INTERPERSONAL FUNCTION OF STYLE IN KENYAN

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS

BY

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the

Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics of the University of Nairobi.

Faculty of Arts

University   of   Nairobi

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DECLARATION

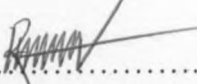This dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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Ombongi Joshua Nyaringi

Signature ....

Date ...27/10/2003...

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This dissertation has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.
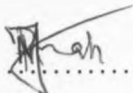
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DEDICATION

To you my Loving Wife Nancy,

In thy face I see a map of honour

To you my little Ian and Gift;

Blossom in mind to do better,

than mom and dad did.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

General guide to analysis and abbreviations

The companies represented here include the following, whose first initial letters

are the ones featuring in the main text:

Company/Advertiser   As represented in text.

    Safaricom   -   S

    Kencell   -   K

    Telkom (K)   -   T

    Cellucom (For Samsung)   -   C

    Nokia   -   N

    Motorola   -   M

In longer texts we supply the newspaper and the dates of appearance:

Newspapers   Abbreviation

    Daily Nation   –   DN

    Saturday Nation   -   StN

    Sunday Nation   -   SN

    East African Standard   -   EAS

    East African Sunday Standard   -   EASS

A typical example in such a reference taking into account the advertiser, paper and

date would look like:

S: Where we lead, others follow.   (DN,1/2/03)

Safaricom   Corpus   Newspaper date

We have also underlined the key words or phrases of the text that we analyze at a given point

Others

SFG   –   Systemic Functional Grammar

SFL   –   Systemic Functional Linguistics

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of a linguistic study on the advertising language in Kenya. While leaning towards stylistics, the study follows the framework of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). Mainly we were out to discover how advertising language realizes its persuasive intention. This as we hypothesize is possible, by the many choices available within the interpersonal function of language (style). Out of such a study, we reasoned, it was possible to identify stylistic features that we could classify and generalize to the advertising language in Kenya. Towards that goal data is collected that markets the 'Telecommunication Industry' from the leading newspapers in Kenya. The results show that the advertisers choose variously from the ranks of word, group and clause and through systems like mood, attitude, person, comment, lexical register, they are able to assign various interpersonal roles to the reader (and themselves). The major functions realized by the adverts analyzed in this study includes informing, persuading and reminding the readers / consumers about the advertisers' goods and services on offer. The paper concludes that SFG is an important tool for analyzing such complex register because it recognizes the 'systematic relationship between the social environment and the functional organization of language' (cf Halliday, 1985:11).
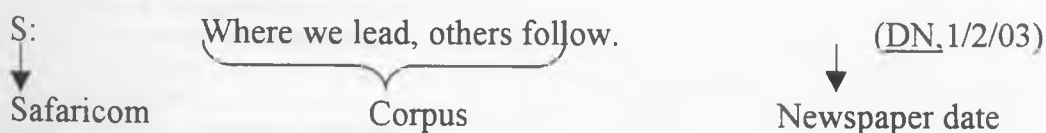
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a linguistic study in the area of stylistics on how the advertising register is presented in newspapers. The study is grounded on Systemic Functional Grammar, which is a recent form of functional linguistics. Specifically it analyzes the advertising register in Kenya as it is exemplified by the newspaper adverts of the telecommunication industry.

1.1 General background to newspaper language

Generally, newspaper language could be viewed from the point of a variety according to medium of communication. Firstly, unlike speech, that is a natural form of communication that exploits such devices as stress, rhythm, intonation, tempo among others, newspapers language/register limits itself to conventional orthography – which makes it hard for the above speech devices to be realized through this medium. Secondly, as Quirk et al. (1985:25) indicates, there is a situational context where the use of written forms:

> …normally presumes the absence of the person(s) to whom the piece of language is addressed. This imposes the necessity of a far greater explicitness: the careful and precise completion of a sentence, rather than

the casual expression supported by gesture and terminated when speakers are assured by word or look that ... their hearers have understood.

The newspaper language as a written language anticipates critical analysis; Quirk (ibid) points out that writers are aware that:

> the written sentence can be read and reread, slowly and critically, writers tend to anticipate criticism by writing more concisely as well as more carefully and elegantly than they may choose to speak.

Whether there is a language register that we can refer to, as newspaper language is open to discussion.

Within the context of this study, it is easier to identify newspaper language as all that which is written in newspapers. However, to define newspaper language as such may risk sounding far-fetched and pretentious, the reason being that newspapers do have varieties according to various issues (business, trade, commentary, sports, crossword puzzles etc) that have their own distinct conventions.

By their nature, newspapers are meant for general/public readership. We therefore note that whichever register the newspaper settles on it is one that is easily deciphered by the majority of the readers. As such there are constraints imposed on writers in newspapers, as this is a form of communication that is one-way and devoid of immediate feedback.

1.1.1 Background to advertising language

> "If a man write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mouse trap than his neighbors, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door".   -Emerson.

The above quotation may also summarize the spirit of market competition prevalent in any country but better still the spirit of advertising language.

The main purpose of advertising is to attract people's attention to a product or service with an aim of selling it. Since there are varied products and services to be sold, we do also expect different forms of advertisements.

The world of advertisement seems to be so varied and complex that to suggest a linguistic study on that line may appear unrealistic and bizarre. We, however, feel it is not impossible. We hope, through this research, to provide insights into the nature of language in general and the distinguishing characteristics of register. To achieve this, we shall attempt an empirically replicable study and hope that the results would be generalisable to warrant such effort.

Much of the problem we anticipate comes from the near scarcity of literature on advertising language/register in Kenya. We may therefore lack that '*reviewness*' common in all studies, for this will seem to be a ground-breaking venture. As such we shall highly rely on fair data collection, a stable methodology and analysis based on a strong theoretical model.

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We believe that our research title ' Interpersonal Function Style in Kenyan Newspaper Advertisements' clearly implies:

i)   Our theme: the interpersonal function

ii)   Main area of study: stylistics

iii)   Theoretical framework: Halliday's interpersonal function of language within systemic linguistics

iv)   Scope: advertising register in Kenyan dailies.

We believe this study will be academically stimulating and rewarding in the long run.

1.2   Statement of the problem

Our research is entitled 'Interpersonal Function of Style in Kenyan Newspaper Advertisements'. Firstly, we shall attempt to answer the question: 'Do Kenyan newspaper advertisement constitute a definable register?' This we do bearing in mind Wardhaugh (1986:48) who warns that:

> register is another complicating factor in any study of language varieties. Registers are sets of vocabulary items associated with discrete occupational or social groups. Surgeons, airline pilots, bank managers, sales clerks, jazz fans, pimps, use different vocabularies.

Do the newspaper advertisements then, have these 'sets of vocabulary items' that we can identify? And how can we classify them as Kenyan?

Secondly, we intend this study to be stylistic in orientation. As such the above mentioned 'set of vocabulary items' will be seen as a form of style. Malmkjer (ed) (1991:438) defines style as 'a consistent occurrence in the text of certain items and structures, or types of items and structures, among those offered by the language as a whole'. We therefore hope to identify these 'items and structures'.

All the above, however, is limited to our theme 'the interpersonal function' in newspaper advertising register. This term (interpersonal function) is associated with Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday's functional grammar where the interpersonal function of language is generally how language 'acts upon' individuals. Here we shall use the adverts to answer the question: 'why were they written in the first place?' Sometimes the answer will be obvious, but we suspect that the superficial aim of the advertising text quite often, will disguise a deeper message.

1.3 Rationale

Much of the language – or registers we encounter daily is in some form of advertisements, on television, radio, newspapers, posters, billboards etc.

We cannot escape these 'ads' anywhere. Maybe because they are too obvious, little attention has been given to them as a serious area that needs a linguistic

study, at least in Kenya. There appears to be minimal literature on advertising register.

This study is geared to contributing knowledge to this 'less explored' area and show that advertising language is as complex as any other register. Perhaps that complexity lies on its outward simplicity. But can advertisements (adverts/ ads) form texts for linguistic analysis?

We shall argue like Halliday (1978:135) that:

> The quality of texture is not defined by size. There is a concept of a text as a kind of super – sentence, something that is larger than a sentence but of the same nature…this is to misrepresent the essential quality of a text. Obviously one cannot quarrel with the use of the term 'text' to refer to a string of sentences that realize a text; but it is important to stress that the sentences are, in fact, the realization of text rather than constituting the text itself. Text is a semantic concept.

Linguistics as a discipline, we hope, stands to gain if we can comprehensively determine features of advertising language that are universal and more importantly Kenyan.

As such we choose stylistics as the area that can help us unravel such features. Where in stylistic analysis, as Malmkjer (ed) (1991:438) points out:

> items and structures are isolated and described using terminology and descriptive frameworks drawn from whatever school of descriptive linguistics the stylistician subscribes to or finds most useful for a given

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purpose. The overall purpose, of cause, will also vary according to the linguistic affiliations of the stylistician.

Such 'freedom' offered by stylistic analysis will be handy as we choose the best possible approach to our area of study.

We look at the interpersonal function because we feel that advertising language is both social, interactive and dynamic in nature; we also explore this function because we suspect that it is mainly what advertisers manipulate to make their text influence the reader in a specific way - for example to inform, to persuade etc. In the words of Charles H. Felt in Adams (ed) (1971: 52):

> Today, at its best, print advertising is person-to-person communication. It can no longer be a corporate proclamation delivered to some vast, faceless audience. Today's advertising seeks to create a dialogue between someone who has something to sell and someone who may be persuaded to buy it. It must look, act, sound and feel as though some one human being is conversing with someone else. It should, like any engaging conversation, be bright, adult, possess warmth, vitality and humour. It must relate to its era, to its environment and to the society in which it functions.

We do believe that a functionalist approach rather than a formalist one will offer much insight into this study. That is the more reason we settle on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar.

We intend through this study to carry out a longitudinal case study of major Telephone/Cell phone network and service providers. We do believe that this is one area that has registered a major growth in recent times and it would be necessary to see how the respective companies compete in the advertising scene. Over time we hope to identify features that we can generalize to the wider Kenyan advertising language/register.

1.4 Scope and limitations

It is our intention that this study remains within the framework of stylistics. But stylistics as Bussman (ed)(1996:459) defines it is quite broad:

a) Methodically, stylistics is a procedure for the analysis of texts;

b) Normatively, stylistics is a directive for what is right in the use of language;

c) Descriptively, stylistics is a text linguistic discipline, which explains the style of a text and sets it in relation to other features of the text (style).

Descriptive stylistics, which is 'the newest branch of stylistics,' will be the focus of this research. More importantly such a functional study, hopefully, will "give us results into the connection between the style and the function of a text (or type of text)"(Bussman: ab initio).

This study uses Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar approach as the basis of analysis.

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According to Halliday meaning can be described in terms of three meta-functions:

i)   To understand the environment (IDEATIONAL)

ii)   To act on the others in it (INTERPERSONAL)

iii)   The TEXTUAL, which breathes relevance into the other two.

We focus this study on the interpersonal function while recognizing that the other functions (i.e. the ideational and textual) are of relevance also to this study, since systemic linguistics view language as a system of choices, meaning that the choices made in one meta-function are of influence to those made in others.

Data analysis comes from the leading Kenyan dailies i.e. The Daily Nation (including Saturday Nation and Sunday Nation) and the East African Standard (and sister papers). Out of these papers our interest will be on the major companies that market 'Telecommunications' by which we mean – Telephone service provider including cell phone/mobile network providers.

Not everything, however, in the adverts is analyzable using our model. We are aware that some adverts heavily rely on pictures such that without the picture content, the verbal statement has very little meaning. Still others manage to effectively convey their message with an almost absence of words. Our study will deliberately avoid such adverts. So we shall be concerned with those adverts that make 'verbal statements'. The choice is also based on the strengths of the companies as represented by the abundance of adverts in newspapers.

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1.5 Objectives

This study has three main objectives:

i)   To determine the stylistic features that characterize advertising language in Kenyan newspapers.

ii)   To explore the application of the interpersonal function of language and how it is used to influence readers in newspaper advertisement.

iii) To assess the strength of Systemic Functional Grammar as a tool for analyzing the advertising register.

1.6 Hypotheses

The following are our hypotheses:

i)   That Kenyan newspaper advertisements have identifiable features that can be classified stylistically.

ii)   That advertising language/register is persuasive in nature and this is achieved by the interplay of choices in the 'rank – scale' (the main units of language structures in English).

iii) That Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar is applicable in analyzing the advertising register in Kenyan newspaper advertisements.

1.7 Literature review

Advertising has been defined by Bussmann (ed) (1996:9) as:

>a persuasive use of language aimed at influencing people's behaviour in
>politics, business, and especially in consumption'. Pragmatic features of
>advertising language include its persuasive intention, its communicative
>distance to various addresses, and its distinctive use of certain expressions
>such as elliptical comparatives...,complex comparatives...and
>adjectivizations. Owing to its characteristics register, advertising language
>is readily recognizable as such by customers.

Gregory and Carroll (1978:64) define register as:

>An instance of language-in-action. It can therefore be described in terms of
>phonological, lexical and grammatical indexical markers (peculiar to a text)
>and common-core features (shared by texts) register is as well the
>realization of the semantic possibilities of language. It defines what can be
>meant in situation. Register then, is culturally determined since it is the
>culture of a society that determines the patterns of environments in which
>language can occur.

Our major concern then will be how to isolate and define the Kenyan advertising
register. While Coulthard (1977:12) argues that the major distinction between
registers will be lexical, he refutes as naïve the claim that:

>some lexical items suffice almost by themselves to identify a certain
>register: 'cleanse' puts us in the language of advertising, 'probe' of

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newspapers, especially headlines, 'tablespoonful' of recipe or prescriptions, 'neckline' of fashion reporting or dressmaking instructions.

Huddleston et al, (1968) cited in Coulthard (1977:15) adds that registers are circularly defined: the language used in dressmaking patterns is the register of dressmaking and the register of dressmaking is that used in dressmaking patterns. Adopting this pattern we shall take the language used in advertising in our local dailies as the advertising register.

Birch and O'Toole (ed) (1988:1) point out that style functions 'both to class a text among other texts-generically... and to give it an unmistakably individual flavour'. The same authors (ibid) argue that:

> there has been a growing concern in all intellectual pursuit in recent years for integrating the formal and informal; the structured with unstructured; the ordered and the chaotic; the artefacts and the people. What these has meant is a recognition in linguistics/ stylistics that analysis only of the formal features of a text – divorced, as it were, from the messy business of people, is insufficient. However, the recognition has outpaced the ability of linguists to rewrite the analytic models.

It is our intention that by carrying out such a study we are redirecting the existing model into new areas and in our analysis perhaps suggest how the model could be strengthened. We acknowledge the fact that all the literature at our disposal on advertising in Kenya is in the form of MBA theses that obviously have the expected 'business' bias. These include Ogutu (1983) who looked at the

Advertising Agencies In Kenya, Their Nature And Operations; Nderitu (1989), *Advertising And The Certified Public Accountants In Kenya*; Ahmed (1992), *Consumer Attitudes Towards Advertising :An Empirical Study Of The Middle Class In Nairobi;* and Odhiambo (1986), *Advertising Timing Strategy: The Practice In Kenya.* The above studies however have little or no bearing at all to this study.

1.8 Theoretical framework

The choice of our model of analysis is largely dependent on its functional approach to grammar. According to Birch (ed) (1988:1-2), Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is functional in three senses:

> Firstly, everything in the grammar can be explained, ultimately, by reference to how language is used.
>
> Secondly, meaning can be described in terms of three meta-functions which are the manifestations in the linguistics system of the two very general purposes which underlie all uses of language:
>
> i) To understand the environment (IDEATIONAL)
>
> ii) To act on the others in it (INTERPERSONAL)
>
> iii) The TEXTUAL, which breathes relevance into the other two.
>
> Thirdly, each element in a language is explained by reference to the total linguistics system.

The power of such a model is of great interest to our research. Whatever 'power' a stylistic process may have is dependent upon the analytic and theoretical models it is based on. However, as noted earlier stylistics is not an independent discipline with its own specific vocabulary and techniques, but an integration of a number of interests drawn mainly from linguistic and literary concerns Birch (ed) (1988:3).

The following is a brief description of our model. In this model, the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions are 'juxtaposed using the rank-scale'. The rank scale:

. . . represent the main units of language structures in English where significant functional choices are made. The whole rank-scale includes: sentence – clause – group – word – morpheme. Clearly, the largest and smallest units, sentence and morpheme, are less functional in English (compared with say, Latin) than the others. Moreover, so many key choices are being made at Group rank that it proves necessary to sub- divide group into its sub-classes verbal, nominal and adverbial. Each rank of unit, then, provides a point of entry to a system of options in one area of meaning. Birch(ed)(1988:7).

The following chart, table 1, which we reprint from Halliday 1973 will be a 'useful focus and aide- memoire' to our study

function / rank	IDEATIONAL				INTERPERSONAL	TEXTUAL	
	Experiential	HYPOTACTIC COMPLEXES OF CLAUSE, GROUP & WORD	Logical	PARATACTIC COMPLEXES (all ranks) co-ordination apposition			COHESION ('above the sentence': non-structural relations) reference; substitution & ellipsis; conjunction; lexical cohesion
CLAUSE	TRANSITIVITY types of process participants & circumstances (identity clauses) (things, facts & reports)		condition addition report POLARITY		MOOD types of speech function modality (the WH-function)	THEME types of message (identity as text relation) (identification, predication, reference, substitution)	
Verbal GROUP	TENSE (verb classes)		catenation secondary tense		PERSON ('marked' options)	VOICE ('contrastive' options)	
Nominal GROUP	MODIFICATION epithet function enumeration (noun classes) (adjective classes)		classification sub- modification		ATTITUDE attitudinal modifiers intensifiers	DEIXIS determiners 'phoric' elements (qualifiers) (definite article)	
Adverbial (incl. prepositional) GROUP	'MINOR PROCESSES' prepositional relations (classes of circum- stantial adjunct)		narrowing sub- modification		COMMENT (classes of comment adjunct)	CONJUNCTION (classes of discourse adjunct)	
WORD (incl. lexical item)	LEXICAL 'CONTENT' (taxonomic organization of vocabulary)		compounding derivation		LEXICAL 'REGISTER' (expressive words) (stylistic organization of vocabulary)	COLLOCATION (collocational organization of vocabulary)	
INFORMATION UNIT					TONE intonation systems	INFORMATION distribution & focus	

Source: Halliday 1973

We should then notice that within the interpersonal function, six choices are available according to their respective ranks. This study will focus on these choices (i.e. mood, person, attitude, comment, lexical register) and their various systems. For instance within mood systems these are choices being made between declarative (making a statement), interrogative (asking a question) and imperative (giving a command). Mood systems are 'choices between different roles which a speaker can select for himself and for his hearer' (Berry 1975:166).

The strength of Halliday's model comes from the recognizing, and articulating, the relations between the choices available at different ranks. This is the interaction that will form the basis of our analysis. It should be added that it is only for descriptive purposes that we find it necessary to limit our scope to the interpersonal meta-function- being the theme of our research. Otherwise the three meta-functions interact with each other constantly in language use. We feel here that these multi-faceted choices and functions are the ones played for stylistic effect and consequences.

1.9 Research methodology

This is a primary research that carries out case studies of its subjects over a period of one year (July 2002 – June 2003).

1.9.1 Subjects

Efforts have been made to carry out a study with an homogenous sample of subjects. The subjects in this study are the companies that 'market' Telecommunications in Kenya. These are companies that provide telephone products and services, especially the cell phone/mobile phone network providers. Our subjects include Telkom (Kenya), Safaricom, Kencell and others (that market their cell phones e.g. Nokia, Samsung, Siemens and Motorola.

1.9.2 Materials

All the material for our data comes from the *Daily Nation, Sunday Nation, The East African Standard, East African Sunday Standard Newspapers*. We use the literature available on systemic linguistics and its theoretical models for analysis.

1.9.3 Procedures

This is a longitudinal research where we observe, over time, the advertisements representing the above subjects. Out of the subjects' adverts as they appear in the Kenyan dailies, we collect corpus of text which we subject to Halliday's systemic functional grammar model.

Generally, we analyze mood in clauses, person in verbal group, attitude in nominal group, comment in adverbial/ prepositional group and lexical register in word.

Specifically, the members of the 'rank scale' shall be scrutinized under the scale of delicacy. This is a scale where a general area of meaning is gradually broken down into fineness of distinctions in meaning i.e. making delicate distinctions in meaning. For instance the scale of mood look like this:

```
                       ┌──── Declarative
          ┌── Indicative │                      ┌──── Closed interrogative
          │            └── Interrogative │
MOOD ────▶│                              └──── Open interrogative
          │                   ┌──── Exclusive imperative
          └──── Imperative │
                              └──── Inclusive imperative
```
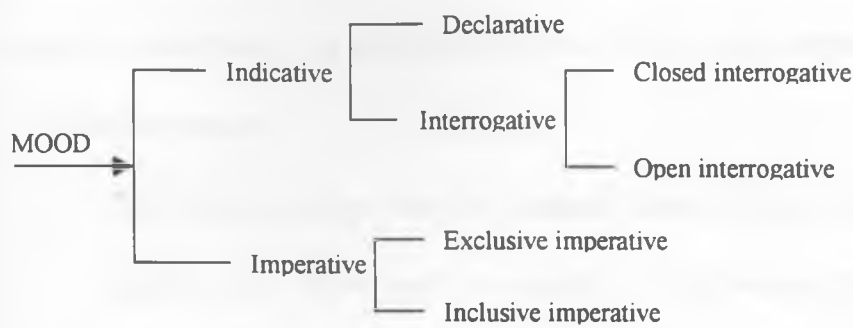
This is where our study comes in. The choice of system an advertiser makes will depend on the roles he wants to ascribe to himself and the reader. According to Berry (1975:167):

> a clause which has chosen indicative makes a further choice between declarative and interrogative. The speaker of a clause, which has chosen declarative has selected for himself the role of informant and for his hearer, the role of informed. The speaker of a clause, which has chosen interrogative, has selected for himself the role of informed and for his hearer the role of informant. The speaker of a clause, which has chosen interrogative, is expecting a verbal response from his hearer. The speaker of a clause, which has chosen declarative is not necessarily expecting an overt response.

It is our hope that this study will turn out to be intellectually exciting especially as we go out to demonstrate on how the style we adopt works for us, enabling us to produce texts that are internally coherent and socially relevant (Birch 1988:1).

The success of our study, we feel is in identifying advertising features that are 'action oriented'. Language is often a powerful vehicle depending on the choices made within it and the functions it is intended to serve. This is best captured by the famous words of Adlai Stevenson:

> 'Do you remember that in classical times Cicero had finished speaking, the people said, 'how well he spoke' – but when Demosthenes had finished speaking the people said, 'let us march'.

The intension of advertisers is not only to make the readers appreciate the language used in advertisements but also to make the readers 'march', that is, to make them *act* upon reading the adverts which in most cases represent the anticipated feedback.

This study we hope will not only benefit the field of linguistics but also the advertisers, with the recognition that solutions to the success of their advertising campaign may lie in the stylistic choices of words within the word, group and clause ranks. This may mean that two advertisers spending the same amount of money in an advertising campaign may have different results depending on how they have manipulated language by the choices they have made.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 MOOD

In our analysis of mood, we look at the mood systems prevalent in the advertising register. Mood is achieved within the clause rank as shown in chart 1 from Halliday (1973) available in chapter 1 above.

At this stage it is in order to remind ourselves the essential properties of systems in systemic grammar. This will also help us to stay on course. According to Berry (1975: 14-5) whom we quote below. Systems have three essential characteristics:

> The terms in a system are mutually exclusive. The selection of one of the terms precludes the selection of any of the others...
>
> A system is finite (the word finite is used here in the mathematical sense). . .
>
> The meaning of each term in a system depends on the meaning of other terms in the system.

The above characteristics are of basic implication to this study. Firstly, since there is mutual exclusiveness, in the case of mood systems, the selection of interrogative prevents the choice of either declarative or imperative.

Secondly, since the system is finite, 'it is possible to fix a limit for a system and say that it consists of a certain countable number of terms, no more, no less'.

This is largely possible as all the terms that are mutually exclusive are the only ones represented in the system.

Lastly if there is a change in one of the terms in the system, the meaning of terms will

also change. If there is any addition or subtraction of a term from a system, the meaning of other terms in the system will also change. Berry (1975) likens this to the proverbial financial cake analogy:

> If a certain sum of money is allotted for the use of a certain number of people, one user can enlarge his share of the money only at the expense of other users.

Other effects are also possible:

> If another person is added to the list of users the original shares will decrease in value. If someone is removed from the list, the original shares will increase in value.

We should remember that not all clauses can be analysed for mood systems, we only consider those clauses that are acting as α elements of sentences and not β clauses that is, clauses that are finite and not non-finite. In the following sentences (Berry 1975: 147):

> Shut the door before you go out or the house will be freezing when we come home.

The two clauses have chosen respectively the imperative at the declarative, but the two β clauses before you go out and when we come home have made no choice from the system of mood.

Systems then have entry conditions, which are the circumstances that must apply for the choices between the terms of the system to be met. Systems are of mutual influence to each other as they often provide entry conditions for each other. For instance it is only possible in English to analyse mood if finite is present in a clause.

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The above means that the choice of a term in the verbal group does determine whether that clause has chosen from the system of mood. These choices do represent the interdependence of terms prevalent in systemic grammar.

The following are M. A. K. Halliday's quotations from his various works as collected in de Joia & Stenton (1980:47-8). Here he defines and explains mood:

> Mood represents the organization of participants in speech situations, providing options in the form of speaker roles. The speaker may inform, question or command; he may inform, request confirmation, contradict or display anyone of a wide range of postures defined by the potentialities of linguistic interaction.

> Systems of mood express speech function, the relations among the participants in a speech the situation and the speech roles assigned by the speaker to himself and his instructors.

> The term 'mood' refers to a set of related options, which give structure to the speech situation and define the relations between speaker and interlocutors in a linguistic interaction.

> ... every language incorporates options whereby speaker can vary his own communication role, making assertions, asking questions, giving orders, expressing doubts and so on. The speech functions of statement, question,

response, command and exclamation fall within this category (though they do not exhaust it) and these are expressed grammatically by the system of mood, in which the principal options are declarative, interrogative, (yes/no and WH-types), and imperatives etc.

Mood is the grammar of speech functions – the roles adapted (and those imposed on the hearer) by the speaker and his associated attitudes. This is the interpersonal component.

In this chapter we do assess all the available mood systems by showing how they are utilized to advertise their respective products. For each mood system, we show the contribution made by the selection of that option to the sentence – in relation to assigning roles both to the writer (advertiser) and the reader (target of advertisement).Our analysis of mood systems will rely on the network shown below, found in (Halliday 1984:15):
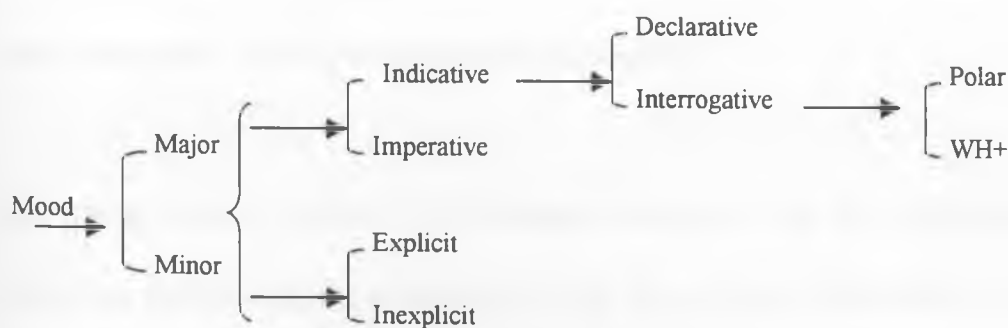
Forming the core parts of this chapter will be the analysis based on the following network:

```
 ┌─The Indicative ──────►  ┌─ Declarative                            ┌─ Polar,yes/no  interrogative/ closed
 │                         │                                         │
 │                         └─ Interrogative ──────►                  │
 │                                                                   └─ WH+/open  interrogative
 │
 │                         ┌─ Exclusive Imperatives
 └─ Imperative  ──────►    │
                           └─ Inclusive Imperatives
```
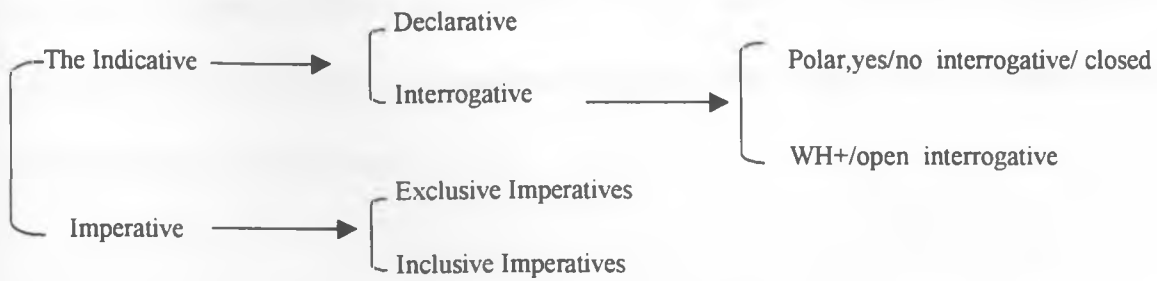
2.1 Indicative

These are two moods within the indicative, realized through the ordering of subject

and finite (Halliday 1985: 74):

> The order subject before finite realizes (declarative).
>
> The order finite before subject realized yes/no interrogative'
>
> In a 'WH – interrogative' the order is:
>
> Subject before finite if the WH – element is the subject;
>
> Finite before subject otherwise. . .

In this section we explore the extent to which the advertising register has used the

indicative (as compared to the use of the imperative).

The use of the Indicative is essentially the sum total of how the above sub-systems

have been used – which we discuss in this section.

We intend also to answer the following questions: why do advertisers choose the

indicative (rather than the imperative)? How does it help them realize the interpersonal

roles between the advertisers and the reader?

The indicative according to Bussmann (ed) (1996: 223) is a verbal mood which

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portrays the state of affairs described by verb as 'real'. In contrast to subjunctive and imperative, the indicative is considered the most basic mood and is used to express neutral objective statements.

The above explanation is largely true to the advertising texts, which have chosen the indicative, as we observe that the majority of such adverts have been used whether in the declarative or interrogative options, to point out fact-like information about products and services. Unlike the imperative that are considered forceful/commanding, the choices available in the indicative are many and of great interest to this study. The indicative form has been extremely utilized by the telecommunications adverts analyzed.

2. 1. 1. Declarative

This is the most utilized type of the indicative in the adverts considered. The declarative is used for initiating information about the products or when it is not demanding an action from the reader. It has been used too when the advertiser wishes to create a rapport between him/her and the audience/reader. The following adverts represent a case where the advertiser is intending to create a relationship (friendly) between himself and the reader. During the New Year's Day, 2003, both Safaricom and Kencell extended their greetings as:

Safaricom wishes all Kenyans a peaceful and Prosperous 2003.

Happy new year. We've extended your cards. Kencell is giving yet another

reason to celebrate during this festive season.

We notice that both companies have personalized subjects. The companies are viewed as thinking and feeling human beings. This arguably is a major step in assigning roles in the advertising register. One gets the feeling that the company is a companion to the reader. Kencell has extremely utilized the 'we' subject to this effect.

The declarative has been used to demand for action (although not commanding) or simply state some expected action from the reader.

Instances of these are:

> . . .good news will be coming to all Yes! Prepaid users... (*here* the reader is expected to anticipate/look forward to a future reward).

> K: We promised to make the best communication more affordable to
>
>   all. We will . . .(DN, 22/1/ 2003).

Both the finite verbs promised and will have been used to affirm a promise–the reader here is called upon to trust the communication to fulfill that promise of making communication 'affordable'. The functional roles created here are of a provider-recipient nature: the advertisers have assigned unto themselves benevolent roles – while the recipient (i.e. the reader) is rendered *powerless* for he cannot demand what is presented as an offer/gift.

Sometimes the declarative is used to enhance the reader's ego before announcing an "offer":

> S: You are special. You deserve to win a luxury weekend for two.

Here the Subject (You) is a direct reference to the reader who is expected to assume the tasks that the advertiser has assigned to him/her.

Other declaratives serve the function of stating an assumed fact. This is exemplified by the repetition of It's in the following advert for a handset (Mobile phone/Cell phone).

N: It's in there Nokia 5210

       It's durable and ergonomic

       It's splash – proofed and well shaped

       It has what it takes in action (StN 15-02-03).

Outstandingly, there is serial repetition of It's. Here, the readers are bombarded with fact-like sounding qualities that are meant to persuade them into buying this phone. The adverts are complemented by pictures of basketball playing ladies which helps in promoting the underlying message, that is, the attempt to make the adverts appeal to active/sport loving individuals to buy the phone.

Declaratives are statements that are expressed as facts about concrete things and issues. Used in this sense, we detect that advertisers are keen to apply this choice by trying to edge out competitors and competition:

S: Where we lead, others follow.

       Every second counts every second we innovate. (SN, 4/5/03).

Here the readers are asked to recognize some 'facts', that is, that the advertised company is better than the rest (part of the collective we) and that the members

(subscribers) are always at an advantage. This is also meant to persuade readers by influencing their company prevalence.

There are instances like the text below, where the advertisers are out to inform the reader and at the same time explain the implications of their message:

S: You are more likely to dial a Safaricom number than any other number (DN, 3/4/03).

The accompanying explanations were that it would be more economical to phone from a network with more subscribers than from one that has few of them.

The declarative is again used in adverts to inform the market of a new offer:

K: Now all Yes! Prepaid subscribers get double airtime every time they reload . . .(DN ,27/3/03).

There is a group of declaratives that sound as advices but which ultimately lead to the process of building brand preferences. Evidently we have declaratives that appeared in the 'Absolute privilege' campaign:

K: Absolute privilege is when you can take the driver's seat charting the course your business should take.(DN,12/5/03).

K: Absolute privilege is when you make a statement without saying a word.(DN ,15/5/03).

K: Absolute freedom is when you don't need quorum to hold a board Meeting. (DN ,19/5/03).

K: Absolute privilege means you can cross borders, oceans, into

financial districts almost anywhere in the world.

All the above adverts and other successive ones (not represented here) are out to describe what being associated to a product means, or ultimately it is expected that all those readers who fulfill the described *standards* would unite around the product. Thus the product would have found a particular class of people. Here the people targeted mostly are the middle class and businessmen.

2.1.2 Interrogative

As pointed out in section 2.1 above, the order finite before subject realizes 'yes/no interrogatives', which are also referred to as Polar (Halliday) or closed interrogatives (Berry). The order subject before finite if the WH – element is the subject, or finite before subject otherwise . . . realizes the WH- interrogative, which is also referred to as the open interrogative.

Both types of interrogatives have been used sparingly in advertising telecommunication companies and their products. We notice that when used the interrogative comes as rhetorical questions, which essentially need no answer from the reader. The answer is either obvious, implied or supplied by the advertiser. This is possible because the adverts are part of a one-way communication channel. Within the interpersonal function, the advertiser is out to assign the readers the role of being passive respondents by the use of such interrogatives.

This section attempts to find explanations on how interrogatives have been used in the press advertisements and whether there were any choices of sorts between the polar and WH-interrogatives.

Our findings point to the fact that though interrogatives are available in the papers, their roles appear to have shifted from the roles associated with interrogative in dialogues: that role of expecting an (immediate) answer. We may be tempted to see this as a shortcoming to discourse, but on the contrary, the data collected shows that advertisers do manipulate interrogatives to achieve diverse functions. For instance, wherever interrogatives appear there is a tendency towards rhetorical questions.

2.1.2.1 Closed interrogative (polar, yes/no interrogative)

These type of interrogatives are referred to as closed or polar because the answers are limited to either Yes or No. In many occasions we do notice the advertiser exploit those types of interrogatives, thereby leading the reader to respond in an anticipated 'Yes/No way'. This is possible in the following adverts:

K: Yes! R U ready? [Are you ready?]

K: Are you getting through?

Yes! Clearly the best for no congestion (DN.18 /4/ 03).

K: Do you enjoy uninterrupted service?

Yes! Clearly the best for reliability (SN, 20/4/03).

K: Do you enjoy good news days?

Yes! Clearly the best for added value (<u>DN</u>,5 / 5/ 03).

K: <u>Can you</u> access your useful services?

Yes! Clearly the best for extra-service.

In the above interrogatives, the answers a reader gives depends on the 'network' he/she is connected to. For instance, if the reader is receiving the services of the same advertiser we anticipate the answers to be in the affirmative.

The advertiser however anticipates the reader to answer in the negative if he is not connected to his network.

The effects of the above adverts mean the following. If one is connected to the K-network then he is lucky to enjoy the above privileges (i.e. good news, no congestion, reliability added value, extra services etc) but if one is in a different network then definitely he or she is not getting the above value for his money.

The idea of competition is also brought out well in these interrogatives. The perceived weaknesses of a competing company are the ones used in forming the objects of the interrogatives of another company:

K: Are you getting through?

Yes! Clearly the best for no congestion (<u>DN</u>, 18/4/02).

The 'Question – Answer' pattern above is worth noticing. The answers to the

questions are not obvious, if they were, then there would be no need for the responses above. In a way then, the above answers are supplied to reinforce the hopefully expected answer that a reader has in his/her mind concerning the service provider.

We do notice the role played by the 'Yes!' logo that stands for the K Company. Here the logo has gotten another use: that of affirming the values (positive) of its company.

By the use of the polar interrogatives, power is invested on the advertiser at the expense of the reader/consumer. The nature of yes/no interrogatives is that there are no other options beyond responding either in the affirmative or in the negative. In this way, the advertiser has a bigger persuasive chance of promoting his business at the expense of the competitor by asking questions that lead the reader to selected and limited choices.

2.1.2.2 Open interrogative (WH- interrogative)

When the WH – Interrogative is used in the adverts there is sense of freedom in the choice of answers expected from the reader, at least, compared to the polar interrogatives.

Sample these:

    K: How are your calls?

            Yes! Clearly the best for perfect clarity (SN. 27/4/03).

    S: What can you buy for Kshs. 99/=? (SN, 27/4/ 03).

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The answer to 'K- Interrogative' above can come from a scale of delicacy that may look like this: *not clear, fairly clear, clear, very clear* etc, while the 'S-Interrogative' above is one where the answers could be limitless. Since the question is so open, the reader is kept guessing about the advertiser's intension. This is a major way of achieving suspense, thus fulfilling the advertiser's efforts in hooking up the readers to their adverts. [The successive adverts showed later that that was the cost, an offer, for new subscription to that network].

We do notice that the WH- interrogative is rarely used, unlike the open interrogative. We may attempt an explanation here. In a yes/no Interrogative the role of the reader is that of accepting or denying. However in WH – Interrogative, the role is that of 'giving on demand'. What this may mean is that the advertiser will need to arrogate himself a more powerful role in the 'advertiser–reader' relationship which is possible by the closed interrogative. The open interrogative has a sense of giving the reader freedom of answering at the expense of the advertiser who might need more adverts (space and money) to qualify the intended message.

There is a way the open interrogative establishes rapport between the advertiser and the reader. Evidence from the data shows that these types of texts are usually presented in a manner that speaks of interest, concern and being sensitive to the reader's needs as in the following example:

      T: For how long have you been using Telkom calling card? (DN, 27/9/02).

2.2 Imperative

In this section we look at how the advertisers used the imperative in the role relationship between themselves and the audience in order to market their products. Earlier we noted that the imperative is at mutual exclusivity to the indicative. This means that if a speaker has chosen the imperative, he has to forgo the indicative. Both systems however depend on the choice of finite, a requisite entry to mood systems.

The choice of imperative in the mood system means that the speaker has selected for himself the role of controller and for his hearers the role of the controlled. The speaker expects from the hearer more than a purely verbal response. He expects some form of action (Berry 1975: 166). Here we use the data collected to highlight how the imperative has been used especially to control the readers and to 'demand for some action'. We shall do this through the two main sub-systems available for a speaker in the choice of imperative. It is worth noting that the imperative has been employed by all the advertisers of telecommunication products throughout the period of analysis (July 2002 – June 2003), and we could expect that trend to go on.

In the imperative the subject is often absent. Halliday treats this as a case of ellipsis of the subject, that the subject is understood to be there (only not mentioned) and that the hearer (reader) supplies it mentally.

One major use of the imperative is to arouse immediate action, just like in commands

or orders "Get it! Stop! Come here!". The general impression is that the imperatives are used by the advertisers to get things done. The nature of adverts (that is being persuasive) means that advertisers are keen on how they manipulate them while being careful not to arouse the feelings of powerlessness on the side of the reader. This means that imperatives have to maintain a delicate balance between coercion and persuasion.

We identify two main types of imperatives:

- Exclusive Imperatives
- Inclusive Imperatives

2.2.1 Exclusive imperative

Exclusive imperatives form a type of directives or commands where the speaker/advertiser is not part of the action to be carried out. The speakers/advertisers ascribe to themselves powerful roles as they use commands in speech. The reader automatically assumes the role of respondent, who is expected to follow the directions without fail. However in adverts the commands seem to be toned down in various ways.

The imperatives in advertisements are interesting in their own right, wherever used they are presented with an 'it is the readers who stands to benefit' attitude: that is, if they carry out the proposed action:

K: So, <u>keep scratching</u> and make double sure that you have reloaded all
    your scratch cards before . . . (<u>SN</u>,2/2/03)

K: Just one more day to go for double airtime. <u>Reload now </u>(<u>DN</u>,3/2/03)

K: <u>Buy and win instantly</u> this Easter (<u>DN</u>, 7/4/03).

Others:

K: So, <u>rush down</u> to any Kencell outlet today and discover a whole new
    world at your fingertips.

N: <u>Take it</u> along and you will always be in good company.

S: <u>Get the Motorola</u> T190 and win . . .

S: <u>Stop paying</u>, when you stop talking...

Looking at the above examples we note that each directive acts as 'a stick to a carrot
elsewhere', that to each command is attached some gain somewhere, for instance,
scratching is attached to double airtime; buying to winning; rushing down, to
discovering; taking the phone to good company; getting a Motorola to winning etc; the
importance of this is that readers do understand that the commands are in good faith,
and as such they are able to 'forgive' any strong imperatives from the advertisers. We
may liken this to a case of providing food to a hungry person and commanding him to
eat. In such a case we expect the beneficiary to understand such commands as friendly.

These imperatives (exclusive) are presented as directives that are easy to carry out,
thanks to the choice of verbal elements. For instance instead of using the verb buy

(which comes with the connotation of spending money) we meet adverts like:

N: . . . take the Nokia 3310 and make it truly yours (StN,25/1/03)

K: Walk away with either the Nokia 8310…Get the Motorola

        T190 (DN,17/2/03).

K: Get connected today (DN,5/2/03).

M: Enjoy the . . . new mobile GN professional series (DN,18/3/03).

K: So take advantage to scratch as many cards as you can. (DN, 5/4/03).

N: Take it along and you will always be in good company (DN, 6/5/03).

K: Pocket the chic Nokia 8310.

Such adverts do influence the reader to view products advertised as being within his/her reach and the verbs used play a euphemistic role to buying/spending money. All the products on offer are nearly always presented as *free*; a good example is 'Scratch as many cards as you can' above. Here, if paraphrased the problem is not on buying the product but the ability to scratch as many cards as one is able to.

Other forms of directives try to appeal to a reader's sense of urgency.

Examples include:

K: Rush down to any yes MEGASTORE today and take advantage of this

        incredible 'Triple Treat'. (DN, 17/2/03).

K: Runaway with the Motorola timeport. (SN,16/2/03).

K: . . . Make double sure that you have reloaded all your scratch cards

        before midnight, Sunday 6th April. (StN, 5/4/03)

K: <u>Dash down</u> to yes! Megastore today. . .(<u>DN</u>,15/5/03)

Others:

  K: <u>Leap for</u> the Nokia 3310...

          <u>Slip away</u> with the Siemens A50...

          <u>Take off</u> with Alcatel one Touch . . .

  K: <u>Dart down</u> to your nearest Kencell outlet and look up to Yes! Today.

In the above cases the reader is informed that taking action will help him/her reap the benefits on offer. The products on offer are presented as scarce and the reader is competing with many other readers who are 'running away' with the same productions.

The above adverts are outwardly action seeking, although not persuasive. This is true with commands since they are appropriate to small immediate actions but not on complex and extended ones. Persuasive speech on the other hand is where 'a concerted and involved line of action is desired, and the speaker or writer will elicit it by means of lengthier statement or sequence of statements' (Alexander 1969:21). It appears therefore that advertiser(s) will find it more convenient to use imperatives, since adverts try to avoid long statements, as there is always a tendency towards word economy in adverts.

2.2.2 Inclusive imperative

These are a type of imperatives that have been rarely used in advertisements but when

used we get the feeling that the advertiser and the reader have a common aim/target:

C: Let Cellucom be your messenger. . . Then tell us about that someone

        special in your life.

A level of trust is easily achieved between the advertiser and the reader in this way. Mutual confidentiality is evident in a case where one buys a Samsung phone during a Valentine season and the above advertiser delivers a bouquet of flowers free of charge to the identified buyer's loved one. Such an advert is good at creating rapport between the advertiser and the reader, where the reader is persuaded not so much by the quality of the phone, but by the after sales gestures of this company.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 GROUP RANK

In this chapter we are largely concerned with how <u>person</u>, <u>attitude</u>, and <u>comment</u> are realized within the verbal, nominal and prepositional groups respectively.

3.1 PERSON

Within SFG person is analysed in the verbal group. Person is of three categories:

First person (I)

Second person (you) and

Third person (he/she/they)

The above forms (which are unmarked) basically state who is being referred to.

The three persons are realized in various pronoun forms, which are 'marked' options; the concern of this chapter:

1st Person Pronouns:

I, <u>me, my, mine, myself.</u>

<u>We, us, our, ours, ourselves.</u>

2nd Person Pronoun:

You, <u>yours, yours, yourself, yourselves.</u>

3rd Person pronouns:

He, <u>him, his, himself.</u>

She, <u>her, hers, herself.</u>

It, <u>its, itself.</u>

They, <u>them. their. theirs. themselves.</u>

The italicized pronouns are 'marked' since they add some value to the person, for instance possessiveness, personal or being reflexive.

In this chapter, therefore, we embark on an analysis based on how the above 'marked' options have been manipulated by the advertisers while assigning roles between themselves and the addressee(s) – and all this is within the verbal group.

English then has the following **person** systems:
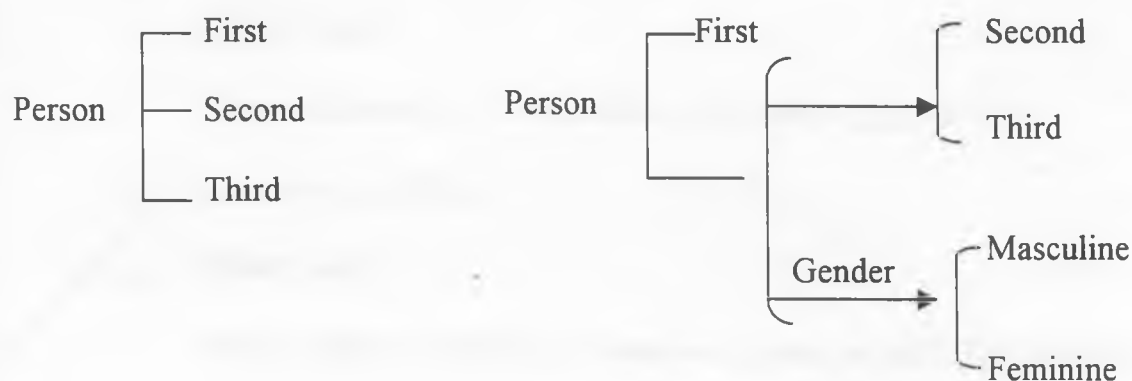
Harris's person systems.

Harris demonstrates a systemic representation that shows person system as shown above, cited in Halliday & Fawcett (1987:15).

The format recognizes the role played by gender in the person system. It would be interesting to find whether gender is an issue necessary for any advertising purposes.

The press advertisers, unlike speakers, are using a one-way form of communication between themselves and the readers (whom we may liken to hearers). As a result the

role relationship is constrained since they (advertisers) do not get a direct feedback from the readers. This may explain the near absence of the first person singular (1PS) in the adverts analysed. The 1PS acts as the subject of a verb and it is normally used when referring to oneself while speaking or writing. It has a personalizing effect on discourse – which at times makes the discourse appear subjective.

The seemingly rare occasion we meet the 1PS 'I' in the press adverts is in a series of repeated adverts:

S: I'm one in a million.

       Habari Yako?

       Congratulations to . . . our million subscribers (StN 28/6/03).

S: I'm one in a million.

       Habari yako?

       With 1 million subscribers, whom am I going to call? (DN 30/6/03).

The 1PS represented in the above lines is in fact the reader himself. In this case we contend that the 1PS pronoun above is a 'marked' option in the sense that it is not referring to the originator of the message but the recipient. As a result there appears to be a shift of authorship from the advertiser to the reader. This is important in the sense that the reader is assigned the role of ownership of the company as part of the million subscribers. He/she enjoys membership to a apparently strong side.

Another equally role-shifting advert appears as:

S: . . . Ask yourself " myself, why should I pay for something which I do

      not use?"

The 1PS here is also referring to the reader. The advertiser is aiding the readers to

arrive at a conclusion: that they need to stop being exploited by rival companies.

3.1.1 First person plural (1PP) 'we'

The 1PP 'We' comes with the following morphological characteristics:

Case: Objective

Person: First

Number: Plural

In this section we look at how 'we' is used whether as inclusive or exclusive: we

ponder like Birch (1988:16):

> Does it really include the speaker, or is it more like the exclusive we used by
>
> doctors and teachers to patients and pupils, supposedly to reassure by
>
> establishing what Erving Goffman calls 'a with', but actually reinforcing the
>
> differential in power relation?

And according to Quirk et al (1985:340):

> The terms Inclusive we and Exclusive we are sometimes used for 1st person
>
> plural pronouns which respectively include and exclude reference to the
>
> addressee. We should in addition distinguish a special type of exclusive We
>
> called Collective we which indicates a plurality of speakers/writers, e.g. in

petitions (we, the undersigned…) or in prayers (we thank thee,

O God. . .).

The analysis of <u>We</u>, therefore, requires identification of how it is being used in the adverts, and the roles it is playing. This may be tricky venture as there are cases of sentences where <u>We</u> appears to defy classification (whether it is inclusive, exclusive or collective). The sentiments are confirmed by Quirk, et al (ibid):

> Unlike some languages, however English does not make any formal distinction between inclusive and exclusive reference. The only circumstance in which inclusive <u>We</u>, is grammatically distinct is in the 1st person imperative '<u>Let's</u>'.

3.1.2 Exclusive we

When we refer to the exclusive 'we' we are in actual fact referring to the plurality of the person of the advertiser (speaker). In this case the reader/addressee is not part of the 'we' but the readers are the 'outsiders' for whom the 'we' is addressing. In short 'we' here is a reference to the company responsible for the advertisements.

This form of person has been extensively used on various occasions either to refer to the advertising company or the company plus the reader.

We do notice that there are adverts that use <u>we</u> as a subject to a verb that perform charitable activities: that is, to offer services that are claimed to be favours:

K: <u>We've extended</u> your cards . . .

K: We've extended validity period.

S: We'll pick you up in a limo. . .

C: We'll make sure they get a box of . . . chocolates

What is noticeable in the above texts is that wherever we is used, there is a tendency for the verb group to have an object. In most cases the object has something to do with an offer by a company (e.g. cards, validity period, chocolates etc) to the reader.

When we is followed by a future verb form e.g. we'll in most cases the advert becomes a kind of promise. The reader in this respect is being called upon to trust the advertisers to fulfill their promises:

K: We promised to make the best communication more affordable to all. We will. 28-01-03. Good news day (DN, 22/1/03).

S: . . . what's more, we'll give you another 50,000/- to donate to a recognized charity . . .(DN, 5/2/03)

'We' is at times repetitively used for stylistic effect and the effect achieved is that of identifying the advertisers as belonging to their own class, say compared to other service-related companies. A case in point is in the following advert:

S: . . . when we launched we made a promise. And we remain focused
        on expanding our network ... Safaricom clearly the better option.
        (DN 1/5/03)

Such is a case of an advert that asserts the 'differential in power relations' mentioned above.

The exclusive 'we' is again used in the verbal group to portray the advertiser as a caring, understanding and sensitive individual. While doing favours to the reader. The following advert exemplifies this usage:

T: We are extending the expiry period from 500, 1000, and 2,000

denomination of calling cards to 30th July 2003. (DN 10/2/03).

Functionally, the 'We are extending' verbal group which is in the simple present continuous tense, shows that the company is at the moment embarked on that process of benefiting consumers and also that the process is expected to go on into the near future. It appears also that it is the practice of the company to offer such incentives. We realize this when we ask ourselves what could have been lost had the above statement been either:

a) *We have extended the expiry period*, or

b) *The expiry period has been extended.*

The hypothetical examples (a) and (b) above would seem to suggest that either the company was forced into that extension or the company is not in control of its affairs, respectively. The 'We are extending' group offers a chance for the reader to see the company as the initiator of that process – equally helping in assigning a reader the beneficiary role as the company assumes the role of a benefactor.

Sometimes, 'We' is used as a subject for a formal statement issued in the press:

Siemens: We wish to inform our customers and the general public that

Siemens Communications Ltd. has changed its name to Siemens

Limited .(DN, 1/4/03).

Sometimes 'We' has been used with the contrastive meaning of 'unlike the others'.

These forms of adverts are intended not only to show how fair the advertising

company is, but also, how other companies are exploitative:

S: We don't nibble into or rip off your airtime (SN,20/4/03).

S: We don't nibble into your airtime.

        No charge for recharge! (DN,22/10/03).

Such an advert is out to make the readers feel compelled to trust the company, as the

company appears trustworthy and sensitive to consumer needs unlike 'the rest'.

Having said the above, it is of interest to note that our data largely supports the use of

exclusive we for the main purpose of identifying a company, while classifying it as

distinct from others.

3.1.3 Inclusive we

The inclusive we (First person plural 1PP) pronoun) is used to include reference to the

addressee. This inclusive 1PP, within the verbal group, realizes various functions. The

overall function being that of making the reader to be part of the action.

First of all, we. has been used in various cases for solidarity reasons, that is, to make

the reader feel part of the company (as well as isolating a non-member):

S: Together <u>we are</u> part of the world's leading mobile phone company.

<u>(StN</u>, 17/5/03).

T: As <u>we</u> celebrate communications day . . . <u>(StN</u>, 17/5/03).

In most cases <u>we</u> is used to show the invincibility enjoyed by the advertiser and

consumers when contrasted to other competing companies. Below is an example:

S: Where <u>we</u> lead, others follow <u>(SN</u>, 4/5/03).

Since it is possible for the advertiser to speak for the reader, the inclusive <u>we</u> appears

to play the role of influencing the reader's judgment by showing them how they are

part of a better team compared to the competitors. Membership is therefore seen as

part of being socially responsible as implied by the example below:

S: We are proud to be associated with UNICEF and the day of the

African Child... <u>(StN</u>,24/5/03).

Inclusive <u>we</u> is stylistically played to unite the advertiser and the reader, while

influencing the reader to feel part of the team.

3.1.4 Other first person forms

Other than the use of <u>we,</u> there are other possibilities of persons that may be

represented by either the following possessives or reflexives:

(1PS) Singular: Me, my, mine, myself.

(1PP) Plural: Us, our, ours, ourselves.

However there is no noticeable use of the 1PS forms <u>me, my, mine</u> within the verbal

group in the adverts analysed. The rare case of <u>myself</u> is on the following advert,

(cited elsewhere above).

> S: Ask yourself, "Myself, why should I pay for something I do not
>
>   use?" (StN – 4/03)

In this case, *myself* is used as a reflexive where a reader is meant to ask himself/herself why (s)he is accepting exploitation when there is an option at hand. Here the promoters are persuading the readers through a comparative process meant to discredit their competitors, by promoting their sense of fairness.

The absence of 1PS me, my, mine within the verbal group, could be due to their individualizing effect of any advert, which is stylistically hard to manipulate as it may require a dialogue to be realized.

On the other hand, the plural forms (1PP) us, ours and ourselves are available in adverts but wherever used they are either modifying a noun (acting as an adjective), and not in a verbal group.

> M: Enjoy the common look and feel of our new mobile GM series…
>
>   (DN, 18/3/03).

3.1.5 Second person 'marked' options

In this group we have the second person you equivalent, which are marked because they are either referring to possession or being reflexive. Here we have four options: You, yours, yourself and yourselves.

To start with, we recognize the abundance of <u>you</u> (though unmarked) in the adverts analysed. We can only point out that when used in adverts, you refers to the reader. The advertiser is directly addressing the reader in this way. From the data collected, <u>you</u> is the most manipulated person by the advertisers. It is realized in such intensity as:

K: Whether <u>you've</u> a lot to say or whether <u>you'd</u> rather be brief, only Yes!

Offers <u>you</u> the lowest per minute - call charges.

Do <u>you</u> enjoy good news days?

Do <u>you</u> enjoy uninterrupted services?

The marked options are important in the sense that they introduce new concepts to the second person, either as possessives or as reflexives. In possession we have the use of <u>your</u> and <u>yours</u> which has been used to show 'ownership' of various forms.

Although there is a possibility of reflexives in adverts, the adverts considered so far failed to reveal any instance of them. We only had extensive usage of possessive form <u>your</u>.

Wherever <u>your</u> has been used, the referent has always been the reader. However there is no distinction between the singularity and plurality of that reference. Since reading is an individual matter, the reader usually sees himself/herself as the subject of that reference.

Within the verbal group, structurally, we do notice that <u>your</u> comes after a verb whereas functioning as an object:

S: Receive . . . scores from South Africa <u>using your Safaricom mobile</u>
        <u>phone</u>.(StN, 15/2/03).

K: How clear are <u>your calls</u>?(DN, 1/5/03).

K: Absolute privilege!

        . . . walk in the corridor of power to <u>take your</u> place among the
        accomplished.

From the above, we also notice that the verbs used here are of special interest. Other than the interrogative above (How clear are your calls?) the verbs: <u>Using, enjoy, take</u> are intended to influence the person (in your) to use the services availed by the company. Thus the advertiser is taking the role of an informer and the reader the role of the 'informed'.

3.1.6 Third person 'marked' options

Here we are referring to the possibilities of using either the many variations of the 3rd person (personal, reflexive pronouns):

    - Him, his, himself.

    - Her, hers, herself

    - Its, itself

    - They, them, their, theirs, themselves.

In the adverts analysed, so far, none had taken a choice of the above forms of persons in the verbal group. However, we notice that <u>it</u>, as an unmarked option, is extensively used as a form of reference to either the advertised product (e.g. a phone).

N: It is durable and ergonomic. (StN, 15/2/03)

Or a service rendered:

K: . . . Yes! Privilege. It's not exclusive. It is the way business is tabled

in the global village .(DN, 19/5/03).

Or just a concept:

K: It's like having your own personal secretary.(DN, 27/6/03).

The fact that few choices are made within the third person option, there are chances that the advertisers are (consciously or unconsciously) aware of the possibilities offered by the 1st person and 2nd person in terms of assigning writer-reader roles. It is also important to notice that the third person reference excludes the speakers, writers and addressee(s). The third person therefore refers to 'third parties' not directly involved in the action. However, adverts are out to create the interpersonal relationship between the advertiser and the reader as pointed above, and it would seem there is little use for the third person here as it is associated with detachment. The third person often comes with an objective reporting style (it, he, she) and a passive voice as in the following example:

K: It is the way business is tabled in the global village.

The above statement is presented in an objective, fact-like manner, which calls for a reader's acceptance of the inherent truth in the advert.

3.2   ATTITUDE

This part looks at the attitudinal modifiers and intensifiers as they are realized in the

nominal group and how they influence the advertiser-consumer roles. Halliday in de Joia &Stenton(1980:39) has pointed out that:

> In addition to the well-described speech functions, statement, question and answer, command and exclamation, the interpersonal component includes such options as those of 'speaker's comment', on the probabilities, the degree of relevance, etc of the message, and of speaker's attitude (for example confirmation, reservation, contradiction). These options provide a means for the expression of the linguistic roles that can be occupied by the speaker in a communication situation.

Elsewhere, Halliday in de Joia &Stenton (1980:40) has argued that the interpersonal function is quite different from the expression of content:

> Here the speaker is using language as a means of his intrusions into the speech event: the expression of his comments, his attitudes and evaluations, and also the relationship that he sets up between himself and the listener.

Attitude, as Halliday indicates is part of the interpersonal component which is concerned with the social expressive and contrastive functions of language, with expressing the speakers 'angle': his attitudes and judgments, his encoding of the role relationships in the situation, and his motive in saying anything at all.

Attitude is better captured by use of intensifiers and modifiers at the rank of nominal group. Used this way, intensifiers and modifiers try to emphasize some features or qualities of objects in sentences. The nature of adverts require that the advertisers

promote/ talk good of their products and services while intensifiers and modifier are used to fulfill this task.

Whether the adverts have used intensifiers or modifier to realize attitude will largely depend on both the denotative and connotative meanings realized by them. Turner (1973:27-8) points out that one important approach to the study of style is based on analysis of meaning into its 'denotative' and 'connotative' elements. And that this is to analyse meaning into a stylistically neutral 'cognitive meaning' and an 'expressive or affective element which is the concern of stylistics'. He adds that 'inevitably the connotations of language prove on closer analysis to be understood from the particular nature of the situations or contexts in which the language is used, or else such context are inferred from the language'.

The relevance of the above to this study is to make us aware that attitude may be better expressed through the connotative meaning on an analysis that tries to understand the circumstances/situations and contexts surrounding the choice of attitudinal elements.

After close analysis we realize that attitudinal intensifiers and modifiers have been used to realize the following intensions in the adverts:

    i) To inform the reader

    ii) To remind the reader

    iii) To persuade and convince the reader to act in a particular way.

The above interactions do either target:

    i) The advertisers themselves (i.e. their products and services).

ii) The consumers (highlighting their ability to opt for the products and services on offer).

iii) The competitor (undermining the competitor's influence in the market).

The 'informative' intensifiers are presented in adverts as clear, honest-sounding and straightforward facts. Consider the following lines appearing in the press adverts:

- Kenya's fastest growing company.

- Most used network.

- Lowest tariffs.

- The fastest connection.

- Widest coverage etc.

All the above lines have made choices from the comparatives and at most choosing the superlatives. There are also other informative intensifiers that are deemed matchless:

- Perfect clarity.

- Excellent quality.

- Unique personal 'look' options etc.

We note that in advertisements different companies do claim to offer the best services separately. It then appears that in advertisements the winning team is the one that can inform better than the rest.

This is where mistrust by the readers, come about. The reader as an interpreter of the adverts is in most cases aware of these distortions of facts. Alexander (1969:18) comments that salesmanship is sometimes regarded as a sufficient justification for

creating misinformation, which he calls intentional deceptions or lying.

The use of comparatives mirrors the competitiveness prevalent in the market, wherever used the comparatives are not only serving the purpose of undermining the competing company but also do elevate the stature of the advertising company. This is true even to the slogans used: e.g. the better option [meaning the others are inferior]. Yes! Clearly the best [It is unequaled]. The slogans, due to their repetitive nature, do play a major role in attempting to "sell" their companies to the consumers. When it happens that the intensifiers are playing the role of "informer" then we could say that the reader is a recipient of that information.

The next group of intensifiers is the one that we classify as emotive. These are adverts whose intent is to arouse feelings in a reader by convincing him/her about some perceived qualities in a product/service. According to Alexander (1969:19):

> Meanings . . . attach not only concepts but also to feelings . . . whole range of emotive experiences, from simple feelings through moods and attitudes to strong emotions, should be included when thinking about emotive meaning. The attitudes and emotions we feel toward particular objects or other human individuals certainly constitute an important aspect, . . . of what an object or individual means to us.

Taken this way, we view advertisers as users of language who exploit the sense of feelings to market their goods. This is a case where the advertiser recognizes the

vulnerability of individuals to their own feelings. Many adverts in this way are out to capture the human imagination, which could alter materials in many ways, often quite fantastic.

The following nominal groups show how modifiers are used to shape the feelings towards the products and services. The products (e.g. mobile phones) on offer have been described as:

... unique personal 'look' options

Covers that suit your mood

Heightened gaming fun

Small, sexy, irresistible

Common look and feel.

Some adverts describe the service providers:

A personal touch

Personalized customer care

While others describe the reader/receiver

You, our customers

(You deserve) a romantic dinner.

The emotive nominal groups as we have argued are intended to arouse some 'positive' feelings towards the products on offer and also to help in convincing the reader/consumer to buy those services or products. However, one may succeed in communicating an emotion without necessarily arousing it, Alexander (1969:20):

. . . the listener understands quite well, as a concept, the sort of emotion we

are expressing or describing but he may not himself in any way

succumbed to this emotions.

Most adverts are dense with intensifiers and modifiers, a way of bombarding a reader

with successive positive qualities about the company (or products and services) to

convince the reader towards their point of view. The following example represents

such adverts:

K: with the <u>clearest, fastest, most reliable</u> connections, the lowest call

charges across the country, day or night, a choice of tariffs designed to

suit your needs, a wide range of Value Added Services and the <u>widest</u>

coverage in Kenya, it's <u>clear</u> why more people spend more time on Yes!

(<u>DN</u>, 5/11/02).

3.3 COMMENT

In this part we explore how the adverts realize comment and how comment helps in

the expression of the speaker's roles in the speech situation, his personal commitment

and his interaction with others (cf Halliday in de Joia &Stenton (1980:40).

Halliday argues that in addition to the well–described speech functions, statement,

question and answer, command and exclamation,,the interpersonal component

includes such options as those of speaker's comment … (cf Halliday in de Joia

&Stenton 1980:39).

This part looks at classes of comment adjuncts realized in the structure of the predication. Also we limit our scope to the adverbial and prepositional group.

The concept of comment in advertisements can be explained as occasions where the advertiser supplies some extra information to a text. This information could be availed within either the adverbial group of the prepositional group.

3.3.1 Adverbial comment adjuncts

We notice that there are many comment adjuncts that have been realized from the choice of adverbial adjuncts. An adverbial adjunct essentially comments about a verb within a sentence. The stylistic aspect here is that, at times in the adverts a verb is ellipted and the adverbial adjunct tends to comment on a verb that is not present. Some slogans are examples to this effect:

> Safaricom, the better option (Safaricom is the better option).
>
> Kencell, clearly the best. (Kencell is clearly the best).

We notice in the above slogans that the two competing companies are out to offer their 'personal' judgement about themselves by their choices on comparatives (better and best). This is outwardly meant to influence a reader's perception about a particular company, in the context of other competing companies. The repetitive nature of slogans is also important in the sense that persons will tend to associate a slogan (because it is memorable) to a particular company. In the long run, this means that the

reader/hearer will eventually associate the described qualities (which are comments) to the company.

In cases where there is an observable verb that is being qualified by an adverbial adjunct, we notice that the trend is to add positive values to that verb.

K: That means <u>Kenya's clearest, fastest, most reliable mobile phone</u> network now covers the area. (<u>DN</u> 12/2/03).

K: . . . get <u>10 SMS absolutely free</u>. (<u>DN</u> 7/3/03).

N: The new Nokia 2100 phone is <u>small and stylish,</u> and packed <u>with useful features</u>.

The adverbial comment adjunct is also used to make the processes associated with a verb appear simple to a reader:

N: Take it along and you'll always be in good company.

This is a form of persuasion where the company has taken the role of advising or urging the reader to buy a particular phone to enjoy possession.

3.3.2 Prepositional comment adjuncts

This type of comment adjunct is also extensively used in the adverts.

Prepositional adjuncts can give more information about an object (e.g. a phone service) tending to lead the readers to a specific choice:

S: Access <u>to the most comprehensive</u> phone listing in Kenya (<u>EAS,</u>

4/8/03).

S: Get connected <u>to Safaricom</u> for only 99/- (<u>DN</u>, 1/5/03).

K: Don't just Talk about getting connected <u>to the network that works</u>.

        Do so with this tiny offer (<u>EAS</u>, 9/8/03).

In other cases we notice the use of such comments within an interrogative. This choice

essentially gives no room for readers to decide on the right answer because the answer

is either implied or given within those comments:

K: If you could have this phone <u>on a network that won't let you down</u>,

        wouldn't you wait? Yes! (<u>DN</u>, 23/9/03).

In the above case, the advertiser has taken both the roles of 'interrogator' and

'respondent'.

The advertiser can opt to use such comments to draw attention to the reader or the

product while amplifying peculiar qualities:

N: Communicate <u>in your own unique</u> way with Nokia 3310 cellular phone.

        It comes <u>with an impressive number of chart and messaging</u> features,

        unique personal look options and four challenging games.

                                                                (<u>StN</u>, 25/1/03).

Comment adjuncts have been used to create a sense of urgency while trying to

persuade the readers to make haste 'while stocks last':

K: You're off to a flying start.

        . . . so rush down to a Kencell outlet on the double (<u>DN</u> ,27/3/03).

In terms of role assigning, we notice speakers/advertisers will use comment adjuncts to pass their judgment about their products or services which are aimed at influencing the perception of a reader, using factors like quality, affordability and availability. In most cases we notice that these comments are presented in a tone that suggests that the qualities being described have already been settled upon and are of obvious knowledge.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 WORD RANK (Lexical register)

To analyze lexical register in systemic functional grammar, we do constrain our focus within the rank of word. In this chapter we shall try to answer the following and related questions:

Do we have evidence of words used in the adverts that can guarantee us to talk of a lexical 'register'. Within the interpersonal function, are there typically 'advertising words'? What stylistic forms, if present, have these words taken?

This chapter deals with two areas:

i) The use of expressive words and

ii) Stylistic organization of vocabulary.

4.1 Use of expressive words

In the adverts analysed so far there are words that are outstanding due to their high frequency and which we may associate to the advertising register in general. These are expressive words that are vivid, concrete and which serve to promote the appearance of products or to urge readers to buy those products and services. We have classified those words according to various choices:

i)   Active verbs (rather than passive)

ii)   Emotive words

iii)   New word/forms

iv)   Comparatives

v)   Abbreviations

vi)   Others (a choice of adjectives).

4.1.1   A choice of active verbs

Evidently active verbs have been chosen in the adverts at the expense of passive verbs.

We do observe that these active verbs are used to persuade the reader to undertake

some action (which is buying an advertised product) they also make the advertisement

text to sound immediate as a reader feels being communicated to. The following verbs

that have been repeatedly used in adverts represent this class. They include: enjoy,

save, take, experience, choose, come etc.

4. 1. 2 A choice of emotive words

These are words that are 'emotion laden' and are meant to influence the reader's

feelings about some products. In this case we can talk of words that tend to personify

products (e.g. mobile phones) or associated with beauty. These words include: chic,

sexy, irresistible, slim, elegant etc.

4.1.3 A choice of new word forms

These are words that have come with the emergence of innovations, or words which

have been semantically broadened to fit a particular usage. For instance in the

telecommunications industry, we have the words like: load, re-load, scratch, recharge,

SMS (a verb), credit, network, connect, congested, tariff, the mobile.

Example: Get <u>connected</u> to the <u>network</u> that won't let you down.

4.1.4 A choice of comparatives (*better* and *best*).

This is also reflected in the slogans of some telecommunications Companies 'the better option', and 'clearly the best'.

Other words include:

- Lowest (Lowest tariff charges).

- Finest, fastest (network).

- Most, cheapest (the most affordable way to talk).

4.1.5 A choice of abbreviations

These are words whether used for stylistic effect, or attempting to catch the readers attention, have gone out of the way of recognized orthography – thus breaking some basic rules of sentence/word formation. The following adverts, appear to break written rules, while fulfilling some functions:

K: pls wrt a clue 4 me. (*please write a clue for me*).

K: no u hv 2 w8. (*no, you have to wait*).

K: I cn not w8 any longer. (*I cannot wait any longer*).

K: yes! R U Ready? (*Yes, are you ready*)…(<u>DN</u> 27/2/03).

Some abbreviations are used with the same status of words: the 'word' SMS is technical for Short Message Service. However it is freely used in the adverts to refer to either a message or the process of texting that message.

In other adverts, it is simply MS as in:

> K: Love. Money. Career?
>
>   Yes! MS 247 for Horoscopes (<u>DN</u> 6/6/03).

The other word is ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) appearing in the advert.

> T: Telkom, Kenya's new ISDN is . . .

Such a word could enter into the advertising register for its brevity compared to its constituent words.

4.1.6 Others (choices of adjectives).

There are other words that we can group here which are remarkably available in almost all the adverts across the board of advertisers. Such words include: free, offer, new, brand, attractive, fantastic, irresistible, etc.

These words functions as adjectives wherever used in the adverts. Their persuasive intention is to make readers view those products as attractive and thus encourage consumption.

4.2 Stylistic organization of vocabulary

Here we look at how the lexical items have been arranged in the adverts for stylistic effect. Other than the use of words that have stylistic value to the adverts, we do

realize that the arrangement of words could have an impact to the message and such word organization has been exploited by advertisers.

There are various processes that are undergone in the arrangement of vocabulary. Among the most noticeable, are types that we have classified as follows:

i)   Adjectivization

ii)   Compounded words

iii)   Elliptical comparatives

iv)   Paired words

v)   Others   a) Brand names

b) Local words

4.2.1 Adjectivization

These are groups of words that when used together, realize the function of describing a product or service.

It is a common occurrence in adverts to have 'strings of words' that act as adjectives to nouns. The best examples come from adverts describing features of cell phones. Such describing groups come from a range of nouns, prepositions and adjectives. Consider the following strings:

- 4-greyscale high resolution graphical display

- Integrated hands-free speaker phone.

- Harmony ringer tones with polyphonic sound.

- Brilliant colour display.

Such strings of words do intensify the qualities that are associated to a product. Therefore they play an appealing role to a reader, because readers would feel that they stand to gain from very many features described. Sometimes such forms of description can turn technical, consider:

- 3D menu

- Li-ion battery talk time 3h 20m standby 200h

- WAP/Internet emails

- Data communications via

- R5232/USB Cable (EAS,3/6/03).

The question here is whether such technical terms are of any use to the 'role relationship' between the advertiser and reader. We posit that such terms realize two functions: descriptive and prestige. For a reader who is interested with the various components in a cell phone, this could be useful. But as Clay Muganda (DN 5th July 2002 pg 11) observes: 'What seems to distinguish the different social classes in Kenya is the kind of handset one has - from Alcatel to Motorola to Erickson to Sony to Trium.' Such an advert could essentially be out to appeal to the tastes of a particular social class of people in the society.

4.2.2 Compounded words

Closely associated with adjectivization is a noticeable fusion of two or more words to realize a new meaning. This is a process akin to coinage but where existing words are

used in the word building process to suit new innovations (within the Telecommunications industry). The following compounded words are available in the telecommunications adverts:

- Scratch-cards

- Multimedia, airtime

- Polyphonic ringtones

- Full-screen

- Greyscale

- Network (new sense)

- Voicemail callback.

4.2.3 Elliptical comparatives

These are word forms that 'play' with percentages and figures meant to show how better the advertised product is, but fail short of answering 'from what?' an advert by Posta about money transfers read: 'As good as cash but 100% safer'.

Other examples include:

S: 50% off. Coming soon from Safaricom. (DN, 4/4/03).

S: 50% off between 11p.m. and 6 a.m. (DN ,11//4/03).

K: So, that is up to 17% airtime for you. (DN, 28/1/03).

K: Now you get up to 17% extra talk time on yes. (DN, 29/1/03).

S: Save 30% with Safaricom's per second billing. (DN ,1/5/03).

Here also we could classify adverts that use words as lowest, highest, best, etc.

K: Yes! Offers you the <u>lowest</u> per minute call charges, day or night.

The question could be 'lowest compared to who/what?'

The function of such 'word forms', with arithmetical figures and comparative facts, is to influence the readers by showing that the current product or service is more economical and is of superior quality compared to other similar ones.

4.2.4 Paired words

These are words that for some reasons; whether rhyming or having alliteration, are always found to co-occur in adverts. They have been used with such an intensity that they could pass for advertising phrases:

- Value Added Services

- Special offers!

- Prepaid subscribers

- Prepaid service

- Worldwide web

- Triple treat

- Screen savers

- Top of the range

- State of the art.

4.2.5 Others (brand names, local words etc).

These are other forms that are used as part of lexical items and with time could realize distinct connotations. For instance brand names of products usually come with a

mixture of 'words and numbers':

Motorola: T720, T190, V50,V66i etc.

Alcatel one Touch 311 etc.

Nokia: 3310, 5210 etc.

SAGEM MW 3020 etc.

Other than for identification purposes, we notice that the different brand names are essentially meant to satisfy consumers with diverse tastes and backgrounds. This means that functionally the brand names can be used for classifying readers into social groups with different tastes.

Local words especially Swahili, have found their way into advertisements. One advertiser has extensively used names of places and activities carried there to add local colour to the adverts:

K: Kitui goes sweet on Yes! (implying honey harvested at the region)

<div align="right">(<u>DN</u> ,17/12/02)</div>

K: Lamu opens its doors to Yes!   Lamu is associated with ancient
                                             huge doors and use of Swahili (Hodi
       When yes! Said, 'Hodi' Lamu   is an equivalent of 'may I come in'
                                             'Karibu' is <u>Welcome.</u>
       Said a big 'Karibu'.

In terms of lexical register, we have noted that advertising language becomes innovative as new words come into the scene through the various ways considered in this section. We also notice that technical language associated with innovations is standardized and made available to the readers. Evidently, it would be hard to talk

about, say, the telecommunication industry without incorporating some of the lexical items above.

Other than supplying suitable labels for products, we have noted that advertising register will tend to classify different products depending on the type of market involved. In our case the market is the telecommunication industry.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study had three objectives to fulfill. Firstly, we wanted to explore the interpersonal function of style in a hope that (secondly) we could identify stylistic features that could characterize the advertising language (register) and in the process (finally) assessing the strength of our tool of research (the systemic functional grammar approach). Towards these goals we can at this juncture offer useful insights derived from our observations. We have divided this section into three parts:

i)   The interpersonal function of style

ii)   Systemic functional grammar

iii) Features of advertising language

5.1 The interpersonal function of style

In our analysis of the interpersonal function, we have explored the various levels or systems, which include: mood, (within the clause), person (within the verbal group), attitude (within the nominal group) comment (adverbial and prepositional group). Lexical register (within word). Our model also identifies the system of Tone that is realized within the information unit which is meant to be smaller than word.

It was not possible to study the Tone given that tone in this system is represented by 'intonation systems' that may only be realized in speech. Tone within the spoken form of communication, however, is very basic to the understanding of the messages

conveyed between speaker and hearer. This as we point out is a major area of communication that is isolated when speech is written.

Within the advertising register, we have noted that the interpersonal function of language plays a major role in the relationship that the register tries to influence. Out of our analysis we are able to classify various objectives that the interpersonal systems fulfill.

There are three main functions that are realized by the various interpersonal systems:

i)   To inform.

ii)   To persuade.

iii)   To remind.

5.1.1 Informing

We have noted that within the mood systems, largely the declarative has been used to inform e.g. telling the reader about a new product. The intensifiers in the attitude systems are out to inform a reader by offering interesting qualities of their products and services and sometimes out to change a buyer's perception about the product.

5.1.2 Persuading

The persuasive intention is realized by all the systems analysed. In persuasion the advertiser is out to make the reader perform any of the following roles: persuading the

reader to buy goods urgently, showing the reader why he/she should change to a different company or products, trying to change the perception of a reader about a product, among others.

5.1.3 Reminding

The advertising register shows many instances where the main function was to remind a reader where to buy the products. It also shows that the products will be of value in the future, 'for instance if one bought a Nokia handset he/she will always be <u>in good company</u>'.

5.2 The Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) approach.

Halliday's SFG model applied in this study has proved of great use and has offered insights into the advertising register, and we feel it is possible to use the model to analyse any type of language register. This is possible for the following reasons.

Firstly, the model is comprehensive in outlook as it looks at language from the three metafunctions: the ideational, interpersonal and textual. What we have managed to analyse so far is a part of the system that deals with the interpersonal roles of both the speaker(s) and the addressee(s), or what Halliday refers to as Tenor (Halliday, 1985:12).

A comprehensive analysis of any register will therefore require a study of Field, Tenor, and Mode (equivalents of ideational, interpersonal and textual functions

respectively). The insights reached here we believe will be a step towards that direction.

Secondly, Halliday's SFG has made it possible for us to analyse the whole range of rank, that is, from the clause to the word. This is important because we are able to analyse how all the ranks (Word, Group, Clause) are interrelated in a 'chain system' where information unit contributes to word; word contributes to Group; Group contributes to clause, etc. And because SFG offers such complex systems, we are able to analyse the texts in advertisements which are complex systems in terms of either being single words, phrases or long sentences.

Thirdly, the recognition that meaning is not only derived within a sentence (as structuralist linguists do) but also through the complexities associated with the context of situation, and the relationship between parties (social environment), is important. Thus we were able to derive meaning from word, groups and clause ranks according to how language is used: in this case to advertise goods and services.

Out of this analysis we notice that language (in this case advertising language) is complex since at any given moment, there is a multiplicity of choices available to the advertiser. And the choices made, do distinguish one language register from another. This may explain why advertising language is readily recognizable by consumers.

5.3 Distinguishing stylistic features

As noted above, there is more that needs to be done on the advertising register in Kenya, before stable conclusions are made. However in the course of our study some light has shone towards that direction.

Firstly, the advertising language is highly innovative.

At the word level, there comes to the scene new words that may not be found in conventional dictionaries for example words taken from local contexts.

Secondly, advertising language seems to enjoy some 'poetic licence', where advertisers are at liberty to break conventional rules of grammar and go unpunished (in actual fact they seem to be rewarded in the process). A major advertiser ran the following line words 'no U hv 2 w8', which we interpreted by phonic elements to be 'no you have to wait'. This 'deviant' style poses challenges to a linguistic analysis, for instance, after translating the above into 'proper' language, there is a sense of loss of the original effect: the effect of reaching a reader through a form of 'register' available in mobile phone text messages/SMS.

Thirdly, within the Interpersonal function, the advertising register incorporates both involvement and detachment normally associated to spoken and written corpora respectively. The spoken corpus is primarily an "I"-"You" text; the world as seen by you and me. While written corpus often takes 3rd person and objective reporting styles

(it, he, she and passive voice). The noticeable features here are that advertising register tends to involve the reader (especially by the abundant use of <u>You</u>), trying to establish a personal relationship through a shared world-view between the advertiser and the consumer. However, the language is also keen to carry a communicative distance (or detachment) so that it can appeal to a wider audience.

Fourthly, we have also noted that the advertising language as shown in the newspapers is distinctive through the use of certain expressions e.g. elliptical comparatives, adjectivizations etc.

Ultimately, our study shows and seem to reiterate the fact that language is not a self-contained system, which can be meaningful by itself but there is need to integrate 'utterance and situation'.

This is because as the advertising language has shown and as pointed by Birch & O'Toole (in the introduction) language can be both *formal and informal, structured and unstructured, ordered and chaotic and it can involve artefacts and the people.*

To restate their words 'there is a recognition in linguistics/stylistics that analyses only of the formal features of a text – divorced, as it were, from the messy business of people is insufficient'.

We do hope that this study eventually proves useful and academically stimulating into the Kenyan advertising 'register', offer insights into the application of M.A.K.

Hallidays Systemic Functional Linguistics, and specifically, the realization that the **interpersonal function** of language is an important component to understanding the 'messy business of people' as the advertising language shows.

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