

Structural -Functional Classification cum Analysis of The Complete Sentences of Contemporary Nigerian Advertisement Messages

Dr. SAMSON OLASUNKANMI OLUGA¹

¹ UNIVERSITY TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN KAMPAR / PERAK CAMPUS

Received: 23 June 2011 Accepted: 18 July 2011 Published: 2 August 2011

Abstract

Many of the contemporary Nigerian advertisements copy messages are simply phrases and sentence fragments while many others are syntactically and semantically complete sentences. The complete sentences of contemporary Nigerian advertisement messages are usually of different structural and functional classifications. This paper therefore attempts a structural-functional classification cum analysis of one hundred and fifty (150) complete-sentence advertisement messages identified among some selected three-hundred (300) advertisement messages of products, services, ideas or organisations i.e. 50

Index terms— Complete Sentences, Advertisement Messages, Classification cum Analysis

1 Introduction

A sentence according to Downing & Locke (2006:272) is grammatically the highest linguistic string made up of one independent or super-ordinate clause with a subject and a predicate or two or more closely related clauses. Palmer & Sayidina (2005:162) describe the English sentence as the highest independent structure on the syntactic rank of the language which orthographically begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop (otherwise called a period), a question mark or an exclamation mark and which semantically communicates a meaningful idea or complete thought. Finch (2005: 109) also identifies the traditional definition(s) of sentences as grammatically complete and semantically independent units of language capable of standing on their own. In the light of the basic semantic, orthographic and syntactic requirements of a sentence mentioned in the three definitions, a comprehensive definition of sentence can be deduced as an expression which represents the Author : Research Phd Student Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences , Faculty of Arts And Social Sciences, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Kampar / Perak Campus, Malaysia. E-mail : samoluga@yahoo.com largest unit of a language that is grammatically worded/constructed, having a subject and a predicate, expressing a complete thought / idea, starting with a capital letter and ending with a full stop/period, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

A complete sentence according to Hillward (1983: 96) is that made up of basic grammatical constituents or components like the subject and finite verb and which is not preceded by any word making it dependent on some other group of words. To Finch (2005: 110) a complete sentence is a major sentence that has at least a clause and consists of elements like subject, predicator, direct object, indirect object subject complement, object complement and adverbial usually combined in various ways. A complete sentence is therefore different from a sentence fragment or fragmentary sentence which is a group of words punctuated as a sentence but which is not actually a fully formed sentence. Such an incomplete /fragmentary sentence leaves out parts of its structure as understood or assumed (Nigel, 1990:392) and this constitutes a serious error/problem in writing because it also leaves readers with a number of unresolved questions in their minds.

Advertisement simply refers to a carefully and uniquely constructed spoken or written form of marketing communication intended to disseminate vital messages or information about some newly introduced or existing products, services and ideas of given organisations so as to captivate the attention of their target audience, arouse

3 II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

their interest and ultimately make them demand/ buy the organisations' products, services or ideas (Robin, 2010, MacRury, 2009 & O'Guinn, Allan & Semenik, 2009). In a similar vein, Bearden, Ingram and La Forge (2001:393) define advertisement as marketing communication that is persuasive, non-personal paid for by an identified sponsor and disseminated through mass channels of communication to promote the adoption of goods, services, persons and ideas. Okanlawon and Oluga (2008:45) however, point out the fact that advertisements usually have specially worded verbal messages, spoken or written, in addition to the visual August messages and these can be complete-sentence advertisement messages or phrasal/ fragmentary advertisement messages.

A complete sentence of a advertisement message can be classified structurally and functionally. The structural classification is all about determination of sentence types based on the grammatical construction of sentences that is, in terms of their forms, formation, constituents' combination or clausal relationship. The functional classification is the determination of sentence types based on their grammatical functions that is, in terms of the uses of sentences or what they are used for, what the sentences do or what they are used to do. Based on the structural classification of sentences we have the simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound -complex sentence. Based on the functional classification of sentences, four main types of sentences can also be identified which are the declarative sentences, interrogatives sentence, imperative sentence and exclamatory sentence. It is however important to point out the fact that the two major classifications of complete sentences of advertisement messages are sometimes interwoven. This is because a sentence that is structurally simple, compound, or complex can also be functionally declarative, interrogative, imperative or exclamatory.

The study carefully selects three hundred (300) contemporary advertisement messages of products services, ideas and organisations. These are mainly printed/written advertisement messages of posters, hand bills, bill boards, news papers and magazines covering the advertisements of products like cars, food drinks , drugs, mobile phones etc services like telecommunications, banking, pension fund administration/ management etc and organisations like the National Population Commission (NPC) and Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC). Some products, services or organisations have more than just one complete-sentence advertisement message selected especially those with variety of advertisements but none has more than three advertisement messages among those classified/analysed which are usually differentiated with the numbers being ascribed them. Only one hundred and fifty (150) out of the total three hundred (300) advertisement messages selected that is 50% are the complete-sentence advertisement messages classified and analysed for the purpose of this study. The rest are either phrases or sentence fragments used as advertisement messages of given products, services, ideas or organisations.

The study adopts a two-in-one approach to the classification cum analysis of the one hundred and fifty (150) complete-sentence advertisement messages of products, services, ideas or organisations identified among the whole three hundred (300) carefully selected advertisement messages. This is because the structural classification/analysis of the various complete-sentence advertisement messages is first done to show the ones that are simple sentences, compound sentences and complex sentences. The functional classification of the various complete-sentence advertisement messages under each of those three main structural types of sentences is then done to show if these sentences are declarative, interrogative, imperative or exclamatory. A simple percentage analysis of the various complete sentences of these classifications will be done with a view to establishing the rate of occurrence of each of the various forms of the complete-sentence advertisement messages of products, services, ideas or organisations.

A simple sentence according to ??olaji & Alabi (1994:97) is a sentence that contains just a single major clause otherwise called a main, independent or super ordinate clause having one subject and predicate/predicator but which may or may not have a complement, an object or adverb/ad adjunct. There are seventy-six (76) simple-sentence advertisement messages out of the one hundred and fifty completesentence advertisement messages which represent 50.7%. It is important to point out the fact that these sentences, though similar in terms of their structural construction are slightly different in terms of their functions. We therefore, have the declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory simplesentence advertisement messages.

2 a) Declarative Simple-Sentence Advertisement Messages

These simply refer to the simple-sentence advertisement messages that are in form of statements or assertions and therefore usually give information stating with a capital letter and ending with a full stop otherwise called a period. Out of the seventy-six (76) simple-sentence advertisement messages identified there are forty-one (41) i.e. 54% that constitute the declarative simple-sentence advertisement messages as illustrated below: Honda-We have evolved a new mathematical Calculation.

2. Samsung-I will be the next hero. 3. Cherry Wood Furniture-Good things come in pairs. 4. Money Gram 1 -The power is in your hands. 5. PermaNent-it is back to school time. 6. First Inland-The doors to endless possibilities is here. 7. Money Gram 2 -your money arrives in minutes. 8. Omatek -It is a compact world. 9. Spring Bank -We crack nuts. 10. Sony Ericsson -I love choice.

3 II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

III.

4 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

IV.

5 SIMPLE SENTENCE ADVERTISEMENT COPY MESSAGES

Arco Petrochemical -We add value to the oil and gas sector. These refer simple-sentence advertisement messages that express strong feelings of surprise, shock, pain, joy or excitement starting with a capital letter but ending with an exclamation mark. We have the basic and the non-basic exclamatory simple-sentence advertisement messages. The basic exclamatory simple sentences are introduced by "what" and "how" as in "what a wonderful goal that was" and "How beautiful she is now". The non-basic exclamatory simple-sentence advertisement messages are other forms of simple sentences introduced to express strong feelings which also end with exclamation marks but which do not start with "what" or "how". Nine (9)

6 d) Interrogative Simple -Sentence Advertisement Messages

The interrogative simple-sentence advertisement messages are non-basic simple sentences used to ask for information starting with capital letters and ending with question marks. The interrogative simple-sentence advertisement messages can be 'wh' interrogative sentences i.e. those starting with "what", "when", "which", "where", "why" and "how" as in (73) to (75) below or the "yes or no" interrogative simple sentences which usually start with auxiliary verbs serving as operators like 'are' 'is', 'do' 'has' etc as in example (76) below: 73. Dangote Spaghetti -How can I resist you? 74. Tura Soap -What's up girl? 75. Vono Foam -Who is your sleeping partner tonight? 76. Super Loaf -Has it any equality? e) Compound Sentence Advertisement Copy Messages Compound sentences according to Aremo (2004: 374) are sentences formed by joining or linking two or more basic or non-basic simple sentences with the aid of coordinating conjunctions or coordinators like "and" "but" and "or" depending on the relationship between the combined or coordinated simple sentences. It is in the light of this that Finch (2005: 111) describes the compound sentences as coordinated sentences whose second elements can be reduced as those of the first sentences clarify those reduced. There are forty-four (44) compound-sentence advertisement messages out of the one hundred and fifty (150) complete sentences advertisement messages which represent 29%. The compound sentences just as the simple sentences can also be of different structural classifications hence, we equally have declarative, imperative and exclamatory compound sentences. These sentences are also properly linked by semicolons and by other punctuation marks like commas and colons especially in advertisement messages.

7 f) Declarative Compound-Sentence Advertisement Messages

A declarative compound-sentence advertisement message is one whose coordinated main clauses make statements, assertions or give information about products, services or ideas advertised. This, just as a declarative simple-sentence advertisement message, also starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop otherwise called a period. There are fourteen (14)

8 h) Exclamatory/ Interrogative Compound Sentence Advertisement Messages

There are just two (2) examples of the exclamatory compound-sentence advertisement messages and only one (1) interrogative compound-sentence advertisement message identified among the total forty-four (44) compound-sentence advertisement messages. The exclamatory compound-sentence advertisement messages are properly linked or coordinated main clauses which end with an exclamation mark while the interrogative compound sentence asks a question and therefore ends with a question mark. The two (2) exclamatory compound sentences represent 5% while the only one (1) interrogative compound sentence represents 2% of the total compound-sentence advertisement messages identified. It is important to point out/ note that this interrogative compound-sentence is distinct in that it is a tag question which usually makes a statement before asking the question. It is not the same as the 'wh' or 'yes or no' questions/interrogative sentences. The two exclamatory (equally imperative) and one interrogative compound-sentence advertisement messages are shown below: 114. MTN Treasure Hunt -Win big and live large! 115. FRSC/ Nigeria Breweries 2 -Don't drink and drive! 116. Tura Beauty soap -She is beautiful, isn't she?

These refer to some compound sentence advertisement messages whose two or more coordinated main clauses are not of the same structural or functional classification hence, can not fit into the ones already discussed/ analysed. There are four (4) of such -structure -sentence advertisement messages which represent 9% of the total compound-sentence advertisement messages identified. The first has an imperative sentence and a declarative sentence linked by a comma. The second has an imperative sentence and a declarative sentence linked by the coordinator 'and'. The third has a declarative sentence and an imperative sentence linked by a comma. The fourth has an imperative sentence and a declarative sentence linked by a comma. Below are the mixed structure compound sentence advertisement messages: 117. Stanbic IBTC Bank -Roll out drums, we have our winners.

159 120. Tom Tom -Lend a hand, one unit of tom-tom can save a life.

160 9 i) Complex Sentence Advertisement Copy Messages

161 A complex sentence according to Oseni (1998:175) has a main clause and two or more subordinate clauses hence,
 162 a complex sentence, to him, is formed through the process of subordination. The main clause of the complex
 163 sentence is otherwise called the major, super ordinate or independent clause because it can stand on its own.
 164 The minor clause introduced by subordinators like 'because', 'if', 'although', 'until', 'unless', etc is otherwise
 165 called the subordinate or dependent clause because it can not stand on its own to express a complete thought or
 166 idea. Thirty (30) out of the total one hundred and fifty (150) complete-sentence advertisement messages which
 167 represent 20% are complex-sentence advertisement messages. Below are the first sixteen (??6 The structural-
 168 functional classification cum analysis of the complete-sentence advertisement messages identified among the
 169 carefully selected advertisement messages shows clearly that about half of the complete-sentence advertisement
 170 messages are simple sentences. This is because seventy-six (76) out of the whole one hundred and fifty (150)
 171 completesentence advertisement messages i.e. 51% are the simple-sentence advertisement messages. This is
 172 not surprising considering the fact that simplicity and conciseness are basic principles of advertisement message
 173 communication usually achieved via the use of short simple sentences.

174 The compound-sentence advertisement messages are next to the simple sentenceadvertisement messages in
 175 terms of number. They are forty-four (44) altogether i.e. 29% of the entire one hundred and fifty (150) complete-
 176 sentence advertisement messages identified and analysed. Many of these compound-sentence advertisement
 177 messages also do not negate the principles of advertisement message simplicity and conciseness as they are
 178 as short as many of the simple-sentence advertisement messages. For example, "Go get it" of (111), "Grow and
 179 win" of (117) and "Save and win" of (101) are three word compound-sentence advertisement messages while
 180 "come fly with me" of (93), "Wash more, save more" of (107), "Don't worry, be active" of (150) and "Be smart,
 181 choose ovaltine" of (110) are four-word compoundsentence advertisement messages.

182 There are a number of the complex-sentence advertisement messages among the complete-sentence advertise-
 183 ment messages identified/ analysed as there are thirty (30) out of the one hundred and fifty (150) complete-
 184 sentence advertisement messages i.e. 20% that are complex sentences this is because these sentence are only
 185 structurally described as complex sentences because of the fact they have a combination of the independent/
 186 super ordinate and dependent/ subordinate clauses. But in actual fact those used as advertisement messages
 187 classified/analysed are not semantically complex as they communicate easy-tocomprehend messages/ information
 188 about the advertised products, services, ideas or organisations using straight-forward language/ expressions. Some
 189 of such expression are "money attracts money when in good company" of (136) "Capture every moment as it
 190 happen" of (124) and "No one knows Europe like we do" of (121).

191 There is however, no single compound-complex sentence advertisement message among the one hundred
 192 and fifty (150) complete-sentence advertisement messages identified and analysed. This, in addition to the
 193 simple, compound and complex sentences make the four main structural types of sentences. The compound-
 194 complex sentence as the name suggests usually has features of both the compound and complex sentences. It
 195 can therefore be longer than others and may inhibit advertisement message simplicity and conciseness. This
 196 may be the reason why no single compound-complex-sentence advertisement message is found among the one
 197 hundred and fifty (150) complete-sentence advertisement messages identified and analysed. However, it is
 198 not impossible to form compoundcomplex -sentence advertisement messages that are not too long just as the
 199 three/four-word-compoundcomplex-sentence advertisement messages cited above. For example, we have concise
 200 compoundcomplex sentences or expressions like "(I) work and study to excel" and "(I) rest and exercise to live
 long". 1 2 3



Figure 1:

-
49. Zain -Experience true life.
 50. Solar Glow -Let the sun work for you.
 51. Sovereign Trust Insurance -Let's unlock your potentials .
 52. Aska Power Generator -Power your future.
 53. Honda Dream 100& -choose the Kings of the road.
CGL 125
 54. Multilink Recharge Win -Join the winning family.
 55. Aquitaine -Find your energy.
 56. STP Performance -protect your engine from bad fuel and diesel.
 57. Nissan Xtrail1-Rule your time.
 58. Peugeot 307 Saloon -Test your adrenalin.
 59. Audi -Discover the Audi in you.
 60. Cornerstone Insurance -Get the right cover for your building .
 61. Beco Petroleum Products -Experience counts.
 62. Glo Rechargeable Bulb -Enjoy light at night without NEPA or Generator.
 63. Leadway Personal Annuity -Share the benefit of a lifetime. Plan (LPAP)
- c) Exclamatory

Simple
-
Sentence

Messages

38. Pirelli -Power is nothing without control.
39. African Petroleum -It is a brand new day at African petroleum.
40. Skye Visa Card -I can pay everywhere in the world with my Skye Bank visa card.
41. Intercontinental Edu-Now school payment would not be problem. Support

b) Imperative Simple-Sentence Messages

These are simple-sentence advertisement messages which are used to command, direct or instruct hence, such imperative simple sentences are otherwise called instructive simple sentences which usually start with capital letters and end with full stops or exclamation marks. Out of the seventy-six (76) simple-sentence advertisement messages identified there are twenty-two (22) i.e. 29% that constitute the imperative simple-sentence advertisement messages as shown below:

43. MTN2 -Reach more people for less.
44. Intel -Multiply your possibilities.
45. Computer Ware House -Take the information tech tripod advantage.

Figure 2:

¹© 2011 Global Journals Inc. (US)

²© 2011 Global Journals Inc. (US)11.1.

³© 2011 Global Journals Inc. (US) 70. Etisalat 2 -Get free air time for life! 71. Alpha Mobile Phones-Check this out! 72. Glo Rock 'N' Rule -Let's rock da city!

-
- 201 [Hoboken] , N Hoboken . JohnWiley & Sons Inc.
- 202 [Omer and Sayidina ()] , M R Omer , A H M Sayidina . 2005. Elements of English Sentence. Muechen: Lincom
203 Europa
- 204 [Millward] 183): *Handbook for Writers*, C Millward . New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- 205 [Oseni ()] *A Comprehensive Approach to Effective Communication in English*, M A Oseni . 1998. Lagos: Mudmic
206 Publishers.
- 207 [O'guinn et al. ()] 'Advertising and Integrated Brand Promotion'. T C O'guinn , C T Allen , R J Semenik .
208 *Mason: South-Western Centage Learning*, 2009. (th ed)
- 209 [Bearden et al. ()] W O Bearden , T Ingram , R W N & La Forge . *Marketing Principles and Perspectives*,
210 (Boston) 2001. McGraw Hill Irwin.
- 211 [Bolaji et al. ()] E B Bolaji , V Alabi , Ed . *The Principles Practice of Communication*, (Ilorin) 1994. I.G.S.
212 Publication.
- 213 [Downing and Locke ()] A Downing , P Locke . *English Grammar: A University Course*, (London: Routledge)
214 2006. (nd ed)
- 215 [Okanlawo and Oluga ()] 'Examination of Language Use in Contemporary Nigerian Advertisement Copy Mes-
216 sages'. B Okanlawo , S Oluga . *Marang Journal of Language and Literature* 2008. 18 (1) p. .
- 217 [Finch ()] G Finch . *Key Concepts in Language and Linguistics*, (New York) 2005. Palgrave Macmillan.
- 218 [Hyundai Sonata -The sonata moves you miles ahead] *Hyundai Sonata -The sonata moves you miles ahead*,
- 219 [Landa ()] R Landa . *Advertising: Generating and Designing Creative Ideas across Media*, 2010.
- 220 [Macrury ()] I Macrury . *Advertising. London: Routledge References References Referencias*, 2009.
- 221 [Nigel ()] *The Students Writers Guide: An A-Z of Writing and Language*, K Nigel . 1990. Leckhampton: Stanley
222 Thornes (Pub) Ltd.