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RESEARCH ARTICLE

From Community Language to Advertising Jargon? Theatrical and Poetic Linguistic Devices in the Marketing Messages of Vendors at Mupedzanhamo Marketplace in Harare, Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

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The economic crisis in Zimbabwe has turned the country into a retail site with the entire Zimbabwean plateaux turning into a vending marketplace. As more people became vulnerable to the vagaries of the unstable economy, they turned to vending as the last resort for survival. To market their wares at Mupedzanhamo Mbare Musika market in Harare, vendors developed Shona indigenous poetic language when advertising to lure customers. This study is informed by Swift and Levine's (1987) theory of empowerment. The research presents an inductive qualitative exploration of advertising linguistic styles that vendors have adopted to have an edge on their competitors thereby maximize sales and service delivery. The article is based on a multiple case study of twenty-five purposively selected excerpts and interviews with five key informants who employed and performed theatrical and poetic linguistic marketing styles for survival in the market space saturated with competitors. The article concludes that vendors deliberately employed indigenous language Shona theatrical and poetic linguistic marketing styles that are musical to attract potential buyers.

INTRODUCTION

This study employed the broad and interdisciplinary critical content and discourse analysis of advertising messages to examine its implication on Shona language empowerment. Discourse analysis can be defined as the study of language in use or 'the linguistic, cognitive and social processes whereby meanings are expressed, and intentions interpreted in human interactions' (Davies & Elder, 2008). This research attempts to make sense of contextual factors of content and discourse of utterances. When we speak or write, we always take particular perspective of what the world is like (Paltridge, 2006). Discourse analysis therefore considers people's perspectives of what is normal and not, what is acceptable and not including what is right and not. Spoken and written language is actively used to create or build the world's activities. The article argues that, although it is claimed that Zimbabwean indigenous languages are digitally dead, the Shona language still provides a lifeline for informal trading vendors at Mupedzanhamo. It is on this basis that the researchers sought to analyse the poetic linguistic marketing devices used by vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketing grounds in Mbare, Harare.

Objectives of the study

The overarching objective for this research was to explore the poetic linguistic devices used by vendors at Mupedzanhamo grounds in Mbare using content and discourse analysis. The study therefore explored:

- 1. Theatrical and poetic linguistic devices vendors used at Mupedzanhamo, Mbare Market space;
- 2. The implications of theatrical and poetic linguistic marketing devices in context of *Ubuntu* and Swift and Levine's 1987 theory of empowerment, and;

3. The possibility of designing a model of indigenous language advertising at Mupedzanhamo in Mbare Musika marketing space.

The research objectives provide an appropriate guide to the study of poetic linguistic devices that vendors employed at Mupedzanhamo, their intentions, and the possibility of coming up with a model based on the advertising messages and in the context of *Unhu* and empowerment theory.

Statement of the Problem

The economic situation in Zimbabwe is persistently in a meltdown. People are encompassing various methods for survival, which includes the use of the once neglected Shona indigenous language that had been restricted to the community and home spaces. The Mupedzanhamo Mbare Musika market is a hive of business activities in Harare. It is a very popular marketplace with people from communities within and beyond Harare flocking there to buy what they perceive to be cheaper goods and services. Nyoni and Nyoni (2022) explored how the form, content and discourse of vendors' adverts in public places bring out art embedded in their verbal acts. This article sought to propose a useful synergy between marketing studies and linguistics in which participants have a unique and fresh approach to marketing. What is more interesting is that it focused on participants who are very rarely focused on in marketing studies, that is, vendors at Mupedzanhamo in Mbare. Mupedzanhamo is a market for the 'poor' and the general populace who form the majority of the Zimbabwean population. The uniqueness and the value such a study probably makes is an immense contribution to knowledge about the marketing tactics that ordinary 'unschooled' vendors use to lure buyers who comprise the majority of the population of Zimbabwe. While the field of advertising is widely studied, its uniqueness comes in its use by the vending unschooled participants who are not trained in the field of marketing. Furthermore, it is being packaged in a Zimbabwean indigenous language, Shona, which had been relegated to a subject and home language rather than language of business, education and intellectualisation. The article is hypothesising that the use of Shona theatrical poetic linguistic devices is an innovative advertising strategy employed by vendors at Mupedzanhamo to lure customers in a tightly contesting marketing space. Shirinboyevna (2020) noted that advertising phenomenon has been explored by experts such as linguists, psychologists, economists and others, who all come from various fields of study. The scholar found out that, while linguists analyse the language of advertising regarding phonetic, lexical, syntactic and morphological stylistics, the psychologists consider methods of language management and their impact on consumers. It was concluded that, in order to sell a product, it is necessary to come up with unusual sentences that can attract the consumer's attention. There is therefore a need to use rich, figurative and graphical linguistic styles as to form mental images that are memorable. It was also discovered that speaking the language of the recipient is one of the major prerequisites of successful sales talk. As noted by Mihaela and George (2020), the aim of advertising is to be catchy and easily remembered wherein advertisers use language quite distinctively like making bizarre and controversial statements. Attentive value announcements attract and arouse curiosity through breaking grammatical and spelling rules, rhymes, rhythm, semantic derivatives and putting language in unorthodox contexts (Mihaela & George, 2020). Similarly, Ngulube and Elezie (2023) investigated the kinds of language and styles mostly used in English advertisements and noted they are skewed towards the literary approach to stylistics. The style involves manipulation and variation of all the aspects of language available to speakers at a particular time to express themselves as optimally as possible. Hence, this need to content and discourse analyse the theatrical and poetic linguistic devices that vendors use as well as its implications in the context of *Ubuntu* principles and Swift and Levine's (1987) theory of empowerment with a view to design a contextual indigenous language advertising model that is germane to a Zimbabwean business market.

Justification for the research

It is important to outline the potential beneficiaries of the results of this article and how they stand to benefit from it. The use of language that is not directly related to the context has been dominant in various domains. This article attempts to look at a contextual language, Shona, which used by vendors, and then analyse its structural or dynamic properties that seem to be relevant in a social perspective. Language systems are contextually based as reflected by the different domains where they are used. It is on this basis that the researchers sought to analyse the language of vendors in relation to context and relativity in the business domain in the context of *Ubuntu* and Swift and

Levine's (1987) theory of empowerment. The article recognises that there is meaning conveyed beyond the uttered words, phrases, sentences or passages. The participants who are vendors, fire persons (those that are hired to advertise merchandise in Mupedzanhamo informal marketing spaces), would-be clients, clients and the Harare shop owners in general would gain insights from this study. The vendors at Mupedzanhamo Mbare Musika, the oldest marketing space in Harare, have continued to lure multitudes of clients and potential clients despite claims that some are duped through misinformation when buying there. The resilience of the market space and its pulling effect has resulted in some to claiming that these allegations of misinformation are just speculations, especially from Harare business people who want to tarnish the image of the informal business sector that is giving them facing stiff competition.

Contextualising the research

Advertising is adopted from the Latin word 'advertere' which means to direct one's attention to (El-Dali, 2019). This may imply that any form of public announcement intended to direct people's attention to the availability, qualities and or cost of specific goods or services may be some form of advertising. This is in line with El-Dali (2019) who argues that consumer advertising is directed towards the promotion of a certain product or service to the public. Furthermore, El-Dali (2019) opines that advertising is diverse and is undertaken differently by entities or individuals for different reasons.

In addition, Oldham (2017) examined the language used by street produce vendors who trade in fruits and vegetables. The researcher observed the language diversity and opined that 'these experiences provide unique perceptive on language in their local context including their national and regional context'. The present research differs from Oldman's research in that it used the participant observation method to collect data. The data was collected from purposively key vendors and fire person informant participants while *in situ* at Mupedzanhamo Mbare Musika market space. There was notable code-mixing in which the participants used both Shona and English in their advertising messages. The researchers identified that the vendors were deploying all linguistic resources at their disposal in an effort to lure clients to buy their goods and services in the saturated market space.

Bacalu (2013) explored the ways subtle aspects of word meaning can affect the mental representations of social events and the relationship between vendors and their would-be clients. The researcher also looked at the relationship between grammar and cognition, and the importance of language for the maintenance of social identity. The findings of the study have implications for the social nature of the situations in which language is used, language understanding as social cognition, and the principles and mechanisms of language use. In the research, a description is made of 'the development of social reasoning, the relationship between language use and cognition, the role of language variations in attitude change, and language as a set of complexes, organised systems that operate in concert'. This study further looked at the relationship between language use and group membership, and the central role of representations in communication. This research however is interested in how vendors relate language to the context of buying and selling and how the use of language benefits them in their day-to-day business. The research recognises the impact of language use on cognition and how the vendors use language to maintain group relations.

In a related study, Mkinda-Nyasulu (2013) also looked at the various functions of language. The researcher mentioned that language is used to communicate information, to inform others, ask them to do certain things, express feelings, moods experiences and many more. The researcher states that languages have a great relationship with society. In this case, social structure is considered to either influence or determine linguistic structure. In speaking, choice of words and rules for conversing are determined by social requirements. The research brings out that language constitutes both linguistic and communicative competences where psychological principles and sociological considerations constitute one's competence as a speaker in a given situation. In this case, language is enriched by these principles that are mastered by speakers. This article also identifies the various functions of language, but is mostly concerned with how language is used to communicate information, to ask people to do certain things, and further reviews how the speaker's choice of words is determined by social requirements; in this case, luring potential clients at Mupedzanhamo marketplace.

In their language-specific episodic trace of language emotionality theory, Puntoni et al. (2009) contend that the language in which marketing messages are communicated influences their (the marketing messages) emotional intensity (this is the element that lures and, or, determines the impact of marketing messages on the consumers). The theory identifies two contributory factors to emotional intensity of marketing messages. First, emotional intensity increases when the marketing messages are conveyed in the consumer's native language than in a second language. The study also validates the current research in that vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace do not use English, but Shona instead. Second, and what is more relevant to the current study, is that emotional intensity increases because of the frequency with which words are experienced as marketing messages are conveyed. In their study, Puntoni et al. focused on how frequency is achieved through the use of the consumers' native language. The current study marks a point of departure from Puntoni et al.'s study in that, through an analysis of the marketing messages conveyed by the vendors at Mupedzanhamo, it argues that, the high frequency with which words are experienced can be achieved through theatrical poetic language devices. Theatre thrives on visual symbolism which on its own increase's emotional intensity. Poetry thrives on repetition of vowel sounds (assonance), consonant sounds (alliteration), parallelism and linking (initial, cross and final linking). In the current study's analysis of the messages of the vendors, it was established that there were poetic devices that repeated certain words and sounds which increased frequency and; therefore, emotional intensity of advertising messages. The study identified a further contributory factor to emotional intensity, that is, the use of possessives. These three factors contributed to, and indeed comprised our own marketing theory and strategy, which we can patent or claim as our own intellectual property.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

According to Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), empowerment is a construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviours to social policy and social change (Rappaport, 1981, 1984). Empowerment theory, research, and intervention link individual well-being with the larger social and political environment. Theoretically, the construct connects mental health to mutual help and the struggle to create a responsive community. It compels us to think in terms of wellness versus illness, competence versus deficits, and strength versus weaknesses. Similarly, empowerment research focuses on identifying capabilities instead of cataloguing risk factors and exploring environmental influences of social problems instead of blaming victims. Empowerment-oriented interventions enhance wellness while they also aim to ameliorate problems, provide opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and skills, and engage professionals as collaborators instead of authoritative experts. The article is informed by empowerment theory that helps vendors in developing the skills needed in advertising their merchandise. It engages vendors into participating in empowering advertising styles that lure customers in a tightly contested Mupedzanhamo marketing space.

Empowerment theory provides a unique conceptual framework for developing support systems to enhance positive development of vendors because it incorporates the notion that advertising requires them to develop specific skills and positive linguistic assets, but also that they become motivated to actively apply these skills and knowledge to become agents of positive change for themselves and their communities (Zimmerman, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000). Thus, support systems based on empowerment theory focus on building positive assets, connecting vendors with local community linguistic resources.

Ecological theory complements empowerment theory in that it focuses attention on the social contexts in which vendors feel that they are still businesspersons who participate and contribute to national economic development. The interactions between the contexts and the roles they can play within these community contexts influence the way vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace tailor their advertising messages. An intervention approach informed by these two theories enhances positive development of vendors by engaging them in relevant ecological settings where they can learn native language advertising skills, practice those skills, establish the social resources to effectively navigate advertising contexts Mupedzanhamo marketplace in which they find themselves. This would assist them to develop into healthy and worthy citizens.

In addition, the ecological theory sought to empower individuals and communities to gain personal, interpersonal and economic power to better their lives. This work also strives to challenge systems

that hinder the vendors from meeting their needs. If not empowered these vendors may feel helpless in their lives for several reasons, but empowerment theory focuses on how oppression contributes to this experience. It focuses on helping marginalised people at individual, group and community levels so that they gain personal, interpersonal and political power to improve their lives. The theory argues that empowered individuals have the characteristics of high self-esteem, self-efficacy, control over their life and increased socio-political and civic access (Zimmerman, 2000). This view is informed by self-determination, autonomy, and collaboration. By focusing on competence rather than deficits in individual or social functioning, the empowerment model supports resourcefulness and the development of skills to remove social barriers for individual or social functioning, the empowerment model supports resourcefulness and the development of skills to remove social barriers for individuals and communities and communities.

There are several key principles of the empowerment theory, namely being respectful and non-judgmental, building a relationship where the person feels comfortable to discuss their feelings and what they want, focusing on strengths and abilities, supporting and encouraging involvement in decision making and respecting the decisions a person makes about their own life. The empowerment theory and ecological theory were therefore especially handy in accounting for the impacts of linguistic usage by vendors in the matrix of culture, language and advertising messages.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is an inductive qualitative one based on the case study of twenty-five advertising excerpts purposively selected for critical content and discourse analysis of theatrical and poetic linguistic devices that Mupedzanhamo vendors use, account for their implication in the context of *Unhu* and empowerment theory. The data collection was done at Mupedzanhamo marketplace in Mbare Musika in Harare where various items are sold. It is a marketplace where various vendors meet to sell their items. The purpose was to explore theatrical and poetic linguistic devices invented and performed by vendors at Mupedzanhamo Mbare Musika, the intention of vendors, the psyching effect that the marketing style messages have to potential clients and implications in the context of *Ubuntu* and empowerment theory. The data was collected through observations and recording. The data was collected randomly as vendors were selling. The participant field research method helps to have a detailed scope of utterances as they were collected whilst participating in the process. The data was then analysed using critical content and discourse analysis. The researchers then reported the results in ways useful to social science and not harmful to those observed.

Qualitative approach

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), qualitative research is concerned with understanding the processes and social cultural contexts that underlie various behavioural patterns and is mainly concerned with explaining the why question. This is in line with the question: Why do vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace use theatrical poetic linguistic devices in their advertising messages? Morgan and Sklar (2021) posit that the qualitative paradigm is concerned with interpretations and meanings hence the interpretations of Mupedzanhamo market vendors' messages and analysis of their meanings. This study was interested in how people interpret their experiences, and how they construct their marketing world. In this case, it concentrated on rich or deep description of indigenous language of marketing phenomenon at Mupedzanhamo marketplace. The responses were obtained through interacting with the participants in their natural setting (in situ) while vending and focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The emphasis was on quality and in-depth understanding of vending advertising messages and its implications in the context of unhu/ubuntu and the empowerment theory. This was in sync with the study purpose that was concerned with the uniqueness of each situation that explored Mupedzanhamo marketing messages, theatrical poetic linguistic devices and purposes. The approach helped in understanding the Shona indigenous language-based advertising phenomenon within its naturalistic context in Mupedzanhamo marketing space as seen through the eyes of vendors and potential buyers who were participants in this study. This is in sync with Nieuwenhuis (2007) who argues that human experience can only be understood from the viewpoint of people since reality is a socially constructed phenomenon and multiple realities exist. The qualitative paradigm takes a postmodernist position that there is no fixed truth, but multiple realities that can be constructed by different people, which is also known as relativist and constructivist in nature (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Case study design

The delimitation of the article maps geographical, conceptual and historical boundaries. Geographically, the study is limited to vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketing space in Zimbabwe and; in particular, the twenty-five advertising excerpts elicited from the purposively sampled participants. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), we cannot study everyone doing everything everywhere and; thus, in this study we purposively sampled a reasonable sample of twenty-five advertising experts on the purpose of the psyching effect they may have on potential buyers and implications in the context of *ubuntu* and the empowerment theory. Nieuwenhuis (2007) explains that a case study phenomenon, as a bounded system, is a unit of analysis that strives towards a comprehensive and the holistic understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation. The focus of this study was on how participants made meaning of a phenomenon, that is, theatrical poetic advertising devices, in a bid to answer the research questions in this study. In this case, a multiple case study of twenty-five vendors' advertising messages offered a multi-perspectival analysis in which the researchers considered not just the voice perspective of one or two participants in a context, but also the views of other relevant vendors. The 25 vending messages gave insights and understanding of the dynamics of a theatrical, poetic and possessive indigenous language phenomenon.

Sample and sampling procedures

The study considered a small sample of 25 data rich key participants whose advertising excerpts were sampled to enable an in-depth description of indigenous language of advertising phenomenon at Mupedzanhamo marketplace. The sample for this research was intentional and purposive and a reasonable size for starting point in designing an indigenous language advertising model. The sample included only fire persons who designed and used theatrical, poetic and possessive linguistic styles in advertising their merchandise.

Data collection

The advertising excerpts were both audio and video recorded while the vendors were on the job. The study used qualitative data sets and offered interpretation that was based on thick descriptions (Creswell, 2009) of the experiences of vending participants while *in situ* at Mupedzanhamo marketing space. The recorded audio advertising messages were then transcribed according to the questions and responses using a Microsoft Office Word document on a laptop. The data was opened and axial coded into sub-themes, themes and global themes of theatrical, poetic and possessive linguistic devices and woven into a coherent story for reporting on the linguistic marketing styles.

The interview guide was selected as a complementary data collection tool for data collection in seeking further clarification on why participants used certain devices. Nieuwenhuis (2007) says the aim of a qualitative interview is to see the world through the eyes of the participants. This concurs with the purpose of the study, which was to have a two-way conversation with participants in learning about the study phenomenon. It was handy in collecting the participants' ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviour in response to the question: 'Why were they using idioms and graphical demonstrations?' The empirical data from the interviews was complemented by review of related literature from other communities and other languages.

Data analysis: Grounded theory

The study utilised grounded theory as an analysis method and coding system. Grounded theory is inductive in that it starts with data and generates theory from the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In grounded theory anything from interviews, observations, field notes and documents are data (Charmaz, 2008). In this grounded theory study, researchers used coding, constant comparison, memo writing and theoretical sampling to develop an Indigenous language advertising model based on the excerpts of advertising messages the vendors employed at Mupedzanhamo marketing spaces. Grounded theory was therefore handy in this study as it allowed themes to emerge from excerpts of language advertising data, hence moving from data into theorising and from particular to general in exploring the theatrical, poetic and possessive advertising linguistic styles. The narrations from key

informants were central in building a reportable story on how and why vendors utilised theatrical, poetic and possessive linguistic devices at Mupedzanhamo marketing space.

Methods of Data Analysis

The researchers used the critical content and discourse analysis (CDA) to analyse the data. Discourse analysis is defined as the analysis of language beyond the word, sentence or utterance. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) "brings the critical tradition of social analysis into language studies and contributes to critical social analysis with a particular focus on discourse and on the relationship between discourse and other social elements (power relations, ideologies, institutions and social identities)" (Fairclough, 2012). Critical social analysis can be understood as normative and explanatory critique. As a normative critique, it describes existing realities and evaluates them. It also "assesses the extent to which they match up to various values" (ibid), which are considered to be essential in society. On this basis, the researchers utilised discourse analysis to elucidate the discourse used by vendors Mupedzanhamo marketplace in Mbare.

Language use in society indicates the society's norms, values, and structure (Giles & Coupland, 1991). Language conveys social information through direct speech and, subtly, through indirect speech. Information may be communicated by the use of correct grammar and exact choice of words. Language also helps to determine the nature of individuals, their social perceptions as well as their interpersonal and intergroup relations. Linguistics studies gained much research and attention from social psychology, particularly in intergroup relations (Barker et al., 2001). This study analysed the language used by vendors as a social group, looking at how language conveys social information through the use of direct or indirect language. Language may convey social information both overtly and covertly through direct speech and subtly through inflection (Cylke, 2003). This maybe indicated by grammar and language choice. Speakers in the vending context consider this to achieve different goals. One may need to draw attention to the consumers at the same time making them come and buy their items. These goals are achieved by using various theatrical and poetic linguistic devices as indicated in the subsections below.

Data Presentation, Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion

Data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion are intertwined and intricately related. While data presentation is given as the first step in this article, it is inseparable from analysis and interpretation as already stated and evidenced when the researchers transcribed the excerpts from Shona into English. Literary translation style is used to avoid word for word or literal translation. The justification is that the researchers sought to come up with meaning of language of advertising by vendors beyond the word level. The data collected is given below. The voice recordings were transcribed into text and English language translation equivalence are given since the article is in English.

Presentation of Data

This section of the article shows the data as it was collected in Mupedzanhamo marketplace in Mbare. It also gives a translated version of the transcribed utterances by the vendors. The excerpts were picked from the vendors while doing their work in the market space. The whole place was noisy as the fire persons shouted at the height of their voices in musical ways. The excerpts presented below are musical and poetic; and vendors shouted these words routinely from morning till dawn:

- i) Huya uhodhe! Madhirezi! Madhirezi! (Come and order! Dresses! Dresses!)
- ii) *Zvinopfuhwira! Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi!* (They are attractive! Underwear! Underwear! Underwear!)
- (iii) *Ndivo vadiniwo vana? Vatengereiwo! Vatengereiwo!* (What have the children done? Buy for them! Buy for them!)
- (iv) Dzimwe muchiba! Dzimwe muchibhadhara! (You steal some! Pay for others!)
- (v) *Mukati bate mombobhadhara! Mukati bate mombobhadhara!* (Screen and pay!)
- (vi) *Dzevana ndadzidhingura! Dzevana ndadzidhingura!* (These are children's! Reduced prices! These are children's! Reduced prices!)
- (vii) Richangovhurwa nedollar chete! (Have just been opened for a dollar!)
- (viii) Bhachi renyu nedollar chete! (Get a jacket for a dollar only!)

- (viv) Nditengereiwo ndiri nherera! Handina mukadzi! (May you buy my stuff I am an orphan! I am not married!) Nditengereiwo ndiri nherera! Handina murume! (May you buy my stuff I am an orphan! I am not married!)
- (x) Skirt *ne*dollar *chete!* (A skirt for a dollar only!)
- (xi) T-shirt *yenyu mubhero!* (Your T-shirt in the bale!)
- (xii) Blouse *renyu mubhero* (Your blouse in the bale)
- (xiii) Dollar dollar *chete mabhurauzi*! (Blouses for only a dollar each!)
- (xiv) *Ma*paperbag *enyu aya vabereki*! *Ma*paperbag *enyu auya!* (Your paper bags are here, parents! Your paper bags are here!)
- (xv) *Mahewu ne*twenty-five cents *chete chete!* (*Mahewu* just for twenty-five cents only!)
- (xii) Huyai mutenge ndaakuda kuenda! (Come and buy, I am about to leave!)
- (xvi) Bhero renyu rauya vabereki! Bhero riya ramanga makamirira! (Your bale has come parents! The one that you were waiting for!
- (xvii) *Hadzisi dzemuno idzi! Ndedze*America (These are not local clothes! They are American clothes)
- (xviii) *Huyai pane vamwe apa!* (Come where there are others here!)
- (xviv) *Ndadhingura apaka! Apa! Pega! Pega!* (I have reduced the price here! Just here! Only! Only!)
- (xx) *Ndadhingurira svoto!* (I deliberately reduced price to fix others!)
- (xxi) *Ndedzekuchechi idzi!* (This is church attire!)
- (xxii) *Ngedzenyu dzekumasowe idzi!* (These are your attire for apostolic shrine!)
- (xxiii) *Ngedzekubhazi idzi!* (These are specifically for a special journey!)
- (xxiv) *Dzevana idzi!* (These are children's)
- (xxv) Sahwi iwe uya pano! Uya uzvionere! Usaite zizwawakazwa! (My friend come over here! Come and witness yourself! Do not rely on hearsay!)

In the excerpts above, the vendors are using different theatrical and poetic linguistic styles as indicated in the subsections below:

Invitatory verbs as poetic linguistic styles

The invitatory verb, 'Huya...! (Come...) Huyai...! (Come...), in its triple singular, plural and honorific respectful forms is heard in the market as indicated in the excerpts in the data presented. The verb indicates that the would-be clients are called by the vendors to buy from their lots. The marketing is so aggressive that the researchers observed some would-be clients pulled and indirectly coerced to buy the merchandise that were being advertised. Some vendors were parading the items and imitating wearing the items or using them mimicking combing hair, using mirrors to do make up and even putting on body lotions. Some would-be clients were handled by hand and led to the vendors' lots. All this was done in the name of advertising and assisting clients. The mood of the verb evoked the effect of coercing the would-be clients. To complement the use of verbs, the vendors would sometimes pull the clients to make them buy from their lots. The finding resonates with foster (2001) who noted that, apart from linguistic features, there are additional graphic gesture modelling styles to conquer and attract, generate desire and arouse action from potential customers.

Short sentences, repetitions of nouns and idioms as poetic linguistic styles

The participants' perception of social life in terms of what they thought and believed reflected the form and contents of the speakers' acts. Similarly, the triangulation of shortness of sentences, repetition of nouns and idioms and initial and final linking devices in the following excerpts created musical advertisement. The linguistic styles were tailored by vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace in such a way that they entertained the would-be buyers. The combination is amusing as to attract would-be clients as implied in:

Huya uhodhe! Madhirezi! Madhirezi! (Come and order! Dresses! Dresses!)

Zvinopfuhwira! Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi! (They are attractive! Underwear! Underwear!)

Ndivo vadiniwo vana? Vatengereiwo! Vatengereiwo! (What have the children done? Buy for them! Buy for them!)

In each of the excerpts, the initial statement is stating a problem as indicated in, *Huya uhodhe!* (Come and order!) and *Zvinopfuhwira!* (They are attractive!) while repeatedly the solution is given through the advertising message in, *Madhirezi! Madhirezi! Madhirezi!* (Dresses! Dresses! Dresses!) and *Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi! Zvivharangozi!* (Underwear! Underwear! Underwear!), respectively. The repetitiveness and emotional intensity increase with the frequency at which the utterances are made. Both, the shortness of the sentences (one-, two- or three-word sentences) and their repetitiveness helps the message to be easily remembered. It also brings amusing rhyme and rhythm that are less likely to be resisted by would-be clients. The linkages (initial linking where one-word sentence is repeated begin with same noun prefix) and (final linking, where there is the same noun stem in all three instances) complements the rhyme and rhythm which enhances the musical effect of the advertising messaging by vendors. The diction is not coincidental, but intentional as to appeal to the would-be buyers' imagination. The linguistic styles are in line with Jafari and Mahodi's (2014) observation that the sentences or phrases are sort of slogan or tagline in Foster's (2001) words.

The nouns and idioms in some cases enabled naming of the products as indicated in 'Madhirezi', 'Zvivharangozi', 'Bhachi', 'T-shirt', 'Mapaperbag' and 'Skirt'. The naming was not coincidental but intentionally meant to attract clients and tell them about the items on the market that they may be looking for. In addition, the idiomatic expressions, 'Zvinopfuhwira' and 'Zvivharangozi' are tailored in line with Shona culture that undergarments are not called by their names in public. In short, vendors describe the product, outline its purpose and give its perceived effect, which is meant to inspire the customer to want to purchase the product. Also, the view was confirmed by one interviewee that there were many vendors with similar products which made them to employ a more aggressive approach. Upon asked on why the vendor used idioms, one participant said it was in line with *ubuntu* As "Undergarments are not called by the actual names. We are *vanhu!*" This implies that these vendors are bound by values and principles of *ubuntu*. This view by the vendor interviewee confirms what Jafari and Mahodi (2014) proffer as notable in the gigantic and enormous sea of advertising and the sellers' attempt to seize consumer's attention as they need to be conscious of the language they use which should be interesting enough to draw passive observers' attention. Vendors, as a community of speakers, tend to use language that refers to their cultural experiences and beliefs. The vendors may simply say, 'huyai pane vamwe apa' (come where others are) when calling customers to come and see a kind of clothing that they feel cannot be called by its real name appear to the style of the day. Vendors used euphemistic words to refer to clothes like bras and pants which they feel were more acceptable in their society. Ruscher et al. (1996) found out that impression task forms shared impressions to the target person by focusing on stereotype-consistent information. Referential communication on the other hand, has shown that conversationalists who have different levels of knowledge on conversation topic (Isaacs & Clark, 1987) have learned to use different expressions to refer to a stimulus (Wilkes-Gibbs & Kim, 1991). This have collaborated to bring out a common way of referring to the referents. In some cases, there is evidence that their subsequent memory of a referent may be distorted in a direction that is consistent with the established common expressions (Wilkes-Gibbs & Kim, 1991). Bruner (1990) also observed that the state in which discourse is ambiguous or polysemous makes it possible to bring meanings into the public domain and negotiate them.

Contrasts and ideophones to warn would-be offenders through jokes

The vendors' advertising messages at Mupedzanhamo marketplace were loaded with contrasts, ideophones and jokes that serve as poetic marketing devices as captured in the following excerpts:

Dzimwe muchiba! Dzimwe muchibhadhara! (You steal some! Pay for others!)

Mukati bate bate mombobhadhara! Mukati bate bate mombobhadhara! (Screen and pay! Screen and pay!)

Dzevana ndadzidhingura! Dzevana ndadzidhingura! (These are children's! Reduced prices! These are children's! Reduced prices!)

Diction in the above excerpts is well selected and organised for a reason to lure would-be clients. There is a jigsaw and contrast in the use of language. The jigsaw and contrasting device is captured in 'Dzimwe muchiba! (You steal some!) Dzimwe muchibhadhara!' (You pay for others!). The two opposites verbs steal and buy are set one after the other. Similarly, the enumerative qualifier

'Dzimwe' (some) which is serving as initial linking is given at the beginning of each of the two sentences. Similarly, the second verbal construction that follows the enumerative qualifier in each of the sentences starts with 'muchi...' which brings medial linking. There are short balanced sentences that are meant for encouraging clients to buy goods and at the same time warning the would-be thieves that the seller is aware of their intention to steal as captured in, Dzimwe muchiba! (You steal some!) Dzimwe muchibhadhara! (Pay for others!). In, Dzimwe muchiba! Dzimwe muchibhadhara! (You steal some! Pay for others!) the vendor is raising a dimension of stereotyping that buyers steal from vendors. It is probably that, during colonial era the Shona were used to stealing from White colonial businesses as a way of sabotaging colonialists and it became a culture such that they are now disempowering fellow enterprising African whom they should support thorough indigenisation. There are Shona sayings in support of that, Mbavha ngembatwa (You can only call them thieves when you caught them stealing) Mbavha haipedzi dura (A thief will not finish the sales stock in this case). This is why the vendor is talking about stealing lightly and jokingly warning the customers by employing an idiomatic expression that captures a Shona custom known as kurova bembera (indirectly rebuking wrong doing).

In the next excerpt, Mukati bate bate mombobhadhara! (Screen and pay!) Mukati bate bate mombobhadhara! (Screen and pay!) the diction is again well chosen and well arranged in a musical way to jokingly warn those who just shuffle the merchandise without buying. The use of a repeated idiophone 'bate bate' is in a way graphically representing unnecessary shuffling of merchandise. Again, the jigsaw and the repetition in which the construction is offered is amusing to hear as it brings rhyme and rhythm and at the same time reminding would-be clients to buy in a jocular manner. Similarly, in 'Dzevana ndadzidhingura! Dzevana ndadzidhingura!' children's! Reduced prices! These are children's! Reduced prices!) and Ndadhingurira svoto! (I deliberately reduced price to fix others!). The order and choice of words is intentional and purposeful for the intended purpose of creating rhyme and rhythm which is musical. There is a possessive 'Dzevana' (These are children's) and an idiom 'ndadzidhingura' reduced prices. Also, there is '...svoto!' is an idiom which means to fix others. The construction omitted the noun to name or identify the one who is being fixed by the vendor as this may be unnecessary baggage or cause friction with the obviously implied competitors.

Enumerative qualifiers as poetic linguistic devices

In the excerpts indicated above the advertising language is in indigenous language, Shona. The finding resonates with Mihaela and George (2020) who notes that advertising through language of the recipient is one of the major requisites of successful sales talk. It is rich in Shona enumerative '…chete' (only) that emphasises that the products are cheaper and 'chete chete' (only only) which emphasises how cheap the products are. Furthermore, when 'chete chete' (only only) enumerative is repeated, it implies that the prices are extremely cheap. The jargon is specifically selected to make the would-be clients feel attracted to the products.

Possessives as poetic linguistic devices

The language of advertising at Mupedzanhamo marketplace is also rich in possessives as indicated in, 'renyu', (yours) 'enyu' (yours) 'dzenyu', (yours), Ndedzekuchechi...! (These are church attire!), Ngedzenyu dzekumasowe...! (These are your attire for apostolic shrine!), Ngedzekubhazi...! (These are specifically for a special journey! and Dzevana...! (These are children's). The possessives are purposively used in the advertising messages to make would-be clients have a sense of ownership even before buying the products. In instances where the following possessives are used; Ndedzekuchechi...! (These are church attire!), Ngedzenyu dzekumasowe...! (These are your attire for apostolic shrine!), Ngedzekubhazi...!, nouns seem to be deliberately omitted. Only the purpose of the clothes is indicated in the above possessives is highlighted. The style is in line with Mahaela and George's (2020) view that some function words are an unnecessary burden because they are semantically empty. The vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace sometimes omit nouns probably because they see them as empty and can be substituted by possessives as evident in the excerpts. This is slightly different from the scholars who refer to pronouns as empty words and unnecessary burden, but highly regard nouns, which they consider as conveying properties, ideas and content and as what counts in an advert.

Similarly, the possessives, Ndedzekuchechi...! (These are church attire!), Ngedzenyu dzekumasowe...! (These are your attire for apostolic shrine!), *Ngedzekubhazi...!* (These are specifically for a special journey! NdedzeAmerica! (They are from America) and Dzevana...! (These are children's) are indicators that vendors, although not trained in marketing, were aware that would-be clients may be purchasing clothes for different purposes. The language used in intergroup contexts therefore offers insights into a society's implicit expectations and stereotypes about particular social groups as well as explicit behaviour and treatment towards specific social groups. In the vendors' advertising, such people are directed to the place where they can get what they are looking for as indicated in the possessives above. The finding resonates with Barker et al. (2001) who notes that language in the vending system has been used to lure customers, draw attention to customers, make the customers laugh and like the speaker and call customers to see the different items being sold. Language is perceived as a critical attribute of group membership, a cue for group categorisation, an emotional dimension of group identity and a contributor to group wholeness (Baker et al., 2001). To that effect, language is used as a means of achieving positive distinction from other groups (Cylke, 2003). Giles and Coupland (1991) supports this view and said that linguistic differences between groups act as cues for comparison and tools for positive distinction. Tajfel and Tumer (1979) contend that social identities form an important part of an individual's self-concept and these individuals are motivated by the need to belong to groups that give them positive distinctiveness from other groups thereby enhancing their personal self-esteem. In the vending system, language is used as a means of communicating social identity. Cylke 2003 talks of hard and soft elements of linguistics where whereas soft elements include mild ascents such, Sahwi iwe uya pano! uya uzvionere! Usaite zizwawakazwa! (My friend come over here! Come and witness yourself! Do not rely on hearsay!). The Manyika dialect is known for being soft-spoken without glottal voiced sound 'h' that the Karanga include on 'huya'. Cylke (2003) notes that minorities accentuate in-group boundaries where they think their social identity is weakened. In this case individuals use language to make their social identity clear. Hard elements groups make it difficult for other groups to pass or join the group. One could find a participant calling 'Ngedzenyu dzekumasowe' (these are for white clothed Christian circuit members) to allow a certain group to visit it whilst those who were not related to the group were excluded. Linguistic elements in this case allow group members to differentiate themselves clearly on dimensions important to group identity.

Communication involves exchanges of presentations and it consists of two representation processes (Krauss & Tussel 1996). In this case, the processing devices were people selling and buying products in the market place. Sperber and Wilson (1995) focused on the central role of representations in communication and consider how the representation in one device comes to be constructed in the second device. Krauss and Fussel (1996) described the concept of interpersonal communication as a provider of different characterisation of the representation conveyed. The encoding/ decoding paradigm are conveyed by means of a code that maps a set of signals to create linguistic representations of meanings. The codes allow speakers to create linguistic representations that incorporate the relevant features of mental representations (Krauss & Chiu, 2007). Speakers construct mental representation that correspond to the hearer's mental representation and expectations as in 'hadzisi dzemuno idzi ndedzeAmerica' (these are American clothing). In this case, the interpreter was supposed to rush for the clothes with the idea that they were nice as they were imported and previously worn by the whites (colonial mentality connotations).

Nouns as poetic linguistic devices

The product names which were nouns of products on sale were also sometimes used as indicated in 'Bhachi', 'Skirt', 'Blouse', 'Mapaperbag' and 'Mahewu'. The nouns were unavoidable in some instance. The finding resonates with Mahaela and George (2020) who view nouns as what counts in an advertising message as these convey properties, idea and content. The nouns in some cases were immediately followed by possessives, 'renyu', yenyu', 'renyu' to show that would-be clients already own the items even before purchasing them. The style instils in would-be clients a sense of entitlement and ownership even before purchasing the product.

Code mixing as poetic linguistic devices

There was also noticeable code mixing in the advertising linguistic styles that vendors used in their code. This is captured in, *Mapaperbag enyu aya vabereki!* (Your paper bags are here, parents!),

Mahewu netwenty-five cents! (Mahewu for twenty-five cents!), Skirt nedollar! (A skirt for a dollar!) and T-shirt mubhero! (T-shirt in the bale!). There was also code-switching style in tag form that was mainly used on the price of the product like in, 'nedollar', 'dollar dollar', and 'netwenty-five cents' which is a way of using language as it is used in everyday life. The code mixing is evidence of translanguaging. The vendors were deploying all the linguistic resources at their disposal for them to effectively market and attract customers. They employed every means possible to make their advertising more egoistical as to attract the hearer and stimulate the action of buying. They wanted to sway the customers into a having positive attitude to the product or service which is changing the customer's situation to the benefit of the vendor.

Rhetoric question, inversion of word order and breaking conventions

In the same construction, there is a rhetoric question, *Ndivo vadiniwo vana? Vatengereiwo!* (What have the children done! Buy for them!). The rhetoric question is meant to make parents and guardians feel pit for their children for they are not the ones that caused their parents to be poor. The vendor knows well that Shona parents make sacrifices for their children. Culturally, among the Shona people, children are perceived as innocent and therefore must not be made to suffer. There is also the use of word inversion as a poetic device in which the noun comes last in a sentence is a way making the message memorable. Still in the verbal construction, the striking use of an enclitic '-wo' in 'vadiniwo' and 'Vatengereiwo' implies that children are in trouble for not having products on the market. Acts of speech are embedded in discourse made up of related sequences of such acts (Krauss & Chiu, 1996).

In addition, language can regularly reflect and help to determine the nature of individuals, perceptions as well as their interpersonal and intergroup relations. Verbs were used to achieve these goals as they have the effect to interpersonal and intergroup relationship. They also indicate how individuals perceive each other, feel about each other and interact with each other (Cylke, 2003). Utterances can also be in form of speech act that can be identified in terms of their intended purposes such as assertions, questions and requisites (Austin, 1962). Looking at language, it is essential to note that it is a sequence of sounds and meanings that is grammatical than informative and omits more of what is required to understand the concepts. Looking at the sounds, we understand speech, for example, in 'nditengereiwo ndiri nherera handina murume' (buy for me, I am an orphan, I do not have a husband). Language therefore conveys meaning in a different fashion. It is also important to consider the way meaning is constructed through the sound sequence. These acts of speaking were used to accomplish a specific purpose that could be the sale of all items at the end of the day. Socially shared knowledge imparts meaning to cultural experiences (Krauss & Chiu, 2007). Bruner (1990) notes that, "by virtue of participation in culture, meaning is rendered public and shared and these socially shared thoughts appear in shared styles of discourse for negotiating variations in meaning and interpretation". Social representation theorists assert that, when private thoughts are made public, shared representations of an event emerge and the participants become committed to a particular interpretation of reality (Rommetveit, 1984). As people change their referring expressions to their addressee's attitudes or beliefs, they may construct a definite and shared representation of the referent (Krauss & Chiu, 2007).

Demonstratives as poetic linguistic devices

There is also a prolific use of demonstratives. The near demonstratives like 'apa', 'idzi', 'aya' and 'apaka', are used to illustrate proximity in the excerpts above. They direct the would-be clients to where the merchandise is. The excessive use of near demonstratives is mainly because the fire persons are operating close to the lots of goods they are selling. The last example with an enclitic '-ka' in apaka is a pleading call to the client to pay particular attention. It is meant to encourage the would-be clients to purchase from the vendor's particular lot.

Selectors as poetic linguistic devices

The vendors also use several selectors. These include 'pano' and 'riye' which help to remind the prospective clients of the products to buy. The selectors point to the vendor's selling space as a unique one. It tells the would-be clients that they are the only ones that are not buying from that vendor. The selectors create an atmosphere that is familiar as if the vendor and the would-be client knew each other before.

Contrast as poetic linguistic devices

In Mupedzanhamo marketplace utterances such as 'Dzimwe muchiba! Dzimwe muchibhadara!' (You can steal others while you can pay for others) and Mukati bate bate mombobhadhara! (Screen and pay! Screen and pay!) The contrasting effect brings rhythm and rhyme to the advertising messages, which is musical to the ears of would-be clients. Such musical messages linger longer in the memory of the would-be buyers. The message warns the would-be clients against stealing because the vendor is aware of it and also reminds them that they should get to a point when they buy and not just shuffling the merchandise. These utterances carry content verbs such as 'muchiba' (concept of stealing), 'muchibhadhara' (concept of paying) and 'mutenge' (concept of buying). The participants use these verbs in a way to show that they know that people are capable of stealing items, especially when there is a crowd of people scrambling for best items. Participants also use the verbs to bring out the human character of doing the unwanted (stealing) at the same time doing the expected (buying or paying). This implies that participants are well aware of their relations with the individuals or group that they interact with. In this case, interpretations of verbs are found in the context of the situation and have positive and negative connotations.

Krauss and Chiu (2007) also opine that participants adhere to a set of conventions in order to communicate. These conversions make their messages conform to generate rules or maxims such as quality (truthfulness), quantity (being informative) relation (being relative and manner (being clear and orderly). The scholars further contend that speakers should adhere to these rules and be able to utilise the expectations when messages are produced and comprehended. When one of these maxims are violated, then the listener may assume that it is done purposefully or deliberately to convey something rather than the literal meaning, for example, 'nditengereiwo ndiri nherera andina murume' (buy for me, I am an orphan, I do not have a husband). This utterance can be considered as a perlocutionary act that attempts to have a particular effect on the addressee. An orphan refers to a child whose parents are deceased and thus people usually sympathise with such a child. The use of the word 'nherera' (orphan) in this context makes one to think that it is done for a purpose and to deliberately draw the attention of the customers and, at the same time, make them come to see what this 'orphan' is selling and ending up buying out of sympathy for the 'orphan' vendor. It is important to note that a variety of locutions have different illocutionary or locutionary or perlocutionary forces although these messages are understood in different context.

The section has done an analysis of the language used by vendors in Mupedzanhamo marketplace in Mbare. The article reveals, that whenever people are speaking, they express their meanings and intentions in the utterances although it might not be direct. The perspectives in speaking are to be understood by listeners so that they act accordingly. Language used in social context also reveals our expectations, our beliefs and the way of interacting in the community. It is clear that vendors also use a particular language to make their customers know what they are selling, entice them to buy their products or items. The intention of the vendors is also achieved at the end by using the persuasive language of advertising.

CONCLUSION

The vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace use a wide range of theatrical and poetic devices. These include inversion of word order, rhetoric questions, repetitions, possessives, enumerative constructions, ideophones, idioms, initial, medial and final linking styles to 'sweeten' their advertising language. The various initial, medial and final linkage words create rhymes and rhythms that create a musical effect in the advertising messages chanted by the vendors. They also use the words out of context deliberately to attract the would-be buyers. Overall, the vendors used their commonly spoken native language, Shona. The study established that English words were only chanted either as names of clothing items with no known Shona equivalents like T-shirt, or rephonologised *bhurauzi* for blouse, or for prices of products or names of countries like America. The vendors probably did this because of the need to achieve the desired emotional intensity in their marketing messages. Furthermore, the vendors also went a step further to utilise various theatrical gestures (imitating how to put on the clothes). The data has shown that these poetic devices increase the frequency of words that have the net effect of increasing the emotional intensity thereby and puissance of the vendors' marketing messages in their attempts to lure potential customers. One of

the key implications of this study therefore is that marketing models are more effective if they incorporate theatrical devices, poetic devices and possessives to increase the frequency of targeted words and; therefore, the emotional intensity of the marketing messages. This gives the marketing model its desired mileage in terms of luring customers. As a result, the study recommends the following marketing model:

The Indigenous Language Advertising Model (ILAM)

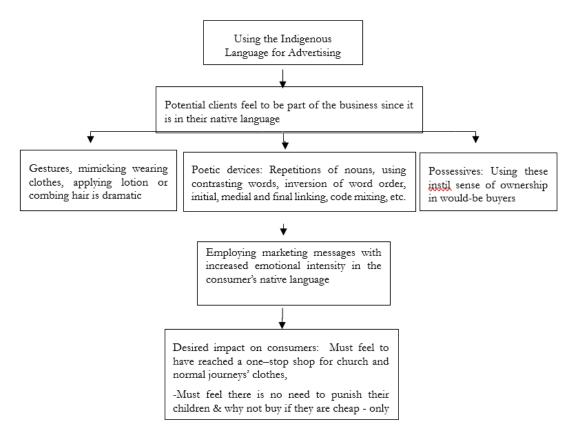


Figure 1.0: Indigenous Language Advertising Model (ILAM)

The goal of this article was to explore the theatrical and poetic linguistic styles used by vendors at Mupedzanhamo marketplace in Mbare and analyse their implications on the consumers. It also analysed how vendors use language in the context of selling and buying items in a market place. The article further analysed how the context of a market place relates to the language used to give meaning and the intentions of the vendors at the end of the day. The study revealed that vendors use language to advertise various types of goods to their customers, lure their customers to specific places where they can find nice and cheap goods and entice them to buy the items. They also use such advertising language to persuade customers to buy the items.

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