2nd Semester
CBCS, CC 4 unit-3 (ALL)

Topic: Representation of media as Codes in Media Discourse Analysis Genres

*Codes and Meaning-
 To establish the social attachment or reference of communication process the concept of code is absolutely important to acquire. Though primordial concept of code is the assemblage of sings in a specific order, codes have a core relationship with the base society which these are originating from. So, code analysis requires meaning of the message or decoding of the „encoded‟ message. According to many contemporary sociologists, without codification of signs, no message can be created or communicated. Even if encoding of signs is not properly done recodification is necessary to communicate that message (Chandler; 2001), because decoding is not just acquiring the meaning but evaluating the message as well on a determinate cultural format. It is also to be noted along with this statement that in transmission theories message is treated as a sealed packet were social context has been quite deliberately ignored.
*What is Code?
 Code is thus a behavioural structure which ensures a cultural assembly of suitable signs in a definite socio-cultural context. Naturally in different localities and societies people have different codes of language, behaviour, other cultural elements to communicate with targeted audience which on the other hand also denotes the heterogeneity codes into two semiotic categories-
i) Codes of behaviour- signify law, manners and
ii) Signifying codes- implied structuration of signs in a social order. As cultural theorist Stuart Hall argues, „there is no intelligible discourse without the operation of a code. Society itself depends on the existence of such signifying systems.
 Theorists have common opinion that:
 Codes are regulated by conventions or rules.
 Codes bear a definite meaning.
 Uses of codes belong to the same cultural plane and they interact with together all the time.
 So, codes and the culture have profound relationship in a determine social format.
 Codes are active only in a specific socio-cultural interaction (Fiske :2003)
In a socio-cultural system codes have number of sub-codes.
 For some theories even in our perception of contemporary world, codes exist. As every human being have established his/her way of perception, it involve a deliberate attempt to make a code out of all what he/she has observed. So codes are all set to express complete meaning of a message in communication experiences.
*Codes and Text –
 Codes are imperative frameworks which are used by both producers and interpreters of texts.

Noted Semiotician Daniel Chandler argues, „codes are not simply conventions of communication but rather procedural systems of related conventions which operate in certain domains. Codes organize signs into meaningful system which correlate signifier and signified.

*Classification or types of Codes:

Fiske has categorized codes into six types-

1) Digital and Analogue codes -- Fiske has explained that Music is generally an analogue code through nowadays music can be analysed digitally by using music editing softwares. Even better example of analogue code is „Nature" and „Dance". Viewers can also observe codes of nature and dance digitally.

2) Presentational and Representational codes -- Usually communicator encodes his message with presentational codes. Fiske argues that presentational codes are indexical; they cannot stand for something apart from themselves and their encoder. However both presentational and representational codes can exist in in verbal and non-verbal communication procedures. Basically communicator"s encoding is presentational because it presents communicator"s emotion. Thus presentational codes can be used in face-to-face communication. Such codes can also be well identified in non-verbal cases, like gestures, eye-movements, voice modulation etc.

On the other hand representational codes create „text" which can exist without tangible presence of its encoder. The text can live even accepting permanent absence of its encoder. Fiske"s analysis here on this code is important: "A written text can have a „tone of voice"; a photograph can convey depression or joy. It involves the creation of a message or a text that is independent of the communicator…"

3) Elaborated and Restricted codes – Basically these codes belong to verbal mode of communication. Traditional community people definitely use restricted codes at most, whereas elite and middle-class people as having compulsion of wider mixing use elaborated codes so that people from different socio-political and socio-cultural interests can get a better understanding of the message.

4) Broadcast and Narrowcast codes – If elaborated and restricted codes signify the nature along with the function of social relationship, broadcast and narrowcast codes signify the status of the audience. Codes for the mass audience are broadcast codes. On the other hand narrowcast codes are for specific audience. Codes like classical music are designed for specific audience whereas popular filmy songs are designed for the general mass audience. It is obvious to understand that people for the narrowcast codes are defined according to the social status and cultural dimensions etc.

5) Arbitrary codes or logical codes – These codes manifest logical relationship between signifier and signified. According to Fiske these codes are symbolic, impersonal and static. These codes are available in mathematical arguments and logic.

6) Aesthetic codes – Drama is an aesthetic code. A particular song is an aesthetic code. All kinds of creation are aesthetic codes. These codes originate from innovative or creative instinct of the source person.

*On the other hand Daniel Chandler has also classified codes into three following socio-cultural categories:

a) Social codes: In a broader perspective all codes are social codes.

i) Verbal language (phonological, syntactical etc.)
ii) Bodily codes (bodily contact, proximity, physical orientation, facial
expression, gesture and posture etc.)
iii) Commodity codes (fashion, clothing etc.)
iv) Behavioural codes (protocols, rituals, role-playing etc.)
b) Textual codes: Representational codes
i) Scientific codes (mathematics)
ii) Aesthetic codes (various art forms, poetry, drama, music etc.)
iii) Genre, rhetorical codes (plot, character, dialogue etc.)
iv) Mass media codes (photography, film, newspaper, magazine, radio etc.)
c) Interpretative codes:
i) Perceptual codes (visual perception)
ii) Ideological codes (encoding and decoding of texts-liberalism, feminism,
capitalism and socialism etc.)
*Daniel Chandler adds to that all codes can be regarded as ideological codes.
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Bibliography- Communication media and cultural studies beyond development by Abir
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