

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFICACY OF APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF VYANGARTH (SUGGESTED MEANING OF A WORD) IN DHVANI (SUGGESTION) OF INDIAN POETICS AS A TOOL TO MAKE ATTRACTIVE AUDIO-VISUALS: WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED ELEMENTS OF VYANGARTH AND SELECTED AUDIO-VISUALS OF SRI LANKAN COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Even though it appears that the concept of Dhvani in Indian Poetics is unrelated to television advertisements unlike in the medium of Literature, the following research reveals that Dhvani is in fact an important element used in audio visuals perhaps as much as in literature. Examples have been utilized in the research to reveal how seven out of ten Dhvani such as *Vaktru*, *Bodhavya*, *Kaku*, *Vakya*, *Anyasannidhi*, *Prasthav*, *Cheshta* are evident in Sri Lankan television advertisements in terms of both words and visuals. Evidence has yet not been found on the use of the final three Dhvani, *Vachya*, *Desh* and *Kal* in local advertisements.

This research confirms that the use of Indian Poetics in commercial advertisements has had a positive response and has been successful in gaining the attention of the modern day viewer. In conclusion, it can be observed that a better knowledge and an in-depth study of the use of Dhvani will be an advantage for producers in the advertizing industry to create better and more attractive audio-visuals in the future.

Keywords: Dhvani, Vyangart (suggested meaning of a word), Indian poetics, Sri Lankan TV commercials.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between audio-visual theory and Indian poetics has been an under-researched phenomenon. Anandavardhana, the pioneer of the theory of Dhvani, which is the art of using language to communicate effectively. There are three main components of Dhvani in literature according to the force or signification of a word. Abhidha, Lakshana and Vyanjana. These

generate meaning in different levels as *vachyart* (primary meaning of a word), *lakshyart* (implied or figurative meaning of a word), and *vyangart* (suggestive meaning of a word) respectively.

Ten elements were selected in *Dvani* as follows; the first element known as *Vaktru* denotes that understanding the suggestive meaning depends on the speaker's skill; *Bodhavya*, the second element reveals that the listener's skill is important to understand the suggestive meaning; the third element, *Kaku*, implies that the suggestive meaning can be comprehended through the speaker's accent. Suggestive meaning transpires in whole sentence or poems, known as *Vakya*; the next element known as *Anyasannidhi* expresses the ability of a second listener to understand the suggested meaning; The Suggestive meaning which appears in a proposal put forward by the speaker is known as *Prasthav*; The next element known as *Cheshta*, reveals how there is a suggested meaning when somebody makes their desires known and how this in turn affects the desires of the listener or viewer; *the element of Vachya* discloses that the suggestive meaning is revealed by changing of Voice (active, passive and neutral); The suggestive meaning which becomes obvious when using the name of a country or place is known as *Desh*; similarly the concept of time or *Kal* can be used as a base for suggesting meaning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Primary and secondary data for the following research comprise of selected advertisements produced by commercial advertising firms in Sri Lanka and internet sources. Indian Poetics related to *Dhvani* were also considered in the analysis to examine the selected commercial advertisements in Sri Lankan television. This is done by choosing ten elements belonging to the important theory known as *Vyangart*. These ten elements were made short as *Vaktru*, *Bodhavya*, *Kaku*, *Vakya*, *Anyasannidhi*, *Prasthav*, *Cheshta*, *Vachya*, *Desh*, *Kal* respectively. But it is to be added that all ten elements can be stated in their original and extended form as, '*veshishtyothpanna Vaachyasambhava Arthivyanjana*'.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The element of *Vaktru* is evident in a particular advertisement related to soap used for washing clothes. *Vaktru* has been adopted here by way of an audio track which only describes the virtues of the light of the sun. What is suggested here can be easily comprehended by the viewer of the advertisement to mean that the benefit that one gains from sun light is in fact similar to the benefit gained from brand of soap.

Bodhavya has been utilized by many creators of television advertisements. One such instance is evident in a particular advertisement of chocolate and this has been achieved by using a series of frames where the actress is captured in different angles. Her sensual indulging of the chocolate

and liquid chocolate being poured down along with final statement, ‘sensational satisfaction’ clearly brings forth a sexual connotation.

Kaku can be observed in a selected advertisement for ringing tones. Here, elements of *Kaku* have been adopted to reveal a dialogue between an elderly couple. Even though the conversation makes known to the viewer about the son’s success, by way of *Kaku* the audience can easily understand that the parents are implying a sense of unhappiness about their son’s detachment from them.

Vakya, is evident in an advertisement about the network coverage of a mobile phone connection. In the advertisement we come across a newly appointed school master who is travelling to a school in a remote area. The collection of scenes describe the difficulties and lack of facilities for new comer teacher and the teacher’s facial expressions reveals his clear dissatisfaction. Despite all his troubles a smile appears on his face when he hears his mobile phone ring. It is assumed that the caller is his girlfriend or wife who asks him about the place and to this the teacher replies that *everything is available here*. When considering the whole situation the viewer comprehends the suggestive meaning that coverage is most important to him, because this enables him to be close to his loved ones despite the distance and as a result the teacher truly feels like he has everything he needs.

An example for *Anyasannidhi* is evident in a particular advertisement related to tractors where the power of the tractor is compared to the skills of a young bachelor. The young man is busy working in his tractor when he stops to speak to a girl from the village who is with her friends. The girl asks him about a promise made on an earlier date to drop off a load of stones and to this he replies that he will come to unload the stock at a time convenient for him. This dialogue however when spoken in the Sinhala language reveals a certain sexual connotation particularly the part that deals with the load of stones, and as a result the girl’s friends (the second listeners) who recognize this implication express amusement by laughing.

Prasthav can be observed in a particular local advertisement related to a clothing store. The slogan of the advertisement, ‘Explore...’ suggests to the buyer that shopping in this store will be an exciting and carefree experience. Furthermore the bright blue sky which is the background of the slogan suggests that as much as the shopping experience would bring its customers close to the freedom of nature, it would also be limitless much like the name of the store.

An advertisement for a brand of beer has made *Cheshta* fact evident by using the animalistic and sexual desire of a lion to draw the attention of Sri Lankan youth. As the lion has deep rooted significance in the Sri Lankan context, the final question that is posed to the viewer, ‘*is there a*

lion in you?’ not only increases the viewer’s desire for beer but also makes them feel that beer is a necessity if one is to call himself a ‘Sinhalese’.

Final three elements of *Dhvani* which are *Vachya*, *Desh* and *Kal* have not thus far been found in any television advertisements.

CONCLUSION

When the producers are driven by lucrative profit orientations, consciously or unconsciously, their media applications are created with relation to the conceptual frameworks of *Dhvani*. Currently the use of *Vyangart* or suggested meaning in *Dhvani* is not made maximum use of in the field of television advertisements in Sri Lanka, however a better knowledge of *Dhvani* can be used to create more attractive and interesting advertisements in the future.

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