

All that Glitters is not Gold: A Critical Analysis of the Selected Pakistani Print Media Advertisements

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is determined to find out language manipulation in Pakistani media advertisements. It is seen that excessive industrialization and capitalism growth have become the cause of high marketing competition. This marketing competition has forced the industrialists and capitalists to adopt different techniques and strategies in their advertisements in order to achieve hidden motives like culmination, reputation and power, capital growth, and competition. In this way, marketing competition has forced them to shape various discursive strategies to manipulate, tempt and attract consumers and customers towards their certain products. These advertisements and the manipulative agenda in them have been analyzed under discourse analysis. This research is delimited to print media advertisements in the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation only. This research will stand under the umbrella of qualitative approach. The findings of the study were that the advertisers in the mentioned newspapers play with the language of the advertisements. It was found that the consumers are easily manipulated by the advertisements through their magic of linguistic strategies.

Keywords: Advertisements; Customers; Language; Manipulation; Print media

Introduction

It is a known phenomenon for every individual that the basic aim of language is communicative function as well as the exchange of ideas. But modern theorists and language experts contradict this concept and have said that language performs many functions showing for example: significance, ideologies, identities and actions. Similarly, Paul

Gee (2014) has said “In fact saying things in language never goes without also doing things and being things ... These are among the myriad of things we do with language beyond giving and getting information”(p.2). The advertisements, whether portrayed in the newspapers, social media or any television program, stand under the

umbrella of language and are generally associated with the mass media. Discourse analysis is related to the analysis of language in specific context. According to Guy Cook (2001), the main focus in discourse analysis does not always remain on language only, but it goes to probe into the context, society, situation and medium of language. He further says that the main transpiration of advertising goes back to 1950, and 60 and at that time the aim of this new emerged industry was to promote business by ignoring manipulated strategies. In contrast to this, at present and during the previous one and half decade, the difference between the poor and the rich has touched its maximum and this issue has become the part and parcel of present sociopolitical setting in which we are living. In addition to this, many other business strategies are working for the enhancement of rich capitalist approaches and now-a-days, advertising has adopted discursive stance in industrial and business domains due to high marketing competition. In the same way in Pakistan, in advertisements (printed and graphic), language manipulation is discursively exercised and is flourishing day by day to attain and exercise hidden ideologies and power. The role of teacher is to work as social and moral reformer and being in this role demands the knowledge and understanding of this manipulation so that they may transform the society by making the students learn the mechanisms of language through which it works. Davidson (1992) defines

advertising as: “a social language, a genre of spectator/reader experience, a technique of persuasion ... almost a world in its own right, with its own languages, customs and history, and one that sets the tone and pace for large parts of our lives. Advertising is a topic which both causes and reveals existing social divisions”(p.3). Readers may think that key function of advertisements is information, encouragement and persuasion for society to buy the product but it is not so. Cook (2001) has asserted that advertisements: “also amuse, inform, misinform, worry, warn ... though it may be argued that these functions are all in the service of the main function”(p.5). Their basic aim may be communication using vocabulary, images and puns etc. but as Cook (2001) has said, that advertisements are deceitful because it has taken discursive shape and the advertisers send their message encoded which can be decoded and interpreted with the help of critical discourse analysis. The aim of this study is to decode widely spread linguistic advertisement messages in Pakistan and the reason behind capitalism is the neighboring of big capitalist states like Russia and China. This language manipulation will be analyzed by using Thomas Huckin’s (1997) and Cook’s (2001) approaches.

Literature Review

Norman Fairclough(1989) says that there are two ways of exercising and keeping power: coercing people to physical violence and death and winning others

with their consent. Gee (2011) has said that different styles and varieties of language are used by different people for different purposes and such kind of activities are adopted to make different identities in different settings. These identities and activities are developed through other materials that are not language. Fairclough (1989) advocates that there is an unsymmetrical connection between society and language because language is a kind of social practice. Furthermore, CDA should not focus on text production and interpretation but it should also investigate the interrelationship among text production process and its social context. He further said that all the linguistic activities are the part of society but social norms are not happening fully in linguistic phenomenon. According to Tuen van Dijk (1993), CDA is “a shared perspective on doing linguistics, semiotics or discourse analysis” (p.5). Habermas and McCarthy (1977) claim that the use of language reflects the power and social domination and advertisements are also a kind of discourse which also use power abuse, hegemony and discursive agenda for the hidden motives. CDA questions the ongoing process of an event; how the event e.g. bank advertising maintains the present social structure or supposedly changes or revise it (Bloor and Bloor, 2007). Fairclough (1989) recommends that awareness about critical language developed by critical language study must be included as object in language education. He also glimpses that in

advertising, ideological work is made by constructing a subject position for the customers by giving them the title of consumption community members. van Dijk (2006) says that manipulation is known as interactional and linguistic technique which is used to control the society and people against their intentions and benefits by manipulators. Manipulative concept has negative meanings and it is inappropriate practice because social norms are violated by using manipulation. CDA is an approach which is helpful in developing the understanding of society. It not only focuses on the process of societal description but also works for its interpretation and explanation. It is an agenda to describe the social norms and values which are produced in language (Fairclough 1989, 1995; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Generally, popular culture and shared values given in advertisements attract the consumers and customers because living culture presentation is liked by the community and people commonly.

Research Objective

To explore the strategies through which the advertisers tempt the consumers.

Research Question

How do advertisers tempt consumers towards the purchase/utilization of certain products?

Rationale of the Study

The basic aim of language is communication in society but it is also used sometimes to mislead community in encoded way. This language manipulation becomes the cause of

producing, attaining and exercising power and domination. Similarly, in Pakistan the different advertisers are exploiting and manipulating public under the umbrella of persuasive agenda to achieve their hegemony, power, and ideology. Therefore, this research will dig out the way to understand language manipulation of advertisers for power and their complicity with media.

Data Analysis

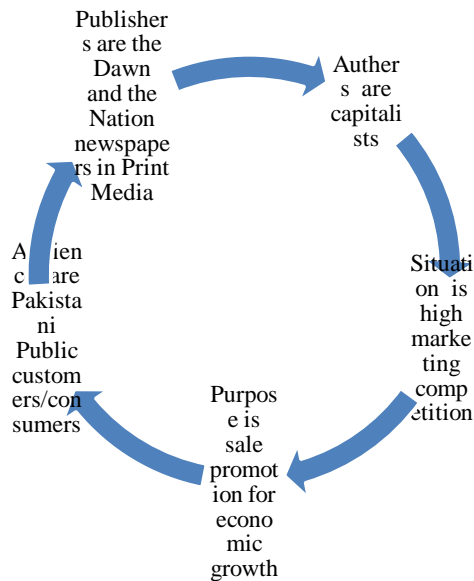
It is confessed by the Huckin (1997) that for text analysis in critical domain, there is no specific approach although he emphasizes that one should be determined to be worthwhile in his job. He says that text should be read as common reader for doing analysis and it is the way of studying text uncritically; after that re-examine the text with a critical methodology at various levels to conclude as whole; then view at the level of sentence; and finally at phrasal and word level. Similarly, Cook (2001) has introduced three parts analysis e.g. material text and people for advertisement critical inquiry. These two approaches are amalgamated for the purpose of this research as a triangulation in order to avoid biasness and better analysis.

Genre

Cook (2001) explains that genre is a class of communication events which shares some set of communicative purposes. Richard and Schmidt (2013) describe genre as a shape of discourse with exceptional and peculiar actions of communications and that have typical and identifiable rules and

arrangements. Paltridge (2006) says that it is a type of text and he further clarifies that critical discourse analysis starts with the indication that what type of genre is there in the specific text. Then, it examines that how for the norms of the genre have been applied by the writer to produce effects on the readers. Huckin (1997) propagates further that the knowledge of the genre also helps understand as what has been excluded and included in the text. He also elucidates that it explains the purpose of omission and addition of the text.

But how is particular text is associated with particular genre? In this sense, various factors discussed by Paltridge (2006) are very useful for the decision. He says that author of the text, situation, purpose and audience are helpful in this sense. Fairclough (1989) says that consumption communities are indirectly developed by advertising and consumerism is the possession of advanced capitalist stance which throws light on ideological assumption from economic production to economic consumption. Similarly, in Pakistan, capitalism is transforming from production to consumption due to the high competition and they are dependent on the advertising agenda in order to promote their business. The capitalists are therefore, trying to be unique by creating an unparalleled situation in their advertisements. The whole situation of this research is highlighted in a cycle.



Framing

According to Huckin(1997), backgrounding, framing and foregrounding are very narrowly associated with each other. They also relate to the viewpoints as how the writer wants to display the parts of text and what kind of opinions are signified and minimized in the piece of writings. Fairclough(1995) elucidates that framing is the way towards intentional manipulation. In the advertisements from both newspapers ‘The Dawn’ and ‘The Nation’, renowned personalities are framed for the product publicity. In the same way, important personalities are quoted for proving the product authenticity and senders of advertisements are trying to convince consumers towards the purchase by exemplifying these personalities. In this sense Esha Gupta, Nicole Kidman, Adnan Siddiqui, Younas Khan, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, Syed Qaim Ali Shah

and Kareena Kapoor are enough for the hood wink of the customers. There are many attractive and seducing quotes which are also attracting the customers towards products and beautiful and colorful sceneries and images are displayed in so artistic manners at the background that by putting the essential glance towards them, it seems the dire need of the consumers. In various advertisements, it is tried to abuse the social power for the sale promotion for example: Defense Housing Authority, school discount offer, Wi-Fi in air travelling, strongest bank in 2015, 1 crore is now 25 crore, Askari Bank Limited, Nestle Pure Life and Eden Life Housing Scheme etc.

Presupposition

Huckin(1997) has asserted that presupposition is a linguistic device which is used at phrase and words level for the manipulation of readers. George Yule(1996) defines it as “something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance” (p. 25) and Huckin(1997) explains it as the use of language in such artistic manners that the positive ideas have been completed. Presuppositions are used by the authors to dominate the audiences for the sake of manipulation. Similarly, they are used in advertisements in the shape of phrases for convincing the readers/audiences towards products. A few excellent illustration from the selected newspapers are:

- Permanent hair colour cream - Colour your life
- Silsalynaikhushion kay

Your residence among falcons
Where Younas Khan comes first
Come, live and dream
etc.

Nonetheless, almost in all the advertisements the authors of advertisements presuppose that the readers/audiences have the complete knowledge of the products and the given essential information and illustrations will likely bring about the sale promotion.

Agency

It is an entity that is used to perform an action. Huckin(1997) says that semantic agent is known as more powerful than agent and repetition of agent in the text favors the agent status. Similarly, in the selected advertisements, the agency is so powerful that capitalists can easily manipulate the consumers with the help of it only.

Topicalization

At the start of the sentence position of the sentence element which makes its own eminence is known as topicalization(Huckin, 1997).In the selected advertisements almost in all advertisements topicalization is so highlighted that the remarks of the sender of the products looks real and original .So in the advertisements it is tried by the capitalists to persuade and manipulate the consumers by using this linguistics device. For example: Colour your life, Silsilaynaikhushion kay, Your residence among falcons, Where Younas Khan comes first,Health care packing products, and School discount offer.

Use of Simple Words and Structure

In the selected advertisements, simple words and structures have been used so that the intended message may be read and grasped easily.The use of noun like falcons, eden life, and YounasKhan connate that how the capitalist class is determined towards its hidden motives in the coverage of language manipulation.The use of the adjective ‘strongest’ in superlative form conveys the greatest persuasion to the customers. The use of number ‘1’ refers a greatest achievement of life and these words provide an easy access to get the attention of customers easily, so as not to make huge effort to remember the concept.Phrases, instead of complete sentences are used to convoy the message because long sentences do not attract customers and make them bored soon. Short phrases and sentences are easily read and memorized.

Use of Simple Sentences

To convey meanings clearly and simply, simple sentences are used to avoid vagueness or obscurity for example the use of phrases like ‘Win’,‘Where Younas Khan comes first’, ‘Literate Pakistan’ and ‘Progress Pakistan’.

Medium of Advertisements

The term medium refers to the means of communication and all the advertisements selected in this thesis are taken from Pakistani Newspapers. So the medium of advertisements in this thesis is print media.

Types of Advertisements

According to Cook(2001), there are two types of advertising: products and non-

products. Twenty-four advertisements taken in this research are product advertisements and one of them i.e. Sindh Government advertising is non-product advertisement but among product advertisements 'MCB Bank', 'For life is wrapped in pink ribbon', and 'Breast Cancer hospital' are included.

Context of Advertisements

According to the selected advertising stance, it can be argued that marketing and business competition is growing day-by-day in Pakistan and strata of business, working, and political class look unsatisfied from their performance and are ambitious to consume more economy to gain money, reputation through their working agenda and finally to produce, attain, retain and sustain power through their advertising ideology.

Society and Situation in Advertisements

In Pakistan, three types of classes exist: lower-middle class, middle class and upper/elite class. The class of the people which is financially at the top most position, is anxious to retain its identity in its respective position and wants to be a superior one in the society for ever. Second class of the people are those who are the holder of the mediocre financial level and try to attain their unique position in the society so that they may be the superior and well reputed people in the society. These people use all their efforts, means, and resources etc. to enhance their financial level and to compete the first category of the

people. The third class of the people is those who are financially miserable and are marginalized by rest of the two classes of the society. Such people stand in the deep and dark well of poverty and it is often too difficult for them to develop themselves but it does exist as well-recognized and exclusive community of the society to retain their distinctiveness.

As shown in Advertisement of 'UBL', it manipulates that the competition of the private banking in the country is too unsympathetic; United Bank of Pakistan is extracting the identity/fame of the great cricket test player Younas Khan only. The stake holders are trying to magnetize the society by evoking the people that such a magnificent celebrity as Younas Khan is the ingredient of their commerce. The said action by the UBL is only to prove the upper class in the society in such muscular opposition. This action will enhance the concentration of the society and will improve the banking/business intensity. Similarly, in the advertisement of a Chocolate Party 'MAGNUM', they are enchanting the safe haven of the prominence of Karina Kapoor (An Indian Actress). In the contest of Chocolate collection and to be a part of the MAGNUM Chocolate Party, they manipulate the joining of great actress Karina Kapoor in an elegant fashion/way, like the flavor of the MAGNUM Chocolate to draw the attention of the society to be the part of their production. In this advertisement, the MAGNUM Chocolate Party

manipulates the presence well-recognized and heart touching personality of the society to augment their level of fame and to retain their identity in the society in an intricate way.

As discussed above, in the advertisement of the 'SINDH BANK', the stake holders again use the portrayal of the enormous politician of Pakistan People's Party i.e. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto in their poster to attract the people's attention. They try to cast the reputation of Ms. Bhutto to settle in the race of private banking system of the society. If they do not exploit this ideology, their competition with other banks in Pakistani society in general and Sindh in particular might be in a risk.

So, to retain or to enhance their ideology, all the companies, industries, and societies need a strong and powerful reference of either a star or hero (related to politics, education, sports, Hollywood, and showbiz etc.). By doing this, they might be able to thrust the lower and average classes in the race of the elite class of the society, through supposedly telling them the benefits of their business in one way or the other.

Parasitic Discourse

Simply, the discourse of advertising explores the language of current advertisements where the discourse seems parasitic as it becomes communication and trade link between two or more groups of societies which may or may not interlink each other but do promote their interests on behalf of each other's amenities. Such

communications, publicities and announcements are vital for the valuable communications among all groups/companies which increase their economic as well as social moral to cope with the aristocratic class of the society. For example, print media and the advertising company i.e. Chocolate Party 'MAGNUM' is the parasitic discourse for each other because they are directly linked with each other. When the advertising company advertises something, it is directly advantageous for the company to explore their production in a good manner which ultimately increases the transaction and consumers of that company leading to high profile economic growth. In the same way, the print media is depending upon the frequency of advertisements which manipulates the local/foreign information related to the social, political, moral, and educational aspects of life.

Paralinguistic Features and Music

In communication, the words of advertisements are not remote but are merged with music pictures and other texts around them. However, in case of the descriptive and expressive methods in the above report, it does not contain any video or music link so this discussion is limited to pictures, and texts etc. taken from the print media advertisements. The element of music is discarded but paralinguistic features are used by the senders of advertisements for the promotion of sale and according

to Cook (2001), the description of paralinguistic features is as following:

Verbal Behavior	Paralinguistic Behavior	Overall Effects
+	+	+
+	-	-
-	+	+
-	-	-

Use of Pun

It is seen in the selected advertisements that puns are used to attract the consumers e.g. 'colours your life', 'silsalnaikhushion kay', 'apni car chalanykamaza hikuchaurhy', and 'Eden life' etc.

Findings and Conclusion

In the light of above discussion on the study of twenty five advertisements, it is likely to sum up that language manipulation is visible in the print media advertisements for capitalists' sale promotion, materialism growth and high economic competition. In this fast economic growth when the interest of capitalists and businessmen does not cooperate with the interest of consumers or they cannot succeed to persuade the customers towards certain products, then they decide to adopt the routes of manipulation under certain devices like linguistic strategies, power, hegemony and ideology etc. These capitalists also try to manipulate the public to mix consumerism needs with marketing techniques. They use controversial marketing techniques so that advertisers may achieve the goal and consumers can be trapped in sale promotions net. The

critics of advertising say that the advertisements have negative impacts on community mutual affection and financial effects. In addition to this, advertising is the cause of promotion for obscenity in the country that was created only in the name of Islam. Furthermore, it also declines the inner power of individuals for the open choice if the product is good or average!

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