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***Word-Picture Conjunction: A Multimodal Discourse  
Analysis of Cellular Network Companies Slogans in  
Pakistan***

**Abstract:**

Word -picture conjunction is an effective mode of communication. Words cannot be understood without pictures and vice versa. The present study investigates how linguistic and meta-linguistic features of cellular network companies are employed to propagate desired ideology to the target audience to win their consent through discursive moves. The data for the present research has been collected from Mobilink Jazz's slogans. The time span for data collection ranges from year 2015-16. The methodological perspectives used in the present research include Fairclough (1993) model of Critical Discourse Analysis, Barthes' (1974) model of Semiological Discourse Analysis and Kruger's (2000) model of Focus Group Discussion analysis. The data used in the study comprises three modes (linguistic, visual and views of focus group participants). This justifies the use of tri-angular research method employed in the study. The research contends that role of new media has increased communication among the people the world over. Additionally, it finds that new media is one of the best sites for ideological investment because significance of visual and verbal practices has increased many folds.

**Keywords:**

Visual and Verbal Practices, New Media, Semiotic Discourse, Slogans, Implicatures, multimodality

**I. Introduction:**

New media includes websites and blogs, streaming audio and video, online communication, mobile apps, web advertising, virtual reality, digital camera etc. In media studies, new media is a comprehensive term. In post- modern era various modes of communication are used to sell the product and to hegemonise the minds of the users. It is used as an interplay between technology, images, and sound. In the politics of representation different modes of communication are tactfully operationalized to win general consent. The multimode of communication used in cellular network companies is affected by cultural practices. Advertisements are designed by keeping in mind socio-cultural norms of a context to enhance marketing process.

The genre of advertisement has technicalities of its own. The slogans of cellular network companies are revised from time to time. This is done in accordance with the tendencies of the changing time. They are short, catchy, persuasive, culturally loaded and replete with bundle of interpretations. More often they consist of less than five (05) words. In order to decode them one needs linguistic and meta-linguistic competencies.

**II. Work already done:**

Yuliana's (2001) research on the concept that slogans are coined very tactfully focused on the nature of the product being advertised and how it is advertised. Moreover, the contextual setting and normative competence of the context where it is going to be advertised are of vital significance. He argued that along with linguistic features the non- verbal features must have harmony with each other. Visual coherence must be observed to propagate the desired message comprehensively.

Lapasansca (2006) analyzed TV advertisements by highlighting the significance of word- picture conjunction. The data was collected from different TV channels and analysed by applying Multimodal Discourse analysis research

technique. Additionally, the researcher validated his findings by incorporating general perception as well. It suggests that electronic media discourses are never ideology free and one of the best sights for ideological investment.

Mahmood's (2007) work on female representation in women's magazine illustrates the way; the concept of femininity is propagated through linguistic and semiotic discourses of magazines. It highlights stereotypical concept of how a woman should be like in patriarchal societies. Additionally, it focuses on how roles are assigned by employing various modes of language. The research concludes that ideology travels from top to bottom and the target audience adopts the ideological messages being propagated.

Nugroho (2007) conducted the research on the slogans of cosmetic and food products. The research highlights most often females are represented as sex object and commodity. The imported feature of the study is that not only women are objectified rather men are as well. The underlying reason might be that the consumers are of males and females. Linguistic and visual analogies are drawn very deftly to create coherence and to sell the products by making persuasive use of verbal and non-verbal practices.

Sudarni (2011), in her research, explained the variations of meanings of conversational Implicature and the reasons of the conversational Implicature used in "SALT" movie script. She analysed the data at word, clause, and discourse levels. Besides, the research, contends that one needs to decode linguistic and meta-linguistic feature of the text to infer possible range of meanings being conveyed.

Sajid (2012) elaborated in his research that how gender stereotypes go a long way in shaping the mindset of the people about the division of gendered roles through linguistic and semiotic discourses of Pakistani print media. The data was analysed through triangular research technique. To incorporate general perception, the researcher conducted focus group discussions and validated his findings of visual analysis. It highlighted that visual and verbal practices are used to render women from the main domains of power in society.

Waseem (2019) carried out a research on the slogans of cellular network companies in Pakistan. The analysis was done by applying multimodal discourse

analysis research approach. The study contends that different linguistic modes are supplementary to each other to convey desired message to the audience comprehensively. Therefore, the producers of ideology keep on changing the slogans of their cellular network companies to exploit the consumers on different grounds and to sell their products.

### **III. Operational Definitions:**

#### **a. Slogan:**

The Oxford Dictionary of English defines a Slogan as "a short, catchy, striking and easily memorable phrase often used in advertising. It is usually a short tagline - less than five words. Here, in the present research the term means how cellular network companies' slogans in Pakistan are used to sell the desired ideology and what possible connotations they embody with in a particular cultural setting.

#### **b. Implicature:**

It means the study of additionally conveyed meanings. It is a persuasive technique of conveying the un-said meanings through the said. These are indirect speech acts and cannot be understood without having the knowledge of metalinguistic features. The politics of positive self and others negative representation is often played up through implicatures.

#### **c. Visual & Verbal Practices**

In the present research, these terms have been operationalized that how various meta-linguistic and linguistic devices work together to propagate desired ideologies to the consumers and to make things common sense to advertise the brand more persuasively.

### **IV. Methodological Perspectives:**

The present study used multimodal discourse analysis research design by drawing upon Fairclough (2003) model for linguistic analysis, Barthes (1974) model of Semiological Discourse analysis( SDA) and Kruger's (2000) model for focus group data analysis. The rationale behind using tri-angular research approach is that the data for the present study consists of three modes such as linguistic, visual and focus group discussions. Fairclough's (2003) analytical framework addresses a number of social research themes and the prominent

analytical categories include representation, metaphor, implicatures, assumption, back/ foregrounding, in/exclusion and discourse as a social practice. However, after going through the data critically the researchers have found that the use of rhetorical question, use of pronouns and frequency of occurrence of various techniques are present in the collected data and hence have modified the existing model by adding the mentioned analytical categories.

#### **V. Semiological Discourse Analysis:**

In order to analyse visual data in the present research the researchers have operationalised Barthes' (1974) model of Semiological Discourse Analysis (SDA). The prominent levels of analysis of this analytical model are iconic, identical and indexical. The visual data collected from Mobilink Jazz advertisements has been analysed from lower to complex levels. According to this research model meanings are propagated through visual and verbal modes of communication. The above mentioned three levels are as under:

1. Iconic level highlights that meanings are self-contained and can be perceived through the images of celebrities and infamous criminals.
2. This level illustrates that how society values signs and how these signs are used to convey social, cultural and political connotations embedded in the signs. However, the concept of signifier and signified is contextual.
3. This level of meaning making is considered the most complex one because here no finality can be had in terms of extracting meanings from the visual discourses. Rather this level states that visual discourses are culturally oriented and should be decoded by focusing upon cultural and normative perspectives which surrounded a particular semiotic. In this way, socially constructed meaning up to great extent become common sense and at the same time represent dominant belief patterns of a particular time. Hence, semiotic discourses embody bundles of interpretations and one needs cultural competence as well to lay there embedded ideologies.

#### **VI. Focus Group Discussion:**

Semiotic analysis is most often considered as researcher's personal perception and interpretation of the text which may or may not match with general perception. To cater with the issue two focus group discussions were conducted

among the participants who were MPhil in linguistics and other disciplines. Two mixed gender discussions (each of 60 minutes) on the selected cellular network companies' advertisements were conducted (visual recordings available). The first group comprises 08 participants who were MPhil in linguistics. The participants in 2nd group were MPhil in other disciplines such as Education, Mathematics, Islamic studies, management sciences, Economics, Urdu, and Physics. This was done to have in-depth views of the participants on the selected advertisements of (Mobilink and, Ufone, The participants expressed their views on the use of visual and verbal practices employed in the advertisements. Thus, the data obtained was transcribed and analysed by applying Kruger's (2000) model at words, context, internal consistency, frequency, extensiveness and finding the big Idea.

### **Research Questions:**

The present research answers the following research questions:

1. How have discursive modes of representation been employed by Mobilink Jazz, a cellular network company in its slogans to sell its products during 2015 - 2016?
2. What possible implications do these slogans carry?

### **VII. Linguistic Analysis:**

Fairclough (2012) asserts that no use of language is ideology free. Either we express solidarity through the use of language or distance. Similarly, the use of second person pronoun Tu (you) in the beginning of the advertisement under analysis imparts the concept of social distance among the participants. The waiter, who later on is labelled as the user of (most probably) Ufone is called by using pronoun Tu (you) by the other boys shown as belonging to upper class as compared to the waiter.

”تو یہاں بھی آگیا“

"To yahan bhi aa gya"

"You have also come here"

The person (waiter) is shocked by this question and moves away, there comes again the sound of laughter. This implies that the users of Mobilink are happy, healthy and wealthy. The arrival of a young, beautiful and attractive girl astonishes all. Everybody feels attracted towards her. This implies that Mobilink Jazz has back

grounded every other network just as the girl has captured the attention of every individual towards herself. The visual imagery associated with the girl represents her as a seductress capable of motivating everyone. Her arrival adds colors to life as is metaphorically represented by her dress of red color which according to Barthes (1974), connotes validity, passion, life, vigor etc. It connotes the happy and relaxed life of Mobilink users as compared to the life of the waiter. The concept of person as state metaphor has also been exploited here. The waiter and the other boys and girl stand for their respective cellular networks.

Fairclough, (1993) argues that media is one of the best sites to gage degree of change taking place in society. Same is the case with the ad of Mobilink under analysis. It seems that it has been designed keeping in view the psychology of the target audience. It is done to sell the product and to make the people behave in a desired manner. Among the other persuasive techniques lexicalization is significant one. Highly loaded words have been used to win the consent of the users. Rahman (2003) argues that language is a fundamental tool that is used to construct the identities. The users of this particular network companies have been assigned superior and positive identities.

Eco (1979) discusses the difference between a close an open text. An open text can be decoded in multiple ways focusing on the context. When the girl is given numerous offers, she nowhere is taken aback except when the boy offers her for endless talk around the clock. She then utters “کیا (Kiya)” means what? The use of interrogative by the girl, in the form of verbal and visual practices, implies that she could not seem to believe at this amazing package of Jazz Company and turns her head towards the boy who is giving her this offer. This could imply the dilemma of post-modern age where every individual wants someone to share his/her feelings. This makes the offers of Jazz unbelievable:

یہی ہے موبلی لنک جاز کی ناقابل یقین آفر  
جس سے دن رات، صبح شام، چوبیس گھنٹے  
اپنے تین فرینڈز اینڈ فیملی نمبرز پر کال بالکل مفت

Larka 1: Yahihai Mobilink Jazz kinainaqabil-e- yaqeen offer

Jis say din raat subah sham chobees ghanty

apny teen friends and family numbers pr call bilkul muft

Then another verbal practice is used in the form of imperative sentence which is as under:

ابھی جازون پہنچ پر آئیں

AbhiJazzone package pr aye

Activate Jazzone package right now.

The imperative tone of the sentence implies that sometimes our well-wishers use authoritative tone to guide us to the right path, which later on proves to be good thing for us. Similarly, Mobilink Jazz, being our apna(well-wisher) implies this tone to bring the people to the right network. The use of number game is still another persuasive technique to sell the product, which has been mentioned in the following line.

صرف 6.99 روپے روزانہ میں نان سٹاپ چوبیس گھنٹے فری میں بات کا مزہ اڑائیں

Sirf 6.99 rupay rozana main non stop chobees ghanty free main baat ka maza urain

Enjoy non-stop 24 hours in only just 6.99 rupees.

The slogan of Mobilink Network Company is very appealing and the concept of oneness has been imparted through it. Conboy (2007) states that language shows solidarity and distance from a particular group.

موبل لنک جاز اپنا ہے

Mobilink Jazz apna hai.

Mobilink Jazz imparts solidarity to its users

The concept of Us-ness through the linguistic features has been highlighted by uniting the Mobilink users into a family. The slogan also implies that no other cellular network company is as caring to its users as is Mobilink.

Fairclough (2012) opines that language is not static rather dynamic. With the passage of time, various changes take place in language and society. Similarly, new media also reflects the changes taking place in socio-political scenario. In order to capture the minds of the users, the selected cellular network company has been changing its slogans from time to time. The slogans of Jazz Company have been mentioned below to support the stance.

دنیا کو بتا دو

موبل لنک، ہر دل، ہر دن

موبل لنک جاز اپنا ہے



If we look at the changes in the slogans chronologically, the above mentioned slogans of Mobilink cellular network company can be put together as;

دنیا کو بتا دو کہ ہر دل کے لیے ہر دن موبیل لنک جا اپنا ہے

Dunya ko bta doo keh har dil k liyay hr din Mobilink Jazz apna hai

The implications of the slogans of MobilinkNetwork Company are that the users of this network are privileged ones. This network company has facilitated its users in such a way that they are in a position to guide others (the users of other network companies) that if they want to enjoy every type of facility in terms of affordability and connectivity the only option left with them is to be the users of Mobilink Jazz. Its packages are meant for the people of every age group and profession as has been shown through visual practices in the advertisements. Not only this particular network company's packages are affordable but also it takes care of its users like your own near and dear ones. This must be known to everybody. Though the linguistic form of slogans is imperative yet it imparts the concept of solidarity.

#### VIII. Visual Analysis:



Barthes (1974) argues that word- picture conjunction goes a long way. The

girl in the ad of this network company which connotes vitality, youth, vim, vigor, happiness and passions. She tall, captivating and attractive. It implies that Moblink Jazz stands prominent among other networks. It brings pleasures in the lives of its users. Moreover, the other visual practices used in the ad is the use of different colors such as red, white, yellow and black. These visual practices represent passion, blood, liveliness, sunshine, happiness peacefulness, power and strength. The use of different colors implies that Mobilink is very much in light about the present needs of its users and facilitates them in such a way that they look confident, happy, satisfied, peaceful and different from others. As a result its users feel themselves empowered.

Barthes (1973) opines that each image has an implied view of society, of the world and our roles in it. Similarly, everybody feels attracted toward the girl representing Mobilink which is capable of astonishing everybody.

Bignell (1997) states that caption underneath the picture enables the audience to look at the image with certain cultural connotations and the picture functions as the proof that the message of the text is true. If correlated with the visual practices used in the ad it implies that most of its users are young ones and especially the student class has been focused as is highlighted through the educational institute in the background.

#### Table of Verbal Practices in Mobilink Ads during 2015-16:

No.	Category	Frequency of Occurrence
1.	<i>List of First Person Pronoun:</i> I, Me, مجھے، میں، ہمارے، اپنے، اپنا	
2.	<i>Second Person Pronoun:</i> You، تُو، آپ، تم	
3.	<i>Interjection / Exclamatory Sentence:</i> اوئے! کیا بات ہے!	
4.	<i>Rhetorical Question:</i> تُو یہاں بھی آگیا وہ لاہری ٹھکانٹ، سمجھ نہیں آرہی کون ہوگا جو اس ناقابل یقین آفر سے فائدہ نہیں اٹھائے گا، سوچتے کیوں ہو، کیسے بچیں، شہر سے کیش کیسے آئے گا، کیش کیا	

5.	<i>Interrogative:</i> کتنے کا حصہ ہے؟ آپ اسے شہر میں کیوں نہیں بیچتے؟	
6.	<i>Code Mixing:</i> ایکس کیوز، می، رائٹ نو، بی۔ اے، اسائنمنٹس، انڈنس، لنچ فرینڈز، فیملی، اینڈ، نمبرز، نان سٹاپ، ڈائل، جاز، کیش، ان لمیٹڈ، 3G	
7.	<i>Code Switching:</i> I love you You love me	
8.	<i>Metaphor of Number:</i> دس سال، 6.99 روپے تین فرینڈز اور فیملی نمبرز 2500MB	
9.	<i>List of Future Tense:</i> گا، گے	
10.	<i>Use of Slogans:</i> موبی لنک جاز اپنا ہے دنیا کو بتادو موبی لنک ہر دل، ہر دن	
11.	<i>List of Adjective:</i> نا قابل یقین، مفت، فری، نان سٹاپ، سانسے، quick، Happy، اصل، unlimited، سب سے بڑے، چھوٹے، کتنے کا	
12.	<i>Rhyming Words:</i> You, Too, Me, Family بڑھادو، دکھادو	
13.	<i>Imperative:</i> ابھی جازون پیکیج پر آئیں	

#### **IX. Focus group data analysis:**

The researchers have validated their findings of visual analysis by incorporating the remarks of the participants. The most frequently used words by the participants are persuasive techniques, new media war, product selling, elite ideology, woman as commodity, attraction for young generation etc. All the

participants were of the opinion that different techniques of marketing have been used to sell their product and by putting the other cellular network companies in the background. In this regard the remarks of some of the participants have been included here.

*"I think as usual a female has been used as commodity and a seductress to persuade the users. Less attention is paid on the product and more on the objectification of woman."*

*"The use of visual and verbal practices is very persuasive. Target audience have been targeted very tactfully focusing on marketing techniques."*

*"There is also the concept of breaking stereo types as boys always used to impress the girls through different ways such as by telling about their families and by appearing gentle through dress. Now they are propagating the message that if you want to impress a girl, you should have the sim of this particular network."*

*"The imperative tone in the use of visual and verbal practices is impressive and exploits the psychology of the people."*

All the participants argued that the concept of word-picture conjunction has tactfully been employed for positive self and negative other representation. The use of visual and verbal techniques is impressive.

#### **X. Conclusion:**

The analysis of data collected from the ads of Mobilink jazz during the time period of 2025-16, reveals that different visual and verbal practices have been deftly employed by the producer to propagate multiple ideologies to the target audience to sell the product and to control their mind set as well. Among the persuasive visual and linguistic techniques the use of imperative sentence is common one - e.g. سب کہہ دو (Say it all) 'Sbkeh doo', دنیا کو بتا دو (Let the world know) 'Dunyakobta doo'. The implications of these slogans are that the users of mobilink jazz are facilitated by all means in terms of affordability and connectivity they are relaxed up to the possible extent and hence, they must say what they want through this cellular company and should also persuade the rest of the world that

اپنا ہے 'Mobilink Jazz apnahai'. Language is connotative and denotative the slogan that 'Mobilink Jazz apnahai' could be an answer of the question asked by the user of another cellular company that what type of network this is. In response to the question the users of jazz can easily claim that this particular network company takes care of its users like a near and dear one.

The research also finds that among the visual used in conjunction with linguistic ones most often celebrities are shown in the ads. One of the possible reasons could be that ideology travels from top to bottom and by seeing the celebrities using a particular cellular network company, the target audience start using the same network to be the part of mainstream ideology. Similarly, in the ads of Mobilink jazz the concept of word picture conjunction has been operationalized to propagate desired ideology to the users comprehensively.

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