Chapter - 4

ANALYSIS
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

This chapter presents a detailed analysis, linguistic as well as semiotic, of the three select soap operas namely Choti Bahu, Saathiya and Bade Achche Lagte Hai. The parameters formulated for the study are based on an elaborate review of literatures of methodologies of Critical Discourse Analysis. But to quote Norman Fairclough (2001), ‘text analysis is just one part of discourse analysis’ and hence in this chapter the researcher has tried to include only the first stage of Critical Discourse Analysis that is the description of the select linguistic as well as the non-linguistic (visual) features of the three select soap operas under study. The textual samples of these select soap operas in the succeeding paragraphs contain a range of linguistic features such as lexical and pronominal anaphora, ‘idioms’ ‘message orientation’ (inter textual reference) ‘allegorical references’ if any, in the select aural text.

Again while attempting the description of non-linguistic textual features such as visuals the researcher has applied the description of symbolic, iconic and (indexical) signs to signify the identification of mythical (religious) discourse. The repetition of motifs (visual anaphora) used in the text as associative semiotic elements are used by the researcher to associate the characters with the frequency of orientation to religious discursiveness (practices). Again description of symbolism used in the form of visuals such as ‘white smoke to denote heavenly’, ‘color’ (Eco, 1996) (saffron, golden, red have cultural symbolism in India), ‘Swastik symbol’ (used in Hindu religious discourses), ‘mudlamps’ (associated with the celebration of the Hindu festival Diwali), ‘vermilion mark’ (used on the forehead by Hindu people), ‘draping of saree’ (draping of saree in a particular style connotes the wearers regional identity in India), ‘raising
of right hand in the gesture of giving blessing’ (this gesture is prevalent in the customs of both Hindus and Christians), ‘joining of hands for prayer’ (this gesture is prevalent among Hindus but the Sikhs and the Christians join their hands keeping the fingers crossed), ‘joining of hands for greeting’ (traditional way of greeting in India saying ‘namaste’ or ‘namaskar’) are analysed to trace the dominance of a particular religious (and cultural) discourse throughout the text and intertextual reference to selected visual text (motifs) have been made to bring out the orientation of the religious discourse constructed in the text. The close analysis of such features undertaken by the researcher contributes to an understanding of power relations and ideological processes in mediated mythical or religious discourse of these three soap operas. (see 3.9)

4.1. Analysis of Choti Bahu

4.1.1. a. Description of Visual

In the select visual of Plate 1 text of the soap opera Choti Bahu the female character is draped in saree with traditional style of wearing it while its colour is bright ‘red’. She also bears a vermilion mark on her forehead along with the black beaded mangalsutra. The colour ‘red’ of saree and of vermilion are indexical to the marital status and religious background of the female character in this text. The identity of this female character is stereotypically presented with ‘the body – object articulation’ (Foucault, 1979) of the cultural codes and the ‘colour’ (Eco, 1996). As it is known that ‘culture conditions the colours we see’ (ibid) as well as the symbolism associated with various colours in different cultural paradigms, hence the colour conditioning of ‘red’ with women in Hindu religion or Indian culture not only symbolizes the feminininess but also the marital status of the character. Again her identity as a married
woman in the title text of the soap opera makes the obviousness of domesticity and marital responsibilities as the context of the text. The female character is presented conforming to the stereotypical representation of the female characters portrayed in the Hindi soap operas since the day of its commencement (Ubero, 2008). Again the female character is positioned to the extreme right while the object 'peacock lamp' is positioned on the foreground and the 'swastik' symbol on the background. These objects associated with Hindu religion add to the already loud representation of 'Hinduness' (Ibid) of the female character connoting her identity as a religious character. Again the 'body-object articulation' (Foucault, 1979) of these two religious objects with the female character make her 'dependent and docile' (Bartky, 1997) towards the intentional force. A plane background or foreground would have connoted the identity of the female character as the protagonist of the soap opera with the story revolving around her own life but these objects dominate her positioning and make her identity with relation to her religiosity or some Hindu God. The 'anchorage' (Fiske, 1990) of 'Choti Bahu' (meaning younger daughter in law) amidst the symbol of 'flute' connotes the patriarchal construction in 'the second order signification' (Barthes, 2009) there by creating the myth or ideology of gender roles.

4.1.(i) b. Inference generated:

After undertaking the semiotic description of the visual text, it can be inferred that the select visual text portrays the domination of Hindu religious discourse of the characters present in it. The title image of the soap opera Choti Bahu is loaded with patriarchal construction of gender roles and femininity where Hindu ideal female character should be dependent, docile and an object of male desirability. There is a complete absence of other religious discourses
like Islam, Sikhism, Christianity etc of India in this select text. Hence the construction of religious discourse in the text of this media content draws on the order of the dominant position of Hindu religious discourse as ‘us’ and other religious discourses of India as ‘them’ (Hall, 1997) conforms to the hegemonic construction of ‘Hinduness’ (Uberoí, 2008) in the plot.

4.1.(ii) a. Description of Visual

In Plate:2, Balram and Kahna (lord form) are seen laughing in the room. In this scene the mythological character Kanha is dressed in saffron coloured ‘dhoti’ a drape used by men in India to cover the lower part of their body. The colour ‘saffron’ is signified with Hindu religious discourse. Other semiological codes that establish the character ‘Kanha’ as God are the use of ‘Golden crown’ and ‘heavy jewellery’ (stereotypes used in serials like ‘Mahabhatara’ and ‘Rmayana’) (See 3.9). The semiological element that identifies the character as the Hindu God ‘Lord Krishna’ is the holding of ‘Flute’ (see 3.9) which is mainly associated with this mythological character.

4.1.(ii) b. Inference generated

After undertaking the semiotic description of the visual text, it can be inferred that the select visual text portrays the domination of Hindu religious discourse through associating certain colours (see 3.9) as religiously symbolic. The occasional appearance of Hindu mythological character Kanha is another symbolic element used to portray the mysticism and magical element of Hindu religious discourse thereby hailing it as dominant.

4.1.(iii) a. Description of Visual

The episode starts with the scene where Radhika grabs the hand of Barkha to stop her from
hitting the farm boy (see Plate: 3). The small farm boy is portrayed as an incarnation of Balaram, the elder brother of Lord Krishna (according to the Hindu mythologies). The establishment of the farm boy as the incarnation of the Hindu mythological character Balaram who is the elder brother of Kanha in the text is constructed when the latter addresses the small boy as ‘dau’ which means ‘elder brother’ in Hindi. This term is repeated throughout the text of this serial to emphasis on the relationship between the two constructed allegorical characters drawn from external text of ‘The Bhagavat Gita’. Barkha portrayed as the villainess is stereotyped with semiological codes establishing this binary opposition to the virtuous character of the protagonist. The character of Barkha is also portrayed draped in ‘Saree’ (an Indian dress) but usually of bright colours. Although it is found that both the protagonist Radhika as well the villainess Barkha are always draped in Saree but the style of draping it differs in the case of both the characters. While Radhika portrayed as the ‘good’ character drapes it in North Indian style, Barkha drapes it in a pan-Indian style (see 3.9). The deliberate difference in draping of Saree of both the characters is an attempt to construct an embedded significance of the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ characteristics of both the characters in relation to their draping of Saree. Again the streak of vermilion on the forehead of the characters, the black beaded ‘mangalsutra’ worn by both the characters signify them as ‘married Hindu women’. The semiological codes in the visual definition of both the protagonist and the villainess establishes the dominance of North Indian cultural code embedded in the religious discourse constructed in this serial Choti Bahu.

4.1.(iii) b. Inference generated

gain in the third visual text the researcher found the anaphoric or repeated portrayal of mythological characters of Hindu religion. The repetition of this visual construction of mystic
elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or a ‘banal religion’ (Hjarvard, 2011). It is even difficult to describe these soap operas as religious texts because of their ‘implicit or unwaved’ references (Bazerman, 2004; Hjarvard, 2011) but the portrayal of religion has become a pattern of life which is quite obvious in these text that is ‘hegemonisation and homogenisation’ (Uberoi, 2008).

As it is known that ‘culture conditions the colours we see’ (Eco, 1996) as well as the symbolism associated with various colours in different cultural paradigms, hence the colour conditioning of ‘red’ with women in Hindu religion or Indian culture not only symbolizes the feminineness but also the marital status of the character. This symbolism associated with the sign of colour ‘red’ identifies her and all other women using the colour as an index of their marital status. Again her identity as a married woman in the title text of the soap opera makes the obviousness of domesticity and marital responsibilities as the context of the text. The female character is presented conforming to the stereotypical representation of the female characters portrayed in the Hindi soap operas since the day of its commencement. It is even difficult to describe these soap operas as religious texts from the repetition of the visual construction of religious ‘iconography’ (see 3.9) because of their ‘implicit or unwaved’ references (Bazerman, 2004; Hjarvard, 2011) but the portrayal of religion has become a pattern of life which is quite obvious in these text that is ‘hegemonisation and homogenisation’ (Uberoi, 2008) through these repetition.

4.1.(iv) a. Description of Visual

The select text in Plate: 4 of the serial Choti Bahu is found to be heavily loaded with Hindu religious discourse. The visual codes embedded in the shot consist of the female protagonist
a tray (with flowers and mudlamp usually referred as the Aarti-plate used for performing the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti). Here the signer is the symbolic plate which refers to the performance of the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti as signified. Again the signified of Aarti is converted into a sign where the signer is ‘the female protagonist holding the plate while the male protagonist receiving the ‘Aarti’ (aura from the lamp)’. The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repeated portrayal of Hindu ‘religious discourse’ along with ‘the gender discourse’ constructs entanglements of these two discursive strands into the discursive knot of ‘male- female hierarchy’.

4.1.(iv) b. Inference generated

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ (Barthes, 1973) because it is the women who are always shown performing the religious chores within the family. The repeated portrayal of Hindu ‘religious discourse’ along with ‘the gender discourse’ constructs entanglements of these two discursive strands into the discursive knot of ‘male- female hierarchy’. The repetition of this visual construction of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘Hinduness’ (Uberoi, 2008).

4.1.(v) a. Description of Visual

The shot in Plate : 6 is used as a reaction shot from the idol is a low angle shot of both the idols of Lord Krishna and Radha to establish the superiority of the image of Gods in front of human beings. The construction of the visual text of framing this low angle shot establishes
the portrayal of Hindu religious discourse of ‘idolatory’ in the text of this scene as well as the ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’.

4.1.(v) b. Inference generated

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ (Barthes, 1973) where the religious discourse is vested in the women who are portrayed as practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repetitition of this visual construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘gender roles’.

4.1.(vi) a. Description of Visual

In the scene (see Plate: 6) where the protagonist Radhika, along with the other characters Amba (the nanny), Maheshwari (an ally of the villainess Barkha) and Mohini (the daughter-in-law of Maheshwari) are coincidentally gathered at the temple area, each and every shot is framed with the image of Lord Krishna and Radha in the background. This anaphoric use of the motif of Lord Krishna to signify the spirituality and holiness of the framed location is an implicit intertextual reference to the teachings of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavat Gita. The select text of the serial Choti Bahu is found to be heavily loaded with Hindu religious discourse. The visual codes embedded in the shot consist of the female protagonist a tray (with flowers and mudlamp usually referred as the Aarti-plate used for performing the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti). Here the signifier is the symbolic plate which refers to the performance of the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti as signified. The signified of this sign takes the form of a
‘myth’ where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repeated portrayal of Hindu ‘religious discourse’ along with ‘the gender discourse’ constructs entanglements of these two discursive strands into the discursive knot of ‘male-female hierarchy’.

4.1.(vi) b. Inference generated

After undertaking the semiotic description of the visual text, it can be inferred that the select visual text portrays the domination of Hindu religious discourse of the characters present in it. The select image of the soap opera Choti Bahu is loaded with patriarchal construction of gender roles and femininity where Hindu ideal female character should be dependent, docile and an object of male desirability. There is a complete absence of other religious discourses like Islam, Sikhism, Christianity etc of India in this select text. Hence the construction of religious discourse in the text of this media content draws on the order of the dominant position of Hindu religious discourse as ‘us’ and other religious discourses of India as ‘them’ (Hall, 1997) conforms to the hegemonic construction of a dominant discourse in terms of both religion and gender roles.

4.1.(vii) a. Description of Visual

In this scene (see Plate: 7) the family members of Radhika come to visit her on the occasion of Diwali starts with Amba, the nanny placing a bronze pot with coconut and mango leaves on in amidst the mudlamps in the centre of the house. The semiotic codes in this visual construction are embedded with the symbolism associated with the Hindu religious discourse of holiness associated with coconut and mango leaves. The anaphoric use of mudlamps and
flower throughout the visual construction of this serial is an attempt of positioning these inanimate objects as ‘elements of Hindu religious discourse’.

4.1.(vii) b. Inference generated

The repetition of this visual construction of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion (see 3.9) and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of dominanitio of either religion or gender roles within the institution of family.

4.1.(viii) a. Description of Visual

In the select shot (see Plate: 8), the female characters are shown to serve food to some people seated in a location that is established as a Hindu religious institution because of the signifier of ‘saffron clad people’. The context of the text makes the signification take the shape of a discoursral construction where Dev the husband of Radhika orders her look after the arrangements of lunch in the ‘muth’.

4.1.(viii) b. Inference generated

As it is known that ‘culture conditions the colours we see’ (Eco, 1996) as well as the symbolism associated with various colours in different cultural paradigms, hence the symbolic connotation of colour is part of several literature. Similarly the colour ‘saffron’ has come to be associated with Hinduism (see 3.9). The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ (Barthes, 2009) due to its established connotative correlation with a particular religion, and hence the subsequent portrayal of this colour acts as a stereotypical establishment of this particular religion. Again the actions performed by the female character in this scene along with the

81
contextual reference of ‘docility’ (Bartky, 1997) brings out the embedded discourse of ‘hierarchy in husband-wife relation’ in the select text of the soap opera under study. Under this ‘discursive knot’ (Jager & Maier, 2009) of ‘male- female hierarchy’ the discourse strand of domesticity becomes evident where female characters are always allocated domestic chores both within and outside the walls of their house. The protagonist and the other female characters are portrayed as more than obligated to perform their duties and celebrate their domesticity. It is found that either domestic chore or religious discourse keep on substituting each other in the content of this serial where either of the two take centre stage to invest in the mystic element of the content.

4.1.(ix) a. Description of Visual

The scene (see Plate: 9) where Kanha and Balram are shown passing judgemental remarks from heaven is constructed with stereotypes of visual grammar. White smoke is at their feet while their voices are given an effect of echo.

4.1.(ix) b. Inference generated

It is also found that certain ‘banal religious elements’ (Hjarvard, 2011) according to which both individual faith and collective religious imaginations are created and maintained by a series of experiences and representations in the media that may have little or no relationship with institutionalized religions. The repetition of this visual construction of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001).
4.1.(x) a. Description of Visual

The repetitive use of Hindu religious discourse in the text of this serial is an attempt of establishing it as a dominant discourse offered for reading by the audience. The shot in Plate: 10 signifies the blessing power of the heavenly beings (here Lord Krishna) amidst the chanting of “Govind gopal radhe Radhe Keshav nanadan Radhe Radhe” (a hymn sung in praise of Lord Krishna and Radharani). The gesture of raising right hand denotes the showering of blessing in Hindu religious discourse. Hence the signifier of this gesture signifies the construction of Hindu religious discourse in the text of this serial.

4.1.(x) b. Inference generated

The recurrent construction of this text throughout the serial establishes the attempt of the producer to exploit the myth of ‘intentional force’ (Hjarvard, 2011) and its designs behind every event that takes place in one’s life. This construction is an element of ‘banal religion’ (Ibid). The construction of the ‘resort seeking’ nature as natural to the female characters is an attempt to re-establish the imposition of ‘discipline and punishment’ to create ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault, 1979; Bartky, 1997).

4.1.(xi) a. Description of Visual

The scene (see Plate: 11) where Kanha and Radharani are shown busy in conversation in heaven is constructed with stereotypes of visual grammar. The signifier of ‘white smoke is at their feet’ as well as their costumes’ are used to signify their character as ‘heavenly’ or ‘God like’. Although both the male and female characters are portrayed as heavenly but the ‘religious discourse’ constructed gets entangled with the ‘gender discourse’. This can be read from the
physical framing of both the characters. While the female character in shown standing with her hands positioned near her belly (to make her comply to the feminine traits), the male character is shown placing his hands at his waist to position himself as confident, dominating and powerful.

4.1.(xi) b. Inference generated

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ (Barthes, 1973) where the religious discourse is vested in the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their regular lives and they also assume that their regular conjugal practices are to be treated as religiously as possible. The repetition of this visual construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ideology of ‘gender roles’ (Bartky, 1997). While the producer and director of the serial try to exploit the concept of ‘intentional force’ (Hjarvard, 2011) and how it shapes up and decides the events in a person’s life, the repetitive use of the same kind of associative image brings out the understanding about the ‘docile bodies’ (Bartky, 1997) to the fore of the discussion.

4.1.(xii) a. Description of Linguistic features:

In the first episode of the selected sample it is found that Radhika, (who is the incarnation of Kanha here in these selected 5 episodes of festive season ) uses words such as Radhika’s ‘vishwas’ (faith), that ‘mei’ (I) came here to help ‘mere’(my) bhakt (devotee) in need”. The anaphora ‘bhakt’ is used here to refer to the character of Radhika, who is the protagonist while ‘I’ and ‘my’ are used to emphasise on the construction of the mythological character of ‘Kanha’ as the speaker in this select text. This association of the speaker ‘Radhika’ who is
shown as Lord Krishna in the disguise of the female protagonist Radhika in the text establishes the representation of mythological characters in the discourse of this select soap opera.

The construction of religious discourse in the text of this serial becomes prominent when one of the characters Daima (the nanny) says “bhakt ka vishwas majboot huve, to bhagwan bhi majboor ho jave” which means “even God gets moved at the strong faith of a devotee”. Words like ‘dharmasabha’ (religious meet), ‘muth’ (a Hindu religious institution) also signify the construction of religious discourse in the text of this serial. Some ‘banal religious’ element too find place in the text like ‘Rajpurohit’ (royal priest), ‘karvachauth vrat’ (a fasting ritual performed by Hindu wives for the long life of their husbands) etc. In the select text an intertextual reference of events cited in the Hindu mythological epic ‘the Mahabharata’ is also found. The use of ‘Shloka’ from ‘the Bhagavat Gita’(the religious Book of the Hindus) in the contraction of the dialogue of the incarnated ‘Kanha’ establishes the religious turn taken in the serial. Reference to the mythological characters like ‘Arjun’, ‘Krishna’ and even the ‘Kurukshatra war’ are part of ‘direct quotation’ and ‘indirect quotation’ (Bazerman, 2004).

4.1.(xii) b. Inference generated

In these selected text one recurring turn that is taken is ‘tenets of Hindu religion’ with anaphoric reference to ‘dharma’ to establish its emphasis for the dominant reading. Hence the anaphoric reference to Hindu mythological character in the dialogue of the protagonist as well as the supporting characters establish the discursive strands of religion in the semantic construction of the soap opera under study. The repetitive use of Hindu religious overtones in the text of the serial is an attempt to establish it as a dominant discourse (Fairclough, 2001) offered for reading by the audience.
4.1.(xiii) a. Description of Linguistic features:

The episode starts with Dev and he is returning to his room when he is stopped by Barkha, the villainess to seek forgiveness for her failure in completion of her ‘vrath’ (referred to Karvachauth). In reply to her Dev repeats the ‘indirect quotation’ attributed to the Bhagavat Gita in the earlier episode. In another scene when Maheswari starts chanting God’s name to save herself from the fear of ghost the elements of ‘banal religion’ are contructed in the text to invest in the story. Again the recurring reference to ghost, ‘jhooti kasam’ (false oath) and bad omen associated with it establishes the superstitious elements of a ‘banal religion’ (Hjarvard, 2011) being constructed in the text as part of ‘cultural discourse’ portrayed in the text of the select soap opera.

4.1.(xiii) b. Inference generated

There is a difference between explicit or ‘waved’ religious text and implicit or ‘unwaved’ religious texts (Hjarvard, 2011). The second kind of text gives rise to ‘banal religion’ which may incorporate representations that have no necessary religious meanings or symbolism used (such as ringing of temple bells, dropping of flower, sudden appearance of allegorical characters and hymns as background score in the case of this study). The ‘iconography and liturgical practices’ of both institutionalized religions and folk religions become ‘stockpiles’ of the media’s own production of factual and fictional stories. The religious representations are there to serve the conventions of the melodrama and invest the story with mysticism, magic and excitement.
4.1.(xiv) a. Description of Linguistic features:

When the mythological character Kanha says: “Sabka lekha hai mere paas”, “maine sab dekha hai”. Here ‘mere’ and ‘maine’ are anaphoric reference of the pronoun of ‘me’ and ‘I’ to relate the speaker Kanka with the ‘judgmental duty’ of Gods with the verbs used such as ‘lekha’ and ‘dekha’ meaning ‘noted down’ and ‘saw’. The tense of the verbs used are past perfect which denotes the context of ‘judgement’ being already passed by the speaker. This construction establishes the mythical discourse of Hindu religion where Gods are portrayed as keeping track of every actions performed by the mortals to pass the judgement. This can be related to the establishment of a mythical discourse connoting to the ‘discipline and punishment’ (Foucoul, 1979) of patriarchy.

4.1.(xiv) b. Inference generated

It is found by the researcher that media have become an important producer and distributor of ‘religious re articulations’ about the supernatural and intentional force behind natural phenomenon such as the sudden strike of lightening (or victory of protagonist over the antagonist in the case of this study). Since our contemporary world is as furiously religious as it ever was, the ‘demystification’ and ‘disenchantment’ of the modern world could never be an explicit process. Any attempt to ‘naturalize’ or make them ‘common sensical assumptions’ will be an act of construction of ‘banal religion’ (Hjarvard, 2011).

4.1.(xv) a. Description of Linguistic features:

The discoursal structure of her dialogue even goes to the extent of associating religious connotation to ‘service’. When she says “seva sukhdayi hota hai, seva ‘pane vale’ ke liye hi
nahi, seva ‘karne vale’ ke liye bhi” (meaning “service always provides happiness not only to
to person who is served but also to the service provider”). “isliye to kabhi kabhi Bhagwan bhi
apne ‘pyare bhakto’ ke seva ke liye aajate hai” (meaning “therefore sometime even God also
come down to serve his dear devotees”). In the above select text the term ‘seva’ (service) is
repeated four time during the entire dialogue which established its emphasis. Again
paradigmatic relation of both the binary opposite laxemes ‘pane vale’ (service receiver) and
‘karne vale’ (service provider) establishes the dominance of the concept of ‘service’. When
the following dialogue starts with ‘isliye’ (therefore) it acts as a continuation of the justification
provided to the concept of service. The text even goes to the extent of constructing religious
discourse in the anaphoric reference of ‘apne’ following the noun ‘Bhagvan’ to establish the
justification. The discourse constructed in the text creates a relation between ‘Bhagwan’ (God)
and ‘pyare bhakto’ (dear devotees) on a more personal level. This construction of the text
forms a basic ground of the serial in many recurring juxtaposed set of images and text as it
further develops.

4.1.(xv) b. Inference generated

The researcher found that the religious discourse constructed in the text positions women in
the ‘social role’ of domestic and Upholder of patriarchy as ideology. The repetition of this
visual construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here
‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such construction
thereby building the ideology of ‘gender roles’.
4.1.(xvi) a. **Description of Linguistic features:**

Some banal religious’ elements are also introduces in the text of this scene when the character of Radhika refers to a ritual of lighting every corner of the house during ‘Narak Chaturdasi’. When Radhika tries to light a mud lamp on the window pane Dev informs her about chances of its extinguishion. But Radhika justifies its power of burning all night based on the dedication of the one who wants to light it. The lamp is personified here when she says “*har diye ke andar ek vishwas hote hai*” (every mudlamp has a belief within it). The paradigmatic relation between ‘diye’ (mud lamp) and ‘vishwas’ (belief) portrays this personification which is further established by the term ‘andar’ (within). The text “*iske vishwas ko jinda rakhna hai*” where ‘iske’ is the anaphora meaning ‘it’ used for the mud lamp referred in the earlier dialogue with the repetition of ‘vishwas’ (belief) to establish its emphasis as a personified object. Any impersonified object is identified as bereft of emotions but when abstract noun of belief is juxtaposed along with the term ‘andar’ (within) and ‘zinda’ (alive) in both the dialogues respectively, it gives room for the text to construct a preferred discourse.

4.1.(xvi) b. **Inference generated**

The context endorsed in this aural text is ‘re-enchantment’ because human beings overcome all hurdles in life by dint of self belief. However sometimes they resort to belief in other supernatural self and this happens when the belief in self is insufficient in comparison to the magnanimity of the hurdle. It is found that the context of ‘re-enchantment’ (Hjarvard, 2011) and ‘resort seeking’ (Bartky, 1997) of human beings towards the ‘intentional force’ or more particularly ‘religious discourse’ is embedded in the select text under study. The symbolism of the text upholds the victory of good over the evil and establishes the power structure of the
intentional force over human beings. The reference of this ‘shrap nivaran vrat’ in the text is an establishment of ‘banal religious’ (Hjarvard 2011) element. The symbolism associated here is not just the construction of religious discourse in the text but also to create ‘the docile body’ in the character of Radhika who is the protagonist there by imposing ‘discipline and punishment’ over her. This imposition of ‘discipline and punishment’ is again a design of the patriarchy to ensure domination over the female characters. The discourse constructed in the text of this serial is one of patriarchal domination with the armor of religion. Moreover the researcher found that the religious discourse contructed in the text positions women in the ‘social role’ of domestic and upholder of patriarchy as ideology.

4.1.(xvii) a. Description of Linguistic features:

The discourse of the select soap opera creates ground for several other discoursive strands such as ‘religious’, ‘gender relation’ etc. The ‘gender relation’ discourse gets constructed under the influence of ‘culture discourse’ because the relation between husband and wife is constructed as one of ‘superior and inferior’ in the text. This can gets evident when semantic analysis is attempted because the text in Radhika’s dialogue consists of pronouns like ‘aap’, ‘aapko’ to address Dev while he uses ‘tum’ to address her. The connotation associated with ‘aap’ and ‘tum’ in Hindi text is that of forms of speech used to address someone superior and someone inferior respectively. Again when Dev and Radhika use the adverb ‘kripa’ (blessing) in relation to the verb of ‘prarthana’ (prayer), the establishment of religious discourse and its resort seeking nature of the protagonists constructed in the discourse.
4.1.(xvii) b. Inference generated

It is found that the connotation associated with ‘aap’ and ‘tum’ in Hindi text is that of forms of speech used to address someone superior and someone inferior respectively. This recurring construction of the form of speech in the discourse of the serial amplifies the stereotypical presentation of ‘hierarchy in husband-wife relation’ as ‘natural’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘gender roles’. While the first part of the selected text in this serial revolves around Dev as the bone of contention between the protagonist (Radhika) and the villainess (Barkha). The second part of the selected serial during the non-festive season revolves around the contention for winning the recognition of the greatest devotee of Lord Krishna. In both the cases surprisingly the bone of contention remains the male characters while the contenders are female. While the former contention is for the mortal being Dev, the latter contention is for the mythological character ‘Kanha’ (Lord Krishna). The semantic analysis of the names also have some symbolism of religious discourse because the name ‘Dev’ means ‘deity’ in Hindi while ‘Kanha’ is the name associated with Lord Krishna. Here both are given the status of superiority over the female characters. Again the name ‘Radhika’ and ‘Radharani’ are synonymous and are the name of the mythological character cited in ‘The Bhagavat Gita’ as the lover of Lord Krishna. The discourse constructed in this serial never attempts to drop the established stereotypes of female character especially the ‘protagonist’ portrayed in Indian television soap operas. Hence it is found that the discursive knot of ‘male female hierarchy’ is created as a result of the entanglements of ‘religious discourse’ and ‘gender discourse’ constructed in the text.
Plate 1: Opening frame of Choti Bahu

Plate 2: Balaram and Kanha
Plate 3: Radhika grabs the hand of Barkha

Plate 4: Radhika offering Aarti, a ritual performed by Hindus
Plate 5: Low angle shot of Idols

Plate 6: Inside the temple
Plate 7: Mudlamps

Plate 8: Hindu religious institution
Plate 9: Balaram and Kanha in a Heavenly setting

Plate 10: Radharani and Kanha in Heaven
4.2. Analysis of Saathiya

4.2 (i) a. Description of Visual

In Plate: 12, the opening frame of the select serial *Saathiya* is found where two female characters are portrayed along with the ‘anchorage’ (Fiske, 1990) in ‘pink’ floral art work. The female characters are again draped in saree but while one towards the left wears it in traditional style covering her head the other in the right wears it in modern style with her hair kept untied. While both the female characters are portrayed in terms of male desirability of both traditional and modern background of the colour (Eco, 1996) ‘red’ and ‘pink’ symbolizes the feminine and marital status of these characters. The anaphoric use of these colours (ibid) as indexical signs can be viewed as an attempt to naturalize the use of these colours by ideal and desirable women in patriarchal construction. The ‘anchorage’ (Fiske, 1990) of ‘Saathiya’ which means partner bears a twin meaning, one explains the relation of the female characters with each
other and the other with their respective husband. The ‘second order of signification’ (Barthes, 2009) helps to decipher the connotated gender roles and patriarchal ideology where the identity of these two female characters in this text is dependent on their relation with the invisible male character thereby making them dependent, docile and dominated. Again in the background of both the characters, the interior setting of a large elite house is portrayed. This is used as an object in ‘the body-object articulation’ to attempt the portrayal of female characters in respect to their elite and prosperous but domestic identity.

4.2 (i) b. Inference generated

As it is known that ‘culture conditions the colours we see’ (Eco, 1996) as well as the symbolism associated with various colours in different cultural paradigms, hence the colour conditioning of ‘red’ with married Hindu women can be viewed as an attempt to naturalise the use of these colours by ideal and desirable women in patriarchal construction.

4.2 (ii) a. Description of Visual

The construction of the visual text of framing a low angle shot of idols of Hindu deity (see Plate: 13) establishes the portrayal of Hindu religious discourse of ‘idolatory’ in the text of this scene as well as the ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’. All through out the visual text of the serial the image of Lord Krishna is used as a leitmotif to signify the spirituality and holiness of the framed location is an implicit intertextual reference to the teachings of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavat Gita. But the anaphora constructed in the visual text is an evidence of Hindu religious discourse portrayed in the serial. The recurrent construction of this text throughout the serial establishes the attempt of
the producer to exploit the myth of ‘intentional force’ and its designs behind every event that takes place in one’s life. This construction is an element of ‘banal religion’ (Hjarvard, 2011).

### 4.2 (ii) b. Inference generated

The repetition of construction of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalise’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘common sensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘Hindutva’. Moreover the construction of the ‘resort seeking’ nature as natural to the female characters is an attempt to re-establish the imposition of ‘discipline and punishment’ to create ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault, 1979; Bartky, 1997).

### 4.2 (iii) a. Description of Visual

In the select shot (see Plate:14) with religious symbolism Gopi and Jigar are shown standing on the doorway with the background image of a large painting of Lord Krishna and some female characters. The scene carries semiotic connotations of a relation between religious discourses constructed in the text along with the discourse of patriarchy. Based on semiological codes the scene can be read in relation to the background image because the female character Gopi is shown standing at the side where the female character in the painting is placed. Again Jigar, the main character is shown standing on the side of the image of Lord Krishna in the background painting.

### 4.2 (iii) b. Inference generated

The framing of this scene signifies the relation between the female and male members of the society according to religious discourses constructing a ‘superior-inferior hierarchy’ in the
relationship. The text of these serial also try to construct a discourse where the female characters are established as devotees of the male characters who are constructed as Gods in their life.

4.2 (iv) a. Description of Visual

The framing of the shot (see Plate:15) is heavily loaded with semiotic elements that have religious connotations as well as the pompous arrangements for celebrating the festival Diwali among Hindus. The flood of lights and mudlamps shown in this shot are used as a signifier to signify some celebration but the symbol of ‘Swastik’ (made with the mudlamps on the floor) is used as an ‘icon’ to refer to the signified of Hindu religious discourse particularly due to its association with the Hindu religion.

4.2 (iv) b. Inference generated

The repetition of construction of the religious overtones in the visual text of the select serial denotes the implicit reference to the ‘Hinduness’ (Uberoi, 2008) of the storyline or characters but on the ‘connotative level’ (Barthes, 2009) the televisual sign is not fixed but is highly polysemic (Hall, 1980). The dominant cultural order in the form of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ of dominant ideology both religion and gender roles. The institutional or political or ideological order as noted by Stuart Hall (1980), gets imprinted in the pattern of these televisual codes. As pointed out by John Fiske (1987) reality is already encoded, and hence the implicit or explicit reference to these semiotic elements can make sense by correlating them with the codes of our Indian culture where the producers may be trying to set up a hegemony of a ‘preferred and powerful
social bloc' (Mitra, 1993). Again the signifier of 'flood of lights, mudlamps, flower garlands/floral arrangements and the idols of Lord Krishna and Radha shown in this shot' is used as an 'icon' to refer to the 'status of grandeloquence' attributed to the celebration of religious festivals among the elites. The signifier in the shot not only signify construct the strands of religious discourse but also gets entangled with gender discourse as well when the female characters are shown bearing the responsibility of festival preparation through domestic chores.

4.2 (v) a. Description of Visual

In the select shot (see Plate:16) the celebration of birthday of Ahem, the husband of Gopi the protagonist becomes the central theme of the turn of events that are shown in this select samples. The select text of the serial Saathiya is found to be heavily loaded with Hindu religious discourse. The visual codes embedded in the shot consist of the female protagonist a tray (with flowers and mudlamp usually referred as the Aarti-plate used for performing the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti). Here the signifier is the symbolic plate which refers to the performance of the Hindu religious ritual of Aarti as signified. The signified of this sign takes the form of a 'myth' where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship.

4.2 (v) b. Inference generated

The repeated portrayal of Hindu ‘religious discourse’ along with ‘the gender discourse’ constructs entanglements of these two discursive strands into the discursive knot of ‘male-female hierarchy’. The context of the shot helps in reading the sign created by the signifier of the surface of the text and the signified of their binary opposite representation based on cultural
discourse. The symbolism found in this construction is that an ideal wife of daughter-in-law follows the path tried and tested by her family rather than adopt something new. The celebration of festivals is made as natural as also the docile nature of the female character. The discoursal structure of these semantic constructions confirms the imposition of ‘discipline and power’ upon the female character by assigning them the religious and domestic chores.

4.2 (vi) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In the first scene Rashi the sister of the female protagonist Gopi is seen talking to her mother when Kokila Modi, the mother-in-law of Gopi enters the scene. It is found that whenever the characters greet each other they use the phrase ’Jai Shri Krishna’ (Hail Shri Krishna) which establishes their Gujarati identity and surprisingly the phrase is repeated at every drop of the hat. This phrase is found in the dialogues of all the characters who repeat it whenever someone meets someone or takes leave of someone.

4.2 (vi) b. Inference Generated

The discourse constructed in the text is of Gujarati Hindu identity and the repetition is a process of making it as natural for the dominant reading. The institutional or political or ideological order as noted by Stuart Hall (1980), gets imprinted in the pattern of these televiual codes. As pointed out by John Fiske (1987) reality is already encoded, and hence the implicit or explicit reference to these semiotic elements can make sense by correlating them with the codes of our Indian culture where the producers may be trying to set up a hegemony of a ‘preferred and powerful social bloc’ (Mitra, 1993).

4.2 (vii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:
It is also found from the discoursal construction that words such as ‘kharidi’ (shopping), ‘kharidne’ (to be purchased) and ‘kharidungi’ (will purchase) are used with reference to the festival of ‘Dhanteras’. The festival of ‘Dhanteras’ is celebrated as the festival of wealth by Hindus in India. Construction of the text revolving around the purchase of not just any item but ‘gehne’ (ornaments: in plural form citing the quantity) is an attempt to make it synonymous to the mainstream lifestyle portrayed in the text of this serial.

4.2 (vii) b. Inference Generated

It is found by the researcher that ‘commodification and merchandisation of festival.is constructed in the text as a dominant discourse. The ‘naturalisation’ of this representation is an attempt to ‘reproduce the process of production’ by the capitalist class (Althusser, 1971) thereby maintaining the ‘superstructure’.

4.2 (viii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In the next scene when Kinjal and Dhaval argue about the extravagant shopping of ornaments, the clash between the ‘middle class ideology’ and the ‘elites’ is constructed. The binary oppositional ‘turn’ taken by both Kinjal and Dhaval on the purchase of gold ornaments during the Dhanteras festival establishes the construction of ‘different connotation of festival celebration among different class of people’. Kinjal hailing from the elite ‘Modi family’ uses words such as ‘set’ (ornament set), ‘dher sari’ (a lot), ‘sab kuch’ (everything) in relation to the verb lexeme ‘Dhanteras ki kharidi’ (shopping of Dhanteras) in her dialogue. On the other hand when Dhaval is portrayed presenting Kinjal a gold chain for Dhanteras the latter is portrayed ridiculing it with the adverbial phrase ‘dhage jaisi’ (thin as thread). Kinjal then
shows off her purchased ornament referring it as ‘sone ka zevar’ (gold ornament set) which establishes it to be an expensive heavy jewelery. The binary oppositional turn taken by both the elite wife and the middle class husband on the celebration of festival is established as a discursive construction in the text.

4.2 (viii) b. Inference Generated

It is found by the researcher that although class conflict finds place in the religious discourse constructed in the soap opera text but it gets ‘naturalised’ under the influence of ‘banal elements’ of religious discourse imagery consisting ‘banal religious elements’.

4.2 (ix) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

The episode starts with Kokila stopping Gopi and Rashi when she notices a leaf on the hair of Rashi. The authoritative role of Kokila Modi in the family of the Modi’s is established when she says “to pata rakkha karo aur savdhani bhi barto... mujhe katei pasand nahi ki Modi parivar ki bahue bahar rahe to uljhi aur bikhri rahe. Samjhi gayi! The discoursal construction of this dialogue brings out preferred set of behavioural pattern of patriarchy to be followed by the daughter-in-laws. The verb lexeme ‘savdhani barto’ (take precaution) is referred to maintainance of ‘decency’ by the ‘Modi parivar ki bahue’ (daughter-in-laws of Modi family). The exclamatory phrase, ‘samjhi gai!’ (understood) which is used at the end of this dialogue is constructed in the text to confer the authoritarian role to the character hailing the ideologies of patriarchy.

4.2 (ix) b. Inference Generated

104
It is found out by the researcher that the female character who was vested with power in the household like the mother-in-law was defined by the patriarchal norm that saw it necessary to downplay her sexuality. Hence patriarchal ideology is established in the discourse of the select serial.

4.2 (x) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

When Urmila Ben, the mother of Rashi enters the scene amidst the argumentation of Dhaval and Kinjal, she takes the turn on the purchase as ‘shubh’ (good omen). Her approval of the commodification and merchandisation of festivals establish the construction of desire of the middle class people to live the life of elites. In this process reference to Hindu religious discourse is made to justify the purchase of gold items by Kinjal by Urmila. Urmila convinces Dhaval to let Kinjal purchase since it was her first Dhanteras celebration post marriage and she being the ‘ghar ki lakshmi’ (intertextual reference to the Goddess Lakshmi: Goddess of wealth which is used as a phrase in hindi to refer to the daughter or daughter-in-laws).

4.2 (x) b. Inference Generated

This implicit intertextual reference to the Hindu Goddess of wealth to justify the commodification of festival is an attempt to uphold the consumer culture even with the use of religious discourse to benefit the producer class.

4.2 (xi) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

The domination of work and worship as natural phenomenon in the life of the female characters is constructed when all of them are shown using ‘Dhanteras ki sajawat’, (decoration for Dhanteras), ‘ghar ki sajawat’ (decoration of the house) and ‘rasore ka kaam’ (kitchen chores).
The term ‘rasora’ (kitchen) is repeatedly constructed in the text of the serial attributing extreme emphasis on it. While on the one hand the celebration of any festival is given the status of a ‘grandeloquent affair’, the responsibility of making it so is vested upon the female characters and hardly ever the male characters. The celebration of festivals is made as natural as also the docile nature of the female character. The discoursal structure of these semantic constructions confirms the imposition of ‘discipline and power’ upon the female character by assigning them the religious and domestic chores. The ‘discipline is constructed when Kokila Modi is shown assigning various Hindu religious rituals to Gopi, her daughter-in-law. The text in the dialogue of Kokila establishes this construction. The semantic analysis of the dialogue “Gopi vau, tum rangoli banaogi”, and “Gopi tu yahaa mandir me diya lagaai” portrays that both refer to assignment of religious duties on the protagonist Gopi. Where the speaker of the first sentence is Kokila Modi the second is spoken by Rashi, the antagonist. The subject of both the dialogues is Gopi and since both the sentences mean assignment of certain work they are associated with authority over the subject. The word ‘Gopi vau’ and its anaphoric reference ‘tum’ explains the relation of the speaker as mother-in-law and superior because ‘tum’ in Hindi is used for someone who is inferior either in age or in position. Similarly the word ‘Gopi’ and its anaphoric reference in the sentence ‘tu’ explains the relation between Rashi and Gopi as that of ‘superior- inferior’ because although Rashi is the cousin sister of Gopi she is authoritarian over Gopi and hence uses ‘tu’ to address her. Here ‘tu’ means ‘you’ used for someone who is younger in age or inferior in status. Again the verb lexeme ‘rangoli banaogi’ and ‘diya lagaai’ used in both the sentences are forms of work done during the preparation of any festival celebration, in this case ‘Diwali’. The religious connotation is further established when Rashi uses the ‘indexical reference’ ‘yahaa’ (here) to signify ‘mandir’ (temple) to emphasise on the location of the work to be done.
4.2 (xi) b. Inference Generated

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repetition of this construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalise’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ‘common sensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘gender roles’.

4.2 (xii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

Another context that shapes the discourse of this serial is distress which is constructed recurrently to bring out the ‘resort seeking’ behaviour of the female protagonist. While the male characters like Ahem, Jigar and their other counterparts does not have much of role play in the portrayal of religious discourse but the female characters are interweaved in either distress situation or festivities throughout the text. The discoursal structure that establishes this resort seeking portrayal of the female characters is the recurring construction of pronominal words with religious connotation like ‘Thakurji’, ‘Bhagvan’, ‘Krishna Bhagwan’ (to refer Lord Krishna) in their dialogues.

4.2 (xii) b. Inference Generated

The use of reference to religious God establishes the portrayal of Hindu religious discourse in the text of this serial. The recurrent construction of this text through out the serial establishes the attempt of the producer to exploit the myth of ‘intentional force’ and its designs behind every event that takes place in one’s life. This construction is an element of ‘banal religion’
(Hjarvard, 2011). The construction of the ‘resort seeking’ nature as natural to the female characters is an attempt to re-establish the imposition of ‘discipline and punishment’ to create ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault, 1979; Bartky, 1997).

4.2 (xiii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In a turn of events within the plot when Rashi, the cousin of Gopi, the protagonist are constructed in the context of crisis, Rashi assigns duty of ‘resort seeking’ to Gopi. Here Rashi is portrayed using idiomatic phrases to express her state of mind for example “diwaro ke bhi kaan ‘hote hai’“ (walls also can hear), “lene ke dene ‘par jayenge’“ (will lose everything instead), “papad belne ‘parte hai’“ (have do even the most difficult task), “chitre udd jayenge” (will shatter into pieces). A semantic analysis of these text gives the evidence of the action oriented character of Rashi unlike the ‘resort seeking’ Gopi. All the idioms are either in present indefinite tense like ‘hote hai’ and ‘parte hai’ or future indefinite tense like ‘par jayenge’ and ‘udd jayenge’ which establishes her recent actions having an effect on her future rather than the believe that all actions will be governed by an ‘intentional force’.

4.2 (xiii) b. Inference Generated

The semantic construction also establishes Rashi as a female character of not so few words unlike Gopi the protagonist who is never constructed using idioms in her dialogue. Moreover it is found out that the female characters are positioned in ‘social roles’ with archetypical embodiment. The role of these female characters in ‘resort seeking’ is made ‘natural’ through the anaphoric construction in the religious discourse presented under the constant fear of ‘discipline and punishment’ to create ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault, 1979; Bartky, 1997) in them.
4.2 (xiv) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

The text in Gopi’s dialogue consists of words such as ‘Kanhaji’ (Lord Krishna), ‘kripa banaye rakhe’ (shower blessings), ‘madat kijiiye’ (help) in the context of her ‘resort seeking’ sequence during an elaborate prayer. The verb lexemes are addressed to the ‘intentional force’ ‘Kanhaji’ to construct the dominance of Hindu religious discourse in the text of this select serial. The verbs ‘kijiiye’ and ‘rakhe’ in Hindi are used for someone who is superior in age or status hence its construction in the text establishes the ‘superior status’ attributed to God in the religious discourse of the text.

4.2 (xiv) b. Inference Generated

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repetition of this construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalise’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ‘common sensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘gender roles’.

Plate 12: Opening frame of Saathiya
Plate 13: full screen shot of idols of Hindu deity

Plate 14: Gopi and Jigar with the background of Lord Krishna and gopiya
Plate 15: Mudlams and lights on the occasion of Dipawali

Plate 16: Ahem receiving Aarti from Gopi
4.3. Analysis of Bade Achche Lagte Hai

4.3 (i) a. Description of Visual

The researcher in the process of undertaking the semiotic analysis of the select visual text of the soap opera *Bade Achche Lagte Hai* (see Plate: 17), delineates the subtle construction of the visual anaphora already elucidated in text of the opening frame of both the other select serials. In this select text it is found that two characters one female and one male are portrayed with the background of natural greenery. The ‘anchorage’ (Fiske, 1990) *Bade Achche Lagte Hai: yeh dharti, yeh nadiya, yeh raina aur tum* meaning ‘Like these a lot: this earth, these rivers, these nights and you’ explain the relationship between the two characters positioned in the visual text as husband and wife because the female character bears all the anaphoric indexes of marital status already presented in the earlier texts consecutively. Since it is found that the use of colour (Eco, 1996) ‘red’ is absent in the saree of the female character and the use of light shades all throughout establishes the characters as matured and middle aged. Although the female character is portrayed as middle aged but her untied tresses are used to cater to male desirability naturalizing the role of women in patriarchy. The positioning of the male character on the foreground establishes him as the object in the ‘body-object articulation’ (Foucault, 1979) where the female character is identified with respect to her relation her husband devoid of her individuality. Again the text in the anchorage explains this articulation when the relationship between the characters is established as universal as the relationship of human with nature and ecosystem. Moreover the advertisement of hair dye Garnier Colour Naturals along with the anchorage establishes the capitalistic benefit derived out of these soap operas catering to the women viewers who are assumed to dye their hair to keep them young and desirable for men.
4.3 (i) b. Inference Generated

Hence the ‘second order of signification’ (Barthes, 2009) of the sign of this plate as a whole tries to cater to the naturalizing the gender roles established by patriarchy and hence form a subtle idea about the power relations in our society (Althusser, 1971).

4.3 (ii) a. Description of Visual

In this select shot (see Plate: 18), the traditional Indian outfits of the protagonist in this scene (the Indian drape called ‘Saree’, the black beaded necklace called ‘Mangalsutra’ and the streak of vermillion on her forehead called ‘Sindur’ to signify her as a Hindu married woman) indicate a specific mixture of self-righteous, virtue and domestic stereotyping of the Indian women. The expressions of the protagonist signify exaggerated visible explanation of her powerlessness. The signifier ‘physical structure’ signify her as a married women confronting a male character with an outburst of emotions. But the sign as a whole signify confrontation in ‘male- female hierarchy’ where women resort to outburst of emotion, (especially tears) to construct the myth of them being ‘docile bodies’ (Focoult, 1977).

4.3 (ii) b. Inference Generated

The discourse is constructed to establish certain stereotypes of the spectacle with exaggeratedly visible explanation. Apart from reestablishing the stereotypes of female characters and class difference, evidence of stereotyping one’s powerlessness, religious discourse, merchandising of festivals and resort seeking to intentional force is also found in the text of these serials. The protagonists are portrayed as not ashamed of accepting the dictates of other characters and know how to cry since the audience has a liking for tear.
4.3 (iii) a. Description of Visual

The signifier in this select shot (see Plate: 19) is the ‘lady putting lipgloss on her lips’ and the ‘curved image formation on a convex plane’ signifies the self pampering characteristics of a person with distorted morality (here the distorted image is read as signifier of the signified of distorted morality). The sign signification can lead to the myth of stereotype of villainess constructed in the text if it is read in the context of the role of the character in the text of the serial.

4.3 (iii) b. Inference Generated

The stereotype of villainess is constructed to make her binary opposite to the virtuous (Saree clad with Mangalsutra and Sindur) stereotype of the heroine (female protagonist). Hence the representation of the protagonist and the antagonist are highly based on the adoption or rejection of cultural discourse (traditional outfits). This according to Norman Fairclough (2001) is an attempt to position the female characters in subject positions of established gender stereotypes of ‘good and bad’ thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ or ideology (Althusser, 1971).

4.3 (iv) a. Description of Visual

In this select shot, Shipra and Ayesha return from shopping (see Plate: 20) on the occasion of Diwali. The ‘Bags’ in their hands are signifiers that signify the stereotyped consumerist behaviour of women. The signified of women as celebrating their domestic and consumerist behaviour during festival can again read as a sign to signify the grandeloquent and merchandising aspect of any Indian festival.
4.3 (iv) b. Inference Generated

The construction of class difference is also found in the text where the celebration of a festival has different connotations to both the poor and the elites. The women in soap operas have always been stereotyped and this select serial is not an exception but the myth that is created in this process of sign signification is the ‘merchandisation of festivals’ as religious discourse. Hence repeated visual portrayal of ‘commodification and merchandisation of festival’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalise’ this aspect of Hindu festivals as part of dominant Ideological discourse.

4.3 (v) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In the select episode of Bade Achche Lagte Hai during the festive season of Diwali reference of Hindu mythological characters is constructed in the text. The reference is made in the dialogue of the male antagonist Siddharth who is portrayed as the step brother of Ram Kapoor the male protagonist. The dialogue “Ram aur Sita ke saath Ravan ki stapna bhi ho gayi” is an implicit intertextual reference to mythological characters cited in the Hindu religious epic ‘The Ramayana’. When Siddharth says, “Ram aur Sita ke saath Ravan ki stapna bhi ho gayi” the nouns in this sentence like ‘Ram’ and ‘Sita’ are metaphorically referred to the incarnated mythological characters of Lord Ram and Sita (cited in the Hindu epic Ramayana) while ‘Ravan’ refers to the mythological villainous character (also cited in the Hindu epic Ramayana). The ‘implicit intertextual reference’ to the mythological characters tries to draw the audience to read the context of the plot according to the incidents cited in the Hindu mythological epic. The discursiveness of the text referred is embedded with religious connotations and hence any reading of the surface text will draw in the preferred reading of dominant discourse that
is Hindu religious discourse in his case. Further the verb used in the sentence ‘stapna’ means ‘setting up’ refers to the context of the Hindu tradition of setting up of idols in places of worship at the onset of any religious festival.

4.3 (v) b. Inference Generated:

The ‘micro study’ and ‘macro study’ of the text in combination of the intertextual reference found within it brings out the presence of Hindu religious discourse (in terms of nominations used, verbs and context) in the text. The repetition of construction of the religious overtones in the visual text of the select serial denotes the implicit reference to the ‘Hinduness’ (Ubero, 2008) of the storyline or characters but on the ‘connotative level’ (Barthes, 2009) the televisual sign is not fixed but is highly polysemic (Hall, 1980). The dominant cultural order in the form of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ of dominant ideology both religion and gender roles. The institutional or political or ideological order as noted by Stuart Hall (1980), gets imprinted in the pattern of these televisual codes. As pointed out by John Fiske (1987) reality is already encoded, and hence the implicit or explicit reference to these semiotic elements can make sense by correlating them with the codes of our Indian culture where the producers may be trying to set up a hegemony of a ‘preferred and powerful social bloc’ (Mitra, 1993).

4.3 (vi) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

As a reaction to Siddharth’s dialogue the character Mamaji (an ally of the villain) says, “O hamare upar wale Ramji, hamare Ravan ko jita dena issbaar.” The first sentence of this
dialogue is an anaphoric reference to the mythological character ‘Ram’ which establishes the emphasis laid on the symbolism associated to the mystic and mythological characteristic of Hindu mythological characters. Further the anaphoric use of pronoun ‘hamare’ before both the Hindu mythological characters denotes the relation of the speaker to both the Hindu mythological characters as ‘our’.

4.3 (vi) b. Inference Generated:

This positioning of ‘our’ establishes the distinction made between ‘our’ and ‘their’ (or other) in relation to the religious discourse constructed in the text. The linguistic analysis brings out the representation of the protagonists as well as the antagonists as belonging to the Hindu religion. This construction of the text establishes the portrayal of Hindu religious discourse in the text of this serial. The recurrent construction of this text throughout the serial establishes the attempt of the producer to exploit the myth of ‘intentional force’ and its designs behind every event that takes place in one’s life. This construction is an element of ‘banal religion’ (Hjarvard, 2011).

4.3 (vii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In this episode when Priya who is the female protagonist use the pronoun ‘unhe’ meaning ‘him’ (used for elder people) as an anaphoric reference to ‘Mr Kapoor’ we deduce that the person referred to is elder to Priya or is superior to her. The context of the text brings out the hierarchy in husband- wife relation because Mr Kapoor is no other then Ram Kapoor who is the husband of Priya. The use of ‘unhe’ instead of ‘use’ (used for someone who is younger or inferior) brings out the structuring of the discourse of husband- wife relation in Hindu –Hindi discourse.
4.3 (vii) b. Inference Generated:

The discourse constructed in this serial never attempts to drop the established stereotypes of female character especially the ‘protagonist’ portrayed in Indian television soap operas. Hence it is found that even the speech acts used in Hindi to address husbands by their wives denotes a superior- inferior relationship between them. The use of this parts of speech in mediated discourse will construct it as ‘natural’ and commonsensical thereby maintaining the power relations in Indian gender discourses.

4.3 (viii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

The text used in the dialogue of Priya’s mother Shipra is heavily loaded with Hindi idioms. This construction of text loaded with idioms gives us a glimpse of the rhetorical means used to convey the cultural discourse of practitioners of Hindi language. When in one of her dialogues Shipra uses ‘Ramkatha’ she means ‘the entire story’. However the use of the word ‘Ram’ in ‘Ramkatha’ does not make explicit reference to Hindu mythological epic ‘Ramayana’ but rather makes an implicit reference to the ‘extensive nature’ of the epic Ramayana.

4.3 (viii) b. Inference Generated:

Hence the context of the text establishes the entanglements of ‘Hindu religious discourse’ with ‘Hindi cultural discourse’. The repetition of construction of the religious overtones in the visual text of the select serial denotes the implicit reference to the ‘Hinduness’ (Ubertoi, 2008) of the storyline or characters but on the ‘connotative level’ (Barthes, 2009) the televisual sign is not fixed but is highly polysemic (Hall, 1980). The institutional or political or ideological order as noted by Stuart Hall (1980), gets imprinted in the pattern of these televisual codes.
As pointed out by John Fiske (1987) reality is already encoded, and hence the implicit or explicit reference to these semiotic elements can make sense by correlating them with the codes of our Indian culture where the producers may be trying to set up a hegemony of a ‘preferred and powerful social bloc’ (Mitra, 1993).

4.3 (ix) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In this episode when Priya asks her husband to accompany her to her father’s house on the occasion of a festival called ‘Bhai duj’ (a festival to commemorate the honorable relationship between brother and sister) the context of Hindu religious discourse gets constructed in the text. When she says “hamare ghar me bhaiduj bohut dhum dham se banaya jata hai” the nomination ‘bhaiduj’ is structured after the indexical association ‘hamare ghar me’ which establishes the relation of the protagonist and the association to the celebration of the festival which comes out as a finding in compliance with the first objective. The association of the protagonist with this Hindu religious festival as ‘hamare’ meaning ‘our’ instead of ‘their’ (or other) brings out the representation of the protagonist as that of a Hindu woman.

4.3 (ix) b. Inference Generated:

The construction of class difference is also found in the text where the celebration of a festival has different connotations to both the poor and the elites. While on the one hand the celebration of any festival is given the status of a ‘grandeloquent affair’, the responsibility of making it so is vested upon the female characters and hardly ever the male characters. It is found that the female character is represented as a Hindu woman and although not portrayed as a ‘resort seeking’ stereotype but is associated with the celebration of the Hindu festivals. Hence this
construction ‘naturalises’ the domination of Hindu mediated mythical or religious discourses as dominant in text of soap operas.

4.3 (x) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In one of the select scene when the character mamaji says “logo ki Diwali to kal rat se shuru hogi, hamari Diwali kalse hi shuru hogayi hai”, the text is constructed with signifiers that have binary opposite signifieds. The context built through the signification is that Diwali is a festival of lights and happiness for ‘log’ (people: indexical reference to all people) but an opportunity for cunning ploy for ‘hamari’ (our: indexical reference to the villainous Mamaji). The construction of moral positioning of the speaker in terms of the connotation he associates with the religious discourse is an attempt to treat the association with religious discourse as a scale for demarcation of ‘good’ and ‘bad’.

4.3 (x) a. Inference Generated:

The rise and fall of fortunes even the transient image of certain contexts such as distress, crisis or festivities are established as designs of an ‘intentional force’. This ‘intentional force’ can be symbolically related to the orientation to religious discourse. The repetition of construction of mystic elements of Hindu religious discourse is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such mysticism to Hindu religion and thereby building the ‘commonsensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘Hindutva’.

4.3 (xi) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

In another select scene when Siddarth, enquires about the preparation for the celebration of Diwali to his mother saying “Diwali ki tayari kaisi chal rahi hai?” the construction of gender
discourse takes place in the text. The verb ‘tayari’ meaning ‘preparation’ is assigned to the female character. Again when he says “iss bar koi kami nahi rehni chahiye” the authoritative positioning of the male character is established in the text. Hence the discursive knot of ‘male–female hierarchy’ is constructed through the entanglements of ‘religious discourse’ (Diwali celebration) and ‘gender discourse’ (stereotyping of female as engulfed in domesticities). The indexical referent ‘iss baar’ (this time) is used to denote the nominal referent ‘Diwali’ which establishes the ‘recurrent nature’ of this celebration in location of this serial thereby portraying Hindu religious discourse as a dominant in the text of the select soap.

4.3 (xi) b. Inference Generated:

The signified of this sign takes the form of a ‘myth’ where the religious discourse is vested on the female who are portrayed practicing religion as part of their domesticity and domesticity as their worship. The repetition of this construction of ‘resort seeking’ character of women to any superior force or here ‘mythical discourse’ is viewed as an attempt to ‘naturalize’ the domination of such construction thereby building the ‘common sensical assumption’ (Fairclough, 2001) or ideology of ‘gender roles’.

4.3 (xii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

When an employee of Ram Kapoor comes to hand over gifts and money to the principal on the occasion of Diwali he says “Diwali ke absar par Kapoor Mansion me lakhro rupai ke gifts aate he jo iss baar bhi aye hai.” The text in the dialogue brings out the discourse strands of ‘religion’ and ‘economy’ which gets entangled intensively because the speaker uses the nomination ‘Diwali’ along with the indexical reference ‘iss baar’ (this time) to ‘Kapoor Mansion’ (where mansion is usually used to refer big house). Hence the celebration of Diwali
festival and the phrase ‘lakho rupai ke gifts’ meaning ‘gifts worth lakhs of rupees’ is constructed as a recurring event in the large house of the male protagonist Ram Kapoor. This positioning of the celebration of the religious festival of the protagonist is embedded with ‘mechanization’ in the select text thereby creating it as a discursive knot.

4.3 (xii) b. Inference Generated:

It is found that the ‘binary opposition’ in the characteristics of the elites and middle class celebration of festivals is constructed in the text. Although the binary opposite nature of both the classes gets constructed in the text but class struggle between the bourgeoisie –owning the means of production and the working or middle class gets clearly avoided. However the difference is made ‘commonsensical’ thereby maintaining the power relations required for ‘maintenance of existing process of production’ (Althusser, 1971).

4.3 (xiii) a. Description of Linguistic Features:

When Shipra refers to the bags as “Diwali ki shopping” meaning “shopping for Diwali” the construction of a myth in becomes more explicit and loud. The discourse constructed in the text in the context of festivity is of involvement in merchandisation. The religious discourse constructed in the text is shaped from the influence of society because it is found that people from all strata get involved in economic activities during festivals in India. It is usually during the celebration of religious festivals that the difference between the haves and the have-nots gets illuminated rather than the illumination of souls which is the prime essence of Diwali festival. While on the one hand we find the construction of semantic structures such as ‘lakho rupai’ in the context of ‘Kapoor Mansion’, the words like ‘sale’ (discounted price), ‘budget’ (threshold of expenses), ‘kanjusy’ (stingy) etc used in the text of dialogues of the family
members of Shipra. Hence the characters are represented as either ‘rich’ or ‘not rich’ in the context of the religious discourse constructed in the serial.

4.3 (xiii) b. Inference Generated:

The women in soap operas have always been stereotyped and this select serial is not an exception but the myth that is created in this process of signification is the ‘merchandisation of festivals’ as religious discourse. The synonym for Diwali ‘Tyohar’ (festival) is found to be associated with ‘extra kharacha’ (extra expense) referring the discursive knot of ‘merchandization’ of festival celebration evolve out of the entanglements of ‘religious discourse’ (festival celebration) and ‘economic discourse’ (expenditure). Hence ‘commodification and merchandisation of festival’ is constructed in the text as a dominant discourse.

Plate 17: Opening frame of Bade Achche Lagte Hai
Plate 18: Priya confronting her husband

Plate 19: Distorted image of Niharika formed in a concave mirror
Plate 20: Shipra and her daughter return from Diwali shopping
References and bibliography

Books


Articles


Websites


Critical%20discourse%20analysis.pdf (accessed on 9-12-2010).