PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF STICKERS PRINTED IN ENGLISH

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty

God the giver of all wisdom and knowledge.
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ABSTRACT

This research work sets out to use pragmatic principles to analyze the language of printed stickers in English. It portrays how advertisers use pragmatic features to persuade, inform and manipulate their target audience to buy their goods and services or respond to their invitations. A survey of advertising texts and pictures was made to bring out those pragmatic features from one hundred advertisements drawn mainly from stickers printed in English. The stickers were collected from two commercial towns of Onitsha and Awka in Anambra state. The instrument for data collection was observation. Each advertisement on the stickers was observed to sift out information as regards the pragmatic principle relevant to that advertisement. The study revealed that advertisers employed the pragmatic weapons of implicature, dexis, speech acts, context etc as strategies in persuading, informing and manipulating their target audience. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that since most of the advertisers are products of Nigerian educational system, that efforts should be made to teach and emphasize the contextual meanings of words and expressions in our educational institutions. Advertisers should also be taught correct English expressions to be used in advertising.
Furthermore, people should be advised through the media and other means of communication not to use the advertisers’ English as a yardstick for measuring the standard of the English language.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

1.3 Statement of the Problem

1.4 Relevance of the Study

1.5 Research Methodology

1.6 Scope of the Study.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Pragmatics as a major division of semiotics has not received considerable attention by scholars because it is the last to be systematically investigated by linguists. Pragmatics is concerned with context dependent aspect of meaning. According to Levinson,
“Pragmatics is a branch of study which is concerned with the ability of language users to pair sentences with the context in which they would be appropriate” (24)

Pragmatics describes language from the point of view of the users, especially as regards the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using their language for social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in a speech event.

In any social situation, the main function of language is communication. In communication, there is always more than the ordinary message and the ability to interpret this inner message is what pragmatics sets out to achieve.

The language of stickers (which is a miniature form of advertising) is emotive and flowery. This makes it prone to pragmatics interpretation. The application of pragmatics principles makes it possible for the actual message of the stickers to be understood. According to Ndimele,

“Pragmatics is concerned with all aspect of language use, understanding, and appropriateness of expression due to context” (106)

Lycan also in buttressing the idea of context said that:

The knowledge of syntax, phonology and semantics has become clear that there are specific phenomena that can
only naturally be described by recourse to contextual concepts and the single word we hear in the study and practice of pragmatics is the word “context” meaning context of utterance. Pragmatics is specifically the functioning of language in context. This makes a significant contrast with semantics and syntax which generally aspire to be contextless. While syntax accounts for grammaticality in a string of words, that is whether a sentence is grammatically well-formed, semantics focuses on sentence-meaning, that is the meaning of sentence type in abstraction from any particular use to which the sentence might be put. In other words, it deals with the contextual meaning of sentence types while the field of pragmatics addresses the social uses of linguistic expressions in context (165).

Stressing the importance of context, Geertz, in his study of the linguistic etiquette among the Japanese stated that:

“It is nearly impossible to say anything without indicating the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer” (167)
The modern use of the term pragmatics derives from Morris who outlined the science of semiotics as “the science of signs” (6) His outline distinguishes three distinct branches of enquiry which include syntactic, semantics and pragmatics. In this enquiry pragmatics is the study of signs to interpreters. According to Katz however.

[Grammars] are the theories about the structure of sentence types …Pragmatics theories in contrast, do nothing to explicate the structure linguistic constructions or grammatical properties and relations. They explicate the reasoning of speakers and hearers in working out the correlation in the context of a sentence taken with a proposition. In this respect, a pragmatic theory is part of performance (19)

According to Onuigbo, the point to note in Katz’s use of pragmatics is that it covers both context- dependent aspects of language structure and the principle of language usage that has little to do with linguistics structure. He went on to say that pragmatics is concerned with those aspects of meaning of utterances which cannot be accounted for by straightforward reference to truth- conditions of the sentence uttered.
Pragmatics, therefore, accounts for what people use language to do and the linguistic features employed in doing it. In a written text, the syntactic features and the punctuation marks used to control the writing are linguistic contextualization cues. In a spoken text, on the other hand, the spoken utterances and the modulation of the voice serve also as the contextualization cues. The interpretation of the linguistic features or the formal system of language employed in the doing gives the formal semantic formation but the involvement of people and the interpretation of what they use these formal features of language in a given environment or context to do accounts for the pragmatic force”(318)

On context-dependent utterances, Ndimele opines that “pragmatic considerations may influence our choice of sounds, grammatical construction or even vocabulary from the resources of our language”(106). Giving an example in French language he said that there are two forms of 2nd person singular pronouns: “Vowels and tu”. Whereas “vous” is used in a formal situation, “tu” has an additional meaning of intimacy and therefore used in an informal situation. The interpretation given to these forms is context dependent. Choices made between alternatives expressions in terms of formality considerations may be entirely pragmatic and therefore have nothing to do with grammaticality of the expressions concerned. In other words, a sentence (depending on the situation) may be rejected not necessarily because it violate any grammatical requirement but
because it violates certain pragmatic rules about usage. According to Ndimele, “what this means is that pragmatic error may not necessarily mean a grammatical error. Sentence which may not break any grammatical rule may turn to be pragmatically odd depending on the context in which they are used” (107)

Levinson also shares this view when he said that

“The context- independence of syntactic phenomenon if left unchecked can generate unacceptable sentences” (34)

Some sentences are syntactically correct but the English language does not generate them because they are unacceptable. Examples are

(a) The prize won.
(b) An orange won the prize.
(c) The apple ran the race.
(d) A prize won the give.
(e) A stadium was very young.

The above strings from the native speaker’s intuitive knowledge of the grammatical rule of English are anomalous and therefore can bring about misconceptions when used in the language of stickers. Apart from the syntactic and phonological domains of language, there is also a development in the field of
semantics which has isolated intractable phenomena such as decixes and other context–dependent implications. This situation has brought into focus the importance of pragmatics analysis for the language of advertising and other forms of language. Besides these particular problems that seem to require pragmatic solutions, there are also other general motivation for the development of pragmatic theory and analysis.

Levinson also in buttressing the above fact said that:

“Pragmatics can effect a radical simplification of the semantic. This hope is based on the fact that pragmatic principles of language usage can be shown systematically to “read in” the utterances more than they conventionally or literally mean”(34)

It is essential for pragmatics to be used in analyzing the language of stickers as a miniature form of advertising because it is realized that there is a great gap between current linguistic theory and communications. When linguists talk of the goal of linguistic theory to construct an account of a sound–meaning, it might perhaps infer that such a grand theory would in fact account for only the essentials of how we communicate using language in social situations. However, if the term “meaning” is restricted to the output of a semantic theory such as a truth –
conditioning, those interested in a theory of linguistic communication will be greatly disappointed. This is because it is clear that semantic theory alone can give only a proportion of an account of language understanding. Pragmatics helps to bridge the gap because it accounts for hints, implicit purposes, assumptions, social attitudes etc. that are effectively communicated by the language, besides figures of speech which are the major preoccupation of rhetorics and literature. Sometimes a lot of inference can be drawn from such communications that have a great range of implicatures. The conversation below is an example where the responses carry great implications.

A: You look sweet today (Implication: I compliment you on your dressing)
B: Oh thanks
A: Do you have snacks to go? (Implication Sell some snacks to me if you can)
B Cakes and dough moughts (Gives him)
A Well, we’re going out. Why?
B Oh! I was just going to say come with me.

There is need for a theory or theories that will compliment semantics in order to give a relatively full account of how language is used to communicate. This is
because in the above example, there is a great range of such implications some of which have only the tenuous relationship to the semantic content of what is said.

Pragmatics therefore shows how the resources of the language could be employed to portray the meaning of an advertisement on the stickers which may not be associated with the literal meaning of language.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

1. Do advertisers use speech-acts in advertising?
2. Does context contribute to the understanding of the advertisement on the stickers?
3. Why do advertisers employ implicature as a weapon to appeal to the senses of the audience?
4. What is the importance of daxis in advertisement?
5. How does advertisement affect the Gricean co-operative principle?
6. To what extent does the language of stickers make positive statement?
7. Does the language of stickers reflect errors in the use of English as a second language?

In this study, a number of terms are central to the analysis and these terms are explained as follows:-

**Sticker:** An adhesive label, especially one displaying a message or advertisement in the window of a shop, door of a house, window of a car etc.
Implicature: - Underlying meaning of an utterance

Deixis: - Use of some adverbs or pronouns to point at something

Context of utterance: - The setting in which a piece of language is used by the speaker

Co-operative principle: - Rules observed by interactants for successful communication

Illocutionary Act: - Using an utterance to perform a speech act

Explicit performative: - An utterance where a speaker’s utterance is openly expressed

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to use pragmatic principles to analyse the language of stickers printed in English. It aims at evaluating how advertisers (writers of the stickers) appeal to the senses of their audience and those who receive or use the stickers.

The research will also show how structural analysis is insufficient to account for a perfect understanding of the message of stickers. The general objective of the study can be broken down as follows.
1. To apply pragmatics principles (knowledge) in assessing the meaning of the message of stickers

2. To suggest solutions to the misconceptions that exist between speaker-meaning and sentence meaning

3. The study also intend to reveal to the readers that the language of sticker are full of propaganda tricks and exaggerations which are employed by advertisers in order to attract their audience.

1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The essence of language is to communicate meaning from the point of view of the user. Since in pragmatics meaning is context dependent, it is expected that the language of stickers though brief, emotive and sometimes poetic will portray the intended meaning of the message clearly. Pragmatics as the theoretical framework on which this study is based is mainly concerned with explicating the reasoning of speakers and hearers in working out the correlation in the context in which a sentence is embedded. Pragmatics therefore, accounts for what people use language to do and the linguistic features employed in doing it.

In a bid to make use of language in printed stickers, substandard English, incorrect spellings, fragmental and vague expressions are employed by the advertisers. This has created a misunderstanding of the information produced by
the stickers leading to misinterpretations and misconception of the message of the stickers. This also makes it possible for the readers to assess the intended meaning of the stickers.

Researchers have shown great interest in the language of advertising but very few people have done any thing in the language of stickers. Besides, nothing has been done using pragmatics framework as the theoretical base for the studies. That is why the study is carried out with the hope that the findings will serve as important data for further studies in the field.

1.4 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Different research works have been done in this area of study but research on communication has not been exhausted because there are still misconceptions of ideas between the writer and the reader. This is why some information on the stickers are understood better than others. This research intends to find out how the writer’s message will correspond with their intended meanings. According to Adegbite,

The pragmatics analysis of language can be broadly understood to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words and constructions, but from the way in which utterances are used
and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered

(61qtd in Babajide)

This research will portray the fact that successful communication is very essential between the writer and the reader. Crystal also supports this idea when he said that

”Pragmatic principle arise in the attempt to achieve successful communication in any setting and at any level” (120)

This study will also show that without reference to context as a pragmatic variable, the denotative meaning of an advertisement on stickers may not be specific. It will reveal how writers (advertisers) use implicature as a pragmatic principle to convince their audience to believe in their products or in what they are saying without literally telling lies.

The data generated from this research will provide teachers and students with great insight into the problem posed by the use of pragmatic principles in the language of stickers. The result of this research will moreover serve as an eye opener to the audience and help them to assess any sticker before they respond to it.
1.5- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for this research will be collected from stickers printed in English. This will include both religious and secular stickers. The reason for the choice of stickers is that they will make for easy interpretation.

The data derived from the above sources will be interpreted and the information derived from them would help discuss the pragmatic principles employed by writers in the language of stickers.

1.6- SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the use of pragmatics principle in analysing the language of stickers as against other linguistic enquiries.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, the review of Related Literature will be done from the point of view of the following:

2.1 Pragmatics as a Level of Linguistic Inquiry
2.2 Implicature as a Pragmatic Theory
2.3 Co-operative Principles in Pragmatics
2.4 Speech Acts in Pragmatics
2.5 Deixis in Pragmatics
2.6 Context in Pragmatics
2.7 Language of Advertising: Pragmatic Perspective

2.1 PRAGMATICS AS A LEVEL OF LINGUISTIC INQUIRY

2.1.1 ORIGIN OF PRAGMATICS

   In a wide conception of language as a general theory of sign system, pragmatics is recognized as one of the three inter-related levels of semiotics viz-syntactic, semantic and pragmatic levels. Pragmatics as one of the three major divisions of semiotics has been the last to be systematically investigated by
linguists. This is because in the words of Horn, pragmatics was looked at as “a large, loose and disorganized collection of research effort”(113)

He went on to say that pragmatics was considered to be a branch of study into which any ill-behaved and variable phenomenon in language matters was dumped.

However many linguists are working very hard to see that pragmatics as a linguistic inquiry receives considerable attention. According to Mey “the past twenty-odd years have witnessed an ever-growing interest in pragmatics and pragmatic problems” He went on to say that there have been international conferences, and the International Pragmatics Association has been in existence for more than fifteen years. Also there has been publication of journals on pragmatics, newsletters including a number of working papers, theses, dissertations and book series. Also six major works and textbooks as well as a concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics are available. To complete the history of pragmatic Mey concluded by saying “… the picture is complete. Pragmatics has come into its own and it is here to stay” (3)

It is noteworthy that pragmatics didn’t just happen by itself appearing out of nowhere. It is, therefore, important to define pragmatics in terms of what it does even though it is difficult to limit the field in such a way that we can say where pragmatics stops and where it begins.
The modern use of the term pragmatics, however, derives from Charles Morris who defined pragmatics as “The study of the relation of signs to interpreters” (6) Pragmatics as a domain of linguistic inquiry partly emerged as a result of some reactions against Chomsky’s treatment of language as an abstract device or mental ability not related to the uses, users, and functions of language. For him, the proper domain of pragmatics would be what he has called performance which is the way the individual goes about using language. This concrete linguistic practice would be distinguished from an abstract competence, understood as the user’s knowledge of the language and its rules. This viewpoint is neatly captured by Katz who says:

Grammars are theories about the structure of sentence types …pragmatic theories, in contrast, do nothing to explicate the structure of linguistic constructions or grammatical properties and relations. They explicate the reasoning of speakers and hearers in working out the correlation in the context of a sentence taken with a proposition. In this respect, a pragmatic theory is part of performance (19)

However, the question of how to delimit pragmatics vis-à-vis syntax, semantics, and phonology still remains. In fact, this question prompted the
development of pragmatics as a linguistic inquiry. This development came up because syntax, phonology and semantics cannot adequately explain various syntactic and phonological principles especially in the area of stress and intonation except by recourse to contextual concept. In speech, the meaning of an utterance is determined by stress and intonation depending on the meaning the speaker intends. In other words, words do not change their meaning in speech but the tune we use adds something to those words. According to O’connor “what the tune adds is the speaker’s feeling at the moment” (108). The reference to the speaker’s feeling at the moment is very essential and that is the pragmatic function of intonation. Syntax is mainly concerned with grammatically, well-formed sentences while semantics on its own, cannot incorporate intractable principles such as presupposition, speech acts, deixes and other context-dependent variables. Consequently, the study of the pragmatic theory becomes important.

2.1.2 DEFINITIONS OF PRAGMATICS

Pragmatics is mainly concerned with how people use language within particular context. According to Mey “The language user is the center of attention in pragmatics” (5). Many definitions have been given to the concept of pragmatics by many language philosophers. According to Levinson quoted in Mey, pragmatics
should be considered as “the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized or encoded in the structure of a language” (5). Lycan defined it as “the functioning of language in context” (162). Ogbologu defined it by saying that

“Pragmatics analyses language from the user’s viewpoint. It is concerned with choices and constraints in matters of the language based on the context. Indeed, pragmatics is concerned with pairing of sentences with their appropriate context” (44).

The emphasis on context reflects those factors which determine choices in language in social interaction. These choices have effects on the listeners. There are norms of politeness, appropriateness, formality, and respect associated with language use. Thus, pragmatics is at the center of appropriate interpretation of sentences since there may be differences between literal and implied meanings. These differences are brought about by the situation, the shared background knowledge of the participants in the discussion and the linguistic context of the expressions.

Charles Morris also considered pragmatics as “the science of relation of signs to their interpreters” (30). In other words, pragmatics is concerned not with language as a system or product per se, but rather with the interrelationship
between language form (communicated) messages and language users. It explores questions such as the following.

* How do people communicate more than what the words or phrases of their utterances might mean by themselves and how do people make these interpretations?
* Why do people choose to say and/or interpret something in one way rather than another?
* How do people’s perceptions of contextual factors (for example, who the interlocutors are, what their relationship is and what circumstances they are communicating in) influence the process of producing and interpreting language?

In his own view Crystal says that “pragmatics is the study of factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction” (120). Another linguist, Akmajian also defined pragmatics by saying that

“Pragmatics covers the study of language use and in particular, the study of linguistic communication in relation to language structure and context of utterance” (343)

He further illustrates that pragmatics involves three major communication skills which includes:
i. Using language for purposes such as greeting, informing, demanding, requesting, questioning etc.

ii. It also involves adapting language to suit the needs of the listener or situation, for instance, the way a child talks to an adult differs from the way he talks to his peers.

iii. Pragmatics follows the rules for conversation in a social setting such as talking turns, introducing new topic of conversation, staying on one topic, rephrasing when misunderstood and those rules vary from culture to culture and between languages.

Judging from the above discussion, it could be inferred that what is common in the study of pragmatics is the contribution of context to meaning and this goes a long way to explain that for effective communication to take place, the context in which the communication occurs should be of prime importance. In other words when an utterance is made, it is invariably done in a particular context by a particular speaker for a particular purpose.

Adegbite also saw pragmatics “as an area of language studies that has a wide scope” (61) He went on to say that its scope covers both context-dependent aspects of language structure and principles of language usage and understanding that have little to do with linguistic structure and as a result it will be difficult to have a definition that will cover these aspects. According to Adegbite, scholars in the area
like Bach and Harnish (1979), Wilson and Sperber (1981), Leech (1983), and Thomas (1983) among others generally agree that pragmatics accounts for the specific meanings of utterances in particular social and situational context, unlike semantics which accounts for the general (dictionary) meanings of sentences.

Particularly, Leech and short wrote that:

The pragmatic analysis of language can be broadly understood to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of the words and constructions but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered (290)

The above statement shows that certain underlying principles govern or control what we say or utter in any given social situation. These principles determine the way we express ourselves in any social situation or context. For instance, in a speech event, there is no explicit law which prevents a company manager and a messenger in the office from sharing jokes but it is not generally done. These are social norms of formality and politeness that we subconsciously imbibe and follow as a matter of course while talking to certain persons like older persons, persons superior to us or persons of opposite sex. In pragmatics, for the speaker and hearer
to understand each other, there must be certain common shared world view. Adegbite explains this further when he said that:

Pragmatic studies generally assume that participants in a discourse do not only rely on their knowledge of language system in their interactions. Instead they require a combination of the knowledge of the world, the knowledge of cultures and conventions of people and knowledge of the factors of situations in which communication takes place” (63)

Also according to Levinson ‘Understanding is used in the way favoured by workers in artificial intelligence to draw attention to the fact that understanding an utterance involves a great deal more than knowing the meanings of words uttered and the grammatical relations between them. Above all, understanding an utterance involves making inferences that will connect what is said to what is mutually assured or what has been said before that, is referred to other words as anaphoric reference (21)

The issue of invisible meaning of structural feature of the language was brought in by Yule when he said that.
“Pragmatics is the study of “invisible meaning” or how we even understand when it isn’t actually said or written” (27)

Actually, Yule’s opinion as will be discussed under the concept of implicature rests more on implied meanings which are based on a number of factors. Schiffrin sees pragmatics as “the relationship of language and its users” (28). In a more comprehensive definition, shaozhong explains that “pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics developed in the 1970’s which studies how people comprehend and produce a communicative act in a concrete speech situation which is usually a conversation (hence conversation analysis) (1) Leech et al went further to say that:

Pragmatics deals with two types of meanings ‘sentence meaning and speaker’s meaning. Pragmatics distinguishes two intents of meaning in each utterance or communicative act of verbal communication. One is the informative intent or sentence meaning and the other is the communicative intent or speaker meaning (24)

In buttressing communicative intent, Onuigbo in Anasiudu etal (ed) said that

“In communication, there is always more than the ordinary message and the ability to interprete this inner message demands what is called pragmatic competence” (364)
According to him, there is, in other words, the grammatical competence which has to do with the intuitive knowledge which a native speaker has of his language to generate acceptable and new sentences. But there is also a more fundemental kind of competence, which has to do with non-linguistic information in the interpretation of a given utterance. This is the pragmatic competence which results from background knowledge and personal beliefs in the use and interpretation of sentences in a given language based on the context of use and the hearer’s knowledge of the world of the speaker or writer. Some linguists like Nuyts et al seem to have deviated from the general opinion on the importance of context by projecting implicative, relations as their definition by inferring that “the existence of pragmatics guarantees that we do not say what we mean (intend)” (17)

For instance, one who says “Is that your daughter?” may mean any of the following:

(a) I don’t know that you have a daughter.

(b) So you are married and now have a daughter

(c) What a beautiful daughter you have?

The implication is that an expression can have various meanings, ranging from admiration, to disapproval, warning etc. Generally, it is the content (events, participants, objects etc) intonation (the way it is said) that informs the listener’s interpretation.
In fact Bar-Hillel raises an unfortunate alarm warning scholars about what they do with matters relating to pragmatics, as can be seen from the following statement credited to him.

“Be careful with forcing bits and pieces you find in the pragmatic waste basket into your favourite syntactic – semantic theory. It would perhaps be preferable to first bring some order into the content of this wastebasket” (405)

In other words, there are a number of unsettled scores in pragmatics and as such pragmatics has been declared a danger zone which must be ventured into with maximum caution by the researcher of any theoretical orientation.

In his view, Leech (qtd in shaozhung 2) said that, “The study of pragmatics as a separate field is more than necessary because it handles those aspects of meaning that semantics overlooks”.

However, despite the criticisms, pragmatics has made a great impact on language study in the areas of sociolinguistic conduct, person-to-person interactions, the choice of different linguistic means for a communicative act and interpretation for the same speech act.

Pragmatics as a linguistic inquiry has some relationships with other areas of linguistic inquiry such as semantics and syntax.
2.1.3 PRAGMATICS AND SEMANTICS

These two areas are closely related because both are theories of meaning but while pragmatics studies all aspects of meanings other than those involved in the analysis of sentences in terms of truth conditions; that is sentence meaning with regards to the propositional content alone, pragmatics addresses the study of meaning as it relates to social situations of context. But semantics studies the meanings of words and sentences in language. It deals with meanings in terms of truth conditions. Semantics studies meaning with the principles of entailment while pragmatics studies meaning in terms of implicature.

2.1.4 PRAGMATICS AND SYNTAX

Syntax studies the arrangement of words to form a sentence or sentences. Its major concern is well-formedness of sentence or grammaticality of sentence structures. While syntax is based on formation of sentence structures, pragmatics concerns itself with using those well-formed sentences for social functions. Under normal circumstances syntactic description does not go beyond the level of the sentence, whereas pragmatics considers that sentence in relation to social context. Coulhard points out that “meaning must be seen as an amalgam of grammatical, lexical and extra-textual information’ (18). The study of these linguistic areas, therefore, help to achieve effective communication and this is the essence of language production.
2.2 IMPLICATURE AS A PRAGMATIC THEORY

(CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE)

The term ‘conversational implicature’ was introduced by the philosopher H. Paul Grice. In his lectures and a couple of very influential articles in 1975 and 1978, he proposed an approach to the speaker’s and hearer’s cooperative use of inference. According to Mey “there seems to be enough regularity in the inference-forming behavior of listeners for speakers to exploit this by implying something, rather than stating it” (204) In his proposal, Grice maintained that “since communication is the essence of using language in interaction, without meaningfulness, effective communication cannot take place”. (qtd in Levinson 100)

Hurford in his own contribution explains implicature as a concept of utterance meaning as opposed to sentence meaning, but is parallel in many ways to the sense relation (ie sentence meaning concept) of entailment. Implicature is related to the method by which speakers work out the indirect illocutions of utterances” (278). The difference between a semantic entailment and a pragmatic implicature is that an entailment of a sentence cannot be denied by the one who used it but in the case of a pragmatic implicature of an utterance, it is worked out by the hearer on the basis of not only the linguistic knowledge but also on assumptions made about the
speaker’s intention. This is why it is always easy for a speaker to deny his intended pragmatic implication drawn by the hearer if it is to his own disadvantage.

In other words, according to Pateman “Some implications could be cancelled whereas entailment is not like that” (II) For example, the sentences under column ‘A’ entails those made under column B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chika is a Spinster</td>
<td>Chika is a woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ebe owns four cars</td>
<td>Mr Ebe owns a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestine Plays the guitar</td>
<td>Celestine plays a musical instrument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The essence of implicature according to Ndimele “is to account for what the speaker can imply, suggest or mean as distinct from what he literally says”. (115).

In fact, the notion of implicatures rests upon a distinction between what is explicitly said and what is implied (ie not overtly expressed). On the other hand, implicature offers a more explicit account on how a speaker means more than what he actually says. For example, let us examine the dialogue between A and B:

A:  I would like you to accompany me to the market on Friday.

B:  My elder sister is getting married that day.

From B’s response, we can infer that A’s request is not granted. B’s elder sister’s wedding is an excuse for not accepting the offer from A. However this implied
meaning of refusal is not directly deducible from the linguistic contents of the expression.

Other examples may include utterances like

I tried to finish the work – This would imply that I failed to finish it.

It’s cold in here. – This could imply, switch off the fan.

Oh! we shall miss him terribly – This could imply, he has left us or he is dead.

The concept of implicature and its success as a pragmatic theory is based on inference (an additional information) used by the listener to connect what is said to what must be meant. For example.

*Example I*

Speaker: Where is the fresh salad sitting?

Listener: He is sitting by the door

*Example II*

Speaker: Can I look at your Chomsky?

Listener: Sure, It’s on the table over there.

According Yule, “The process of inference makes it clear that we can use names (e.g salad) associated with things to refer to people and names of people (Chomsky) to refer to things” (131)
Another example of conversational implicature where inference is used to interpret sentences is in the following conversation between Dorren and Arthur (Downess II). In the conversation, Doreen is talking about a girl at the firm in Nodlingham where she and Arthur live. They are sauntering together in a park arm in arm. The conversation:

Doreen: She got married yesterday. She looks ever so nice.

Arthur: What was the bloke like, could you smell the drink? He must have been drunk to get married.

After his utterance of the word ‘drink’, Arthur physically moves away from Doreen. According to Downess the above conversation renders different possible meanings such as:

1) That Doreen intends Arthur to marry her

2) Perhaps she wanted them to discuss the topic of marriage (II)

In another vein, Arthur may have taken Doreen’s remark to mean “we ought to get married” but the message is not coded in the above linguistic elements. The intention was not directly conveyed. Therefore, it could be denied by Doreen if Arthur comes up with any repulsive statement against her. She can defend herself by saying “I only said she looked nice”.

43
Inference is a technique used in interpreting implicature. It is clear that the hearer needs to use inference to identify the speaker’s communicative intentions on the basis of the speaker’s utterance.

2.2 CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURE

This is another type of implicature classified as conventional because it is not worked out. It is grasped immediately on the basis of reasoning and it is non-cancelable. It is automatic so to speak. Levinson explains that “conventional implicatures are non-truth-conditional inferences that are not derived from super-ordinate pragmatic principles like the Grian Maxims, but are simply attached by convention of particular lexical items” (127)

Conventional implicature is also important because a speaker implies something rather than saying it explicitly. Such implicatures qualify strong claims using choice of particular words such as conjunctions, adverb and modal auxiliaries. Examples are ‘but’, ‘and’, ‘either’, ‘can’, ‘could’, ‘should’, ‘might’, ought’, therefore’, ‘even’, ‘yet’, ‘will’, ‘although’.

Examples

i. She is a Palestinian, she is therefore aggressive

ii. I cannot say that Ikenna is an artist but he is intelligent

iii. Jerry is an athlete but I cannot say he is strong.
Conventional implicature is different from conversational implicature because it is detachable and dependable on the particular linguistic items used. For instance, in sentence(iii) above if ‘but’ is substituted with ‘and’ the conventional implicature is lost but the same truth conditions is retained. Pragmatic principles and contextual knowledge are not employed in calculating conventional implicature, it is rather done by given conventions.

2.3 CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES IN PRAGMATICS

When we think of communication certain questions come to mind. For example how can we move forward in effective communication? How can we achieve effective communication through interpersonal interaction? How effective would language be as a communicative devise if people (particularly those involved in a conversation) say what is not true at random. The above questions were the anticipated problems which made the philosopher H.P. Grice to formulate the notion of co-operative principle. In a co-operative principle, there is a form of agreement between people in a conversation for the purpose of achievement of coherent and effective exchange. Ndimele explains this further by saying that “every conversation is guided by certain unwritten rules which influence the form or flow of conversational exchanges” (117) He went on to say that such unwritten rules or conventions are known as conversational maxims which are those rules
that people follow or obey during a talk-exchange. The co-operative principle is based on the assumption that language users tacitly agree to co-operate by making contributions to the talk as it is required by the current stage of the talk. Grice (1975) recognizes four major types of conversational maxims. They are: the Maxim of quantity, Maxim of Quality, Maxim of Relevance and Maxim of Manner.

The co-operative principle table adapted from Grice (1975) Fig.I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Maxim of Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. This Maxim demands that a speaker makes his contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Maxim of Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. This Maxim demands that a speaker should not say what he believes to be false or say something for which he lacks adequate evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Maxim of Relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. The maxim expects the speaker to be relevant and say things that are pertinent to the discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The maxim of Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. The speaker is expected to avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity. He should also be brief and orderly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.1 VIOLATION OF THE MAXIMS OF THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Occasions may arise when these maxims may be violated. When any of the maxims is violated, it will cause a break down in communication. According to Mey “When speakers do not follow one or more of these rules, then they are inviting hearers to figure out why” (234)

Breaking of the maxims can occur in any of the following ways: (235)

(a) Implicature violates the maxim of quality and quality. Here is an example (From Levinson, 1983:104)

A: Let’s get the kids something

B: Okay, but I veto I-C-E-C-R-E-A-M-S.

In spelling out the word “ice creams”, B is saying more than is strictly necessary, thus flouting the maxim of quantity. A assumes that B’s flouting of the maxim is intentional and meaningful and arrives at the conclusion that B does not want the word “ice creams” used in front of the children. Another example where implicature is used to violate the maxim of quality is in the use of certain utterances in giving information which cannot be substantiated e.g “Kahki trousers are best”

Breaking of the maxim of manner can be exemplified in the following conversation.
Pastor’s wife: How was the Sunday Service

Pastor: Oh! No problem at all.

In this interaction, the Pastor’s answer is not very clear and relevant

b. **IRONY**

This is another device used to flout the maxim. It is a figure of speech that says one thing and means another. From the brief discussion below, we can see how ‘irony’ is used to violate the maxim of relevance.

A: You look very elegant today (meaning the opposite)

B: With what I am putting on? (putting on wretched looking dress)

c. **METAPHOR**

This is also used to flout the maxim of quality which says do not give false information.

A: Has Mr Tortoise come to work?

B: He ‘would soon arrive’

Mr Tortoise is not a man’s name, it is a name of an animal that is very cunning.
2.4 **SPEECH ACTS IN PRAGMATICS**

One of the major concerns of pragmatics is the identification and classification of speech acts. Speech acts were first introduced into linguistic study by a British language philosopher known as J.L. Austin (1911 – 1960) Explaining the concept of speech acts, Ndimele said that “One of the major concerns of speech act theory is to analyse the roles that utterances play in relation to the behavior or attitudes of the speakers and hearers in interpersonal communication” He went on to say that ‘it is communicative ability defined with respect to the intentions of the speaker while talking, and the effects of his speech on the listener” (107)

In his work “How to do things with words” (1962:3), the language philosopher Austin pointed out that speech is action and that language can be used to do things. He also reacted against what he calls the “descriptive fallacy” which is a view held by other language philosophers that a declarative sentence is always used to describe some state of affairs, some facts etc. To him this group of sentences form only a small percentage of tasks that can be performed by saying something. He went on to say that there is a class of utterances called performatives that do not state fact but are themselves the performance of actions. These are what he referred to as “Speech Acts”

The linguist Dijk supported Austin’s view by saying that “what is usually meant by saying that we do something when we make an utterance is that we accomplish
some specific social act. Such social acts include making a request, a promise, giving advice and so on are usually called SPEECH ACTS or more specifically illocutionary act”. (195)

In this performance of speech acts there seems to be a distinction between production of some sounds and execution of social action, but in reality, production of sounds and accomplishing a complex social action co-occur. This means that speech should be described in different types of actions. According to Akmajian et al (394) speech acts are acts performed in uttering expressions. They also said that theorists like J.L. Austin (1962) and J.R. Searle (1969) developed a theory in which they mapped out four important categories of speech acts as shown in figure 2.

**TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS: Akmajian et al (395)**

![Diagram showing the classification of speech acts](image-url)
2.4.1 UTTERANCE ACT

Akmajian et al describes utterance acts simply “as acts of uttering sounds, syllables, words, phrases and sentences from a language” (394) According to Malmkaer Austin refers to this as the “phonic act: uttering noise, phones” (489). The utterance act is not very important in the study of speech acts because sound alone is not communicative – Birds, machines, tape recorders also produce sounds. In other words, they perform utterance act though the sounds they produce are unintelligible.

2.4.2 ILLOCUTIONARY ACT

Ndimele describes illocutionary act as “the act performed by the speaker in an effort to accomplish a communicative purpose” (III) Akmajian sees it as “an act performed in saying something” (395). The act performed by the speaker may be in form of a command, a request, an invitation, a question, an apology etc. A sentence such as “I hope you will be there tomorrow” might be intended by the speaker to mean any of the following:

(a) an invitation
(b) a request
(c) a compulsion
(d) a threat
In fact, depending on the intention of the speaker in a particular context, a number of illocutionary acts can be performed using the tokens of the same utterance – type as illustrated by the sentence above. An illocutionary act can be successfully performed by the speaker by simply getting his intention recognized eg. If Bekee says to Deede. “I bet you a dollar; “Super Eagles will win the match against Liverpool”; If Deede recognizes Bekee’s intention and tells Bekee that super Eagles can beat Liverpool, then Bekee has succeeded because Deede has understood him.

2.4.3 PERLOCUTIONARY ACT

This is a non-linguistic act performed as a result of the effect of the speaker’s utterance on the listener. Ndimele describes it as “the act which is performed by the hearer resulting from the effect or influence that the utterance of the speaker has on him (ie the hearer)” (112). He went on to say that a perlocutionary act takes effect if the hearer does any of the following:

(a) answers a question asked by the speaker.

(b) carries out an instruction issued by the speaker

(c) accepts that a particular state of affairs concerning him be altered as soon as the appropriate utterance is pronounced by the appropriate speaker

(d) Gets irritated by the speaker’s utterance.

(e) refuses to comply with the speaker’s utterance.
However, there is always a distinction made in speech act theory between, illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect. Illocutionary force is the intended effect that an utterance ought to have on the hearer from the point of view of the speaker. It is the consequence that a speaker would want his utterance to produce on the part of his addressee. On the other hand, perlocutionary effect is the actual influence that the speaker’s utterance has upon the beliefs, attitudes or behaviour of the hearer. Concerning the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect Ndimele explains that “from facts about the human communication system, it is observed that sometimes the actual illocutionary force (ie the intended consequence of an utterance from the point of view of the speaker) and perlocutionary effect (ie the actual consequence of an utterance from the point of view of the hearer) do not coincide.

This is why a speaker’s intention may be to ‘persuade’ but the perlocution may turn out to “dissuade”. Sometimes, it may be to reassure but the effect on the listener may turn out to ‘threaten’.

If a speaker successfully performs a perlocution, it means he has actually performed a locutional and an illocutional act at the same time. To this end if advertisers could successfully perform locution and illocution, their intended message can easily reach their target audience.
According to Akmajian (396) “some typical examples of perlocutionary acts are:

Inspiring embarrassing
Persuading misleading
Impressing intimidating
Deceiving irritating

2.4.4 PROPOSITIONAL ACTS

This is a term developed by Searle from the work of Austin. According to Coulthard, Searle describes propositional act as “an act which carries the content of the utterance (2)”. He went further to say that an utterance has two parts namely: a proposition explained above and a function indicating device which marks the illocutionary force which is what determines the types of speech act performed. For example. The following utterances have the illocutionary force attached to them.

i. I warn you to desist from examination malpractice - warning.

ii. I advise that you take your studies serious – advice.

iii. I report that the assignment has been carried out – report.

iv. I judge that the super Eagles were cheated in the Olympic games – judgement.
Also according to Malmkear “Propositional acts involve the subsidiary acts of referring to someone or something and of predicating some property or act of that to which one has referred”. (490)

The following sentences are examples:

(a) Will Kanu leave the stadium
(b) Kanu will leave the stadium
(c) Kanu, leave the stadium
(d) If Kanu will leave the stadium, I will leave also.

In the above utterances, the speaker expresses the proposition that Kanu will leave the stadium. This means that he predicates the action of leaving the stadium by Kanu. It is only “b” above that performs the illocutionary act of asserting (declarative statement). However, among the four categories of speech acts discussed, it is the illocutionary act that is used synonymously with the speech act where one uses utterance to perform a speech act. In order to achieve this, Searle employs the services of some verbs which he refers to as “performative verbs”. Hurford sees performative verbs as “the verbs which when used in the present positive tense with a first person singular subject can make the utterance of that sentence performative”. (237)
congratulate etc.

2.4.5 UTTERANCE AND PERFORMATIVE VERBS

According to Mey Austin identified a subset of declaratives that are not used to
make true or false statements” (223) Examples:

(a) I promise to take a taxi home
(b) I declare this meeting open
(c) I warn you that legal action will ensue
(d) I sentence you to two years imprisonment
(e) I name this ship The Flying Dutchman.

Austin claimed that these sentences were in themselves a kind of action: thus by
uttering “I promise to take a taxi home” the speaker makes a promise rather than
just describing one. In the above examples, the utterances perform the action
named by the first verb in the sentence.

Speech-act approach to meaning portrays a unified account of the utterances
of all types: declarative, interrogative and imperative. When any sentence is
uttered, it tends to carry out one kind of act or the other. The chart below illustrates
the above fact.
2.4.6 FELICITY CONDITIONS

In pragmatics, sentences are not handled as true or false but “felicitous” or “infelicitous”. Certain conditions must be met for a sentence to be felicitous. According to Ndimele, “Austin (1962) asserts that there are certain criteria which must be satisfied by a speech act if it is to be successful (ie achieve its communicative purpose) and non-defective” (113). He went on to say that these requirements which are necessary in the accomplishment of any illocutionary act are referred to felicity or appropriateness conditions. The basic idea is that felicity conditions allow us to determine under what condition it is appropriate to ask questions, give commands, make requests etc. It is the condition that must be carried out properly or felicitously. Speech acts are conventional acts and as such they are embedded in the culture and are defined by social customs and practices.
Their performances are therefore governed by rules in the society. The rules may not be expressed but society acknowledges their existence. This is why Babajide explained that “participants in a discourse do not rely only on their knowledge of language system in their interactions. Instead, they require a combination of knowledge of language system, the knowledge of the world, the knowledge of cultures and conventions of people and the knowledge of the factors of situations in which communications take place” (63). Therefore for a performative to have the desired effect, it has to meet these social and cultural criteria called felicity conditions.

According to Coulthard “these conditions must be satisfied if the performative act is not to misfire” (12)

1. There must exist an accepted conventional procedure, having a conventional effect, the Procedure will include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances.

The conditions stated above, show that in a particular situation, performative act that follows a conventional way cannot be carried out arbitrarily. The performer must conform to the laid down utterance used for that act. He must also have the right to do so. For instance in baptizing babies in Christian churches, the utterance act is “I baptize this baby in the name of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit”. The person to utter these words must be a clergy. The above utterance cannot be
used to name an animal. In another example like the issue of divorce, no man can divorce his wife by simply saying “I divorce you, go your way”. It has to be legally done in a law court and the pronouncement (utterance) should be made by a legal practitioner.

2. The particular person and circumstance in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.

The above condition implies that the right person must be present and the circumstance must be acceptable by convention before it could be authentic. For example, it will be unconventional for a magistrate to say “I sentence you to four years imprisonment” to a man suspected to have stolen a certain item along the road. Such a matter should be handled in a law court.

3. The Procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and completely.

These conditions cover misfires which occur despite the existence of a conventional procedure and the presence of the appropriate participants in the appropriate circumstance. Sometimes, the problems may be verbal or non-verbal. For instance, in conducting a wedding ceremony, Yes/No questions are involved and responses are expected from the would-be couple. The clergy man, the would-
be couple and the witnesses must be present. When the question, “do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife” is asked to the would-be husband, his response will not just be ‘Yes’, For the response to be felicitous, it has to be “Yes I do”.

Examples of felicity and infelicity conditions in illocutionary Acts.

1. Promising

(a) The speaker must be ready to carry out the thing promised – (felicitous)

(b) The speaker must be of inferior status to the hearer – (infelicitous)

(c) The thing promised must be something that the hearer wants to happen - (felicitous).

2. Protesting

(a) The speaker and the hearer must recently be in conflict with each other – (infelicitous).

(b) The speaker must disapprove of the state of affairs protested against – (felicitous).

(c) The state of affairs protested against must be disapproved of by the community generally – (infelicitous).

3. Requesting

(a) The hearer should be able to carry out the action described – (felicitous)
(b) The action has not been carried out – (felicitous)
(c) The speaker should be able to carry out the action described – (infelicitous).

4. Apologising
(a) The speaker must be responsible for the thing apologized for – (felicitous)
(b) The thing apologized for must have been unavoidable – (infelicitous)
(c) The hearer does not want the thing apologized for to happen – (felicitous).

5. Naming
(a) The thing or person named must not already have a recognized name known to the speaker – (felicitous)
(b) The thing or person named must belong to the speaker (infelicitous)
(c) The speaker must be recognized by his community as having the authority to name – (felicitous).

2.4.7 IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT PERFORMATIVES

All speech acts are performative utterances. However, they can either be implicit or explicit.

Implicit performative (indirect speech Act) In the English language, most of the speech acts we encounter are implicit. This is why the concept of implicature plays
a major role in the utterances because, the speaker’s intended meaning is not indicated by the literal reading of the utterance. Due to the implicit nature of most of the performatives, there is always a difference between the speaker’s intended meaning and the actual illocutionary force it will have on the hearer. Most advertisements are implicit and this is why advertisers exploit their consumers (customers) by creating implicatures.

Examples of implicit performatives in the utterances.
(a) Could you close the door? This could mean “Are you able to close the door or please close the door.
(b) Don’t you think you ought to finish your assignment?” This could mean “asking whether the hearer think so” or a suggestion to finish his assignment.

Explicit performative: This is the direct expression of a linguistic form indicated by the literal reading of the grammatical form and vocabulary in the sentence uttered. Mey explained that “explicit performatives are characterized by special features, as in:
(a) They tend to begin with a first person verb in a simple present form: e.g I bet I warn etc.
(b) This verb belongs to a special class describing verbal activities to promise, warn, sentence, name etc.
Again for the speaker to make illocutionary act explicit, he has to indicate the speech-act involved by adding performative verb before the clause such as:

“I advise you to finish your assignment”

“I order you to close the door” (225)

2.5 DEIXIS IN PRAGMATICS

The concept of deixis originated from the Greek Word for ‘pointing’ or ‘indicating’. It has elements such as demonstrative pronouns, first and second person pronouns, tense, specific time and place adverbs like ‘now’ and ‘here’ and a variety of other grammatical features tied directly to the circumstances of the utterance. According to Duranti, Burks defines deixis as “signs that have some kind of existential relation with what they refer to” (17) Lyons supported this view when he said that “deixis is the source of reference” According to him, they are introduced to handle the orientational features of language which are relative to the time and place of utterance” (275) Yule in his view describes deixis as “bits of languages which we can understand in terms of speaker’s intended meaning”. (130)

Some utterances in the English language are impossible to understand if we do not know who is speaking, about whom he is speaking, the time and the place of the utterance. Therefore, such utterances will essentially depend on the immediate
physical context in which they were uttered for their interpretation. Deixis concerns itself with the ways the syntactic features of the language encode the context of speech-event and the interpretation of the speech depends on the analysis of the context of the speech event. Deixis belongs to the domain of pragmatics as a linguistic inquiry because it directly concerns the relationship between the structure of the language and the context in which they are used.

Deixis are of four types:

1. Person deixis
2. Time deixis
3. Place deixis
4. Social deixis

**2.5.1 PERSON DEIXIS**

They are deixis used to point to a person or persons during a speech event. Person deixis involves the use of pronouns such as: me, you, him, them etc.

*Examples*

Are you going to see her?

Please give me that school bag.

The principal will address them soon.

Give the orange to him.
2.5.2 TIME DEIXIS

They are indexicals used to point to the time of an event. Examples include: now, then, before, later etc.

‘I was in the church then’

‘She came later to claim the passports?’

‘Please call her now’.

2.5.3 PLACE DEIXIS

They are words that point to a location. Such words are here, there, yonder etc.

Examples

The dog is over there

Here comes the Pastor

This is the place for your upliftment

2.5.4 SOCIAL DEIXIS

This has to do with the relationship in a social setting between participants in speech events or a referent or among social ranks. The rational variety in a social setting is what determines social deixis.

*Examples of such relationship include:*

(a) Relationship between a superior and an inferior person
(b) Relationship between an older and a younger person.

(c) The relationship between titled men and non-titled men.

(d) Relationship between clergy and the congregation.

Examples of such deitic expressions include His Excellency, His Majesty, my Lordship, His Grace.

In Igbo language, deitic expressions to indicate elder sister and brother include ‘daada’ and ‘deede’ respectively. Deitic expressions are interpreted in terms of what the speaker has in mind and they are used at specific points in the process of communication.

2.6 CONTEXT IN PRAGMATICS

Context plays a very vital role in the study of pragmatics. This is because the meaning of a word cannot be divorced from the context of the utterance. According to Akmajian et al “the ‘context’ of an utterance is an expandable notion” (388)

The contribution of context to the meaning of an utterance is very essential. Context is dynamic because it is not just a one world state of affairs, rather it is a sequence of affairs. Mey upholds this notion when he says that “a dynamic context is an environment that is in steady development, prompted by the continuous
interaction of the people engaged in language use” (14) When utterances are made, we can ask what the implications are depending on the context in which they are made.

The utterance “It is raining” could mean any of the following

(a) The weather will be cold.
(b) The rainy season is here with us.
(c) Please bring in our clothes.
(d) Our evangelical outreach will be cancelled.

The four meanings above will arise in different contexts.

For proper understanding of the term context, there are four types of context to be discussed.

*Namely:*

(a) Physical Context
(b) Epistemic Context
(c) Linguistic Context
(d) Social Context

2.6.1 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

We can consider this type of context in terms of the place the conversation is taking place, what objects are present, what actions are happening and so on. For
instance, if a person sees the word “bank” on the wall of a building in a town or city, he will easily interpret it to mean “a financial house” because the physical location will influence his interpretation.

2.6.2 EPISTEMIC CONTEXT

This refers to the knowledge which the interlocutors have about the world. It is the background knowledge shared by them. For instance it will be out of context for an illiterate and a professor to engage in a conversation that involves an academic research.

2.6.3 LINGUISTIC CONTEXT

This is also known as co-text. According to Yule “the co-text of a word is the set of other words used in the same phrase or sentence” (129) He went on to say that the surrounding co-text has a strong effect on what we think the word means. For instance, the word ‘bank’ is a homonym, but if it is used in a sentence together with the words like ‘steep’ or ‘overgrown’, there will be no difficulty in interpreting it to mean “the bank of a river”. 
2.6.4 SOCIAL CONTEXT

Pragmatics has generally been described by linguists as the appropriate use of language in social situation or contexts. It is also referred to as functional organization of language in social environment. Social context involves hearers, speakers and the text or utterance. The social context of an utterance is the environment in which the meaning of utterances are being exchanged. The very essence of meaning is realized in a particular context of interpretation because contextual knowledge allows the hearers to understand that the intended meaning differs from the literal meaning.

2.7 LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING: PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

The New Encyclopedia Britannica vol. 1 defines advertising as:

“The techniques and practices used to bring products, services, opinions or causes to public notice for the purpose of persuading the public to respond in a certain way towards what is advertised”. (133)

Hutchinson Encyclopedia states that: “advertising is any of the various methods used by a company to increase the sales of its products or services or to promote a brand name. Advertising is also used by organizations and
individuals to communicate an idea or image, to recruit
staff, to publicise an event or to locate an item or
commodity”. (10)

Stanton sees advertising as “activities involved in presenting a group, a non-
personal, oral, visual or openly sponsored message regarding a product, service or
idea”. (414)

The disseminated message is called an advertisement. The dissemination could be
carried out through the media, such as television, radio, newspapers, stickers,
magazines etc. It is expected that once the members of the public decode the
advertisers message, they will behave in a desired way. Thus the advertisers’ sole
purpose is to use certain strategies to inform or/and persuade the target audience.
Supporting this view, Ndimele said “in fact, advertisements are clear puzzles
targeted at a naïve and innocent consumer” (204).

However, for an advertisement to be effective, Stanton says “it must be
noticed, read, comprehended, believed and acted upon” (58). To achieve this goal
some advertisers employ some pragmatic principles in the language of advertising.
However, before discussing some of the pragmatic principles, some basic issues
concerning advertising will be discussed below.
2.7.1 HISTORY OF ADVERTISING

Jefkin (1) observed that modern advertising started to grow with the development of printing in the 15th and 18th centuries. The 19th century saw a great expansion in business both in London and the United States. The first set of activities engaged in by the advertisers were to book spaces in the newspapers, product naming and package designing. They also purchased space or time to get the advertising messages out to the public. In the 1880’s and 1890’s, a few instructional texts on advertising appeared. It was after 1900 that books on direct marketing, sign painting, copy writing and advertising psychology were published.

2.7.2 BASIC ISSUES ABOUT ADVERTISING

Pateman (16) outlines some basic issues about advertising as follows:

1. Effects of advertising are unpredictable because no advertiser can claim to have a direct straight forward effect on consumer because there are too other factors affecting interpretation and behaviour.

2. Audience are skeptical, so advertisers must put up defenses in order to pacify them.

3. Different national audience have different attitudes towards advertisements. This is as a result of influence of different cultures.
4. The anonymous and non-reciprocal nature of advertising makes it generally impossible for the consumer to challenge the advertisers in relation to the claim made and connotations produced.

Also some basic features of advertising as outlined by Ndimele (209) include:

(a) Sometimes an advertising copy can create ambiguity and suspense. For instance, the advertisement by Xerox which says: We taught the world to copy’ is ambiguous.

(b) Advertising copies are usually written in the imperative, so as to persuade the consumer to develop a feeling for the advertised product. They must, however, not command or demand.

(c) Advertising involves the excessive use of idiomatic expressions, metaphors or imageries with high emotive values.

(d) Advertisements are full of open-ended comparatives e.g “7up the difference is clear” (one would ask, the difference between what and what?)

Most of the claims in the basic issues about advertising are handicaps as well as assets to advertisers because they help them (advertisers) to push over to the consumers certain claims which cannot be defended. However effective persuasion is hindered at the same time.
If one asks the question “why do we analyse advertisements with pragmatic principles?” The answer will point to the fact that advertising makes use of language like any other mode within the limits of the language. However like poetry and other literary genres, it has the license to deviate from normal use of language and this is why advertising borders on pragmatics as a domain of linguistic inquiry.

2.7.3 PRAGMATIC FEATURES IN LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING

CONTEXT

Context is very important in the resolution of certain ambiguities in utterances. Advertisers are also aware of the importance of context in the process of interpretation. They therefore employ contextual features which help to drive the message of the advertisers home. For instance, while trying to advertise the hot drink schnapps in a sticker, instead of just putting the image of the bottled-drink and writing schnapps beside it, the sticker had an image of an elderly man with traditional attire pouring out the contents of a bottle of schnapps before a young man and a woman kneeling down. This suggests that this hot drink schnapps is important for traditional marriage ceremonies.
2.7.4 SPEECH ACTS

This is another feature of the language of advertising. According to Myer “advertisements are performative. Usually the acts they perform are implicit. They do not use first person present-tense utterances such as “we hereby do this or that’ or I hereby apologise” except on promise” (3)

Most advertisements make a sort of promise. Myer went on to say that “these promises are regulated by statutory laws. But when an advertisement is making a promise, it is calling attention to action. It is also stating that the organization is capable of keeping them or be held accountable for it” Such promises are usually put in writing by some organizations and companies. Insurance companies for example put down their promises so that their target clients would have confidence in them and take up a policy with the insurance company. Sometimes they share out such advertisements on stickers to their target audience.

Example of such a promise: “We promise to pay debenture on your insured property provided you pay your insurance premium”

Banks also make promises to customers e.g “We promise customers satisfaction” This is to persuade customers to bank with them. Another example is “First Bank Plc promise 10% increase in profit to our numerous share holders” First Bank PLC promises putting you first” Advertising makes use of other speech acts such as command.
Example:

i. Repent now and accept the Lord Jesus Christ’

ii. Buy Nokia phones now!

Deixis: This is another pragmatic element that features in advertisement. According to Mey “the deictic devices in a language commit a speaker to set up a frame of reference around herself” (182). He went on to say that “every language carries an implicit division of the space around the current speaker, a division of time relative to the act of speaking, and via pronouns, a shorthand naming system for the participants involved in the talk”. Deitic utterances help to contextualise and place the text within the addressee’s environment. In an advertisement, the ‘you’ refers to both the characters in the fictional situation depicted in the advertisement and the multiple addressees, the “I” is the manufacturer or advertiser and the ‘He’ is the person who did not buy the product. Sometimes the ‘He’ is used to point to a fictional character who is projected as being successful for buying their product.

A good example is “He’s won” This advertisement shows a supposed athlete who won by drinking a nourishing beverage such as “milo” it has an image of a man with sturdy muscle beside the text with a trophy around his neck.
An example of an advertisement that made use of place deixis is “Here is the real thing” pointing to the liquid content by the coca-cola bottling company.

Another example that used time deixis is: “Free beer Tomorrow” According to Yule, “the bar owner puts this sign to get target customers to return the next day” (130)

**Implicature**

Advertisers often take the advantage of implicature to make claims that people interpret to be more powerful than they really are. This is because implicature is worked out by hearers not only on the basis of linguistic knowledge but on the basis of assumptions they make about the speaker’s intentions or as Searle describes it intended illocutionary force” Implicature is a strategy used by advertisers to express a little and implicate a lot. This enables them to deny any interpretation that will contradict their claims and accept all the different interpretations offered by creative receivers. Implicature makes room for advertisers to exploit the defaulting nature of generic sentences in order to take advantage of the belief of their target audience.

For example: a text like:

(a) “GBC air freshener refreshes your house and kills germs in your house: This advertisement makes use of implicature and suggests the kind of interpretation which the advertiser intends the readers to have. The readers may give this
interpretation: GBC air freshener will refresh your house and kill all germs in the house whereas the statement suggests “some” if any germ will be killed by the air freshener.

Another example is

“Campell’s soup has one third less salt” Although the implicature here is vague, it is completely reasonable to assume that the soup has one third salt than some relevant bench mark, which might be the salt level of major competitors of the average of nationally sold soups.

Use of emotive words in the form of verbs and adjectives which have implicit meanings also create implicature for the target audience. Words such as crisp, proven, improved, fresh, new, taste, feel are emotive and they normally create implicatures in the minds of the target audience.

**Example:** ‘taste and see’

‘Fresh fruit juice’

‘new Omo detergent’

‘proved electronics’

**Co-operative Principle**

According to Myer Gricean four maxims are based on a single cooperative principles, “Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the exchange in which you are
engage” (5). Unfortunately advertising seems to be a poor example on the issue of cooperation as regards the definition of the word. This is because, advertisers try to tell consumers or their target audience something they don’t know and at a time they are not interested in the thing and thereby make them do what they would otherwise not do. Yet the interpretation of advertisements depends on co-operation. However, the advertisers’ intention is to reach their target audience even if they don’t want to be reached. They achieve this through different strategies mainly by the use of conversational tone. In their effort to reach their target audience and compete for attention at the same time, they flout one maxim or another.

2.7.5 LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING VERSUS GRICEAN MAXIMS

Maxims of Quantity ‘Make your contribution as informative as is required”. It seems that all advertisements flout this maxim by deliberately withholding information and creating implicatures. According to Yule “More gets communicated than is said” (127) Sometimes advertisers employ re-spelling as a device in their advertisements. Substandard spellings are used in the advertisements. Fromkin says that “advertisers often spell though as ‘tho’ through as “thru” and night as ‘nite’ (564) An advertised film title ‘AMOSFEAR’ is used to imply ‘fear’ as well as atmosphere’. This re-spelling based on the homophony
between ‘fear’ and ‘phere’ seems to be economical and indeed more pragmatically productive. By that title more has been communicated than said.

Another aspect of this maxim is not to make your contribution more than required. Advertisements violate the first and second part of this maxim. In this second aspect, they give too much information about a product. Advertisers do this by repetition.

**Maxim of Quality**

Do not give false information or what is not supported by evidence. This is the most flouted of all maxims. According to Pateman “advertising is legalized lying” (2) Todorova ardently supported this view when he explained that in language of advertising “values ascribed to the advertised product are centered on the juxtaposition of the product with something else that is more sublime than the product itself” (1) In other words, reality is distorted because the way images and text are visualized does not correspond to real life. As one does not see the real product, one fills the void with fantasies, dreams and desires. Shunsley says that “advertisers make very great assumption about the audience. It is acceptable to puzzle or intrigue in ways that would not be at all appropriate if the audience depended on the advertiser’s information (4)
Most of the time advertisers leave the missing elements for the readers to supply.

Another aspect of this maxim says “Do not say that for which you lack evidence” Advertisers are known for their use of “puffery word”. These words suggest meanings without actually being specific. At times they use the open comparative or bogus superlatives. Thus: Brown Sandals are Better” (posing the question, better than what?) OR “Brown Boots are best’ (still posing the question best among what?)

**Maxim of Relation**

This maxim says “give relevant information”

The issue of relevance seems to be the central principle for interpreting advertisements because relevance concerns how the hearer calculates the pragmatic meanings of what the speaker has said. It is calculated through assumption and inferences. Advertisers often use unrelated background in posters or stickers, For example, an advertisement on a sticker advertising a Christian programme says “Ultimate Breakthrough. I’m the ultimate” with the image of a young woman excitedly raising her hands depicts unrelated situations. Ultimate breakthrough is an event that can happen in a person’s life but I’m the ultimate does not indicate that the event has happened in the person’s life. Only God is ultimate.
The last maxim is the maxim of manner and it says, “avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity. Be brief, be orderly. This maxim is always violated since ambiguity or obscurity of language are what advertising thrives on. The language of advertising is full of obscurity and ambiguities that yield various interpretations and this is why implicature is the hall mark by which advertisers achieve their aims. Consumers can do little or nothing to reduce the vague or multiple meaning of an advertisement. They (consumers) cannot question anybody as regards the exact meaning of the advertisement. They are left to draw their own conclusions. According to Pateman “the advertisers get the consumers to do their dirty ideological work for them, by presenting ambiguous or vague statements and leaving them to draw meanings to the advantage of advertisers” (II)

For example, an advertisement on a sticker with an image of a man dropping something into the refuse bin with a statement “keep the nation clean” and also Alpha Dominion Tissue written, depicts that the information is not well presented. At a glance one will easily think that the advertisement is on refuse bin for environmental sanitation but it is an advertisement on a brand of tissue paper.
SUMMARY

Advertising as a form of communication works within the limits of language use. A number of good examples of pragmatic principles have been employed by advertisers as tools of informing, persuading and warning their target audience. Persuasion is the tool mostly used by advertisers because they want to prevail on their target audience to buy their products. Whereas some pragmatic principles could be used for intrigue on the part of the audience, others could be used to proffer interpretation for the audience.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

This chapter describes the following:

i. Research design

ii. Objects of Study

iii. Areas of Study

iv. The Sampling Technique

v. Reliability of Instrument

vi. Method of Observation

vii. Method of Data Organisation

3.1 THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This is a descriptive research. It seeks to use pragmatic principles to analyse the language of stickers printed in English and bring out the import of these principles on advertisement.

3.2 THE OBJECTS OF THE STUDY

The objects used for the study are advertisements on religious and secular stickers. The reason for choice of religious and secular stickers is that they will make for easy interpretation in terms of the words, picture or logo present in them. In this
research, advertisements on stickers were used. This descriptive study was based on information extracted from these advertisements.

3.3 AREAS OF STUDY

The areas used for data collection are Awka and Onitsha. The reason for the choice of the two areas is that Awka is the capital city of Anambra State and also a commercial town. Onitsha is also a major commercial town in Anambra State. The researcher expects to collect many printed in English from religious bodies, pharmaceutical companies and other business establishments which they use to advertise their goods and services. The advertisements on stickers were sampled and listed below as follows:
3.4 **SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The samples involved one hundred advertisements collected from stickers from Awka and Onitsha areas. A large number of stickers was selected in order to ensure a sizeable representation. The selection was also randomly done. Since the study is mainly concerned with the linguistic and pictorial elements of the advertisements, the data is not restricted to a particular type of advertisement such as advertisements on drugs or beverages only. The sampling was therefore done on advertisements generally.

3.5 **INSTRUMENTATION**

The data for this research was got from observing the advertisements made on both secular and religious stickers. In other words, the instrument used for collection of data was observation. Consequently each advertisement was observed to sift out information as regards the pragmatic principle relevant to that advertisement.

3.6 **VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT**

Observation as an instrument was best suited for this kind of research which makes inquiries on linguistic phenomena in a particular mode of writing which is the language of stickers printed in English. By observation as a method of gathering information (data) it was easy to see the characteristics of the object being observed.
3.7 **METHOD OF OBSERVATION**

In making the observation, the relevant phenomena to be observed were checked for on each advertisement. Each advertisement on the stickers was analysed in order to find out the pragmatic principle that were present or absent in it. The findings were indicated and noted.

3.8 **METHOD OF DATA ORGANISATION**

The method used for organizing the data in this research is descriptive approach. The linguistic phenomena which occur in the advertisements were described according to their types and examples were given from the advertisements.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data. The collection of data was done through the application of the pragmatics principles of speech acts and conversational implicature. Austin’s speech act is employed in the analysis because it recognizes language as an instrument for social and interpersonal interaction. Also the theory of implicature is used in the analysis because it emphasizes the capacity of language to project messages which may have no direct relationship with formal linguistic value of the words and sentences used to carry the messages. The theory of implicature has also been effectively used by leech and short (1981) for the interpretation of the novel and it therefore seems to be a reliable approach for the interpretation of texts of advertisement on the stickers.

Pragmatics analysis has the power of giving fresh and first hand interpretation of advertisements on the stickers based on unique realities of socio-cultural values of the author’s worlds. The advertisement on the stickers were therefore observed and those that made use of the pragmatics principles of speech act and implicature were analysed accordingly.

Some advertisements made use of speech acts. According to Myers, “advertisements are performatives. Usually, the acts they perform are implicit. They do not use first person present-tense utterances such as “we here-by do this
or do that” or I here by apologise except on promise “ (3) Most advertisements make a sort of promise. Myers went on to say that these promises are regulated by statutory laws.

But when an advertisement is making a promise, it is calling attention to action. It is also stating that the organization is capable of keeping them or be held responsible for it”(4). Such promises are usually put in writing by some organizations and companies. Sometimes they share out such advertisements on stickers to their target audience. For instance, the advert on plate 15 reads. “ first Bank PLC promise 10% increase in profit to our numerous share holders. First Bank promises putting you first “.

The advertisements on plate 20 also reads “we promise to pay debenture on your insured property provided you pay your insurance premium”.

The effect of the above advertisements with promise is to make the target clients have confidence in them and take a policy with insurance company. The promise from the bank is to persuade customers to bank with them. The aim of the advertisers is also to knock- out other companies and banks.

According to Austin, speech is action and language can be used to do things” (3). Speech acts are acts performed in uttering expressions. Such performed acts can come in form of commands, assertion and interrogation. The following are examples:
Plate 18 reads “stop here for your spiritual refreshment”- command
Plate 25 reads “ Repent now and accept the Lord Jesus Christ” command
Plate 32 reads “ The incomparable God” assertion.
Plate 21 reads “ The lame man healed !. Isn’t God wonderful? Interrogation

The above advertisements are used by the advertisers to draw the attention of the target audience and get them interested.

Advertising also makes use of Illocutionary acts to inform and persuade the audience so that they will yield to the advertisers desired expectation. Ndimele describes Illocutionary act as “the act performed by the speaker in an effort to accomplish a communicative purpose (III). The purpose of the speaker being that the target audience will yield to their desired expectation. The power of persuasion and information made by the advertisement draws the attention of the audience and gets them committed.

The following advertisements are examples:
Plate 16 reads “Reitel communication network ...your reliable link”- persuading

The advertiser wants the audience to believe that the Reitel communication network is a network to be relied on. In other words, it can lead one to any part of the world. It is better than others.
Plate 50 reads “Sky Best quality paints. Your dependable quality”-persuading
The advertiser wants to convince the audience that sky best paint is the only paint to be depended upon particularly as the name implies. Plate 40 reads “419 Beware” EFCC will get you any time, any where”- informing.

Plate 55 reads “stop, danger!”- informing.

The above advertisements on plates 40 and 55 are simply giving important information to the audience. Some of the advertisements made use of indirect speech acts. For instance, the text on plate 1 reads “cow bell milk” our milk and sugar two in one”. Again the text on plate 29 reads “OGC spare part the mark for high quality”

The texts in the above advertisements are indirectly stated. The advertisers said “ our milk and sugar, two in one” instead of saying” buy cow bell milk, it is economical because it contains both milk and sugar. Also the spare parts advertisers simply stated “OGC spare parts mark of high quality” instead of directly telling the buyer to buy their products because it has a high quality.

Advertisers also employ the use of implicature in advertisements. Implicature is a means of tacitly projecting multiple meanings of an utterance and it is intended to place the advertisers on an advantageous position where he expects the readers of the advertisements to use their initiative to unravel the meaning of the advertisements. Advertisers often take advantage of implicature to make claims which people interpret to be more powerful than they really are. This is because
according to Yule, “the concept of implicature and its success as a pragmatic theory is based on inference (an additional information) used by the listeners to connect what is said to what must be meant (131). In other words, implicature is worked out by hearers not only on the basis of linguistic knowledge but on the basis of assumptions they make about the speaker’s intentions or as Searle described it “intended illocutionary force” (328). By using implicature, advertisers express a little and implicate a lot. This enables them to deny any interpretation that will contradict their claims and accept all the different interpretations offered by creative receivers. The pragmatic principles of implicature is used in the following advertisements.

The text on plate 38 reads Nenco natural water. “the best quality water money can buy”. The advertiser is implying here that Nenco water is the best water so far. However he cannot prove this. The text on plate 10 reads “GBC air freshener refreshes your house and kills germs in your house”. This advertisement makes use of implicature and suggests the kind of interpretation which the advertiser intends the readers to have. The readers may give this interpretation: “GBC air freshener will refresh your house and kill all the germs in the house whereas the statement suggests” “some” if any germs will be killed by the air freshener. This kind of interpretation buttresses Ndimele’s idea of implicature when he said that “the essence of implicature is to account for what the speaker can
imply, suggest or mean as distinct from what he literally says “ (115). Other examples of advertisements with implicature include plate 80 with the text “crepower- motorcycle spare parts a brand you can trust”. The advertiser is implying in the above text that one cannot trust any other brand except this crepower motorcycle spare parts. He has said a little and implied much, yet he did not show any proof. Plate 70: MAGGI CUBE with the text “maggi and me, the secret of goodness”. The advertiser expects the consumer to interpret the advertisement to mean that if one buys and uses maggi cube, one will experience good life. In other words, one who does not use maggi cube has not discovered the secret of good life and yet this cannot be proved. The text on plate 31 reads “MTN your best connection”. The advertisers are in actual sense saying that in the area of communication, MTN is the best connection for the people but this has not been proved. The audience is left to concord to what has been said.

Some of the advertisements featured elliptical elements which the advertisers expect the audience to fill. According to Shunsley “advertisers make very great assumptions about the audience. It is acceptable to puzzle or intrigue in ways that would not be at all appropriate if the audience depended on the advertiser’s information. They have the missing elements for the readers to supply”(4). Such advertisements include plate 36 with the text
“Rainbownet communications
…delivering fresh opportunities”.

Plate 66 reads “sacrafoam quality and comfort…comfort without rival”

In the above advertisements, the advertisers expect the target audience to fill the elliptical gaps for them. To get the audience to fill the slots is to the advantage of the advertisers because the elliptical elements gives the audience the opportunity to put one or two additions to what the advertisers have already said. Most of the claims made by the advertisers in their advertisements cannot be substantiated.

The pragmatic element of dexis was used in some of the advertisements. According to Mey “Deictic utterances help to contextualize and place the text within the addressee’s environment” (182). In an advertisements, the “you” as an indexical element refer to both the character in the fictional situation depicted in the advertisement and the multiple addressees. The following advertisements are examples.

Plate 71 reads “stop here for your spiritual refreshment”.

Plate 78 reads “Jesus died for you, accept Him now and be saved”

Plate 73 reads “Coca-Cola- Here is the real thing”
In the above advertisements “here” and “you” are indexical elements. They are used to create a conversational atmosphere in the advertisements and this kindles the interest of the audience.

Most advertisements do not obey the Gricean co-operative principle. According to Myer, Gricean four maxims are based on a single co-operative principle: Make your contributions such as is required at the stage which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the exchange in which you are engaged” (5). The co-operative principle includes the maxim of quantity, quality, relevance and manner. When any of the maxims is violated, it will cause a break down in communication. As Mey puts it “when speakers do not follow one or more of these rules, then they are inviting hearers to figure out why” (234). The following advertisements obeyed some maxims and flouted some.
Plate 39 reads “Khaki no be leather. If e no be panadol, eno fit be de same tin as panadol”
Plate 59 reads “star larger bear. Share brighter life”.
Plate 36 with the text “Rainbownet communication Network- “one people, one voice, one network,,”, delivering fresh opportunities”
The text on plate 39 “khaki no be leather “ violated the maxim of quality and relevance because it was actually advertising panadol as a drug while the major text of the advertisement was talking about khaki not being leather. There was no
explicitness in the utterance. While the woman in the advertisement was talking about Khaki and leather, she was holding a card of panadol in her hand. The meaning of the advertisement is got through assumptions and inferences. The text on plate 59 “star larger, share brighter life also flouted the maxim of relevance, quality and quantity. The advertisement encourages the audience to share the brighter life by taking star which is an alcoholic drink. This advertisement depicts two unrelated life situations since it is a known fact that alcoholic drinks do not make for a healthy living. The text on plate 36 which advertises the rainbownet communication Network violated the maxim of manner which says “avoid ambiguity”. The advertisement contains images of dancers with a particular attire. At a glance one would easily think that the advertisement is on native wears or traditional dancers. This shows that the information is not well presented. In the above advertisements, one maxim or the other is violated. In conclusion, advertisers do not comply with the Gricane co-operative principle.

Advertisers often use unrelated background while advertising on posters or stickers. For example: Plate 53 with the text “ultimate breakthrough. I am the ultimate” This is an advertisement of a Christian programme with the image of young woman excitedly raising her hands. This depicts unrelated situations. Ultimate breakthrough is an event that can happen in a person’s life physically or
spiritually but “I’m the ultimate” does not indicate that the event has happened in such a person’s life. Only God is ultimate.

Plate 72 with the text “Alpha Dominion Tissue keep the nation clean”. On the advertisement, there is also an image of a man dropping something onto the refuse bin. At a glance, one would easily believe that the advertisement is on refuse bin for environmental sanitation because the information is not well presented.

Plate 17 with the text “A UNN graduate is naturally ahead of you”. The language of advertising is full of obscurity and ambiguities that yield various interpretations. This is why implicature is the hallmark by which advertisers achieve their aims. As pateman puts it “the advertisers get the consumers to do their dirty ideological work for them, by presenting ambiguous or vague statements and leaving them to draw meanings to the advantage of advertisers.(11) .

The advertisement above is really ambiguous. In the first instance, one cannot easily say whom the statement is addressing. Is it addressing the audience or the man in the advertisement greeting a young graduate? Again, the statement “a graduate of UNN is naturally ahead of you will stimulate some questions like: ahead of you in doing what or in what way and how?. In the midst of this confusion, a reader of the advertisement will end up giving his / her own interpretation.

Some advertisers also make use of non-standard English in advertising.
Advertisers use what Fromkin calls “commercial re-spelling” (564) while advertising. This is the use of non-standard spelling in advertisements. The following advertisements are examples:

Plate 28 reads “why I no go make yanga. Beta wash for beta money”

Plate 27 reads “Jesus na you be Oga, every oda god na so so ye ye”

Plate 81 reads “Delay sex now, unwanted belle or HIV/ AIDS fit spoil your life”

Plate 47 reads “For your Xmas bonanza, visit us and Xperience it at Mr. Biggs”

The above examples show that some advertisers use non-standard English and spelling as advertising strategies to get the attention of the target audience. Another reason why advertisers use non-standard English and commercial re-spelling is that they are eye catching and also for word economy on the part of the advertisers. This confirms the words of Yule that “more gets communicated than said “(127). The use of non-standard syntax and spelling is deliberate and it is also geared towards familiarizing the target audience by making their mispronunciation of some English words coincide with the orthography. For instance,

“Oda” for /ɔː:/ /

‘beta’ for /bet /
SUMMARY

From the presentation and analysis of data in this research, there is enough evidence that pragmatic elements are embedded in the language of stickers. The intention of the advertisers for using the pragmatic elements vary from one advertisement to another. Such intentions include getting familiar with their audience, creating a conversational atmosphere and making the target audience interpret the advertisement to the advantage of their advertisers. However, their sole aim is to persuade their target audience to get interested in their goods and services.

Non-standard English was also made use of and the essence is to get the attention of their target audience. This is why it was easy to find poor spellings and syntactic errors in some of their expressions. The effect of this non-standard expressions on the audience cannot be over-emphasized. It erodes the proficiency of the English language of many Nigerians who are vulnerable to imbibing these non-standard expressions.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter deals with discussion, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research

5.1 DISCUSSION

The language of advertising treads on the border of pragmatics as a domain of linguistic inquiry.

From the advertisements on stickers studied, it was discovered that almost all the advertisements made contextual use of language and images. Portraying the importance of context, malinnowski explained that “context is necessary for adequate understanding of the text” (qted in Halliday 7).

It was discovered that advertisers seem to be very interested in implicature as a pragmatic element because it is inherent in almost all the advertisements used for the research. The researcher also found out that implicature was employed as a strategy to make people, according to Gerfen “take their claims to be more powerful than they really are” (11). The strategy of implicature also makes people interpret ideas that would favour the advertisers and their products. The advertisers made use of words such as “famous “news”, “best”, supper”,

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“goodness”, “no rival etc. which are emotive words aimed at addressing the self image of the audience. All these emotive words have great implications in the minds of the target audience.

It is also discovered that all the advertisements contain speech acts and their illocutionary force is mainly to persuade and inform their target audience.

On the issue of the Gricean co-operative principle, advertising did not fit in well. It seems to be a poor example because advertisers want to reach the audience even if they do not want to be reached. The advertisers seek the attention of the audience when they are busy with other things such as listening to network news, reading newspapers or magazines. Advertisements are all over the places demanding for attention. In the advertisers’ efforts to reach the audience and at the same time compete for attention, they flout one maxim or the other.

Indexicals which are pragmatic elements were also employed by advertisers to create conversational atmosphere between them and their addressees. This also helps to place their advertisements within the addressee’s environment. For instance, plate 78 reads “Jesus died for you, accept him and be saved” Plate 31 reads “MTN your best connection, Plate 71 reads “stop here for your spiritual refreshment”

This research also reveals that advertisers use non-standard English in order to establish or create a familiar atmosphere with their audience. In a language
community where English is used as a second language, the standard of English is lowered to attract the attention of the audience. The orthography of the advertisement is made to sound like the pronunciation that the audience is familiar with. For instance “Beta money for beta wash”

“Jesus na you be oga”

5.2 CONCLUSION

This study sought to find out how pragmatics principle could be used to analyse the language of advertisements printed on stickers. The information collected was based on the observation of 100 advertisements on stickers. Actually, the research revealed that advertisers, like other users of the English language as poets, operate within the limits of language use. It has shown that there are factors that affect interpretation of advertisements and consumer behaviours. It was also pointed out that there is a communication gap created by advertisers for their audience to fill and this is to the advantage of advertisers..

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this research. Since most of the advertisers are products of Nigerian educational system, efforts should be made to teach and emphasize the contextual meanings of
the words and expressions in the teaching of the English language in our educational institutions. This is because context is very essential in the interpretation of meanings of words and expressions. Again, since advertising has its unique features of language use, people should be advised through the media and other means of communication not to use the advertisers’ English as a yardstick for measuring the standard of the English language.

Moreover, in any workshop organized for advertisers, explicitness of expressions should be emphasized in order to avoid ambiguity or multiple meanings associated with the expression meant for the target audience. The advertiser should also be taught correct English expression to be used in advertising.

Furthermore, the government should establish a body of editors for the purposes of editing the advertisements that are projected to the audience. This will help to check the unsubstantiated claims made by advertisers. Advertisers should also be discouraged from using language as a tool of deceit.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research experimented on the use of pragmatics principles to analyse the language of advertising generally. Consequently, the researcher could not
engage in an intensive analysis of different pragmatic features as they affect advertisements because of time and space limitations.

For this reason, the researcher suggests that research could still be carried out in the following areas pragmatic exploration of the language of information on the notice boards in our university campuses”

The effect of the use of implicature in persuading the target audience and the pragmatic elements predominantly employed by advertisers to achieve their aims. Research in these areas could bring the full import of the pragmatics principles on advertisements.
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