Critical thinking is the argumentation practice in everyday life. Advertising is a speech where critical thinking can occur both as a practical reasoning in the everyday life as well as an institutional evaluation of skills necessary to build and deconstruct such a discourse.

To talk nowadays about argumentation means to place yourself either within the frameworks drawn by a few usual distinctions, or outside them: argumentation theory, or theory of argument; argumentation practice, or practical argumentation. Placing yourself outside the frameworks drawn by these distinctions often means cancelling the distinctions themselves: argumentation theory and theory of argument concerns the same thing, and the same happens in case of argumentation practice and practical argumentation.

Such distinctions were usually accepted in the following terms: argumentation theory is the study of argumentation practice (in its normative, empirical or conceptual dimensions), whereas theory of argument is the study of argumentation products (that is, of arguments, from the perspective of their functioning as practical argumentation within a given discourse genre). From such a perspective, theory of argument is a part of argumentation in the same way in which arguments or practical argumentation are parts of argumentation practice.

Accepting or cancelling the frameworks drawn by these distinctions is the focal point of the interdisciplinary approaches to critical thinking as argumentation practice, bringing together not only the traditional perspectives of philosophers, epistemologists, or logicians, but also those of rhetoricians and communication practitioners, as well as of theorists and practitioners from other fields.
Critical analysis of the advertising’s commercials

This paper will try to emphasis on the advertising’s commercials analysis focusing on the models offered by the critical thinking tests, from which we will resume only to the LSAT tests perspective. Commercials will be approached as ‘advertising discourse’, and the advertising discourse as public discourse.

We resume in our presentation the three most important LSAT perspectives on advertising discursive analysis (the comprehensive analysis, the informational analysis and the logical-argumentative analysis) leaving aside the outlook analysis of advertising or marketing psychology, perhaps more popular to the public. We present those perspectives focusing on informational analysis.

Critical analysis of advertising consists in decoding commercials with at least three types of questions found in LSAT: analytical reasoning questions (for the informational analysis: organization, grouping, structuring information in a discourse), and logical reasoning questions (for the logical-argumentative analysis: structuring and destructuring an argumentative discourse), and reading comprehension questions (for the comprehensive analysis: understanding long discourses by comprehensive thinking).

Here is how to display the characteristics of the three types of analysis we set forth embodied in the critical thinking skills according to LSAT (The Official LSAT Handbook, 2010, 2-4): 1) Characteristics of the Informational analysis: A) Organizing, grouping, structuring the data; B) Identifying a basic information structure; C) The possible use of the given information; D) The compulsory use of the given information; E) The possible use of new information; F) The compulsory use of new information; G) Choosing the entities using the available information; 2) Characteristics of the logical-argumentative analysis: A) Identifying an idea, theme or main problem; B) Constructing an inference; C) Identifying an argumentative structure (an explicit or a implicit one); D) Identifying a similar argumentative structure; E) Identifying a reasoning error; F) Identifying a similar reasoning error; G) Identifying the assumptions and presuppositions in an argument; H) Using the additional evidence/information; I) explaining an event, including a conflict state or apparently paradoxical; 3) Characteristics of the comprehensive analysis: A) Identifying the main points of view; B) The explanation of the meaning/significance/the reference of the expression; C) The
argumentative structure of the text/discourse/advertisement; D) The construction of inferences concerning advanced points of view in advertisement; E) The expansion of the discourse content/gaining new knowledge; F) Identifying and highlighting attitudes; G) Identifying the analogies and the principles that a commercial uses; H) Emphasizing the purpose in which the advertisement is used.

As can be seen, the informational analysis of a speech of advertising is determined primarily by the analytical reasoning skills, but its elements are found in the other two types of analysis considered by us. We shall limit ourselves below only to underline the vision of an analytical approach to advertising’s discourse, focusing on the questions with which we can identify the course of information in a commercial and the expected effects of different ways of using the information.

**Informational analysis of advertising: the model**

For the informational analysis of the advertising discourse from a critical thinking perspective we will retain only how skills were used to analyze the information in the LAST test. This test consists of multiple choice questions, some of which concern the use of information skills in reasoning or thinking. Among the questions that are found in the structure of the three types of items, analytical reasoning questions are crucial for testing data analysis skills used in reasoning or thinking, but not sufficient. In the analysis of advertising, they must be accompanied by questions aimed at, in one way or another, all information contained in a product ad, regardless of whether they are logical reasoning questions or reading comprehension questions. What questions are therefore to be made in terms of information analysis?

Before our review we will present briefly what actually we mean by informational analysis questions. We are doing this starting from the clues given in *The Official LSAT SuperPrep. The Champion of LSAT Preparation* when it briefly presents Analytical Reasoning Questions (*Ibidem.*, 2, 4-39): 1) The purpose of the information analysis questions consists in putting and solving problems, and discussing it assumes the ability to understand a structure of entities and relations and to draw conclusions about those structures, more exactly: A) The ability to identify elements or structures of elements (given information) under the form of default terms of a problem, that can be: a) Groups of contextual elements:
conceptions, visions, perspectives, situations, actions, entities, space frames, time frames, background frames, assumptions, relationships, structures and so on); b) Groups of entities that can relate between them: persons, places, things, events, images, shapes, colours, expressions, representations etc.; B) The ability to relate correctly keeping in mind some default terms, reasoning consisting in putting/representing the problem in dates (the perceivable forming or reforming of the problem): a) Affirmations, rules, conditioning and reasoning regarding the default terms: highlighting, explaining and stipulating the relations between certain entities or structure of them (entities structures, relationship structures); b) Structures or organisations under the form of requests of given information (for example: placing given elements/information in order from first to last, selecting subgroups of elements/information of a bigger group, matching elements/information from another group; 2) The required skills and assumed by the informational analysis questions are those describing regular relations, like: A) Designation: 2 entities, P and O and their sub-entities, R and S, must be analysed from the informational behaviour point of view during the fourth consecutive instantiation, called 1,2,3 and 4; B) Ordering: X is positioned before Y, but after Z; C) Grouping: A discourse tries to analyze, regarding the problem that it discusses, 7 points of view – R,S,U,V,W and X. Each point of view is being analyzed from its own perspective that it was created: A discourse tries to analyze, on an issue that discusses seven ways - R, S, U, V, X. For each point of view it is analyzed their own perspective from which they were formulated – pros, cons and holds and abstentions; D) Space orientation: An advertising poster has 6 information focal points and each point is connected to at least another point in an interference system, some of them being targeted one way only.

A special category of information analysis questions are ‘problem-solving questions’ that take place actually. These are questions regarding the requirement of solving a problem (data-problem). To highlight and better understand the role they played in the analysis of an advertisement, we will present summarily, the risk of falling into didacticism. Briefly restate two subcategories of these questions: 1) Questions regarding what is necessary, what is possible and what is impossible from the request: A) “Which of the affirmations regarding X should be true?”; B) “Which of the affirmations could be false?”; C) “If Y regards Z, which of these affirmations regarding X has to be true?”; D) „If Y and Q sometimes regards Z, which of these affirmations regarding X could be true?”; E) „What might or must happen regarding X: either in general, either under certain terms?”; 2) Questions regarding understanding the request: A) “In
what way the given information must relate in the request?”; B) “How can the given information can not relate in the request?”; C) “Which part of the request is just a contextual information”; D) “Which part of the request is a background information”; E) “How can you intuitively represent (sketches, symbols, formal notations, graphics, diagrams, etc.) the problem facts?”.

Another category of questions closely related to the above and related also to analytical reasoning, are the questions regarding the problem solving method: 1) Orientation questions, regarding: A) The way in which the request terms guides answers: a) “Which of the possible solutions of a problem grants every term of the request?”; b) “Which of the possible solutions of a problem doesn’t bend none of the request terms?”; c) “Which of the possible solutions of a problem bends a term from the request?”; d) “Which of the problem terms is obeyed by the X solution to the problem?”; e) “Which of the problem terms is not obeyed by the X solution to the problem?”; B) How the problem-solving and the requirement guides answers: a) Questions containing the expression “from which anyone”: for example „Which of the lists is complete and correct of Y-type entities from which, what are the ones that have the X quality in the Z version?”; b) Questions containing the expression „at a certain time before/just after”: for example “X’s description takes place at a certain time before/just after Y’s presentation?”; c) Questions containing the expression „at least/at most/exactly”: for example “X’s intervention regards at least/at the most/exactly three aspects of the problem in cause?”; d) Questions containing the expression „respective/ no necessarily in this order”: for example “If the Y element is presented first, the second, third and fourth element of the presented elements could be T, respectively X and O, but not necessarily Q?”; e) Questions containing the expression: “if … then”: “If the Y element is presented first, that which of the T, X, O and Q is presented the second?”; 2) Validation questions, regarding the truth of phrases that express the solution to the problem: A) “What has to/might be true?”; B) “What has to be true under certain specified circumstances?”; C) “What has to be true only under a requested terms basis?”; D) “What might be true depending on certain specified circumstances?”; E) “What might be true only under the requested terms basis?”.

Logical reasoning questions used in the informational analysis of advertising can also be displayed in three categories. We will review as we have done with the analytical reasoning questions (Apud. The Official LSAT SuperPrep, 2004, 18-22, 25-33). The first category is that of questions about what can be logically derived from the information provided in advertising: 1) Questions to identify a position from the
Information given: A) Questions to identify a position conclusively supported (necessarily) to the information given: a) “What is the statement whose truth is guaranteed by the information given?”; b) “What is the statement supported and confirmed by the information given?”; c) “Which statement must be true if the information given is true?”; d) “What statement can be deduced logically from advertising expressions?”; e) “If the information in advertisement are true, which is the statement whose truth follows from their truth?”; B) questions to identify a position supported in an inconclusive way (non required) by the information given: a) “What is the best supported statement by information in the advertisement?”; b) “What is the statement most likely supported by the information in the advertisement?”; c) “What sentence is possible to sustain based on the information from the advertisement?”; d) “What statement is reasonable to be inferred based on the information of the advertisement?”; e) “If the information in the advertisement are true / authentic, which is the most powerful statement supported?”; 2) Questions to identify issues on which of the advertisement interlocutors have different views: A) “The main issue in the debate between X and Y is whether ...?”; B) “Which statement correctly expresses the main idea disputed by X and Y”; C) “On the basis of what is said, X and Y shall decide to disagree on whether ...”; D) “The advertisement claims the most powerful statement that X and Y disagree about...”; E) “X and Y do not agree that ...”.

The second category of logical thinking questions used in the informational analysis of advertising is actually formed out of argumentative questions about how the information works in advertisement: 1) Questions about the impact of additional information (additional) in the argument: A) Questions about additional information that strengthens the argument: a) “What information, if true, supports the most powerful the argument?"; b) “To support the argument, which statement would be most useful to be determined?"; c) “Many statements, if true, may weaken the argument, EXCEPT ...”; d) “What statement, if true, supports the most arguments / main conclusion of the advertising?"; e) “What statement, if true, raises the best strength or credibility of X's argument supported by X in the text / speech?"; B) Questions about additional information that weaken the argument: a) “What information, if true, most weakens the argument”; b) “To reduce the force of the argument, which statement of it would be most useful to be determined?"; c) “Each of the X's statements, if true, strengthens the argument, OTHER THAN...”; d) “Which of the statements of X reduces most of the
advertisement value of the main conclusion? ”; e) “What statement, if true, reduces the credibility of the claim of X in the ad?”.

The third category of logical thinking questions used in the informational analysis of advertising is about tacit information. These questions aim tacit informational content of a text advertisement seen as more complex than it appears at first sight. One of these categories is “questions about how the argument operates with tacit information”: 1) Questions about the assumptions of the argument: A) “What statement is assumed to derive a logical reasoning conclusion?”; B) “The conclusion follows logically from the premises of the advertisement only if it is assumed the statement ...”; C) “What is the assumption from which X starts its argumentation?”; D) “What premise is tacitly assumed in the arguments of the advertising?”; E) “The argument depends on the assumption that ...”; 2) Questions about using the principles in argumentation: A) “What reasoning would be justified by the principle of X, if it is accepted?”, B) “In what respect the interests expressed in advertisement substantially overlap to X and Y?”; C) “What principle, if true, helps most to support the argument of X?”; D) “What principle is contradicted hardest by the advocacy of X?”; E) “What is the principle to which arguments of the advertisement comply?”.

Useful in the informational analysis of advertising are two categories of reading comprehension questions (Apud. The Official LSAT SuperPrep, 2004, 53-54. These categories of reading comprehension questions are about what the advertisement says or suggests: 1) Direct elementary questions (“What does the commercial really say?”) targeting not the exact wording of certain passages of the text, but rather the meaning of their formulation: A) “What is textually/ explicitly said in the advertisement?”, b) “What the ad’s author claims about X?”, c) “What is stated in the advertisement about X?”, d) “According to the advertisement, which statement is true about X?”, e) “Through which statement can we express, according to the advertisement’s author, a feature of X?”; 2) More sophisticated, complex and difficult questions, transmitted by an advertisement on the plus (tacitly) to which it explicitly states (“What are the information that the author leaves untold or undelivered explicitly based on the public's ability to highlight them?”): A) questions sophisticated aimed at what the author assumes that the public already knows: a) “What are the things or information that the author considers that there was no point in telling them public because they are well-known or at least he would be known?”, b) “What things or information is transmitted tacitly by what is stated explicitly in the ad?”, c) “What things or the information which the commercial explicitly states can be
understood by the public?”; d) “What additionally is transmitted by the advertisement compared to what it explicitly states?”; e) “What does the advertisement’s author not say, leaving for the public to understand?”; B) complex questions relating to the ad’s inferential component: a) “What does the advertising suggest or indicates, without directly saying?”; b) “What can be implied from what the advertising explicitly states?”; c) “What is understandable in the examined commercial?”; d) “What can be inferred from an advertisement about an element of its structure?”; e) “What is true, according to the ad, about what you can infer from it?”; C) more difficult questions concerning the ideas, opinions or inferences of the public: a) “What is the idea of the advertisement the public might agree, even if it is not?”; b) “Which of the ideas of the advertisement is least likely for the public to agree with?”; c) “What inferences should make public in order to understand what the author expressed in the advertisement?”; d) “To what nonexistent information in the advertisement must the public appeal in order to understand what the advertisement’s author says?”; e) “In which way can be deducted from the ad the author's claim that an opinion differs about X compared to public expectations?”.

## Conclusion

The focus point of our informational analysis model is to realize the interpretation of an advertising discourse in according to the critical thinking skills tested by LSAT. We will elaborate the specifics of critical thinking perspectives of analysis by giving answers to the main types of questions that underlie the three components of critical thinking: analytical, logical and comprehensive.

## References
