

**Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review**

**Print ISSN: 3006-5887**

**Online ISSN: 3006-5895**

**<https://llrjournal.com/index.php/11>**

**The Semiotics of Local Captions and Slogans in Pakistani Advertising Design**



**Ahmed Faraz**

Assistant Professor, Department of Graphic Design  
University of Home Economics Lahore, Pakistan  
Email: ahmedfarazgull@gmail.com

**Humda Khan**

Assistant Professor, Department of Textile and Fashion  
Design, University of Management and Technology  
Sialkot, Pakistan  
Email: humda.khan@skt.umt.edu.pk

**Abstract**

Slogans play a vital role in any traditional or digital design campaign. Slogans are an influential tool for visual advertising. The impact of semiotic dimensions is studied in Pakistani advertising agencies and design studies regarding slogans. Through the lens of semiotics, the work of copywriters, art directors, and graphic designers is studied. Through the qualitative method, the study focuses on the precise advertising campaigns from different local and international brands in Pakistan. There is a blend of slogans in Urdu, English, and mixed language. The research highlights that slogans used in Pakistan through the visual communication campaigns and the graphic design industry for brands contribute a lot to brand identities. Cultural importance in Pakistani advertising campaigns through slogans suggests that designers and marketers apply the semiotic framework for the advancement of effective communication. Through the bilingual switching and regional cultural narratives, designers of Pakistan bridge the contemporary, modern, local, and traditional values.

**Keywords:** Semiotics, Slogans, Simplicity, Pakistani Graphic Design, Advertising, Art Directors.

**Introduction**

In the realm of advertising, a slogan is not just the combination of a few words, but has become a semiotic instrument for communicating cultural and linguistic context. It communicates through a designed sign in a written structure and situational context. In the Pakistani graphic design industry, slogans trigger emotional reactions. The intermingling of the English and Urdu languages trend communicates the environmental representations. Analyzing slogans through semiotics provides the context for thoughtful communication through the structure of the words.

This article presents an analytical study of the semiotics employed in captions and slogans of advertising design in Pakistan. The research lays emphasis on how the language impacts the consumer's behavior. These slogans not merely form identity of a brand but also reflect the cultural influences. The bilingual slogans, designed with the combination of English and Urdu languages, suggest the modern impact, which has given rise to openness in Pakistani advertising design. These new trends have a tendency to appeal the new generation, ultimately resulting in brand promotion.

**Literature Review**

In visual communication signs and symbols hold a pivotal significance. This is studied through semiotics, which not only examines the meaning through visual elements but also through textual components. Saussure (1916) proposed the dyadic model of sign, which is based on "the signifier" i.e. form of the sign, and "the signified" i.e. the concept it signifies. Later on, Charles Sanders Peirce further advanced this approach by establishing a triadic model of sign. This model consists of representamen, interpretant, and object, which emphasizes that interpretation is central to creating meaning (Chandler, 2007, p. 29). The discipline of visual communication extensively makes use of these theories in the development of meaning in branding, advertising, and graphic design campaigns.

# Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

In Pakistan, shifts in social and political circumstances as well as global cultural influences, has brought about change in deployment of slogans. The early advertisements after the independence of Pakistan frequently employed Urdu language, highlighting national identity and relevance with the local audience (Nusrat & Ghulam, 2023, p. 2-6). With advancement in electronic media campaigns, the advertising firms began to use English alongside Urdu, creating bilingual slogans, to target middle-class audience (Nusrat & Ghulam, 2023, p. 2-13). Bilingualism in advertisement demonstrates global cultural influences on local market as well as consumers. Moreover, consumer perceptions are also being influenced by the linguistic choices of advertising firms, stimulating consumer's decision-making (Shah & Islam, 2024, p. 83-96).

Semiotic analysis of visual communication campaigns reveals that consumer's response is also highly dependent on the style of typography, color scheme, and the use of space (Williamson, 2024). Malkawi (2025) discusses the advertising strategies that have persuasive impact on consumer behavior. She emphasizes the use of advertising tactics which are emotionally appealing for the consumers while resonating with their values. It is observed that such tactics are frequently incorporated in slogans of Pakistani advertisements, which are culture-specific, religiously relevant, family oriented, or based on sensitive themes, greatly influencing the consumer.

Most of the scholars study slogans through linguistics and marketing perspective, leaving a gap in literature regarding graphic designer's approach to slogans and semiotics, particularly in Pakistan. This research addresses the gap by stressing the use of language, forms, and composition, enhancing the significance of slogans.

## Material and Methods

To study the semiotic use of slogans in the Pakistani graphic design industry, this research focuses on the qualitative methodology. Theoretical and real-world manifestations are studied through this qualitative research method to analyze the semiotics of slogans and their impact on the Pakistani Graphic Design industry. It also highlights that the graphic design visual elements and linguistic essentials are united to give the traditional or contemporary medium of advertising. Research focuses on the telecommunication, fashion industry, beverages, food industry, and banking, etc. Slogans generate public consciousness and cognizance between the national and international brands advertising in Pakistan.

## Results and Discussion

Cultural significance and linguistic ingenuity are showcased in a vibrant way by the Pakistani brands through slogans. Prompts of shared identity is reflected through the emotionally adjectives, comprehensive pronouns and impressive verbs. Bilingual style slogans are in practice by the graphic designers of Pakistan, usually combining the National Language Urdu, and English. This illustrates the reality of Local or rural Pakistan and, on the other hand, represents the modernity and ambitions. Urdu gives the emotional cultural deepness and wisdom. Brands like Surf Excel having slogan "*Daag tou achay hotay hain*" to evoke the sense of emotional linking and national identity through the message and written context. Surf Excel is recognized for its well-known slogan "*Daag tou achay hotay hain*".

Jazz directly speaks to its customers or to the audience through its powerful slogan

## Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

“Dunya ko bataa do” showing the connection of power. Another slogan of Jazz “Meri superpower” gives a strong concept of stability and trust through its slogan. “Meri superpower” symbolizes communication technology through fast internet, a secure network, and digital tools that have become human capabilities as an extension. The slogan is so loud and clear and resonates with the Pakistani youth and every individual as a beacon of independence, strength, self-belief, and confidence. “Meri superpower” is very catchy, easy to remember, simple but artistic and adaptable across advertising campaigns.



Figure 1. Jazz, *Dunya ko bataa do*.

(Source: <https://jazz.com.pk/media-center/detail/jazz-and-eva-zu-beck-to-showcase-pakistans-true-colors>).



Figure 2. Jazz, *Meri superpower*.

(Source: <https://www.autostore.pk/jazz-x-autostore-2/>).

Zong is famous for its slogan “Sab keh do” “سب کہہ دو” featuring the bold lettering in red color, complementing the white background. This represents the growth and connectivity. “سب کہہ دو” empowers every individual to say whatever lies inside their hearts and minds. the slogan interprets that the Zong is not only a telecommunication company but also encourages every individual to show their emotions and act as a bridge between the people and technology. It communicates that there is no limit to Zong’s network. “Sab keh do” “سب کہہ دو” invites people to break their silence and speak the communicate their care, love, affection, respect, and ideas for each other's progress and stability.



Figure 3. Zong, *Sab keh do*.

(Source: <https://mediamagick.com/zong-inviting-agencies/>).

Telenor's "*Karo mumkin*" heartens aspiration, progression, and advancement. The slogan "*Karo Mumkin*" factually interprets to "Make it Possible" in the English language. This empowering phrase encourages the audience through its motivational line to have trust in Telenor's potential and strength in the field of telecommunication. This slogan gives the idea of transforming impossibilities into possibilities. "*Karo mumkin*" connects directly with the youth, every individual, and the working class emotionally by focusing their hope, goals, struggles, and aspirations in any field of their career.



Figure 4. Telenor, *Karo mumkin*.

(Source: <https://www.pakorbit.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Telenor-Pakistan-Logo-Telenor-Logo.jpg>).

Ufone's "*Tum hi to ho*" "تم ہی تو ہو" used a culturally significant tone in order to progress and keep growing, and be successful. The slogan is very impactful and has developed a great brand positioning. It interconnects the people-centered communication to celebrate the customer trust towards the brand. There is a warm and affectionate tone built between the brand and customer. In Pakistani Culture, the

## Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

phrase “*Tum hi to ho*” “تم ہی تو ہو” has an emotional impact and indicates a friendly message and closeness to loved ones. The slogans interpret the thoughts of everyday life, relationships among people, and emotions connected through technology, establishing the brand's clear message. This slogan approach by Ufone is very different from the competitors in terms of human and appropriate brand image, highly motivational, and futuristic. The slogan is so memorable and professional despite its simplicity.



Figure 5. Ufone, *Tum hi to ho*.

(Source: [https://logodix.com/logos/2155354#google\\_vignette](https://logodix.com/logos/2155354#google_vignette)).

Slogan of Shan Foods, “*Khushiyan chakh lo*”, “خوشیاں چکھ لو” is showing a pleasurable and delicate message to the audience. “*Khushiyan chakh lo*” is associated with the emotions of families with reference to the food. It shares happiness, love, and family celebrations. This slogan beautifully presents the sense of joy of food items with Shan Foods. The word “*chakh lo*” is associated with the sense of taste, and the word “خوشیاں” (happiness) enters into the dominion of togetherness, family affection, and emotions beyond the tangible product of Shan Foods. Home-cooked meals evoke family togetherness at dinner in the traditional manner.



Figure 6. Shan, *Khushiyan chakh lo*.

(Source: <https://www.trendinginsocial.com/shan-foods-oath-for-her-doctor-bahu-tvc-2022/>).

## Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

Another slogan by the National Foods “نئی سوچ کے نئے ذائقے” highlights the ingenuity, modern culinary evolution. National food is recognized as a traditional and heritage Pakistani brand. The slogan expressed the continuous growth and evolution to meet modern taste, and tendencies towards the future taste, not focusing on the past. It transmutes that the National foods always bring fresh thinking towards traditional cooking in Pakistan. The slogan holds progressiveness, liberalism, and optimism. The slogan in red acts as a marketing standpoint. Through this slogan, National Foods positions itself as a leading and change maker in the culinary novelty in Pakistan. It also acts as a bond between freshness, innovation, and tradition.



Figure 7. National, *Nayi soch ke naye zaiqe*.

(Source: <https://aurora.dawn.com/news/1143235>).

The slogan “*Tum, mein aur aik cup chai*,” “تم، میں اور ایک کپ چائے” stunningly purifies the essence of social linking through a universal symbol “Tea”. This emotional closeness represents the daily use of *chai*. The slogan carries warmth, caring, and understanding. The slogan is having a poetic pause, creating emotions, rhythm, and hope. The slogan is so simple and universal. It represents the affection between lovers, friends, relatives, and family. The slogan covers all kinds of social classes, as tea is for everybody. Colloquial Urdu is used in this slogan by the brand. As the logo of Tapal on red background presents warmth, energy, passion, and affection. The slogan emphasizes the connection of emotions to the consumption of the product.



Figure 8. Tepal Danedar, *Tum, mein aur aik cup chai*.

(Source: <https://ialsaatchi.com/work/bas-tum-main-aur-aik-cup-chae>).

Through a very powerful domestic and emotional slogan “*Vital peeyo, zindagi jeeyo*,” “وائٹل پیو، زندگی جیو” produced by the Vital Tea highlights that the tea is not only a drink, it gives you pleasure to enjoy life with full energy. The word vital is derived from the word “vitality,” which means energy, vivacity, liveliness, life, and strength. Vital tea is not just a tea only it acts as a fuel for living with energy, passion, confidence, and positivity. The rhythmic slogan produced by the vital, “وائٹل پیو، زندگی جیو” evokes liveliness, energy, and a zest for natural life. The slogan tone and voice is cheerful and bouncing. The slogan itself has become the philosophy of life and has proved the transformation of branding in a classic way. A great shift in the advertising campaign from a product of brand towards the communication of life in an aspirational way.



Figure 9. Vital Tea, *Vital peeyo, zindagi jeeyo*.

(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1171810238313937&set=a.643988191096147>).

Slogan by Mezan Tea “بر پیالی دل والی” “*Har piyali dil wali*” carries a poetic message. The act of making tea as a connection of emotions, love, affection, and sincerity gives warm feelings. The slogan carries genuineness, sincerity, love, care, and attention. The slogan typography in curved form or handwritten typography, emphasizing the feeling of love and touch. There is an emotional touch and a sincerity in every *Piyali*. This tea brand is not only focusing on the taste but also on the emotions. It is evident that the Mezan Tea is more pure in terms of emotional depth and intention of purity compared to the Vital and Tapal tea.

“بر پیالی دل والی” “*Har piyali dil wali*” converts every cup of tea into a sip of warmth, and love made with the heart. Here, the feeling of customers or consumers matters apart from the profit or benefit of the brand.





Figure 10. Mezan Ultra Rich, *Har piyali dil wali*.

(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=122113533230207546&set=a.122113533272207546>).

A very powerful and energetic slogan ever produced by the Dalda Cooking Oil is “*Jahan maamta wahan Dalda*” “جہاں مامتا وہاں ڈالدا”. It is built on the emotional idea, directly focusing on the attention, care, love, nutrition, and altruism that symbolize maamta. The brand positioning is not limited to the cooking oil or Dalda ghee, but it is treated as a symbol of care, love, affection, trust, and pure love of mothers towards their kids. Here in the slogan the word *maamta* symbolizes the pure affection of a mother towards her family, having love and protection. *Dalda* explores it beautifully in such a way that where there is love of a mother, you will find the *Dalda* there, because it promises care and protection. The slogan has a very natural feeling of love.



Figure 11. Dalda, *Jahan maamta wahan Dalda*.

(Source: <https://aurora.dawn.com/news/1144213>).

Sufi, “*Jo naam hai aitemaad ka*” slogan presents the trust itself. The slogan consists of family values. The word “*Aitemaad*” (trust) evokes the Sufi connection emotionally between the families and careful choices. The design and communication strategy through the name of brand name focuses on simplicity and clarity. The message and language of the slogan is very straight and reflects the dignity, confidence, purity, quality, and care. The slogan is highly successful in establishing the Sufi as a superior, reliable, trustworthy and expressively stranded brand in the cooking oil or ghee market.



Figure 12. Sufi, *Jo naam hai aitemaad ka*.

(Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DAVqobeIgj1/>).

The slogan of “سلطان” (Sultan) Cooking oil “*Sultan mein pakatay raho, hamasha muskratay raho*” connects the cooking with joy and pleasure. The emotional and cheerful tone of the slogan focuses on cooking while using the “سلطان” (Sultan) Cooking oil and which brings happiness in life. The slogan straightly targets the homemakers. There is a rhythm and poetic impact in the slogan. The slogan beatifically portrays action and emotions connecting family love, pride, and moment of joy. The slogan links cooking with warmth, affection, and wellbeing. It also suggests that the cooking with the Sultan cooking oil with attention, purity and concentration leads to happiness, good health and well-being, that bring smiles.



Figure 13. Sultan, *Sultan mein pakatay raho, hamasha muskratay raho*.

(Source: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/77979261/campaign-design>).

## Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

The slogan “*Ho yaqeen to khulain khushiyan*” by Coca-Cola beautifully links with the simply opening of the Coca-Cola bottle. The emotional experience of the opening of *Khushiyan* (happiness) as a symbolic wording related to the opening of a bottle brings joy, happiness, togetherness, and social connection for celebrations. Coca-Cola is not just a beverage; it’s a trigger for happiness. The natural red and blue outdoor ambiance aligns with the central image of the bottle, bringing freshness and energy. The simple but short slogan induces enthusiasm, excitement, happiness, and togetherness. The slogan “*Ho yaqeen to khulain khushiyan*” creates musicality, importance, and memorability. The slogan globally established the brand philosophy.



Figure 14. Coca-Cola, *Ho yaqeen to khulain khushiyan*.

(Source: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/4145169/Coca-Cola-2012-Campaign-Pakistan>).

The slogan “*Ghoor matt, thand rakh*” translates as “Don’t Stare, Stay Cool, by Sprite, perfectly focus on the courageous, humorous, and youth-oriented message. “*Thand rakh*” literally refers to the cold refreshment and points to staying calm and cool in any kind of situation. Sprite gave a message to the youth who value self-confidence and humor. The phrase adds a cool and self-assurance vibe, inferring that sprite consumers and drinkers do not lose their self-possession. Sprite often introduced the youth in its advertising campaigns, focusing on the street language and humor to make the ambiance more natural, modern, culturally enrich, and authentically Pakistani.



Figure 15. Sprite, *Ghoor matt, thand rakh*.

(Source: <https://www.brandsynario.com/sprites-latest-billboard-just-offended-some-pakistanis-heres-why/>).

## Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

“لیول بڑھا Next پہ آ” is an interesting slogan by Cola Next translate as: Raise your level, move to the next one. This call to action represents development, growth, determination and self-reformation. Cola Next position as a brand elevates the game of lifestyle, attitude, and taste. The word *Level Barha* presents a growth mindset. The phrase adds a thought-provoking and inspiring, and encouraging tone. The slogan is so catchy and modern and have a poetic phrase. The word “Next” very smartly and cleverly intermingle to convey the message in both ways, first as a brand and second as the concept of progress, advancement, and development.



Figure 16. Cola Next, *Level barha Next pe aa*.

(Source: <https://aurora.dawn.com/news/1144411/cola-next-and-bilgic-pack-a-next-level-punch>).

### Conclusion

The cultural impact and its role, visual communication, and linguistic research have highlighted the semiotic aspects of slogans used in the visual design and by the graphic design agencies. Through the slogans, the findings indicate that the words or content not only provide ornamental textual mechanisms but also mold the audience's perceptions. Slogans function as an instrument connecting the traditional thoughts, values, and contemporary approach towards advertising. The research results in the exhibiting of cultural identity, brand creativity, merging branding techniques, keeping in view the local traditional stories to develop a better connection between the audience and the company. In this way, brand awareness and the impact of emotionalism on the consumer's mind and heart bring more rationalization. Slogans bring with them culturally and traditionally relevant imagery, which helps them to remember them persuasively and easily.

The fusion of Urdu and English is due to the widespread bilingualism in the advertising traditions. To grab the attention of culturally rooted customers, consumers, and viewers, brands use this semiotic instrument of slogans. Grasping the semiotic and linguistic aspects, the research shows that the nostalgic appeal of brands contributes to the memorable and significant association of brands. A slogan carries the emotional resonance and significance that highlight the themes of national pride, values, unity, and empowerment. Slogans act as a tradition, modernity, and emotions as cultural and traditional links.

The expansion of academic conversation on graphic design through slogans improves the impact of advertising in Pakistan. This research not only communicates the

# Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

message but also connects the audience by combining linguistic innovation and cultural setup. In the ever-changing artistic and design landscape of Pakistan, both educators and professionals are focusing on the new trends and media regarding language, culture, tradition, art, and contemporary advertising design. The utilization of slogans in different languages not only focuses on promotional tools in the field of advertising but also bridges the gap between the culture, art, and design industries.

## References

- Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics: The basics* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Danesi, M. (2018). *Understanding media semiotics*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Kohli, C., Leuthesser, L., & Suri, R. (2007). Got slogan? Guidelines for creating effective slogans. *Business Horizons*, 50(5), 415–422.
- Malkawi, A. H. (2025). The use of conceptual metaphors in advertising: A cognitive approach to persuasive language. *Journal of Posthumanism*, 5(2), 969-981.
- Nusrat, M., & Ghulam, K. (2023). An analysis of bilingual text in Pakistani advertisements: A sociolinguistics study. *Research Square*. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375052082\\_An\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Bilingual\\_Text\\_in\\_Pakistani\\_Advertisements\\_A\\_Sociolinguistics\\_Study/fulltext/653d26013cc79d48c5b5e532/An-Analysis-of-Bilingual-Text-in-Pakistani-Advertisements-A-Sociolinguistics-Study.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375052082_An_Analysis_of_Bilingual_Text_in_Pakistani_Advertisements_A_Sociolinguistics_Study/fulltext/653d26013cc79d48c5b5e532/An-Analysis-of-Bilingual-Text-in-Pakistani-Advertisements-A-Sociolinguistics-Study.pdf)
- Piller, I. (2001). Identity constructions in multilingual advertising. *Language in Society*, 30(2), 153–186.
- Saussure, F. de. (1916). *Course in general linguistics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Shah, M. M., & Islam, M. (2024). Investigating Advertising Strategies: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Social Media Advertisements in Pakistan. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 5(4), 83-96.
- Williamson, S. (2024, September 5). The role of typography and color theory in effective branding. *Imagely*. <https://www.imagely.com/brand-color-matters/>