

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS ON LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, IBADAN

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Abstract

In this information age, where the inclination for knowledge has increased, there is a need for the children, likewise adults to be aware of happenings and products to be used. The consumers must be duly informed, enlightened, educated, and be entertained, all at the same time. Advertisements of products not only excite the listeners and viewers, but also teach and pass knowledge. As the saying that 'seeing is believing' for visual presentation, and also is the channel through which the adverts are being passed across. It is on this note that this paper assessed the knowledge of television advertisements on students' language learning. The study employed a descriptive research method. The students in Akinyele Local Government Area were used as samples for the study. The questionnaire was used to elicit response from the students. One of the findings from the study revealed that adverts in English language positively enhance students' language learning. It was therefore recommended that frequent use of English language as illustration in the schools; especially the public schools will increase the students' zeal in learning English language.

Keywords: Information, Viewers, Advertisements, Media, Television.

Introduction

The mass media which includes the television and the radio are irresistible pull in the lives of children, especially the adolescents. These audio and audio visual media have impacted into the attitudes, behavior, manner and outlook to life of the children. Television is an important tool for most people, young or old, as today most information are delivered to the public through this advancement in technology. This medium can be assessed easily through cables or satellite, as this provides the consumers (i.e. the household) with every type of information which ranges from entertaining, informative, expository and educating programmes. Television is a common and boundless medium which contains audio-visual information. Such information can be captivating, inspiring, and at times, boring, and insignificant.

According to Burton (2005), television is the most available media to all levels of people; old, young and young adults, compared to other media. It is a medium that renders all the programmes you can ever thought of, which is mostly interesting to the viewers, that is the children, young adults and adults alike. As noted by Anderson and Pempek (2005), limitless access to varied information could have effect on their development, behaviour, health and learning. The television has been regarded as the eye and ear of the people, as it looks for informative programmes to wide range of individuals. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the television has formed an important part of modern broadcasting (Olumorin, Aderoju, and Onojah, 2018)

Advertisement is a powerful force in every culture. In the olden days, the common medium of advertising is to hawk the goods from one village to the other, calling out the name of such good; with a melodious voice, combined with a particular rhyme or song that will attract the villagers to buy the ware. In the modern day setting, advertisement has gone digital and as such, become sophisticated, with the advent of the television. Children, young and old are viewing a lot of advertisements, otherwise called commercials, as they are designed to sell products or services to the viewers. Gbadeyan (2009) notes that the basic goal of advertisement in the television is to sell their products. The most commonly advertised products are food items, toothpaste, cooking items and other household items. It is barely surprising that the child still depends on what he sees as the reality. This is so because television and other commercials have been integrated into the child's experience, as part of the inner world.

Statement of the Problem

Advertisement in the television is a vital part of the household relaxation, generally, for the children and the adults. The television advertisement has been categorized as an alternative to classroom teaching; thus as the children watch and listen to the television adverts, there are bound to be knowledge and information in such adverts. However, over the years; for the children to learn from each advertisement, they rather concentrate on the aesthetics and graphical illustrations contained in the advertisements. Previous studies have focused largely on the business aspect of the advertisement, whereby the profit to be derived from such animation and pictorial representations on the television. Others have reviewed the roles that advertisement played in the society with little emphasis on the cognitive aspect of the adverts, which has to do with language learning. Hence, this study assessed the knowledge of television advertisement on

language learning among secondary school students in Akinyele Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess the knowledge of television advertisement on language learning among secondary school students in Akinyele Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the students' knowledge of television advertisements?
2. What are the students' perceptions of English language advertisements?
3. Does the mother tongue have any effect on students' language learning through television advertisements?
4. How has the use of English language adverts helped in the second language learning?

Literature Review

Television Advertisements

Television has been classified as the foremost medium that advances the past with some level of reality. Sambo (2012) reports that the television affords the child real life experience, which fascinates and captures the attention of the child. As the saying goes that what we hear we forget and what we see we remember, thus access to television makes learning effective and productive (Olumorin, Aderoju and Onojah, 2018). The television appeals to the visual senses, as this facilitate retention and easy recall. By viewing the television, learning becomes easier and interesting (Ortyoyande, 2006). Television, like any other medium; reinforces social codes to attract readers and convince the viewers on the right way to look, act and think. To this end, television has an impact on the cognitive aspect of the viewers (Apuke and Dogari, 2017).

Television combines the appealing feature of the visual and the audio, which is one of the most popular amusements during the childhood's years. It induces a child away from other forms of play. Many babies are introduced to television while they are still in their toddling stage. For them, television is a built-in baby sitter because it keeps them amused when no one is available to act in this role (Okika and Agbasi, 2015). For the preschool child and even the older child,

television watching is an added play activity, though, not a substitute for active play and other forms of passive play, but for many children it is more popular and more consuming of their play time than all other play activities. Television is still an important medium for children and they use it actively. However, while children regard it primarily as a source of entertainment (Livingstone, 2002), many parents often see it, particularly for young children, as an important educational tool that can assist children intellectual development.

According to Niss (2002) television provides one of the most powerful media for the transmission of commercial messages to children. In the same vein, Postman (1985) in Gbadeyan (2009) refers to television as a curriculum that is specially constructed information system whose purpose is to influence, teach, train or cultivate the mind and character of youth. Like the curriculum, it is assumed that television contains information about the world we live in and at the same time it acts as a vehicle of socialization where knowledge about social roles and cultural values is acquired. From the advertisers' point of view, television offers unique possibilities for reaching a young audience. Most children love films, television and any moving pictures with sound. These electrical equipment kindle their imagination and bring into play many more of their senses than do the written word or still life pictures, consequently television can be described as an extremely powerful medium for getting commercial messages across to children and adults alike.

Language Learning and Language of Advertisement

It has been discovered that according to the behaviourist theory language is a verbal behavior. From the empirical advance of Skinner, it was assumed that the mind is a blank tablet, which was being filled from the outer world. Thus, man is molded to be suitable in his domain. According to Chomsky (2006), language acquisition is determined by his environment, and as such, language development is the imitation of the environment of the child. He posited that there is a language organ in the brain that grows and reaches the maturity stage, and begins to abate at about age 12. Hence, this is called the critical period, as this period gave language acquisition an extra dimension, privilege and importance over learning (Al-Harbi, 2015). Thus, early learning is basic in language acquisition.

Exposure of children to the media, television in particular, is one of the means to receive linguistic instruction that can contribute to the child's language learning and development.

Awofadeju, Taiwo, Odorume, and Kwembili (2016) conducted a study on the impact of mass media on children upbringing. The research adopted a descriptive survey with teachers and staff of Ministry of Education as samples. The research concluded that the mass media enhance good learning attitudes in children and it improves the academic performance in students.

Language learning by children depends on the influence of the context of linguistic social interactions and then on receiving and responding to the content presented on the TV, since the child brings his social competence into interpreting and understanding the content viewed on TV. In the same manner, Linebarger and Vaala (2010) investigated how screen media affects children's language development by examining the abilities of infants and toddlers to see if they can learn from media. They focused on three factors, that is, attributes of the child; characteristics of screen media stimuli; and the varied environmental context surrounding the child's screen media used. The study found that media's effect occurs if the child can identify with its content (that is, it is similar to the child's daily life experiences). The discovery of the research showed that bringing the plot, images, occasions, and events of the TV show home to children's daily experience was a way of capturing the child's attention.

The main subject or body of advertising is significant for its information and explanatory value. For the message of advertisement to be effective and successful, the language must be right and the vocabulary must be appropriate to the consumer as well as the listener it is hoped to influence. Advertising language neglects the conventional rules of grammar and writing and that is why it is referred to as 'a language of mutilation' (Oluwole, 2012). It is accepted because it belongs to a world or setting where the main aim is to get the attention of the public and persuade them to buy the advertised product. The nature of advertised product determines the kind of language used. Slogans and logos are some aspects of language of advertisement that are catchy and easy to remember. Some examples include:

Indomie – the difference is in the taste

Maggi - cook the difference

Hollandia Evaporated Milk – the taste of goodness

Research Methodology

The research method used in this study is the descriptive research method. The population of the study involved all the students in the secondary schools in Ibadan. 100(one hundred) students were randomly selected from the Junior Secondary Schools in Akinyele Local Government Area. The copies of the questionnaire was given to the students, with the help of the teachers in the schools.

Data Analysis Presentation

This section presents the results of the data analysis in the order of the research questions raised.

Research Question 1: What are the students' knowledge of television advertisements?

Table 1: Showing students' knowledge of television advertisements

S/N	Items	Regularly	Always	Often	Rarely	X	S.D
1	I watch television at home.	92	06	02	00	3.18	0.81
2	I watch entertainment programmes.	67	12	10	11	2.91	0.75
3	I watch fascinating adverts on the television.	59	27	08	06	3.11	0.84
4	I can recollect pictorials and aesthetics.	56	31	06	07	3.04	0.81
Weighted Mean = 3.06							

The table above shows that 92 of the respondents watch television at home regularly, 6 watch it always and only 2 watch it often. Furthermore, 67 of the respondents watch entertainment programmes on it regularly, 12 watch entertainment programmes always and only ten watch entertainment programmes often; none of them is negative about this. Also, 59 agree that they watch fascinating adverts on it regularly while 27 watch fascinating adverts on it always, 8 watch fascinating adverts on it often and only 6 rarely watch fascinating adverts. In the same vein, 56 agree that they remember pictorials and aesthetics the advert talks about regularly, 31 remember them always while 6 remember them often and 7 rarely remember the pictorials and aesthetics. This indicated that majority of the students are exposed to various English language advertisements on the television.

Research Question 2: What are the students' perceptions of English language advertisements?

Table 2: Showing students' perception of English language advertisements

S/N	Items	A	SA	D	SD	X	S.D
5	I understand English language.	81	12	06	01	3.19	0.79
6	I can speak it fluently.	79	19	02	00	3.11	0.88
7	I prefer advert done only with English language.	63	16	12	10	3.82	0.92
8	I learn at least one new word from the English adverts.	92	06	02	00	3.61	0.81
Weighted Mean = 3.43							

The table shows that 81 of the respondents agree that they understand English language, 12 strongly agree that they understand it, 6 disagree and only 1 strongly disagrees. Also from the analysis, 79 of the respondents agree that they speak English language fluently, 19 strongly agree, while only 2 disagree that they speak it fluently often and none of the respondents strongly disagree. Furthermore, 63 of the respondents agree that they prefer adverts done in English language, 16 strongly agree, 12 disagree and 10 strongly disagree, as 92 of the respondents agree that they learn new English words from the adverts, 6 strongly agree and 2 disagree.

Research question 3: Does the mother tongue has any effect on students' language learning through television advertisements?

Table 3: Showing effect of mother tongue on students' language learning through television advertisements

S/N	ITEMS	A	SA	D	SD	X-	S.D
9	I understand my mother tongue.	82	09	05	04	3.21	0.81
10	I can speak my mother tongue fluently.	98	02	00	00	2.98	0.79
11	I enjoy watching adverts done with my mother tongue.	90	06	02	02	2.91	0.66
12	I communicate better in my mother tongue.	89	10	01	00	3.10	0.78
Weighted Mean= 3.05							

The table reveals that 82 of the respondents agree that they understand their mother-tongue, 9 strongly agree that they understand it, 5 disagree that they understand it, and only 4 strongly disagree that they understand it. More so, 98 of them agree that they can speak their mother-tongue fluently, only 2 strongly agree that they can speak it fluently. It is revealed that none of them disagree or strongly disagree that they can speak their mother tongue fluently. Furthermore,

90 of them agree that they enjoy watching adverts in their mother-tongue, 6 strongly agree that they enjoy it, 2 disagree that they enjoy it and 2 strongly disagree that they enjoy it.

From the analysis too, 89 of them agree that they communicate better with their mother-tongue, 10 strongly agree that they communicate better with it and only 1 disagree that they communicate better with it.

Research question 4: How has the use of English language adverts helped in the second language learning?

Table 4: Showing English language adverts influence on language learning

S/N	ITEMS	A	SA	D	SD	X	S.D
13	I enjoy learning new English words.	91	03	03	03	3.12	0.89
14	The English adverts I watch have made my spoken English better.	63	12	20	05	3.58	0.72
15	I communicate with those new words I learn from those adverts.	59	19	12	10	2.99	0.91
16	I encourage people to watch English language adverts because it has helped in my English language learning.	91	02	05	03	3.01	0.33
Weighted Mean= 3.18							

The table above reveals that 91 agree that they enjoy learning new English words, 3 strongly agree that they enjoy learning new words, 3 disagree that they enjoy learning new words and 3 also strongly disagree that they enjoy learning new words. 63 agree that English adverts has really improved their spoken English skills, 1 strongly agree that it has made it better than it was. 20 disagree that it has made their spoken English better and 5 strongly disagree that it has made their spoken English better. 59 of the respondents agree that they communicate with the new words they learn. 19 strongly agree that they communicate with it, 12 disagree that they communicate with it and only 10 strongly disagree. From the respondents' feedback, it is obvious that 91 agree that they will encourage more students to watch the English adverts because it has helped in their English language learning, only 2 strongly agree to it, 5 disagree and 3 strongly disagree to it. This indicated that the adverts presented in English language aid students' learning of the second language, which is English language.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 reveals that the mean of each item is greater than the standard mean of 2.5 which implies that students' knowledge of English language television adverts is positive and should be encouraged. This is supported by Gowon (2009) that television and radio can enhance English language learning skills of students. This finding is in line with Olatunji and Akhagbas' submission (2013) that children are affected daily by mass media messages, which may range from extremely beneficial to being extremely harmful.

Table 2 shows that the mean of respondents is higher than the standard mean of 2.5. By implication, it translates that the level at which students understands English language through advertisements is very high. This finding corroborates Al Jahromi's (2015) findings that all media, whether social media or the mass media; regardless of gender and age positively influence students' L2 proficiency.

From table 3, the mean of all the items are higher than the standard mean of 2.5. This implies that students agree that their mother tongue also influence their understanding of English language advertisement and also improve their skills in English language. This finding opposes Oluwole's (2008) finding in his study that majority of the students in the secondary schools avoid English language and as such, mother tongue has a strong influence on English language. The finding also contradicts Owhoeli's (2011) conclusion in his study that mother tongue actually influences the learning and proficiency of the target language (that is, English language).

Table 4 reveals that the use of English language for advertisement on television has tremendously improved the learning of English language among students. The items means are greater than the standard mean of 2.5. This result is similar to Bogdanova (2010), which states that English language remains on the symbolic and on the visual level in Bulgarian advertising and journalistic discourse. The type of language use in the study reveals that English is still for the most part just adding symbolic value in the advertising discourse. On the other hand, in the journalistic discourse the number of occurrences of English cannot be neglected because whenever English is used it is vital for understanding. This finding also corroborates Menkveld's (2015) in his study, based on age that younger participants prefer adverts in which English language is used significantly more than the older participants.

Conclusion

The study has shown that advertisements presented in English language can influence students' language learning. The study also shows that television advertisements in English language enhance learning of the target language, which is English language.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers and school authorities should encourage all their students to communicate more with English language; especially in the government schools where first language is the order of the day. This would really help the students in their studies because practice makes perfect.

More advertisements should be done with the use of English language. This would go a long way in teaching the students the effective use of language, especially English language.

Adequate time should be allocated to English language advertisements, since it has been revealed that such adverts help the students in their studies. If more time is allocated, students' learning of new words will increase.

Parents should encourage their children to watch English language advertisements with little attention on the attractive pictures and captions.

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