

## Unveiling Persuasive Strategies of Fast Food Taglines

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### Abstract

*Language in advertising particularly in the fast food industry has a significant impact on consumer behavior and brand perception. While a number of studies have acknowledged the importance of language in marketing, little focus has been placed on how language features specifically elevate the stature of fast food taglines. Using Fairclough's approach of Critical Discourse Analysis, it is investigated how language in fast food taglines affects consumer engagement and persuasive strategies. In the paradigm of qualitative research, this study is descriptive. It uses purposive sampling technique to select fast food taglines from Sialkot, Pakistan. Investigating the specific linguistic components and communication strategies employed in these taglines, this study assesses the potential impact of fast food taglines on consumer perception and brand loyalty. It looks at lexical choices, syntactic patterns, semantics, and coherence in the context of persuasive communications. The analysis evaluates the possible influence these taglines may have on consumer perception and brand loyalty by examining the precise language elements and communication tactics used in them. This research offers significant recommendations for marketers to enhance their language tactics in order to boost consumer interaction and brand loyalty in the fast food industry.*

**Keywords:** Fast food taglines, persuasive strategies, advertising language, consumer perception, critical discourse analysis

### Introduction

In the fast food industry, the relationship of language and customer depends on the efficacy of the marketing discourse and the strategies used in the advertising of the fast food. As the language plays an important role to convince the customers through attractive messaging and develop the connection with the consumers likewise the taglines are crafted with using appealing words so they have ability to retain the connection with the consumers (Smith & Taylor, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to comprehend the linguistic components of the taglines. It is noted that there is less exploration of the studies on the linguistic persuasive strategies of the taglines. This study utilizes Fairclough's (1989) model of CDA to explore the power relations and underlying patterns of the ideologies through the use of language. This study demonstrates the use of language and how the language develops the relation with the audience and how it is interpreted in the particular context (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). This study refers to the identification of different linguistic features like vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure. It also explores the convincing tactics of the taglines. This study has set the objective of the exploring of the broader socio cultural interpretation in the taglines of the fast food by using the critical discourse analysis. Persuasive strategies are the methods employed in these taglines to sway consumer opinions, arouse feelings, and eventually prompt purchases (Kotler & Keller, 2012). These tactics frequently entail the use of linguistic elements, rhetorical methods, and prevalent strategies that connect with customers on a deeper level and influence their decisions and preferences.

This study examines how language functions in Pakistani fast food advertising by examining the linguistic components of popular national as well as international brands' taglines. The study intends to identify the persuasive methods embedded in these taglines and their

influence on customer perceptions and behavior through a critical evaluation of terminologies, rhetorical devices, and framing techniques. In addition, it investigates how these linguistic decisions reflect power relationships and cultural contexts, adding to the larger conversation about consumerism in the fast food sector. The majority of earlier research on word choice for creating persuasive advertising messages has been on commercials and other promotional texts of very popular international fast food chains like McDonalds, KFC, Burger King and Dominos. There are so many international brands which are not even touched for linguistic analysis. The distinct nature of this study is to touch upon the local, national, and international brands to evaluate their taglines.

### Research Objectives

This research work has following objectives:

- i. To comprehend the linguistic components used in the fast food taglines and their persuasiveness.
- ii. To observe the underlying patterns and cultural assumptions hidden in the taglines of the fast food.

### Research Questions

Here are some questions that are going to be addressed in this work.

- i. What linguistic devices and rhetorical strategies are commonly used in fast food taglines to create persuasiveness?
- ii. What ideologies and cultural assumptions are embedded in the language of the fast food taglines?

The focus of this work is to study the language perspectives of the taglines; it does not focus on the images and semiotic analysis. It highlights tactics used by the advertisers to grab the attention of consumers in order to sell more fast food. This research primarily focuses on words used to arouse the feelings of the consumer and structures woven to communicate the meaning of the taglines and how they affect the choices of consumers and leave lasting impressions in the favour of various brands. By covering these areas, this study may lead to contribute to fill the research gap related to the linguistic choices and perception of the brands in order to engage the customers.

### Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to give brief overview of the researches and previous studies conducted on the persuasiveness of the taglines and advertisement of the fast food industry by keeping the critical discourse analysis in view. As language is a code and mode of communication so it is one of the powerful weapons that can be used to mold the behavior of anyone through the use of affective language. Language helps to understand the world around us, get the picture of the world through the use of powerful words, and understand the complex relationship of the language with the outer world. Advertisement is one of the main means to make connection with the audience and to attract, motivate and retain with a particular thing. It is noted that advertisers and marketers use the language in a careful way to captivate the consumers.

Losi et al. (2022) state in their study that there are many strategies that are used to sale the things on the platform of social media by using the theory of Lamb's classification. This study basically emphasizes on the persuading techniques the companies mostly used on one

of the social media platform that is Instagram. This study has observed the different figures of the post uploaded on the Instagram by the Burger King and Starbucks by using the qualitative approach. Burger King has used the different strategies while Starbucks has employed different ones, inclusive language is used by the Starbucks and there is use of more questions and imagery in the promotion messaging of the Burger King while the other one has used literary and rhetorical devices like alliteration and personification.

Noor et al. (2017) examine the use of distinctive language by advertisers in *Cosmopolitan Magazine* advertisements to draw in customers. Their concentration was on comprehending the ways in which language and imagery communicate ideas. They discovered via qualitative analysis that marketers stress the advantages of their products and use persuasive language to close deals. The majority of the content focused on the advantages of the product. Personification was a popular technique used to give human characteristics to inanimate.

Mohsen (2022) investigates the use of persuasive language in online skin care product marketing in Arabic and English. It seeks to comprehend the distinct linguistic elements and rhetorical devices used in these advertisements. The study discovered both universal and culturally particular persuasive strategies by examining 100 advertisements in each language. Still, not much study has been done on the conversation surrounding online advertising in these settings. Although the study improves our comprehension of commercial language, it does not fully address how effective these persuasive techniques are at influencing consumer behavior in various cultural situations.

Fitria (2021) observes the reasons behind using persuasive strategies in Instagram advertisements for various product categories like mineral water, medicine, food and drink, household items, and beauty and skincare products. The study identifies that these ads focus on different aspects of the products to persuade consumers, such as quality, ingredients, and benefits. They often use rationalization as a persuasive strategy, appealing to consumers' needs and logical thinking. The study provides insight into the persuasive strategies used in Instagram ads.

Gunawan and Munirah (2022) investigate the persuasive strategies used in UMKM beverage advertisements in Makassar City and their implications on Indonesian language learning in Class VIII. Using qualitative descriptive analysis, the research gathers data from interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. It identifies three persuasive strategies: rationalization, suggestion, and identification, used in these advertisements to attract consumers. Additionally, it explores how these advertisements can be used as teaching material to educate students about local advertising.

Shah et al. (2022) investigate the social effects of Pakistani ads' use of persuasive techniques. The study utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to assess five print media advertisements. The analysis shows how the brand uses linguistic and metalinguistic elements to draw customer's attention.

After a brief look over the previous studies, there are many areas in which research gap is found. The first gap is noted in the practicality of the persuasive techniques of the advertisement. Most of the researches are conducted to analyze the language and focus on the linguistic landscapes but do not study the area of consumer behavior and their perceptions

Additionally no comparative research has been conducted to cover the cultural context and advertising strategies. Researches do not focus on the broader cultural and social aspect of the language. There is a gap between the use of convincing strategies and their outcomes on the consumer in relation with academia that will be helpful for the students. There is also a need to address the local marketing techniques to design a way full of information to affect and motivate the consumer to stick to the particular brand. In conclusion, by conducting research on the fast food taglines and messages it will help to understand the intricate subject of the fast food by focusing on the linguistic strategies used in the taglines.

### **Methodology**

To focus on the validity and reliability of the data, it is necessary to understand the methodology of the research. It deals with the process of collecting, handling, analyzing and explaining data in the context of fast food taglines. Moreover this follows all the methods that meet the objectives of the study in order to complete this work. The methods used are grounded in a specific framework to investigate the research questions. The researchers have used descriptive method in the paradigm of qualitative research. Data is selected through convenient sampling technique.

By applying critical discourse analysis, the researchers demonstrate as to how language works in different social contexts to construct meanings and exercise power. There are three dimensions of this model: textual dimension, discursive dimension, and social dimension. Textual dimension aims to analyze written or spoken text. It includes the analysis of structural, grammatical, and lexical features and other linguistic elements. Discursive Dimension sees building blocks of discourse as lens and mirror and hammer to magnify interpretation. Social Dimension concerns with exploration of broader social, cultural and historical events. It emphasizes that language is not used in isolation but is embedded in social norms, ideologies, and realities; it shapes and is shaped by social, cultural and historical events. However, the purpose of this study is also to expose the underlying ideologies to develop and understand the relation of consumer with the techniques used by fast food brands and to influence their purchasing decision. This work provides detailed analysis of how language is used to manipulate the consumers' behavior and their consumption of fast food by determining the power relations and social norms.

This work gives details of how language is used in local and international markets of fast food and to know the interconnectedness of these strategies. This emphasizes the use of rules that are involved in making the taglines of local and international brands in the particular scenario. The main objective of the study is to get to know about the use of language and compare of both local and international fast food and their influence on the audience.

### **Data Collection**

Validity and reliability of the research depend on the data that has been selected to dissect in order to understand the different persuasive strategies in the fast food taglines.

### **Selection of Taglines**

In order to analyze the fast food taglines, it is important to select a suitable data from the reliable resources. In this procedure, there is a requirement of the specific sample of the data that is representative of the population. In this research a figure of 20 taglines from both national and international fast food chains in Sialkot, Pakistan market has been selected. This

sample size is selected via purposive sampling technique. The fast food chains have greater impact on the social class of the area because they are accessible to all classes, 10 fast food taglines are selected from national chains of Sialkot including Frangoz and Takeaway's and 10 taglines have been selected from the international chains of greater influence whose taglines are underexplored. This mixture of local and international advertising methods ensures that taglines that are selected are accessible and reliable in the local market of Sialkot.

### Data Analysis

Fairclough's three dimensional models which employs the textual, discursive and social analysis of the data that includes national (Sialkot) and international taglines of the fast food company. The focus is basically on the textual analysis of the taglines that how the advertisers have used linguistic features to address the consumers and to appeal their emotions. In discursive analysis researcher finds the production, distribution, and explanation that involves how society interprets these taglines. The third aspect of this model is the understanding of social behavior as to how the audience of particular area has interpreted these taglines according to their own social norms.

### Textual Analysis

This section includes the textual analysis of the fast food taglines focusing on the following aspects:

#### Lexical Choices in Fast Food Taglines

**Base Form of Verbs:** Base form of verbs produce clear and powerful statements that increase the taglines' memorability and call to action. Some of them are *Feel, Wrap, Order, Eat, make, Think*.

**Present Participles:** Present participles imply that the product is lively and enticing since they communicate continuous motion and freshness. Some examples include *rolling in flavor* and *sizzling with flavor*.

**Nouns:** Nouns are heavily used to anchor the tagline in tangible, relatable elements, enhancing brand identity and appeal. *Examples: flavor, bite, taste buds, zinger twister, snacking, freshness, mozzarella cheese sticks, flame, Mexican steaks, pizza perfection, burger, fun, order, family, roof, slice, ingredients, buns, hamburger, food.*

**Adjectives:** The use of adjectives in taglines enhances their emotional appeal by producing vivid and appealing imagery. *Examples: "crunchy," "juicy," "irresistible," "fresh," "best," "great,"*

**Adverbs:** Adverbs modify verbs and adjectives to emphasize and enhance the qualities being described, though they are used sparingly in these taglines. *Example: so*

## Syntactic Features and Structures

Fast food taglines contain distinguished syntactic features, which are given as follows:

**Imperative Sentences:** Imperative sentences are used to give commands or make requests, which can be engaging and direct, urging customers to take immediate action. The data reveals multiple instances of imperative sentences including *Feel the crunch in every bite (Takeaway's)*, *Spice up your snacking (Takeaway's)*, *Eat fresh (Subway)*, *Feed your happy (Hardees)*, and *Think outside the buns (Taco Bell)*.

**Indefinite Sentences:** Simple sentences provide clear, concise messages that are easy to remember and understand, making them effective for taglines i.e., *it's burger o' clock (Frangoz)*.

**Complex Sentences:** Complex sentences can provide additional context or conditions, creating a more sophisticated message that can convey deeper values or promises. Some examples include *When you're here, you're family (Oliver Garden)* and *We don't make it until you order it (Jack in the box)*.

**Parallel Structures:** Parallel structures provide rhythm and balance to the taglines. An example includes *Better Ingredients, Better Pizza (Papa Johns)*.

**Contractions:** By making the language more relevant and conversational, contractions can contribute to the development of a warm and welcoming brand image i.e., *It's burger o' clock (Frangoz)*.

## Rhetorical Devices

**Metaphor:** By comparing one item to another without the use of "like" or "as," is called the use of metaphors. It produces a powerful image in the mind of the readers. An example is traced in the data including *A little slice of heaven (Pizza max)*.

**Hyperbole:** Exaggerated claims that are not meant to be taken literally are referred to as hyperbole. It draws attention to a product's superiority or distinctiveness, making it stand out i.e., *The last great hamburger stand (Fatburger)*.

**Personification:** Personification is the process of giving non-human entities human traits. This can help consumers relate to the product on an emotional level, which increases its attractiveness and relatability. The tagline *Where flavor meets flame (Frangoz)* shows the use of personification.

**Alliteration:** The repeating of first consonants in closely spaced words is known as alliteration. It produces a memorable, catchy, and rhythmic effect for the tagline. The repetition of the letter f shows alliteration in the tagline *Feast on Freshness (Takeaway's)*.

**Parallelism:** Similar word or phrase structures are used in parallelism. This gives the tagline harmony and rhythm, which increases its allure and facilitates memorization. The tagline *Better Ingredients, Better Pizza (Papa Johns)* shows the use of parallelism.

**Onomatopoeia:** Using words that mimic natural sounds is known as onomatopoeia. It can stimulate the senses, enhancing the vividness and allure of the goods. Some examples of

onomatopoeia include *Sizzling with flavor*(Frangoz)and *Feel the crunch in every bite*(Takeaway's).

**Assonance:** The repeating of vowel sounds in adjacent words is known as assonance. It adds a nice, rhythmic element that makes the slogan more memorable. The tagline *Pizza perfection at a price that's just right*( Frangoz)elucidates the example of assonance.

### Discursive Analysis

Discursive analysis, grounded on Fairclough's paradigm, examines the production, distribution, and consumption of discourse to demonstrate how language both shapes and mirrors social behaviors and power structures. It is vital to understand that how language of taglines are produced, distributed and interpreted in broader social context. Discursive analysis, grounded on Fairclough's paradigm, examines the production, distribution, and consumption of discourse to demonstrate how language both shapes and mirrors social behaviors and power structures. By getting insights of the process of production, distribution and how these taglines impact their behavior, we will get to know that this process is shaping consumer's perception, their choices and promoting the value of brand in the highly fierce industry of fast food

**Appeal to Senses and Emotions:** Fast food taglines are designed in such a way that they always appeal to senses and feelings by using emotive word to build the connection with the consumers. The example includes *Feel the crunch in every bite*(Takeaway's). This tagline has used the tactile imagery by explaining the texture of food to create the image of the food in the consumer's mind through the word of crunch. This will help to increase the attraction by giving more reality based experience of the fast food.

**Emphasis on Quality and Freshness:** To differentiate themselves from the competition and ease consumer concerns about fast food, several taglines highlight the meal's quality and freshness. The tagline *Feast on Freshness*(Takeaway's) indicates the quality assurance. By stressing the food's freshness and using alliteration, this tagline appeals to customers who are health-conscious while yet being catchy. The second example includes *Better Ingredients. Better Pizza* (Papa Johns). The idea that better ingredients translate into better flavor is reinforced by this parallel arrangement. The third example is *Eat Fresh* (Subway). The imperative sentence gives the buyer clear instructions to put freshness first, strengthening the link between the brand and high-quality, healthful food.

**Encouragement of Action and Engagement:** It is a common practice to employ imperative sentences to nudge consumers toward making an instant purchase or interacting with the brand. The tagline *Spice up your snacking* (Takeaway's) implicates that the product will improve their experience. This imperative sentence encourages customers to liven up their snack time. The second tagline *Think outside the Buns* (Taco Bell) suggests that consumers should be creative and diverse in their food selections by urging them to try something new.

**Creating a Memorable Brand Identity:** Personification, hyperbole, and metaphors are common rhetorical devices used in taglines to make them stand out. The tagline *A little slice of heaven*(Pizza Max) projects the food's quality and appeal to elevate to a divine experience.

### **Distribution**

The process of spreading awareness of these taglines to the public using a range of media, such as social media, packaging, in-store displays, and advertisements, is known as distribution.

### **Advertisement:**

Advertisements of Taglines are commonly used in print media, online ads, and television advertising. For instance, *I'm lovin' it* (McDonald's) has become a household phrase because of McDonald's massive marketing efforts.

### **Social media platform:**

Taglines are shared on social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. To boost interaction, taglines are frequently combined with images and hashtags. Taco Bell's *Think Outside the Buns* (Taco Bell) campaign leverages social media to target a younger, tech-savvy demographic.

### **Packaging and In-Store Displays:**

Containers and In-Store Exhibitions At the point of sale, taglines are also used to promote the brand in stores and on product packaging. In Subway restaurants, the phrase *Eat Fresh* (Subway) is frequently displayed, reminding patrons of the dedication of the brand to freshness.

**Consumption:** Consumption is the process by which viewers understand and react to these taglines, which can affect how they feel about the brand and behave.

**Immediate Action:** Imperative taglines like *Spice up your snacking* (Takeaway's) encourage immediate consumer action, driving sales and increasing engagement.

**Brand Loyalty:** Memorable and emotionally resonant taglines foster brand loyalty. *Better ingredients better pizza* (Papa John's) has become synonymous with Papa John's, creating a lasting impression that keeps customers returning.

**Cultural Impact:** Some taglines become part of popular culture, influencing language and social behavior, demonstrating its deep cultural penetration. Fairclough's discursive analysis model highlights how the production, distribution, and consumption of fast food taglines are interconnected in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors.

### **Social Practice Analysis**

Fairclough's social practice framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural setting though this study is delimited to Sialkot, Pakistan. It helps to understand successfully mix traditional local cooking styles with contemporary fast food fads, satisfying the sensory and emotional desires of customers. The focus of this dimension is on taste, quality, community, and cost resonance with the beliefs and way of life of the individuals in Sialkot.

### **Taglines of Fast Food Chains of Sialkot, Pakistan**



***Rolling in flavor with every bite (Takeaway's):*** This tagline emphasizes the importance of flavor in local cuisine. In Sialkot, where food is a significant part of social and family gatherings, this tagline appeals to the cultural value placed on rich, flavorful food.

***Feel the crunch in every bite (Takeaway's):*** It highlights the local preference for texture in food. Crunchy snacks and fried items are popular in Sialkot, and this tagline aligns with those preferences, suggesting high-quality and enjoyable food.

***Wrap your taste buds with our Zinger Twister (Takeaway's):*** It reflects the blending of traditional tastes with modern fast food trends. The concept of a "Zinger Twister" introduces a Western fast food item while promising an experience that caters to local tastes.

***Spice up your snacking (Takeaway's):*** It directly appeals to the cultural love for spicy food in Pakistan. It positions the product as not just a snack but a flavorful and exciting experience, resonating with local culinary traditions.

***Feast on Freshness (Takeaway's):*** It explains how fresh ingredients are essential to Pakistani cuisine. Sialkot cuisine places a premium on freshness; therefore this slogan serves to reassure customers of the product's elevated standards.

***Stretchy, cheesy and oh-so-satisfying Mozzarella cheese sticks (Frangoz):*** It introduces an international snack while highlighting attributes that appeal to local tastes. The emphasis on "cheesy" and "satisfying" speaks to a growing interest in diverse food experiences among younger consumers.

***Where flavor meets flame (Frangoz):*** It connects with the local tradition of grilling and barbecue. This tagline resonates with cultural practices around cooking and eating, suggesting a fusion of fast food convenience with traditional cooking methods.

***Sizzling with flavor, juicy Mexican steaks (Frangoz):*** It offers an exotic, international option that adds variety to the local diet. It ensures that the product still satisfies the local preference for juicy, flavorful meat while appealing to the adventurous eater seeking out new flavors.

***Pizza perfection at a price that's just right (Frangoz):*** It balances the appeal of quality with economic accessibility. In Sialkot, where economic diversity is significant, this tagline ensures that the product is seen as both premium and affordable.

***It's burger o' clock (Frangoz):*** It uses playful language to promote burgers as an anytime meal, fitting into the fast-paced lifestyle of urban consumers in Sialkot. It suggests convenience and flexibility, which are important in a busy city environment.

#### **International Fast Food Taglines**

***When you're here, you're family (Olive Garden):*** This tagline emphasizes the emotional connection and comfort that come from being treated like family, drawing on the universal principles of hospitality and belonging. It appeals to the universal human urge for warmth and social inclusion regardless of cultural background.

***We don't make it until you order it (Jack in the box):*** This tagline addresses consumer concerns about the authenticity and personalization of fast food worldwide while demonstrating a dedication to freshness and quality. This slogan speaks to the rising desire for made-to-order meals and openness in the food preparation process.

***The best pizza under one roof (Pizza Hut):*** It promises a superior dining experience by combining quality and convenience. This is appealing in a global market where consumers are looking for reliable, high-quality food options in a single, accessible location.

***A little slice of heaven (Pizza Max):*** The goal of this tagline is to appeal to consumers' cravings for indulgence and pleasure in their culinary selections while elevating the product to a transcendent level.

***Better Ingredients. Better Pizza (PapaJohns):*** It focuses on quality and health, addressing the growing concern and understanding about food ingredients and their origins around the



world. Customers that respect healthful, high-quality components in their meals may find this phrase appealing.

***It just tastes better(Burger king):***It focuses on the taste and flavor of food, which are universally important. Simple and appealing to customers' basic expectation that food should taste good.

***Eat Fresh(Subway):***It draws attention to how important freshness is in food, supporting the demand for unprocessed, fresh foods as well as the worldwide movement towards healthier eating habits.

***Feed your happy(Hardees):***It suggests that food is a source of joy and happiness, which plays to the emotional aspect of eating. This statement aligns with a global movement that views food not merely as a source of nutrition but also as a tool to enhance wellbeing.

***Think Outside the Buns(Taco Bell):***It encourages trying new and unconventional food options, appealing to the adventurous spirit of global consumers who are open to exploring new culinary experiences.

***The Last Great Hamburger Stand(Fatburger):***It evokes memories of a fine dining experience. This tagline speaks to the desire of customers for real, classic dining experiences by evoking a sense of tradition and authenticity.

### **Practical Implications**

#### **Consumer Awareness:**

The result of this research will give more awareness to the consumers to buy good and healthy food and will also affect their choices through the word play used in crafting these taglines. In this way, consumers will pay more attention towards the advertisement of fast food.

#### **Policy and Regulation:**

The area where quality and healthy food is a priority of the consumers, these findings will help the advertisers and policy makers to design advertisements by keeping the concept of healthy food in their mind in order to attract more and more consumers.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this research show that to influence consumer's behavior and brand identification, it is necessary to carefully design the taglines because each single word has an impact on their perception. While crafting a persuasive strategy, advertisers and linguists pay heed to the little linguistic aspect. Using Fairclough's model, this study demonstrates that how consumer perception and their preferences related to food can be impacted by the persuasive techniques, linguistic and other rhetorical devices. Intentionally, taglines are designed in such a way that they use specific words to attract a particular audience but they also retain the essence of the brand's ideology. Since these techniques and appealing language have been used, these advertisements have become more attractive. Cognitive models also play a key role in making appealing phrases to deal with shortage strategies and emotional boosters in order to catch more consumers and they also address the objectives of the consumers. Lastly, these appealing words help a brand to differ it from others and retain its identity and also enhance the brand's impact and encourage more consumers to buy these appealing fast foods.

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