

Comparative Linguistic Strategies in Selected Agribusiness Advertisements: Impact on Food Security and Agricultural Transformation

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Introduction

Understanding the impact of linguistic strategies on farmers' decision-making processes is essential for developing effective communication that fosters sustainable agricultural practices. Language use in agriculture advertising features persuasion which is meant for the products sales and influence consumer behavior (Onipede, 2023; Cook, 2001). Despite the critical role of advertising in promoting agricultural products and services, there is limited research on how the language used in these advertisements affects food security and agricultural transformation. This study uses a qualitative approach to compare the evaluative language, engagement strategies, and linguistic intensification in ads from Marv Farms Agro Services and FarmFex Hybrid Agro Resources Nigeria using Appraisal Theory. The websites and social media accounts of the chosen companies provided the study's data (Facebook, WhatsApp, <https://farmfexhybrid.com/>, <https://m.facebook.com/marvfarmsltd/>). Effective communication through advertising plays a pivotal role in shaping farmers' perceptions and decisions regarding agricultural products and services. In agribusiness advertising, this theory helps analyze how evaluative language influences farmers' perceptions and decisions. For instance, a study on the distribution characteristics of appraisal resources in Chinese and English food advertising highlights the importance of attitudinal resources in shaping consumer behavior. The language used in agribusiness advertisements can significantly impact food security by influencing farmers' adoption of sustainable practices. The objectives of the study are to; 1) analyze how evaluative language in agribusiness advertisements of the selected Agro Resources companies influences food security and agricultural transformation in the ads; 2) examine the engagement strategies used in FarmFex and Marv Farms advertisements to establish credibility and persuasion; and 3) investigate how linguistic intensification impacts farmer decision-making and agricultural innovation. and food security, particularly in developing nations like Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

This study employs a comparative discourse analysis using Appraisal Theory to examine the persuasive linguistic strategies in advertisements from FarmFex Hybrid Agro Resources Nigeria and Marv Farms Agro Services. Advertisement texts were collected from company websites and social media handles. A total of 10 advertisements (5 from FarmFex, 5 from Marv Farms Agro Services) were analyzed. The study focuses on Evaluative Language (Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation): Analyzing how emotions, judgments, and valuations are expressed. Engagement Strategies: Examining how advertisements engage readers, establish credibility, and persuade. Graduation (Linguistic Intensification):

Results and discussion

Based on the first research objective (Evaluative language: Affect, Judgment, Appreciation), FarmFex Hybrid Agro Resources Nigeria emphasizes confidence and empowerment as evident in the excerpt: "Join over 8,000 farmers who have transformed their farms into profitable ventures". Ethical responsibility is highlighted in: "We are committed to supporting food security and agricultural development". Marv Farms Agro Services on the other hand utilizes fear-based persuasion as shown in this excerpt: "if you don't invest now, others will dominate the market". Emphasis is on immediate profitability over long-term sustainability. Evaluative language in the ads above appeal to consumers to buy the products (Goddard, 2018). For the second research objective (Engagement Strategies), FarmFex Hybrid Agro Resources Nigeria adopts balanced engagement, presenting multiple perspectives ("with proper guidance, farmers can maximize profitability"). The ad discourages alternative perspectives by presenting its services as the only option for success. The results show that Marv Farms uses urgency-driven strategies, whereas FarmFex prioritizes sustainability and reputation.

Conclusions

This study examined the role of linguistic strategies in agribusiness advertising, emphasizing the impact of evaluative language, engagement strategies, and linguistic intensification on food security and agricultural transformation. The study generated advertisements on the sales of oil palm seedlings.

Keywords: Agribusiness advertising, Appraisal Theory, food security, evaluative language