REPRESENTATION OF KENYAN UNIVERSITIES: A GENRE AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED UNIVERSITY PROSPECTUSES

LILY JEPKEMOI RONOH

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EGERTON UNIVERSITY

SEPTEMBER, 2015
DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

DECLARATION
This thesis is my original work and has not been presented before for a degree in this or any other university.

SIGNATURE:____________________________ DATE: _______________________

LILY JEPKEMOI RONOH
REG. NO: AM13/2900/11

APPROVAL
This MA thesis has been submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

SIGNATURE:____________________________ DATE: _______________________

DR. PHYLLIS BARDOO
Department: Literature, Language and Linguistics.

SIGNATURE:____________________________ DATE: _______________________

PROF. YAKOBO MUTITI
Department of Languages, Linguistics & Literature,
Pwani University, Kilifi, Kenya
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear mother, Mrs. Zipporah Ronoh, for her love and encouragement.
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ABSTRACT

Globalisation has virtually affected all spheres of our lives and it has had a huge impact on institutions of higher learning necessitating these institutions to publicise themselves through various means. Prospectuses are increasingly becoming important to the admissions and marketing practices of colleges and universities due to their ability to rapidly communicate a significant amount of content to a vast audience. Colleges and universities use language, whether textual (i.e. written) or visual (i.e. images), to position and differentiate themselves from other institutions and promote their efforts. Despite their significance, not much has been done on the formal analysis of university prospectuses in Kenya and, therefore, the generic and recognisable communicative functions have not been subjected to scholarly analysis. There is also little research regarding the intentions of university officials in the production of prospectuses and the focus of prospective student on the language of university prospectus. This study identifies the generic features of the prospectuses from six public and private universities in Kenya. It also establishes the intention of public relations officers in the production of the prospectus. In addition, the opinions of prospective students were examined to assess the possible impact of the marketing tools that universities use. The researcher used both interview schedule and questionnaire to collect data, and genre analysis in describing the text of university prospectuses. Critical Discourse Analysis and Genre Analysis were adopted for theoretical framework of the study. A seven move generic structure was identified in the prospectuses. Although there were similarities in the move structure, individual universities push out the generic boundaries to fulfill private intentions so as to stand out from their counterparts. Analysis reveals that public relations and marketing officers’ intention is to market the institution and made deliberate tactical choices on the kind of image they want the world to see of the university. The prospective students have divergent reading focuses of the text. The findings and recommendation of this study can be applied effectively in the production of prospectuses and extended to other related genres.
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