SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE APPEALING STRATEGIES IN COMMERCIALS: A CASE OF THREE PAKISTANI BEAUTY CREAM COMMERCIALS

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Abstract

The aim of this project is to examine the commercials of beauty creams in Pakistan. In order to find the ideology of the beauty advertisements in Pakistan, three renowned beauty commercials were taken for analysis of their discourse. The three beauty creams that are made a part of the critical discourse are Golden Pearl Beauty Cream, Fresh White Beauty Cream and Faiza Beauty Cream. The analysis of discourse was done critically with adoption of Fairclough's model (1989). The model is well acknowledged in the field of CDA to have an analysis of the employment of specific features in discourse for manipulation of particular ideology within certain class of individuals. It is perceived through beauty cream advertisements to buy the beauty products. The data was collected from the YouTube commercials. The research paradigm was qualitative to highlight the marketing based lingual elements that have been cleverly devised in beauty commercials. The results have revealed that the Pakistani beauty commercials are made to attract the minds of Pakistani women. The findings will help to develop a proper understanding in Pakistani consumers with facilitation in their decision power to buy the products without exploitation of media commercials.

Keyword: Advertisement, Beauty Cream, Manipulation, Pakistan, Society, Women

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Statistics Bureau of Pakistan (2017), the population of women in Pakistan is around 48.8%. It is represents half of the population of Pakistan. The various manipulative strategies have been adopted by the commercial designers to use the beauty of women in supply and demand of different beauty creams.

Aim of the Study

The study examines the use of language discourse in beauty cream advertisements.

Research Questions of the Study

The study will try to answer the following question:

What appealing strategies have been used in advertisements of the beauty creams to attract women of Pakistan?

Limitations

The limitations in present study are:

- i. The analysis of commercial discourse is done from one of the sources that is YouTube channel. This project can be extended to take data from other sources, namely, newspapers, magazines and different research articles.
- **ii.** The study narrowed its focus on commercials of beauty creams. The pattern of research can be applied to other beauty and care products. They can be shampoos, conditioners, tooth pastes and etc.
- iii. The undertaken research study can also be conducted through application of other paradigms. It can be an analysis based on morphological, phonological and semiotic levels in context of commercials.

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Commercials on Beauty Creams

Schroder and Vestergaard (1985) state two different forms of communication, the verbal and nonverbal. It is through these forms of communication, the commercial designers try to employ the attractive language. The language encodes a specific concept in form of lingual pattern that is decoded in receiver's cognitive environment. The communication requires a medium to transfer in shape of both speaking and listening. Therefore, Romanenko (2014) states that the advertisers are the communicators. They send the communicative discourses of advertisements and the receivers are their customers. The terms of addresser for advertiser and addressee for the customer can be used interchangeably. The language of advertisement is possessed with a target language that tends to bend the overall perceptions of the target community. This is as a result; the audience put their reactions that are expected by the commercial designers (Leech, 1966). These features have basic objectives behind the advertisements that have been explained with the following words of Phillips and McQuarrie (2007). According to them, "the communication is secondary in meaning and the response of audience is a primary act". The demarcation and innovativeness do play a significant role to the advertisement of language. It comprises of specific lingual features. The commercial designers use rhetorical means to design features for figurative lingual patterns. The rhetorical devices are techniques to pay expressions that are often deceitful and tend to avoid literal ways to express. A play of words is important for advertisements to catch the attention of public. The specific rhetoric techniques are promoted to create a kind of humorous condition to trap audience's attention. It is accompanied with the persuasive strategies. Similarly, the contribution of Laviosa (2005) on wordplay states that the specific socio-cultural techniques of the country are shown in advertisements to effectively highlight the pedagogic objectives for awareness with the help of lingual and cultural elements in language. The commercials are means to allure their viewers. Therefore, it is argued by Jhally (1995) that the commercials are influential to socialize the modern group of individuals. The beauty creams are commercialized to fascinate the beauty of women with success and societal dignity. Therefore, to attain this success, the female beauty is taken as a religious responsibility for her (Baudrillard, 2005). The impressionistic role of media through commercials of beauty cream is exploited within young women more in the current ages. It is because the women of today have been observed to give concern to their beauty more than other aspects, like health and home chores etc. According to Riji (2006), this trend is under possible influence of commercialism on beauty creams. The trend to look beautiful is deeply rooted in the old custom society, where the society itself is gender demarcated. The women urge to look beautiful in sense of their fair-complexion. Therefore, they use beauty creams without proper consideration of their side effects. According to one of the researches conducted by Peregrino et al. (2011), on the manufacture of a beauty cream, it

Peregrino et al. (2011), on the manufacture of a beauty cream, it contains mercury in a large amount as one of the causes to create side-effects in skin. The mercury does help to increase fairness in complexion; however, there are many side-effects to use it on regular basis. The model of CDA tends to make people aware of different subtle issues of society. The analysis of critical discourse is based on problems of society (Fairclough, 2001). This model is dealt with to study the relation of power influence and discourse. Hence, the following study will tend to adopt the model of CDA.

Concept of Woman Beauty in Commercials

According to Kumar (2002), the beauty of woman is the description of her attractive looks opposite to the man, who is acknowledged, if he is handsome. This cultural feature grew in subcontinent because of the British rule. For many centuries, the supremacy of white has been stuck in minds of people in South Asia. Goon and Craven (2003) believe that the supremacy of beauty is in white skin colour that is typified with the power status. This has been further spread in society by the manufacturing brands of beauty cream. Shankar, Giri and Palaian (2006) explain that it is through the help of advertisements, the specific value of supremacy is inculcated in minds of young women that the acceptable complexion of skin in their society is fair not the dark. Researchers in the field of critical discourse have tried to adopt various dimensions to perceive the motto behind advertisements. Chaudhary (2012) explains the reason behind perceiving the motto of advertisement that is target on psychology and portray of specific cultural beliefs. According to Ismail, Loya and Hussain (2015), the society of Pakistan is under cultural inferiority issue that has led commercials on beauty products to play a vital role. This developed its margin to a high rate because half of the population in Pakistan is obsessed to acquire fair complexion for the societal status and respect. However, the act of selling the beauty creams in market is not an easy task. There are many commercials on beauty creams that tend to strengthen this ideology about beauty for women ie beauty is the cause of her success. Niazi, Siddiqui, Alisha, and Hunjra (2012) state around billions of open cash dollars is utilized in order to put control on minds of public through advertisements. Therefore, it has been the most powerful resource to inspire behavior of people to buy the product. The commercials on television is commonly used more to gain attention of public compared to other mediums of communication in the era of technological advancement. The virtual information is perceived perfect on account of virtual in discipline. Nowadays, the new techniques have been under practice of commercial designers to advertise specific section of marketing product in advertisements during different programs. The important act of advertisers is introduction of the commercials on beauty creams in commercial break of drama serials. This can target women easily because majority of women in Pakistan watch serials on regular basis. Goddard (2002) defined the nature of advertisements. These ads are ephemeral in nature. However, the effects of these ads are far long in minds of people.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The earlier studies on beauty commercial have utilized the critical approach to analyze the discourses through CDA model of Fairclough (1989). This critical approach tends to analyze discourses of different texts. The present study has used it to analyze discourse of commercials on beauty creams of Pakistan. The analytic sets concerned to analyze a text are three dimensions that have been defined by Fairclough (1989). Fairclough (1995) defined three dimensions of critical discourse model to analyze a complete communicative event. The model starts with the analysis of entire text. It follows with a description of a discourse that is in practice (the context responsible in production of text). Finally, it tends to practice the social cultural aspects (defines situation and institution). The commercials of beauty creams deal with the use of language in specific sociocultural setting and describe rhetoric of three different brands of beauty cream. The connection of lingual elements that have been used in sociocultural setting and application of discourse functions is practiced through adoption of this framework.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The study tends to analyse the discourse of three Pakistani commercials on beauty creams that have been taken from the YouTube Channel. The corpus is taken from the advertisements. The corpus is given in the appendix (1) (2) and (3). The links of the advertisements have been shared below in the table.

| Brand of the Beauty Cream | Links of the Advertisements |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Golden Pearl Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= |
| | it5T_peOamo |
| Fresh White Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= |
| | NYisRJhCMpg |
| Faiza Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= |
| | feps54DizUM |

Model of CDA to Analyze the Discourse of Advertisements

Van Dijk (1995) states that the techniques of manipulation are always explored through CDA. It helps to explicitly represent the legitimized concern of a particular mindset of people. The methods of discursive approach are used that find the specific behavior of people. According to Fairclough (1992), the discourses have a deep impression on real life situation. Therefore, the discourses in advertisements do have an influence on social relevance and discipline of life styles. Therefore, the significance of discourses in advertisement cannot be avoided. It does have an ability to mold the behavior of consumers. In this sense, Emodi (2011) remarks that Language is used not simply as a means to communicate. However, it can be an effective tool in marketing sector to appeal the nature of people. The advertisement discourses in social media help to strengthen the society. They tend to reflect the overall mental status of public. Vasiloaia (2009) states that the demand of sale depends on the connection of people who are connected with the market products. Here, commercials play a significant part. The language is utilized in a particular way to manipulate and turn actual meanings to attract the audience. The previous studies on analysis of commercial content have mentioned different qualitative techniques to analyze its content. However, the present study focuses to analyze the part of discourse in commercials. Therefore, the model of Fairclough (1989) to critically analyze the content has been utilized. The model tends to assess underlying meanings in a language usage for its proper explanation in a context. The model visualizes a concept of relation between the text and society. The textual pattern is processed with contextual perceptions and vice versa.

ANALYSIS OF COLLECTED DATA

The collected data of discourse in advertisements have been analyzed through model of CDA into three levels. They are text, discursive and finally the societal actions.

Textual Analysis (The First Layer of Model)

Simpson (2003) states about the beliefs that it depends on influential people to use a language which strengthens its ground to propagate struggle of ideologies. The discourses of advertisements are analyzed with multi-modality principle that comprises of lingual elements in the audio-visual discourses of images, sounds and colors. This section tries to answer the question of this study. It analyses the particular lingual elements that have been used in discourses of commercials. The lingual elements include rhetoric strategies, particular vocabulary and the structure of syntax to allure Pakistani women society to buy beauty cream products. The language used in advertisements is flowery and tends to possess different types of adjectives. The use of vocabulary is a powerful tool for commercial designers to manipulate the ideas through formal and informal words. The relation is created between the viewers and the product. This is a medium to acknowledge ideology and behavior behind the advertisement. The next significant device that prompts the ideological perspectives of texts is grammar, verbs, tenses, pronouns and emotive vocabulary. All these elements tend to play an important role to depict the reality. The language that is used in advertisements is positive. It tries to highlight product with positive attributes in comparison to other products. The attributes are "Fresh White", "Golden Pearl", "Real extract", "Laboratorytested", "100 % guaranteed", "Your New Identity"-(Aapki naaie pehchaan). The language of advertisements cannot be proper always like "Because faces tells everything" (Kiyun k chehray hi sabb kuch batatay hain).

The brief discussion on the use of lingual elements that have been used in the three commercials of beauty creams is given below:

Compound Words

The advertisers sometimes tend to adapt language in their individual perception. The use of adjectives is done through compound based words. The quality of adjectives is best utilized by the commercial designers to pay deepness and twist of situation in commercials. The example is taken from the advertisement of 'golden pearl' that states as "The face looks fresh like a glowing flower" (*Chehra ek phool ki tarah shadaab hai*). The next example is also taken from the same commercial that states, "Is it her face or a shining moon" (*Chehra uska hai ya koi mehtaab hai*). It is a way to invoke the keen interest of audience.

Negative and Positive Adjectives

The adjectives that are positive in nature are used like, golden pearl, fairness glow, beautiful face, fresh and white, new positive identity etc. The adjectives that are negative in attribute have also been made a part of the advertisements. These address to problems that customers currently face. The solution of these negativities lies in the application of the given beauty cream. The kind of negative adjectives that have been found in data from the advertisements on Fresh and White Beauty Cream are "acne, wrinkles, thread-spots and dark circles around eyes" (*keel muhaasaay, jhuriyaaan, dhaag dhabay aur aankhaun k girdd siyaa halkayy*).

Use of Imperatives

There has been a general trend to use imperatives. The imperatives used in advertisements give very small area for audience to put their argument. The example in Fresh white beauty cream is an imperative sentence that tends to chase audience to obey commands in their subconscious level. "The real sign of beauty is *Fresh White beauty Cream*. On the other hand, the commercial of Golden Pearl Cream used negative kind of imperative. The example is "It is not possible to praise the beauty of a woman/beloved" (*Hussnn Janaa ki*

tareef mumkinn nahin). The relation of society is depicted with an address that speaks on TV. The speaker tries to create closeness with listeners.

Second Person Pronoun

The other significant way to create closeness with the audience is the use of second person pronouns. The possessive and personal pronouns address the audience directly. The words like 'your face, your skin' and 'you look'. Therefore, it became clearer about the motive behind the commercial designers to use second person pronoun. It will not help designers in marketing of product only but can also develop affiliations with the customers. The direct address develops a physiological impact on audience that makes them feel a special being. Fairclough (1989) refers this psychological impact on audience as the synthetic mode of personalization. The example in the following commercial of Faiza beauty cream collected from data that addresses the audience directly is "Your New Identity" (Aapki naie pehchaan).

Interrogatives

Some of the commercials on beauty cream instigate the aspect of inquiry in audience to make them involve psychologically for buying the product. The technique that is used by advertisers includes the employment of interrogatives. This is used to make the viewers beneficiary with the questions that remain unanswered. The questions that are usually asked: "Do you know the secret behind a beautiful face?" (*Kiya aapko haseen chehray kaa raaz pata hai*?). The effect of slogans to catch women's sights was enhanced with the help of attractive visual images, effects, sometimes funny conditions, the songs of legendary figures in background and music effects.

Practical Discourse Analysis (The Second Layer of Model)

The second stage of model is concerned with the analysis of practical discourse. It tends to mediate relation of text with the societal

practices. The reason behind production of a text till its use for consumption to persuade the costumers is analyzed. The various discursive strategies that have been used by advertisers to put a strong influence on audience are discussed below from the collected data.

Use of Beautiful Models and Female TV artists

The certification of companies is done with the cast of a beautiful model or a celebrity of media. The fame of these models helps to support demand of the products. The product is associated with the skills of celebrity. The data received from the three commercials on beauty creams have revealed that the use of models and TV artists are cast on heavy prices. These help in fascination of youths' mind. The motive behind the cast of models or the TV artists helps commercial designers to increase the market of product. They target the minds of female audience with a belief that the use of beauty cream will make them look beautiful and lovely same as the model in the commercial.

Specific Technical Vocabulary

The advertisers employ specific technical scientific vocabulary to put an impression on audience that the current product is tested with modern pace of technology. This is another way to convince the audience. The employment of medical terms is an appropriate technique to commercialize skin-loving products. The beauty creams have been appealing for the majority of woman society in Pakistan. The fair complexion of skin has become the standard meter to gauge the beauty of the woman. The advertisers tend to engage the emotions of audience to buy beauty cream products to look like a beautiful model and to maintain proportion of skin properties. The example of scientific terms in usage has been taken from the commercial, Fresh and White Beauty Cream. It shows through a visual image that "this is made from 100% pure extracts that contains Vitamin A, B, E and Aloe Vera" (*Jo murratab hai qudratii*

ajzaa kaa). The use of images in a commercial of different pure extracts help viewers to immediately take into account for the action to purchase the product.

Familiarity with the Given Context

The link of context with the text has employed a deep impression on the audience. It is one of the old concepts. The advertisements based on the given context do have a higher impact on audience compared to other non-contextual advertisements. The selected three commercials of beauty creams do create a great impression on woman society of Pakistan due to its contextual familiarity with the models and female TV artists of Pakistan.

Background Sound System

The present era demands advertisements on forceful system of song or music in background to attract audience for the product. The songs are important in marketing of a product. They assist to bend perceptions of the viewers. The researches on advertisement segments have stated that audience memorized those ads that had multi-sensory happenings in one go. The speeches are memorized if they are accompanied with the forceful music system. The various studies have indicated that the audience is more inclined to pay response towards the rhyming scheme. Therefore, the songs in the background of commercials attract attention of listeners. According to Alpert and Alpert (1989), music has good extent of emotional conditions that create a critical ideology to develop attitudes. The data that have been collected from three different commercials present different songs. The melodious song of golden pearl cream starts with a phrase that "The face looks fresh like a glowing flower" (Chehra ek phool ki tarah shadaab hai) and ends with the repetition of two words "moon like face" (Maahaaruu Maahaaruuu) and "Very beautiful" (Mahajabeen Mahajabeen) to maintain the rhythm in advertisement. These make the commercials more glamorous. It is catchy to pursue the attention of people.

DISCUSSION

The examination results give an idea to use appealing strategies through semiotic analysis of commercials. It tends to explain that the beauty commercials have strong consistent power that could be envisioned by proper stylistic devices. The assessment of two layered framework and informative devices exhibited the case of semantic features and logical contraptions in the commercials that are around coordinated and organized. The comfortable association between the design of commercials and audience of individuals is made when words are passed and displayed on the use of tenses, which are in simple Present and Future, the pronouns of individual and reflexives are used (I and She). The commercials complemented with use of inter-textuality and between its discursivity in the use of beauty creams, for instance, anaphora, direct inverse, parallelism, strengthening and representation.

CONCLUSION

The study is aimed to have an analysis of particular words in advertisement that could present the specific strategies to attract through three selected Pakistan audience beauty cream commercials. The idea in commercials of beauty cream is picturized white skin complexion. Through these beauty cream on commercials, the designers of commercials tried to use different ways to make advertisements more attractive through particular choice of words. The critical analysis of discourses can create a general awareness amongst the readers about manipulative language done practices of that have been bv the sponsors/manufacturers of different beauty cream companies. Therefore, it was affirmed that language is a powerful weapon to shape up mindset of people in a society. This weapon has been shrewdly employed by the advertisement makers on beauty that greatly affects the attitudes and desire of woman society to buy beauty cream of a particular brand. Therefore, this study can even

tend to exploit the use of advertisement discourses that shapes decision makings in people.

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Semiotic Analysis of the Appealing Strategies in Commercials

Appendix No 1: Advertisement of (Golden Pearl Beauty Cream) (Duration: 1 minute 18 seconds)

| Golden Pearl Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it 5T_peOamo |
|--|---|
| The advertisement is framed under the song of | Lyrics |
| "Afreen Afreen" by the Pakistani legendary Singer, Late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. | Chehra ek phool ki tarah shadaab hai |
| The beautiful model of Pakistani media industry in white dress is alone in a huge white palace | Chehra uska hai ya koi mehtaab hai |
| She stands alone on the ship and gives a beautiful smile | Chehra jese ghazal Chehra jaane ghazal |
| She is dressed red and walks in a red palace | Chehra jessay kalli Chehra jessay kanwal |
| | Chehra jessay tassawur ki tasweer bhii |
| | Chehra ek khwab bhii Chehra taaabeer bhii |
| The beautiful model soon takes the packet of Beauty cream "golden pearl" | Chehra alif Laila ki daastaan |
| She applies cream on her face (it shows glowing, clear and spot free | Chehra ek pal yakeen chehra ek pal khumaan Chehra essay Chehra jo khaheen bhi |

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| effect) on her face. | naaheen |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| | |
| | Maahaaruu Maahaaruuu |
| She wears the golden dress after the | Mahajabeen Mahajabeen (Twice) |
| application of cream and dances on | |
| * * | Golden Pearl Cream |
| classical song | Golden Peurl Creum |
| (The one that matches with the | |
| cream) | (Hussnn Janaa ki tareef mumkinn nahin) |
| | |
| The model who applies the cream, | |
| looks unique, more focused in | |
| beauty than other girls that dance | |
| | |
| with her | |
| | |
| | |
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| | |

Appendix No 2: Advertisement of (Fresh White Beauty Cream) (Duration: 49 seconds)

| Fresh White Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N YisRJhCMpg |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | |
| The Advertisement starts with a | Fresh and White kay liye |
| smile of a beautiful model; she | Fresh White beauty Cream |
| touches the skin of her face with | |
| keen care. | Harr mausam aur harr tarah kii skin kay |
| | liye |
| It shows the usefulness of cream in | Fresh White beauty Cream |
| all seasons | |
| | Jo muratab hai qudratii ajzaa kaa |
| | |
| It shows the composition of cream | |
| that is 100% pure, made from | Is k chandd din k istemaal se |
| Vitamin A,B,E and Aloe Vera | keel muhaasaay, jhuriyaaan, dhaag dhabay |

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| The application of cream is shown with its positive results | aur aankhaun k girdd siyaa halkayy khatam Jessay kay kabhii thay hii nahiii |
|--|---|
| Dark complexion turns into fair in 3 seconds | Skin ko banaie clean, clear and Fresh |
| seconds | Khoobsuratii ki asal phehchaan Fresh White beauty Cream |
| | Fresh White beauty Cream |
| | (Kiyun k chehray hi sabb kuch batatay hain) |

Appendix No 3: Advertisement of (Faiza Beauty Cream) (Duration: 2 minutes)

| Faiza Beauty Cream | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe ps54DizUM |
|---|--|
| The advertisement picturizes a beautiful model, who gets awake with the rays of sun, entering her room from the window | Ek aainaa hai woh Roshan jessay Sooraj huaa Kitna haseen khayal hai who Sabah jissay chum kar herat e aashnaa huii |
| The girl gives a cute smile on her face to pose beauty | Ek muskrahat hai who Shab e asmaan bhi jessay khil khilayaa |
| The model sees her face on a mirror and wears a costly jewel | Ek haseen lamha hai woh Jo kabhi qaid na ho payee |

| She dresses like a princess to join a party, | Ek mehktaa taaraa hai woh |
|--|---|
| opens the main door and steps into the party | jessay dusray taraaay dekh kar muskraien |
| People in the party focuse her beauty after the application of Faiza cream | Ek khullii kitaab hai woh Jo ishq ki dastan batlaae |
| One handsome man in the party shares the eye focus of her and so does she. | Faiza Beauty Cream Jo jildd ko anadar se naram aur roshan karay |
| | Jessay roz ek bahar aaiee |
| | Faiza Beauty Cream (Aapki naaie pehchaan) |