



Title: Analyse language choice used in radio advertising as a brand positioning  
technique: Jet case study  
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## **ABSTRACT**

During colonial South Africa, indigenous languages were marginalised while English and Afrikaans were the only languages used to advertise goods and services (Ngwenya, 2011). Today, according to Bishop (2006) advertisers are struggling to find the best language to communicate with their target audiences. Particularly to multilingual who respond differently to the messages presented to them in each of the languages they know (Santello, 2013). The present research study analysed the language choices used by Jet in its radio advertising in order to understand how the brands use of language positions it in the mind of its target market. The study used a focus group to collect data from a purposive sample. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis was used as the theoretical framework which helped to determine the research questions that provided the data that was analysed. The results showed that Jet uses language to entertain as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements. Furthermore, Jet's multilingual and bilingual target market does respond differently to the messages presented to them, they found the English radio advertisement straight to the point, the isiZulu one entertaining and the code-switching radio advertisement problematic. Moreover, the isiZulu radio advertisement that did not have a discrepancy.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction

According to Ngwenya (2011) during colonial South Africa, indigenous languages were marginalised while English and Afrikaans were the only languages used to advertise goods and services. The aforementioned author Ngwenya (2011) further states that today's advertising landscape is slightly different with some brands opting to adapt to their target markets needs by communicating to them in the language that is appropriate for them.

IsiZulu, isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English (in descending order) are the top four first languages in South Africa, (Statistics South Africa, 2011). However, according to García Vizcaíno (2010), the English language is used in advertisements because it is not only considered to be modern and youthful, but there is a perception that it indicates progress. Lanza and Woldemariam (2013) attribute globalisation for the widespread of the English language, however, it does not mean that it should be substituted for languages that are more widely spoken than it. Puntoni, de Langhe and van Osselaer (2009) support the aforementioned stance, they have found that brands predominately communicate in English to their consumers despite their cultural heritage and indigenous languages. Furthermore, Puntoni *et al* (2009) further suggest that one of the consequences of globalisation is the influence it has on how consumers respond to advertising communication.

This research study aimed to analyse language choice used in radio advertising as a brand positioning technique. The study focused on English, isiZulu and code-switching, the alternating of languages in one conversation (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). This research study's researcher will present to you the rationale, problem statement, research questions and objectives, limitations and delimitations; literature review; research methodology, population and sampling data, collection methods, ethical considerations as well as a reference list and annexures.

## **1.2 Background and Context**

Advertising is a form of communication that is part of the marketing mix, it is used by a brand to promote and present a product or service (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Akinbode (2012) indicates that a language is an influential tool used in advertising. Torto and Richard (2015) agree with Akinbode (2012) that language has the ability to influence, they further suggest that the influence has a significant effect on consumers behaviour. Furthermore, they state that while the visuals, designs and audio that advertising uses are effective tools used by advertisers. It is therefore undeniable that it is language that assists consumers with identifying product's and remembering them.

The prevalence of the English language in South African advertising is the result of South Africa's past as well as globalisation (Wasserman 2009). This has resulted in advertisers changing how they market their products because the political climate has changed. During apartheid, the country's advertising reflected the segregation that had taken place, however, since then times have changed because of advertising now inclusive (Dowling, 2013). Furthermore, multilingualism is becoming popular in South African media and advertising. However, brands in South Africa are still facing the dilemma of choosing which language to communicate or advertise with because they are 11 official languages available to them to use (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Moreover, Puntoni, de Langhe and van Osselaer (2009) state that

consumers are communicated to predominately in English, despite their cultural heritage and indigenous languages.

### **1.3 Rationale**

Literature looked at the use of indigenous languages and code-switching in South African advertising, authors such as Conradie and van Niekerk (2015) conducted research about the use of Afrikaans and indigenous South African language code-switching in English advertisements research. Moreover, authors from other countries with bilingual and multilingual citizens have also conducted research about language use, they include but are not limited to: Hornikx *et al.* (2010), conducted a study on that looked at the use of English versus local language in the Netherlands and focused on easy and difficult English slogans; Lanza and Woldemariam (2013) who conducted research in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and their research looked at the English language and the country's linguistic landscape from a branding perspective; and Hsu (2013) conducted a study that investigated two main things, the attitude that the public has towards English and Taiwan mixing in advertising as well as the socio-psychological effect that the English in advertising has in Taiwan.

This research study analysed the role that each language played in positioning the same brand, it was able to contribute to further research studies that look into the implications of a brands language choice(s) as well as brand positioning using language.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Santello (2013) suggests that when communicated to multilingual respond differently to the messages presented to them in each of the languages they know. Furthermore, Bishop (2006) found that advertisers struggle to find the best language to communicate with their target audiences. This research study will, therefore, analyse how Jet's use of English, isiZulu and code-switching when communicating with their multilingual consumers play a role in how they are positioned in their minds.

## 1.4 Research questions

The research questions that guided this study are:

**Research question one:** How does Jet use language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements?

**Research question two:** How do multilingual and bilinguals respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements?

**Research question three:** Is there a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual and bilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis?

## 1.5 Research objectives

The research objectives that guided this study are:

**Objective one:** To analyse how Jet uses language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements.

**Objective two:** To determine if multilingual respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements differently.

**Objective three:** To evaluate whether there is a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis.

## 1.6 Purpose statement

The purpose of the present research study was to analyse and gain an understanding of how Jet is using its English, isiZulu and code-switching as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements.

## **1.7 Conceptualisation (key concepts)**

According to Davis (2014) conceptualisation refers to keywords and the meanings they ascribe in a particular research study. The key concepts for the present research study are as follows: code-switching, multilingualism, Bilingualism, indigenous languages and brand positioning technique.

### *1.7.1 Code-switching:*

According to Gardner-Chloros (2009) and Bullock and Toribio (2009), code-switching is the combined use of two or more languages in a conversation or sentence by bilingual and multilingual people.

### *1.7.2 Multilingualism:*

Bhatia and Ritchie's (2013) define a multilingual person as someone with the ability to communicate in three languages or more.

### *1.7.3 Bilingualism:*

Bhatia and Ritchie's (2013) definition of a bilingual person is someone who has the ability to communicate in two languages. Furthermore, according to Scotton (1976) "A bilingual may be able to speak about certain topics with more fluency in one linguistic variety than in another, therefore, he may codeswitch to accommodate his own linguistic abilities".

### *1.7.4 Indigenous languages:*

Indigenous can be defined as “Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native” (Oxford Dictionary, 2019.). Therefore, for the present study, what is meant by indigenous language is a country’s native language. And in the south African context, isiZulu is a native language that Zulu people speak (Best and McRoberts, 2003).

#### *1.7.5 Brand positioning technique:*

According to Aaker (2012), a brands position forms part of its identity and value proposition that is communicated to its target market.

#### *1.7.6 Radio:*

Radio is a type of audio media that allows advertisers to produce spots or live reads. Produced spots are different to live spots because they're recorded in a studio and allow for music and sound effects while live reads are narrated on air (Kelley, Jugenheimer and Sheehan, 2015).

## **1.8 Methodology**

In order to answer the study’s research questions outlined in section 1.4, the present research study used the interpretivism paradigm as its worldview. Furthermore, the researcher used purposeful sampling to get the research participants who were part of its focus group that was used to collect qualitative data.

## **1.9 Chapter outline**

This research paper has five chapters and they are as follows:

**Chapter one:** Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher Introduces the present research study then discusses the rationale, the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, Conceptualisation (key concepts), methodology and limitations and delimitations.

### **Chapter two:** Literature review

In this chapter, the researcher reviews existing literature and unpacks the theoretical framework used in the present research study in a discussion that reveals how the present study relates to it.

### **Chapter three:** Research Methodology

In this chapter, the researcher unpacks the methodology used in the present research study. Ethics and considerations will be also be discussed.

### **Chapter four:** Data analysis and Findings

In this chapter, the researcher gives an analysis of the data collected and discusses the findings

### **Chapter five:** Conclusion and Recommendations

In this chapter, the researcher will present the conclusion of the research study as well as offer recommendations. Furthermore, the researcher will highlight the areas for future research.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the reason why the present research study was conducted in. Furthermore, it highlighted the research problem, the research objectives as well as the research questions that were answered in the study. In addition to the aforementioned, the researcher provided a brief explanation of the chapters that will follow. The next chapter is the literature review.

# CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of a literature review is to provide an overview of previously conducted research that is relevant to a research topic. It allowed the researcher to identify the gaps in the research that was previously conducted as well as its shortcomings and victories (Maree, 2018). The present research study will do just that by first reviewing literature that is about language choices in advertising; the use of the English language, isiZulu and code-switching in advertising and then unpack the framework that is the most applicable to answering the research question as outlined in section 1.4 and meeting the research objectives stated in section 1.5 for this research study.

## 2.2 Language choices in advertising

According to Micu and Coulter (2010) state that the popularity of the English language in countries where it is not an indigenous language has resulted in language choices in advertising becoming an important topic of interest. Cook (2001) states that advertisements do not only have the ability to persuade the consumer to purchase products, but they are also able to amuse, inform, misinform, worry and warn the public. Where amusing and informing is concerned, Chan (2011) indicates that because consumers do not like hard-sell advertisements, therefore, advertisers try to make them less obvious by using tactics such as humour. As a result, the lines between what is entertaining and what is meant to persuade become blurred (Chan, 2011).

When choosing languages, it is a brands budget that determines how many languages are used in an advertising campaign (Grier, 2014). Dowling and Grier (2015) state that indigenous languages in Africa are generally used in radio advertising only. It can, therefore, be argued that it is due to radio advertising being that it is flexible, relatively inexpensive to produce and flight and allows brands to

target their consumers based on the radio stations they listen to (Kotler and Keller, 2012). The SABC has radio stations that broadcast in different languages, therefore brands able to communicate to their target market in the languages they know (SABC, 2017). An example of such as radio station is Ukhozi FM (2018) which targets a diverse isiZulu speaking audience and aims to create a sense of pride and culture in them. While radio stations such as Metro FM target black urban adults and communicate to them in the English language. It can, therefore, be argued that radio stations such as Metro FM are capable of airing advertising in English and code-switching, unlike Ukhozi FM that might find that using the English goes against their efforts to instil a sense of Zulu pride and culture (Brand South Africa, 2017).

Researchers such as Noriega and Blair (2008) found that when it comes to choosing which language to communicate with, advertisers make their choice based on who their target audience is. Whether advertisers like Jet do indeed base their choice of language on who their audience is, or other factors is unclear, but it can be argued that the choice(s) they make have an effect on consumers that they need to be aware of. Particularly because Ries and Trout (2001) state that brands have to consider how their communication choices influence how they are positioned in the mind of their target market because the messages they communicate to them need to cut through the clutter. Particularly because consumers make different product and brand associations based on their use of a single language or code-switching advertisements (Noriega and Blair (2008).

The effects of language choice (indigenous, English and code-switching) in advertising has been investigated by several researchers from different countries such as The Netherlands by Hornikx *et al.* (2010), France by Puntoni *et al.* (2009); Ethiopia by Lanza and Woldemariam (2013), India by Krishna and Ahluwalia (2008) and Taiwan by Hsu (2013). Moreover, researchers such as Ngwenya (2011), Dowling (2013), Ndlovu (2011) and Conradie and van Niekerk (2015) conducted research that focused on South African languages in advertising. Of the aforementioned researchers, Krishna and Ahluwalia (2008) looked at the use of the English language from the advertising industry's and advertiser's perspective unlike researchers such as Hornikx *et al.* (2010), Lanza and Woldemariam (2013), Puntoni *et al.* (2009) and Hsu (2013) who only looked at the consumers perspective. The

present researcher acknowledges the different perspectives that are available when conducting a research study about language in an advertising context but due to the nature of the research study the researcher would need to look at the consumers perspective because it will answer the research questions outlined in section 1.4.

Some researchers such as Lanza and Woldemariam (2013), Hornikx *et al.* (2010) and Krishna and Ahluwalia's (2008) compared the use of two languages whilst others only focused on one like Kuppens (2009). Van Hooft, van Meurs and Spierts (2016) on the other hand conducted a study about language choice in advertisements targeting Egyptian consumers. The study an Hooft et al. (2016) conducted, compared Arabic only, English only and English and Arabic code-switched advertisements. While the researcher acknowledges the research studies that compared the use of two or one languages, an Hooft et al. (2016) research study are the most similar to the present research study. Van Hooft et al. (2016) investigated language choices in advertising to Egyptian consumers, they found that the research participants' attitudes toward the advertisements and product were less positive for code-switched advertisements compared to Arabic only and English only advertisements. However, between Arabic and English only advertisements, the research participants were more likely to purchase products that were advertised in English. Planken, van Meurs and Radlinska (2010) would disagree because they conducted research on the effects of the English language in advertisements and found that the use of English in polish advertisements did not yield positive results because the effect it had on the research participants was negative.

### *2.2.2 The use of Indigenous languages in advertising*

According to Micu and Coulter (2010), the use of the English language in advertising has become popular in a lot of countries where it is not an indigenous language. Ustinova (2008) suggests that the English language connects bilingual consumers to the world and global community while indigenous languages connect them to their local community. Furthermore, Van Hooft et al. (2016) mention that attitude consumers have towards the English language can have an effect on how they evaluate advertisements and product and it influences their purchase intention.

Moreover, Krisha and Ahluwalia (2008) suggest that a brand's choice of language can have a positive or negative effect on the consumers' attitude toward the advertisements and the advertised product. Micu and Coulterm (2010) found that English advertisements by multinational receive a positive attitude as opposed to their indigenous language counterparts. Furthermore, Micu and Coulterm (2010) found that there was no attitude difference when it came to advertisements by local brands that were in English or an indigenous language. From a brand positioning perspective, which the present research study will be focused on, the researcher was able to establish whether Jet's use of the English language as well as isiZulu and code-switching position the brand in a positive or negative manner.

Kuppens (2009) conducted a research study that analysed four television advertisements that targeted Dutch-speaking target audiences. The research study used a qualitative content analysis and took a holistic approach to unpack the visual, auditory, narrative and linguistic references made in the advertisements. According to Kuppens (2009), advertisers regard the use of English effective in advertising their brands and products to consumers irrespective of who the target market is. However, Hornikx *et al.* (2010) argue that the comprehension of English affects consumers preference of the language over their indigenous language and that the preference is governed by the degree of difficulty of the English language. Kuppens (2009) further suggests that brands who communicate in English thrive primarily because it is a language that is capable of winning the minds of consumers who know and understand the language. Perhaps the reason for the aforementioned is because the English language gives brands more influence in the consumer market (Hsu, 2013). Furthermore, it gives consumers the perception that they are using a global brand even when it is local (Micu and Coulterm, 2010).

What is unfortunate about Kuppens (2009) stance on the use of the English language in multilingual countries like South Africa, is that it denies a majority of South Africans whose first language is not English the opportunity to have communication presented to them in the language of their choice or mother tongue (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

### *2.2.3 The use of code-switching in advertising*

Code-switching is a strategy in advertising that results in the mixing of languages, predominately English and a local language, in order to leverage both the associations that each of languages offers (Hashim, 2010). Tajolosa's (2013) agrees with Hashim (2010) and indicates that there are three main points that code-switching studies agree on are namely: a) code-switching is a strategic objective in advertising that is predominately used by advertisers to increase information retention; b) code-switching studies pair an indigenous first language with a global language like English and 3) code-switching in advertisements is primarily motivated by a strategy that seeks to create a social identity that target audiences can identify with. The present research study will not be investigating information retention but will be looking at Jet's use of an indigenous language, isiZulu and English.

Lin and Wang (2016) argue that brands like Jet are using code-switching as a tool to attract bilingual populations and as a result, it has become popular in countries like China and Taiwan and according to Conradie and van Niekerk (2015), South Africa. According to Bhatia and Ritchie (2013) consumers attitude towards code-switching can range between positive, neutral and negative. Consumers who consider code-switching positive, do so because it is natural, while consumers who find it neutral consider it a fad. Furthermore, consumers who find code-switching negative often do so because they prefer the use of one language in an advertisement because they regard code-switching as a bad use of language (Bhatia and Ritchie, 2013).

Noriega and Blair (2008) conducted a research study that looked at the extent to which the addition of the second language in advertising creates positive consumer behaviour towards products that are advertised. Noriega et.al (2008) state that bilinguals and multilingual use and experience code-switching every day and as a result it influences the associations, they make about the languages they know. The present research study's researcher recognises that for Jet's target audience, the same applies with their code-switching radio advertisements and it is for this reason that the present research study used bilinguals and multilingual because they were capable of making the associations needed to answer the research questions outlined in section 1.4. The aforementioned stance made by the present research study's researcher is supported by Noriega and Blair (2008) who state that unlike

monolinguals who rely on their surroundings to help them identify which vocabulary is used in order to communicate, bilinguals take it a step further because they also use the context in which they find themselves in to identify which language is the most appropriate. Therefore, the sample used in the present research study will be able to make different associations for each language because they know and understand both. Furthermore they will be able to establish how the use of the code-switching strategy positions the Jet brand in the mind of its consumers, not why the brand is using codeswitching because understanding why the brand is using it will not allow the present research study's researcher to understand how the brand is positioned in the mind of its consumers, let alone answer the research questions outlined in section 1.4.

### **2.3 Theoretical framework**

Due to the nature of the present research study, the chosen theoretical framework is part of the linguistic school of thought. The present research study is not the first to use a linguistic framework in a research study about advertising, linguistic frameworks such as the markedness model have been used by researchers such as Luna and Peracchio (2015) and the accommodation theory by Koslow, Shamdasani and Touchstone (1994). The aforementioned researchers did not use an advertising related frameworks even though their research was in the advertising context, the present research study will do the same.

The theoretical framework used in the present research study is The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of linguistics, which states that people's thoughts are shaped by their native languages, furthermore, people who speak different languages view the world in different ways. Hussein (2012) and Regier and Xu (2017) agree that The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has been subject to controversy. Regier and Xu (2017) offer a theoretical reason for this, that the hypothesis challenges the popular stance that thoughts rely on a universal way of understanding and acquiring knowledge. However, the aforementioned has not deterred the hypothesis from being used in a lot of research studies over the last decades (Bloom, 2000).

The hypothesis is divided into two parts, namely Linguistic Determinism and Linguistic Relativity (Kay and Kempton, 1984) Linguistic Determinism looks at how language determines how people think (Hussein, 2012). According to the theory, different languages cause different thoughts, therefore, there is a close connection between language and thought (Wolff and Holmes, 2010). On the other hand, according to Lucy (1992) linguistic relativity indicates that languages influence how people think. It looks at how people think differently based on the languages they know (Hussein, 2012).

The researcher therefore apprehends that while there is slight difference in the two theories, one determines (Linguistic Determinism) while the other influences (Linguistic Relativity) how people think the implications of both of them are relevant to the present research study because they will be able to reveal how the brand is using language as a positioning technique.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The literature discussed was relevant to the topic and research problem. It gave the researcher an understanding of language choices in advertising as well as the use of English, an indigenous language and code-switching in advertising. Furthermore, The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which is the theoretical framework for the present research study was unpacked. The next chapter is the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the study. According to Leavy (2017) a research methodology describes how research will be conducted. Furthermore, it gives researchers an opportunity to be transparent about the how they collected the research data that answered their research questions and formed their recommendations and conclusions. The following sections will be discussed: the problem statement, research question and research objectives for ease of reference, followed by the research paradigm, research design and approach, population and sampling, data collection methods, data analysis methods, trustworthiness, ethical considerations, limitations and delimitations and end with a conclusion.

#### *3.1.1 Problem statement*

Santello (2013) suggests that when communicated to multilingual respond differently to the messages presented to them in each of the languages they know. Furthermore, Bishop (2006) found that advertisers struggle to find the best language to communicate with their target audiences. This research study will, therefore, analyse how Jet's use of English, isiZulu and code-switching when communicating with their multilingual consumers play a role in how they are positioned in their minds.

#### *3.1.2 Research questions*

The research questions that guided this study are:

**Research question one:** How does Jet use language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements?

**Research question two:** How do multilingual and bilinguals respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements?

**Research question three:** Is there a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual and bilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against The Saphir-Whorf hypothesis?

### *3.1.3 Research objectives*

The research objectives that guided this study are:

**Objective one:** To analyse how Jet uses language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements.

**Objective two:** To determine if multilingual respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements differently.

**Objective three:** To evaluate whether there is a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against the Saphir-Whorf hypothesis.

## **3.2 Paradigm**

du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) states that paradigms are research traditions or worldviews that researchers use as a lens when conducting a research study. This view is supported by Nieuwenhuis (2016) who states that paradigms are perspectives that

are used to view and interpret reality or the world. The research paradigm of the study is interpretivism. According to Ritchie et al. (2013), interpretivism is a paradigm that is used to understand situations using the lens that people use to make sense of things. The aforementioned stance by Ritchie et al. (2013) is supported by Plooy-Cilliers (2014) who states that its primary objective is gaining an in-depth understanding of phenomena. It, therefore, allowed the researcher to understand how the research participants made sense of all the radio advertisements that were presented to them.

Like with all paradigms, they are the five positions that are applicable to the interpretivism paradigm, namely: epistemological, ontological, metatheoretical, methodological and axiological.

The ontological position worldview of interpretivism is that reality is flexible, subjective and relies on human interactions. It is a social construction of reality that is not necessarily experienced the same way by people because they each give their own meanings of it (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Therefore, taking using an interpretive lens allowed the researcher to leverage off of the different perspectives the research participants had, thus providing the researcher gaining an understanding of how the brand is positioned in their minds. Furthermore, it provided the answers to the research questions as outlined in section 3.1.2. Furthermore, the epistemological position of interpretivism is that the researcher uses their own thinking to analyse and make sense of the data that they have collected and is guided by their interaction with the multilingual and bilingual research participants (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

According to Nayak and Singh (2015), the metatheoretical position of interpretivism allowed the researcher gather data, analyse it and create a theory(s) based on the information and analysis in order to answer the research questions outlined in section 3.1.2. As opposed to the metatheoretical position of positivists that would have resulted in the researcher collecting data and making generalizations about how the brand is positioned in the minds of its consumers and providing general recommendations about what needs to be done to manipulate or control it without

providing an understanding into how the brand is using language to position itself from the target markets perspective (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The interpretivism paradigm, therefore, allowed the researcher to create a theory that leveraged off of the ontological position of interpretivism discussed above.

The Axiology position provides insights into the role that values play the research study (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The researcher acknowledges they are part of what is being researched and will, therefore, their influence cannot be separated from how they influence their collection of data and its analysis (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The researcher has therefore used the ethical considerations section in to discuss the ethical implications of the aforementioned.

### **3.3 Research design and approach**

According to Creswell (2014), a researcher can conduct a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method study, each of which is determined by a worldview. This research study used the interpretivism paradigm outlined in section 3.2, therefore, a qualitative research study was used to answer the research questions outlined in section 1.4 as well as meet the research objectives found at section 1.5. A qualitative study seeks to explore, describe and understand a phenomenon, therefore, the measuring, quantifying or generalising of this study's findings are non-applicable (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

Nieuwenhuis (2016) states that narrative studies, grounded theory, ethnography, case studies and phenomenology all form part of the approaches that can be used in qualitative research designs. However, Leavy (2017) suggests that of the aforementioned, ethnography and phenomenology are part of the Interpretivism paradigm. Nieuwenhuis (2016) further states that phenomenology focuses on the meaning of the lived experience(s) of individuals and describes the meaning of those experiences to them. While ethnography is used to study a group of people's cultures(s) over a period of time in order to learn about their language, shared behaviour, actions etc. (Creswell 2014). This research study, therefore, used the

phenomenology approach because an ethnographic study would have been time-consuming and phenomenology allowed the researcher to understand the experience of listening to radio advertisements by Jet that is either in English, isiZulu and code-switching in order to establish how each position the brand in the minds of consumers.

According to Nayak and Singh (2015), research projects can fall into the following three approaches: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Leavy (2017) states that descriptive research is appropriate for studies that sought to describe people, activities, events and situations. Moreover, Walliman and Baiche's (2011) view is that descriptive research uses observation to collect data and that observations are recorded in order to get analysed. Nayak and Singh (2015) state that an explanatory study is appropriate for studies that already have a description and the researcher is looking to understand why the phenomena being researched is the way it is. Furthermore, it provides evidence and explains how one thing causes another thing to happen under certain circumstances (Leavy, 2017). Exploration is good for filling in the gaps of previously conducted research or taking a fresh approach to a topic that has been previously researched in order to get new insights (Leavy, 2017). It does not generalise findings and does not make use of hypotheses (Nayak and Singh, 2015). Furthermore, its objectives include gaining a better understanding of a topic, a group of people and social setting and identifying key issues and factors. Unlike descriptive research which is appropriate for studies that seek to describe people, activities, events and situations (Leavy, 2017).

Based on the abovementioned descriptions, the research that is the most suitable for this research study and will answer the research question as outlined in section 1.4, is exploration because according to Nayak and Singh (2015) exploratory research designs use a qualitative research strategy. Moreover, it allowed the researcher to analyse and gain an understanding of the role that each language (English, isiZulu and code-switching) played in positioning Jet through its radio advertisements (Leavy, 2017). Furthermore, this study will not make use of the longitudinal designs which studies a sample repeatedly because of time constraints, therefore, a cross-sectional design will be used because it allows the researcher to collect data from their sample once (Nayak and Singh, 2015).

### **3.4 Population and sampling**

The unit of analysis for this research study was radio advertisements. This research study focused on three advertisements by Jet which advertised the same product in English, isiZulu and code-switching. The radio advertisements that were used were the 2017 to 2018 School *The Future Back to School* campaign. The aforementioned advertisements were used because the three languages which the present research study focuses on (English, isiZulu and code-switching) were used therefore they allowed the researcher to use them in order to answer the questions outlined in section

According to Brookes (2017), Jet's target market is between LSM 4 to 7, therefore, all the multilingual and bilingual people from this segment who knew isiZulu and English would be the population for the present research study. Nayak and Singh (2015) state that a sample is taken from a large population and represents them when measured. A sample is used because measuring an entire population due to factors such as a researcher(s) not being able to access the entire population.

The present study used the non-probability sampling method because it is often used for qualitative studies while probability sampling is often used in quantitative studies (Pascoe, 2014). Furthermore, it did not require the researcher to use their entire population (Nayak and Singh, 2015). Non-probability sampling can be categorised into four types: convenience sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling (Pascoe, 2014). Of the different types of non-probability sampling, this research study used purposive sampling because it allowed the researcher to conduct a focus group with members of Jet's target market who had the ability to understand the advertisement that the research study uses. Furthermore, the researcher was able to find them.

### **3.5 Data collection method**

The researcher will be unpacking the methods used to collect data that assisted with answering the research questions outlined in section 1.4.

### *3.5.1 Radio advertisements*

Radio advertisements from the same campaign were identified and sourced. The choice of the advertising campaign was based on the use of English, isiZulu and code-switching which the back to school campaign provided. Two of the radio advertisements, English and code-switching were 30 seconds while the isiZulu advertisement was one minute long.

### *3.5.2 Focus group*

Data was collected from a focus group, a type of field research. Focus groups are appropriate for qualitative research studies seeking a range of responses, experiences and forgotten details in an environment that allows them to do so without inhibitions (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Furthermore, Strydom and Bezuidenhout (2014) state that focus groups allow focus group participants to express their views and opinions thus all the participants have the opportunity to freely exchange them thus learning from each other while answering the questions posed to them.

In order to facilitate the focus group, the researcher formulated a moderator guide which was used to during the discussion in order to ensure that the participants answer the open-ended predetermined research questions outlined in section 3.1.2. Prior to the focus group being conducted, participants signed their consent forms. The focus group was recorded, and the transcript can be found in [Annexure B](#). During the focus group the researcher played the radio advertisements which the research participants discussed, probing questions were used in order to mine for more information as well as to ensure that what the participants said or meant was not misunderstood (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

### 3.6 Data analysis method

The data analysis method used in the present research study was a Thematic Analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) a thematic analysis is broken up into six phases, namely:

- **Phase one data familiarisation:** After transcribing the focus group discussion the researcher familiarised themselves with the data by reading it a couple of times.
- **Phase two is generating initial codes:** This phase took place while the researcher was reading the transcribe in order to familiarise themselves with it. The researcher highlighted words and phrases were relevant to the research study.
- **Phase three searching for themes:** The grouped all the codes they identified in order to look for themes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) themes represent important data that was collected that can help answer research questions. In terms of the themes that will be collected, they were based on the present research study's theoretical framework.
- **Phase four reviewing the themes:** After creating a list of all the themes, the researcher looked at them again to ensure that they were correct.
- **Phase five naming the themes:** The researcher named all the themes that they identified.
- **Phase six producing the research report:** The researcher created a table that reflects the themes that were identified.

The present research study followed the abovementioned process when analysing the data collected because it would ensure that there was trustworthiness in the handling of the data collected. Evidence of the aforementioned can be found in

[Annexure C](#). The focus group transcript that the researcher used to can be found in [Annexure B](#).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), tables can be used to present qualitative data, furthermore, the table may include verbatim quotes from respondents because they assist readers to better understand the identified theme(s). Below is an example of the table used to present the data.

Category number:

| Theme | Frequency | Verbatim quote |
|-------|-----------|----------------|
|       |           |                |

The aforementioned table will follow in section 4.2.

### **3.7 Limitations and delimitations**

#### *3.7.1 Limitations*

In terms of this study's limitations, time constraints played a big role, had there been more time this research study could have provided a more in-depth understanding of how language choice used in radio advertising as a brand positioning technique. Another limitation is that this research study focused predominately on English, isiZulu and code-switching only and two of the radio advertisements were hard-sell while the third (isiZulu advertisement) was soft-sell. Furthermore, only one focus group with five participants was conducted by the researcher.

#### *3.7.2 Delimitations*

According to (Creswell, 2014) delimitations allow the researcher to explain the parameters of their research study. For this particular research study, the object of the analysis for the present research paper is Jet's radio advertisements. All the other communication channels that the brand uses such as Television and catalogues fall outside the scope of this research study.

## **3.8 Trustworthiness**

Koonin (2014) states that trustworthiness is the qualitative research version of reliability and validity for quantitative research. Below is a discussion for how the present research will ensure trustworthiness.

### *3.8.1 Credibility*

According to Koonin (2014) credibility deals with the accuracy in which the researcher interprets the data they collected from their research participants. In order to ensure that the present research study is credible, the researcher relied on the theoretical framework, The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, to identify the categories for the research analysis. Furthermore, the researcher used some of the research techniques that are relevant when conducting a qualitative research study.

### *3.8.2 Transferability*

Transferability deals with whether the findings gathered can be used in similar research studies and yield similar results (Koonin, 2014). Whilst the researcher cannot guarantee that similar studies will yield similar results, the present research study can be used as an exemplar for studies looking into languages choice being used as a brand positioning.

### *3.8.3 Dependability*

In terms of dependability, the researcher has documented their process in order for anyone interested in the study to be able to follow the research process, data collection as well as the analysis (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

### *3.8.4 Confirmability*

According to Koonin (2014), confirmability speaks to other people being able to reach the same conclusions as for the researcher by just looking at the data collected. The present research study will be able to ensure confirmability because the study uses volunteers that fit the purposive sampling (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher did not manipulate any of the responses that were made by the research participants, therefore, the research study used authentic data that other researchers can trust. Added to that, a USB with the recording of the focus group was handed in with a hard copy of the present research study and a transcript of it can be found in [Annexure B](#).

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

The researcher for the present research study took into consideration numerous ethical considerations when designing the research methodology. All the research participants were given their consent prior to the focus groups taking place, they were informed about all the details and therefore knew what was required of them for the course of the study. Moreover, the participants were reminded to sign their consent forms which can be found in [Annexure E](#) before the focus group commenced and were advised that they had the right to refrain from answering questions they were not comfortable with answering as well as withdraw from the study at any point if they felt uncomfortable or needed a break. The participants were given the option to remain anonymous by creating a code name which they could use in the focus group, but they were all okay with using their names in the focus group. However, the researcher did not use their names in the transcribe because in the consent forms as well as in the focus group because they stated that they would protect their identities. Furthermore, the researcher informed the research participants that the focus group would be recorded, furthermore, they informed them that the only people that would have access to them are the researcher, their lecturer, marker and supervisor. In terms of the handling of the data collected, the researcher did not in any way distorted the findings to suit a particular outcome.

Furthermore, the researcher ensured that there was no bias involved during the course of the research study.

# CHAPTER FOUR: DATA FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the focus group that was conducted according to the research questions. The data that was collected was analysed using thematic analysis, as discussed in chapter three. Furthermore, the analysis will include a discussion about the correlation between the findings and the literature review. The focus group transcript can be found in [Annexure B](#).

## 4.2 Findings

*4.2.1 Research question one:* How does Jet use language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements? The aforementioned research question was asked in order for the researcher to analyse and gain an understanding into how the brand is positioned in the minds of its target market based on its use of English, isiZulu and code-switching. Furthermore, as discussed in section 3.5, a thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected which allowed the researcher to identify the themes below.

Category one: Linguistic Determinism

| Theme        | Frequency | Verbatim Quote   |
|--------------|-----------|--|
| ENTERTAINING | 17        | "...so, it was also entertaining and also simple like, they didn't go too deep which would be very boring..." (Participant 3, 2018). |
| INFORMATIVE  | 11        | "...They are direct, to the point and they give you information like from the first 4  |

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
|             |   | or 5 seconds of the ad...” (Participant 2, 2018).  |
| AUTHENTIC   | 3 | “...It was hundred percent Zulu and hundred percent that person that would, how someone would talk to you...” (Participant 2, 2018).           |
| INAUTHENTIC | 4 | “...I feel like, it’s a bit, yes it’s selling and it’s an ad but its’ wallpaper to me, it sounds very non-authentic...” (Participant 4, 2018). |

*Table 4.2.1 – Linguistic determinism themes*

After identifying themes that answer research question 3.2.1 from each of the languages and combining them, the themes that were prevalent were namely: entertaining, informative, authentic and inauthentic. Of the aforementioned themes, the theme that was the strongest was entertaining.

The entertainment theme reveals the following: a) the code-switching advertisement was entertaining and not boring; b) the isiZulu advertisement was humorous and entertaining and 3) the English advertisement was not entertaining at all. It can, therefore, be argued that the when the brand uses isiZulu, whether alone or code-switched it makes Jet’s multilingual and bilingual the target market find it somewhat entertaining which in turn translates into how the brand is positioned in their minds. Furthermore, while Micu and Coulterm (2010) found that there was no attitude difference when it came to how consumers view advertisements by local brands that were in English or an indigenous language. In the present research study, there was a difference in how Jet’s target market thought about the advertisements that were in English, an indigenous language as well as code-switching. The difference can be attributed to the Linguistic Determinism theory, which states that language determines how people think (Hussein, 2012).

4.2.2 *Research question two*: How do multilingual and bilinguals respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements? The aforementioned research question was asked in order for the researcher to determine how the target market responded to the messages presented to them in English, isiZulu and code-switching, based on the linguistic relativity theory.

The researcher will first present an interpretation of the English language, followed by isiZulu and then code-switching.

Category two: Linguistic relativity

| Theme                     | Frequency | Verbatim quote  |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| Straight to the point     | 7         | "...It's straight to the point, telling you what to do. I know what to do, no beating around the bush..." (Participant 4, 2018).      |
| Inauthentic               | 2         | "... I do not think it was authentic because nobody talks like this (mimicking the lady in the advert)..." (Participant 4, 2018).     |
| Authentic                 | 2         | "...so for me I would disagree and say that it was very authentic and they are getting the message through..." (Participant 3, 2018). |
| Not emotionally connected | 1         | "...It doesn't serve my emotional needs in terms of the language..." (Participant 2, 2018).   |

Table 4.2.2 – Linguistic relativity English response themes

The researcher identified the following four themes namely: straight to the point, inauthentic, authentic and not emotionally connected which are presented in table 4.2.2 above. Of the identified themes, straight to the point was the most prevalent.

The research participants felt that the English advertisement used in the present research study told them exactly what was on offer, how much it was and what they needed to do. The aforementioned is a complete contrast to García Vizcaíno's (2010) finding that the English language is considered to be modern and youthful and indicates progress.

According to Kuppens (2009) who communicate in English thrive primarily because it is a language that is capable of winning the minds of consumers. It can be argued that a brand like Jet thrives in its use of the English language because they use it to get straight to the point and that is how they are perceived by their bilingual and multilingual target market who are indifferent about it.

Category three: Linguistic relativity isiZulu responses

| Theme              | Frequency | Verbatim Quote  |
|--------------------|-----------|---|
| <b>ENTERTAINED</b> | 2         | "... so, it was also entertaining and also simple like, they didn't go too deep which would be very boring..." (Participant 3, 2018).   |
| <b>AUTHENTIC</b>   | 7         | "...It was just how people talk on a daily basis..." (Participant 3, 2018).   |
| <b>PROUD</b>       | 4         | "...I think the ad, the ad portrays how for the lack of a better word, beautiful how how our languages can be..." (Participant 4, 2018) |

Table 4.2.3 – Linguistic relativity Isizulu response themes

The researcher identified the following themes: entertainment, authentic and proud which are presented in Table 4.2.3 above. Of the identified themes, the most prevalent was authentic. The research participants found the isiZulu advertisement authentic because not only did they find the use of language true to how they speak but it was also mentioned that it was authentic because it was one hundred per cent isiZulu. The researcher, therefore, managed to understand how the isiZulu language influenced how the multilingual participants think (Lucy, 1992).

As indicated in the literature review, there is a need for advertisers to be aware of the language varieties that South African languages such as isiZulu have, was discussed (Rudwick, 2018). Particularly because language varieties present continuously evolve (Quirk, 1990). Based on the participants' responded to the use of language, it can be argued that the brand used a language variety that was appropriate for their target market because they did not find it problematic. Furthermore, it has contributed to positively to the brands' efforts to create a distinct place in their target markets minds as a brand that uses the isiZulu language authentically.

Category four: Linguistic relativity code-switching responses

| Theme         | Frequency | Verbatim Quote  |
|---------------|-----------|---|
| Problematic   | 5         | "...English yes it's authentic but when it comes to other languages they're just a second thought, it is a translation of whatever the English is ..." (Participant 3, 2018). |
| Understanding | 3         | "...So like back to school if you translate it in in your typical black language it won't have the same meaning that it would have in English..." (Participant 2, 2018).      |

Table 4.2.4 – Linguistic relativity code-switching response themes

Three themes were identified by the researcher, namely problematic, understanding and concerned. Of the identified themes, problematic was the most prevalent. The reason for its prevalence was that the research participants found that the participants felt that the use of the isiZulu language was an afterthought and that isiZulu was a direct translation of the English language. The aforementioned is particularly interesting because consumers make different product and brand associations based on their use of a single language or code-switching advertisements (Noriega and Blair, 2008). Therefore, it can be argued that the

association made with Jet's code-switching advertisement is that it treats both languages unequally. What is problematic about the unequal language use perception is that code-switching in advertisements is primarily motivated by a strategy that seeks to create a social identity that targets audiences can identify with (Tajolosa, 2013). However, what it created was a reminder of South Africa's colonial past that marginalised indigenous languages in favour of English and Afrikaans (Ngwenya, 2011).

*4.2.2 Research question three:* Is there a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual and bilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against The Saphir-Whorf hypothesis? The researcher asked this question in order to evaluate and understand the reasons behind whether the area or aren't. In order to answer this question, the researcher had to compare the themes identified in the research question one against those in research question two.

Based on table 4.2.1, the researcher found that the Jet brand was using language to entertain as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements. Both the English and code-switching radio advertisements revealed a discrepancy. The response to the English radio advertisement was that it was straight to the point. Furthermore, the research participants did not give an indication that although it was straight to the point, that it was entertaining. Moreover, the participants' response to the code-switching advertisement was that it predominantly problematic and again no indication that it was entertaining. The isiZulu radio advertisement, on the other hand, was the only one that did not show a discrepancy because the prevalent theme as presented in Table 4.2.3. was entertained.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the research findings and the analysis of the data collected in the focus group. The themes that prevalent themes that emerged in the focus group

were discussed because they provided the answers to the research questions that the researcher sought to answer. Chapter five presents the conclusion, recommendations as well as the areas for future research.

# **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a synthesis of main findings of the present study as well as the recommendations the researcher has for future researchers. The purpose of the present research study was to analyse and gain an understanding of how Jet is using English, isiZulu and code-switching as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements. The researcher unpacked the research problem which was that when communicated to, multilinguals respond differently to the messages presented to them in each of the languages they know (Santello, 2013) suggests. Furthermore, advertisers struggle to find the best language to communicate with their target audiences (Bishop, 2006). The researcher, therefore, crafted research questions and objects that would provide the answers to how Jet is using its language choices in radio advertising as a brand positioning technique. The conclusion section in this chapter briefly discusses the answers the present research study's questions

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Research question one had the objective of analysing how Jet uses language as a brand positioning technique in its radio advertisements. It can be concluded that Jet does so by entertaining its multilingual and bilingual target market because based on the thematic research analysis, the entertained theme was the most prevalent. However, it must be noted that only the isiZulu and code-switched advertisements contributed to the aforementioned finding because the English advertisement was not entertaining at all. Therefore, it can be argued that the brand needs to look into rectifying the aforementioned if it is not a strategic move on their side.

Research question two had the objective of determining whether multilinguals and bilinguals respond to the messages presented to them in each of the languages in the Jet radio advertisements differently. It can be concluded that Jet's multilinguals and bilingual target market do respond differently to the messages presented to them. This was revealed by the three different prevalent themes from each of the languages, namely: straight to the point, entertaining and problematic. Based in the research findings in chapter 4, of the three prevalent themes it can it can straight to the point was neutral, entertaining was positive while problematic was negative for the brand from a brand positioning perspective.

Research question three had the objective of evaluating whether there is a discrepancy between how Jet is positioned in the radio advertisements and how the multilingual consumers respond to messages presented in each of the languages against the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The present research study's researcher produced a finding that revealed that there was a discrepancy in two of the three languages choices because the isiZulu radio advertisement was the only one that had a matching theme.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The recommendations that are put forward by the researcher are based on the research findings from the focus group that was conducted.

#### *5.3.1 More than one advertisement per language*

Based on the first finding the researcher recommends that future research study's that are similar should use more than one advertisement per language. Furthermore, the advertisement should vary, therefore some should be hard-sell while others are soft-sell this will ensure that the research findings are more robust.

#### *5.3.2 Similar should separate multilingual and bilingual speakers within the same*

### *target market*

The researcher recommends that academic researchers a conduct a similar research study that looks at multilinguals and bilinguals separately to present research findings that differentiate the two. The researcher realised this while analysing the second research findings that their research study might have been more interesting if it was able to produce a finding into whether each group individually, would respond to messages presented to them in different languages in one brand's radio advertisements differently

### *5.3.3 Researching all previously marginalised South African languages code-switched and alone*

Based on the third research finding, the researcher recommends that future research studies look into all the previously marginalised South African languages code-switched and alone. Particularly because indigenous languages in Africa are generally used in radio advertising only (Dowling and Grier, 2015) it would be worth it for academic researchers to look at the implications of languages in radio advertising from a brand positioning perspective. Particularly because both language and brand positioning play significant roles in brand communication

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