Discourse Analysis Approach; A Framework for Determining the Paradigm Shift in Marketing

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Abstract

For investigating any science and identifying its different aspects, we need a true understanding about its changes and developments. This true understanding occurs through using an accurate framework. One of the approaches which are used in discourse changes and political phenomena is the discourse analysis. In the field of marketing, the recent paradigm shift from marketing management to relationship marketing has led to deep and extended attitudinal changes.

In this study, for investigating the mentioned shift the Laclau and Mouffe discourse analysis in political sciences has been applied. By using of concepts such as turning point,

problematization, articulations, nodal point, hegemony and deconstruction, has been attempted to present a basic framework for better understanding about marketing and discussions.

1. Introduction

Discourse analysis has been used less in discussions related to marketing so far, accordingly in this study we intend to introduce a discourse analysis framework to marketing discussions and investigate the discourse technique in marketing. According to comprehensive definition of Jorgenson and Philips (2002), discourse is a special technique of discussion and understanding the different aspects of the world. Therefore, from this viewpoint discourse analysis approach in marketing, studies the whole processes including discoursal, recognizing and social processes through the discourse. The presented framework in this study is based on the work of Michel Foucault (1981 & 1985, a & b) and also the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe's research are used more than past times in managing studies (Wilmot, 2005).

The base of the present study is mainly based on the fundamental concepts presented by discourse theory. This concepts include turning point (major changes occurred in marketing discourse), problematization (the causes of the turning point appearance), articulations which give a new direction to the proposed concepts in the marketing discourse, nodal point (certain signs of marketing discourse which give a uniform concept to this discourse), hegemony which is the representative of the world-based viewpoint in configurations dominated over the marketing discourse, and deconstruction (an activity which is the explainer of the legitimacy of marketing discourse hegemony).

In this study, first a literature of marketing emersion process is represented and especially paradigm shift of the marketing management to the relationship marketing is discussed. Then, with offering a framework based on the discourse theory and with respect to the represented discussions paradigm shift of the figure is investigated.

2. Literature review

2.1 Paradigm Shift Emersion Process in Marketing

In the past, administration affairs have been done with focusing on its macro dimensions such as exchanges without any kinds of sins and emphasis on ethics (Jones &Shaw, 2002). Historians unanimously believe that marketing is a science, which appeared as a branch of applied economy. On the other hand, this field with scientific management discussions of Taylor and the works of Ford and regarding the mass production and understanding the ways of mass distribution for mass consumption has been developed remarkably (Shaw& Jones, 2005).

The development of marketing as an independent field, is due to the lack of economists' attention to the details of market behavior particularly the mediums' activity in market which intensified gradually by developing of many kinds of mediums in industrial era and getting importance in distribution system. By developing and extending transportation and connection ways (railroads, shipping and harbors, roads and connecting roads, express posts and proper packing), publishing newspapers and advertising magazines, department stores and national brands, the connection of the big and small cities and farms more than ever, now the main problem is referred to the way of market distribution. Unlike the nineteenth

century's economists who were focused on general policies and economic institutions effect of market, marketing thinkers were more focused on scientific matters and mostly on the marketing channels efficiency and their services in changing the shape and the way of commodities transportation from the producer to the consumer (Kotler, 1972). The first marketing courses were held in America (Michigan) in 1902. In these courses, subjects were represented in three fields of catalog making, products classification, organizations and institutions classification (Bartles, 1988). The main concern of this era was about the way of discounting the price of the distribution expenditures and delivering the farmers' products to the urban consumers efficiently. This issue developed by the wholesale and retail and also by some medium occupations between farmer and department store and the consumer (Jones & Shaw, 2002).

Marketing with respect to the management concept and subordinately marketing management mainly was created under the effects of achievements in the U.S. army and after the World War II. After the World War II, consumable commodities produced by army led to the economic development in the America which resulted in more supplying than the existing demand. These situations proposed the idea of demand by administration companies for the commodities. This changing approach was also under the effect of proposed discussions by the Ford and Carnegie foundations in 1959. These institutes asked for more attentions to the administration educations and developing major changes in the existing educational system. But the most important role in introducing the marketing concept with the modern definition was played by Alderson (Alderson, 1957 & 1967). The most important issue in the marketing management and marketing systems is that how the managers must produce the commodities for the customers based on their needs. Although marketing management school was a dominant and a common school for a while and many authors like Kotler *and* other authors (Kotler & Levy, 1969; Kotler & Zultman, 1971; Levy & Zultman, 1975), have developed and extended it, it was criticized then. For example, it was criticized because it was believed that this concept of marketing is only applied for administration companies and emphasizes on marketing strategies and combined elements of marketing (product, price, promotion and place).Another proposed criticism was related to the services concept and its status in marketing, in other words it was expressed that it should not be emphasized only on the concept of the product, but the case of the services should be noticed. The basic criticism which led to the change in the viewpoint toward the marketing management was the lack of attention to the trust as a base in administration exchanges. Likewise, the management tools (product, price, promotion and place) have not the capability of credibility and trust creation (Grönroos, 1994).

These criticisms and introduction of new concepts such as network approaches, services marketing and relation with the customer have led to the representation of a new paradigm with the name of relationship marketing. Relationship marketing concept is defined in the field of service and industrial marketing. Grönroos defines the relationship marketing as creating, establishing and improving the relation with the customers and other sharers and attempt to achieve the common goals. He emphasizes that such a relation is created through the exchanges and keeping the promises. The process of creating the relation with the

customers can be divided into two parts: customer absorption and establishing a relation which the customer can achieve his/her economical goals through them (Grönroos, 1988; a & b). Among the marketing elements concepts of promise, absorption, relation making, trust establishment and promotion can be suggested (Kolnios, 1988).

Two masterminds in marketing have suggested that companies must move from short-term-goals to the long-term-goals based on the relation. In an interview Kotler pointed that "paradigm shift as Thomas Kuhn said, it is being observed, changing the viewpoint has directed from interchanging to making relations and marketing networks. Moving orientation has focused on mixed marketing toward the focus on relation (Kotler, 1991). On the other side, Friedrich Webster, concluded similarly and expresses that "thus shift the concept of exchange with relation is occurring" (Webster, 1992).
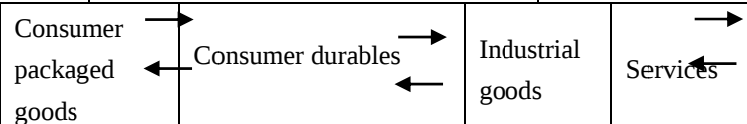
The strategy continuum	**Transaction marketing**	**Relationship marketing**
Time perspective	Short-term focus	Long-term focus
Dominating marketing function	Marketing mix	Interactive marketing (supported by marketing mix activities)
Price elasticity	Customers tend to be more sensitive to price	Customers tend to be less sensitive to price
Dominating quality dimension	Quality of output (technical quality dimension) is dominating	Quality of interactions (functional quality dimension) grows in importance and may become dominating
Measurement of customer Measurement of customer	Monitoring market share (indirect approach)	Managing the customer base (direct approach)
Customer information system	*Ad hoc* customer satisfaction surveys	Real-time customer feedback system
Interdependency between marketing, operations and personnel	Interface of no or limited strategic importance	Interface of substantial strategic importance
The role of internal marketing	Internal marketing of no or limited importance to success	Internal marketing of substantial strategic importance to success
The product continuum	Consumer packaged goods → Consumer durables → Industrial goods → Services → ← ← ←	

Figure 1. The Marketing Strategy Continuum: Some Implications. Source: Grönroos(1991)

Before the official definition for marketing in 1985, American Marketing Association defined the marketing as administration activities which direct a current of commodities and services originated from producer to the consumer or user. This definition was denounced by academic members (Hunt, 2006). According to these denunciations in the next definitions the concepts of relation and customer's value were considered in a way that in 2007 American Marketing Association calls marketing as a process which is searching for creating of value, relation and value transferring to the customers and also is seeking the customers' relation managing and bringing benefits for the organization and its beneficiaries (American Marketing Association, 2011).

2.2 Turning Points and Problematization

Turning points in marketing historical research, consider the alternate existing bases every time. Hollander *et al* (2005) states that marketing historians must identify the existing turning points in the marketing which express "the important occurred changes in marketing methods, economic situations and etc." . Foucault (2000), not only considers the turning point concept as an alternate base, but also focuses on it more generally as covering any kind of changes occurred in discourses and configurations under included in the study. In this study, the turning point is also defined as any changes occurred in marketing discourse .An example of turning points existing in the marketing discussions is marketing introduction which instead of focusing on a unilateral relation of seller to the customer as an only exchanging concept, shifts toward a bilateral relation of seller-customer and attending to the customers' needs that gave a new orientation to the marketing and marketing research. But, what is the reason behind these changes in marketing discourse? Answering this question, the concept of problem-finding is proposed. Based on the Foucault's definition (1981) problem-finding, expresses the reasons and events this resulted in changes of configurations and discourse [marketing]. problematization points to the uncertainties related to the dominated discourse. Uncertainty about the efficiency of the former marketing definitions in 1950, which resulted in marketing introduction instead of the concept of exchanging. On the other hand, the lack of attention to establishing the concept of trust proposed this discussion that how the bilateral relation should be formed.

3. Discourse theory

Problem-finding and turning point identification are the initial points of the presented discourse analysis proposed in this research. Focusing only on problem-finding and turning points are not enough, but a description about the conditions of a more special analysis is needed. For a more accurate description of these concepts the Laclau and Mouffe (1985) discourse analysis is applied.

3.1 Laclau and Mouffe Discourse Theory

Laclau and Mouffe have loaned their discourse concept from Foucault and proposed it for the first time in the book of Hegemony and Socialistic Strategy in 1985. These two researchers also introduced the Foucault's power concept in their discourse theory but instead of Foucault's "decree" they used the Saussure's "sign" for explaining the discourse structure,

thus they call the discourse not a set of decrees but a set of signs .What distinguishes the Laclau and Mouffe discourse analysis from other discourse analysis is transferring the discourse from culture and philosophy fields to the society and politics. From the Laclau and Mouffe viewpoint any phenomenon and act for being meaningful should be discoursal. When the phenomenon and activities place in an especial discoursal frame they will be understandable. Nothing has identity with itself, but its identity is acquired through a discourse which is located in. Laclau and Mouffe have loaned the discourse typology from Saussure but these two do not accept the constancy of indicative and indicated and in this matter they agree with Derida. Derida overwhelms the Saussure's indicative and indicated dichotomy and calls the language as a set of indicatives without any indicated, indicatives which get their meaning at time of using. Actually, in different situations different indicated ascribed to indicative, and the subject of which indicated is ascribed to which indicative is always disputable. In this way Laclau and Mouffe by using the Derrida concept of sign in discourse theory, make the determination of the political disputes possible (Kasraei & PuzeshShirazi, 2009). Indicatives, persons, concepts, statements and abstract or actual symbols indicate an especial meaning in an especial framework. An especial meaning and concept which an indicative indicates to, is called indicated. Indicated is a sign which with seeing it the intended indicative will be meaningful for us. For example, the frequency of media and press is a sign and a mark and colloquially an indicated which guide us to the indicative of "freedom of speech". In other words, makes the freedom of speech meaningful for us. In marketing discussions attending to relation discussions and its effect as an indicated, leads us to the concept of customer and its status as the central indicative more than ever.

3.2 Discourse and Its Components

Four basic concept of the Laclau and Mouffe discourse theory include: articulation, discourse, moment and element. Based on the Laclau and Mouffe theory discourse expresses the concept confirmation in a particular field (Phillips &Jorgenson, 2002). Moments are the structural discourse barriers; they are the signs which their concept will be confirmed in relation to other moments, and this relation will be established through the articulation. Articulation also establishes a specific discourse by confirming the concept of moments.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985) call this discourse definition only theoretically true, whereas in real world such a confirmed relation is found rarely. They acknowledge that concept confirmation is always expediently. Having this viewpoint toward the discourse led to the element introduction. Elements are the signs which prevent the confirmation of a special concept. These two with their definition did not decrease the extreme structuralism in the discourse definition, but this does not mean that they disassemble the discourse structuralism totally. A discourse is always in relation to the signs which are outside it (Skalen, 2010). This phenomenon indicates that a discourse always can be destroyed by an existing element in the discoursal area. Accordingly, a discourse tries to turn the elements into the moments.

3.3 Nodal Point

Turning the element into the moments is always expediently; hence a discourse can be redefined. According to Laclau and Mouffe, when the concept of a discourse confirmed by

one or more indicatives and it is structuralized to some extent, then the discourse comes to the existence. (Phillips &Jorgenson, 2002).Nodal points are the moments which have a superior status in the structure of moments. Based on this definition it can be said that discourse is relatively constant confirmation of the existing signs in a special field in which a few number of nodal points have a superior status. Moreover, nodal points can be included in the floating indicatives' category, but the different lies in this fact that nodal point refers to a condition in which the meaning of sign has been turned to congelation and blockage, while floating indicative refers to a condition in which the sign in the battlefield of different discourses is suspended and floating for the meaning confirmation (Soltani, 2008).

Concerning these definitions, the above-mentioned problem-finding and turning points could be understood better. Based on the Laclau and Mouffe's viewpoint (1985), problem-finding covers two activities including discourse splitting and attempting to change it. In other words, problem-finding can turn the moments of a specific discourse into the elements. After discourse splitting, redefining the relation between moments will be resumed again through the articulation configuring which this lead to a redefinition of discourse. Problem-findings which are in accordance with nodal points will have a stronger power to define the new relations among moments, since these problem-findings focus on the centrality of discourse (Skalen, 2010). If the articulations can redefine the discourses, the turning points will be created. These concepts can be seen clearly in the domination of relationship marketing school. The opponents of the marketing school could change it with splitting discourse and exchange, and by rearticulating among the moments they succeed to redefine the discourse and replace the social marketing.

3.4 Hegemony

Finally the struggles related to any discourse with turning into the hegemony will be ended. The discourses which are dominant temporarily are called "objective" and those destroyed temporarily are called "political" discourse (Laclau, 1990; Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). Hegemony is a defined method of the world understanding which creates a kind of domination and legitimacy, a concept which makes a specific discourse dominant. Indeed, hegemony is a set of configurations which make a discourse hegemonic. When a specific discourse becomes a worldwide concept, it will be called hegemonic. Actually, when we refer to the proposed issues in the field of problem-finding and turning point, hegemony is related to the stage of discourse redefinition (the second stage of problem-finding). As an instance, in turning the marketing school into the relationship marketing, the marketing school appeared as a hegemonic barrier and consequently could be the dominant discourse.

3.5 Deconstruction

The marketing discourse analysis by using the discourse theory not only shows the way of marketing schools being hegemonic, but also makes the critically investigation possible. According to viewpoints of Laclau (1993), Jorgenson and Phillips (2002) the goal of the study of hegemonic discourse (dominant) is its deconstruction. Deconstruction is an activity which states the discourse temporariness and also is the relations among its moments. In other words, it causes the moments of a specific discourse to turn into the elements again.

Deconstruction reveals the critical nature of the discourse analysis which can be referred as problem-finding of the problem-findings. For example, in the field of the marketing administration school deconstruction and changing it into the relationship marketing school is stated that not only the organizations should adjust themselves to the needs and demands of their customers, but also should affect their needs.

4. Conclusion

The aim of the present study is introducing a discourse analysis framework for marketing which can be designed to investigate paradigm shifts in marketing. This framework begins with the concept of turning point which expresses the meaningful changes in marketing discourse. Problem-finding includes the events which expedite the changing of marketing discourse moments to the elements and through this way rearticulating and a new concept is represented. In many cases, problem-finding leads to achieving the nodal points. Therefore, marketing discourse is always expediently and temporary. Nevertheless, problem-findings search for eliminating this temporary condition and creating the hegemonic marketing discourse. Hegemonic marketing discourse is established through configurations which are called hegemony. The goal of the marketing discourse theory is the deconstruction of marketing discourse.

By using this presented framework the analysis and description of marketing discourse stability and changes and events which are the causes for creation of schools will be done better. Thus, this study assists the qualitative marketing researchers in two ways. First, it provides the marketing researchers a research tool which they can do their research based on it. Second, the discourse theory provides the researcher a critical tool through the deconstruction concept which can balance their marketing orientations to some extent.

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