Contextual Marketing:  
The Language/Vocabulary of Marketing in SMEs

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Abstract: This paper is part of ongoing descriptions of Contextual Marketing in SMEs. To date two previous papers have addressed a variety of key factors that contribute to Contextual Marketing. Our first paper, (Carson et al 2002*), addressed the overriding theme of Contextual Marketing and considered issues such as commonalities, triggers, variances, situation specific and language/vocabulary. Our second paper, (Copley et al 2002**) examined commonalities in more depth and linked this to the personality of the entrepreneur/owner/manager.

This paper focuses on another of the identified key factors, that of Language/Vocabulary, the recognition that marketing practitioners have their own language/vocabulary depending upon which ‘tribe’ (Enright 2001), they belong. The discussion draws on each authors personal experiential and empirical knowledge gleaned from many years of working with small firm entrepreneurs/owners/managers. Each author is acutely aware that small firm entrepreneurs/owners/managers do not always use, (if at all), the language of conventional marketing theory when performing business of a marketing nature. Often they will use language which is founded in their own local vocabulary range or which has been learned from simply doing business in their own unique industry environment. This paper seeks to demonstrate this intimate language/vocabulary.
The structure of this paper is the same as the previous two. Each contributing author presents a 500/600 word synopsis from their experiential knowledge on perceptions of vocabulary. There are of course commonalities and variances, which can be gleaned from reading each contribution and from the brief summary. However in the end what is produced is a definitional scope of an implicitly known but not explicitly published outline of appropriate language/vocabulary for marketing in SMEs. Each authors’ views are presented in the order in which they were received for editing and co-ordinating.

Contribution to Contextual Marketing: The Language/Vocabulary of Marketing in SMEs

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Perhaps the word ‘lexicon’ – meaning as it does, for our purposes, the language of a particular branch of knowledge – might be an appropriate descriptor. This differentiates it from the lexicon of the big structure, market-driven organisations. I would hold that all organisations have organisation-specific lexicons; then, a broader lexicon for their industry and an even broader one for their publics and stakeholders.

The closer one gets to the organisation, the more specific or tribal in nature becomes that lexicon. This section of the paper does not seek to provide a lexiconographic comparison and contrast between larger organisations and the varieties of SMEs studied so far. Rather it refers to the meanings generally given to words in the bigger structures of marketing writing and compares and contrasts these conventional meanings with what they mean to an SME operator. Its purpose is threefold: to illustrate yet another difference between small and large organisations, to show how smaller organisations are excluded in a teaching process that is more a servant to the big marketing structures and to use the extreme of difference to highlight this by taking a number of words and comparing and contrasting their definitions from forty in-depth interviews with respondents in SMEs and the definitions ascribed by major textual works such as those of Kotler.

The limitations of such a comparison and contrast are as follows:
1. it centres on the smaller organisations. Most of the fieldwork was the small- not medium-sized organisations.
2. such texts are only one source for definitions but are worthy representative for big structures marketing.
3. such texts define, SME operators describe.


The Leviathan Approach to Assessing Difference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Conventional description</th>
<th>SME description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>-the identification and satisfaction of customer needs</td>
<td>-making money by selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-an activity big corporations undertake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market orientation</td>
<td>-initiation response frameworks</td>
<td>-a boundary-free range of opportunities not necessarily related to the current, core business</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-intelligence gathering and dissemination</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business growth</td>
<td>-attainment of predetermined goals that were mutually agreed-to across the departments of an organisation</td>
<td>-personal freedom of manoeuvre expressed as wealth, conspicuous consumption or lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>-a highly sequenced and complicated combination of activities to attain growth. Marketing is a central tenet of this belief system</td>
<td>-a financial matter. Without money, there is no future. Marketing may be a means to this end but not necessarily. Survival is a central tenet of this belief system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>- an individual, normally under most scrutiny either in the development of target markets or at the end of the supply chain, often beyond the effective control of the organisation. Most commonly aggregated into target markets and then subjected to highly systematised market targeting</td>
<td>-can be a good, service or idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-smaller operators tend not to identify a difference between customer and product. For them, the two concepts merge. A customer is a ‘product’ that produces revenue just as the product for sale is some form of representation of the customer -generally, smaller organisations are at pains to differentiate between the concepts of ‘customer’ and ‘product’. Rather, they perceive a difference between stock or capacity and the ability to match it to demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>-a component of the marketing mix</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-can be a good or a service or an idea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-the manifestation of the organisation’s world view of the market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-can be a good, service or idea</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>-a component of the marketing mix</td>
<td>-set by SMEs, settled upon by market forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-set by markets</td>
<td>-price can be difficult to change as product mixes are often shallower and narrower than large organisations, making line-pricing modifications difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-the revenue-producing element of the marketing mix</td>
<td>-price often relates to acquisition costs more than market price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place / Distribution</td>
<td>-a component of the marketing mix</td>
<td>-a logistical issue more than a marketing one</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-a marketing function whereby product availability is subjected to varying degrees of selectivity according to desired positioning</td>
<td>-product is usually directly passed on to the customer from the premises or distribution points are selected only so far as such distributors accept the product and the person behind it</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotion / Marketing</td>
<td>-a component of the marketing mix</td>
<td>-a sometimes necessary cost of production in order to achieve sufficient revenue levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>-a range of activities specifically designed to present the product to the most probable targeted audience in the most convincing way</td>
<td>-tends to be subsumed under the operator’s networking activities, associations and perhaps local memberships</td>
</tr>
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It is worthwhile asking about these differences in interpretation, albeit grounded in terms generated from big structure marketing. Do these differences give rise, in turn, to localised vocabularies? It would appear that they do, although much remains to be uncovered about such linguistic adaptations. Is the above chart the appropriate approach? It probably is in the first instance but it is Leviathan who is setting the discourse by nominating the terms in the first column. This is perhaps the more appropriate way to initiate wider discussion but at some time a more anthropological aspect should be undertaken, one favouring the SME operators,
My experience of vocabulary in such situations is based upon both the experiential and empirical. The environment surrounding the SME shapes, no doubt, the 'intimate vocabulary' exhibited. The sixth of six propositions that came out of a study by the author in the late 1980s suggested that small firms' managers define marketing in their own terms. A key point was that whilst they generally like the idea of planning ahead, these informants saw it as an impossible ideal and therefore they did not value marketing planning. They said they would use aspects of marketing for managing problems but did not treat marketing in the same way as education and training providers. There was, therefore, some hint that a new paradigm for marketing existed and within this a requirement for a new language for SME marketing. This suggests that vocabulary used is important in this context.

In a later work, the author (Copley, 2000) used other contemporary studies to highlight the idea that traditional textbook marketing is not what occurs in the small firm and that entrepreneurial marketing probably needs further refinement still. It is therefore suggested that marketing planning is rejected on the grounds of it being too complex and should be replaced by a simpler tactically based reaction that suits SME needs. A non-linear view, where hierarchical models are problematical and where the McDonald-style audits are too detailed, is more suitable. The 'drowning in information' argument and the 'be flexible within a planning framework'-type argument, where the SME is interested in processes rather than strategic thought, seems more relevant. SME managers do indeed spend resources on marketing and they do it but call it another name such as networking where word-of-mouth and personal contact are key.

The need for flexible/adaptive marketing approaches, which may be different at different stages of life of the business, is therefore key. There can be formality where informal plans can be thorough but have to secure consistency. The adaptive process begins with a link from core SME philosophy to the narrative i.e. whichever way the manager wishes to tell of (design) the marketing mix (and where the manager may not use such vocabulary) and to surface level tactical elements of the marketing effort such as the Internet.

In a further study by the author (Copley, 2001), an in-depth case of a BtoB SME, the usual use of the 4 Ps as a marketing model was rejected. This SME cited the example of the imposition by larger (and more powerful) supplying manufacturing companies of product concepts that do not fit the market. This SME advocated a more relational approach to these ideas rather than the usual marketing mix approach. The informant actually said 'This is my marketing concept' i.e. that a better relationship with suppliers and customers was warranted and would be beneficial to all concerned and he saw a spectrum from manufacturer to customer with the SME in between. Just why no such relationships had been fostered was because at the (big) supplier end there was a sort of cartel operating but not so much of the...
price rigging kind. The reduction of R&D costs was an obvious area where co-operation was likely so that between the major manufacturers there were relationships. At the same time issues such as ethics, role of the sales force and its closeness to customer pulse, the nature of power in inter-firm marketing and so on were raised. Price was everything and you have to ‘sell a price’. Compromise was expected but not really on the table with large suppliers. In terms of this SME’s own people it tries to instil in them that ‘the mind is like a parachute. It only works when it’s open’. Traditional points like 'don't take criticism personally when selling’ came to the fore but there was clearly a deeper level of concern that a real relationship with suppliers was desirable but difficult to achieve.

We maybe loose sight of the fact that for a lot of SMEs customer dealings are at board level – financial director, managing director – who are interested in payback and the bottom line not the product for its own sake and you have to be able to cope with that. For this BtoB SME informant, the ‘psychology of it all should be taught’ and critical reflection was therefore seen as important but it is not just interpersonal skills. The informant felt that vocational skills are extremely important but this is only part of it, and that technical skills are only part of it. The need for technical know-how and then to be able to communicate it was of greater importance where there is a need to have know-how but also be able to use it in situ. Part of that situation included things such as ethics, power, sexual politics etc. Two schools of customer exist in this SME context. The 'old school' type where a ‘Sir’ approach is necessary and customers have to be treated in a particular way. For example, you do not speak until you are spoken to and position in the company is important. The 'new school' customer has the same thoughts as the SME and has one goal – profitability. Business is conducted on a personal basis and people have to be weighed up. Knowing how to deal with people is vital, how to handle awkward situations and so on. Market trends were stressed as being vital but the flavour of the conversation became more relational and global and an example was extended into this global context by explaining that the product may come from Japan but not direct, the situation often involving the USA. The Americans might not understand the British context as well as might be expected in terms of adopting American techniques that are expected to work elsewhere. The power of the Internet was then emphasised in comparison with conventional advertising and its cost. The big manufactures have an important role to play in facilitation of links.

The points addressed above surely indicate, amongst other things, that vocabulary is an important aspect of the SME marketing context. The danger is that this is either ignored or that such issues are simply slotted by educators/trainers/developers into the existing 4p/RM boxes.

Contextual Marketing – Language
'The cartography of market development - an accent waiting to happen?'

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'Signs are not meaningful in isolation, but only when they are interpreted in relation to each other'. Adapted from Jakobson (1971)

The problem is as I see it this: the word 'marketing'.
During all the in-depth, open ended, phenomenological interviews I've conducted with managers, owner managers and entrepreneurs not one has been able to place the word in a context that has any relevance to accepted epistemology.

Thank goodness (or add any blasphemous marketing expletive of your choice) for that!

Actually perhaps the problem isn't the word marketing as so much the meanings that are associated with it and how these meanings are vocalised (or not) in context. To me the work of Mead (1934) is critical here. During the 20's and 30's Mead worked upon the concept of 'symbolic interactionism' whereby he outlined the idea that it was the understanding of the minutiae of social interaction that held gravitas rather than a study of societies in their totality. In essence it's the difference that makes the difference – the small interpretations count – there maybe more than one lexicon of marketing.

What I have discovered is that there is a definite small firm vernacular for marketing: which might be phrased as 'market development'. This descriptor reflects the 'active' nature of small firms – who are by nature market led. It also acknowledges the fuzzy experiential approach that small firms have to management and the importance of tacit knowledge in business development. However my most recent research suggests that within this area lies a completely new language based upon social interaction within the networks that small firms inhabit. It is this language that now needs to be delineated.

Take for example the concept of marketing planning. In our business schools and MBA lecture rooms we discuss at length the rational and linear approach to this subject. We use words like planning which by definition have a solidity and finality about them. Now take a conversation about marketing planning with the owner of a small firm. Here the tone and content of language is more akin to cartography than architecture and like cartography accepts that the landscape is in constant change. The lexicon is rich with words like 'direction' and 'mapping' coupled to 'action' and 'opportunity' – indeed the linguistic premise is active, participatory and definitely human scale. This is what I have begun to define as the 'action mapping' approach to market development in the small firm sector, the development of these 'action maps' taking place informally within the network of the small firm and communicated through conversation heavy with metaphor.

Another example of the need to redefine the way in which we understand what is happening – or even being said – within the small firm is the variety and non-conformity nee irreverence of moniker for customers. This is definitely a case of fact being stranger than truth even stranger than spoof retail customer typologies (Planet Brown). It appears that 'trade' small firms seek not customers but 'jobs'. Now this has a massive effect on the way in which builders and plumbers and their like market the firm, any communication with customers (sorry but I have builders 'living in' at the moment) utilises a task based language and not the 'solution to a need' Levittian rhetoric. The small firm professions have taken this art to new heights with 'concept' based descriptors – clients for example. But it is retail where the language is most rich. Here we find customers (people we would like to build a relationship with), buyers (people who seek transaction rather than relationship), lookers (fail to make a purchase no matter what), carpet beaters (don’t even look) and touchers (I quite like the sound of those!). One florist I have been researching longitudinally has a blanket descriptor for all shoppers on wet, Welsh, Wednesday afternoons – JP's – no one special just Joe Public!
Compliments paid to academics are few and far between, but I had one a while ago from a small firm I had been assisting. The owner said that he had not come across an academic before that spoke his 'language' and what was more impressive we shared the same 'accent' – that of the small firm (Deacon, 2000; Jones – Evans et. al 2000).

I wonder – can the ability to understand the 'new' language of our discipline be an accent waiting to happen?

REFERENCES

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Contextual Marketing: Language/Vocabulary of the SME Marketer

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When I first began working with SME entrepreneurs/owners/managers in the late 1970s, early eighties, few had any formal knowledge or education about marketing. Yet the successful firms could be observed performing marketing activities. In discussions and conversations with such individuals they would describe their business activities in very much non-marketing terms. Since those far of days many new entrepreneurs/owners/managers(EOMs) have had the benefit of marketing education from a wide variety of providers. Indeed, many of today’s EOMs can be described as being marketing literate in that they can converse in marketing terms gleaned from formal study. However, my original observations still hold. When in conversation with EOMs today, they use vocabulary and language in their everyday business activity which is essentially non-marketing. I will try to illustrate how this is so.

Marketing Language and Terminology

I have found that if I use marketing terminology with EOMs they will respond with using similar terminology. This is a well known phenomenon recorded by Hills and Muzyka (1993) whereby EOMs will respond/reply in the language used by a researcher. However, if I studiously avoid marketing terminology things are often described as being just common sense. Indeed, EOMs will often be disparaging and describe him/her self as, ‘I'm just a
simple person’. This is so, even when quite sophisticated marketing activities can be observed. So if EOMs do not readily use marketing terminology, what do they use?

**Industry Specific Language (Carson and Gilmore 2000)**

Anyone who has taken a new job in a previously unfamiliar environment will recall having to learn the language of the new industry, this even though you were probably employed because of your technical expertise. An example is a friend of mine who had amassed many years experience as a sales and marketing executive in the food distribution industry. He took up a sales and marketing post in the telecommunications industry, specifically in mobile phones and immediately found himself immersed in new terminology inherent in the sales and marketing function.

Another example from my own experience is in the travel and tourism marketing industry. In this industry customers are referred to as clients and more often as family or 2x2 (meaning two adults and two children), or ‘party of 4’. Similarly, Tour Operators and Travel Agents are referred to as TOs and TAs respectively. Familiarisation visits to resorts by travel industry staff are referred to as ‘Fam trips’.

Further, listen to staff in a restaurant, they do not talk about customers or even people. The common language is, ‘table 14 wants a bottle of 22’, (probably a very fine bottle of Rioja Grande Reserva).

**Local and Regional Language**

This aspect is well known. In many European countries a broadly north-south and or east-west variation can often be detected whereby people can find it difficult to understand the dialect never mind the use of specific words. This is similarly so in cities verses rural societies. Expand this phenomenon to any country in the business world and the same variances can be detected. These variances impact upon the local and regional marketing language.

**Marketing Language in Practice**

In a more general sense, marketing practitioners use marketing terminology in a much more focused and perhaps restricted fashion than the full scope of language contained in the formal marketing literature. Some examples:

*Market and Marketing* – Terms which are hardly ever used except in a very general sense when talking to non industry people or addressing a formal forum of some kind. More often sales and selling will be used to describe what is needed or is being done.

*Consumers* – Almost never heard amongst marketing practitioners. Instead they may use ‘our/my customers’ or occasionally ‘the customer..’, although in many SMEs the individual customer’s name is likely to be used. Alternatively and perhaps more commonly, terms as illustrated above and which are industry specific will be used, so ‘our clients’, etc.

*Technical ‘Literature’ Marketing Terms* – Terms such as product portfolio matrix, or product life cycle etc are seldom if ever used.
Marketing as Practised in Context – Even though I have highlighted some examples of marketing type language it is important to be aware that even these terms are not used in isolation from other/any business activity. EOMs tend not to work in ‘functions’ but instead in a holistic business sense, facing problems and issues important to the enterprise. If these happen to be marketing oriented so be it.

So in summary, marketing language in context is just that. It is difficult to remain in context once formal marketing language is used. What has tended to happen, is that academe ‘interprets’ what it sees and recognises as marketing activity into formal marketing language. EOMs nowadays can shrug the shoulders and say, ‘ok that’s what I’m doing’, but the fact remains it is not how they would describe it when doing every day business.

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Contribution to Contextual Marketing: The Language/Vocabulary of Marketing in SMEs

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That the language of marketing in the small business is different to that used in any of the standard marketing texts is not a surprise to any of us that have worked with or researched such enterprises. Approaches will be illustrated by using the ‘voices’ of respondents from seven small companies visited. The companies cover both the manufacturing and service sectors but five are drawn from the former group. They are all less than 15 years old and so provide an opportunity to see how marketing activities are undertaken and described in what could be called established small firms.

In the case of many small companies the decision to enter a market can be purely instinctive. A response to a perceived opportunity in the marketplace without any formal market research as it would be called in our textbooks. The following quotation illustrates this point. ‘I think it’s basically a gut reaction from her’ (the owner). She just says ‘Right, that’s what we need to get into. There are things going on in that market.’ This fashion retail business was built up from a market stall and it still has a straightforward market mentality; ‘You just go for it and worry about it later. We never do any market research, you know.’ This business has all the agility of the alley cat avoiding trouble and it survives. It does make mistakes but then so do businesses which spend thousands of pounds on market research. In their case it was entry into supplying khaki clothing which was a failure as customers primarily saw them as a knitwear supplier.
Some owners claim that their knowledge of the industry was superior to that which any external market research agent could provide. ‘With regard to the leisure industry, they cannot find out more than I already know. It’s a fat lot of good a market research company trying to tell me how to suck eggs. I know where to go to get that [specific information] myself, so I might as well do it and get on with it.’ This ‘do-it-yourself’ approach to marketing in small firms is well documented.

There can be perceived reactivity in the language used to explain their business. For instance one company waits for buyers to come to their London showroom. ‘There is no real drive to get into a market. The markets select themselves, basically. They come in, if they want to buy from us, they can do. We don’t go out, sort of, oh, we want to sell to Austria today.’

Most advertising is restricted to regular or one-off editions of trade publications. The spend, where described, was stated as ‘not very much’, ‘close to zero’ and ‘small’. Other methods used include printed literature, attending trade fairs/exhibitions with some free publicity gained from local press releases. Planning expenditure is low as evidenced by ‘It’s like we need this, [advertising spend] so we’ll do it at the moment.’ There is however an awareness of the need to adapt brochure material to the international market e.g. ‘It’s important to get the ethnic appeal of the particular countries, which is different in Britain, America, France, Germany or Turkey or wherever. You’ve got to look at what the market, the individual market, sees as being acceptable.’

In terms of delivery issues and a reputation for service it is generally recognised that this is important e.g. ‘By and large our everyday delivery is fine. One of the crucial, crucial factors of any production is delivery dates. If you cannot meet delivery dates…you only get one opportunity not to do it and if it happens again, then you lose big accounts.’

Only two of the eight companies talked about having a ‘market-orientation’ based, as they described it, on market knowledge and a willingness to respond to changing customer needs. A further two spoke of being sales-led with (formal) marketing rarely entering their activities. Four of the companies claimed to have progressed from an initial technical/product driven strategy to a naissant state of perhaps being what we could call ‘developing marketers’ in relation to the textbook language. They are beginning to think more about formal market research, spending more on communications but still favour cost-plus pricing and, for those involved, neglect to transfer good marketing practice to their export markets.

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**SME Language/Vocabulary**

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SME owner-managers operate in many different contexts, industries and markets. These different contexts, industries and markets have an impact on the way in which owner-managers communicate with colleagues, competitors, the marketplace and the language that they use. In this way owner-managers have their own *vocabulary*. This of course, means that owner-managers specific, intimate detailed discussions and descriptions of business activity may be difficult to understand for anyone outside that trade or market. This
emphasises the potential difficulties for researchers seeking to fully recognise, explore and understanding SME marketing in different contexts.

At one level language can be very specific to individual owner-managers and how he/she communicates within the company. This use of language can be varied further when used within a particular industry (or trade) and can be varied again when communicating in different geographical regions. The language used gives some insight to an individual owner-managers world-view and the meaning they attach to what they do, when, where and why.

The nature and personality of the owner-manager will have an impact on the actual use of language and this may differ in different contexts. In the context of discussing business activity I have noticed that some owner managers often use very assertive language, sometimes talking about business and business activities in warlike language. Discussions such as this focus on specific business activities and compare them to the nearest competitors activities with an emphasis on how the owner-managers activities intend to or will outshine competitors activities. In the context of company employees owner-managers use this very assertive approach particularly in relation to outlining visions or plans for the future. Some owner-manager’s are very precise in their descriptions of how their business offerings are different and better than their competitors and so emphasise the importance of this activity to their employees and anyone outside the company who is willing to listen. Many of these plans and visions for improving and developing business activities come across as the owner-managers own ideas, even though he may have picked up ideas from other businesses, competitors or from his networking activities.

Different companies, trades or industries will have their own particular language or use of words and so it may take an outsider some time to understand the meanings and nuances in that particular situation. This highlights the importance of exploring and studying such contexts of marketing in an appropriate and meaningful way.

Understanding an SME owner-managers use of words and interpreting them in the correct or relevant context is vital for anyone trying to make some statements or draw some conclusions about them or their business activity. Thus an open, flexible and experiential research approach to studying such complex, dynamic, interaction managerial activity is needed. In such studies the language used by a researcher should deliberately exclude marketing terminology but instead focus on the activities of the owner manager and the words he/she uses to describe their work.

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**SUMMARY**

This paper presents some fascinating insights into understanding of the way SME entrepreneurs, owners, managers use common everyday language in doing business. Each of the authors has emphasized some specific issues of importance which are worth summarising here.

*Enright* emphasised common lexicons in different contexts and illustrated the variances in language between large companies and small firms and called for new research with a different focal point.
Copley illustrates that vocabulary is an important aspect of the SME marketing context. He concludes that there is a danger that this is ignored or that such issues are simply slotted by educators/trainers/developers into the existing 4p/RM boxes.

Deacon places language in fluidity, with its own terminology for marketing activities. He also acknowledges the industry/sector specifics of language.

Carson identifies language variances in both national, regional and local contexts and argues that it is driven by the industry specifics context rather than marketing terminology.

McAuley highlights ‘will do’, ‘do-it-yourself’ action approaches which create a matching language.

Gilmore reflects that business language is ‘warlike’ in its scenario descriptions. She argues the importance of understanding of the language and its uses is vital to understanding SME marketing.

All of these perspectives are interesting, useful and insightful. What is perhaps more insightful is the very strong commonalities pulsing throughout the topic of language and vocabulary. These independent researchers are of course writing here because they have a common awareness, understanding and indeed belief that marketing textbook language and theory is not that which is used in context. However, their experiential knowledge produces very strong themes within their descriptions, both implicitly and explicitly stated.

Several authors refer to a different lexicon/language in different and/or specific contexts. They talk of both simplistic and complex social interactions. There is acknowledgement that marketing is defined in the entrepreneurs/owners/managers own terms and that marketing is not perceived as a meaningful entity in itself. There is also clear indication of a variety of names for the customer but never the use of the moniker of customer.

These authors have also a common belief that educators and indeed marketing theorists need to be aware that everyday language and vocabulary have a hugely strong influence on how marketing is perceived and performed. These authors have such an awareness but recognise that they do not yet have a full understanding of the influences. They do also recognise that much of the ‘establishment’ in marketing academe is blissfully unaware of this importance.