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# Language choice as discourse: A transitivity approach to MTN<sup>®</sup> and ETISALAT<sup>®</sup> advertising communicative webs in Nigeria

**Abstract.** Advertising texts are significant to manufacturers to promote and skyrocket products' consumption. This study examined kinds of textual choices in advertising, accounting for their frequencies. Two advertisements each from MTN<sup>®</sup> and Etisalat<sup>®</sup> – of the Nigerian advertising universe – were chosen for sample analysis, employing Transitivity and word-formation procedures, as the conceptual frameworks. Transitivity allowed tables and graphs to compute the recurrence of textual components. The research revealed Material Processes of *has offered*, *go rock* (MTN); and *get*, *pick up* (Etisalat) as pronounced choices. Circumstances of Location such as *This week...* (MTN); and *on weeknights...* (Etisalat) are choices of communicative augmentations. The investigation further recapitulated creative over-generalization (*yous*), word play fragmentation (*Y'ello*), and alphanumeric code (*9javaganza*) as communicative facilities of MTN and Etisalat constructs. Hence, the researcher suggested that an extensive study of language choice in advertising domains can strengthen government policies to benefit, among others, readers, researchers, manufacturers, and advertising practitioners.

**Keywords:** advertising, discourse, ideational metafunction, language choice, system.

## 1. Introduction

Language, being a hub of both human activities and existence, is thus central to the notions of discourse and advertising. On that ground, one could suggest that discourse and advertising locate ways in which language resources are chosen, constructed, and disseminated to play some functional roles in societies (Cook 1992; Kress 2010; O'Halloran & Lim 2014; Forceville 2017). In respect of that remark, there are some terminologies remarkable to this study as devices of language operations. The basic concepts are *discourse*, *advertising*, and *language choice*. (The italicized lexemes

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are for emphasis). Language choice, as a core mechanism for depicting and expressing meaning (Fontaine et al. 2013), serves as the interface between discourse and advertising.

The language of advertising is not short of scholarly evidence. This is because advertising, according to Dalamu (2017a), is as old as man. That recognition seems to have informed the proliferation of discourses of advertising in human sciences. Significantly, it is attestable in the knowledge-based industry that Leech (1966) has set a linguistic pacesetter for advertising analysis, explaining the kind of language that advertising professionals utilize to convince the public. On this key language geometry, extant literature has emanated. Consequently, Williamson (1978) examines interchangeability in advertising frameworks, while Gies (1982), Vestergaard & Schroder (1985), Myers (1994), and Forceville (1996) illuminate advertising scaffolding as the epitome of textual and imagery fabrications. Such phenomenal events, for instance, in Brierley (1995) and Hermerén (1999), are explicated as being metaphorical, elliptical, euphemistic, denotative and connotative. Nevertheless, Dalamu (2018a) claims that textual devices play fundamental roles in exhibiting meaning potential of advertisements (henceforth: ads).

Of course, there are other insights, such as Lemke (1995), Geiszinger (2001), Goddard (2002), Fairclough (2003), Dyer (2005), and Carter & Nash (2013), which describe advertising nuances from textual, contextual, historical, socio-cultural, semiotic, and communication points of view. However, this study, as a contribution to the existing literature, differentiates itself from earlier efforts by investigating the choices of lexemes, functional in MTN and Etisalat<sup>2</sup> advertising constructions, deployed to persuade readers to consumption. In addition to that, this study considers MTN and Etisalat textual constructs as a kind of discourse for hypnotizing the audience to patronize their services in Nigeria. Nonetheless, Halliday's grammatical transpose of Transitivity operates as the major processor of the textual facilities, channeling a way for tables and graphs to account for the frequency of the texts. The goal is to demonstrate that Transitivity has the capacity to expound meaning potential of the MTN and Etisalat advertising texts. As a result, one expects that such exposition will further display to readers the structural contents' recurrence of the frameworks and semantic implications associated with the contents.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Discourse, advertising and language choice

Fundamentally, the notion of discourse, possessing multidimensional and overlapping descriptions, influences scholars to express different opinions on the subject as a very wide and complex concept (Schiffrin et al. 2002; Jaworski & Coupland 2006; van Dijk 2010; Gee 2011). Perhaps the writer might perceive discourse in this proposal as discourse analysis (DA) because scholars, including Fairclough (2003), claim that discourse is synonymous with DA. Blommaert (2009: 2-3) expatiates discourse as (i) "linguistic structures actually used by people" and (ii) "a meaningful

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<sup>2</sup> MTN and Etisalat are telecommunication operators (firms) in Nigeria.

symbolic behavior”. In a similar semantic plane, Fairclough (1992) illuminates discourse as social activities pleurably conducted by language users. Of significance is the functionalist perspective in which discourse is practically entwined with text in context. Discourse represents a specific spoken language or any social process of communication (Lemke 1995; Hoey 2000). Nonetheless, Johnstone (2008), from a methodical point of view, explicates DA as a systematic consideration of a set of broad analytical *topoi* and a research mechanism that can be used to answer a variety of questions. Then, it seems to imply that as DA is a social engagement; the notion is as well as a processing facility of human communications. Thus, the present analyst has employed DA in the study as an analytical tool and explanatory paradigm in alignment with Johnstone’s (2008) argument.

Advertising plays crucial roles in today’s businesses. Those tasks position advertising as a fascinating device for promoting products in different parameters to increase consumption and achieve economic growth. In addition, advertising constructs a link between language and society, society and business, and products and consumers. Leymore (1975) defines an ad as a stimulant and a means of drawing consumers’ attention to something or informing people of something by provoking the consumer’s anxiety and resolving it. The mission of ads might motivate experts to produce their communications with unique language choices for the intended social interaction (Dyer 2005). Advertising text choices, in Myers’ (1994) argument, accommodate some features such as: clever puzzles, short bursts, and being parasitic in nature. Besides the ubiquitous nature of ads, one might state that the language choices are loaded with concise structures (Ignis 1972). Such strategies aim at attracting attention with simple constructs that contain comprehensive messages. The features of ads stated above appease to justify my interest in analyzing the language choice of MTN and Etisalat advertising discourse in Nigerian communicative space.

The notion of language choice, as used in this paper, subscribes to certain specific tendencies, as characterized in cognitive and neuroscience (Lamb 2013), sociolinguistics (Putz 1997), stylistics (Carter & Nash 2013), and systemic practices (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), in relation to cultural and contextual spheres (Urbach 2013). The neuroscience claims that choice is the potential as well as the concrete selection of part of a system. These parameters invariably position a textual element to be multifunctional. The multifunctional principle pinpoints a relationship between systemic linguistics and neurolinguistics, expressed through Lamb’s relational theory (Gil 2013). In sociolinguistics, the term is alternatively employed either as language choice or choice of language. Particularly, Buda (2006: 1) argues that “sociolinguists have been long fascinated by the phenomenon of bilingualism and the complex language switching patterns that accompany it”. A bilingual could code-switch, in Buda’s (2006) perspective, from one language to another. For instance, a bilingual could switch from English to Yoruba, while a multilingual could switch from English to Yoruba or English to Igbo as the situation demands.

In stylistics, scholars (O’Quinn 2012; Donovan 2012) have examined language choice as word choice and writer’s choice. Stylistic experts seem to orient their arguments principally on the choice of words that a writer makes as the writing style. Style is the lexical choices that a writer exhibits to express ideas as s/he decides for a particular communicative rationale. Perhaps the

choice displays the ways in which meanings are constructed in texts to serve a rich variety of purposes (Ross 1985). To this end, one might appreciate language choice as word constructions, explaining the feelings of a writer. Although neuroscience, sociolinguistic and stylistic views are relevant to how advertisers deploy language choices to persuade consumers' patronage, this approach hangs on Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth: SFL) for its strong emphasis on language as choice.

The explanations that SFL offers on language as a network of choices characterize the theory as a device of textual analysis (Halliday 1994). That merit seems to inform Kress (1981) to state that SFL, the Hallidayan theoretical dais, rests on the notion of choice. In Kress's view, choice represents the crux of meaning-making in interactions. That might be connected to Halliday's (2013) reinvigorated idea that all human activities involve choice. Based on that discernment, it may be difficult to engage SFL in language analyses without a reference to the concept of choice either explicitly or implicitly. Kress further argues that "The speaker of a language... engaging in any kind of culturally determined behavior... carries out, simultaneously successively, a number of distinct choices" (Kress 1981: 3). To Kress, the cultural context of which a speaker chooses to communicate the message to the audience is still anchoring on the individual's language choice.

In language, choice manifests centrally for it is the selection made out of a range of other lexemes available to a communicator. If someone has a reason for saying something in a certain situation, by implication, the interactant could have said something else if the context has been different. In consonance with that standpoint, Bloor & Bloor (2013) say that language consists of systems which offer the writer an unlimited choice of ways of creating meanings. It is out of the 'unlimited' systemic items that a writer makes a choice. Consequently, linguistic choices operate at every point in the production of writing (Matthiessen et al. 2010) as context-related and context-dependent facilities.

The idea of choice in SFL connects strongly to the concept of *System*. System, as a technical concept, is an itemized set of choices in a specific context. A linguistic system, in Kress's (1981) symbolic insight, is composed of items which have possible alternatives in that position and the domain of its utility. In the mainstream, Kress (1981) mirrors a system as providing a possibility of options for a language user to execute certain communicative tasks. The terminology of choice revolves around Halliday and the theory that he exemplifies. As such, choice being paradigmatic and probabilistic is not only axiomatic but a basic tenet in SFL because the thought connects language distinctively pervasively. The impression creates a contrast between what element has been chosen and what elements are left out in a communicative exchange.

## 2.2. Advertising and language

Advertising and language are social enterprises that utilize the text as a means of communication. The text operates as an interface between two social actors, and can serve as an object of requesting something from readers (Bourdieu 1988; Barry 1997; Hoffman 2002; Brierley 2002; Thompson 2014). Language can function without advertising; nevertheless, it is probable that advertising

might not operate without language. However, Goffmann (1979: 84) discusses advertising without language when he refers to “hyper-ritualization” (also in DeRosia 2008). That position of the image, playing a wholesome role, is rare in the advertising industry. So, the position that language occupies in advertising elevates the “local magic” (Firth 1957: 185) as a bond in the creativity (text-cum-image) of persuasion.

Perhaps it is unarguable that advertising behaviors are globally universal (Mattellart 1991), but contextually, the matter of cultural affiliations influences one advertising professional from another (Daramola 2008; Forceville 2017). Such a division and demarcation could be observed regionally, nationally, and continental-wise. To reiterate, Leech (1966) considers advertising lexemes from Great Britain; Williamson (1978) explains interchangeability and semiotics in advertising; and Tanaka (1994), in her pragmatic approach, examines advertising designs of Britain and Japan. The perspectives of Cook (1992), Forceville (1996), Hermerén (1999), Dyer (2005), and Geiszinger (2001) dominate the circle of the developed western world. It is important to state that Awonusi (1998) and Gully (2012) have discussed political and commercial texts. Some of those texts are neither dialectical nor theoretically-systemic.

However, most of these studies have succeeded in interpreting the creative nature of advertising as employed to persuade the audience. The symptom that the analyst observes in earlier efforts and seeks to address is that none of those scholars, to the best of my knowledge, has evaluated advertising texts of MTN and Etisalat, utilizing the Ideational Metafunctional approach as articulated in Halliday’s (1994) point of view. The digitization of the lexemic and *registerial* choices is the open window that the study intends to explore. The application of SFL has the capacity to decompose the deployed choices into grammatical constituents (Wodak & Meyer 2001: 3, 8), allowing technological tools to act upon the components (Dalamu 2017b). This will permit textual density’s accountability-cum-computation. Besides the scientific facilities revealing the nature of choices in different hierarchies, SFL processors of Transitivity has unveiled the meaning potential of MTN and Etisalat advertising discourse to readers. These factors position this proposal as an object of digital humanities (DH) with the potency to demonstrate significant values within the Nigerian multilingual domain.

## 2.3. Theoretical mapping

This study has adopted two conceptual spheres, as applications, to analyze the texts of MTN and Etisalat ads. The major one is Transitivity – a grammatical transpose of Ideational Metafunction, and compounding and blending – some terms of morphological methods – represent the minor aspect.

### 2.3.1. Ideational metafunction

The study has considered one of the core elements of SFL’s three Metafunctions as a tool of analysis owing to its resourcefulness in social semiotics and textual analysis (O’Halloran 2008). On that ground, Thompson (2014) indicates that Ideational Metafunction operates to

create functional meanings in context (also in Butler 2003). One could suggest that Ideational Metafunction is divided into experiential and logical relations. In that respect, Halliday (1994) claims that the Ideational Metafunction exhibits the content of the *goings-on* in a text. When we use language to interact, Halliday & Matthiessen (2014) emphasize that we use language to express either the world around us or the world within us. Egings (2004: 213-215) observes further that we use words to talk about our experience and construct the world where “some entity does something”. Ravelli (2000) remarks that the external world focuses things, events qualities, etc. Our internal world represents thoughts, beliefs, feelings, etc. Moreover, Halliday (1994: 106) describes both external and internal worlds as *experience* as consisting of *goings-on*. He adds that “the clause is also a mode of reflection... and flow of events” to explicate meaning potential in confidence.

These utterances are regarded as texts that are contextually-produced in a particular content. Kress & van Leeuwen (2003: 47) explain that the speaker determines the content with specific meanings embedded thereof. In this regard, language possesses numerous resources that are employed to represent the entities in the world. The module of realizing and analyzing meanings from this standpoint, Thompson (2004) asserts, is called the transitivity system. Also, Thompson (2014) suggests that the *Process* is brought about, most times, by nominal elements (*Participants*) involved in the event of negotiating and exchanging interactions. It is also possible that a text may have circumstantial elements to augment the information (Dalamu 2017c). Figure 1 below illustrates the six processes operating in the clauses of English.

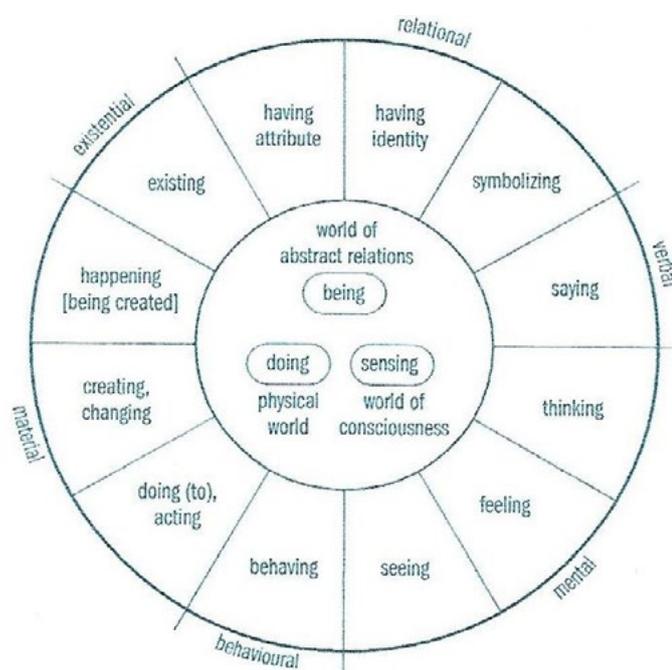


Figure 1. Six processes in English clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014)

The content of the message is, perhaps, central to the communication function in terms of meaning potential and linguistic analysis. As a result of that remark, the contents have its distinct way of presenting both the external and internal worlds to social actors. As publicized in Figure 1, Halliday & Matthiessen (2004: 171) argue that “Material, Mental and Relational are the main types of process in English transitivity system” with “Behavioral, Verbal and Existential” on the border lines. Figure 1 is the cyclical posture of the six processes of the Ideational Metafunction, which offers descriptions to how Halliday’s linguistic thoughts analyze textual nuances of communications within the schemata of the independent clause in English.

### **2.4.2. Compounding and blending**

*Compounding* is described as the joining of “two separate words to form a single form” (Yule 1996: 53). *Blending* is “accomplished by taking only the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of the other” (Yule 1996: 53; also in Napoli 1996: 214-223).

### **2.3. Research questions**

This study has used the following questions to reveal the exploration of the MTN and Etisalat choices in their advertising constructs: How has the application of Transitivity conceptual model assisted in deducing meaning potential of processes of MTN and Etisalat advertising choices? What kind of circumstantial elements do MTN and Etisalat deploy to augment the messages of their ads? Of what frequencies have Processes and Circumstantials function in the MTN and Etisalat ads? In what ways have MTN and Etisalat contributed to English through the formation of new coinages? Besides the theoretical terms employed for the analysis, the researcher has utilized statistical instruments such as tables and graphs to accomplish the achievement of some of the questions.

## **3. Method**

### **3.1. Procedure**

The analyst selected two ads each from MTN and Etisalat communications, as advertising facilities in The Punch newspaper. The choice of the advertising communications was based on the discourse patterns, contextual relevance as well as *neological* apparatuses of the texts. The selection’s objective was to demonstrate certain factors in consideration before advertisers deploy texts to the public space. The data presented below displays the textual choices of MTN and Etisalat ads labeled as Ad 1 and Ad 2. The researcher has applied Transitivity, a terminology from SFL, and Compounding and Blending, morphological terms, to process the clauses after being separated with slashes. The paper exhibits the analytical techniques in Figures 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, as shown in the sub-section of Data Analysis. It is worth stressing here that the demarcation of clauses with double slashes and the initial capitalization of concepts characterize the tradition of SFL fathers (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014). A combination of qualitative and quantitative procedures, as SFL

has permitted, dominates the study. Thus, after the constituents' analysis, as stated earlier, tables and graphs operate as technological tools, computing and revealing the frequencies of systemic choices, exhibited in Tables 1 and 2, and Figures 7 and 8. The discussions act on the platform of these applications. The symbol, ®, references a registered company as CL is an abbreviation of the clause. Ads are in British English (BrE) in order to retail their lexical originality.

### 3.2. Data presentation

*MTN Ad 1: //MyCustomer®, your smile is worth a thousand 'Thank Yous'// Our celebration starts with you.// For 10 amazing years you have offered us the opportunity to serve you like no other.// This week, we are celebrating a decade full of fond memories// we promise you that the best is yet to come with the continuous roll out of new look. MTN Walk-in centres across Nigeria.// It is always a pleasure to serve you.*

*MTN Ad 2: //MTN Kulturefest Lisabi// Lisabi Cultural Festival.// Let's go rock Egbaland// It's going to be a Y'ello Celebration// as all Egbaland honours Lisabi the Great.// From March 1st to 8th, you too can be part of the Lisabi Festival// and experience Egba cultural as well as innovative MTN Products and services on full display.// It's an experience// that will surely enrich life//*

*Etisalat Ad 1: //wwwherever you are// wwwhenever you wwwant// wwwhatever you need// get up to 1GB freeeee!// it's easy with easynet.// Get the internet plan of your choice with easynet// Get 1 month free bonus data plan //when you buy any of our 1.5GB, 3GB or 6GB plans// Bonus available instantly upon purchase// Bonus available in the following months after purchase can be used only on weeknights and weekends// Pick up your easynet data SIM and USB modem at any etisalat experience centre// Text 'help' to 229.//*

*Etisalat Ad 2: //9javaganza// enjoy free weekend calls// get 50% of airtime spent// it's your time to talk// From now till March 31, simply make as many calls as you wish to my network on week-ends //and get 50% of the amount you spent to make FREE weekend calls to any etisalat line!// And you get this week after week after week// So pick up your 0809ja phone //and start calling!// It's your time to talk! //Offer opens to all new and existing easystarter and easycliq subscribers.//*

### 3.3. Data analysis 1

The analysis below demonstrates the application of Halliday & Matthiessen's (2004) transitivity system to textual devices.

CL1	MyCustomer	your smile	is	worth a thousand 'Thank Yous'		
	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attributive	Attribute			

CL2	Our celebration	starts with	you
	Actor	Pro.: Material	Goal

CL3	For 10 amazing years	you	have offered	us	the opportunity	to serve you like no other
	Circum.: Extent	Actor	Pro.: Material	Recipient	Goal	Circum.: Cause

CL4	This week as we celebrate a decade of fond memories			we	promise	that
	Circum.: Location			Senser	Mental	

CL5	the best	is	yet	to come with	the continuous roll out of new look MTN Walk-In-Centre...	
	Actor	Pro.: Ma-	terial	Goal		

CL6	It	is	a pleasure to serve you
	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attributive	Attribute

Figure 2. Analysis of MTN Ad 1

CL1	MTN Kulturefest Lisabi	CL2	Lisabi Cultural Festival
	Participant		Participant

CL3	Let's	go rock	Egbaland
	Actor	Pro.: Material	Goal

CL4	It	's going to be	a Y'ello Celebration
	Actor	Pro.: Material	Goal

CL5	as	all Egbaland	honours	Lisabi the Great
	Behaver	Pro.: Behavioral	Behavior	

CL6	From March 1st to 8th	you	too	can be	part of the Lisabi Festival
	Circum.: Extent	Token		Pro.: Rel. identifying	Value

CL7	and	experience	Egba culture	as well as innovative MTN products and services of full display	
		Pro.: Mental	Phenomenon	Circum.: Accompaniment	

CL8	It	's	an experience
	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attrib.	Attribute

CL9	that	will	surely	enrich your life
		Pro.: Ma-	Circum.: Manner	terial

Figure 3. Analysis of MTN Ad 2

CL1	wwwwherever	you	are	CL2	wwwhenever	you	wwwwant
	Circum.: Location	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attrib.		Circum.: Location	Senser	Pro.: Mental
CL3	wwwwhatever	you	need	CL4	Get up to	1 GB freeeee	
	Circum.: Matter	Senser	Pro.: Mental		Pro.: Material	Goal	
CL4	it	's	easy	with easynet			
	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attrib.	Attribute	Circum.: Manner			
CL5	Get	the internet plan of choice	with easynet				
	Pro.: Material	Goal	Circum.: Manner				
CL6	Get	1 month free bonus data					
	Pro.: Material	Goal					
CL7	when	you	buy	any of our 1.5GB			
		Actor	Pro.: Material				
CL8	Bonus	[is]	available	instantly			
	Carrier	Pro.: Rel. attrib.	Attribute	Circum.: Manner			
CL9	Bonus available in the following months after purchase			can be used only	on weeknights and weekends		
	Actor			Pro.:Material	Circum.: Location		
CL10	Pick up	your easynet data SIM and USB modem	at any etisalat experience centre				
	Pro.: Material	Goal	Circum.: Location				
CL11	Text	'help'	to 229				
	Pro.: Material	Goal	Circum.: Location				

Figure 4. Analysis of Etisalat Ad 1

CL1	9javaganza	CL2	enjoy	free weekend calls		
	Participant		Pro.: Mental	Phenomenon		
CL3	get	50% bonus of airtime spent	CL4	it	's	you time to talk
	Pro.: Material	Goal		Value	Pro.: Rel. ident	Token
CL5	From now till	simply	make	as many calls	on weekends	
	3 1st March		Pro.:	as you wish		
	Circum.:Extent		Material	Goal	Circum.:Location	
CL6	and	get	50% of the amount you spend to make FREE weekend calls	to any etisalat line		
		Pro.: Material	Goal	Circum.: Location		
CL7	And	you	get	this	week after week after week	
		Actor	Pro.: Material	Goal	Circum.: Location	
CL8	so	pick up	your 0809ja phone	CL9	and	start calling!
		Pro.:Material	Goal		Pro.: Material	
CL10	It	's	CL11	Offer opens to	all new and existing easystarter and easycliq subscribers	
	Value	Pro.: Rel. ident		Actor	Pro.: Material	Goal

Figure 5. Analysis of Etisalat Ad 2

The study, as expressed in the Results section, further translates the Transitivity elements of the analyses in Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 to tables and graphs. These tools display the language choice frequencies in terms of Processes and Circumstantials as functional in MTN and Etisalat communications.

### 3.4. Data analysis 2

Below is the list of word-formation processes observed in *MTN* and *Etisalat* ads.

	<i>Coinages</i>	<i>Foremation Processes</i>		<i>Original Lexemes</i>
<i>MTN Ad 1:</i>	My Customer	= my + customer	—————>	my customer
	You	= you + s	—————>	you '-s'
<i>MTN Ad2:</i>	Kultrefest	= culture + fest	—————>	culture festival
	Y'ello	= yello + hello	—————>	yellow hello
<i>Etisalat Ad 1:</i>	wwwherever	= ww + where + ever	—————>	wherever
	wwwhenever	= ww + when + ever	—————>	whenever
	wwwant	= ww + want	—————>	want
	wwwhatever	= ww + what + ever	—————>	whatever
	freeeee	= free + eee	—————>	free
	easynet	= easy + net	—————>	easy net
<i>Etisalat Ad 2:</i>	9javaganza	= 9ja + vaganza	—————>	Nigeria extravaganza
	0809ja	= o8o + ja	—————>	080 Nigeria
	easystarter	= easy + start + er	—————>	easy starter
	easycliq	= easy + cliq	—————>	easy click

Figure 6. Morphological appreciations of MTN and Etisalat ads

## 4. Results

This study displays the outcomes of both systemic applications and morphological processes in this section.

### 4.1. Outcomes of systemic applications

Tables and graphs below reveal the Transitivity constituents of Processes and Circumstantials of MTN and Etisalat ads' textual choices in their different recurrence capacities and patterns.

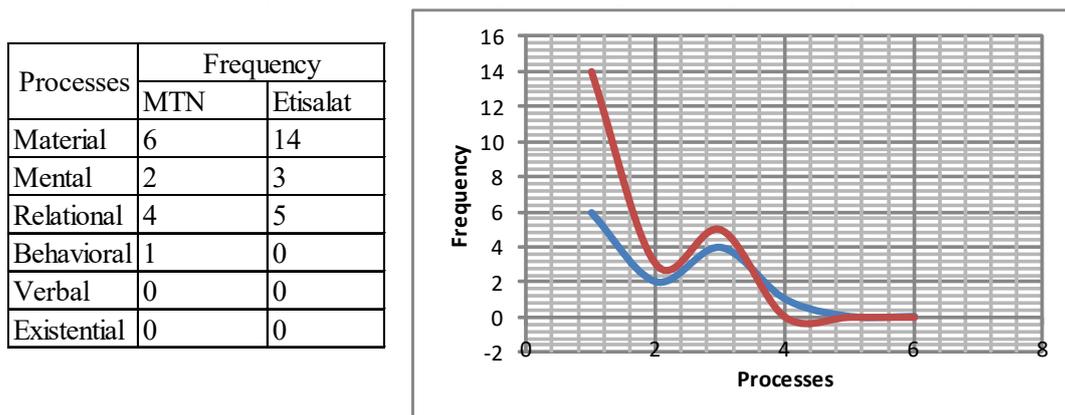
**Table 1. Analysis of Processes in MTN ads Table 2. Analysis of Processes in Etisalat ads**

Processes	MTN Frequency		
	Ad 1	Ad 2	Total
Material	3	3	6
Mental	1	1	2
Relational	2	2	4
Behavioral	0	1	1
Verbal	0	0	0
Existential	0	0	0

Processes	Etisalat Frequency		
	Ad 1	Ad 2	Total
Material	7	7	14
Mental	2	1	3
Relational	3	2	5
Behavioral	0	0	0
Verbal	0	0	0
Existential	0	0	0

Out of all the six Processes found in English, Table 1 reveals that only four of the goings-on are functional in the MTN ads, while Table 2 indicates three operational Processes in the Etisalat ads. Thus, the choices present Material, Mental, Relational, and Behavioral as the goings-on of the advertising communications. By implication, as Verbal and Existential Processes are not remarkable choices in both MTN and Etisalat ads, the Etisalat advertiser goes ahead to eliminate the deployment of Behavioral Process. The Process choices of the MTN Ad 1 and Ad 2 operate in similar frequencies. Those are the motivation for Material, Mental, and Relational Processes to recur as 3, 3; 1, 1; and 2, 2 points. In addition, the Behavioral term functions just once in Ad 2.

The textual choices in Etisalat record the recurrent higher number of points because of the higher number of clauses employed in persuading the audience. Consequently, the recurrent points of Material Processes are 7 and 7 respectively, in Ad1 and Ad 2. Mental Processes operate in the ration of 2:1, whereas Relational Processes recount 3 and 2 points as shown in Table 2. Figure 7, as indicated below, juxtaposes the frequencies of the MTN and Etisalat ads’ textual choices computed in both Tables 1 and 2.



**Figure 7. Graphic representation of Processes’ frequency of MTN and Etisalat Ads**

Figure 7 contains a table and a graph whose combination pinpoints MTN and Etisalat advertising communications, utilizing Material Processes at the highest frequencies of 6 and 14. That choice was followed by Relational Processes in the two telecommunications operators with 4 and 5 points. There are Mental Processes recurrences of 2 to 3. Although the figure points to the fact

that minor Processes of Verbal and Existential are irrelevant choices of persuasion, MTN still employs the Behavioral once as a communication point. In all these, one could infer that Material Processes occupy the highest relevant positions in the advertising of both MTN and Etisalat, which are seconded by Relational Processes. Significantly, these choices demonstrate the keen interest of MTN and Etisalat advertising practitioners in getting things done as well as making things happen as quickly as possible. Besides, another sphere of interest, as Figure 7 illustrates, is how to create unbroken relationships with the target audience.

**Table 3. Analysis of MTN ads’ Circumstantials Table 4. Analysis of Etisalat ads’ Circumstantials**

Circumstances	MTN Frequency		
	Ad 1	Ad 2	Total
Angle	0	0	0
Location	1	0	1
Extent	1	1	2
Contingency	0	0	0
Matter	0	0	0
Cause	1	0	1
Manner	0	1	1
Accompaniment	0	1	1
Role	0	0	0

Circumstances	Etisalat Frequency		
	Ad 1	Ad 2	Total
Angle	0	0	0
Location	5	3	8
Extent	0	1	1
Contingency	0	0	0
Matter	0	1	1
Cause	0	0	0
Manner	3	0	3
Accompaniment	0	0	0
Role	0	0	0

The Transitivity system, as computed in Tables 3 and 4, unveils Circumstantials of Location, Extent, Matter, Manner, Cause, and Accompaniment as augmentation facilities to inspire readers. There are no choices regarding Angle, Contingency, and Role in the MTN and Etisalat texts. Alternatively, MTN does not utilize Matter so also does Etisalat reject Cause and Accompaniment as devices of manipulating subscribers.

As exemplified below, Figure 8 represents the comparison of the MTN and Etisalat ads’ textual choices accounted for in Tables 3 and 4.

Circumstances	Frequency	
	MTN	Etisalat
Angle	0	0
Location	1	8
Extent	2	1
Contingency	0	0
Matter	1	1
Cause	1	0
Manner	0	3
Accompaniment	1	0
Role	0	0

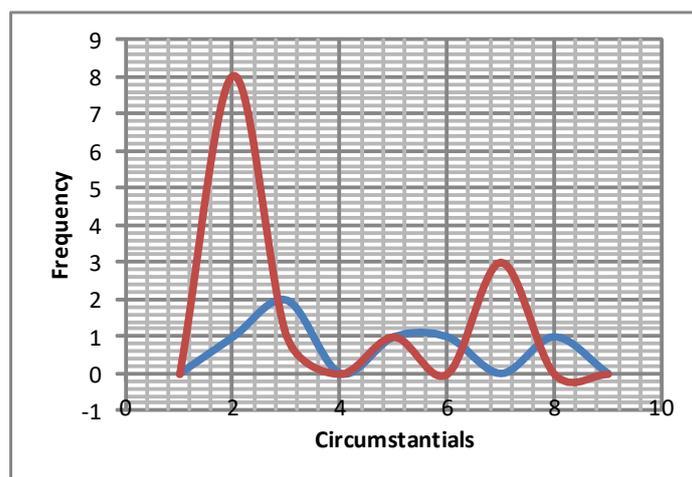


Figure 8. Graphic representation of Circumstantials’ frequency of MTN and Etisalat ads

Apart from Extent that records 2 points in the MTN ads, other Circumstantials occur one time each. Seemingly, observations show different frequencies in the Etisalat ads. As the Circumstantial element of Location records a value of 8 and Manner 3; Extent and Matter manifest one point each. As such, the analyst could infer, as illuminated in Figure 8, that Location, Manner, and Extent are the most fascinating choices where MTN’s and Etisalat’s advertising experts utilize domain, quality, and period to sensitize recipients to consumption.

#### 4.2. Outcomes of morphological procedures

Moreover, the morphological procedures pinpoint combinations of letters in strange ways. These are: *yous* (creative over-generalization); *y’ello* (creative familiarization; wordplay fragmentation); and *wwwant* (creative association). One could recapitulate the formations as creative fallacy of some kinds because some of the lexemes serve only business purposes. There are also the formations of numbers-cum-letters such as *9ja*, and *9javaganza* known as alphanumeric codes. In a simple term, these are the communication choices of the ‘neological’ constructs of the analyzed MTN and Etisalat ads.

### 5. Discussion

The researcher organizes the discursive patterns of MTN and Etisalat ads’ textual choices along the lines of Transitivity arrangements in relation to Process, the core element, as well as the systemic semantic implications of the clauses. These logical parameters follow after Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), Thompson (2014), and Dalamu (2018d).

## 5.1 MTN ads



MTN Ad 1

There are six declarative clauses, as analyzed in Figure 2, in MTN Ad 1. Clauses one and six are relational of a kind because their contents are propagated as *is*. The Relational Processes project their Attributes as *worth a thousand 'Thank You's'* and *a pleasure to serve you*. The former quantifies weight of gains that consumers receive from MTN over the years, which lead individuals to uncontrollable facial expressions. The Transitivity segments the subscribers' favorable countenance as *your smile*, Carrier. *A pleasure*, as the Attribute for the later, relates readers to the feelings of the MTN team in providing telecommunications services for Nigerians.

Mental Processes, *starts with*, *have offered*, and *is... to come*, are the goings-on of clauses two, three, and five. The advertising professional displays *starts with* as a pointer to the source of the acclaimed celebration operating as Actor. A reference to consumers is further introduced through *have offered*, which is an invitation proposed as Goal, *the opportunity*, for MTN. In that regard, subscribers have perceived MTN as capable of performing some telecommunications' tasks useful to the people. Such duties tend to treat the public well through unwavering service deliveries. A time-line of *10 amazing years* signals the degree of trust that consumers bestow on MTN, which seems incomparable to a favorable chance given to any firm in the telecommunications industry. *To serve you better like no other* and *For 10 amazing years* enhance the clause to draw the subscribers' attention to the message. The linguistic organs *our*, *you*, *us*, and *we* create strong partnerships between MTN and the public.

The Process, *is... to come*, fingers the future. *The best*, Actor, incites recipients toward good services expected later from the firm, which is illustrated by *the continuous roll out of new centers across the country*. The ad proceeds in clause five by utilizing a Mental Process, *promise*, an object of emotion, to excite readers. Concisely, the commitment is made during a week of festivity that MTN organizes to mark the *10 year* anniversary. The affirmation, expounded earlier, is to get very close to the consumers' reach, hence, the establishment of more satisfying sales outlets.

As a strategy, before the communication appreciates the *10 years* of the business existence in Nigeria, the ad first and foremost acknowledges consumers' roles in ensuring that the operations

are successful through their loyalty. That condescending allegiance informs the planting of more branches in strategic locations. As a result of that notification, the MTN team, as the ad asserts, derives some pleasures in rendering nice services to subscribers. The motivation for services, one could submit, is financial gains from subscribers rather than services rendered. In other words, the cash received through the consumers' patronage influences MTN consistent services to consumers.



MTN Ad 2

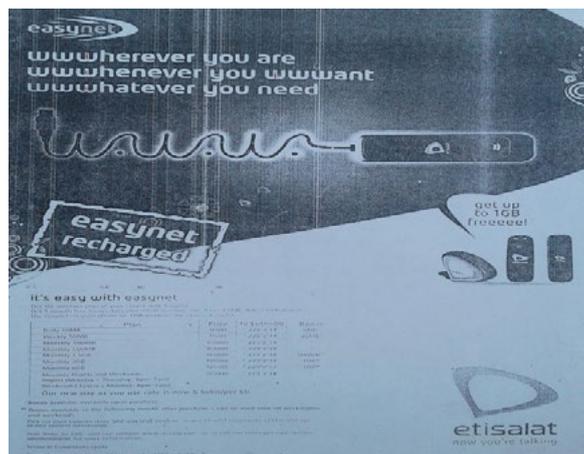
As depicted in Figure 3, MTN Ad 2 accommodates nine clauses divided into two fragmented clauses (clauses one and two), one imperative (clause three), and six declaratives (clauses four and nine). Being punctuated, clauses one and two do not have Processes, which can determine the kind of participating agents of their systems of Transitivity. Thus, *MTN Kulturefest Lisabi* and *Lisabi Cultural Festival* are labeled as Participants of nominal group (NG) pertinent identifications. Of importance are the constructs of *Kulturefest* and *Lisabi*. Apart from the contextual inclinations of the two structures, *Kulturefest* has three salient fundamentals. First, the *K* is an adoption phonetic sound from the consonant *C* (Adetugbo 1997). Second, *fest* is a pruning remnant of *festival* (Yule 1996). Third, *Kulturefest* as a compound device is a combination of two lexemes, that is, culture and festival (Zapata 2000, 2007).

One can duly observe the peculiarity of the Material Process, *go rock*, in clause three with the Actor, *Let's*. It is quite unusual for the imperative to have a subject element except in the case of *Let's*, which is an indicator of suggestions. Besides, *go rock*, *'s going to be*, and *will... enrich* are other contents pointing readers to happening events, such as, *a Y'ello celebration* and *your life*. The Behavioral Process, *honour*, in clause five pinpoints a particular activity that *all Egbaland*, Behavior, yearly participates in. The advertising communication mentions *From March 1st to 8th* as the week of *Lisabi the Great's* remembrance period. *Can be* and *'s*, Relational Processes, engage recipients to the cultural connection by identifying with the social commitment in terms of value, *part of the Lisabi festival*. To the advertiser, the readers' involvement is further classified as *an experience* in relation to attribute as well as mental cognition. Although the ad focuses *Lisabi Cultural Festival*, the communicator also offers some portions for promotional intents. The analyst observes these

goals, augmented with *as well as innovative MTN products and services on full display, and surely enrich your life*. The former represents accompaniment in an additive status, while the later functions as manner to demonstrate quality.

In the life of an individual or a community, one can emphasize, tradition seems to be vital. The aspect of one's background and tradition cannot be discarded with a wave of hand (Goddard 2002). MTN might have discovered the certainty; and the company has in-turn fraternized products with *Lisabi* and, perhaps, other festivals in Nigeria. These various aspects of different traditional festivals are done specifically for the specific communities involved in the festivals. The MTN ad on the *Lisabi Cultural Festival* is done for the Egba people in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. MTN does applaud the Egbas as a people with a rich cultural heritage. The MTN ad reminds the Egbas of how *Lisabi* has served as a symbol of protection and unity for the people. The aim of the laudatory ad is to build a harmonious relationship between MTN and the Egbas of which Olusegun Obasanjo, Wole Soyinka, Taofeek Dalamu, etc. are in the membership board.

## 5.2. Etisalat ads



Etisalat Ad 1

Etisalat Ad 1 has twelve clauses. On the one hand, seven of the clauses are declarative and five are imperative. On the other hand, the twelve clauses organize their contents in the forms of three Relational goings-on, two Mental goings-on, and seven Material goings-on. Apparently, the dominance of meaning potential is in Material Processes. The constituents of clauses one and three are very germane because the linguistic organs construct internal communicative rings. First, clauses two and three possess Mental Processes of *wwwant* and *need* respectively, which denote desideration (Thompson 2014). Observations locate the second communicative ring in the utilization of *you* as Sensor(s) indicating participants of *wwwant* and *need*. Even the Relational Process, *are*, accommodates *you* as Carrier. The third ring is the choices of *wwwherever*, *wwwhenever*, and *wwwhatever* of Location and Matter representing Circumstances of place, time, and condition.

Specifically, the *www* linguistic devices noticed in the constructs are connotations of the Internet website resources identified as World Wide Web (Dalamu 2018c). Moreover, the ad

deploys Material Processes in a repetitive mode such as *Get up to, get, and get* in clauses four, six, and seven. All these structures have their Goal(s) as *1 GB freeeee, the internet plan of your choice, and 1 month free bonus data plan*, pointing readers to the quantity of benefits derivable from the advertised product. *Freeeee* is creativity as an advertiser's language of stimulating the public to consumption. *Buy, can be used, Pick up, and Text* are other contents of materiality that exhibit the sole mission of advertising in clear terms.

In addition, the places where consumers can purchase the plan as well as the appropriate time of its enjoyment are demonstrated as *at any etisalat experience centre and on weeknights and weekends*. These pieces of information become necessitated in order to clarify doubts on the product's availability and to ease the consumers' stress on the purchase of the service. The communicator consoles subscribers with clauses twelve and five. That is, *Text 'help' to 229 and it's easy with easynet*. Directing readers *to 229* is perhaps an end to discomfort in purchasing the Internet plan, owing to the freedom that consumers could exercise by purchasing the product online. The convenience created alleviates some worries. To further satisfy the public, *it's easy with easynet* culminates the message to give readers a peace of mind. Such means could make consumers relax to benefit from the campaigned Etisalat data plan.



Etisalat Ad 2

The eleven clauses of Etisalat Ad 2 contain one disjunctive grammar, seven imperative, and three declarative clauses. The punctuated structure, *9javaganza*, is a lexical choice made up of alphanumeric code (Dalamu 2018b). That is, 9 (a number) plus *ja* plus *vaganza* (words). As decorated in Figure 6, *9javaganza* is a leftover of the punctuated *Nigerian extravaganza*. From a systemic point of view, *9javaganza* is a disestablished participant that cannot be associated with any Process of English. Consequently, *9javaganza* has become a non-conformist participating linguistic facility. The textual choice demonstrates the advertiser's fantastic conduct of benevolence to be lavished on the public, though the waste or recklessness is restricted to only Etisalat consumers.

It is upon the intended 'business' profligacy, euphemized as generosity, that other ten clauses rest. The Mental Process, *enjoy*, in clause two creates emotional feelings for consumers on the

benefit of *free weekend calls*. Communicative facilities such as *get*, *make*, *pick up*, *starts calling*, and *opens to* are Material Processes that inspire readers to consumption. Ad 2 utilizes *get* repetitively about three times in clauses three, six, and seven as a means of sensitizing the public to gain extra *50% of airtime*, obtainable in a consistent weekly basis. That is a probable reason for deploying ... *to make FREE weekend calls* and ...*week after week* as Goal and Circumstance of time respectively. *To any etisalat line!* is another Circumstance, but, of place, emphasizing Etisalat as a priority. The imperative markers *make* and *pick up*, in clauses five and eight, are two bedfellows. The Processes inform the target audience to grasp a telephone loaded with Etisalat line in order to commence communicating friends and relatives with *your 0809ja phone*.

In that respect, the advertiser personalizes both the telephone and Etisalat line as consumers' properties. That behavior signals an ownership culture that baptizes and entwines the audience into Etisalat family. *It's you time to talk*, illuminated in clauses four and ten, pinpoints *From now till 31-March* as the duration of the proposed *FREE weekend calls*. The communicator employs *opens to* to indicate the people who are qualified to take advantage of the campaigned benefits. Thus, Actor, Offer, and Goal, *all new and existing easystarter* and *easycliq subscribers* display a sort of generalization of participants to be satisfied.

## 6. Conclusion

One cannot deemphasize the relevance of choice in the language of advertising. It is on that plane that the researcher demonstrates how MTN and Etisalat deploy specific lexemes and *registerial* coinages to persuade the public to consumption. With the application of Transitivity system, the study reveals that Material Processes (e.g. *start*), as demonstrated in Figure 7, are the commonest choices of both MTN and Etisalat advertising communications. Nonetheless, Relational Processes (e.g. *is*) are next in function, which are followed by Mental Processes. In the domain of communication augmentation, MTN and Etisalat utilize Location in terms of time and place to sensitize readers. To a limited degree, the Circumstance of Manner and Extent play some roles as choices of excitements.

Although the two communication firms employ similar conceptual terminologies in constructing relationships with subscribers, their lexemic choices are not the same. For instance, MTN uses *go*, *'s going to be*, and *experience*, while Etisalat deploys *get*, *get up to*, and *enjoy* to inspire the target audience in order to patronize their goods and services. *As well as innovative MTN products...* and *to any etisalat line!* are Circumstantial choices that lay some emphasis on the firms' goals. From a morphological perspective, the ads fascinate recipients through the poetic license leading to alphanumeric codes, creative fallacies, and word plays of perhaps undefined terms and indefinite sequences. Yet, one also observes dissimilarity in the freedom exemplified in their morphological mechanizations such as *'Thank Yous'*, *Kulturefest*, and *Y'ello* in MTN, and *wwwwhenever*, *9jevaganza*, and *0809ja* in Etisalat.

The analysis has briefly offered an understanding to the nature of advertising texts in Nigeria. In turn, the effort could motivate advertising professionals, young scholars, and researchers to deepen their understanding about creativity in the advertising industry in this bloc of the universe.

In addition to that, the study has demonstrated to readers the suitability of SFL as a virile and interpretative tool for advertising discourse choices. By extension, the outcomes could benefit stakeholders as recapitulated thus:

To advertising professionals, the analysis could spur new choice of textual creation in the creativity industry, having obtained the knowledge of what is currently obtainable in the industry, as functioning within the Nigerian context. The document could assist manufacturing companies in calibrating the influence of ads on the target audience as that affects sales, thus, operating as a yardstick to quantify sales of products. This is obtainable by realizing the nature of textual choices that assist in generating more consumption of products. The recipients of these kinds of communications will understand the recklessness of advertising as a vehicle for convincing, shaping, and swaying readers' thoughts in a designed/certain direction.

Besides, the analysis will assist in the formulation of policy to adapt textual nuances as devices of leveraging an equal playing ground between communicators and recipients. The investigation could inspire government agencies to promulgate policies to regulate the activities of the advertising industry in ways that their persuasive strategies could contribute to peaceful coexistence that the world urgently needs and seeks rather than to mental-capitalize consumers. The research seems to have the capacity to channel a way for other cross-national and cross-continental studies in communication spheres in order to stimulate structural and contextual knowledge of the advertising industry.

To reiterate, the study has facilitated the exposition of language students to SFL's insights into processing advertising texts. It thus appears that this study might serve as a device to be incorporated into computational linguistics. That is, it could encourage computer experts in collaboration with linguists to develop software that can account for advertising communication lexemes. However, such move has the strength to enhance cross-fertilization of interdisciplinary ideas in Digital Humanities.

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