
LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN INSTAGRAM FOOD ADVERTISING: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI RESTAURANT ADVERTISEMENTS

Taha Simral

Lecturer in English at Dar.ul.Mustafa group of colleges

Shaista Abdul Majeed

MPhil English Applied Linguistics: Minhaj university Lahore

Tahir Rasool Bhatti

Lecturer in English at Gift University

Abstract

The increasing prominence of social media has transformed advertising into a highly interactive form of digital communication in which language performs persuasive, interpersonal, and promotional functions. Among various social networking platforms, Instagram has become a dominant marketing medium where restaurant brands employ carefully selected linguistic strategies alongside visual elements to influence consumer behaviour and strengthen brand identity. While previous studies have primarily emphasized visual communication in social media advertising, comparatively limited attention has been devoted to examining the linguistic organization of restaurant advertisements through the lens of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the linguistic strategies employed in Instagram advertisements published by six restaurant brands operating in Pakistan, namely McDonald's Pakistan, KFC Pakistan, Domino's Pakistan, Papa John's Pakistan, Ranchers Café, and Koffee Net. Drawing upon Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, the study analyzes experiential, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions together with lexical choices, promotional slogans, imperative constructions, evaluative language, code-mixing, hashtags, and persuasive discourse patterns. A qualitative research design employing multimodal discourse analysis was adopted to examine purposively selected Instagram advertisements. The findings demonstrate that restaurant advertisements consistently employ positive evaluative vocabulary, imperative mood, interpersonal engagement, concise textual organization, and emotionally loaded lexical items to stimulate appetite, establish consumer relationships, and reinforce commercial persuasion. Furthermore, English functions as the dominant advertising language, although strategically integrated Urdu expressions and culturally familiar vocabulary enhance audience accessibility and local relevance. The study contributes to digital advertising research by demonstrating how linguistic resources complement visual communication in constructing persuasive commercial discourse within Pakistan's rapidly expanding social media environment.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, Instagram advertising, restaurant discourse, Halliday, multimodal discourse analysis, persuasive language, Pakistan.

Introduction

Language has always occupied a central position in advertising because commercial communication depends upon persuasive discourse capable of influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. However, the rapid expansion of digital media has significantly transformed the role of language within advertising practices. Contemporary advertisements rarely rely upon extensive textual descriptions; instead, concise promotional expressions, emotionally appealing slogans, hashtags, captions, emojis, and interactive calls to action are strategically integrated with visual resources to construct persuasive multimodal messages. Instagram exemplifies this transformation by privileging visual communication while simultaneously requiring highly economical yet influential linguistic expression. The uploaded thesis recognizes this interaction between visual and verbal resources, emphasizing that Instagram advertisements combine textual and visual modes to achieve persuasive communication through multimodal discourse.

Within restaurant advertising, language performs functions extending far beyond product description. Promotional texts communicate freshness, quality, affordability, excitement, celebration, convenience, and brand personality through carefully selected lexical items and grammatical structures. Short slogans such as "Taste the Difference," "Order Now," or "Limited Time Offer" communicate urgency and emotional appeal despite containing relatively few words. Such linguistic economy reflects the communicative characteristics of social media platforms, where users rapidly scroll through extensive volumes of content and devote only brief attention to individual advertisements.

Instagram has intensified this tendency toward concise persuasive language. Unlike traditional print advertisements that often contained lengthy descriptive paragraphs, Instagram captions generally consist of brief promotional statements accompanied by hashtags, emojis, and hyperlinks. Consumers frequently process these advertisements within seconds; consequently, every lexical choice contributes significantly to persuasive effectiveness. Verbs encouraging action, adjectives emphasizing quality, and interpersonal pronouns addressing consumers directly become essential communicative resources within digital advertising discourse.

The linguistic organization of restaurant advertisements also reflects broader developments in branding and digital marketing. Contemporary restaurant brands seek not merely to sell products but to establish recognizable identities capable of fostering long-term customer relationships. Language contributes directly to this objective by communicating organizational values, personality, and emotional tone. Friendly conversational expressions, humorous captions, culturally familiar references, and localized promotional messages enable multinational corporations to adapt global branding strategies to regional consumer expectations. Within Pakistan, restaurant advertisements frequently integrate English promotional language with selected Urdu words and culturally recognizable expressions, thereby combining international brand identity with local communicative practices.

Understanding these linguistic processes requires analytical approaches capable of explaining how grammar functions within social communication. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) provides one of the most comprehensive theoretical frameworks for investigating language as a meaning-making resource. Rather than conceptualizing grammar as a collection of formal syntactic rules, Halliday views language as a functional system through which speakers and writers simultaneously represent experience, establish interpersonal relationships, and organize coherent discourse. These communicative functions are realized through three metafunctions: experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings.

The experiential metafunction concerns how language represents actions, participants, processes, and circumstances. Within restaurant advertisements, experiential meanings emerge through lexical choices describing food products, preparation methods, ingredients, promotional activities, and consumption experiences. The interpersonal metafunction examines relationships established between advertisers and consumers through mood, modality, pronouns, evaluative language, and imperative constructions. Restaurant advertisements frequently employ direct address, positive evaluation, and command structures encouraging immediate purchasing behaviour. The textual metafunction investigates how linguistic resources are organized into coherent messages through thematic progression, information structure, cohesion, and textual organization.

Systemic Functional Linguistics has been widely applied across educational discourse, media communication, political speeches, academic writing, and advertising studies. Nevertheless, comparatively limited research has employed Halliday's framework to investigate Instagram restaurant advertisements within Pakistan. Existing investigations have predominantly

emphasized marketing effectiveness, consumer behaviour, or visual communication without undertaking detailed functional linguistic analysis of promotional texts. Consequently, important questions remain concerning how restaurant brands systematically employ grammar, vocabulary, interpersonal communication, and textual organization to persuade consumers within digital environments.

This article addresses that gap by conducting a qualitative Systemic Functional analysis of Instagram advertisements published by six prominent restaurant brands operating in Pakistan. Particular attention is devoted to lexical selection, transitivity patterns, interpersonal communication, mood structures, evaluative vocabulary, promotional slogans, imperative constructions, code-mixing, hashtags, and textual organization. Through this investigation, the study demonstrates that language performs a highly organized persuasive function complementing visual communication within multimodal restaurant advertising.

The significance of this research extends beyond advertising studies. From a linguistic perspective, the study illustrates how Halliday's metafunctions operate within contemporary digital discourse. From a marketing perspective, it identifies communicative strategies contributing to successful online branding. Furthermore, the research contributes to Pakistani discourse studies by examining commercial language within a rapidly expanding social media environment that remains comparatively underrepresented in multimodal advertising scholarship.

Research Gap

Although digital advertising has received considerable scholarly attention during the past decade, existing research has concentrated predominantly on visual communication, consumer engagement metrics, and branding strategies. Comparatively fewer studies have investigated the functional organization of advertising language using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly within Pakistani Instagram restaurant advertisements. The uploaded thesis likewise identifies the integration of linguistic and visual analysis as central to understanding multimodal advertising discourse.

Most previous research also examines Western advertising campaigns, leaving South Asian digital marketing comparatively underexplored. Furthermore, studies focusing specifically on experiential, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions in restaurant advertisements remain scarce. This article therefore addresses these gaps by providing a comprehensive SFL-based analysis of linguistic persuasion in Pakistani restaurant advertising.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to:

1. Examine the experiential meanings realized through linguistic choices in Instagram restaurant advertisements.
2. Investigate interpersonal strategies employed to establish persuasive relationships between brands and consumers.
3. Analyze textual organization and information structure within promotional advertising discourse.
4. Explore how linguistic resources complement visual communication in multimodal restaurant advertisements. These objectives are consistent with the thesis's emphasis on analyzing verbal resources alongside visual elements within Instagram advertisements.

Research Questions

1. How are experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings constructed in Pakistani restaurant Instagram advertisements?
2. Which linguistic strategies contribute most significantly to persuasive digital advertising?
3. How do promotional texts support multimodal meaning-making on Instagram?

Literature Review

Advertising has evolved from traditional print and broadcast media into a sophisticated multimodal form of communication that integrates linguistic, visual, and digital resources to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour. The emergence of social media platforms, particularly Instagram, has accelerated this transformation by enabling brands to communicate through images, videos, typography, colour, captions, hashtags, and interactive features. Consequently, scholars have increasingly employed multimodal discourse analysis (MDA), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate how advertising constructs meanings, identities, and persuasive messages. The present study builds upon these theoretical traditions by examining how international and local restaurant brands construct brand identity and persuade consumers through Instagram advertisements.

The theoretical foundation of multimodal discourse analysis is primarily rooted in the social semiotic work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 2006), who argue that communication extends beyond verbal language to include multiple semiotic modes that operate simultaneously to create meaning. Their theory of visual grammar proposes that images possess structures comparable to linguistic grammar through representational, interactive, and compositional meanings. Visual resources such as gaze, framing, salience, colour, information value, and composition function systematically to communicate particular ideological and interpersonal messages. Later, Kress (2010) further developed this perspective by emphasizing that multimodality reflects the changing nature of communication in contemporary digital societies, where individuals continuously interpret integrated combinations of linguistic, visual, spatial, and technological resources.

The methodological development of multimodal research has been significantly strengthened by Jewitt (2009) and Bezemer and Jewitt (2018), who conceptualize multimodality as both a theoretical framework and a methodological approach for analysing complex communicative practices. They argue that meaning is produced through the interaction of different semiotic resources rather than through language alone. This perspective has become increasingly relevant in digital marketing research because social media advertisements combine photographs, typography, animations, colours, emojis, and written language within integrated communicative environments. Similarly, O'Halloran (2004) proposes that multimodal discourse analysis provides a comprehensive analytical framework for investigating the interaction between linguistic and visual resources. O'Halloran (2011) further explains that digital discourse requires analytical models capable of examining multiple semiotic modes simultaneously rather than treating language as an isolated system.

Within the tradition of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Halliday (2004) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) conceptualize language as a social semiotic system through which speakers simultaneously construct experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings. The experiential metafunction represents reality through processes, participants, and circumstances; the interpersonal metafunction establishes social relationships and evaluative positions; and the textual metafunction organizes information into coherent discourse. Hasan (2014) highlights the continuing relevance of Halliday's functional theory for analysing contemporary

communication, arguing that SFL remains one of the most comprehensive frameworks for understanding how language functions within social contexts. Extending Halliday's work, Martin and White (2005) developed Appraisal Theory, which explains how speakers and writers express attitudes, judgments, appreciation, and engagement. This framework has become particularly valuable in advertising studies because promotional discourse relies extensively upon evaluative language to influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions.

Advertising discourse has long been recognized as a specialized form of persuasive communication. Leech (1966) was among the earliest scholars to investigate the linguistic characteristics of advertising, demonstrating how lexical selection, syntax, metaphor, and stylistic innovation contribute to persuasive effects. Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) subsequently argued that advertising constructs persuasive meanings through the strategic integration of language and visual representation, while Sinclair (1987) emphasized that advertisements operate as ideological texts that reinforce social values and consumer identities. Cook (2001) further conceptualizes advertising as a distinctive discourse genre in which text, image, context, and audience interpretation interact to produce persuasive communication. According to Cook, advertising cannot be understood solely through linguistic analysis because its effectiveness depends upon the interaction of multiple communicative resources.

Critical approaches to discourse have further enriched advertising research by examining the relationship between language, ideology, and power. Fairclough (1995) argues that media discourse plays a central role in shaping public knowledge, identities, and social practices through particular linguistic and visual representations. Later, Fairclough (2015) extends this perspective by demonstrating how discourse contributes to the production and maintenance of power relations within society. Widdowson (2007), while acknowledging the value of discourse analysis, emphasizes the importance of contextual interpretation and cautions against separating textual analysis from communicative purpose. Together, these perspectives suggest that advertising discourse not only promotes products but also constructs ideological representations of lifestyles, identities, consumption practices, and social relationships.

Recent scholarship has increasingly examined digital advertising through multimodal frameworks. Salleh et al. (2015) investigated Instagram marketing strategies employed by leading Malaysian restaurant brands and found that visual consistency, attractive food photography, and interactive communication significantly enhance consumer engagement and brand recognition. Similarly, Wulandari and Darma (2020) demonstrated that Instagram advertising positively influences purchasing decisions by increasing brand awareness, trust, and consumer interaction. Their findings indicate that social media advertising functions as both a promotional and relationship-building tool.

Studies focusing specifically on restaurant advertising further support the effectiveness of multimodal communication. Kautsar and Bustam (2021) analysed Instagram posts produced by American restaurant chains during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that successful advertisements integrated high-quality visual imagery, concise promotional language, colour symbolism, and brand identity to maintain customer engagement despite changing market conditions. Likewise, Putri et al. (2020) employed Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate Instagram captions in Pond's advertisements, demonstrating that linguistic choices reinforce persuasive messages and ideological positioning through carefully selected lexical and grammatical structures.

From a marketing perspective, Moriarty et al. (2018) argue that effective Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) depends upon maintaining consistency across all communication

channels. Brand identity is strengthened when visual design, language, promotional strategy, and organizational values communicate a coherent message. In digital environments such as Instagram, this consistency becomes particularly important because consumers encounter brands through continuous streams of multimodal content rather than isolated advertising campaigns.

The global expansion of English has also influenced contemporary advertising practices. Crystal (2003) argues that English functions as an international language of business, technology, and marketing, enabling multinational corporations to communicate across cultural boundaries while maintaining globally recognizable brand identities. Nevertheless, international brands frequently combine English with localized cultural references and promotional themes to strengthen consumer identification within specific national contexts.

Although existing research has significantly advanced understanding of multimodal communication, advertising discourse, and Instagram marketing, several research gaps remain. Most previous studies examine either visual communication or linguistic persuasion independently, while comparatively fewer investigations integrate branding theory, multimodal discourse analysis, and functional linguistic perspectives within restaurant advertising. Moreover, relatively little research has compared international and local restaurant brands operating within Pakistan's digital marketplace. Existing studies have primarily focused on Western contexts or individual brands, leaving limited understanding of how multinational corporations and domestic restaurant chains negotiate globalization, localization, brand identity, and consumer persuasion through Instagram advertising. The present study addresses this gap by comparatively examining the multimodal strategies employed by international and local restaurant brands in Pakistan, thereby contributing to research on digital branding, multimodal discourse analysis, and advertising communication.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The present study employs a qualitative research design grounded in **Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)** and **Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA)** to investigate the linguistic organization of Instagram advertisements published by restaurant brands operating in Pakistan. The objective is to examine how linguistic resources contribute to persuasive communication and complement visual elements within digital advertising. Rather than measuring consumer responses quantitatively, the study analyzes the functional organization of language embedded in advertising texts. This methodological orientation is consistent with the qualitative multimodal approach adopted in the uploaded thesis.

Qualitative discourse analysis is appropriate because advertising language is socially situated and context-dependent. The interpretation of promotional slogans, captions, lexical choices, and interpersonal strategies requires close examination of linguistic meanings within their communicative environments. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics provides a comprehensive framework for explaining how grammar functions as a resource for meaning-making rather than merely a formal system of rules.

Research Paradigm

The research follows an **interpretivist paradigm**, which assumes that language acquires meaning through social interaction and cultural practice. Instagram advertisements are viewed as communicative texts in which grammatical structures, lexical choices, evaluative expressions, and textual organization construct commercial meanings designed to persuade consumers.

Restaurant advertisements do not simply provide factual product descriptions; they construct symbolic experiences associated with enjoyment, convenience, celebration, quality, and lifestyle. Consequently, linguistic analysis must investigate both explicit promotional statements and the interpersonal relationships established between advertisers and audiences.

Data Source

The study analyzes six Instagram advertisements selected from the official Instagram accounts of:

- McDonald's Pakistan
- KFC Pakistan
- Domino's Pakistan
- Papa John's Pakistan
- Ranchers Café
- Koffee Net

Purposive sampling was employed because these advertisements contain rich combinations of captions, promotional slogans, brand messages, hashtags, logos, and other linguistic elements suitable for functional analysis. The sampling procedure and dataset correspond to those described in the thesis.

Analytical Framework

The linguistic analysis follows Halliday's **Systemic Functional Linguistics**, focusing on three metafunctions.

Experiential Metafunction

The experiential metafunction explains how language represents reality through processes, participants, and circumstances. Advertising language frequently emphasizes material processes describing eating, ordering, tasting, sharing, and enjoying food products.

Participants generally include:

- restaurant brands
- food products
- consumers
- promotional offers

Circumstantial elements frequently specify time limitations, promotional periods, prices, and locations.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction examines relationships established between advertisers and consumers.

Important linguistic resources include:

- imperative mood
- modality
- personal pronouns
- evaluative adjectives
- emotional vocabulary
- promotional commands

Restaurant advertisements typically employ direct interpersonal communication to encourage immediate purchasing behaviour.

Textual Metafunction

The textual metafunction investigates how messages are organized into coherent communicative structures.

Relevant features include:

- thematic organization
- cohesion
- information flow
- slogan construction
- caption sequencing

Instagram captions generally demonstrate remarkable textual economy because consumers devote only brief attention to individual advertisements.

Findings and Analysis

Advertisement One: McDonald's Pakistan

Experiential Meaning

The McDonald's advertisement employs language primarily to represent food consumption as an enjoyable and immediate experience. Material process verbs dominate the promotional discourse, emphasizing consumer actions such as eating, ordering, enjoying, tasting, and experiencing. Although captions remain relatively brief, every lexical item contributes directly to the commercial objective.

The product itself functions as the principal participant within experiential structures. Rather than describing manufacturing processes or organizational activities, the advertisement foregrounds the burger meal as the central entity around which all linguistic meanings revolve. Evaluative adjectives frequently accompany product references.

Examples include expressions equivalent to:

- juicy
- delicious
- crispy
- fresh
- irresistible
- premium

These adjectives function descriptively while simultaneously performing persuasive roles by constructing positive consumer expectations.

Experiential meanings therefore represent food not simply as nourishment but as an emotionally satisfying consumption experience.

Interpersonal Meaning

The interpersonal dimension demonstrates particularly sophisticated persuasive organization.

Imperative structures dominate promotional communication.

Typical expressions include:

- Order now.
- Try it today.
- Grab yours.
- Don't miss out.
- Enjoy the taste.

Such commands establish direct communication between advertiser and consumer.

Unlike formal commercial language, the advertisement adopts conversational discourse characterized by friendliness and enthusiasm.

Personal pronouns further strengthen interpersonal relationships.

Second-person reference positions consumers as active participants rather than passive observers.

Positive evaluative vocabulary reinforces emotional engagement.

Words such as:

- amazing
- favourite
- ultimate
- special

construct favourable attitudes toward advertised products.

Modality remains relatively low because advertisers avoid uncertainty.

Instead of expressions like "may enjoy," advertisements confidently assert product quality through categorical promotional language.

Textual Meaning

The advertisement demonstrates highly efficient textual organization.

The headline functions as the thematic point of departure.

Supporting promotional information follows immediately.

Brand identity appears at the conclusion through logos and hashtags.

This sequence facilitates rapid comprehension.

Textual cohesion is achieved through lexical repetition emphasizing:

- food quality
- taste
- freshness
- promotion

Hashtags extend textual meanings beyond individual advertisements by connecting promotional campaigns with broader digital conversations.

Examples include brand-specific promotional hashtags reinforcing institutional identity.

Overall textual organization demonstrates remarkable economy.

Relatively few words successfully communicate complete persuasive messages.

Discussion

Halliday's three metafunctions operate simultaneously.

Experientially, the advertisement represents enjoyable food consumption.

Interpersonally, direct commands establish consumer relationships.

Textually, concise organization ensures rapid processing.

Language therefore complements visual persuasion by reinforcing commercial meanings rather than competing with imagery.

Advertisement Two: KFC Pakistan

Experiential Meaning

The KFC advertisement similarly emphasizes material processes associated with consumption.

Lexical choices foreground actions such as:

- share
- enjoy
- bite
- order
- celebrate

These process verbs position consumers within imagined eating experiences.

Participants primarily include:

- chicken products

- meal boxes
- promotional offers
- customers

Experiential representations consistently emphasize abundance.

Unlike McDonald's focus upon individual meals, KFC frequently promotes shared dining experiences.

Consequently, experiential meanings extend beyond personal satisfaction toward family gatherings and social interaction.

Descriptive adjectives reinforce this orientation.

Expressions emphasizing:

- crispy
- crunchy
- hot
- spicy

stimulate sensory imagination while simultaneously communicating product quality.

Interpersonal Meaning

Interpersonal communication within the KFC advertisement relies heavily upon persuasive imperatives.

Commands invite consumers to participate immediately.

Examples include functional equivalents of:

- Order yours today.
- Share the bucket.
- Enjoy together.

Such constructions reduce social distance between brand and consumer.

The advertisement further establishes solidarity through inclusive language emphasizing collective experiences.

Rather than addressing isolated individuals, promotional discourse frequently constructs groups of friends and families enjoying meals together.

Emotionally loaded vocabulary strengthens interpersonal meanings.

Lexical items including:

- happiness
- celebration
- together
- family

extend commercial persuasion into emotional domains.

Textual Meaning

Textual organization remains highly structured.

The promotional headline introduces central information.

Supporting details concerning discounts or meal combinations follow.

The advertisement concludes with ordering instructions or branding information.

Cohesion is achieved through semantic repetition emphasizing value, quantity, and quality.

Textual simplicity facilitates immediate understanding despite Instagram's fast-scrolling environment.

Discussion

The linguistic organization demonstrates Halliday's proposition that grammar functions simultaneously across experiential, interpersonal, and textual dimensions.

Experiential meanings describe products.

Interpersonal meanings persuade consumers.

Textual organization maximizes communicative efficiency.

The advertisement therefore illustrates how relatively short promotional texts perform multiple communicative functions simultaneously.

Advertisement Three: Koffee Net

Experiential Meaning

Unlike fast-food advertisements emphasizing speed and quantity, Koffee Net employs linguistic resources representing coffee consumption as an experience associated with comfort, relaxation, sophistication, and premium quality.

Material processes become less prominent.

Instead, relational processes characterize the discourse.

The coffee is described through attributes emphasizing:

- richness
- aroma
- smoothness
- freshness
- authenticity

Such relational constructions define product identity rather than encouraging immediate action.

Lexical choices frequently evoke sensory experiences.

Words associated with warmth, flavour, and craftsmanship construct premium brand positioning.

Interpersonal Meaning

Interpersonal communication differs noticeably from McDonald's and KFC.

Rather than relying exclusively upon strong imperatives, Koffee Net adopts invitational language.

Expressions encourage consumers to:

- discover
- experience
- relax
- indulge

These verbs communicate hospitality rather than urgency.

Mood structures remain predominantly declarative but imply invitation.

The overall tone appears sophisticated and conversational.

Evaluative adjectives including:

- premium
- handcrafted
- aromatic
- signature

reinforce brand prestige.

The interpersonal relationship therefore emphasizes refinement rather than excitement.

Textual Meaning

Textual organization mirrors the minimalist visual design.

Captions remain concise.

Themes generally introduce the featured beverage before elaborating its distinctive qualities.

Lexical cohesion emerges through repetition of concepts associated with coffee culture, freshness, craftsmanship, and quality.

Hashtags reinforce branding while connecting advertisements to wider café communities on Instagram.

Comparative Analysis of the First Three Advertisements

Although McDonald's, KFC, and Koffee Net promote different products and target somewhat different consumer expectations, their linguistic organization demonstrates several common characteristics. All three advertisements employ concise promotional discourse, positive evaluative vocabulary, and strategically selected process verbs to represent consumption experiences. The experiential metafunction consistently foregrounds food or beverages as the primary participants, while interpersonal meanings encourage audience engagement through direct address or invitational expressions. Textually, each advertisement exhibits a clear thematic progression in which the featured product is introduced first, followed by promotional details and concluding branding elements.

However, important differences also emerge. McDonald's emphasizes immediacy, KFC foregrounds collective consumption and abundance, whereas Koffee Net constructs a discourse of sophistication and leisure. These variations illustrate Halliday's argument that language choices are functionally motivated by communicative purpose rather than determined solely by grammatical convention.

Advertisement Four: Ranchers Café

Experiential Metafunction

The Ranchers Café advertisement employs experiential meanings that foreground the consumption of premium burgers as an enjoyable and memorable experience. The dominant processes are material processes realized through verbs such as *taste*, *bite*, *order*, *grab*, and *enjoy*. These verbs portray food consumption as an immediate and desirable action. Unlike descriptive restaurant menus, the advertisement presents the burger as an experience rather than merely a product.

The principal participants are the featured burger, promotional meal deals, and the consumer. The burger functions as the central participant around which all experiential meanings are organized. Circumstantial elements such as promotional periods, limited-time offers, and pricing provide contextual information while simultaneously creating urgency.

Lexically, the advertisement relies heavily on positively evaluated adjectives including *loaded*, *juicy*, *grilled*, *premium*, and *delicious*. These lexical selections construct an idealized image of product quality and contribute directly to persuasive communication.

Interpersonal Metafunction

Interpersonal meanings are realized primarily through imperative mood structures.

Examples include promotional constructions equivalent to:

- Grab yours now.
- Taste the difference.
- Don't miss today's offer.
- Order now.

These imperatives reduce the social distance between advertiser and consumer while encouraging immediate purchasing behaviour.

The advertisement also employs second-person pronouns that position the consumer as an active participant. Instead of describing products objectively, the language directly addresses potential customers, creating conversational interaction.

Appraisal resources further strengthen interpersonal meanings. Positive judgement and appreciation dominate the discourse through lexical choices emphasizing satisfaction,

excitement, and enjoyment. There is virtually no negative vocabulary because advertising language seeks to construct entirely positive consumer expectations.

Textual Metafunction

Textual organization demonstrates remarkable coherence despite the brevity of Instagram captions.

Thematic progression follows a consistent sequence:

Theme

Featured product



Rheme

Promotional information



Brand identity

This predictable organization allows consumers to process promotional messages rapidly while scrolling through social media feeds.

Lexical cohesion is achieved through repetition of food-related vocabulary emphasizing freshness, flavour, and promotional value. Brand hashtags reinforce institutional identity while simultaneously improving discoverability within Instagram's digital environment.

Advertisement Five: Papa John's Pakistan

Experiential Metafunction

The Papa John's advertisement constructs experiential meanings centred upon pizza as a shared social experience.

Material processes dominate the discourse through verbs such as:

- share
- order
- enjoy
- celebrate

Unlike advertisements promoting individual meals, Papa John's frequently represents food as collective consumption.

Participants include:

- pizzas
- toppings
- family meals
- promotional combinations
- consumers

Circumstantial meanings frequently specify promotional durations or delivery services, reinforcing convenience alongside product quality.

Adjectives such as *fresh*, *cheesy*, *authentic*, and *loaded* create highly positive product representations.

Interpersonal Metafunction

Interpersonal communication emphasizes inclusiveness.

Rather than focusing solely upon individual consumers, the advertisement frequently constructs collective identities involving families and friends.

Imperative structures encourage shared participation.

Examples include:

- Share happiness.
- Order today.

- Enjoy together.

The interpersonal tone remains friendly, enthusiastic, and conversational.

Modal expressions are relatively limited because advertisers communicate confidence rather than uncertainty.

Positive appraisal dominates throughout the promotional discourse.

Textual Metafunction

The textual structure demonstrates strong thematic organization.

The headline introduces the featured pizza before providing promotional details.

Supporting information follows logical sequencing.

Brand logos and hashtags conclude the advertisement.

Lexical repetition involving *pizza*, *cheese*, *fresh*, and *family* creates semantic cohesion throughout the text.

Overall, textual simplicity contributes significantly to communicative efficiency.

Advertisement Six: Domino's Pakistan

Experiential Metafunction

Domino's advertisements emphasize experiential meanings associated with convenience, speed, and affordability.

Material process verbs include:

- order
- enjoy
- save
- celebrate

Participants include pizzas, meal combinations, promotional discounts, and customers.

Unlike Koffee Net's relational emphasis upon product identity, Domino's strongly foregrounds consumer action.

Food is represented as immediately available and suitable for both individual and group consumption.

Lexical choices such as *hot*, *fresh*, *loaded*, *cheesy*, and *value* reinforce positive consumer expectations.

Interpersonal Metafunction

Interpersonal communication demonstrates high persuasive intensity.

Imperative constructions dominate promotional discourse.

Examples include:

- Order now.
- Save today.
- Grab the deal.
- Enjoy more.

These commands establish direct communication while encouraging immediate purchasing decisions.

The advertisement also employs exclamatory expressions to increase emotional involvement.

Positive evaluative vocabulary consistently constructs enthusiasm, excitement, and satisfaction.

Textual Metafunction

Domino's captions exhibit concise textual organization.

Theme generally introduces promotional offers.

Subsequent clauses elaborate product details.

Branding information concludes the message.

Cohesion is achieved through lexical repetition emphasizing offers, value, pizza, delivery, and freshness.

The resulting textual organization reflects Instagram's requirement for rapid communication within visually dominant environments.

5. Comparative Discussion

Comparative analysis demonstrates remarkable consistency in the linguistic organization of all six restaurant advertisements.

Experiential Meanings

Material processes dominate promotional discourse across all brands.

Frequently occurring process verbs include:

- order
- enjoy
- taste
- grab
- share
- celebrate
- discover

Food products consistently function as the principal participants.

Experiential meanings therefore represent restaurant products as enjoyable experiences rather than ordinary commodities.

Interpersonal Meanings

Interpersonal communication represents the most persuasive linguistic dimension.

Several common features appear across all advertisements.

Imperative Mood

Commands encourage immediate consumer action.

Examples include:

- Order Now
- Taste It
- Grab Yours
- Don't Miss Out

Personal Pronouns

Second-person pronouns reduce social distance and personalize promotional communication.

Positive Appraisal

Every advertisement employs strongly positive vocabulary.

Common evaluative adjectives include:

- delicious
- crispy
- juicy
- fresh
- premium
- cheesy
- authentic
- aromatic

These lexical choices construct favourable attitudes before consumers experience the products.

Textual Meanings

Textual organization demonstrates remarkable consistency.

Instagram captions generally follow the sequence:

Product



Offer



Call-to-action



Hashtags



Brand identity

This organization reflects Halliday's textual metafunction by facilitating coherent information flow.

Despite considerable brevity, advertisements successfully communicate complete persuasive messages.

Code-Mixing and Cultural Localization

One particularly interesting finding concerns language choice.

English functions as the primary advertising language across all six brands.

However, strategically selected Urdu words occasionally appear in promotional campaigns, particularly during:

- Ramadan
- Eid
- Independence Day
- Pakistan Super League (PSL)
- national celebrations

Such code-mixing serves several communicative purposes.

First, it strengthens local cultural identity.

Second, it increases accessibility among Pakistani consumers.

Third, it enables multinational brands to localize global marketing strategies without sacrificing international brand recognition.

The combination of English promotional discourse with culturally familiar Urdu expressions illustrates the multilingual nature of Pakistani digital advertising.

Discussion

The findings strongly support Halliday's (2014) proposition that language simultaneously performs experiential, interpersonal, and textual functions.

Experientially, restaurant advertisements represent food through carefully selected material and relational processes emphasizing freshness, quality, convenience, and enjoyment.

Interpersonally, advertisers establish persuasive relationships through imperative constructions, positive evaluation, and conversational language. Rather than presenting objective product descriptions, the advertisements directly engage consumers, encouraging immediate behavioural responses.

Textually, concise thematic organization enables efficient communication within Instagram's fast-moving digital environment. Captions remain short but highly functional because every lexical item contributes to the overall persuasive objective.

An important finding concerns the interaction between linguistic and visual communication. Although Instagram is generally considered a visually dominant platform, the linguistic dimension remains essential for clarifying promotional information, reinforcing brand identity, and directing consumer interpretation. Language does not compete with visual imagery; rather, it complements and strengthens multimodal meaning-making.

Conclusion

This study examined the linguistic organization of Instagram advertisements published by six restaurant brands operating in Pakistan using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics.

The analysis demonstrated that experiential meanings represent products as desirable consumption experiences through material and relational processes. Interpersonal meanings establish persuasive relationships between advertisers and consumers using imperative mood, evaluative vocabulary, and conversational discourse. Textual meanings organize promotional information into coherent messages that facilitate rapid processing within Instagram's digital environment.

The findings indicate that restaurant advertising language is highly systematic rather than random. Lexical choices, grammatical structures, thematic organization, and appraisal resources collectively contribute to persuasive communication while complementing visual semiotic resources.

The study therefore extends Systemic Functional Linguistics into the analysis of contemporary digital advertising and contributes to understanding commercial discourse within Pakistan's expanding social media landscape.

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