

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains on the background of CDA and it is used as a research tool in the analysis of advertisements. In addition, this chapter states the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem of this research, the significance of the study and the research questions.

### **1.1 Background to the study**

CDA is an offshoot of applied linguistics which offers multiple frameworks for analysis drawn from the work of discourse analysts such as Van Dijk (1997), Wodak (1995) and Fairclough (1995, 2001). CDA is regarded as the emergent form of discourse and text analysis which recognizes the role of the language in structuring power relations in society. According to Phillips and Jorgensen (2002), “it is central to Fairclough’s approach that discourse is an important form of social practices which both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations” (p.65). Wodak and Meyer (2001) also stated that the term Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are used interchangeably and CDA is utilized to represent CL theory.

They also added that nowadays the term CDA is used as a reference in a research that deals with the basic unit of communication.

In general, speech is used for establishments of daily life and to maintain human relationships in daily interactions whereas the written language is used largely in transferring information or conveying messages. Goody (as cited in Brown & Yule 1983) stated that there are two main functions of written language. Firstly, it functions as the storage that permits communication between people even in time and space. Secondly, it also permits words and sentences to be examined out of their original contexts. One of the common genres that uses written texts to create meanings is advertising.

In the early 1990's many scholars of CDA have emerged. Researchers like Teun Van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo Van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak have contributed much to the area of CDA. According to Wodak & Mayer (2001), CDA has a different kind of interest in analyzing texts which is based on a context, their production and their relations with the society. This is different from research in the area of sociolinguistics which mainly describes and explains language variation, language change and the structures of communicative interaction with limited exploration of social hierarchy and power.

Van Dijk (2004) stated that CDA is about making connections between social and cultural structures and processes as well as properties of the text. In other words, there is a link between society and text. In addition, Van Dijk (2004) explained that, CDA sees discourse such as language used in speech and writing as a form of ‘social practices’. Therefore, advertisements have often been used as a subject for analysis in CDA.

However, in research, the text is not only to be analyzed but it is also important to consider how a text is interpreted or received, as well as their social effects. This is where the idea that ideology constructs the concept of interpellation as proposed by Althusser (as cited in Gray, 2004) who stated that “ideology interpellates individuals as subjects” (p.4). For instance, an advertisement manage to attract the readers into buying the products advertised due to the similarity between the reader and the ideology proposed in the advertisement.

## **1.2 Critical Discourse Analysis as a Research Tool**

Toolan (2002) stated that CDA looks at language as the discourse and it is interpreted by the readers’ social interests. In other words, the language produced resembles social reality. In addition, Toolan (2002) explained that CDA views a society’s discourses as a representation of people’s reasons and

thoughts. This also explains the reason why people can study a certain society through its language use.

Fromkin and Rodman (1998) described that individuals have the ability to know a language and this also enables them to construct sentences and express their ideas and thoughts. The study on discourse analysis is basically concerned with the analysis of language use (Brown & Yule, 1983). According to Fromkin and Rodman (1998) “discourse analysis involves questions of style, appropriateness, cohesiveness, rhetorical force, topic/subtopic structure, differences between written and spoken discourse, and so on” (p.191).

Critical Discourse Analysis or CDA provides a framework that allows us to study society by looking at how language determines social structures. Janks (1997) explained that “CDA stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice” (p.1). She also added that critical discourse analysis analyzes and explains how discourse is linked to the relations of power. In addition, Van Dijk (1993) stated that the knowledge people have can form a way of interpreting the world as well as the discourse produced and actions.

Zahra (2004) affirmed that “CDA has made the study of language into an interdisciplinary tool and can be used by scholars from various backgrounds, including media criticism” (p.1). Apart from this, Zahra (2004) also added that

the theory in CDA can be applied in studying media texts such as advertisements. Huckin (2002) stated that CDA can be a valuable tool for teachers and students in studying texts. In addition, by analyzing written texts, it will help teachers or students to understand the actions or even the social problems in a certain society. In addition, Huckin (2002) stated that some CDA addresses the contemporary societal issues and how the discourse can control people's ways of thinking.

Van Dijk (1993) explained that CDA is a type of research that analyzes the social abuse of power or inequality and tries to understand it. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) summarized CDA as the area which addresses social problems and it analyzes the discourse that constitutes a society and its culture. Discourse is also regarded as a form of social action and there is a link between text and society (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). In short, CDA is a framework or approach that can be used as a tool to study or analyze language use in a society. Apart from this, CDA not only analyzes text per se but it also helps in identifying the social structures, inequality or power that influence discourse production.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

“The process of interpellation is an act that begins with ‘hailing’, a calling to participate in a form of ideology” Althusser (as cited in Gray 2004, p.4). In addition, if an individual recognizes the hailing, it means that the individual is interpellated. It is a form of hailing, that resembles a calling like “HEY YOU” and we the decoders of the text will respond to it as ME? You mean ME?? And the ideology will say, Yes I mean YOU” (Klages, 2001).

In addition, an individual will be interpellated based on a construction of identity. According to Ganim (2008) “most of the readers instinctively understand literary characters as if they were real people” (p.24). This statement can be applied to a situation when we are reading the advertisements where we are led to believe that the images displayed in the advertisements are real persons.

Similar to literary texts form of hailing like ‘dear reader’, advertisers also use various lexical items such as ‘you’ as the hailing process (Klages, 2001). This is how the Althusser’s framework of interpellation can be applied in analyzing any number of texts and discourses including advertisements (Gray, 2004).

In relation to the discursive construction of interpellation, we can assume that an advertisement can interpellate an individual. In other words, we often feel that the advertisements are referring to us. Advertising is a genre that speaks to readers or consumers by addressing them. For instance, an advertisement of a cosmetic product, which is made specifically for Asian skins, may interpellate consumers in Asian countries such as Malaysia.

However, readers and consumers are often not expected to be aware of the concept of interpellation when they encounter an advertisement. Moreover, they may not realize that they are influenced to buy the products advertised. In addition, even if they recognize that they are being spoken to, not only are they engaged more deeply with the text but they also accept or identify with the identity projected by the advertisements.

Besides television and newspapers, magazines are another medium where advertisements abound. Often, magazines are also created with a certain format to suit a certain gender or group. For instance, in Malaysia, there are many magazines which are specifically produced for men such as *Men's Health* and *Masculine* whilst *Cleo* and *Her World* are mainly for women. This research has specifically used L'oreal advertisements which are taken from *Cleo* magazine and this magazine was chosen because it is considered among the top rank women's magazines in Malaysia.

Talbot (as cited in McLoughlin, 2000) stated that, femininity can be articulated through the discourse of commercial and mass media especially in the magazine and fashion industries for clothing and cosmetics. Furthermore, magazines that are created for women will use a different type of language to depict the image of femininity. McLoughlin (2000) stated that, magazines are easy to be read which explains their popularity among women. In addition, in women's magazines, all products advertised carry the ideology of femininism which means that the idea of prime and proper women is sustained. For example, a cosmetic product advertisement such as L'oreal can attract a female reader who wants to look beautiful as depicted by the image in the advertisement itself. This is an example of how the concept of 'interpellation' introduced by Althusser (Gray, 2005) can occur and interpellate the reader to buy the product advertised.

Through the study of lexical items or words usage in advertisements taken from Malaysian women's magazine *Cleo*, an analysis of the construction of interpellated identity can be made. This research chose *Cleo* magazine because it is one of the English womens' magazines produced in Malaysia but it advertises many products which are produced overseas. L'oreal is one of the companies in Paris that produces beauty products and the products are quite popular among women in Malaysia.



In this part of globalization era, products by foreign companies have conquered the Malaysian's market. Cosmetics are a good example of the foreign products that are easily available. It is surprising that such foreign companies invest heavily in advertisements targeted at Malaysian women in particular. However, it has yet to be investigated how a Western cosmetic company like L'oreal for example constructs their advertisements in order to attract Malaysian women. This study thus seeks to investigate this problem by analyzing L'oreal advertisements taken from Malaysian women's magazine *Cleo*.

Goddard (2002) affirmed that, advertisements could create a body of messages about the culture that produce them. The analysis of advertisement texts, not only a process of analyzing the texts production and interpretation but it is also an analysis of relationship between texts, processes and their social conditions. Therefore, Fairclough's framework has been used as the framework to analyze the advertisements texts in this research.

#### **1.4 Purpose of study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the discourse of interpellation in these advertisement texts taken from a Malaysian women's magazine *Cleo*. In particular, this study looks at how the use of language used in advertisements in order to illustrate how Malaysian women can be interpellated towards the advertisements. In other words, the purpose of this study is to look at how the

language used in L'oreal advertisement can attract the women readers or consumers to buy the products advertised.

### **Research Questions**

1) What are the linguistic features in the advertisements/advertorials (L'oreal) published in Malaysian women's magazine (Cleo) that might interpellate Malaysian women?

### **1.5 Significance of study**

This study is to illustrate that an advertisement can be analyzed as a discourse. Apart from this, the concept of 'interpellation' proposed by Althusser (Gray, 2005) in the area of CDA can exemplify how a particular social identity is constructed. In other words, the use of lexical and syntactic signs in advertisements can be seen as an indication of how our particular personality, social and ideological position

Moreover, this study can also contribute to other fields of study such as mass communication studies and gender studies. In addition, the findings might provide some understanding on the concept of advertisements and how the advertising texts are produced. Finally, this study can also contribute to the area of discourse analysis and demonstrates how advertisements texts taken from

Malaysian women's magazine can be analyzed through the framework produced by Fairclough (1989, 2001).

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

Findings of this study are not generalizable for all advertisements in female magazines as this study only looked at advertisements in *Cleo* magazine. Moreover, this study only looked at *Cleo* magazine which is produced in Malaysia.

In addition, findings of this study are not generalizable for all cosmetic products because this study only analyzed advertisements for L'oreal cosmetic products