

# **A GRAPHO-SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE NIGERIAN *PUNCH* NEWSPAPER**

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## **Abstract**

This paper sought to investigate the stylistic variations in newspaper advertisements to assess creativity as demonstrated by the advertisers in the *Punch* newspaper. Data for this study were selected, based on their types as: business, obituary, political, birthday and congratulatory adverts. The graphology of the advert types as well as the likely syntactic inappropriateness in each sample was the goal of the paper. Data were then isolated in terms of marked-ness in patterns and deviance in choices of advertisers. We found after all that details such as dates, venues and phone numbers are vital information in advertisements. Secondly, major syntactic disorders in advertisements are meant to achieve stylistic purposes. Moreover, the syntactic errors in advertisements are typographical and graphological. Above all, there is nothing as graphological errors but graphological features. We conclude that advertising is a form of communication about ideas, things, services, events or people, which is paid for by an individual or organization. The type of advert has been observed to be a determiner of the style of graphology and syntax (language) which is employed by the advertiser to ensure appropriate meaning-making. Therefore, graphology and syntax are not particularly errors but meant for stylistic purposes.

## **Introduction**

A stylistically rewarding venture it seems when newspapers, two or more, are juxtaposed for differences in style of choice of advert types and style of deviation from the norm of writing and its convention. A more rewarding attempt it might be if stylistic analysis is delimited to choices made by particular newspaper editors in their advert placements. To unveil the bride, our intention in this paper is to stylistically examine different advert types and their varying graphological and syntactic manifestations in the *Punch* newspaper.

An attempt is made in this dense area of research to find out how graphology actually influences writing according to Crystal and Davy (18) that graphology is the analogous study of a language's writing system or orthography as seen in the various kinds of handwriting or topography. Leech (39), writes that graphology transcends orthography in his *linguistic guide to*

*English poetry*. Style, according to him refers to the whole writing system: punctuation and paragraphing as well as spacing. Since graphology has to do with writing, appropriateness in writing then supposedly captures not only the physical or creative arrangement but also the syntactic arrangement of words, phrases, clauses and the entire sentence. Data for this study are divided into advertisement types: business, obituary, political, birthday and congratulatory adverts. The extracts to be analyzed are presented as datum items which are selected for analyses after a brief review of Literature below. This paper is an attempt to contribute to existing studies in the fields of stylistics, critical discourse and grammar in general.

### **Nature of Advertisement: Definitions**

Advertisement as a term has a wide range of meanings, depending on the context of usage. According to Fashina (237), advertisement as a form of communication is conceived as “a commercial, social and political message, an enterprise often used either for marketing particular products or for influencing the direction of public opinion in favour of an individual, party/group, society or race”. Fashina (ibid) gives the examples of social advertisement as obituaries, marriage adverts, club party adverts, adverts for chieftaincy coronation, house warming ceremonies, anniversaries, sports, sponsored announcements of political programmes, manifestoes, rallies, parties, etc. He admits that commercial advertisement is the most widely recognized and most common form of advertisements. It is a form of advertisement which affords a manufacturer, distributor or retailer the opportunity of selling a particular consumer product or service.

Advertisements have one overriding aim which is to sell goods and services. The different types of advertising texts are therefore likely to vary, according to the perceived differences of the potential consumers of the various goods and services being advertised (Bex 158). Since advertisement is a form of communication, it is clear that all the messages that emanate from the advertiser to the audience pass through different channels used for effective communication of the messages. Thus, the messages are deliberately worded and structured to stimulate the consumer towards buying the products.

Adewumi (1995) has classified advertisement into indoor and outdoor, with the indoor medium being radio, television, newspaper and magazines; and the outdoor medium being billboards, signboard, poster cards, and public square announcements.

### **Language Use and Structure of Advertisement**

According to Crystal and Davy (1983), a particular social situation makes us respond with an appropriate variety of language. Thus, the types of language we use can vary according to the purposes for which language is employed. Language variation in relation to style is a function of the circumstances, contexts, situations and status of the language.

Fashina (238) opines that there are well-organized common-core stylistic features of advertisement not only with artistic and creative backgrounds, but also with communicative effectiveness. He states further that different graphological devices are used, especially in newspaper, magazine, billboard, signboard and television adverts. The system of graphology consists of typographical devices such as colour variations, styles of typography, paragraphing and spacing. Colour in adverts is said to be one of the most versatile elements used for a number of reasons.

In advertisement, the introduction of beautiful colour makes people to notice an advert more than when it is not used. Paragraphing and spacing are also utilized in making significant parts of messages to stand out clearly. They also help to prevent any feeling of monotony on the printed page. Kleppener (1966) recognizes this as a device of staggered and irregular arrangements, which is calculated towards achieving visual prominence in advertisements. It is common to find adverts whose captions are designed in capital letterings, thus foregrounding its message. These devices make headlines to have high visual prominence, thus creating eye-catching effect.

According to Goodman (52), many analysts of images and proponents of literacy claim that there is a grammar inherent in images, just as there is in writing. Some scholars adopt a functional theory of language associated with the work of Halliday (1978, 1985). In Halliday's words, "language is as it is because of what it has to do" (19). Following this view, the choice of linguistic sign – the word – and the ways in which words are combined in the clause are related to the functions to which the language is being put. This view takes 'language as being a map of the world', a way of representing things and events, rather than a 'window to the world' (a way of looking straight out on to the world). In other words, the meaning we ascribe to language is socially constructed and negotiated, or in Halliday's words:

The particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve (Halliday, 142).

The language of advertisement is observed to usually deviate from the normal usage of English. The language of advertisements brings novelty of impression. Adverbs and Adjectives form the keywords or lexical choices used in adverts. These adverbs and adjectives are called TRIGGER WORDS (Fashina 240).

## **The Print Media as a Medium of Advertising**

This section briefly discusses the print media as a very popular window of advertisements by companies, government functionaries, and industries, among others. Following television and radio adverts is the print media in form of newspapers, magazines and bills. In the case of the printed adverts, Bex (1996) observes that there is graphological thematization, in that it has been given a prominent typeface, and is in upper case letters. The use of ellipsis is observed to be a common phenomenal style in print adverts. It is a useful device because the cost of adverts is so high that strict rationalization of words is applied to minimize cost.

Apart from that, an advert is supposed to have an easily, on the spot, accessible message with minimal difficulty. Thus, the need for the use of eye-catching graphological and phonological devices is high. Most of the time, the construction of adverts is somewhat similar to those of newspaper headlines. This is especially in the realm of using Verbless Nominal and Adverbial Phrases. The verbs, which may otherwise occur in the crude form of the sentence, are ellipted. Thus, what one has are transformations exhibiting traits of verb deletion (Fashina 1996 243).

Also, the use of conditional affirmative clauses is common to the language of advertisement. Either of these is used as stylistic devices, to achieve a desired impact, or influence the consumers. Interrogatives are sometimes used in adverts to quiz the public consumers into the positive values of the company or product so advertised. Goodman and Graddol (1996) observe that the form of verbal English can also be considered as visual medium; letter forms themselves can convey meaning and information. They add that if we admit letter shapes, spelling and punctuation into the realm of English, then we are into the field of *grapho-semantics* – meaning

which derives from the text's writeness (44). This in essence means it looks not only at what is written, but how it is written and at the relationship between the two. Their submission therefore is that the type face in which a text or part of a text is set can convey a mood, signal clues as to content, or even suggest a point of view. In the present study, grapho-syntactic inappropriateness is investigated in some selected newspapers.

According to Goodman and Graddol (1996), "the semiotics of typography state that handwritten-style fonts are often used by advertisers to give the receiver the impression of a friendly handwritten note from a friend". Goodman and Graddol (1996) opine that adverts generally deviate from the conventions of graphology in normal writing – commas, capitalization, background illustrations and different colourings and paintings are graphetically and graphically supplied. In terms of language, an advert is meant to win the taste-craze of consumers, including job seekers. In the subsequent sections, we shall review stylistics before narrowing down to graphology which is the focus of this study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Style in writing can be investigated according to the choice of the writer. The common markers of style have been summarized by Alabi (162) as lexico-syntactic, phonological and graphological patterns as well as choices and devices. Although, literary and linguistic stylistics are popular approaches, while the eclectic approach may be uncommon, a common ground appears to be the patterns, choices and devices of styles. Crystal and Davy (219-253) address the reaction of Leech to the grammar and vocabulary of television advertisements by emphasizing the written and memorized nature of the tele-visions and tele-voices in terms of quality. A similar essay to the present one is Crystal and Davy's (ibid) address of the language of press

advertising. They posit that the notion of advertising is identified by reference to commercial advertising only. They identify distinctions in language forms, “deviations from normal usage which occur for example, graphologically (as in Beanz Meanz Heinz or in such brand-names as *Chilprufe*)”. In this study, such identifications as demonstrated by Crystal and Davy (1969) will be cued.

## Data Presentation and Analyses

Since graphology has to do with writing, appropriateness in writing captures not only the physical or creative arrangement but also the syntactic arrangement of words, phrases, clauses and the entire sentence. Data for this study are identified advertisements in terms of types, as business, obituary, political, birthday and congratulatory adverts. The extracts to be analyzed are presented as datum items below:



**Fig. 1** Guarantee Trust Bank Adverts (*The Punch*, Tuesday, 22 March, 2016, p. 52)

The visible expressions in the figure above are:

## **INTRODUCING**

\* 737#

### **Simple Banking**

**Just dial** \* 737# to start

Quick links

Airtime (self) \* 737\*AMOUNT#

Airtime (Third Party)\*737\*8\*AMOUNT\*Phone NO#

Transfer to Other Banks \*737\*2\*AMOUNT\*NUBAN A/C NO#

Bill Payment (Startimes) \*737\*37\*AMOUNT\*SMART CARD NO#

Internet Banking Details \*737\*6\*5#

Generate Token Code \*737\*7#

Account opening \*737\*0#

Balance check/enquiry \*737\*6#

Try it today!

For more information, kindly visit [www.gtbank.com/737](http://www.gtbank.com/737)

### **Graphological Analysis**

**Picture Display** of a Phone (hand set) to show that the banking transaction can be done with a telecommunication gadget which is usually in form of a phone or a computer. In this advert, a phone set is on display.

**Attractive Caption** reading “**INTRODUCING**”. Like in conventional discourse, this is an attention catching device used to draw the attention of those opening the pages of the newspaper to that particular page for closer look and keener interest. A reader is caught in the web by seeing

the word “introducing”. Any reader will be interested in reading the advertisement to see what exactly is being introduced.

**Bank** is the next word below the word “introducing”. Intelligently, the advertiser decided not to waste time before revealing what is to be introduced. A reader immediately sees the word **Bank**. Okay, a bank is being introduced, but the question that arises is that the name of the bank is not prominent in the writings, but only placed strategically at the right-hand-side corner of the advertisement page.

**Figure Caption** \* 737# is written following the word “bank” immediately to create another confusion or suspense. What the figure is about runs through the mind of the reader of the page.

To understand the figure caption, the reader will need to shift his or her gaze to the right to view the **Quick links**, written in some gothic lettering to achieve a stylistic effect. The quick links give specific instructions on the use of the figure \* 737# in order to carry out a transaction of banking or purchase of airtime, within the same (intra-bank) or with another (inter-bank) bank. The **language** of the advertisement is not only simple but also straightforward. In other words, the information needed by a subscriber is provided in succinct language void of ambiguities. Since bank customers would require easy and convenient banking service, the advertiser encourages the reader to **Try It today**, and for more information refers the reader to the bank’s website. The tone of the advertisement is very formal and official. It is a strictly business-like language.

### **Graphological Effects**

Boxed lettering is a major pattern in the advert. Also observable is the colouring of portions of the Quick Link for special attention and the short expressions which can be explained syntactically.

## Syntactic Analysis

The syntactic approach to be used to analyze the conjugations above is the systemic.

### Simple banking

m h (Nominal Group)

transfer to GTbank

l p n (Verb Group)

Bill payment

m h (Nominal Group)

Generate token code

l m h (Verb Group)

From the analyses above, two groups of grammatical names are noticed: the nominal group and the verb group.



Fig. 2 Job Vacancy Adverts (*The Guardian*, March, 29, 2016, p. 42)

## Graphological Analyses

### Bold Prints

The phrase and word above are the job descriptions of the vacancies available. Below the captions are written “ *must have a minimum qualification of HND or B.Sc (Marketing) with 5 years post qualification experience in Print sales and evidence of previous account serviced. In*

*addition, he/she must be an aggressive goal getter working to achieve set target with minimum supervision”.*

### Syntactic Error

What appears to be an error in the long sentence above is the compounding of “previous account serviced” and achieve set “target. It is possible for the word “target” to carry a plural inflection “s” since targets could be multiple.

“All Applications with curriculum vitae to be received on or before 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2016 and should be addressed to...”

**Omission of auxiliary verb.** There is an omission of the word “are” in the sentence above. That is possibly a deliberate error with the intention of minimizing space, and at the same time conveying the intended message.



**Fig. 3. Punch Newspaper Bonanza Adverts (The *Punch*, Tuesday, 29 March, 2016, p.**

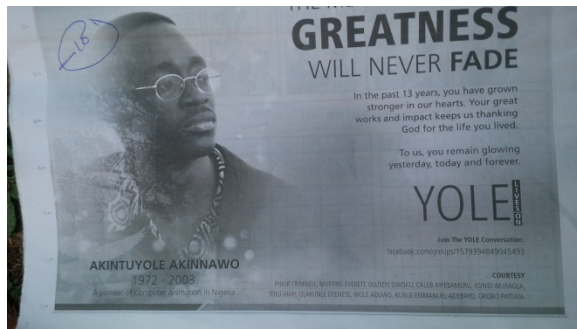
### Graphological Feature

Syntactically, the expressions can be analysed as follows.

A                  S                  P                                  C    A

In the sentence above, there is only one subject, one predicate and only one complement, whereas there are four adjunct expressions. The implication of this disparity is that the nominal group and the verb group as well as the complement are not as important to the advertiser as the adjuncts which are “directives”. While the nominal group has a pronoun, “you” the verb group has an instructive, “can now reach”, and the complement points at the interest of the would-be advertisers, “more prospective clients”, the goal of **PUNCH** is to direct would-be advertisers to **PRICE TAG, PLACE/COVERAGE OF ADVERTS, MANNER/ACTION, and TIME** of advertisement. In other words, *Punch* newspaper is interested in informing the public of the token it will cost them to advertise their products, and not exorbitant prices, the place or coverage of the advertisements (Nigeria) and not abroad. The action to be taken is to take a bold

step of advertising their products in the *Punch* newspaper. The timing of the offer is weekly. These pieces of information are the goals of the advertiser of the *Punch*.



**Fig. 4 Obituary Adverts (The *Punch*, Tuesday, March 29 2016,**

The *Punch* newspaper announces the passing away of a young lad who has made an appreciable mark in life within a very short time that he lived. The **graphological** effect in the advert is the bolding and increased size of the lettering or orthography. The big word is “**GREATNESS**” that will never **FADE**. The choice of the two words is an indication that they are important to the personality of the deceased. The advertisers say “in the last 13 years, you have grown stronger in our hearts, your great works and impact keeps us thanking God for the life you lived”. “To us, you remain glowing, yesterday, today and forever, **YOLE**”. For stylistic purpose, and for emphasis, the attention of the readers is drawn to the name – **YOLE**.

**Syntactically**, the errors in the advertisement are minimal. The expression can be analysed thus:

///In the last 13 years,/// you// have grown// stronger// in our hearts,///

A S P A A

/// your great works and impact// keeps us thanking// God// for the life you lived”///.

S P C A

The sentences above are void of explicit or implicit errors.



**Fig. 5 Job Vacancy Adverts (*the Punch*, Tuesday, March 29, 2016, p. 34)**

Two adverts are lumped together on the same small page. The first is that of an admin officer and a Personal Assistant (PA). The boldly written part of the advert is the actual position that is to be filled. That is that of the **ADMIN OFFICER**. Also to be filled is the position of a **PA**. The qualifications expected include the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and the Higher National Diploma (HND) or Bachelor of Science (B.Sc). In the second advert, the **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS ALL OVER LAGOS STATE, OGUN STATE AND OYO STATE**

The graphological features in the present advert are the bold prints. Admin Officer, Development Officer, Lagos State, Ogun state and Oyo state are the locations of the vacancies. The duties of the would-be employees are however written in **Verb Phrase**. For example,

**DUTIES:**

\*Surveying new territory to identify suitable sales outlets for our products

\* Sign up new outlets for effective sales and distribution of our product

The writings above are precise without any ambiguity. The basic duties of the would-be applicants are to survey new territories for imminent sales to prospective buyers. They will also sign up new outlets for effective sales and distribution of products. For **REMUNERATION**, a one word answer is given as **ATTRACTIVE** without any long essay. The grammatical error in the advertisement is found in the expression:

Note: ALL SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE shall be invited for an interview at Ikeja, Lagos state.

The plural inflection which is to accompany the word “candidate” as “candidates” is missing. Moreover, the advertisers failed to pluralize the expression, “interview” by saying “candidates” will be invited for “an interview”. Consistent application of concord rule was not observed by the advertiser.

\* ACCOUNTING OFFICERS \*  
\* GRAPHICS ARTISTS \* CONTACT: oyesolak@icloud.com

**URGENT VACANCIES**  
An indigenous Company with European Partner here in Lagos is in need of Marketing Executives/managers. Qualifications: B.Sc, HND, OND & NCE. Ages: 25-60yrs. Experience not necessary. There is training facilities, it's career building. Salary: N150k per month + Commission and other fringe benefits. Interested candidates should send their CVs to [ulumarizu700@yahoo.com](mailto:ulumarizu700@yahoo.com) or text 08032420788.

**VACANCIES**  
An investment firm in Nigeria wishes to employ qualified graduates with the below qualifications in the following fields.  
\* English \* Marketing \* Economics \* Linguistics \* Education \* History  
Position: Relationship Officer  
Send ur cvs to [areourcesintl@gmail.com](mailto:areourcesintl@gmail.com)  
Or text ur Name, Qualification, Gender, Age, and Location to 09055103600  
Only for innoos residents.  
\*United Kingdom \*Singapore \*Malaysia \*Thailand\* Indonesia \*Hong Kong \*Nigeria \*India

**MMI MONTESSORI TEACHER TRAINING**  
Montessori Diploma Course (M. Dip)  
ONE YEAR PART TIME INTERNATIONAL  
MONTESSORI DIPLOMA COURSE LEADING TO THE  
AWARD OF DIPLOMA IN MONTESSORI METHOD  
OF EDUCATION (MMI LONDON - M. DIP.)

■ BENEFITS ■  
➤ Highly lucrative course and world recognized Diploma accreditation (Earn over 90% current earnings)  
➤ Be able to own and run your own pre-school  
➤ Be able to work anywhere in the World in international schools  
➤ Get an international Diploma Accreditation  
➤ Do your teaching practice anywhere in the world  
➤ 100% Employability (All our students gain great employments)  
➤ Flexible time-table and holidays at intervals.

Date: Start 28th March 2016 - 10th December 2016  
venue: Helen Doron Centre, MMI London (Island Centre)  
Eleganza Gardens, Opp. VGC, Ikota - Lekki  
Call: Daniel: 08037758153, Martem: 08023083735, Lara: 08028590808  
Kemi: 08035892386, Joseph: 08123775065, Shola: 08028489986

**CAVEAT EMPTOR**  
Advertisement on these pages have not been investigated or found to be available.  
These include the website, e-mails or any other mail address. Intending readers/clients and applicants should endeavour to ascertain their availability and authenticity before entering into any transaction with the advertisers. The Guardian Newspapers Ltd will not be liable for any transaction based on these Adverts/Publications.

**Fig. 6 Job Vacancy Adverts (*the Punch*, Tuesday, March 29, 2016, p. 34)**

Six sections are noticeable in the picture above. The first section is the heading, which says “MONTESSORY TEACHER TRAINING, written in bold letters. The second section mentions the courses available at the training institution. The programmes include Diploma (M.Dip), the anticipated qualification is the MONTESSORY METHOD OF EDUCATION (MMI, LONDON –M.DIP). In the third section there are the BENEFITS highlighted in arrows. The fourth section has the DATE and the VENUE of the programme. The fifth section has the contacts to be called while the last section has a CAVEAT EMPTOR to excuse the advertising newspaper from any fraudulent act in the bid to enter into any transaction with the MONTESSORY TEACHER TRAINING. Needless to say there could be grammatical slips, the graphological style succinctly gives the information required by would-be clients.

**JOBS & CAREERS**

**VACANCIES**

1. Computer User (Office & Shop floor)  
2. For English (First Month)  
3. Automobile Sales Reps. Exp.  
4. Graduate Trainees (Hotel/Reg. Exp. 10k)  
5. Operations/Logistics/MS. (Hotel/Reg. Exp. 10k)  
6. Accountants/Bookkeepers (HND/BSC/ACA)  
7. Agricultural Biologists as Tech.  
8. Hotel Staff (Reps. (Hotel/Reg. Exp. 10k))  
9. House Cooks/Bakers/Chefs  
10. Strengths/Health Index screened  
11. Factory staff (Seasonal/Temp.)  
Apply with CV in person or email within 7 days  
**POW LIMITED**  
Phone: 08057893685, Tel: 08057893685  
150 Oregun Rd, Ikaja, Lagos (Off Filing Station)  
Visit: [www.powlimited.com](http://www.powlimited.com)

**CONVERSION PROGRAM!**  
Convert Now! HND, NCE, & Pro. Certificate to BSc/BA Degree from Accredited Universities. By Project Submission/online Top-Up Duration a semester. Also Mac/ MBA / Ph.D by (Research Work/online). call 08057893685. 56 Oregun Rd Ikaja Email: [info-universalcertification@gmail.com](mailto:info-universalcertification@gmail.com). Fast & Affordable.

**VACANCY**  
A financial institution with international affiliation is seeking for Trainee Managers, Financial Advisors and Marketers for Recruitment. Qualifications: Mac, MBA, BSc, HND, OND, NCE etcetera. Call Mr Luke on 08037548479

**URGENT VACANCIES:**

1. Graduate Trainee (fresh grad), Receptionist  
2. Receptionist, Journalist, IT Specialist  
3. Male/ female, Computer Eng. Marketing Execs (No experience) in any course with/without exp.  
4. Admin Officer, Secretaries/Computer Oper. Customer Service Officers, Sales Reps, Office attendants  
5. Security Guards, Drivers, Cleaners and Cooks.  
CONTACT: Apply either in person To: The Pw Limited, Sarachi Ventures, 42A, Kereke Rd, Near 4005 Police Station, Oshodi or By SMS to 08037548479 or 0813246158.  
INTERVIEW: Immediately. Get back MSG.

**URGENT VACANCIES.**

(1) Admin/ Account Officers (Hnd, Bsc, Jamb Ase)  
(2) Inshore Keptel/ Account Clerk/ Cashiers/ Audit Trainees (ond, Hnd, Bsc)  
(3) general Duty Staff/ Office Clerk/ (ond, Bsc)  
(4) Account Managers/ Store Managers (Hnd, Bsc)  
(5) Inshore Service Officers (ond, Hnd, Bsc)  
(6) Inshore Drivers/ Truck Drivers.  
Apply in Person To: The Admin Manager, Leverage Hall Services, Suite C038, Kaduna 1 Plaza, Bako, Trade Fair Complex, under Bridge Bus stop, Bako, Exp. Way, Lagos 0813246158, 08177505820

**STUDY & WORK, USA/ CANADA/AUSTRALIA**  
Immediate #Study Visa & Scholarship Assistance  
#Business/ Tourist Visa.  
#Work permit with Accommodation.  
#Goods & Property Purchase, etc Call now 08057893685 No 56 Oregun Rd Ikaja, Powered by Themis Inc USA, [themisedu@gmail.com](mailto:themisedu@gmail.com)

**Fig. 7 Job Vacancy Adverts**

The picture above has multiple adverts. The adverts have different writing methods. Unlike the advertisement in Figure six above, other adverts on this same page appears to be written in a hurry. Reasons for the jumbled arrangement of information could be that of cost or importance of the message on the particular page of the newspaper.



**Fig. 8 Cote D’voire Airline Service Adverts (*the Guardian*, Tuesday, March 29, 2016, p. 27)**

The advertisement above is multi-coloured. The different colours carry different messages. There are about six colours in the advertisement. Each person in that picture represents a nation in Africa. There appears to be an arrangement similar to the positioning of the African nations on the map of Africa. But for Cote d’voire which is at the centre of the advert, the other nations are the neighbouring countries. The nations are graphologically arranged as Gabon, Senegal and Nigeria from the West, and Cote d’voire conspicuously standing in the middle, and Cameroon to the left of Code d’voire. The advertisement pictorially sends the message that Cote d’voire airline is big, strong and reliable across Africa and beyond. Thus, the airline is equal to the challenges confronting air travel in Africa. The Bold lettering **AT HOME, EVERY CHALLENGE IS A VICTORY** depicts that the exploits of Goodman and Graddol (1996) Air Cote d’ voire have made the airline victorious. Through human pictures, the message is adequately conveyed clearly without mincing words.



**Fig. 9 Telecoms Service energy Adverts (*the Punch*, March 29, 2016, p. 40)**

The advertisement above in the Punch newspaper has the following graphological features

- Bold letters
- Underlined expressions
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients

There is no particular reason to examine the datum syntactically.

**VEHICLES FOR SALE**  
(COMPANY USED):  
**FOTON & MANDIESEL TRUCKS**  
**HONDA CIVIC**  
**TOYOTA COROLLA &**  
**TOYOTA CARINA CARS**  
**CONTACT:**  
**01-774-2544, 09030268989**

**FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE**  
**CORRIGENDUM**  
RE: ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POST  
OF MEDICAL DIRECTOR  
IN FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, ABEOKUTA.  
Please refer to the above  
advertisement published on  
page 40 of the March 21st  
2016 edition of the Punch  
Newspaper.  
Kindly note that the 9th bullet  
under the sub-heading:  
**Requirements** which reads  
"APPLICANT ABOVE THE  
AGE OF 55 YEARS NEED  
NOT APPLY"  
is hereby replaced as follows:  
**APPLICANTS WHO HAVE  
LESS THAN FIVE YEARS TO  
RETIRE NEED NOT APPLY.**  
Thank you.  
Signed  
Medical Director

**Fig. 10 Vehicle Sale Adverts (The *Punch*, March 29, 2016, p. 40)**

On the same page with the advert above, same graphological features were observed.

- Bold letters
- Underlined expressions
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients

There is no particular reason to examine the datum syntactically.

account with Central Bank of Nigeria not later than 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 07, 2016.

The Bank reserves the right to vary the amount on offer in line with market realities prevailing as at the period of auction of the Nigerian Treasury Bills.

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES OFFICE  
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA  
ABUJA

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**YETKEM**  
**INSTITUTE OF CATERING** (Since 1978)  
**(School of skills Development and Ice Cream Making)**

**PERMANENT SITE**  
YETKEM AVENUE, OFF AJASA COMMAND ROAD, THROUGH THE NEW  
EKORO ROAD, ABULE EGBA, WHITE HOUSE BISTOP, LAGOS STATE.  
08052361251, 07080392777

**ADMISSION INTO PART TIME AND WEEKEND COURSES**  
Applications are invited from candidates awaiting University Admission  
School Certificate holders, House Wives, Professionals, Young Boys and Girls interested  
in the catering profession including the Production of Snacks, Bread, Small Chop, etc.

Courses Title	Title	Duration	Admissions
A. Cake making, Decorating & Decoration (Short Course)	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
B. Intensive Practical Cookery Course (Short Course)	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
C. Hall Decoration and Event Planning	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
D. Sugar Craft, Training for Personal Use	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
E. Different Snacks and Small Chops	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
F. Bread Making	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY
G. Ice Cream Making	Part Time/Weekend	2 Months	DAILY

"Sitting down at home watching Television??  
Hurry now to Yetkem Institute to prepare for the future"

**QUALIFICATION**  
(i) JSS PASS (ii) SSC attempted or failed (iii) Teachers Grade 1, NCE  
(iv) University Graduates in Undergraduates, Housewife, etc And matured students  
(v) All interested candidates for the catering Profession

**FACILITIES**  
We assist our brilliant students for employment with other Catering Establishments

**METHOD OF APPLICATION**  
Application forms are available for NCCO cash at Yetkem Institute's School Premises

**Certificates are issued at the end of each course**

**ADMISSION GOING ON DAILY**  
**YETKEM INSTITUTE OF CATERING AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT**  
YETKEM AVENUE, OFF AJASA COMMAND ROAD, THROUGH THE NEW  
EKORO ROAD, ABULE EGBA, WHITE HOUSE BISTOP, LAGOS STATE.  
08052361251, 07080392777, [www.yetkeminstitute.com](http://www.yetkeminstitute.com)

"Your path to successful catering career"

**Fig. 11 Education/Admission Adverts (*the Guardian* March, 29 2016, p. 23)**

The major features in the analyses below include

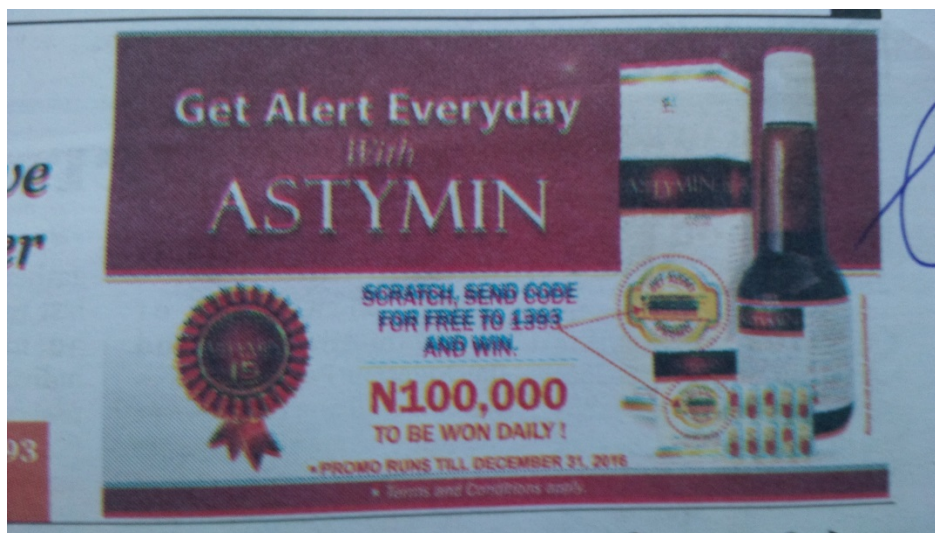
- Bold letters – **YETKEM** (The trade name)
- expressions written inside a table
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients

There is a particular error in the spelling of the word “assist” where the advertiser types “asit”. Moreover, several hanging expressions, rather than complete sentence, are noticed. For example “admission going on daily...” This is also ellipsis at work as a major feature of adverts.



**Fig. 12 Banking Service Adverts (the *Punch*, Tuesday 29 March, 2016, p. 1)**

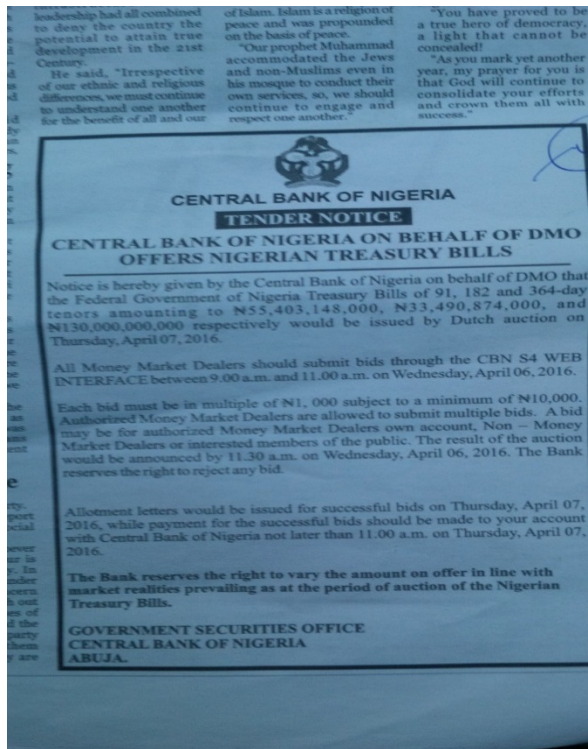
- Bold letters
- Demarcated expressions
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients



**Fig. 13 Drug Adverts (*The Punch*, Tuesday, March 29 2016, p. 37)**

The major graphological features in the advert above include

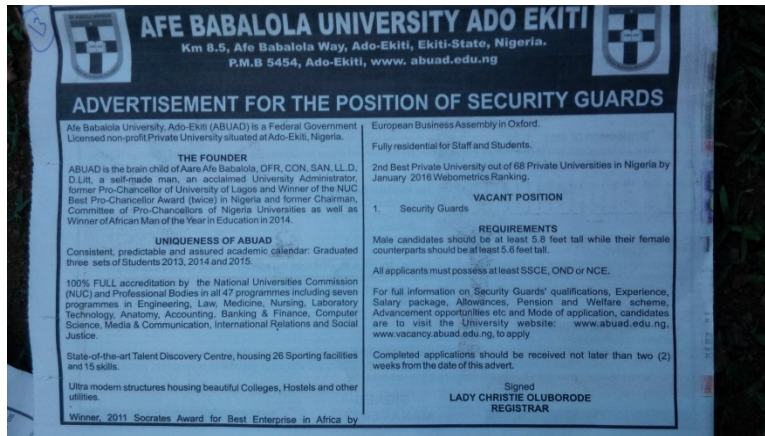
- Colouration **GET ALERT EVERYDAY ...**
- Picture of bottles and drugs
- Figures like ^100, 000 TO BE WON
- Incomplete sentence types for instance "...promo runs till December 31 2016



**Fig. 14 Banking Treasury Bills Adverts (*The Punch*, Tuesday, March 29 2016, p. 19)**

The Central Bank of Nigeria is the advertiser of the advert above. The major graphological features in the advert include

- Bold letters
- Underlined expressions
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients
- Time for customer application and visit.



**Fig. 15 University Security Job Vacancy Adverts (*The Punch*, Tuesday, March 29 2016, p. 32)**

The advert above is a university advertisement. The major features are similar to those of the earlier ones. The features include

- Bold letters
- Underlined expressions
- Figures
- Telephone numbers for location of clients
- Time for customer application and visit.

## Discussion of Findings

### Language of advertisement

Language has a powerful influence over people and their behaviour. This is especially true in the field of marketing and advertising. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important. Visual content and design in advertising have a very great impact on the consumer, but it is language that helps people to identify a product and remember it. The English language is known for its extensive vocabulary, where many other languages have only one or two words which carry a particular meaning, English may have five or six.

Moreover, the meaning of these five or six words may differ very slightly and in a very subtle way. It is important to understand the connotation of a word. Connotation is the feeling or ideas that are suggested by a word, “teacher” than the actual meaning of the word, ‘arm chair’, for example suggests comfort, whereas ‘chair’ arouse no particular feeling. The target audience also puts own meaning into certain words, different people sometimes interpret language in different ways. The mass media (when reporting news items, and marketing and advertising) personnel have to consider the emotive power of the words they use, first, they make a decision about what to communicate and what to withhold. One way in which advertisers adapt language to their own use is to take compound words and use them as adjectives. These compounds often later become widely used in normal situations. Examples of these compounds which have become part of the English Language are: to-quality, economy-size, chocolate-flavored, feather light and longer-lasting.

The language of advertising is of course, normally very positive, and emphasizes why one product stands out in comparison with another. Advertising language may not always be “correct” language in the normal sense, for example, comparatives are often used when no real comparison is made, An advertisement for a detergent may say “it gets clothes whiter’ but whiter than what?

A study of the vocabulary used in advertising listed above, and the most common adjectives and verbs in order of frequency, include

#### Adjectives

New, good/better/best, free, fresh, delicious full, sure, clean, wonderful, special, crisp, fine, big, great, real, easy, bright, extra, safe, rich.

#### Verb

Make, get, give, have, see, buy, come, go, know keep, look, love, use, feel, like, choose, take, start, taste, (Lincoln 1992 p. 5)

### **Grapho-syntactic errors in language usage**

There are four skills in language use. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills according to Oniemayin, Medaye and Daniel (2003) are the stages which any speaker of a language goes through in learning and using the language. The last two skills are acquired later in life in the process of formal education, while the first two stages are acquired unconsciously by the child in the process of first language acquisition (p. 15). The last two stages-reading and writing, pose some difficulties for the learner.

These difficulties appear in form of errors of syntax, graphology, punctuation among others. For the purpose of this study, we have concentrated on graphological and syntactic errors, which are errors of spelling, punctuation, agreement, wrong tenses and omissions.

Grapho-syntactic errors are basically deviation from the accepted standards and overall competence in putting the words of a language in writing. These errors normally occur in language use, and they are sometimes “conscious and unconscious error”. They are “conscious errors” when a speaker uses the wrong forms because he considers them appropriate in the context, and “unconscious error” when they occur as a result of inadequate mastery or carelessness either on the part of the speaker or writer. These errors are indexes of the learners’ difficulties in language use. In some cases, because of the occurrence of errors, the information is not clearly disseminated to or understood by the target audience. Deviations in language use are considered real errors, when they are consistent and non-random, and as well hinder the proper decoding process of information.

### **Advertising as a Means of Communication**

Advertising has been defined by many authorities in various ways to suit many purposes and circumstances. Gullet’s encyclopedia (1969) explains that: advertising is a mass paid communication by means of the printed word, radio or television aimed at persuading individuals to take a desired course of action (p. 8)

*Encyclopedia Americana* 19981 defines advertising as “any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of products, services idea by an identifiable individual or organization. Webster ninth new collegiate dictionary asserts that “advertising is the action of calling something (such as commodity for sale, a service offered or desired to the attention of the public by means of printed or broadcast paid announcement (p. 31). The analyzed data in this study has revealed that communication is the primary goal of advertisement. By way of summary, the major findings in this study are highlighted below.

### **Summary of Findings**

The analyses of the adverts have evolved a number of findings. They include that:

- i. graphological features differentiate advertisements from other forms of writings
- ii. bolding is a major graphological feature in advertisements
- iii. colouring of vital parts of the adverts is a graphological device
- iv. change of font size is another style used by advertisers to projectsalient points
- v. details such as dates, venues and phone numbers are vital information in advertisements
- vi. major syntactic disorder in advertisements are meant to achieve stylistic purposes
- vii. the syntactic errors in advertisements are typographical and graphological
- viii. there is nothing as graphological errors but graphological features

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the graphological features in the Punch newspaper adverts and the possible errors replete in these adverts. The reviewed literature has provided a basis for the analyses and the final results from the investigations. Graphological and syntactic errors have been found to be uncommon in advertisements, and they serve multiple purposes. Graphological features and syntactic conjugations are stylistically written to serve communicative purposes.

Advertising particularly is the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media. From the findings above, we can infer that advertising is a form of communication about ideas, things, services events or people, which is paid for by an individual

or organization. This form of communication is not personal or one to one, it is not face-to face interaction, rather, it is directed at a particular group of people. The type of adverts, will then determine the styles of graphology and syntax (language) which it would be written. We conclude therefore that graphological and syntactic features are not particularly errors but meant for stylistic purposes.

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