



Analyzing the Advertising Discourse- *A Journey from Sight to Mind*

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Abstract

This research paper sets out to project an in-depth study of the advertising discourse by applying methodological approaches of Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to the chosen “advertisements”. It aims at examining the ‘power relations and struggles’ among product-producers and product-consumers, to gauge the level of psychological dominance exercised through the advertising discourse. The study, fundamentally, presents a counter-analysis of ‘advertising strategies’, as to how far they *influence* the consumers’ attitudes and to what extent the consumers *direct* their ‘discourse’. In other words, this research attempts to answer the question: ‘who turns out to be more powerful by *controlling the other’s mind*, in advertiser-consumer relationship?’, whether it is the consumer who shapes the discourse of advertisements through their demands, or the advertiser who affects the consumers’ beliefs through their ‘discourse’! Thus, the current paper presents a comprehensive review of the relevant literature leading towards a theoretical framework of preferred DA and CDA approaches to be further *applied* on the discourse of advertisements. And towards the end, it states the final remarks concluding the entire discussion and reflecting upon the effectiveness of Critical Discourse Analysis in its application on the advertising phenomena.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, Advertising discourse, Producer-consumer power relations, Critical discourse analysis of chosen advertisements

1. Introduction

A disciplined, goal-oriented field that tries to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time, *advertising*, makes ideas creative with the help of three characteristics which are socially-governed: relevance, originality and impact. (Wills, Burnett & Moriarty 1995:422)

To ask “what is an advertisement?” is parallel to hit a question on the working of a society or the process of life itself, for the phenomena of advertising is highly familiar to the modern man that a question about its nature sounds to be out of question in today’s world. However, in spite of its being all around us, or perhaps *because* it is all around us, we do not take time out to think about its function as a form of *discourse* and as a system of language use. In fact, a huge number of readers and viewers are *implicitly* involved in a distant communication with the advertisers, on daily basis.

When it comes to visual discourse, the term “text” gets a multidimensional use including images, colors, artifacts and verbal behaviour. “At the root of the word ‘advertisement’ is the Latin word ‘advertere’, meaning ‘to turn towards’”, says Goddard (1998:6). However, everything we turn towards can not be called an advertisement. That’s why, assigning classifications to the texts in advertising is even more complex in nature, for it depends upon the role they play in a particular *context* with a specific *intention*—why they appear and where they are used.

Central to our idea of an advert appears to be the factor of conscious intention behind the text, with the aim of benefiting the originator materially or through some other less tangible gain, such as enhancement of status or image. (Goddard 1998:7)

Texts do not neatly fall into categories according to the purpose or intention behind them. For instance, the texts of advertisements can not simply be termed ‘informative’ or ‘persuasive’ as there are multiple factors functioning in variant combinations behind it. So, in order to analyze the multidimensional discourse of advertisements, an eclectic approach such as Critical discourse Analysis can be applied for the achievement of well-integrated results.

2. Objectives

The major objectives of this research are to:

1. Investigate the intentions, techniques and discursive strategies of the advertisers (Producers).
2. Trace out the influence of the advertising discourse on the consumers’ mind (Receivers).
3. Analyze the process of production and reception of an advertising discourse in a particular context and society (Social Practices).

3. Literature Review

This section of the research paper reviews pertinent literature on the field of advertising as well as general principles of CDA, outlining the research approaches of Fairclough and Wodak (1997). Moreover, it presents a critique of the CDA approach in order to further establish a theoretical framework to be applied on discourse of advertisements.

3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

A discipline that views discourse as constituting social practice and at the same time being constituted by it (Wodak 1999:7)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a rapidly developing area of Applied Linguistics. It regards discourse as ‘a form of social practice’ (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p.258), and considers the context of language use to be crucial to discourse (Wodak, 2001). It attempts at tracing out the relationship between language and power. CDA may be described as an approach claiming that “social practices”, cultural and economic dimensions are significant in the creation and maintenance of power relations in discourse. The key figures in this area include Fairclough, Halliday, Foucault, Van Dijk and Wodak. It is generally agreed that CDA cannot be classified as a single method but is rather viewed as an approach consisting of different perspectives and various methods for studying the relationship between the use of language and social context as to how discursive power can be exercised in order to control the ‘mind’. As Fairclough (1989) calls it “...a particular form of social practice, in the center of which power and ideology mutually influence and interact with one another”. (p. 42)

3.2 Discourse of TV, Print and Web advertisements

Conventional advertising, mainly TV-commercials and print ads, still dominates today’s advertising market. However, a variety of new advertising formats is emerging. A modern trend in the advertising scenario is the discourse of Web advertisements. Internet is the latest developed electronic mass medium of the 20th century. With its globally operating network and multimedia functions, this new communication tool is gradually capturing the discourse of advertisers and becoming one of the largest advertising medium. Some of the researchers, such as Leong (1998), believe it to be a “threat” to the other mediums.

The phenomenal growth of consumers and businesses connected to the Internet indicate a viable audience for advertising and promotional messages for many companies, being a threat for other mediums of advertisement. (Leong, 1998:47)

3.3 Analysis of Advertising Discourse

Discourse analysis emphasizes language as a tool that constructs texts and talk. It does not only analyze the text itself but also the processes that govern its production and reception, from producers to the target audience. Rather than using language to imply the presence of underlying psychological constructs, it focuses on how people *use* language to express their inner-self and state of mind. The discourse analysts are more concerned with studying what people are *doing* while talking than what they are *saying* in their talk.

By using discourse analysis as a means of examining the social processes that create ads, advertising techniques and discursive strategies, an in-depth analysis of the advertising *discourse* can be conducted. The study of social processes of a discourse is dealt under a contemporary approach of Discourse Analysis (DA) which is called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

3.4 Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis

Many theorists in CDA present its general principles in their own terms. Some of them represent the common ground of all CDA approaches, while some take a separate route for each approach. The most widely cited view is Fairclough and Wodak’s (1997) principles of CDA which are listed below:

1. Social Problems: “CDA follows a critical approach to social problems in its endeavours to make explicit power relationships which are frequently hidden.”
2. “Power relations are discursive”, that CDA explains how social relations of power are exercised and negotiated in and through discourse.
3. “Discourse constitutes society and culture.”
4. “Discourse causes ideological change”, that ideologies are often produced or changed through discourse.
5. “Discourse is history”, that discourses can only be understood with reference to their historical context.
6. “The link between text and society is mediated.”
7. “CDA goes beyond textual analysis. It is not only interpretative, but also explanatory in intent.”

Discourse from the point of view of CDA, then, is a form of social action. The *principal aim of CDA* is to uncover opaqueness and power relationships. CDA is a socially committed scientific paradigm. It attempts to bring about change in communicative and socio-political practices. (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997:265).

3.5 Criticism on the CDA Paradigm

Discourse is “in vogue and vague”. (Widdowson, 1995:158)

Critical Discourse Analysis, being a relatively new theory in the science of language, seems to lack some clear conceptual outlines of its approach, which generates a lot of criticism on CDA paradigm.

Schegloff in his article entitled, 'Whose text? Whose context?' (Schegloff, 1997) argues that CDA is often lacks in detailed, systematic analysis of text or talk, for instance as it is carried out in conversation analysis. He writes:

I understand that critical discourse analysts have a different project, and are addressed to different issues, and not to the local co-construction of interaction. If, however, they mean the issues of power, domination, and the like to connect up with discursive material, it should be a serious rendering of that material...Otherwise the critical analysis will not 'bind' to the data, and risks ending up merely ideological. (Schegloff, 1997:20)

Widdowson (1995) advocates, in his debate on critical discourse analysis, that CDA is contradictory in itself as at one hand it uses the term "critical" for the process of analysis which involves *subjectivity* whereas, on the other hand, propagates *objective* interpretation of the discourse. That's why; he states that the term 'discourse' as it is used in CDA is as vague as it is in vogue. "Discourse is something everybody is talking about but without knowing with any certainty just what it is: in vogue and vague". (Widdowson, 1995:158)

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1 Selected Theories and Approaches to 'Discourse Analysis (DA)'

This section aims at sketching an overview of the theories and approaches that are selected for their application on the chosen pieces of advertising discourse. These approaches have been extracted from both DA and CDA disciplines of Applied Linguistics.

4.1.1 Speech Act Theory

"Actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts". (Yule 1996:47)

4.1.1.1 Background:

The Speech Act Theory was first presented by a prominent linguist and philosopher John Austin in his book entitled "How to Do Things with Words" which was published in 1962. Austin's theory held that language can be used not just for *describing* the thoughts and beliefs, but also for *performing* different acts and the acts that we perform through language are called "Speech acts". The theory was further developed and organized by another philosopher, John Searle, in 1975.

4.1.1.2 Three-fold nature of a Speech Act

The Speech act theory suggests that any speech act can be divided into three layers which are the three major components of speech acts.

Locutionary Act: The act of saying. (A meaningful utterance)

Illocutionary Act: What one does in saying it. (Speaker's intention)

Perlocutionary Act: What one does by saying it. (Effect upon the listener)

4.1.1.3 Types of Speech Acts

Austin and Searle presented different classifications of the speech acts yet being the same in nature. According to **Austin's approach**, speech acts can be divided into two broad classes:

- **Constatives:** These are the utterances that include assertions or statements which may be true or false. All the utterances which are not performatives/ declarations are called constatives.
- **Performatives/Declarations:** These utterances do not report or describe, are not true or false, and they perform an action which changes the state of affairs in the World. For instance:
 - I sentence you to death
 - I pronounce that they may be Man and Wife.

According to **Searle's approach**, speech acts can be classified into five categories:

- **Directives:** speech acts that cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. requests, commands and advice
- **Assertives/ Representatives:** speech acts that represent the speaker's belief about the truth of a proposition, e.g. assertion, claim, conclusion
- **Commissives:** speech acts that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. promises and oaths, offers
- **Expressives:** speech acts that express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, e.g. congratulations, apology and thanks
- **Declarations:** speech acts that change the reality according to the proposition of the declaration, e.g. baptisms, court-decisions, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife

4.1.1.4 Structural Classification of Speech Acts

Structurally speech acts can be divided into:

- **Direct Speech Acts:**

In direct speech acts there is a direct relationship between *structure* and *function* of the sentence.

- **Indirect Speech Acts:**

In indirect speech acts there is an indirect relationship between *structure* and *function* of the sentence.

4.2 Selected Theories and Approaches to 'Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)'

4.2.1 Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

One of the most renowned critical discourse analysts, Norman Fairclough, presented a three-dimensional model of CDA in his work "Language and Power" which was published in 1989. This model is supposed to be an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse, for it views 'language as a form of social practice' (Fairclough 1989: 20) and focuses on the ways social and political dominance is exercised in discourse by 'text and talk'. Moreover, the three-dimensional model highlights processes of the production and reception of a 'discourse fragment' in a particular context.

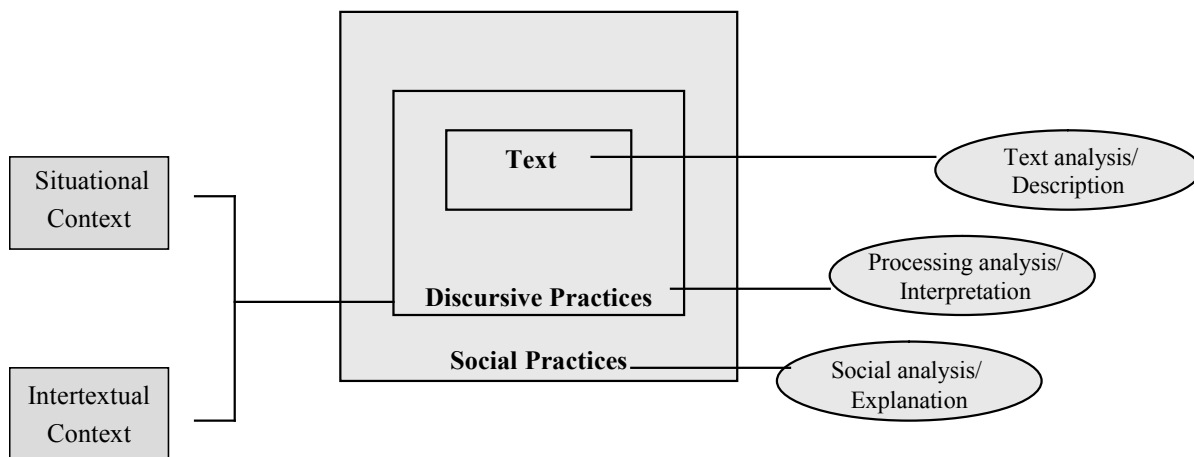


Figure 1: Fairclough's three dimensions to discourse

According to his three-dimensional model, Fairclough identifies three dimensions to Critical Discourse Analysis. The **first dimension** represents the discourse fragment, a "Text" that could be any object of analysis, including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts. The **second dimension** of 'discursive practices' can be described in terms production and reception of a 'text' in a particular 'context'. The context is 'situational as well as intertextual'. **Situational** context deals with the time and place of text production whereas **intertextual** context is related to the producers and receivers of the discourse. The **third dimension** of discourse could be described as 'power behind discourse' or as 'social practices' functioning behind the entire process and governing the power relations in discourse.

Among the three dimensions of Fairclough's model, each dimension requires a different type of analysis: for the first dimension 'text analysis' or description, for the second dimension 'processing analysis' or interpretation, and for the third dimension it is the 'social analysis' or explanation. All dimensions are inter-dependent and therefore it does not matter with which kind of analysis one begins with as they are "mutually explanatory" (Janks 1997: 27).

4.2.2 Power and Discourse

To explain the relation between power and discourse Fairclough presented another approach in "Language and Power" (1989:43-76), where he distinguishes between 'power *in* discourse' and 'power *behind* discourse'. Power *in* discourse as a form of social practice is exercised through *language* in various ways, for example in face-to-face encounters or in the discourse of the mass media. Whereas power *behind* discourse describes the formation of power relations as to which social bodies, organizations and institutions form the power relationships behind discourse. "Power is never definitively held by any one person, or social grouping, because power can be won and exercised only in and through *social struggles* in which it may also be lost", states Fairclough (1989, p. 43).

4.2.3 Three Agents of Discourse

In order to further exemplify his concept of *power in and behind discourse*, Fairclough states that any discursive practice involves three agents in its production:

- i. **Situational Agent**
- ii. **Institutional Agent**
- iii. **Societal Agent**

He suggests that "any given piece of discourse may simultaneously be a part of a situational struggle, an institutional

struggle, and a societal struggle” (Fairclough 1989: 70). In relations to power and discourse this means that struggle at the *situational* level could be seen as making efforts to gain ‘power *in* discourse’ whereas the *institutional* and the *societal* struggles could be described as ‘power *behind* discourse’.

We might say that, in terms of ‘power in discourse’, discourse is the site of power struggles, and, in terms of ‘power behind discourse’, it is the stake in power struggles, for control over orders of discourse is a powerful mechanism for sustaining power. (Fairclough 1989: 74).

5. Analysis

5.1 Application of (above discussed) ‘DA’ Approaches to the chosen advertisements

This section of the research paper is developed on practical grounds of theoretical application. The pieces of discourse under analysis are all television commercials (electronic advertisements) taken from different cultures and TV channels. These advertisements would be critically analyzed applying the selected approaches to discourse which are outlined in the preceding section.

5.1.1 Application of Speech Act Theory

“Here for Good”

Standard Chartered Advertisement

(Transcript attached in appendix I)

5.1.2 Profile of the advertisement:

This advertisement has been taken from Geo TV Pakistan. The commercial was released on January 3rd, 2010. An analysis of the chosen discourse under Speech Act theory is as follows:

5.1.3 Three Major Components of a Speech Act:

Tracing out the three components of Speech Act is this particular piece of discourse:

- **Locution** involves all the linguistic elements used in this advertisement. These linguistic items are the *utterances* that contain a *meaningful* effect in their production.
- **Illocution**, in the discourse under discussion, is the *communicative intent* of the advertiser that is to persuade the consumers in such a way that they would make Standard Chartered their choice.
- **Perlocution** is the degree of influence that the advertiser could have upon the viewers. If the meaningful utterances (locutionary act) in the advertisement generate a strong effect upon the listeners/viewers controlling their minds and actions, then *the perlocutionary aim* of the advertiser is achieved.

(These elements have been given an illustrative treatment under 5.1.4 and 5.1.5)

As speech act is a “thing” to be done through “words”, so the speech act being performed in this piece of discourse is that of the speaker’s/advertiser’s *communicative intent*, the illocutionary act, which is *persuasion*.

5.1.4 Types of Speech Acts

5.1.4.1 Austin’s Approach:

As mentioned earlier, **Constatives**, according to Austin’s approach, are the utterances that include assertions or statements which might be true or false, that’s why, the utterances produced in this advert would be placed under the category of **constatives**, for they can be judged for ‘truth value’.

5.1.4.2 Searle’s Approach:

According to Searle’s classification of speech acts, this discourse would falls under the class of **commissives**. As commissives are the utterances which commit the speaker to some future action, so the claims made in the advertisement are a kind of commissive speech act being performed by the advertiser. Such as claiming:

To be here for People

Here for Progress

Here for the Long Run

Here for Good!

5.1.5 Structural Classification of Speech Acts:

Classifying the speech act performed in the chosen discourse in terms of structure, it could be called an **indirect speech act** which exhibits an indirect relationship between the linguistic form and the function of the utterance.

5.1.5.1 Linguistic Form:

The structure or the linguistic form of this advertisement is that of interrogative utterances. As demonstrated below:

Can a Bank really stand for something?

Can it balance its ambition with its Conscience to do what it must not what it can?

Can it not only look at the profit it makes but that how it makes it makes that profit and stand beside people not above them?

Where every solution depends on each person, simply by doing good, can a bank in fact be great?

5.1.5.2 Communicative Function:

The communicative function being performed by “text and talk” in the advert is that of persuasion, as the advertiser aims at influencing the opinions and ideologies of the consumers.

5.1.5.3 Form-Function Mismatch:

Thus, the linguistic structure and communicative function do not coincide in the chosen discourse, for the interrogation does not require a response from the viewers, rather it aims at questioning the nature and performance of a ‘bank’ in general.

5.2 Application of (above discussed) ‘CDA’ Approaches to the chosen advertisements

5.2.1 Fairclough’s Three Dimensional Model

“Real Women, Real Beauty” Dove Advertisement (Transcript attached in appendix II)

5.2.1.2 Profile of the advertisement:

The Dove accessories advertisement was designed and released by Indian advertising media in June 2005. The beauty products being advertised through this discourse were launched in March 2005 by Unilever Group of Industries. This piece of advertising discourse has been chosen to be analyzed under Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis.

5.2.1.3 First Dimension: Text Analysis – Description:

The first dimension of Fairclough’s model refers to the description of discourse fragment, a “text”. When it comes to a TV commercial, the term “text” does not only point towards an analysis of ‘linguistic units’, but the entire audio-visual discourse including moving images, sounds, color, signs, characters and the social roles or role models being represented in the advertisement.

- **Real Women**

The video clip (appendix V) shows only female characters that are called “real women”, for they do not look like typical models in beauty advertisements (thin, young with haircuts and loud make-up). Belonging to different backgrounds and age groups, they all have got diverse physical features and outlooks.

- **Social Roles**

The women appearing in the advertisement are all performing different roles in society, which they are fully happy and contented with. They seem to embrace life and accept their honorable social role with pride whether it is the role of a “Grandma, ma, sister, soul sister, class mate, room mate, teacher or mentor”. A move from “grandma” to “ma” and “sister” indicates *generation gap* highlighting a sense of *timelessness* in their beauty that no matter how old they grow “dove keeps them beautiful”.

- **Purity**

Projecting clear and plain images of simply “real women”, the advertisement denotes the element of purity in the natural and realistic appearance of these role models. As it says “meet the real celebrities”, advocating that a natural and real look always ensures greater beauty and purity.

- **Balance between Modernity and Simplicity**

The message in this discourse draws a balance between modernity and simplicity of these women. They appear to be simple and traditional women being, simultaneously, modern and progressive in their style and attitude. Coming down to a “class mate” and “room mate” from “grandma” and “ma”, the visual signifies a shift from simplicity to modernity yet sharing the same level of confidence.

- **Gender Discourse**

This piece of discourse could be called gender biased as well, for it presents all the female characters, associating “beauty” with “women” only. Moreover, the reaction and reinforcement of the product is required from the female community only; men are not needed to support the product or admire the advertisement.

- **The Advertising Technique**

The advertising technique to make this commercial more effective is its relatively unorthodox way to advertise the product, in contrast to most of the current beauty advertisements it does neither show professional models nor gives any

information about the benefits customers could gain from the use of the Dove accessories. On the contrary, the message of the discourse could be summarized saying '*stay as beautiful as you already are*'.

Moreover, its natural and real setting aims at appealing a wide range of female viewers as they can *relate* themselves to at least one of these role models.

5.2.1.4 Second Dimension: Processing Analysis — Interpretation:

The second dimension of Fairclough's model would place emphasis on the process of production and reception of this advertising discourse in a particular *context*. The two types of contexts under this dimension are discussed below with regard to the chosen discourse.

(A) Situational Context:

This context deals with time and place of the "text" production. That's why, there are *three elements* involved when the text is a visual discourse fragment: agent, scripter and actors/characters.

- **Agent** is the entity whose intent the message represents, the *producer* of the product, who in this discourse is the "Unilever Group of Industries".
- **Scripter** is the entity who designs the form or content of the message. With reference to the discourse under discussion, scripter would be the *designer* of the advertisement that is Indian ads agency.
- **Actor** is the entity who physically delivers the message, such as the "Real Women" in this TV commercial.

As far as the *time* of production is concerned, the product was launched and advertised in 2005.

(B) Intertextual Context:

Intertextual context underlines the relationship between "text"/discourse and its producers as well as receivers.

• **Product-Producer Relationship**

Tracing out the product-producer relationship in this advertisement, one needs to throw some light on Silvia Lagnado, the director Dove brand. She has been leading a "Campaign for Real Beauty" since 1991. The objective of the campaign was to fight unrealistic ideals of beauty. As they express their goal stating "Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the Foundation of Beauty Beliefs". Talking about change in *ideology* of preference for "unrealistic beauty" and rebuilding a new belief in "real beauty", underscores the *power* which is being exercised through discourse of advertisement.

• **Product-Consumer Relationship**

Since the consumers or target audience here is the female community, their relation to the product can be described in terms of their purpose of using it. The purpose behind its use is not only to look good but to strengthen their self-esteem and generate confidence.

5.2.1.5 Third dimension: Social analysis – Explanation

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, third dimension of the Fairclough model refers to the societal bodies, institutions, organizations and cultural norms that govern the process of "text" production.

In the advert under analysis these "social practices" or factors behind discourse can be enlisted as:

- Beauty Product **Industry**–*Unilever Group*
- The **Brand**– *Dove*
- Indian **Media**– *Ads Agencies*
- The feminist "**Campaign** for Real Beauty"
- The socio-cultural **roles** being occupied by the "real women"

Thus, after an in-depth analysis of a discourse under Fairclough's three-dimensional model, this could be agreed on that all the three dimensions are inter-dependent as any one of them can not possibly be segregated from the other two for an individual analysis. This interconnection of social and discursive factors stems from Fairclough's *interdisciplinary* approach towards research. He tends to draw a connection between various disciplines and the theme of research because to him "language is a form of social practice" (Fairclough 1989: 20).

In the interconnections of three dimensions the analyst finds interesting patterns and disjunctions that need to be described, interpreted and explained mutually. (Janks 1997: 26)

5.2.2 Power and Discourse--Three agents involved:

Two advertising discourses would be analyzed under this approach.

5.2.2.1 Analysis (a):

"That's the power of human expression"
Airtel Express Yourself Advertisement
(Transcript attached in appendix III)

5.2.2.1.1 Profile of the advertisement:

This discourse is designed to advertise India's most popular broadband company "AIRTEL". The advert was released in 2007 by the Indian ads agencies on various television channels of the country and across the boundaries. An analysis of the discourse under Fairclough's CDA approach of "Power and Discourse" is conducted below:

As discussed earlier, this approach views two dimensions of any discursive character of *power*:

5.2.2.1.2 Power *in* Discourse:

Power in discourse is being exercised through the use of *rhetoric* and sentimental utterances in the advertisement. For example:

A whisper can inspire hope.

A touch can instill faith.

Because "*That's the power of human expression*", these utterances are meant to communicate a message of unity and companionship which can be achieved through "human expression", dissolving all kinds of boundaries, hurdles and chaos only if you could *speak*. Just as "*two words*" have the power to "bring down an empire".

5.2.2.1.3 Situational Agent (*Power in Discourse*)

Fairclough states that situational agent involved in any discursive practice refers to 'power *in* discourse', because it deals with the present context or situation in which the discourse works. So, in the chosen advert, this situational agent includes all those different scenarios which are visualized, such as a "setting of war-times", "the world of music/art", "a sports platform" and a "spiritual and domestic set-up".

5.2.2.1.4 Power *behind* Discourse:

Talking about 'power behind discourse', one needs to deal with the social bodies functioning *behind* the scene in order to form and control the power relations in discourse. Fairclough calls these social bodies 'institutional and societal agents' which make a piece of discourse work in society.

5.2.2.1.5 Institutional and Societal Agents (*Power behind Discourse*)

Institutional and societal agents work as 'power behind discourse', activating the process of "text" production and reception. These agents involve all the social organizations and institutions, standards and norms that govern the function of power *behind* discourse fragment.

In this advertisement, power behind discourse is being applied by the following networks:

- Airtel Broadband
- Media
- Advertising Industry
- The renowned personalities shown in the video
- Culture ("music"), Politics ("war", "empire", "dream", "Revolution") and Religion ("a whisper can inspire hope")

5.2.2.2 Analysis (b):

Obama'08

BarackObama.com

Advertisement

(Transcript attached in appendix IV)

5.2.2.2.1 Profile of the advertisement:

This advertisement comprises of different voices, yet all voicing the same personality: Barack Obama, the current U.S. President. This discourse was compiled and released in January 2008 to publicize Obama's biographical information and to advertise his website (BarackObama.com) for the elections that were going to follow in February. The advertisement has been selected for analysis under Fairclough's "Power and Discourse".

5.2.2.2.2 Power *in* Discourse:

Power *in* the chosen discourse is being worked out through the evidence of a set of high-ranked personalities, verifying the extraordinary standing of Barack Obama:

"It was inspiring, absolutely inspiring to see someone as brilliant as Barack Obama take all of the talent and devote it to making people's lives better." (Lawrence Tribe Professor Harvard University Law School)

"Senator Obama worked on some of the deepest issues we had, and he was successful in a bipartisan way." (Senator Kirk Dillard REPUBLICAN)

"It was hard to get that ethics bill passed. This is a man who knows how to get things done. He understands that we've got to move forward with a different kind of politics." (U.S. Senator Clair McCaskill (D-Missouri))

Moreover, the promises and assertions that Obama puts himself, in order to assure a better nation in the near future by becoming one with the people and strengthening the bond between past and present, do also work as power *in* discourse.

I'm Barack Obama and I approve this message, "We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes...There is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United States of America. (Barack Obama)

5.2.2.2.3 Situational Agent (*Power in Discourse*)

The situational agent, here, is not only the American society but also a pure political context in which the discourse takes place. All the situations and settings viewed in the video (appendix V) lie under the role of situational agents.

5.2.2.2.4 Power behind Discourse--Institutional and Societal Agents

The power behind discourse, in this advertisement, is being exercised through societal and institutional agents such as:

- The American *Politics*
- *Status* of the people speaking in the advert
- The web link (BarackObama.com)
- Media and Internet
- And most importantly, Obama's outstanding reputation and position in the history of Harvard and Senate of the United States, is the driving force and power behind the discourse.

6. Conclusion

It (CDA) seeks to discern connections between language and other elements in social life which are often opaque. (Fairclough 1989:29)

The advertising discourse is an apt choice for a healthy analysis of *opaque* power relations. Being a distant form of communication, where participants are separated in place and time, advertisements do not allow the discursive constraints to apply on them. This is mainly due to a sense of "one-sidedness" and estrangement yet engagement with the consumers. The advertisers generalize their discourse by using an ideal content and drawing an ideal relationship with the ideal target audience, in order to control the discourse as powerfully as possible. That's why, in order to analyze the power relations and struggles that function behind the discourse, this is crucial to investigate who has more access to discourse and whose access is constrained through societal mechanisms.

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APPENDIX I**“Here for Good”****Standard Chartered Advertisement****Transcript:**

Can a Bank really stand for something?

Can it balance its ambition with its Conscience to do what it must not what it can?

As not everything in life that counts can be counted, can it not only look at the profit it makes but that how it makes it makes that profit and stand beside people not above them?

Where every solution depends on each person, simply by doing good, can a bank in fact be great?

In many places we call home, our purpose remains the same.

To be here for People

Here for Progress

Here for the Long Run

Here for Good!

APPENDIX II**“Real Women, Real Beauty”****Dove Advertisement****Transcript:**

Meet the real celebrities

grandma

ma,

sister

soul sister

class mate

room mate

teacher

mentor

Real women, Real beauty

Dove keeps them beautiful!

APPENDIX III**“Express Yourself”****Airtel Advertisement****Transcript:**

Two words can bring down an empire.

One dream can change the world.

One raised finger can break a billion hearts; two can win a world war.

A whisper can inspire hope.

A touch can instill faith.

Some voices can move a nation; some can dissolve boundaries.

An act of defiance can spark a revolution.

One hundred thousand candles can end a war.

“That’s the power of human expression.”

APPENDIX IV**Obama’08****BarackObama.com****Transcript:**

Obama: "I'm Barack Obama and I approve this message."

Obama at the 2004 Democratic National Convention:

“We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes.”

Anonymous Voice: "After college and law school, Barack Obama could have cashed in. Instead he fought for change. Working to rebuild an area torn apart by plant closings."

Harvard Law professor Laurence Tribe: "It was inspiring, absolutely inspiring to see someone as brilliant as Barack Obama take all of the talent and devote it to making people's lives better."

Anonymous Voice: "In Illinois he brought Republicans and Democrats together. Cutting taxes for workers and winning health care for children."

Republican Illinois State Senator Kirk Dillard: "Senator Obama worked on some of the deepest issues we had, and he was successful in a bipartisan way."

Anonymous Voice: "And in the U.S. Senate, he's led on issues from arms control to landmark ethics reform."

U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, (D-Missouri): "It was hard to get that ethics bill passed. This is a man who knows how to get things done. He understands that we've got to move forward with a different kind of politics."

“There is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United States of America.”

(Obama in convention speech)