

THE LANGUAGE OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS FOR BEAUTY PRODUCTS: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This paper investigates the advertisements of beauty products of the Garnier brand from a perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, as to how language and visuals are used by advertisers in different ads to persuade customers to buy the products. This is a qualitative study that focuses on the language and visuals used by the advertiser to influence and manipulate the customers. The linguistic analysis is based on Fairclough's "three-dimensional framework" (1995), focusing on three levels of analysis, including the text, the socio-cultural practices, and the discursive practice, and the visual analysis is based on Kress and Leeuwen's model of visual analysis focusing on actor, goal, size of frame and camera angle given in "Grammar of Visual Design" (2006). This study indicates that companies use specific vocabulary language patterns and techniques to attract potential customers, as the language in advertisements promotes the ideology of beauty and controls the minds of readers. Advertisers have used various techniques such as headlines, body text, a signature, a slogan, illustrations, and defining lines to catch the attention of customers. Ads are used as an influential power. The language of advertisement is used in this way to steer the minds of customers. Moreover, people in power, i.e., advertisers, use language to implement executive power over others.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, Critical discourse analysis, Beauty Advertisements, Ideology, Image analysis.

Introduction

This study tends to know and analyse "the language of advertisement for beauty products". The topic is selected to know how the language and visuals are used in the advertisement of Garner beauty products to create a new ideology that motivates people to purchase these products. Advertisements have the power to create, recreate, change or shape ideologies and cultural and societal norms. Advertisements are the way to inform about the services and products or to introduce them to people. These ads persuade the public to buy these products or benefit from these services. Advertisements have now become the part and parcel of our lives as it is a kind of one-way communication. Williamson (1978) states that "ads are a unit of a communication system intended to prepare perceptions and build structures of that means". Advertisements are analysed to understand the way the language is used in ads to construct the ideologies that influence the audiences. Advertisement has become a part of modern life; according to Cook (1996), "advertising is not some external curiosity which we examine, from which we are separate and superior, but something of which we are part, and which is part of us". An advertisement is considered a source of promotion for various products. Generally speaking, advertisement is the marketing of services, goods, ideas, and companies, which is mainly done by the identified sponsors, the producers of the product. An advertisement is considered to be part of the maker's strategy for the promotion of their product.

Advertising agencies, makers, and shoppers are considered the major stakeholders in advertisements. Advertisements are usually promoted to the public through various means

such as social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, websites, radio, magazines, newspapers, and television. The advertising agencies make sure that their ads reach the targeted population, and for this, they choose the right medium which targets their desired population. The medium like magazines is reached by the young generation, and so do the advertisers use the right medium to attract their desired customers. Visuals and language are used differently by different advertisements to draw the attention of buyers in their advertisements.

Cook (2001) states that advertisements motivate, persuade, inform, remind, and influence the attitude, emotions, and opinions of viewers. In other words, advertisements don't only do the marketing of products but also change the perspectives of individuals and motivate people to purchase those products. Advertisements create awareness about the product and construct the identity of the product and the company. From the linguistic point of view, advertisements have great importance; they are designed from a stylistic and discourse perspective to attract people. These advertisements attract discourse analysts and linguists to analyse how language is used in different conditions to provide different meanings.

Advertisers focus on the context in which the advertisement has to be displayed, and focus on the prevailing ideologies and interests of the public and design their adverts focusing on the needs of potential viewers. Some design their ads showing the comparison between their product and other products already used by people. This method is employed to show that their products are better than the other ones. Advertisers not only focus on the context and the needs of the public but also make their ads interactive, focusing on different linguistic elements such as the body of text, illustrations, slogans, font size, colour, and the orientation of text and pictures. They use these to attract the attention of viewers. Beautiful faces are used for illustration of beauty products, and for this purpose, advertisers hire models and actors whom the public likes most and whose influence they get. These tactics easily manipulate the targeted public.

Many magazines appoint girls for marketing of beauty products, to influence the ladies to have flawless skin and colour, motivating them to have beautiful skin (Baudrillard, 2005). Mostly, linguistic and optical means are used to attract audiences. According to Jhally (1995), "advertising is the most prestigious establishment of socialisation in fashionable society." Lau & Zuraidah (2010) state that advertisements distort reality, manipulate people, and make them purchase products. Thus, ads create the connection and desire in audiences to have new lifestyles. The language and visuals in advertisements, especially the women advertising the products, reveal the hidden ideology behind how this works and how it manipulates potential customers into buying these products. The present study examines the role played by advertisements in influencing people. This researcher tries to find out the truth of this hypothesis.

Objectives of the study:

This study has the following objectives,

- To analyse the language used in advertisements of beauty products; to understand the way advertisers attract people to buy products.
- To examine the visuals in the advertisements of beauty products in our society, to understand the relationship between these ads and respondents and how advertisers have established the relationship with potential customers with the use of these visuals.

Literature review

The literature review for this study has three sections. The first section is about the advertisement and capitalism to understand the relationship between different advertisements and capitalist ideologies. The second section includes the research related to the topic, while the third section is about the critical discourse analysis.

Advertisement and capitalism:

The system that aims at making a profit by buying and selling goods and services is known as capitalism. According to Schudson (1986), advertisement is “unofficial capitalist propaganda”. Advertisements present one solution to all the social and material needs of the society, the people of which are purchasing that product. Advertisements make people think that it's very important to purchase that thing, and that showing love and care for others can only be done by spending money on them. So, capitalists use advertisements as a tool to target customers. In economic and political contexts, we can view advertisements as a promotion of capitalism.

Recent research related to the topic:

In South Asian countries, a common liking for white skin is observed among the people. A female segment of these countries desires fair skin as it is the mark of beauty and superiority. In the last fifty years, the trend of fairness creams has increased, and producers are exploiting their white ideology through their skin whitening creams and other products (Goon, 2003). The producers of whitening creams show fair skin in the advertisements of their products and promote their ideology of achieving fair skin, the ideal flawless face, and have the attention of the opposite sex, and to look attractive and superior in society (Shanker, 2006).

The discourse analysis of the advertisements by Tessa (2007) focuses on the role of males and females in different ads and the perspective behind these ads. He stated how the advertisements are made legal and what the pivotal role of these ads is in creating the discourse of different societies. Shaker (1999), in his studies, shows why the ads are considered unethical in some contexts and are considered misleading and promoters of false promises and misinforming ideologies.

With time, many changes have been made in the mode and the style of advertisements. Some ads focus only on the verbal aspects of the ads, while others focus only on the visual elements. The focus shifted from less illustrated material to more illustration in ads, such as in 2000, it increased from 50% to 58%. This percentage increase was also due to the invention of the media and the people's interest in the media. Then, after this, the focus of attention was the use of slogans. They also developed the trend of storytelling and short clips for the advertisement of some home products. Further, the number of words per ad decreased, and the focus was shifted to the positive picturing of products. The last and most prominent change was in the illustration, which was enhanced with the addition of a heading and explanatory text. There are gradual changes in advertisement and its structure, which show the decrease in the verbal part on advertisement of beauty products and an increase in visual content.

The language used in the advertisement of fairness products by the “Fair & Lovely” brand is analysed by Iqbal et.al. (2014) from a Critical Discourse perspective. Their study was based on the language used in the advertisement and also on the techniques and strategies used by an advertiser to influence and manipulate the potential customers, which, in the case of this advertisement, are women. Critical discourse analysts analyse language, ideology, and power in various contexts. Shaikh et.al. (2015) have investigated the advertisements to consider the social choices, values, and ideologies that prevail in society through these adverts. This study focused on the representation of women and men in



different ads to examine dominance and gender inequality. They used semiotics and CDA to analyse the social practices in which these ideologies are constructed and concluded that advertisers use different strategies to portray the stereotypical roles of women and men as if they are natural.

Culture and social processes are also used as a tool to play with the minds of consumers. As with the promotion of their brand or the products through different advertisements and commercials, they promote the beliefs of patriarchal society. Women in these ads are shown to be emotional and weak beings who stay at home and have no active role in society, while in contrast, men are shown to be strong both physically and mentally, being emotionally powerful, they are shown to be the rational members of society with a dominating personality. This study promoted the view that ads should not be biased; advertisers should play the role to eradicate these stereotypes and promote equality and a view of a just society (Khalid et.al., 2016).

Critical discourse analysis:

CDA is known as the sub-disciplinary field of the study of discourses that view language as a form of social practice and focus on how political domination is produced by text and context. According to Wodak & Meyer (2015), "CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimised and so on by language use or in discourse". CDA looks at language as a form of social practice, which is related to some historical context. Through this social practice, different interests are served, and relations are produced. How do we orient the text? What type of interests are served through this orientation of text? What are the results of this orientation of context in that specific text? How is the discourse related to power? When we investigate how the discourse is implied with power, this investigation is known as critical discourse analysis.

CDA is used as a research tool to understand the text from three different dimensions according to Fairclough. The first dimension is the "object of analysis" of the text itself; here, we do not take the text as the only linguistic practice but all other aspects such as colours, images, signs, sounds, etc. The second dimension is "the processes by which the object is produced and received by human subjects", and the third includes "the power behind discourse", the social practices behind the text. These three dimensions are interdependent, and analysis could start from any of these.

Research methodology

This is a qualitative and descriptive study of the language of advertisements. The linguistic and visual characteristics of the Ads are analysed. The analysis is done in two parts for each ad, one is the linguistic analysis based on the Fairclough model, and the other is the visual analysis based on Kress and Van Leeuwen's model of grammar of visual design. Ads for the beauty products of Garnier brands are analysed critically to focus on the way the language is used in these ads and how the visuals are used to create and manipulate the ideas of beauty in society. This study has the following research questions,

1. How is language used in advertisements for beauty products to attract people to buy products?
2. How are the visuals presented in advertisements for beauty products?

Data for this study is taken from different marketing websites and online magazines. The Advertisements for Garnier's brand are selected for linguistic and visual analysis of advertisements to study the hidden ideology behind the ads of beauty products. *The framework of analysis* for this study is Fairclough's three-dimensional model, which is used

to work out different patterns, judgments, languages, and designs used in ads to draw the attention of readers. Fairclough's analysis is on the premise of 3 levels:

1. Description (text analysis),
2. Interpretation (processing analysis),
3. Explanation (social analysis).

For visual analysis, the following parameters are selected from Kress and Loewen's model:

1. Actor: the doer of the action in the visual part of the text
2. Gaze: it is the visual form of direct address it demands that the viewers do something
3. Size of frame: the different types of distances between the represented participants and interactive participants. It includes a close shot, a long shot, and a medium shot.
4. Camera angle: at what angle is the picture captured, horizontal angle or vertical angle

ANALYSIS

This section of analysis presents the qualitative analysis of 7 selected ads of Garnier beauty products following the model of Fairclough, Kress and van Leeuwen.

First advertisement:

Textual Analysis:

This is the advertisement for Garnier's moisturising cream. In-text analysis, according to Fairclough, would focus on the way the cream is described. As a vocabulary, the selection of words is important to describe anything; we can see that different adjectives are used to describe the product. This ad shows both negative and positive adjectives, such as "dry skin, refreshing gel-cream, antioxidant, skin active", so that the reader gets attracted, as everyone wishes to get rid of dry skin. The name of the brand is written in bold letters 'GARNIER'. The speciality of the cream is mentioned as it is "for oil-free moisture", which suggests that to moisturise the dry skin, they have not used oil but natural ingredients that moisturize skin.



The advertiser has also used the adverb to specify the time of action of the product "instantly locks" as this moisturising cream instantly moisturises the skin. The text shows the

direct address to audiences that arouses the involvement. Another strategy used is the disjunctive syntax, a phrase without a subject and a verb, that stimulates conversational style, for example, “moisturise rescue”. The word new shows that they are introducing a new product with new packaging. This advertisement has two colours, one light green and the other light pink. They also give some meaning as the green colour indicates the nature of the product, as it is made from natural ingredients and no chemicals are used. “GARNIER”, the name of the brand, is in the top corner and in bold letters. “Moisture rescue” shows that this specific product moisturises your skin and makes it fresh and attractive, and it will rescue your skin from dryness. This cream also keeps your skin moisturised for 24 hours and prevents your skin from dryness by hydrating its texture. Since it contains fruit and water, this substance is an antioxidant. It softens skin, absorbs easily, and keeps the face hydrated. Emphasis is done with different font sizes.

Processing Analysis:

This level of analysis focuses on the production, distribution, and consumption of text, and how the power relations are established and maintained in the text. The advertiser has designed it with the purpose of promoting their new moisturising cream. They have shown the qualities of the product in both the natural and scientific aspects, such as “Refreshing Gel Cream, Antioxidant complex”. The advertiser has also evoked inadequacies with the use of negative adjectives and makes them conscious about the perfect look, which provokes the potential customers to buy the product to avoid the issues of their skin. Words like “Moisture Rescue, soothes dry skin, and refreshing gel” persuade the customers, especially women, to use this cream.

Social Analysis:

This level in Fairclough’s model deals with the conventions of ideologies. This strategy is employed to make people aware that dry skin could make them look dull, and they need to avoid it, and for a better look, they have to use their product. At the level of social analysis, according to Fairclough, the ideological conventions behind the ad are analysed. This is an advertisement for moisturising cream, and being the inhabitant of this region, many people face the problem of dry skin, so to attract potential customers, the company has used the keywords to grasp the attention. The advertisement is designed to meet the needs of people. This product is for girls of all age groups, young, middle-aged, and the elderly, as women have many responsibilities inside the house and outside for working women, so they have little time for skincare. The advertisement is designed to attract women to buy the product, which would give the desired result in less time. In this present scenario, where everyone is beauty-conscious, the advert is designed to target the basic concept of flawless beauty, through which they have presented the ideology of ideal beauty with their power of exploiting the standards of beauty.

Visual Analysis of Advertisement -1:

Actor: The actor for this ad is a female who is shown as satisfied and happy after using this product. Her goal is to get rid of dry skin, as the advertisement is for a moisturising cream. Her smiling and confident face shows the power that is employed through advertisements on customers.

Gaze: The gaze shows the direct eye contact of a female with the addressed viewers. The female demands that the audience purchase the product and use it. Viewers will find assimilation with the model and will try to get flawless skin. According to this model, direct gaze demands the do something, which is the buying of the product. The power lies in the confidence of the participant; her smile and satisfaction show her confidence in the product.

Frame: The picture of the product, as well as the picture of the model, is taken from a close shot, which is indicative of the close relationship between the addressed customers and the model presented, as mentioned in the Kress and van Leeuwen model. The advertiser has created a close relationship between the participant and the audience.

Angle: From the perspective of an angle, the picture is taken from the front angle to show the direct relation of interactive and represented participants. This front angle also creates a close relation between interactive and addressed audiences.

Second advertisement:

Textual Analysis:

This is a commercial for Garnier face wash. The name of the brand is given along with its logo in small text on the left side of the commercial, “GARNIER CLEAN.” The line “Not just a better clean, better skin” appears under the product name.



Along with the product name Garnier Clean, there is a plus symbol, indicating that this product has certain additional attributes. Only optimistic adjectives such as “nourishing, cleansing, purifying” are used in this commercial to emphasise the product's qualities that are suitable for all. Customers' imagination and ability to try new successful products are evoked by the phrase "DISCOVER NOW". This tactic is used to target new buyers, for example, “better clean”, “better skin!”. They have used their control over readers in this way. There are three different types of face washes: “nourishing cleansing oil, blackhead-removing scrub, and purifying foam cleanser”. These face washes are also suitable for dry skin and are oil-free. According to their slogan, this formula not only offers better cleaning and better skin, but it also benefits all skin types.

One can get stronger, purifying clean skin by using a cleanser. Fruits are used in this medicine, indicating that it has no side effects. Water is used to reflect purity and cleanliness. The Blackhead Eliminating Scrub promises to thoroughly cleanse skin while still drawing out soil that causes blackheads and impurities. The “+” sign with the brand name shows that brands have additional properties, such as the ability to dissolve impurities, deep clean, disinfect, cure skin, clean mud, and relax the skin, in addition to removing impurities, thoroughly cleaning, and scrubbing. They aim to draw consumers' interest by making such advertisements. Different font sizes are used to highlight words and emphasise them.

Processing Analysis:

This level of analysis focuses on the production, distribution, and consumption of text, and how the power relations are established and maintained in the text. The advertiser has designed it with the purpose of promoting their face wash. The “Purifying Foam Clean, Blackheads Eliminating Scrub and Nourishing Cleansing Oil” addresses all the problems of

women. By using this power strategy, advertisers make audiences buy the product as it addresses all their skin-related problems.

Social Analysis:

This is an advertisement for face wash. The product is given the name of “Garnier Clean Plus”, which itself creates the feeling of fantasy of a better clean and purified skin. The word better clean gives the feeling of better skin, and the concept of ideal beauty is established by this advertisement. The representation of women's beauty in this perspective shows the prevailing idea of beauty. So, the advertisers have manipulated the idea of beauty and have maintained the idea of power.

Visual Analysis of Advertisement -2:

Actor: The actor for this ad is a female who is shown as satisfied and happy after using this product. Her goal is to get fresh, nourishing, and clean skin.

As the advertisement is for facewash, the producer has introduced three different types of the same product, addressing the particular needs of the customers. Her smiling and confident face shows the power that is employed through advertisements on customers.

Gaze: The gaze shows the direct eye contact of a female with the addressed viewers. The female demands that the audience purchase the product and use it. Viewers will find assimilation with the model and will try to get beautiful, glowing skin after using these facewashes.

Frame: The picture is taken from a close shot, which is indicative of the close relationship between the addressed customers and the model presented, as mentioned in the Kress and van Leeuwen model. The advertiser has created a close relationship between the participant and the audience.

Angle: From the perspective of the angle, the picture is taken from the front angle to show the direct relation of interactive and represented participants. This front angle also creates a close relation between interactive and addressed audiences.

Third advertisement:



Textual Analysis:

This is a commercial for Garnier hair dye. A picture of a woman appears in the advertisement. The caption “NEW Herba Shine” colour cream with bamboo extract' is printed in bold letters against a pink and yellow backdrop, and the ‘body copy’ is condensed

in a block in the lower right corner of the advertisement. Again, in this advertisement, the positive adjectives used, “fortifies hair, sensational shine”, are a motivating factor by highlighting the qualities of the product. No sentence is used in this advertisement, but only phrases or words. The product name is the trademark line "Garnier" at the top of the advertisement. In an advertisement, a girl's pretty face and freshly dyed hair are depicted. If we just have the headline and picture, this will not make any sense. It also shows a lovely young lady who has recently dyed her hair with the 'new Herba Shine colour cream.' This is also shown in the image “light natural brown”. The time for colouring is also provided in the advertisement; “just 10 minutes” means that colouring your hair only takes 10 minutes. This substance is ammonia-free, as shown by the term “AMMONIA FREE”. Ammonia causes hair disorders. As a result, there are no other side effects of this medication. The effect of this hair colour lasts for a long time, as the advertisement claims: “Lasts through 28 shampoos”.

Processing Analysis:

The advertisement is based on the concept of perfect hair. In today's materialistic culture, everybody needs to look better than the next person. The words “shiny” and “normal” are used to persuade customers to purchase a product and to achieve perfect hair. Through this strategy, the advertisers imply that this product is the solution to their grey hair, and they can get the natural brown colour of their hair back with this product.

Social Analysis:

The advertisement for the promotion of hair colour is named “Herba Shine”, which creates the feeling of shiny and sensational hair and also creates the feeling of glory and beauty. This desire to become beautiful among others is one of the aspects of a materialistic society, as everyone is in the race for perfection and wants to look better than others. So, with the idea of ideal and perfect beauty, the feeling of superiority is established among people. The power factor is highlighted by a desire to be superior and sublime.

Visual Analysis:

Actor: The actor for this ad is a female who is shown as satisfied and happy after using this hair colour. The actor is seen as calm and pleased, with a positive smile that encourages viewers to buy the product.

Gaze: The gaze shows the direct eye contact of a female with the addressed viewers. The female demands that the audience purchase the product and use it. Viewers will find assimilation with models and will try to get beautiful, coloured hair like the models.

Frame: The picture is taken from a close shot which is indicative of the close relationship between the addressed customers and the model presented, as mentioned in the Kress and van Leeuwen model. The advertiser has created a close relationship between the participant and the audience.

Angle: From the perspective of the angle, the picture is taken from the front angle with the emphasis on hair to show the direct relation of interactive and represented participants. This front angle also creates a close relation between interactive and addressed audiences. So, there is a close relationship between the viewer and the advertisement. It also engages and involves the participants as it is taken from eye level.

Fourth advertisement:



Textual Analysis:

This is an advertisement for the Garnier shampoo. We see the same elements in this ad as in the hair colour advertisement: image, headline, name, and body copy (text). There is an additional component in the form of a slogan. A lady is showing her hair in this example. In the upper right corner of this photograph, the term “new” is seen in the photo. The headline “hair shines with a new intensity” means that this product brings shine to a woman's hair with new strength. Again, a motivating adjective “long, strong, anti-breakage, anti-split end” is used to emphasise the product's features. It means that this formula has some additional features and was created specifically for strong hair. The word “strengthen” is written in the centre of the shampoo, indicating that this formula is intended to make hair smoother.

The motto “take care” is placed in the lower-left corner, indicating that Garnier values its consumers and that this shampoo is designed to protect their hair. This slogan also conveys to the consumer that Garnier wants them to take care of themselves by using this shampoo. The signature in the corner reads “Garnier”, which is the product's name. The headline is not spoken by an actor, and the reader is implicitly addressed by the advertiser “we” in the advertisement, but it aids the reader in recognising the situation in the example.

The girl in the picture is keeping her hair in a way that indicates she has thick, glossy hair. As a result of this product's anti-breakage and anti-split-end properties, hair can grow continuously without breaking. A web address is given in this advertisement for more details about a specific product. This product is appealing because it has practical and inspiring uses. It then moves on to a cure for the current issue of hair damage.

Processing Analysis:

The advertisement is based on the concept of strong and long hair. In today's materialistic culture, everybody needs to look better than the next person. The words “long, strong, anti-breakage, anti-split ends” are used to persuade customers to purchase a product and to get perfection of hair. Through this strategy, the advertisers imply the power that this product is the solution to weak and split-ended hair, and they can get naturally strong and healthy hair with this shampoo.

Social Analysis:

The advertisement for the promotion of hair shampoo “Garnier Fructis”, the strengthening shampoo. This desire to get beautiful, strong hair look better than the other is shown in this advertisement. So, with the idea of the ideal and perfect beauty of hair, the feeling of superiority is established among people. The power factor is highlighted by a desire to be superior and sublime.

Visual Analysis:

Actor: The actor for this advertisement is a female who is showing her hair. She is satisfied and happy after using this hair shampoo. The actor is seen as calm and pleased, with a positive smile that encourages viewers to buy the product.

Gaze: The gaze shows the direct eye contact of a female with the addressed viewers. The female demands that the audience purchase the product and use it. Viewers will find assimilation with the model and will try to get strong and long hair. According to this model, direct gaze demands that the audience do something, which is the buying of a product. The power lies in the confidence of the model; her smile and satisfaction show her confidence in the product.

Frame: The picture is taken from the medium close shot which is indicative of far personal relation between the addressed customers and the model presented, as mentioned in the Kress and van Leeuwen model. The advertiser has created a far personal in which the model is seen from the waist up, unlike the above ones in which the close relationship was shown by showing the face and shoulders only.

Angle: From the perspective of an angle, the picture is taken from the front angle with the emphasis on hair to show the direct relation of interactive and represented participants. This front angle also creates a close relation between interactive and addressed audiences. So, there is a personal relationship between the viewer and the advertisement. It also engages and involves the participants as it is taken from eye level. She is facing the virtual respondents, demonstrating the power of her hair.

Conclusion

Based on the current findings, advertisements for beauty goods are just ideological propaganda and do not depict actual women or men in various advertisements. The advertisements portray a flawless and glamorous face solely to enhance their image and demonstrate beauty values. Effective vocabulary and adjectives are used to offer a favourable view of goods, encouraging buyers to purchase them. These advertisements are just a calculated attempt to spread a new agenda by establishing a power relation with audiences and manipulating the ideology. Through the use of various linguistic and visual strategies such as positive adjectives, headings, and slogans, advertisers and product owners persuade people, especially females, to buy the products, which is considered a way to a new life of beauty, the idea of which is created by a powerful sector.

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