

## THE GENDERED SPACES OF GLOBALIZATION

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### Abstract

Using a discourse analysis of texts produced and consumed within globalization, this paper examines globalization as a gendered territory in which feminine and masculine spaces are carved out and invested with particular values. Specifically, the paper shows how these spaces are gendered through the use of stereotypical representations of femininity and masculinity. In the end, the paper argues that a discourse analytical framework is critical in revealing how the gendering process works, shedding light on the material construction of gender within globalization.

### INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I argue that globalization is a gendered process, and that discourse is a site in which this gendering takes place. This means that while gendering takes place materially—in terms of the actual genderedness of globalization as seen in the feminization and masculinization of certain spheres of the new globalized world—it also takes place discursively—in terms of how certain representations in discourse feminize or masculinize particular areas of globalization. Specifically, this means that women and men are often equated with particular fields within globalization, which seems to draw on stereotypical notions of femininity and masculinity. For instance, the notion of jobs as being feminine or masculine seems to draw on stereotypical assumptions about women and their role as nurturers, caregivers, and service providers, and men as creators, decision-makers, and managers. The result is that women tend and are often represented to occupy positions traditionally believed to be feminine like customer care and service, and men masculine ones like finance and technical

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administration.

Moreover, I argue that the feminization or masculinization of both globalization and discourse points to the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities among particular groups of people, in this case, women and men, and the differential value assigned to the kinds of things in which they are engaged.<sup>1</sup> This is so because positions that are considered feminine, therefore aligned with and assigned to women, are generally regarded as inferior or subordinate to masculine positions that are usually associated with and held by men. What this means in the ultimate analysis is that globalization is not a neutral nor uniform process with equal effects, despite claims otherwise, and an analysis that makes use of a discourse approach and takes gender into account is useful in showing how this works.

To argue these points, I examine three related texts produced and consumed in the context of today's globalized world. On the surface, these texts appear neutral, but a closer analysis would show that they are, in fact, gendered, in that they make use of representations that either feminize or masculinize particular spheres of globalization. Specifically, the texts feminize those spaces that are considered to be at the bottom of the globalization hierarchy such as customer service jobs, and masculinize those that are deemed to be at the top such as managerial and technical jobs. As such, the gendering that is taking place in these texts parallels the gender segregation happening in the new globalized world in which top-level jobs are usually occupied by men and bottom-level ones by women. In drawing on and affirming the feminization and masculinization of these spheres of globalization, these texts help in sustaining and reproducing the gendered terrain of globalization, and are therefore complicit in the asymmetrical structures and relations that exist within it. What this underscores is the dialectical relationship between the material and discursive configurations of gender in the age of globalization such that the gendering of globalization itself and that of discourse in the context of globalization influence and shape each other.

Overall, this paper is an attempt to show how gender figures within globalization itself, how it is configured in discourse, produced and consumed within it, and how these configurations are part of other unequal arrangements within globalization. It has to be said, however, that I do not mean to suggest that the workings of gender within today's globalized world are fixed and stable. First, gender itself is a concept that is neither fixed nor stable, as it is, in fact, constantly problematized and contested, which means that the way the term is theorized has bearing on how it is represented and interpreted. Second, there may be other kinds of gendered

representations in other kinds of texts in today's globalized world that do not necessarily agree with or may point to directions besides the findings of this study. There is strong support, however, that gender remains widely viewed in stereotypical terms, and its representations constructed and interpreted within these very same terms.

This paper draws on concepts in globalization studies, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, and feminist theorizing on globalization. In the first part of the paper, I outline these concepts and locate within it the critical tradition to which the concerns of this paper belong. In the second part, I analyze the chosen texts using a multimodal framework and relate my findings to the gendering process taking place in the new globalized world. In the final part, I look at the differential value attached to feminization and masculinization and how it keys into larger issues of power and inequality within globalization.

#### GLOBALIZATION, DISCOURSE, AND GENDER *The Globalization Debate*<sup>2</sup>

Proponents of globalization<sup>3</sup> often depict globalization as a positive process, one that brings about economic and social growth, technological leaps, greater interconnectivity and mobility, a wide range of goods and services, access to all kinds of information, growing cultural diversity, and improved living standards (Kellner 1997). If not in these positive and glowing terms, they generally render it as an economic process—that is, globalization is mostly concerned with international political economy, state interdependencies, and trade relations—which operates on a logic of its own (Marchand and Runyan 2000) and is neutral, as opposed to the modernization (good) vs. imperialism (bad) debate of the earlier period (Kellner 1997). What these renderings imply is that globalization benefits the people of the world in equal ways and has a homogenous effect.<sup>4</sup>

Critics of globalization, however, have an entirely different take on the matter. For one, they argue that globalization sustains old—and also brings about new—forms of asymmetrical relations (Kofman and Youngs 1996) such that it is beset with uneven development, differential values, and inequalities (Perrons 2004; Blommaert 2003; Marchand and Runyan 2000). This means that, while globalization may and does bring about the positive developments mentioned above, these developments are experienced and enjoyed not by all people in all places of the world, but by particular kinds of people in particular kinds of locations. Moreover, critics point to global trends that are both social and cultural in nature,<sup>5</sup> which shows that globalization is not only an economic process, but also a socio-

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cultural one, the interconnections of which affect in various ways the lives of individual human beings whether they realize it or not.<sup>6</sup>

The arguments in the globalization debate are definitely more complex and nuanced than the ones given above.<sup>7</sup> I believe, however, that the overview provided here suffices in terms of giving a context for this study. While I acknowledge the positive changes brought about by globalization, I draw on the critical point that globalization is not a uniform process with the same effects across the board. As such, it provides varying opportunities to people and often produces unequal relations in various aspects of life, the workings of which should be investigated and made sense of.

##### *Discourse and Globalization*

As already established, globalization is regarded, examined, and theorized using various approaches within different traditions and positions. One approach that is clearly relevant in the study of globalization, specifically from the critical standpoint, is the discourse approach. Blommaert (2005) contends that a study of discourse leads to an understanding of “power *effects*, of what power *does* to people, groups, and societies, and of how this impact comes about” (1-2, italics in the original). If globalization is a site of unequal distribution of opportunities and uneven growth, then studying globalization through a discourse approach is crucial in revealing in specific and concrete ways the spheres of globalization in which these inequalities are concentrated, the effects they have on people’s lives, and how and why they come about. Moreover, the study of discourse, as Blommaert (2005) argues, needs to be contextualized within the contemporary world system, which is globalization. In this way then, a discourse approach already necessarily includes an examination of today’s globalizing world, its structures and values, its movements and flows.

Two main categories surface in terms of the study of globalization through a discourse approach. First is the study of *globalization in discourse*, which looks into how globalization is discussed, represented, and made sense of in discourse (Wee 2006). One example of this kind of analysis is the observation that the discourse of globalization tends to focus only on the activities of those on top and ignore the movements of those in the grassroots (Marchand 2000; Marchand and Runyan 2000). Another example is what Spurr (1996) refers to as the “rhetoric of empire,” which scholars of globalization often use when talking about globalization (Chang and Ling 2000). This then results in the construction and representation of

a reality that affirms West/rest, self/other colonial dichotomies (Chang and Ling 2000). The relevance of this kind of study cannot be overemphasized: it shows that globalization itself is a discourse, and an ongoing one, which suggests that it is open to contestation and further theorization. Moreover, this kind of analysis provides scholars of the field an awareness of the terms that they are using and a room for them to be reflexive about their own practice.

The second category is the study of *globalization on discourse*, which is concerned with how globalization itself shapes, challenges, questions, or affirms different kinds of discourse in today's globalizing world (Wee 2006). Examples of this kind of analysis include Machin and van Leeuwen's (2003) study of how the discourse of femininity is both globalized and localized in several country versions of *Cosmopolitan* magazine and Blommaert's (2003) analysis of how a variety of English changes its value as it moves from one context to another. With discourse as backdrop, an analysis of this kind allows for the possibility of talking about and making sense of the movements and developments within globalization in very clear and tangible ways. This, I believe, is particularly important, since discussions of globalization can be quite abstract and seemingly detached from everyday experience. In addition, examining the kinds of discourse that exist within globalization may yield insights into which ones are valued and privileged and which ones are not—and where, when, how, and why such is the case.

Discourse, in both cases, is seen as “compris[ing] all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns” (Blommaert 2005, 3). This means that discourse is composed of not only language as it used in context, but also all modes of meaning-making resources employed in a text such as font types and sizes, color, graphics, pictures, lighting, etc. Moreover, discourse is a social practice situated within a particular social and cultural milieu such that discourse becomes meaningful in light of the already available semiotic resources in a given time and place. Based on this view of discourse, not only is a piece of text such as a brochure composed of language used in a particular way, but it also has pictures and color and follows a certain format—all of which need to be examined in relation to each other and to the whole that they make. Moreover, it has to be acknowledged that this piece of text functions and becomes meaningful in a particular social and cultural context, for instance, the age of globalization, such that its analysis must necessarily take this context into consideration. I use this view of discourse in this paper as well, since I am generally concerned with a multimodal framework in examining the link between language and the social, the discursive and the material. In addition, this view of

discourse allows for an examination of the asymmetrical distribution of resources and unequal power relations within globalization, which is a specific concern of this study. Finally, this study locates itself within both the categories—*globalization in and on discourse*—described above. What I hope to add, however, is an awareness and examination of gender as it figures in globalization and the discourse within it.

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The feminist criticism of globalization is definitely situated within the critical tradition in globalization studies in that it brings into the discussion of globalization, first, the notion of gender, which is often overlooked in the field, and second, gender as it operates in the following aspects: the ideational/ideological, the social, and the physical (Tickner 2001; Hochschild 2000; Marchand and Runyan 2000). By examining globalization using the intersection of these three aspects, a feminist standpoint allows for the introduction of people—individuals, identities, and subjectivities—into otherwise abstract discussions of financial markets, nation-states, and trade and international relations, thus revealing in concrete terms the power aspects of globalization, specifically the relationships of power within it (Tickner 2001; Marchand 2000; Krause 1996). Moreover, such a standpoint initiates an examination of the process by which dominant movements within globalization configure and re-configure social identities and social relations in highly gendered ways (Marchand and Runyan 2000). Nevertheless, feminist critics themselves note that many feminist analyses of gender in the context of globalization have focused on the materialist underpinnings of globalization, neglecting its discursive dimensions, which are equally powerful and pervasive.

To fill this gap, a number of feminist critics of globalization have shifted their attention from the materialist aspects of globalization to how globalization is represented and constructed in highly gendered terms in mainstream accounts of globalization.<sup>9</sup> What studies of this kind<sup>10</sup> show is that the dominant areas of globalization are discursively configured and invested with masculine qualities and values, while globalization's less dominant aspects and practices are associated with feminine traits and characteristics (Marchand 2000). Chang and Ling (2000), in support of this observation, refer to the dominant spheres of globalization as "technomuscular capitalism," since these spheres are dominated by men, deal with international markets, global finance, and high technology, and privilege values generally equated with Western capitalist masculinity. On the other side is globalization's "intimate other," which is sexualized,

racialized, and class-based, as it is primarily populated by migrant workers, the majority of whom are female, who engage in low-skilled and low-waged menial service (Tickner 2001; Chang and Ling 2000; Pettman 1996).

Given the concerns of this paper, it is in the context of this feminist tradition within globalization that I would like to situate my analysis of three texts produced and consumed in today's globalized world. Similarly, I take on a view of gender that is social constructionist (Tickner 2001; Marchand and Runyan 2000; Marchand 2000; Chang and Ling 2000). This means that notions of gender are neither fixed nor stable; they are, in fact, open to negotiation and contestation, thus fluid and mutable (Webster 1996). This means that notions of femininity or masculinity depend on the values assigned to and assumptions about gender in particular social, cultural, and historical periods and landscapes. Further, this view suggests that femininity and masculinity are not tied exclusively or necessarily to women and men, although the relationship between femininity and women, and masculinity and men is often assumed. The relationship between femininity and masculinity is, of course, not equal: it is the latter which is often invested with or viewed in terms of power and strength; masculinity is also often considered as the norm.<sup>11</sup> A social constructionist view of gender is therefore crucial to this paper, as it not only explains how it becomes possible for stereotypical gender categories and relations to be scripted within globalization, but also illustrates the importance of discourse as a site in which these gender stereotypes are configured and mapped out. However, ultimately, what I hope to foreground is a more theoretical and nuanced view of discourse vis-à-vis gender studies, similar to what Blommaert (2005, 2003) proposes.<sup>12</sup>

## THE CALL CENTER AND MULTIMODALITY

The data examined in this paper include a brochure, a print advertisement, and a feature article. The brochure is for DTSI,<sup>13</sup> a company that offers a whole package of “business solutions and services” (see Appendix 1, 2, and 3) to those who own and want to put up a call center in the Philippines. The print ad is for a seminar titled *The Call Center Challenge* sponsored by APC,<sup>14</sup> a company that markets itself as a “leading call center technology provider” (see Appendix 4). The article features the offshore call center industry<sup>15</sup> in the Philippines, its beginnings, its management and operation policies, and projections for the future<sup>16</sup> (see Appendix 5). All three texts are part of a bigger data set collected from 2004 to 2008, and used in a previous publication (see Salonga 2007) and a longer work (see Salonga 2010). In 2004, I initially collected data to

examine the representation of gender vis-à-vis technology, in particular, the computer. Thus, my first source of data was the magazine *Computerworld Philippines*. The initial data showed that women were often represented as users of the computer, never its creator. In addition, their particular use of it was linked to the use of word processing programs like an office assistant typing up a document, or to the performance of traditional female roles like a mother teaching a child through the computer. Moreover, I noticed that women who were shown to be working on a computer were also often with a headset, which keyed me into the presence of women in the then burgeoning call center industry (see Salonga 2007). This sparked my interest in call center discourse, so I continued collecting data. I went to call center-related conferences and job fairs where call centers would set up booths, and gathered different kinds of texts and documents that were related to the call center industry. At first, I was only looking at the gender aspect, but I soon realized that the texts were also constructing a representation of globalization that was gendered. The intersections between language, gender, and the Philippine call center industry eventually became a major concern in my PhD dissertation (see Salonga 2010), on which much of the analysis provided in this paper was drawn.

My choice of these three texts is therefore not by accident. All three are related to the offshore call center industry in the Philippines. The call center industry falls under the rubric of the growing trend of a globalized service economy within globalization such that texts related to this industry, though not necessarily discussing or talking about globalization, may be said to implicate and be implicated in the very process of globalization. More importantly, however, of the data collected, these three strongly suggest that they are very much aware of their situatedness within the new globalized world through their use of particular words and phrases that suggest their participation in globalization. The DTSI brochure, for instance, makes use of tag lines such as “Solutions that move global enterprises” and “Global Experience/Local Resource,” which tap into the global-local relationship within globalization. The conference print ad uses the “global outsourcing movement” and states that the Philippines has now become “a global center for outsourcing services” to sell the importance of the conference, which definitely keys into the global trend of offshore call center outsourcing. Finally, the feature article talks about how the local call center industry in the Philippines is expected “to meet up to half of the global demand,” (Patricio 2004, 8), once again acknowledging the global context in which the call center industry is situated. In short, these texts are a good sample not only of the call center industry, but also of the industry as it situates itself firmly within globalization. For these



reasons, I have chosen to look at these texts in examining the gendered configuration of globalization in discourse and its implications for the process of globalization itself. In addition, these texts are of different types, and as such, can be convincing in showing the interrelatedness of such gendered representation even among texts coming from different genres.

Given the multimodality of the semiotic resources used in the chosen texts, I use the multimodal framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001). The development of a multimodal framework for analyzing discourse is an acknowledgement of the fact that discourse in the new globalized world is becoming increasingly composed of various semiotic modes or meaning-making elements, for instance, language, font types and sizes, color, graphics, pictures, lighting, and sound. A multimodal framework is therefore one that looks at all or a combination of the semiotic resources present in a text, and examines how these resources when taken together create meanings. Apart from this, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) multimodal framework stresses that the semiotic modes used in a text exist in particular historical, social, and cultural contexts such that the meanings they generate are informed and influenced by these contexts. In this study, while the chosen texts employ a number of semiotic resources, I focus on the pictures—specifically on whose faces are in the pictures, the lighting and the angle used to highlight whose faces, and the background or foreground positioning of whose faces—and the language that accompanies these pictures. This means that the configuration of gender in these texts becomes apparent and meaningful only when the pictures and the accompanying language are examined together. Without the pictures, the language in these texts renders globalization neutral; without the accompanying language, the pictures are just women and men situated in a certain kind of workplace environment. To an extent, the pictures in themselves may already be considered gendered; however, the relationship between the pictures and particular spheres of globalization become apparent only when the language used is also taken into consideration. This is similar to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001, 18) point that, in some cases, language “thematizes” the other semiotic modes employed in a text. Thus, in tandem, the pictures and language used to contextualize the pictures point to a gendered configuration of particular spheres of globalization.

#### GENDERED READINGS

In this part of the paper, I give a detailed description of the first text then offer my analysis of it, using the other two texts to supplement the points that I make for the first text. After which, I relate my findings

to the process of feminization and masculinization that is also taking place within globalization. The first text is a brochure for “a business solutions and services” company, DTSI (see appendix 1, 2, and 3). The brochure is folded three ways. The front of the left panel and the back of the right panel of the brochure, when folded together, introduce the company’s tag line “solutions that move global enterprises” (on the top left of the front of the left panel), and the company itself with its logo (at the bottom right of the back of the right panel). Below the company name and logo is the name of a global organization that specializes in high technology and service solutions with which DTSI is affiliated. At the back of the left panel is a list of DTSI’s technology, while at the back of the right panel is a short history of the company. While striking colors such as red, blue, orange, neon pink, and electric green are used, there are no pictures in these panels. It can be said that the fusion of these bright colors seems to suggest the explosion of electricity and activity when computer cables and electronic devices converge at one point.

The front of the middle and the front of the right panels specify the solutions and services that the company offers: Consulting, Turnkey and Project Management, IT and Engineering Services, and Resource Management Services. Under each one is description; side by side with the description is a picture. For Consulting, the picture foregrounds two men, one younger and another older: the younger man is sitting, his body and gaze turned toward the older man, apparently listening to what the older man is saying; the older man is standing, his body and gaze directed toward a piece of document on the table about which he seems to be commenting or talking. In the background are three other images—two women and a man—arranged in order of increasing vagueness as the images that are farthest from the foregrounded images in the picture are also the most vague. In this case, the image of the two women is almost indiscernible, while that of the man can still be seen. For the Turnkey and Project Management service, a picture without any faces but with two hands in a handshake is used. From the shape and size of the hands and the sleeves of the suits worn by the images in the picture, it can be inferred that the two individuals in the picture are men. The IT and Engineering Services part uses a picture of a man who is shown to be fiddling with a technological equipment. His face is turned away from the camera and toward the equipment such that only an outline of his face is shown. Finally, in the picture for Resource and Management Services, two profile images, one of a woman, and another of a man, are shown. The faces are angled away from the camera as the two individuals are shown to be looking at what seems like a flight of elevator stairs. The back of the middle panel contains

the company's web and office addresses, and a collage of pictures. In the collage are shown two men working technological equipment, a man's hand plugging a card into a card reader device, two male hands in a handshake, and three individuals—two women and a man—who are identified as call center agents (also called customer service representative or CSRs) by the headsets<sup>17</sup> that they are wearing. It is the last set of images that I want to describe in more detail: with their faces turned to the computer screen, the women and the man in this picture are shown to be smiling; moreover, the women's faces are in the foreground, while the man's face is in the background.

At first glance, it seems that the brochure is neutral in its signification of gender in that it does not seem to call any attention to it or suggest that gendering is being done.<sup>18</sup> For one, it is straightforward and businesslike in communicating the various services and advantages the company promises to provide. For another, women and men seem to be represented in various jobs and positions within the organization, since the pictures used in the text have both women and men in them. Upon closer analysis, however, the relationship between the pictures and the accompanying language, specifically the manner by which the pictures emphasize either the women or the men in relation to the kind of work that is being done, tells a different story. It is interesting to note that those jobs related to management and technology are represented mostly by pictures in which men are foregrounded, and those that concern human resource and customer service are accompanied by pictures in which women are foregrounded. What this means is that even if both women and men are shown to be present in the different kinds of services and solutions that the company offers, feminization is going on in the jobs that are believed to require feminine qualities such as care-giving, nurturing abilities, and empathy, and masculinization in work that is believed to warrant masculine traits such as decision-making abilities and technical know-how.<sup>19</sup>

This particular manner by which gendering is done is true in the two other texts as well. The language used in the ad for the call center conference seems upfront and neutral and does not suggest any gendered representations. The sole picture used in the ad, however, signifies otherwise. This is because, while the picture features a row of smiling female and male call center agents looking at their computer screens and apparently interacting with clients, it is striking that, of these smiling faces, it is the woman's face that is most clear and discernible, and it seems, the one that has the biggest smile. The smile is, in fact, important here in that it stresses the service-oriented nature of the job. As Cameron (2000a,

2000b) notes, the smile is a prerequisite in the service industry, and in fact, some call centers would train their agents to put a smile in their voice as they interact with clients over the phone. As it is, it is believed that women tend to smile more or have less of a difficulty smiling than men such that the former are more suited to customer and service work. What this representation suggests is a feminization of customer and service work, and while it does not present a masculinization of some other aspect of call center work, it is to be noted that almost all the speakers listed for both the executive and technical sessions of the conference have masculine names, which, to me, suggests that these speakers are men. Moreover, these men occupy top positions within the outsourcing and call center industry in the Philippines based on the designations under their names. In the case of this ad then, the process of masculinization takes place through a different mode; nevertheless, the effect is the same as the one in the brochure in that what is masculinized is the kind of work that involves top-level planning and management and technical operations.

The feature article creates more or less the same significations. On the one hand, it tells a rather gender-neutral story about the growth and projections of the call center industry in the Philippines. Moreover, it represents both women and men as call center agents in the pictures that go with the article. On the other hand, the voice of the article is masculine in that the interviewees are three men who hold key positions within the industry. Further, while both men and women are represented as call center agents, the women are highlighted and put in the foreground through close and clear shots of their faces, while the men are obscured and put in the background through distant or profile shots. Again, these representations suggest that feminization takes place on the bottom level of the hierarchy, and masculinization on the top level. This also implies that while women and men may be represented as part of the same organization, the kinds of work they do within this organization may differ markedly.

Overall, the chosen texts show that, indeed, particular areas of the call center industry are feminized, while others are masculinized. Specifically, those areas that are involved with customer and service work are represented as occupied mostly by women, and those spheres that deal with management and technology are populated generally by men. On a larger scale, the gendering that takes place in these texts and within the call center industry move along the same lines as the gendering that happens within the process of globalization. Within globalization itself, bottom-level jobs such as frontline customer service work are feminized, and top-level jobs such as managerial and technical positions are masculinized.

## CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this paper, I set out to show that globalization is a gendered territory. On the one hand, such gendering is material, as seen in the existing power arrangements within globalization where positions of power tend to be often held by men, and powerless and disempowering ones by women. On the other hand, this gendering is also discursive, with globalization's powerful spaces often represented in discourse in masculinized terms, and its less powerful nooks and crannies in feminized ones. However, the gendering of globalization is often described in either materialist or discursive terms, with more emphasis often placed on the former, when in fact, the two are in a dialectical relationship such that both kinds of analysis give significant insights into the gendering process that takes place in globalization. This paper is therefore an attempt in showing that it is equally important to locate and examine how gendering works in discourse to understand more profoundly the political economy that shapes it, and that it also shapes in return. In addition, discourse approaches on globalization have often neglected the aspect of gender, as discussions have centered on either global vis-à-vis local dynamics and East/West (or Global North/Global South) dichotomies and their representations in discourse. By using gender as a primary unit for analysis, this paper hopes to illustrate that gender is, in fact, very much embedded in these representations, and a focus on gender can yield insightful observations on globalization processes.

The discourse approach used in this paper is grounded in a view of discourse that sees it fundamentally as a meaning-making activity that exists within particular social, cultural, and historical contexts (Blommaert 2005). In this regard, discourse can be seen as a form of social action that has both reproductive and creative possibilities (Fairclough 1993). The reproductive capabilities of discourse are underscored in the analysis with the texts affirming existing power asymmetries in globalization as manifested in the gendered representations of particular spaces of the Philippine offshore call center industry. By affirming these asymmetries, the texts then reproduce them and become complicit in their continued existence and circulation. The effects are not simply discursive, but material as well. Ultimately, however, the significance of the discourse approach is its potential to uncover moments of creativity. As much as discourse can reproduce existing power relations and hierarchies, it can also challenge, reconstruct, and maybe even transform them. This creative potential does not seem to be evident in any of the three texts analyzed, but it does not discount such a possibility. As mentioned at the beginning of the paper, it is

quite possible that there are other texts out there, other kinds of discourses that signify other kinds of meanings, ones that problematize and challenge existing gendering and gendered practices. Ultimately, even if the texts examined here may not recast or question existing power arrangements, the discourse approach serves as a useful and important analytical tool that can shed light on how gendered representations of particular spheres of globalization in discourse may actually signify much larger structures of gender inequality in the world. And when spaces of inequality have been located, it then becomes possible as well to locate those other spaces where such dominant gendered representations may be contested and countered, allowing perhaps for the possibility of creative transformation not only in discourse, but in the world as well.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Front of brochure



NOTES

<sup>1</sup> It has to be noted that it is not gender alone, which determines or influences the value that is ascribed to a particular activity, practice, or phenomenon. Other social variables, such as race, ethnicity, class, age, etc., factor into the process of valuation. However, the focus in this paper is gender; it is also what is salient in the texts that I have chosen to analyze.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the globalization debate summarized here, see Salonga (2007).

<sup>3</sup> Marchand and Runyan (2000) state that proponents of globalization use a neo-liberal rhetoric in making sense of and defending globalization. This means that they see globalization as a series of opportunities that is open and accessible to all kinds of people as long as they are willing to accept, engage, and participate in it. Proponents of globalization are also referred to as liberals or advocates of globalization.

<sup>4</sup> Another implication, specifically in relation to the depiction of globalization as a strictly economic process, is that globalization is unstoppable, since it operates on a level that is removed from the everyday experience of individual human beings, and is therefore out of their control (Marchand and Runyan 2000).

<sup>5</sup> For studies that underscore the social and cultural dimensions of globalization, see Ritzer's seminal work on the so-called McDonaldization of culture (1998), Heller's analysis of the growing commodification of heritage and tradition (2003), and Cameron's take on the increasing importance given to oral communication and performance (2000).

<sup>6</sup> Another direction that critics of globalization have taken on is that of offering strategies of resistance that may challenge, circumvent, or recast the overwhelming forces of globalization. This direction is particularly interesting to me in that it deals primarily with the issue of agency. However, it is not covered in this paper, partly because it is not salient in the texts under examination.

<sup>7</sup> In fact, there are sometimes crossovers between these positions, and often, there are ideological tensions among those who supposedly belong to the same side (Kellner 1997). Moreover, there are other categories by which traditions and positions within the globalization debate are classified (see Held and McGrew 2000; Scholte, 1997; Featherstone and Lash 1995).

<sup>8</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between gender and globalization, see Salonga (2007).

<sup>9</sup> Mainstream accounts of globalization refer to popular texts that are about globalization itself, such as discussions of globalization in popular magazines, or those that may not necessarily be about globalization, but implicate or are implicated in globalization, such as advertisements that represent a particular characteristic of globalization in some way. In both cases, the "globalization in discourse" approach is usually employed in the analysis.

<sup>10</sup> One study, for instance, shows that liberal accounts of globalization read like "rape scripts," in which men are represented as aggressors and women victims (Graham and Gibson in Marchand and Runyan 2000, 12). Another study is Hooper's analysis of the discursive formations of gender, specifically masculinity,

in *The Economist*, which reveals that the magazine makes use of and combines images and metaphors of science, technology, business, and globalization, creating an overall imagery of “entrepreneurial frontier masculinity” (Hooper 2000, 67).

<sup>11</sup> This does not mean, however, that all men partake in the dominant image of masculinity or that there are no women in high positions in the new globalized economy. Gender, as already established, is a social construct, not a physical or biological determination. Moreover, gender is not the only subjectivity that influences women’s and men’s social positionalities; class, race, ethnicity, and age, among others, also play a part. Women are also capable of resistance and subversion, and thus, are not always the victims in this global arrangement of power. It needs pointing out, however, that women’s resistance and subversion are often subsumed within larger structures of exploitation and marginalization.

<sup>12</sup> This is because while the studies within this feminist tradition emphasize the importance of discourse in uncovering and revealing the genderedness of globalization, they often do not provide a theory of or a theoretical framework for studying discourse.

<sup>13</sup> DTSI is the acronym for Diversified Technology Solutions International, Inc. I gathered this brochure in a call center industry-related conference titled “Talking Across the World” held from February 24 to 25, 2006 in Manila, Philippines.

<sup>14</sup> APC is the acronym for American Power Conversion.

<sup>15</sup> Offshore call center contracting for English-speaking nations is deemed as one of the Philippine’s biggest industries today. Figures show that “there are more than 40 call centers operating in the country today. Most of the call centers are constantly on expansion mode” (Valdez 2004, 6).

<sup>16</sup> Both the ad and the article are from the 2004 anniversary special report issue on outsourcing of *Computerworld Philippines*, a weekly newspaper specializing on news and developments in computer and information and communication technology. This special issue is chosen specifically because of its feature on the offshore call center industry.

<sup>17</sup> The headset is a device generally associated with the call center industry, specifically in the context of the Philippines. See Salonga (2007) for an explanation of this association.

<sup>18</sup> A number of other interesting observations can be made based on the other semiotic modes used in the text. For instance, the color and type of business suits worn by the women and men in the pictures seems to create a particular corporate identity for employees of the company, while at the same time drawing on certain expectations about the appropriate color and attire for work. In the case of the text, earth tones and traditionally cut suits seem to suggest an air of respectability and responsibility. Dash of bright reds and maroons over which black coats are worn (interestingly, it is the women call center agents who wear these colors) seem to suggest freshness and youth. What this combination of colors does is it creates an old-and-yet-new feel, which I believe the company wants to project for itself, to signal both tradition and innovation.

<sup>19</sup> It has to be noted that there is an ethnicity or race angle in these representations as well in that the men in the picture for the Consulting aspect of the company are Caucasian, while the women and men in the other aspects are Asian. Interestingly,



one of the primary observations I had in the call center conference I attended was that the owners and managers of the call centers in the Philippines were mostly Caucasian men. The heads of the language and customer service training of these call centers, however, were usually Filipino women. This point, however, is not pursued in this paper, since the focus here is gender. It does show, however, that apart from gender, other subjectivities are being activated in these texts, and in fact, it would also be interesting to examine how gender intersects with other identity categories and how this relationship is represented in the discourse of the call center industry and globalization.

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