

The Patterns of Language-Mixing in Print Adverts of Commercial Banks and Mobile Telecommunications Firms in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Code-mixing is a conventional lexical phenomenon in communities of high heterogeneity and Kenya shows no exception to this. English, Swahili and vernacular dialects are mixed in most of the commercial adverts in the corporate sector of the Kenyan economy. As code-mixing becomes an idiosyncratic trend in Kenyan corporate sector, this study sought to determine the patterns of code-mixing in information-loaded and outcome-driven commercial print advertisements of commercial banks and mobile telecommunications firms in Kenya. The data for this study was collected from primary and secondary sources. It was obtained from language-mixed print adverts from newspapers, brochures, posters, billboards and any relevant advertising message on the walls and buildings housing these firms. The study was conducted in Nairobi County. The target population comprised of potential customers aged 18 years and above. Purposive sampling was used to select language-mixed print adverts only. Collected data was analyzed using the processes of Lexical pragmatics theory. From the results, it was concluded that code-mixing was prevalent in commercial adverts in Kenya. The languages that were mixed in print adverts were: English and Kiswahili, English and Sheng, English and Arabic, Kiswahili and Dholuo, English and Dholuo and Kiswahili and Gikuyu. The dominant mixture however was English and Kiswahili. The forms of language mixing evidenced in the adverts included inter-utterance language – mixing, intra-utterance language – mixing, shifting words to new uses, free and bound morpheme combinations and compounding of words. The use of second person reflexive pronoun was also highly exploited giving rise to a defined pattern.

Key Words: Language mixing, Print adverts, Commercial banks and Telecommunications firms

INTRODUCTION

This study specifically focused on language-mixing in the etymology of advertisements in the cooperate sector in Kenya. According to Bhatia (2001), language-mixing denotes to the mixing of two or more languages or language varieties in speech (spoken or in print). Some scholars use the terms "code-mixing" and "code-switching" interchangeably, especially in studies of syntax,

morphology, and other formal aspects of language (Muysken, 2000; Ayeomoni, 2006). Bhatia and Ritchie (2004) defined code-mixing as “*the mixing of various linguistic units (morphemes, words, modifiers, phrases, clauses and sentences) primarily from two participating grammatical systems within a sentence*” (p.337). Utterances containing code-mixing show the same “discourse unity” as utterances in one linguistic variety alone. The linguistic varieties participating in code-mixing may also be different languages or dialects or styles of the same language. However, this study is concerned only with alternations of dialectal, thus when the term code-mixing is used in this study, it only refers to such language mixing (Myers-Scotton, 2000).

Members of the same society or culture always share common philological habits. The mixing of two language codes is a common practice among local population in Kenya, especially in the elite societies of the urban centers (Brice, 2000). The code-mixing phenomenon is currently prevalent because of the fact that many people are bilingual, trilingual or even multilingual. The current advancement of technology, corporate sector, education and communication has rapidly increases local diversity and global connectedness (Ghemawat & Altman, 2012). This thus implies that people of different languages and different cultures come into contact constantly. Apparently code-mixing has become socially and communicatively unavoidable and it helps us to develop and improve relationship and enables us to adjust and adapt to the environment we are in.

This study endeavored to understand the patterns of advertising language in Kenya. According to Bhatia (2001), advertising language is supposed to be creative, complex, and attention grabbing. Advertisement is usually packed with various distinguished elements like repetition, strategic word order, neologisms, superlatives, hyperbole and other creative non-standard use of language (Cook, 2008). Advertising language is highly stylized. Yet it has to work within a fixed set of restrictions such as legal matters and other what is deemed as more trivial issues such as space. With such limitations in mind, advertising language has to be so carefully crafted with the intention to manipulate and persuade consumers on lexical level with the combination of visual image. The language of advertising is therefore quite a restricted genre.

Words appearing in advertisement are decided very consciously. Mixing “alien” codes into domestic language thus serves a very specific purpose – selling. In Kenya, advertisers have varied choices to make due to the multi-ethnic nature of our social background. English, the official language may be used, Kiswahili, the national language is another preference and other 52 local dialects such as Kamba, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Maasai may also be used. As code-mixing becomes an idiosyncratic trend to be acknowledged in Kenyan cooperate sector, this study sought to determine the patterns of code-mixing in information-loaded and outcome-driven commercial print advertisement of commercial banks and mobile telecommunications firms in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. In as such, data was obtained from language-mixed print adverts from newspapers, advertisements of the said nature as displayed on billboards and posters, brochures from these target forms, any relevant advertising message on the walls and buildings housing these firms. The study targeted six commercial banks and three mobile telecommunication firms in Nairobi County. The internet as an information source

also proved valuable in our study since it provided scholarly contributions on code switching in advertising to bilingual consumers in foreign countries. It also provided literature on the theory used in analyzing this research data.

For sampling purposes, purposive sampling technique was used whereby the researcher selected language –mixed print adverts only from commercial print advertisement of commercial banks and mobile telecommunications firms in Kenya. The researcher used varied data collection techniques to obtain data used in the study. Observation technique was used where the researcher was directly involved in observing, studying and recording the outdoor adverts on billboards, posters, brochures, and building. Relevant advertisements from Nation Newspapers were also collected by the researcher for analysis.

Data collected was analyzed using the processes of Lexical pragmatics theory. This theory was proposed and developed by BlunierReinhard in 1990 in his publication in the journal of semantics. It comprised of two theories in one, that is, lexical semantics and conversational implicatures. The theory was further developed by scholars namely, Carston (1998) Blunter (1998) and Wilson (2003) who tackled the inadequacies and problems that featured in the theory. The theory's processes are lexical narrowing, lexical broadening, approximation, hyperbole, metaphor, category extension and neologism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Languages Used in the Data

According to the data collected for this study, the language- mixtures that featured were;

- English and Kiswahili
- English and Sheng
- English and Arabic
- Kiswahili and Dholuo
- English and Dholuo
- Kiswahili and Kikuyu

However, the mixing is predominantly between English and Kiswahili.

How the Languages are mixed in Print Adverts

This phenomenon of language mixing as earlier stated refers to the alternation of different languages in words, sentences or utterances. Based on the adverts collected, words were innovatively used to suit the products being offered. Word formation processes were adhered to. Word formation refers to the strategy of creating or constructing a new lexical item. It is a strategy used in extending the lexical resources of a language.

The processes relevant to our data and appropriate examples are discussed below:

(i) Compounding of Words: According to Booij (2005) compounding or composition, is the process of putting two words together to form a third. Such words are called *compounds*, independent, of the form class ('part of speech') of the new word, the number of elements involved, whether they are hyphenated and so on. According to the data collected, the compounded nouns

formed were akin to coinage but where existing words were used in the word building process to suit new innovations.

Examples of this kind as manifested in our data are;

Example 1

- Pesa point
Money point
Pesa + point = pesa point
Noun + noun = compound noun

Noun pesa (Kiswahili word for money) is combined with a noun point (English word) to form a compound noun pesa point – combination of Kiswahili and English. Pesa point is a place where one accesses money through ATM services.

Example 2

- Bonga points
Talk points
Bonga + points = Bonga points
Verb + noun = compound noun.

Bonga is a Kiswahili word that means “talk”. It is not Kiswahili sanifu term but is regarded as a functional lexical item. Bonga – a verb is combined with points – a noun to form a compound noun bonga points. Bonga points are earned as one buys airtime or a credit card from Safaricom Company. These points increase with the buying of these credit cards. That is, the more credit cards you buy, the more bonga points you earn and these points in turn earn you a bonga gift. This in the context of persuasion means that the customer is attracted and retained in buying this product because of the gifts. Thus, the customer becomes permanently attracted to these products because of the incentives that go with them.

A point to note from the above data is that a Kiswahili word is joined to English word to form a compound lexical item of language – mixed form. These language mixed compound nouns look unique and appealing to consumers. The simplicity of the words accompanied by the uniqueness make them memorable.

(ii) Blending of Words: The blending of two existing words to make a new word was doubtless an unconscious process in the oldest periods of our language (Joy *et al.*, 2009). Blending can and frequently does create new morphemes or give new meanings to old ones.

An example of a blend observed in our data is the term Safaricom. Safaricom is a blend of a full Kiswahili word safari (to mean journey) and part of English word, communications to give rise to a blend Safaricom. This is a brand name for one of the mobile telecommunications firm under study. The word consists of language-mixed blend of Kiswahili and English. Consumers have further shortened this blend to “Safcom”. In this case, part of the word Safari, that is “saf” is blended with com. This shortening makes it easier to pronounce, it appeals and also enhances memorability.

(iii) Free and Bound Morpheme Combination: A morpheme which can occur in isolation (i.e. which can also be a word – form) is termed as a free morpheme. A morpheme which can only occur in a word – form in conjunction with atleast one other morpheme is termed as a bound morpheme (Booij, 2005).

The following two plural forms of lexical items were cited in a KCB advertisement in Newspapers.

Example 1

- Kukus
Chickens
Kuku + –s= Kukus
free morpheme bound morpheme coined plural form
(singular) (plural marker)

In this case English plural morpheme –s is attached to Kiswahili free morpheme (sg) to form a coined plural form kukus. Kuku usually has no plural form.

Example 2

- Jikos
Charcoal stoves.
Jiko + -s = jikos
free morpheme bound morpheme coined plural form
(singular) (plural marker)

The Kiswahili plural form for ‘jiko’ is ‘meko’ but in this case, English plural marker –s is attached to the Kiswahili free morpheme ‘jiko’ (sg) to form an innovative plural form ‘jikos’.

The items explained above were “Happy Holiday” prizes in the KCB “Open Save and Win” Christmas Promotion for those customers who open Mapato, Jiinue, Current or Simba accounts or those who increase their savings in these particular accounts if they already exist.

Free offers are common in advertisements. They contribute to the persuasive functions of advertising in that consumers buy these products advertised anticipating to get these free items.

Example 3

M- pesa

M- stands for mobile

M-pesa therefore means mobile money. This is money send through mobile services. This is money transfer service offered by Safaricom.

M- hyphenated to Kiswahili word (free morpheme) “pesa” to mean “money”. This gives rise to a popular term M- pesa. The M-pesa system allows borrowing, transferring and making payments using short text messages (SMS). It has proved revolutionary in Kenya, whose landline network has been overtaken by mobile phones. (DN 03/07/2007.)

M- Pesa is an innovative service that has enhanced electronic transactions and stimulated activity among the unbanked population. (DN 27/01/09)

(iv) Shifting Words to New Uses: In this category, words are converted from one grammatical function to another with no change of form, a process known as functional shift. The change involves change from one part of speech to another. Nouns are just as freely used as adjectives, verbs are also used as adjectives or practically so as attributives (McCollomet *al.*, 2002).

The examples under this category featured in brand names of bank accounts and brand names of tariffs of mobile telecommunications firms. Observations showed that names of bank accounts are target areas in language – mixing practice. Most accounts are branded Kiswahili names though an Arabic brand name also features.

Examples of these as observed from the banks under study are given below:

Example 1: Uwezo Account (Barclays Bank)

‘Uwezo’ means ability or capability.

This is an account with an opening balance of kshs 5000. No monthly fee is charged and there is also no charges on withdrawals and deposits. The bank offers interest rates of upto 5.5. %.

As the name suggests you save according to your financial ability. You can save as little as twenty shillings. This attracts customers with low income. The no fee charges is also an attractive incentive.

‘Uwezo’ – ability is a noun but in this position, it shifts its function to an adjective. It pre- modifies the noun account.

Example 2: Al Wahda Service (Barclays Bank)

Al Wahda is an Arabic expression that means ‘unity’.

This banking service is offered to Muslims under La Riba banking though the service is open to both salaried and non-salaried customers regardless of their religious background.

La	Riba.
No	interest.

Thus La Riba Banking means no interest banking service.

An expression “Marhaba to the Al Wahda Account” accompanies the account name, this means “Welcome to the Unity Account”

Customers are welcomed to open this account. This is a good gesture that makes the customers feel valued. The Muslims feel a sense of belonging and recognition and thus identifies themselves with this account, regarding it as their own. Moreover the banking is approved by Barclays Shariah Advisory Board. This appeals to Muslims as their faith prohibits usury.

Another account in this bank with a Kiswahili brand name is Pepea Account.

Example 3: Safari Savings Account (Standard Chartered Ban)

“Safari” means journey – a noun. This noun shifts its function to an adjective.

This is a long – term savings account whose withdrawals are restricted to once every three months. There are no bank charges on this account and have low opening balance of Kshs. 2000 and interest rates upto 5.5%.

The no charge banking and the interest rates are attractive and are likely to persuade customers to open this kind of account without considering the opening balance stated above.

Example 4: Haba na Haba Access account (•Co- Operative Bank of Kenya)

“HabanaHaba” means “little and little”.

This is part of the Kiswahili proverb “HabanaHabahuJazakibaba” which means “Little and Little fills the measure”

This “HabanaHaba” also functions as an attributive adjective in this context of use.

Advertisers exploit the known concepts to make the message clear and persuasive. Consumers, using their encyclopedic knowledge process the message and regard the “HabanaHaba” account as an account of choice given that little amount of money saved accumulates to an amount to enable you accomplish a task.

Example 5: Mapato Account (Commercial Bank of Kenya)

“Mapato” means income or revenue.

It is a noun which in this context shifts its function to an adjective.

This is a principle savings account. Withdrawals are made once every three months. This allows the savings to accumulate. This brand name appeals to customers.

Example 6: Jiinue Account (Commercial Bank of Kenya)

“Jiinue” means lift oneself. Jiinue is a complete utterance in Kiswahili, but in this context it pre-modifies the noun account. Thus it plays an adjectival role.

This is an account for small business operators e.g. hawkers, jua kali sector etc.

The account name appeals to customers as it suggests that this account helps one to uplift or raise his/her economic status hence improve his/her standard of living. It is an account that implies a positive change.

Example 7: Bidii Juniour Account (Post Bank)

This is an account open to all persons below 18 years of age. There are no monthly charges and ledger fee. One free bankers’ cheque per school term is also offered. All deposits are free. These free services and offers are persuasive to customers.

The observation made also showed that most tariffs of the mobile telecommunications firms under study are branded Kiswahili names too. These Kiswahili brand names are self-referential such that the meaning of the product advertised is depicted from the names.

Examples on these are stated below:

Example 8: Ongea Tariff in Safaricom

Ongea means ‘talk’. It is a verb which in its context of use becomes an attributive adjective. It is a tariff with reduced fixed charges of eight shillings per minute, all day, and all night everyday from Safaricom to Safaricom line.

One calls anytime with constant charges. However, calls to other local networks are Kshs. 15. This service is convenient as there is no restriction for timings unlike other tariffs where low charges are regulated between certain duration.

The name “onzea” is appealing and its simplicity makes it popular and enhances memorability. Saasa Tariff is another Kiswahili branded tariff in this firm.

Example 9: Vuka tariff in Airtel

“Vuka” means “cross”. It is a verb which in this context becomes an adjective.

This tariff’s charges are eight shillings per minute across all networks in Kenya. The service is not network restrictive and therefore customers can call at this rate regardless of the network. As the name suggests, consumers are urged to crossover from their competitors e.g. Safaricom, Orange to Zain. This across network strategy is very persuasive.

Producers are constantly on the look out to outwit their competitors. New tariffs come up once the others have been on sale for sometime. The vuka + tariff (SN 25/01/09) was introduced with even lower rates of three shillings per minute to ten friends and family, but just for Zain network. The lower rates are attractive and because they apply to Zain network only, customers will have to maintain this network if they are to benefit from this lower rates.

(v) Intra Utterance Language – Mixing: Intra utterance language – mixing refers to mixing of languages within an utterance.

Examples of this kind that feature in the data collected are displayed below:

Example 1:

Barclays can saidia you.

Barclays can help you.

In this example, Kiswahili verb “saidia” which means ‘help’ is inserted in an utterance composed of English words. This makes it stand out from its context.

Luna and Perachio (2005a:2) says “if an individual is processing information in one language and the message switches one word to a different language, that code switched word will be made salient or marked in linguistic terms, because it stands out from its context”.

This saliency increases message recall which is a vital tool for persuasion. Kiswahili language is regarded as an ordinary citizen’s language and therefore the bank signals that its services are open to all categories of customers. This creates a friendly atmosphere and gives the impression that this bank is very accommodative and customer sensitive.

Example 2:

Double your salo!

Double your salary.

Salo is a sheng word for salary.

The phrase above is imperative.

In this Barclays Bank sales promotion, one has first to apply for a loan before 15th June, 2009 to qualify for the draw. The lucky winner of the grand prize gets one year's salary from Barclays in addition to that that he/she earns from the employer. The service above is offered to salaried customers only.

Sheng is popular among the youth. Therefore this advert targets the youth whom because of age are still in salaried employment. The deadline indicates the urgency for customers to enter the promotion immediately. The customer is persuaded by the idea of doubling the salary though loan repayment is the burden to shoulder.

Example 3:

Save "Haba na Haba" for your business dream!

This means

Save little and little for your business dream!

Part of the Kiswahili proverb "Haba na haba hujaza kibaba has been inserted in this utterance. This message encourages customers to open "Haba na Haba" Access Account discussed under bank accounts. The message is appealing to consumers as that little amount of money you save accumulates to an amount to enable you realize your business dream.

The illustrations of twenty shillings coins put on a taxi that accompany this message helps in further understanding of the message and confirms that the business dream can be realized through a taxi business.

Example 4:

Piga biashara yako jeki with an SME loan from KCB.

This utterance means.

Give your business a boost with an SME loan from KCB. That is, boost your business with an SME loan from KCB.

SME stands for Small Medium Enterprises.

This is also a metaphorical statement.

A boost to a business is regarded as a 'jack'.

A jack is used to lift a vehicle when there is a puncture. Therefore this business loan offered by KCB will enable those businesses that were about to collapse to increase their stock hence improve their businesses. The word "jeki" appeals to customers and this helps to make the message memorable.

The two examples above are metaphorical in nature.

Egan (2005) defines a metaphor as "an imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else which has qualities that you are trying to express". She further points out that in a metaphorical utterance, the advertiser invites his audience to process the utterance. In so doing, the audience is made to see the resemblance between the promoted product and the object or property featured in the metaphor. Advertisers make use of metaphorical propositions as a strategy to present the message with more strength than it might otherwise have been presented in the ordinary way.

Example 5: 2pendane even more.

This means

We love each other even more.

2pendane is a complete Kiswahili utterance. Its English counterpart is “we love each other “. Language economy refers to a word or phrase that is able to be expressed more succinctly in another language than one’s native tongue (Becker 1997) quoted in Bishop (2006:18). For example, since the Kiswahili utterance “2pendane” is more linguistically economical than the English equivalent. “We love each other “. Advertisers use the Kiswahili version to refer to this utterance.

The ‘we’ comprises of the advertiser (Orange) and the reader of the message (the target audience). Here, we get the feeling that the advertisers and the audience have a common goal.

In this advert, the advertiser aims at selling iphone 39 for kshs 29,999. The phones are in two colours, white for her and black for him. This model comes at Valentine season, a season of gifts for lovers. There is an intimate relationship between the advertiser and the target audience.

This is evident in the use of numeral “2” instead of “Tu”. The use of figures among letters is also a strategy to make the message eye-catching.

Such an advert is good at creating rapport between the advertiser and the audience where the audience is persuaded not so much by the quality of the phone, but by the warm gesture of this company.

(vi) Inter-utterance Language – Mixing: This refers to mixing languages between utterances.

Examples of these kinds reflected in our data are discussed below:

Example 1: PataZiaaadaUkicall

get free airtime when you receive a call

receive calls from any network to our orange mobile and get 3/- free airtime per minute. that’s free airtime you can use to call any network, anytime.

all extra minutes are valid until 15th January 2009. (DN 17/12/09)

“Ziada” means excess, supplement, surplus “PataZiada” therefore means “get surplus”. In the above data, the vowel, “a” has been tripled so that “ziada” is “ziaaada”,

This has been done for striking effect. The utterance “pataziaaada” which is the headline is in Kiswahili and the rest of the utterances are written in English. This is a headline with a promise therefore it leads the reader to the text because he/she wants to know the promise and then act.

As Berke (1996:55) says “a powerful headline with a strong promise of benefit can move people to action”. This offer is aimed at making people buy Orange lines as the beneficiaries are those called on Orange lines. The expiry date for the offer is indicated and this speeds up the sales because the buyers want to beat the deadline. Customers are attracted by this free airtime without realizing the buying of the line that is involved.

Advertisers use the verb get more often than buy for psychological reasons. Buy is a word that has one major meaning: the spending of money. It denotes what for most people is an unpleasant action. Get, on the other hand is a word with wider and vaguer associations. It connotes acquiring, and makes the spending less obvious. Russell (2001: 189).

Example 2: Orange ochopo dala

Mtandao wa Orange sasa umefika kisumu na viunga vyake. Njoo katika ukumbi wa Jomo Kenyatta grounds kwa tumbuizo la kukata na shoka mnamo tarehe 27 Desemba 2008kuanzia saa tano asubuhi hadi saa kumi na mbili jioni bila malipo yeyote.

Translated as

Orange has reached home.

Orange network has now reached Kisumu and its outskirts. Come to Jomo Kenyatta grounds for exciting entertainment on 27th December 2008 from 11. a.m to 6 p.m without any payment.

In this data, the languages mixed are Dholuo and Kiswahili. The headline is in Dholuo while the rest of the text is in Kiswahili.

Orange recognizes that Kisumu and its suburbs is Luo region and therefore identifies itself with the Luos by using their language. By so doing, the advertisers hope to persuade the Luos to buy their products. The Luos will also feel recognized and will regard Orange as their own firm. This is supported by Orange's claim that they have reached home, an implication that Orange and the Luos belong to the same family.

Example 3: Bonga ushinde

Everyone is a winner

This means

Talk to win

Everyone is a winner (S SN 31/08/08)

Here, the alternation is between Kiswahili and English.

For you to win you have to buy airtime then earn bonga points. The more bonga points you earn the more chances of winning. But more bonga points means buying more credit cards from Safaricom. Therefore customers are encouraged to buy more credit cards. Bonga points earn you a gift so even if you don't win the grand draw; you get a gift so all is not lost. The statement "everyone is a winner" encourages customers to participate in the promotion because by the end of the day, everybody will get something. The message is presented as if you win just for talking; the spending bit is indirectly conveyed.

Example 4: Lipua mamilioni

Lipua mamilioni means Blow up millions

The data above consists of Kiswahili utterance and followed by English utterances. The use of "mamilioni" for plural is for emphasis.

“Lipua mamilioni” is a hyperbole.

A hyperbole is a form of exaggeration or an overstatement used to give emphasis. It is a striking stylistic feature in the register of advertising. Advertisers go overboard in words when describing their products. The aim behind this is to capture the readers’ attention and persuade them to act upon what is advertised, that is, buy the product. They make use of hyperbolic texts from which the reader identifies the uniqueness of the product.

Example 5: OKOA JAHAZI

The message above consists of English and Kiswahili utterance. “Okoajahazi” literally means “save adhow”, but metaphorically it means “save the situation”. “Jahazi” is adhow, a water vessel. This metaphor “OkoaJahazi” was initially used by people living along the Coast where dhows were commonly used. The dhow was rescued from capsizing hence the expression “OkoaJahazi”. Later on the use of this expression was extended to other contexts such that anybody who needed help would say “okoajahazi” to mean “offer a solution”. In this case a customer who wants to make a call but has no credit is offered credit advance by Safaricom to enable him communicate. Thus, it offers a solution to the customer. Advance credit is a persuasive technique that aims at encouraging customers to buy Safaricom lines with hopes of getting this credit facilities.

Need to make a call but have no credit? is a rhetorical question. This is a question which does not expect an answer, since it really asserts something which is known to the addressee and cannot be denied. Advertisers use rhetorical questions as it captures the reader’s attention to explore the entire text.

(vii) The Use of 2nd Person Reflexive Pronoun “Yourself”: The collected data revealed that the use of reflexive pronoun “Yourself (singular) is favoured in this language mixed adverts. The “Yourself” pronoun enables the advertiser to personalize and address the reader directly.

According to Muchura (2004), the language of direct address is the language of pure salesmanship and that of indirect address, a diluted version of it. The use of “yourself “in the register of advertising perceives the reader as an individual. The advertisements in our collected data below represent this perception.

Example 1: Jibambie; Choose the call rate you want and top up with the right scratch card.

1000/= Call for 3/= sms 2.00/=.

500/= Call for 4/= sms 2.00/=.

250/= Call for 5/= sms 3.00/=.

100/= Call for 6/= sms 3.00/=.

50/= Call for 7/= sms 3.50/=.

20/= Call for 8/= sms 3.50/=

“Jibambie” means “choose for yourself the scratch card of your choice according to the call rate you want and top up.

“Jibambie” comes from the word “bamba” which means “sheet, flat thin piece of anything.

“Bamba” is a coined name for safaricom scratch card (Credit card) which comes as a result of the

scratch card being flat and thin piece of paper. “Jibambie” therefore means you choose for yourself the “bamba” (scratch card) you want. Every scratch card has call rates per minute and SMS charges indicated on it. The higher the values of the scratch card the lower the call rate per minute as well as the SMS charges. Therefore the customer has the freedom to make a choice of the scratch card he/she so wishes to buy. The top up determines your call rate. This applies to Safaricom to Safaricom lines only. Call other networks for Ksh. 15/= and SMS 5.00/=. This is attractive because, the variety provides the customers with choices to make depending on the amount of money they have. Also, the offer on call rates attracts the customers to buy especially credit cards of higher values as they are motivated to talk for long while they pay less.

Example 2: “Jishindie” Bonus.

Top up now

“Jishindie Bonus “means “Win for yourself bonus”. Jishindie comes from the word “shinda” to mean “Win”.

This advert encourages the reader to buy credit from Zain Mobile Phone Company to increase his/her chances to win Ksh.1,000,000/= on 13th January 2009. Before the actual grand prize, there are other prizes to be won. The winners of mini prizes are shown on the advert to make it real and thus attract more readers to top up. This is an advertising strategy to enable the company to increase its credit card sells. The more you top up, the higher your chances of winning.

Example 3: “Jipatie yako leo”

Translated as “Get yourself yours today”

This is an advert marketing Postbank Cash X-Press ATM card. Detailed information about this advert has been given under 2.8. The advertiser still exploits the use of singular reflexive pronoun yourself. The addressee is seen as a participant in this advert. He/She is asked to take part by himself/herself.

The examples of reflexive pronouns discussed above leads to a pattern such as:-

- Jibambie
- Jishindie
- Jishtue
- Jiachilie
- Jipatie
- Jishikie
- Jikwatue
- Jiinue

These utterances are simple and easy to remember. Thus, enhances memorability. It was noted that the use of “yourself” in advertisements indicated the addressee’s ownership, which in this case referred to the reader (the target audience). Since the use of “yourself” relates the message more closely to the reader/ prospect, it is widely exploited in the advertising register.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the results, it was concluded that code-mixing was prevalent in commercial adverts in Kenya. The languages that were mixed in print adverts were: English and Kiswahili, English and Sheng, English and Arabic, Kiswahili and Dholuo, English and Dholuo and Kiswahili and Gikuyu. The dominant mixture however was English and Kiswahili. The forms of language mixing evidenced in the adverts include inter utterance language – mixing, intra utterance language – mixing, shifting words to new uses, free and bound morpheme combination and compounding of words. The use of second person reflexive pronoun was also highly exploited giving rise to a defined pattern.

From the researcher's point of view, code-mixing mode of advertising was found to be very influential and attention-capturing. The study thus recommends that advertisers in the cooperate sector in Kenya needs to design their adverts in mixed language mode in order to capture attention of the customers.

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