Socio-Semiotic Analysis of Billboard Advertisement Through Multimodality Theory

Mamona Firdous*

Department of English Linguistics and Communication, Shalamar Medical & Dental College (SMDC), Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. mamonafirdos@gmail.com

Farah Hanif

Visiting Lecturer (English), Department of Electrical Engineering, University of the Punjab (PU), Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. farah.irfan2004@gmail.com

Najam Irshad

MPhil English Linguistics (Scholar), Department of English (Graduate Studies), National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad, Capital Territory, Pakistan. irshadnajam9@gmail.com

Contact email - mamonafirdos@gmail.com

Abstract

Billboard advertisement is one of the simplest methods for local businesses, global corporations, and telecommunications offices to connect with the wider population. The aim of this study was to examine the advertisements displayed on billboards within the semiotic environment of Pakistan. The semiotic and linguistic choices made in the advertisements were investigated using Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic methodology to achieve the research's objective. This study incorporated a qualitative approach using general principles to draw the multimodal elements included in the advertisement, such as utterance, image, sound, colour, gesture, and space, with the goal of capturing the producer's whole meaning and message. The theoretical foundation for this investigation was established through the socio-semiotic technique outlined by Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). The researcher employed a convenience sampling method and collected data by photographing billboard advertisements. Researcher has analyzed the semiotic and linguistic modes in the billboard ads by using multimodality theory. The study's findings revealed that specific types of semiotic and linguistic signs were formed using several multimodal modes such as visual, verbal, spatial and gestural. This study concludes that a sign in an advertisement has a system that is formed by a combination of language and semiotic choices.

Keywords: Multimodal, socio-semiotics analysis, billboard advertisements, linguistics signs.

1. Introduction

In this contemporary era, Advertisement is a powerful way of marketing and publicity that is highly visible. Advertisements concern about to introduce and sell products or to attract customers. In reconstructing the advertisements, advertising department make something unique in each advertisement in order to entrap the customers/audience. Rehman et al., (2019) stated, "Advertisement as a means of marketing and information, communicate to number of people and pursue their attention to the subject of advertising, the establishment or maintenance of interest in it and its promotion on the market". It is a persuasive technique of merchandise to target audience. Sama (2019) supports this idea, advertisements seen as a significant and crucial component for the growth of the marketers and businesses. Furthermore, Durmaz and Celik (2022) defined advertising as "the practice of announcing a sale or attempting to encourage customers to purchase a product or service". Advertising department adopt different tools to pursue the people and advertise their products to the target customers. In contemporary times, individuals are consistently exposed to numerous advertisements across various media platforms such as newspapers, magazines, billboards, television, and the internet.

A billboard advertisement is considered a powerful and impactful marketing tool. It is a form of advertising that effectively conveys messages to the public, drawing attention to products and services offered by companies. These advertisements target specific customer segments, helping marketers sell their products and gain a larger market share (Taylor & Franke, 2003; Meurs & Aristoff, 2009). Billboards play a crucial role in promoting products and services, creating consumer awareness, and establishing a strong presence due to their wide and repetitive viewership (Utsu, 2020). They achieve this through large text sizes, the inclusion of celebrity endorsements, and the clear presentation of product features and benefits. Nyarko et al. (2015) emphasize that billboard advertisements have a significant influence on the decisions of potential buyers, impacting not only the image of the advertising organization but also the perception of the advertised product or service. In essence, billboard ads shape how a product is perceived, influencing audience preferences, and are specifically designed to capture the attention of both motorists and pedestrians.

In this article, researcher is going to scrutinize the billboard advertisements. Hence, this study provides an analytical framework, which employs a visual social semiotic approach to image analysis in billboard ads. According to Kress (2015), the major objective of social semiotic theory is "sign-

making rather than sign use" (p.54). It is clear that social semiotics considers the "available choices of signs" in order to comprehend how people utilize them in social settings to communicate ideas and attitudes (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p.17). In terms of this research, semiotic approach is used along with multimodal approach. Furthermore, using the Multimodality Theory, this study provides insight into the meanings expressed in advertisements (ads) (Siddiq et al., 2021). This is an important study to understand the trends of outdoor advertising especially the billboards. The aim of this current study is to investigate the linguistic and socio-semiotic choices made in the billboard advertisements found in Pakistan's urban area, using a multimodal approach.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Billboard advertising has been increasingly popular in recent years in our country, as it has around the world, where main roadways are studded with billboards. The increasing number of billboards has sparked debate and highlighted concerns about their spread. This research seeks to address several key challenges and gaps in the existing literature: limited understanding of Multimodality, social and cultural significance, semiotic strategies in advertising, audience reception and engagement and practical implications for advertisers. In short, this article reflects a need for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the socio-semiotic aspects of billboard advertisements through the lens of multimodality theory. By addressing these research gaps, the study contributes to the fields of linguistics, semiotics, and advertising while offering insights into the broader cultural and societal implications of this ubiquitous form of communication (Arif, Siddique, & Ahmed, 2022). As a result, the study examined the linguistic and semiotic choices in billboard advertisements employed by advertisement department.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are:

i. To identify the linguistic and semiotic choices in billboard advertisement
ii. To examine the generation of meanings in billboard advertisements by employing multimodal modes.

1.3 Research Question

What are the linguistic and semiotic choices employed by different companies in billboard advertisement to make their messages effective?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research added to the growing body of knowledge about the current billboard advertisements. It would illustrate how different advertisements demonstrate meanings through the semiotic resources, causing cultural shifts and altering society. It would make readers aware of the changes that are occurring in their lives as a result of these advertisements. This research would explore linguistic and socio semiotic choices are employed by advertising companies. It would provide significant insights in the effectiveness of billboard advertisements that can be used by both product owners and consumers. When people are ready to purchase a product in the future, they would be able to evaluate it critically and rationally rather than succumbing to the magical attributes promised by such advertising (Hassan, Shafi, & Masood, 2021).

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to Pakistan due to inadequate resources to cover other countries where billboards are equally used for advertising.

2. Literature Review

Advertisements have a potential to influence the consumers and their social and cultural surroundings. Many sociological, cultural studies and sociolinguistic approaches highlight the ways the symbols are used in advertisements. Semiotics is a way of analyzing meanings by looking at the signs (like words, pictures, symbols etc.) which communicate meaning (Tolbert and Rutherford, 2009). The study of semiotics provide platform to understand how advertising reflect and shape experiences of consumer's everyday life. In recent times the study of semiotics is increasingly considered as important part of advertising. Semiotic is an interesting tool of billboard advertisements that is used to organize, and create images in such a way that consumers make meaning out of these advertisements (Sharma & Gupta, 2015).

From Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) work, a new branch of semiotics 'visual social semiotics' is emerged that emphasis on visual representations and their meanings. . They developed the theory of Multimodality, which is based on three key principles: Firstly, it is thought that communication always involves various modes (speech, writing, gestures, images, and others), and their intermodal interactions contribute to meaning making. Second, meaning is produced in interactions through the selection and setup of various modes. Finally, resources used by interactants are socially modified over time to develop a shared cultural idea of how they might communicate meaning. Further,

Abousnnouga and Machin, (2011) narrate that Kress & van Leeuwen work marks a shift from monomodal to multimodal communication. A social semiotic approach to multimodal communication is multimodality theory that has become increasingly popular in academia (Zulqarnain, Shafi, & Masood, 2022). Visual social semiotics presents the choices of semiotic elements and features which represent the world and shape social ideologies (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The term multimodality focuses on the means of meaning making As a result, multimodal expression is highly context-dependent, with multimodal meanings generated within unique social and cultural settings, according to the communicative needs of various communities or cultures (Jewitt et al, 2016).

O'Halloran (2008) stated that the connection between linguistic and visual semiotic resources is taken into consideration in a multimodal analysis. While analyzing, there are five socially and culturally situated semiotic/multimodal modes, or "way[s] of communicating". These modes are linguistic, visual, spatial, gestural, and aural. Similarly, Driscoll and Vetter (2020) assert that multimodality is an essential element of modern advertising, in which multiple semiotic resources interact in a single advertisement. Xu (2012) conducted qualitative research which examined one of the "No Smoking Day print" adverts in the image library of the No Smoking Day organization's official website, using a multimodal method. The findings of the study revealed that two semiotic modes complement and augment one another, adding to the discourse's denotation and connotation.

In a different qualitative study conducted by Attar (2015), the research delves into the interaction between spoken and visual elements employed by BMW and Audi advertisers. This investigation explores the multifaceted nature of billboard advertising. Additionally, Moerdisuroso (2017) provides insights into the interpretation of visual content through the application of visual grammar, grounded in a social semiotics framework. The study's findings analyze various aspects within the visual content, including elements and structure, participant positioning, modalities, composition, and materiality, through the lens of sociosemiotic and linguistic choices. Khalid et al. (2019), by concentrating on these aforementioned aspects, investigate the underlying ideologies within billboard advertisements within the context of Lahore's landscape. Savitri and Rosa (2019) conducted a multimodal analysis of smartphones, while Koksal and Erisen (2023) recently undertook a multimodal analysis of advertisements.

From the aforementioned works, it can be witnessed that very little research has been carried out on this aspect in Pakistan. This study needs a detailed and deep study analysis of semiotic approach through the application of multimodal modes, and as such, offers a gap in knowledge which is yet to be discovered. This research would contribute new insights to the existing body of knowledge concerning the meanings conveyed in modern billboard advertisements. It demonstrates how various commercials convey meaning through multimodal modes, resulting in cultural alterations and societal changes (Hussain, Arif, & Saleem, 2021). This qualitative descriptive study looked at advertising billboards to see how different forms of semiotic resources along with linguistic processes might express distinct meaning in a given social setting (Fatima, Ahmed, & Shafi, 2021). Furthermore, the researcher's goal is to use a combination of linguistics and different forms of socio-semiotic choices to uncover hidden ideology of convincing and beguiling target viewers in a specific social setting.

3. Research Methodology

The methodology part comprises sample for research study, design and method of research study and theoretical framework (Masood et al., 2020; Shafi, 2019, 2022; Shafi et al., 2023; Ullah, Ali, & Shafi, 2022). This study used a qualitative approach using general principles to draw the multimodal elements included in the advertisement, such as utterance, image, sound, colour, gesture, and space, with the goal of capturing the producer's whole meaning and message (Ahmed, Shafi, & Masood, 2021). According to Ary (2006), researcher himself is a tool in qualitative research study. Anstey and Bull (2018) and Kress and Leeuwen (2006) were used to analyze the entire multimodal social semiotic systems.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This approach originates from Halliday's (1978) systemic-functional linguistic model, which posits that language functions as a semiotic mode. Subsequently, it was further refined for the examination of various forms of social processes involved in creating meaning (Arif, Shafi, & Ullah, 2022). It investigates how different semiotic modes are merged in multimodal texts. It also examines the similarities and differences between semiotic modes. Kress and Leeuwan (2006) define multimodality as "The use of numerous semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, as well as a specific way in which these modes are mixed".

A multi-modal text uses more than one "mode" to convey meaning in addition to the written word. There are five multimodal modes: linguistic/alphabetic, visual, aural, gestural and spatial. In ads, a picture can communicate a message more effectively and swiftly than written information. Images can help readers better interact with the issue and experience a moment in a way that words alone may find difficult to do. It is critical to recognize the activity of several modes within artifacts while evaluating or generating multimodal compositions (or what we might call multimedia texts). However, it's also useful to consider which mode dominates in any specific media (Arola et al, 2014).

The linguistic mode encompasses both written and spoken forms of communication, encompassing aspects such as word selection, the delivery of written or spoken text, the structuring of words into sentences and paragraphs, and the coherence and development of ideas and words (Saeed, Shafi, & Masood, 2023). The visual mode primarily relies on visual cues and elements to convey its message, using visual information as a key component. However, it can also be argued that the visual mode incorporates aspects of the spatial mode. The auditory mode involves various aspects of sound, including music, sound effects, ambient noises, silence, the tone of voice in spoken language, volume, emphasis, and accentuation (Shafi & Masood, 2023). The gestural mode pertains to how movement and non-verbal communication are interpreted, encompassing facial expressions, hand gestures, body language, and interpersonal interactions. The spatial mode pertains to the arrangement of elements in physical space, involving the organization of objects as well as the proximity of people and objects to one another. Finally, the audience's interaction with and generation of meaning from advertisements is influenced by modality. Writing in the five modes might help the audience to think "outside the box" when it comes to making rhetorical decisions regarding the types of communication people might utilize when venturing beyond the printed word (Driscoll & Vetter, 2020).

3.2 Sampling

The researcher used convenience sampling technique. In this technique, the selection is based on convenience of the researcher, allowing him to easily collect data.

3.3 Data Collection

The data was gathered by capturing photographs of billboard advertisements located along Pakistan's primary boulevard. These billboards, featuring human images, establish a direct line of communication with the audience. The reason for using billboard ads as the data for this paper is

that they are an inescapable powerful medium that is visible to the general public. Advertisers (image makers) are compelled to build eye-catching multimodal billboards using a variety of semiotic resources. As a result, researchers are enticed to examine how semiotic and linguistic modes interact to persuade the target viewer to buy the goods. As a result, this study examines five billboards to uncover the hidden meanings transmitted by these modalities.

4. Findings and Data Analysis

4.1 Billboard Advertisement: Fanta Cold Drink

Figure 1. Fanta Cold Drink

This billboard displays an advertisement for Fanta Soft drink, emphasizing its ability to enhance fun and refreshment. The image features a participant who appears uninterested, reflecting the sentiment of "TRAFFIC JAMS ARE MEH, BUT HAVE YOU TRIED THE NEW FANTA?" This statement conveys the participant's irritation with traffic jams and their need for an energy boost. Fanta soft drink is presented as an ideal choice in such dull situations, fulfilling the need for carbohydrates, liquids, and energy during traffic jams. This aligns with the modern individual's desire for nutrients, energy, and good health, as soft drinks like Fanta provide a mix of essential nutrients. The billboard's other side showcases the refreshing aspect of Fanta as a product. The uncorked bottle signifies readiness for consumption, and the "New" label in red is a marketing technique to attract attention. Advertisers employ linguistic and semiotic strategies to convey their ideologies to viewers.

The linguistic analysis in billboard advertisements applies Halliday's (1994) Functional Grammar, focusing on transitive clauses. These clauses serve the ideational function, representing experiences,

situations, processes, and states of affairs. The study centers on the written content of the ad, encompassing three semantic categories: circumstance, procedure, and participant. Two clauses, "TRAFFIC JAMS ARE MEH" and "FANTA IT'S LIT!" narrate the situation and highlight the product. Syntactically, these clauses are in active voice. "MEH" is used to express boredom or disinterest, suggesting the participant's apathy toward traffic jams. This creates a sense of intimacy, encouraging viewers to relate to the participant and connect with their own experiences. The clause "FANTA IT'S LIT!" directly praises Fanta as an exciting and nutrient-rich choice for any occasion.

A socio-semiotic study of the billboard advertisement employs the multimodal theory, considering visual aspects like color, vector, viewpoint, and motion, according to Anstey and Bull (2010). The background's color, primarily shades of light and dark blue, carries high modality. The participant is foregrounded, emphasizing their significance in conveying the product's message. The participant's appearance and the context of traffic jams relate to Pakistani culture and society. Colors, as suggested by Van Leeuwen (2006), have connotations that advertisers can leverage for precise targeting. The color theme here is blue and orange, with orange representing excitement and vitality. This color choice enhances the mood of the ad.

The image is narrative, depicting the unfolding action of traffic jams and the interaction between the product and participant. Gestural mode is evident in the participant's hand movements, emphasizing the need for Fanta's thrilling energy in such situations. The advertisement transcends social class distinctions, presenting complete figures in a medium-sized frame to maintain a direct connection with viewers.
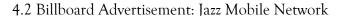
4.2 Billboard Advertisement: Jazz Mobile Network

Figure 2. Jazz Mobile Network

The billboard features an advertisement for Jazz Network, Pakistan's leading 4G network provider. The image portrays a cheerful and satisfied individual, emphasizing their commitment to the network with the phrase "Pakistan's NO 1 NETWORK." In today's world, having a reliable 4G network is essential, and Jazz is promoted as the best choice.

The advertisement uses Western elements, reflecting the influence of Westernization in Pakistan, and symbolizing globalization. Globalization, according to Giddens (1990), is a process that develops worldwide social contacts and creates links between distant locales. The words "No 1 Pakistani Network" in the corners of the poster indicate Jazz's integration into Pakistani society.

The image's red background represents Jazz Network, while the foreground is clear and bright, highlighting the mobile phone and model. The image features Esra Bilgic, a Turkish actress known for her role in "Dirilis Ertugrul," a popular Turkish drama series in Pakistan. Her image is used to capture the audience's attention and convey a message that using Jazz is a crucial part of life in this civilization. In terms of the ad's linguistic choices, the slogan "Pakistan's NO 1 NETWORK" in the center of the billboard emphasizes Jazz's popularity in Pakistan and its comprehensive offerings, including Jazz Super 4G, Jazz Cash, and Wi-Fi Devices. Jazz aims to empower its customers and encourages them to showcase their potential to the world. The other phrase is "dunya ko bataa do" in Urdu, which is written in the lower left corner of the board. The mantra 'Dunya ko Bataa Do' opens the path to success for everyone. It creates joy, involvement, and a desire to succeed. This network was started with the powerful slogan "dunya ko bataa do (Let the world know)."

The red frames on the left and right sides of the billboard signify the Jazz Network's identity and ideational function. According to Poynton and Martin (1992), colors play a significant part in making advertisements attractive and successful. According to Guilfor and Smith (1959), the belief that red is an exciting colour is widely held. It elicits pleasant emotions in the audience, resulting in a positive attitude. The figure's framing and information value interact in a way that increases the advert's communicative effect. Red is chosen to elicit positive emotions and enhance the advertisement's effectiveness. In summary, the billboard promotes Jazz as the top 4G network in Pakistan, using a combination of visuals, text, and color to convey its message of empowerment and success in today's digital world.

4.3 Billboard Advertisement: Everyday Tea Whitener

Figure 3. Everyday Tea Whitener

This billboard features an advertisement for Nestle Everyday tea whitener (milk powder), a well-known company. The ad features two famous Pakistani celebrities, Shan and Reema, holding a cup of tea, portraying a "narrative representation" where they are actively involved. The main focus of the ad is the human image, as celebrities endorsing products increases trustworthiness (Beasley & Danesi, 2002). However, there's a framing discrepancy between the celebrity image and the Nestle Everyday brand, with the image taking center stage and the brand information on the sides.

The central frame provides product information using linguistic choices. The phrase "Tum he mera pyaar EVERYDAY........" is prominently placed, emphasizing its significance. This phrase is ambiguous, representing both the milk powder and the love between the participants. Shan and Reema, belonging to an affluent social class, reflect the ideology of that class. Viewers are encouraged to share their love by drinking tea with the same "KHAAS" flavor as them. Visual communication and language are both crucial in conveying societal meanings (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). The "CELEBRATING 25 KHAAS YEARS" sign highlights the brand's consistency in Pakistan over the past 25 years.

The left and right frames, containing 'NESTLE EVERYDAY' information, are light blue, signifying ideational function/high modality. Colors play a significant role in advertising, evoking emotions and creating associations (Poynton & Martin, 1985, 1992; Guilfor & Smith, 1959). Light blue is associated with health, tranquility, and positivity, enhancing the audience's attitude towards the brand. Colors are chosen to align with specific brands, making them synonymous with certain attributes. The image is an "offer" image because the models' gazes are not directed at the viewers;

viewers are invisible spectators. Shan and Reema appear aware of being observed, giving the impression of providing information. Their smiling faces convey optimism, affecting viewers' emotional responses (Feathstone, 1991). Advertisers use cues to enhance emotional responses and, consequently, brand and behavioral assessments (Kulczynski et al., 2015). The background, although blank, contributes to modality with its colors, including light blue. It's a realistic photo where participants take the lead in conveying the message.

The image's social distance is medium close-up, suggesting a mix of personal and social interactions. It signifies a connection between the participants and the audience. The frontal angle of the photo emphasizes affection between the celebrities and their fans, fostering a close relationship (Sherry, 1987). This billboard shows the entire figure, with a fairly long frame, indicating that participants maintain general social ties with the viewers.

4.4 Billboard Advertisement: Total Quartz Engine Oil

Figure 4. Total Quartz Engine Oil

The image in question is an advertisement for "TOTAL QUARTZ 9000" motor/engine oil produced by Total Parco Pakistan Ltd. The ad prominently features a dynamically generated bottle, showcasing upgraded design elements. Within the ad, various verbal and nonverbal indicators, including a lion, horse, and eagle, are strategically used as signifiers to encourage consumers to choose Total Quartz as their preferred product, emphasizing its ability to keep engines young for longer. These signifiers

are employed to persuade the audience of the product's excellence. The billboard's layout effectively utilizes the bottom corners, with the left corner displaying the website's address and the right corner displaying the Total Quartz logo. The product name, "Total QUARTZ 9000," is prominently displayed at the top of the page in red, indicating high modality. This name is also featured in the product's logo, address, and packaging, signifying the manufacturer, Total Parco Pakistan Limited, a subsidiary of the French company Total S.A., with its headquarters in Karachi, Pakistan, and a joint venture with Pak-Arab Refinery Company (PARCO).

The use of the English language in the advertisement reflects globalization ideology and modernization trends, facilitating global communication and knowledge exchange. The redesigned label design aims to help consumers make informed choices about the right lubricant for their vehicles. The tagline "Unleash the power in your car's engine, Keep your engine younger for longer" emphasizes the product's ability to enhance engine performance, protect against extreme temperatures, improve fuel economy, and reduce friction between moving engine parts. The semiotic analysis of the ad reveals the presence of different signifiers, such as the lion, horse, and eagle, serving as metaphors to convey specific meanings and create positive associations with the product. These metaphors accelerate the comprehension of complex information and influence the audience's decision to select Total Quartz.

The horse symbolizes speed, endurance, courage, and independence, suggesting that the oil empowers car engines like a horse. The lion, representing majesty, strength, and courage, portrays the product as superior and powerful. The eagle symbolizes freedom, confidence, and purity, reflecting the product's ability to keep engines in peak condition and instill trust in consumers. According to semiotic analysis, different signifiers such as lion, horse, and eagle depict the graphic meaning in this advertisement. These are actually different metaphors which are used by advertising department. Because of figurative metaphoric associations, metaphors can generate favorable sensations to the viewers when the non-obvious metaphoric meaning is understood, and they can speed up the processing of complex or abstract information. As a result, metaphors can meet crucial commercial communication criteria (Dehay & Landwehr, 2019).

The advertisement's framing is strategically designed to convey the entire message effectively, aligning with the offered products to target customers better. The background of the image adds modality through its use of colors. The ad is rich in symbolic interpretation, featuring various signs

in the form of objects, symbols, images, and text. While there is no specific represented participant, the signs within the ad play the role of the represented participant, engaging with the viewer. In summary, this advertisement employs a range of visual and textual elements to promote Total Quartz 9000 engine oil, using metaphoric signifiers to convey the product's qualities and benefits to the audience while strategically framing the message for effective communication (Masood & Shafi, 2020).

4.5 Billboard Advertisement: Candi Biscuit

Figure 5. Candi Biscuit

This is a Candi biscuit advertisement, a popular cookie brand in Pakistan, produced by LU (Lefèvre Utile), a French biscuit manufacturer. The advertisement's semiotic and linguistic components contribute to its ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings (O'Toole, 1994).

The central focus of the advertisement is a prominent image in the middle, strategically placed to capture viewers' attention. It features a young girl and an infant, presumably mother and son, sharing a joyful moment. The facial expressions convey happiness and intimacy, reinforcing the ideational and interpersonal significance of the advertisement. The multilingual text, "Share your Khaas dost selfie," further emphasizes the concept of friendship and enjoyment of Candi biscuits with 'khaas dost' (special friends).

The advertisement employs a formal style with bold capital letters, indicating high modality. It is rich in symbolism, including objects, symbols, images, and text. The interactive image engages

viewers directly, and the left and right frames provide information about Candi biscuits, using bright and dark colors for ideational function.

The visual imagery communicates a specific 'point of view,' with the key characteristics of the advertisement given more prominence than the background, creating an imaginative atmosphere. The linguistic coding orientation in the frame provides technological information about the product, with the brand 'LU' prominently displayed. The advertisement's campaign, "Share your khaas dost selfie," targets young people and students, leveraging social media and the trend of sharing selfies with friends. An interactive selfie billboard in Lahore, Pakistan, encourages people to share their #KhaasDost selfies, which are displayed on the billboard in real time. This innovative approach has garnered attention and positive responses. The campaign's slogan, 'Candi Mein woh khaas mithas hai jo kisi aur mein kahan,' celebrates the unique sweetness of Candi biscuits and the concept of special friendships. In conclusion, the Candi biscuit advertisement effectively combines visual, linguistic, and interactive elements to engage viewers, particularly a socially active audience, and promote the product's distinct qualities and the idea of 'Khaas dost' (special friends) (Nisa et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate advertisements on billboards in Pakistan's semiotic landscape, analyzing the semiotic and linguistic choices made in advertising using Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic methodology. The study's findings revealed that advertisers deliberately create and utilize multimodal modes, including visual, verbal, spatial, and gestural elements, to construct specific semiotic and linguistic signs in product advertising. These signs play a crucial role in conveying meaning to viewers, ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions. The study concludes that advertisements consist of signs formed by a combination of language and semiotic choices, with these elements determining the meaning of each signifier in advertising. The use of various semiotic and linguistic choices in commercials influences consumer behavior and product purchases. The study suggests that advertising corporations employ manipulation in their advertisements, which can be discerned within the structure and system that create the advertisement signs. As a result, readers are encouraged to understand the semiotic and linguistic manipulation systems and structures within advertisements, it is better to grasp the advertising goals of products. The study aims to enhance consumers and viewers' awareness of the original slogans

and manipulative elements in advertisements. The author anticipates that this research would be beneficial for future socio-semiotic studies, especially for students in the English Letter Department seeking to analyze semiotic research.

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