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Making Ideologies through Media Discourse:
A Multimodal Critical Analysis of Comedy Talk Shows' Logos

Abstract:

The present study makes a multimodal discourse analysis of comedy talk shows' logos of Pakistani TV channels from the perspective of their ideology and meaning of image. To analyze multimodal discourses using social semiotics as a way gives a direction to analyze the multi-layered meaning in a discourse. For this purpose, 4 famous TV programmes' logos were selected. Faiclough' (1995) 3D model has been applied to make multimodal critical analysis of comedy talk shows' logosThe study highlights the ways through which ideologies and power relations are expressed. Results of the study indicate that these logos construct multimodal discourse through particular language and image, and ideally exercise their power and the mainstream ideology of TV channels in Pakistan.

Keywords:

Multimodality, Logographs, Media Discourse, Electronic Media

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1. Introduction:

The value of images in discourse analysis can no more be neglected now. Multimodal discourse analysis is fully established and employed in different academic fields. In the digital age, images are being more focused than the isolated text to communicate meanings. Today the world is run by corporations and media

is no exception to it. These elite corporations have control on people's lives and this phenomenon of corpocracy affects different aspects of their lives. Large corporations manage the brands of their products. To analyze multimodal discourses using social semiotics as a way gives a direction to analyze the multi-layered meaning in a discourse. It is obvious from the social semiotics that making meaning does not occur in isolation but it is situated in a social context (Jaipal, 2010 cited in Li, 2018).

Logo is the short form of logograph. It is the visual representation of various recognized brand names. With the help of pictorial forms connotations are usually generated like brand names for a particular product. The logos of the programs retain a vital power. The relationship between word and picture is quite significant as the images are quite evident. Media is one of the most powerful institutions of any country. It is playing a very vibrant role in portraying the image of socio-cultural and ideological concerns. According to O' Keeffe (2012), media discourse refers to "...interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer." Critical discourse analysis bears various strands. The discourse is a mixture of text, sound and visuals. The very first visual that strikes the viewers is the logo of the comedy shows. The graphical images are playing significant role in digital and multi modal communication as Smith (2006) asserts.

1.1 Discourse and Ideology:

An ideology is a set of beliefs or values that give a coherent critique of things. Foucault (1972) asserts that discourse and ideology are similar concepts. In order to invest a certain ideology, certain discursive practices are sustained. Ideology of elite class is propagated through these discursive practices in order to change the set mentality of people and to accept general consent of the elite.

1.2 Discourse and Identity:

Discourse and Identity is the sense of one's own ideal self and self-consciousness. Arguably discourse is the process of incorporating power into language to shape the mindset of the masses in general and to accept the realities accordingly. Baig, et al. (2019) investigated the significance of digital media in order to assess the power exercised in the digital medicated constructions of social

identities. It proved that certain social identities were positioned as dominant entities by virtue of social relations.

1.3 Color as Semiotic Mode:

In multimodal analysis color is a distinct and prominent mode which can be combined with other modes purposefully. Some explicit or implicit rules make the choice of colours. It is a fact that color shows a powerful and vital discourse. The function of the color is quite evident at textual level as it can promote and propagate textual cohesion rather than repeating the same color time and again. So, color is considered as a semiotic mode and it is used with an image and writing. Cerrato (2012 cited in Afshan, 2018) asserts that color symbolism is used to deliver an idea that is considered impossible to be delivered with the words. He listed the colors with their specific meanings in his book.

Sr. No.	Color Name	Associated with
1	Red	Anger, danger, violence, beauty, love & Passion
2	Orange	Autumn, creativity, endurances & energy
3	Yellow	Life, happiness, energy, wisdom & hope
4	Green	Nature, growth, newness, prosperity
5	Blue	Calming color, great qualities & masculinity
6	Purple	Power, royalty, richness
7	Brown	Humility, hardship, poverty
8	Black	Death color, darkness, sadness, evilness & Witchcrafts
9	Grey	Decay, old age & dullness in life
10	White	Light, goodness, peace & purity

Table 1: Color Associations

2. Literature Review:

Abbas (2019) conducted a study on the visual and verbal practices of cellular network companies' advertisement to find out the implicatures and certain ideologies. The researcher employed a qualitative approach. The findings of his study revealed that ideological investment was made through new media. The findings proved that no use of language was ideology free.

Simpson (2019) conducted a study on the social semiotic use of

information graphics within the specialized discourse of Civil Engineering in South African context. The researcher collected through observation and reflection as well as through documentary artefacts. The study concluded that the delineation of the social practices associated with information graphics enabled understanding of socially organized knowledge of civil engineering.

From the perspective of multimodal discourse analysis, Nicolai (2019) has tried to unravel the discourse of sonic logo for McDonald's "i'mlovin' it" in the fifteen (2003-2018) years collection of 475 commercials. The study revealed interesting insights into how music could perform a powerful role in the multimodal discourse. The study revealed the way the sonic logo changed with the passage of time and produced alternating meaning potentials.

To reflect the vitality of the multimodal discourse analysis, Guo & Feng (2017) analyzed the 2014 Brazil World Cup advertisements. They presented how semiotics acted effectively to realize the real business purpose. The findings of the study proved that different modes within an advertisement have an interdependent relationship. To express the value of the business product, the researchers have carefully put the background and theme into the advertisement. Based on Visual Grammar, these researchers analyzed the advertisements from the perspective of representational meaning, interactive meaning and compositional meaning.

Ly & Jung (2015) examined two digital images for their representational and interactive dimensions. The results of the study indicate that all processes and relations among the participants contribute to the sociological interpretations of the images. The findings support the theory of visual grammar. The study suggested that images are governed by visual grammar structure and they are rich in meaning like language.

Qadir (2014) carried research to highlight the way the elite in Pakistan propagate and disseminate the political ideologies through media. Sajid's (2012) study on representation of Islam through semiotic discourses of Pakistani and western newspapers cartoons emphasized that a cold war (of words) was going onto represent Islam and Muslims stereotypically. His study illustrated that almost every negative thing was associated with Muslims with the use of linguistic and

semiotic discourses.

3. Method:

The methodology employed in the present study is predominantly qualitative in nature as it explores multilayered meaning embedded in text and images of comedy shows. Descriptive design is adopted. Four most rated comedy show logos of Pakistani TV channels were selected. To analyze the logos multimodal discourse analysis was used. The analysis of logos was done in two phases; first CDA is based on Fairclough's (1995) 3D model and then visual analysis is made through Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual discourse design.

There are three aspects of Fairclough's (1995) model of Critical discourse analysis, each with its exclusive analysis but all these three aspects are interlinked.

1.   Text based analysis (Description)

2.   Discourse Practice (Interpretation)

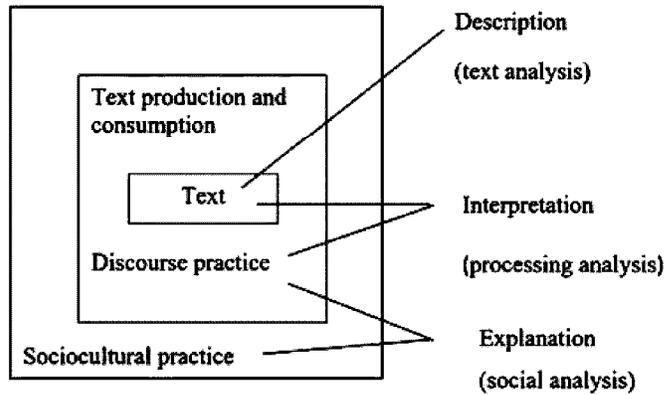3.   Socio-cultural Practices (Explanation)

Figure 1: Fairclough's (1995) Three Dimensional Model

Multimodal analysis delves deep into the generalizations made through agency, power, ideology and identity, to extract meaning of the social interactions. It analyzes how meanings and knowledge are constructed. Multimodal discourse analysis was for the first time propounded by Kress and Leeuwen (1996) as a framework to analyze lexical, visual and other semiotic entities. This model unravels the visual means formulated to perform particular semiotic functions.

The aim is to bring out experiential meaning, interactive meaning and textual meaning which help analyze multimodal texts. The quick and easy access to technology has made it easy to analyze multimodal text.

4. Analysis and Findings:

Based on Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional Model and Kress & Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual discourse design, the following logos have been analyzed.

4.1 Logo of Khabarnaak:

In figure 2 logo of "Khabarnaak' is given, a Geo news production. The genre of the show is comedy, satire and information. The format of the program i.e. a gentle irony is passed on current affairs, political issues and social matters in a comic guise, is evident from the text of the logo. It contains both text (Urdu) and a graphic. The text Khabarnaak is a word coined by blending two Urdu words "Khabar" (News) and "Khatarnaak" (Dangerous). Such a process is done through clipping of words and word coined this way is called "portmanteau". This new word gives a dual meaning that the program is going to break some dangerous news. Danger is also represented through an ignited bomb shown in the logo. But the effect of danger has been lightened by rendering the bomb a smiling face that reveals the oxymoronic effect i.e. a bomb is smiling. The representation of the program through an unusual title implies that the producer intends to appeal the viewers.

The program was first hosted by Aftab Iqbal, an influential senior journalist who is known to have his own team to work with.

The producer of the show is "Jung" media group and the relative interpretation of broadcasting such content may be to break the monotony of the routine news bulletins. At the time of a number of news channels bringing out their products to the audience, such a program proved to be an acceptable change for the viewers and the ideology behind to uplift the rating of the channel may have worked well for the producer. Media power can be realized through the title of the program that it has the sole authority to air any kind of news, be it pleasant or unpleasant.

In a society where news holds a salient place, the broadcasting of a show

with a name "Khabarnaak" plays a significant role in constructing ideologies of the viewers as per the intentions of the producers and the policy of the channel. In Pakistani context, comedy theatres are a source of healthy entertainment. Borrowing the concept from them for a news channel program is an appetizing twist for the viewers. The rise and fall in Pakistani political arena keep the nation intent on the politics in its society which sets the background of the program.

Vibrant colors i.e., red and yellow have been used in the text and the visual. It gives an eye-catching appearance to the logo. The viewers are attracted by the logo and they tend to watch the show. The word "Khabarnaak" is a pun on the word "Khatarnaak" (dangerous) and the use of red color in the text is heightening the effect of danger. Yellow color symbolizes freshness and joy. So, the title is making meanings, indicating that the danger is coming in a joyous mood.

The image is horizontal and at an eye level angle that shows the power in balance between the represented participants and the interactive participants. The medium shot of the picture gives out the balance to social distance.

The viewer has the power to decide either to watch the program or not.

4.2 Logo of Khabardaar:

The second image selected for analysis is the logo of program "Khabardaar" (Warning), a comedy talk show which was aired on express news from 2015 to 2018. It was based both on Urdu and Punjabi languages and was hosted by a renowned media person Aftab Iqbal along with the team of famous theatre comedians.

The logo contains the text with a warning emoticon as semiotic. Khabardar is an Urdu word which means a warning. A caption under "Khabardaar" is given as "Naqalon se Hoishyaar" (Beware of the imitators) which clarifies the warning. As first Aftab Iqbal was the host of "Khbarnaak" on Geo News with a format of gossips on political, social and current affairs with tongue in cheek. The emoticon has been shown holding a public announcement (PA) system to inform the people that they should not get confused with the name of the previous show. The text implies that the name of the show under discussion holds a superior position over the Geo news show just because the originator of the show is associated with the new name at another media group.

Express news is the institution of production giving out the under-discussion media discourse. The producer wants to attract multiple viewers using a striking title for his program. He is concerned with preventing the viewers/receivers from switching to the Geo news program now hosted by Aisha Jahanzeb and Ali Mir. The producer is exercising media power to capture the attention of the viewers.

The viewers are Urdu or Punjabi speakers, having interest in comedy and social and political affairs. Those who were the viewers of "Khabarnaak" at the time when it was hosted by Aftab Iqbal immediately understand the title and warning given in the logo of "Khabardaar".

In Pakistan it has been the custom that the product sellers use such a catchphrase as "Naqalon se Hoshyaar" to raise the number of consumers. With this context in view, the producer might have used this phrase in the logo.

The image is horizontal which shows the involvement of the viewers with the represented participants. The high angle of the represented participants indicates that there is difference of power between the represented participants and interactive participants (viewers). The lower angle of the viewers shows that power resides with on the side of the producer.

In foreground red color has been used for "Khabardaar" to mark urgency/danger. The yellow warning symbol gives a somewhat humorous effect because of the facial features and funny expression allotted to it as yellow is the color of effervescence. The use of bright colors in logo serves the purpose of rendering liveliness to the show.

The power on the side of the producer embeds an influence that the producer intends to exercise on the viewers.

4.3. Logo of Khabarzaar:

Khabarzaar is a comedy television show with the use of Urdu and Punjabi languages. It started in November 2018 on Aap news channel. "Khabarzaar" is also a portmanteau word coined by joining two different Urdu words i.e. "Khabar" and "Sabzazaar" (greenery) implying that the news is presented in a fresh mood. Along with the text Khabarzaar, images of the host Aftab Iqbal and the members of his team have been presented. The image gives the impression of theatre stylized with

lights and individual comedians in their exclusive frames. Theatre actors are recognizable through the picture in the logo. Aftab Iqbal's picture holds a distinctive position and is debatable as well because earlier he hosted other shows with the same format on other channels.

The producer seems to be well known to the social status of Aftab Iqbal as a strong and well acknowledged media personality. His very being guarantees the success of the show. So, his image has been cashed to gather viewership. The viewers already familiar with the ideology of such a format of shows are attracted to the program through the title image.

At the foreground theatrical image is given on a green land that gives freshness to the image and is equated with the text "Khabarzaar" on the pun of "Sabzazaar" (greenery). The logo in itself contains power because of the picturization of powerful media personalities who discourses are taken as dominant discourses.

Logo presents the social and cultural perspective of Pakistan in the true sense of the word as the comedy theatres are highly popular in Pakistan.

The image is at eye level angle which shows the balanced power structures between the represented participants and the viewers.

The medium shot of the image shows a balanced social distance.

Bright colors put in the logo make it dynamic in appearance and the viewers are animated to watch the show. The mediation of power exerts no force on the viewers to bring them to watch the show. He/ she can arbitrarily decide to watch the program.

4.4. Logo of Siyasi Theatre:

Siyasi Theatre is an express news comedy talk show. Political and social moves are delineated on a lighter note. It is hosted by Wasi Shah, a famous poet and media person in Pakistan. The logo of the show is highly symbolical with the text in Urdu "Siyasi Theatre" (Political Theatre) and two masks as visuals. Well known comedy stage actors are performing different characters in the show. In Pakistan, moist of the theatres have become attached to fun and comedy only. So, the text "Siyasi theatre" depicts that the political scenario is being displayed in a comedy theatre.

Two masks on the logo are eluding to the masque plays of European theatre tradition, originated in 16th century in Italy and became greatly popular in England. Masks were put on by the actors to represent allegorical characters. The image of the masks stands for the same allegorical performances given by the stage actors employed as requisite parts of this type of format. One is a smiling mask and the other is sad behind it. It represents that the comic characters through their comedy intent to highlight the serious issues.

This program has been produced by express news channel, realizing the tendency of Pakistani viewers towards comedy and the controversial conditions of politics in Pakistan. The interests of the people have been put together in the text of the logo.

The close shot indicates the intimate involvement of the viewers with the text and figurative design of the logo.

An eye level angle shows reconciliating power between what is represented in the logo and its viewers.

White color text and golden visuals have been shown against a bright pink background. White text looks notable as the viewers find it pleasing to their eyes. Golden masks give an antique look taking the viewer to the historical perspective of the theatres.

The viewers find themselves close to the visual. Balanced power structures lend them the discretion to watch or ignore the show.

5. Discussion:

The findings of the study support Arshad and Khan (2021) who highlighted the concealed ideology of newspaper editors. Their study concluded that news headlines represented editors' ideologies on their political inclinations and this study endorses the hidden ideologies of the talk shows and the political inclinations of not only the show producers but the anchors bent of mind as well.The analysis proves that TVtalk shows are penetrating media withcapabilities of creating ideological consciousness among the masses. The study of logos supports Aaminah's (2018) findings that media headlines are infused with varying hidden ideologies and power relations. Thisstudy critically analyses the media discourse of different Pakistani TV talk shows in terms of their logos' objectivity

and of course persuasion as well as discussed by Horoub (2022) in the Gulf context. It also highlights the power relations in the Pakistani media. These media networks, through these talk shows and their logos,strive hard to convince the people of their vested interests and ideologies.This covertbond between the media discourse and their hidden ideologies unearths the unplumbedtie-up that comprises the components of the adopted discourse. The analysis indicates that these TV talk show logos manipulate media content and meaning to propagate their hidden ideologies to convince the masses at larger level.The analysis pictures the linguistic features and ideological beliefs of the said media discourses. The findings here highlight the significance of the constructed ideologiesas representations of ideological beliefs as described by Yeng&Geng (2021).

6. Conclusion:

The aim of the study was to bring about the multimodal discourse analysis of the logos of comedy talk shows, a genre that is highly popular these days on news channels. Using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model and Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual design, power structures exercised by the producers of the programs and the hidden ideologies propagated through the text and visuals in the logos have been analyzed. Media houses exercise power through the media discourse and try to inculcate their ideologies in the minds of the viewers/receivers. Those who have access to the power assert it in their discourses and media houses are power holding institutions. In short, producers intend to modify the behaviors and ideologies of people through their power and ideology-based productions. So, the critical discourse analysis of the logos of comedy talk shows is going to expose the construction of ideologies and the change of behavior so that it can be resisted.A stronghope is cherished that the study would help in the propagation of media literacy among the masses and specifically media houses and authorities in Pakistan.

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Appendix

TV Talk Shows' Logos