



## ECO-FRIENDLY LANGUAGE, SUSTAINABILITY CLAIMS, AND GREENWASHING: A QUALITATIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BRAND COMMUNICATION

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### **Abstract**

*Environmentally oriented communication has gained significance in modern-day English linguistics owing to the fact that language is not only used to describe ecological phenomenon but it is also used to construct our understanding, interpretation, evaluation, and response to the said phenomenon. Recent global preoccupation with climate change, pollution, plastic waste, resource depletion, and sustainable development has resulted in the development of a new set of language for responsibility, ethical consumption, ecological legitimacy, and corporate accountability. The development in this regard is also evident in Pakistan through its manifestation in consumer communication in which language like "natural," "pure," "green," "eco-friendly," "recyclable," and "sustainable" is now commonly used in the marketing of products through product packaging, social media advertisements, housing development promotions, and online brand management. However, an increased focus on ecological vocabulary has led to the emergence of criticism of greenwashing. This study will focus on the use of eco-friendly language, sustainability rhetoric, and greenwashing in the discourse of Pakistani consumer brands. The study is located in the field of English linguistics and explores the construction of environmental discourse through the use of certain linguistic expressions. In the study, an empirical qualitative design will be employed based on the critical discourse analysis theory proposed by Fairclough, combined with the five types of greenwashing categories identified by Carlson: weak claim, false claim, omission or elision, misleading visuals, and trade-off concealment.*

*The study asserts that environmental significance is often created via lexical condensation, evaluation, symbolic ecological connection, and evidence selection. Most sustainability statements use general terms that allow for favourable meaning because of the semantically open nature of the terms used without specifying any significant environmental issues. The use of such language may not always be an indication of dishonesty. Nevertheless, it could provide conditions where ecology means more than what is said.*

**Keywords:** *communication, greenwashing, accountability, specifying, sustainable, preoccupation, favourable, semantically, evaluation, environmental issues*

### 1. Introduction

Language plays a crucial role in the construction of environmental reality within society. Human understanding of such concepts as climate change, ecological threat, sustainability, environmental ethics, and ethical consumerism is rarely shaped by immediate experience. On the contrary, it goes through a series of mediators ranging from discourse, symbolical meaning-making, institutional communication to public narrative and cultural interpretation. In other words, environmental issues cannot be seen exclusively from the perspective of science, technology, and politics; they are also linguistic issues inasmuch as the language of

ecological futurity affects the sense of urgency, responsibility, legitimacy, and desirable environmental action.

In recent decades, the phenomenon of environmental discourse has been gaining increasing importance in the domain of commercial communication. Nowadays, companies tend to use environmentally related vocabulary to demonstrate their awareness of issues, social responsibility, and ethical standpoints. Words like green, natural, eco-friendly, biodegradable, recyclable, responsible, and sustainable are ubiquitous in modern product packaging,

advertisements, promotions, social media campaigns, and corporate communications. The above-listed lexical units often imply strong positive connotations. They can refer to care, safety, future perspective, moral responsibility, and social approval. Nevertheless, their persuasive power usually outweighs the amount of actual information conveyed by them. A few words may give rise to a lot of environmental interpretation without offering much specific evidence.

The issue has gained considerable interest among scholars since commercial environmental communication is not about simply providing information but actively shaping meanings associated with ecology. A customer never understands an advertisement using words like natural, greener future, and recyclable bottle as just a description. This vocabulary creates the meaning through evaluation, association, presupposition, expectation, and symbolization. From this point of view, sustainability-related language often interprets ecological concepts before providing any information about them.

A case study of Pakistan offers a particularly interesting lens through which to consider the dynamics discussed above. Environmental challenges in the nation include air pollution in cities, the growth of plastic waste, shortage of water, industrial pollution, and vulnerabilities posed by global warming. Environmental problems intersect here with ongoing trends of urbanization, consumerism, digital advertising, and growing awareness among the public about their

responsibility towards nature. The modern rhetoric of consumption in Pakistan has increasingly begun to utilize environmental language, colors, symbols, and narrative positioning. Product packaging, social media marketing, supermarket marketing, marketing of new developments, and corporate communication have increasingly employed environmental meaning in their discourse. On the other hand, the increasing appearance of environmental rhetoric poses several questions. When a product or service is described as natural, green, or eco-friendly, what exactly is being communicated? Is there any grounding of these terms in actual practice or are they simply used as rhetorical devices? What does the use of such language imply in the Pakistani consumer culture context?

These concerns take on particular importance in cases where the regulation of environmental claims is relatively limited, as well as in instances where consumer interpretation is heavily reliant on language-based signals. In such cases, discourse takes on added significance within processes of environmental meaning. In their assessments of product claims, consumers are often dependent on short-term linguistic and visual markers. Thus, seemingly minor linguistic decisions can carry great interpretive weight.

Greenwashing refers to communication strategies used by organizations in creating a favourable image of environmental responsibility that might be exaggerated, partial, vague,

or inadequately supported. From the standpoint of English linguistics, greenwashing does not only consist of lies of factuality rather, it is about wording, framing, vagueness, implication, elision, semantic openness, and positioning of the interpreter. A text can be semantically defensible, yet open to more ecological extrapolation than warranted by the text itself.

Despite an abundance of international literature on eco-linguistics, environmental discourse, and sustainability communication, there is relatively little existing research in the area of sustainability language in the context of Pakistani consumer communication. The research conducted in Pakistan in relation to environmental issues tends to focus more on environmental policy, consumer behaviour, corporate social responsibility, or awareness levels in general. The use of linguistic analysis for the study of eco-language usage is still relatively underexplored.

### 1.1 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to examine how eco-friendly language and sustainability claims are linguistically constructed in Pakistani consumer-facing discourse and how these linguistic constructions may create interpretive conditions associated with greenwashing.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

1. Identification of the main linguistic tools used for environmental meaning making in Pakistani consumer discourse.
2. Investigation of the role played by sustainability messages in creating perceptions of ecological legitimacy and consumer trust.
3. Examination of the mechanisms that create the ambiguity surrounding greenwashing through language use.

### 1.3 Research Questions

1. How is eco-friendly language linguistically constructed in Pakistani consumer-facing discourse?
2. What discursive strategies are used to communicate sustainability claims?
3. How do selected texts generate interpretive conditions associated with greenwashing?

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

Academic contribution comes in three ways. First, from an academic point of view, this research adds to the body of literature related to eco-linguistics and discourse analysis by analyzing how the environmental discourses are created in terms of lexical semantic associations, evaluation, presuppositions, and multi-modal associations. Second, from an empirical perspective, this research creates a corpus of Pakistani sustainability communication for consumers. Third, contextual contribution is made by offering one of the few detailed discourse analyses on the issue of greenwashing communication in Pakistan.

## 2. Literature Review

The eco-linguistics approach focuses on the connection between language, ecology, and social significance. Instead of viewing language as a neutral means of describing the

environment, eco-linguists analyse how linguistic processes construct our ecological understanding, values, and imagination. One reason for the emergence of this field is the need to be wary of how dominant discourses might reinforce certain presumptions regarding growth, consumption, development, and human-nature connections.

One of the earliest contributions to this discussion is Halliday (2001). According to him, modern linguistic expressions often reflect ideologies of growth, accumulation, consumption, and development. These linguistic tendencies cannot be regarded as ecologically neutral since they influence the social environment in which ecological damage is normalized or overlooked. Halliday's study made an impact because he emphasized the importance of moving beyond merely vocabulary and examining discourses and cultural meanings.

Mühlhäusler (2003) built upon this approach by asserting that linguistic systems influence how environments become socially perceived and interpreted culturally. The reality of the environment does not gain public significance based on material factors alone. Instead, discourse acts as an intermediary between perception, salience, classification, and interpretation. In this way, language helps in the social construction of ecological meaning-making.

Stibbe (2015; 2021) contributed to eco-linguistic literature by suggesting that societies operate through discourses, which construct narratives that govern their values, identities, assumptions, and relationships with the non-human world. Crucially, discourse does not merely represent environmental reality. Rather, it creates models for the types of ecological relationships that seem acceptable, desirable, responsible, or natural. This is particularly pertinent to consumer discourse analysis as advertisements often invoke culturally constructed themes of caring, purity, responsibility, and futurity.

The next area of significance pertains to the scholarship of sustainability discourse. While sustainability has been viewed largely as a technical, scientific, or political idea, discourse theory has proved that sustainability is an ideology. It has no fixed meaning, but it can be interpreted differently depending on the institutional context in which it is used and the purpose of communication.

According to Dryzek (2013), environmental rhetoric exists within larger frameworks of political discourse and helps in shaping political problems, assigning responsibility for those problems, and determining appropriate courses of action. Similarly, Hajer (1995) stated that the discourse surrounding environment issues was inherently political in nature and involved a lot of political framing. This is significant since it helps us realize that the language of sustainability cannot just be viewed as neutral language. Interpretation and strategic positioning.

The concept of sustainability in corporate communication functions as a form of reputation management. It enables companies to present themselves as ethical, socially responsible and as entities in line with current social expectations. Scholarly research suggests that sustainability communication tends to use abstract positive language, future commitment, morality, and symbolic positioning in lieu of measurable ecological factors. In consumer-oriented communication, sustainability may be valued for its emotive quality, interpretability, and symbolic legitimacy.

Communication about sustainability directed at consumers is different from scientific and

political language. Shorter formats, visuality, immediacy of interpretation and competitive nature of marketing communications play an important role here. According to Ottman (2011), green marketing tends to use symbols, short descriptors and concise evaluative language. Words like natural, clean, green and responsible have persuasive power because they can evoke culturally positive associations without being too narrow.

The semantic elasticity of such language can be significant for analysis. The use of a term like "natural" might convey a positive environmental connotation without being sufficiently defined in practice. The term could apply to product components, sensory experience, genuineness, or symbolic purity, but not necessarily to environmental sustainability. Likewise, terms like "better," "greener," or "eco-friendly" may convey environmental enhancement without specifying comparison criteria or evidence. Such elastic language allows for the potential that persuasive value may outweigh informational accuracy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

The present dissertation uses Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the main methodological approach. According to Fairclough, discourse should be understood not only as language-in-use but also as social practice by which social meanings, social relations, and ideologies are articulated and reproduced. From this viewpoint, there is no such thing as a neutral language. Lexical selection, framing practices, evaluations, presuppositions all contribute to larger social processes of meaning-making. This approach is especially applicable to environmental communication since sustainability claims are not just statements of environmental facts. They are also claims to moral legitimacy, credibility, and authority.

The analytical approach proposed by Fairclough includes three interrelated levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice. The first level concerns the examination of the linguistic properties of texts, which include lexical choice, grammar, modality, evaluative language, repetition, presupposition, and semantic frames. In the present study, the focus on this level makes it possible to analyze how lexical items such as "natural," "pure," "recyclable," "greener," and "sustainable" are used as condensed evaluative resources. Such lexical items tend to be informational at face value, but they are also morally and emotionally charged.

In the discursive practice dimension, the focus is moved from textual form to production, distribution, and consumption process. Consumer-directed claims about the environment exist in specific communicative settings marked by brevity, competition, visual immediacy, and quick interpretation. Labels for packaging, posts on social media, online ads, and captions for promotions occur in compressed forms of communication. As such, the discourse cannot be seen as an isolated expression of words. Instead, it needs to be understood in terms of market-mediated communicative practices involving quick comprehension, minimum cognitive expenditure, and positive interpretation.

At the level of social practice, discourse needs to be considered within wider institutional and cultural contexts. The language of environmentalism occurs in a wider context of climate anxiety, urban consumer growth, symbolic ethics consumption, and corporate reputation building. For Pakistan, these contextual factors assume special importance since

ecological stress exists alongside urbanization and weak regulation of environmental claims. Carlson's Greenwashing Framework

As an extension of Fairclough's general discourse analytic approach, this research paper also incorporates the classification system developed by Carlson, Grove & Kangun for environmental advertising claims. This framework continues to be valuable since it provides a means of distinguishing among various ways through which greenwashing may manifest itself. Instead of limiting greenwashing to its obvious form of falsehood, the framework outlines various modes of communication whereby environmental messages might go beyond the available facts and support for those messages.

The five types of environmental advertising claims used in this paper include weak claims, false claims, omissions/erasure, misleading visuals, and hidden trade-offs. Weak claims consist of general environmental positive terms without clear semantic limits. False claims entail false statements about environmental issues. Omissions/erasure refers to cases in which necessary context is missing in communication. Misleading visuals include creation of environmental meaning through imagery, symbolic color use, and design without linguistic statements. Hidden trade-offs are instances where a positive environmental statement is highlighted against the negative environmental impact.

This framework is particularly suitable for the current research since most consumer texts in modern-day Pakistan do not depend on factual environmental messages. Instead, they often utilize implication, metaphorical symbolism, evaluation, and selective revelation. Thus, Carlson's classification helps determine the communicative process of creating interpretive ambiguity.

### **Combining Fairclough and Carlson**

The combination of Fairclough and Carlson brings both interpretive and analytical advantages. With the help of Fairclough, one can analyze the functioning of environmental discourse as a social practice, whereas with the help of Carlson, it becomes possible to classify such practices according to the effect they produce. In this regard, the combination of Fairclough and Carlson will allow addressing two closely interconnected issues: how does the linguistic construction of environmental meaning occur, and how can interpretive factors that lead to greenwashing arise?

This combined framework also strengthens methodological coherence. Rather than treating greenwashing as merely a marketing problem or an issue of factual verification, the dissertation approaches it as a discursive phenomenon rooted in lexical semantics, framing, presupposition, multimodal association, and interpretive positioning.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Paradigm**

The research approach for this article is interpretivist qualitative research. Interpretivism is based on the premise that meaning is socially constructed through discourses, contexts, social

interactions, and cultural interpretations. As the current research explores how meanings about environmental issues are created linguistically, shared, and interpreted within consumer communications, interpretivism is the most relevant epistemology for this

research.

The current study does not seek to quantify environmental performance using material and technological metrics. In other words, the current research does not quantify carbon emissions, lifecycle calculations, rates of material recovery, or measures of industrial compliance. Rather, this research focuses on the question of communicative meaning. How do linguistic practices influence the perception of environmental credibility, authenticity, reliability, and responsibility?

This point is crucial. Assertions of sustainability often depend not only on the literal denotations of words but also on inferences, evaluative associations, contextual expectations, symbolic framings, and socio-cultural interpretations. This means that the core research issue in this case is interpretive and not materialistic, and a qualitative paradigm is therefore more appropriate than mere quantification.

### **Research Design**

This study utilizes the design of empirical qualitative discourse analysis. Empirical design has been chosen for this dissertation in that it is based upon the analysis of naturally occurring public discourse instead of being based only on secondary sources or researcher-created elicitation material.

There are several justifications for qualitative methodology. Firstly, the research questions deal with issues of meaning-making rather than with quantitative measures. Secondly, the study deals not so much with frequencies of occurrences of language use but rather with their effect on

perception. Thirdly, greenwashing often relies on ambiguities, implications, omissions, and symbolism in its communication, which requires interpretive skills rather than mere counting.

### **Corpus Construction and Sampling**

A purposive sample of twenty textual instances was gathered. Purposive sampling was chosen since the investigation needed texts that used specific language related to environment or sustainability instead of generic consumer discourse.

The sample was collected using publicly available texts like packaging, official brand webpages, ads, social media messages, video promotions, and housing-development communication. This method was chosen since it was comprised of the most visible types of consumer discourse today in Pakistan.

Purposefully, the final sample size was kept small, at forty units. This is because close analysis, contextualisation, and theory-based coding appeared more important than gathering a large number of lexical items.

### **Analytical Procedure**

The coding process took place over three steps.

In the first step, all texts were analyzed multiple times with regard to recurring lexical patterns, thematic patterns, tendencies toward evaluation, and multimodal environmental context.

Preliminary notes were made regarding semantic openness, futurism, ecological symbolism, and

selective disclosure of evidence.

In the second step, initial coding categories were created. These included naturalness, ecological credibility, consumer inclusion, futuristic morality, absence of environmental cost, symbolic purity, ambiguity in comparison, and aspirational sustainability.

In the third step, initial codes were categorized according to larger discourse themes using a combination of Fairclough's three levels of analysis along with Carlson's categorization of greenwashing techniques.

Coding by hand was preferable to using automated corpus software since it was a more interpretive endeavor, not a computational one.

### **Empirical Analysis**

#### **Nestlé Milkpak — 'Natural dairy goodness'**

Nestlé Milkpak regularly makes use of language which revolves around themes of naturalness, nourishment, and family care. The use of phrases like natural dairy goodness and wholesome nutrition can be interpreted from a textual perspective as evaluative condensation through positive evaluation. In popular culture, natural is highly connotative for authenticity, health, purity, and integrity. Nevertheless, its semantic boundaries remain ambiguous. It could mean anything from the source, ingredients, degree of processing, nutrients or environment-friendliness.

From the perspective of discursive practice, the usage can be understood as an interpretative shorthand that signifies familiar care and responsibility. From a social practice perspective, the language is embedded in larger cultural myths where naturalness is associated with the prosperity and well-being of families.

In the context of Carlson's analysis, this amounts to making a weak statement. There may be implicit meanings related to the environment due to the discursive practice, although the latter is primarily concerned with nutritional information.

#### **Intiaz Super Market — 'Small actions make a big difference'**

The message about retail sustainability is increasingly framing the consumers' participation in making the environmental difference. Small Actions Make a Big Difference is an example of this trend. Textually, the language used is motivational and morally positive. It appeals to action without specifying what that action should be.

In terms of discursive practices, the slogan can be understood as an ethical participation prompt, which invites consumers to see their shopping activities as environmentally significant. Socially speaking, the discourse reflects the neoliberal approach to the environmental issues where responsibility is individualized through consumer choice.

According to Carlson's theoretical framework, this kind of message implies omission/erasure. Environmental costs related to production, transportation, packaging, and infrastructure are ignored here, while consumer agency is emphasized.

### **Nestlé Pure Life Pakistan — corporate sustainability webpages**

In addition to being on packaging labeling, the notion of sustainability is also present in the corporate discourse online. The vocabulary of sustainability-related terms used by companies on their websites includes responsibility, community, recycling, stewardship, and future generations, amongst others. Textually, such discourse functions as an ethical alignment as opposed to a product-specific one.

Discursively, corporate sustainability pages are different from packaging as they allow for longer forms of narrative. Nonetheless, corporate sustainability narratives tend to frame ideas through broad thematic positive framing, rather than measurement. Discourses of environmental commitment can be described through direction, aspiration, and value orientation.

Socially and as practice, such practices are part of current norms of corporate reputation. According to Carlson's model, these discourses are characterized by weak claims and selectivity, rather than operational indicators.

#### Discussion

The extended empirical analysis further supports the more general claim that environmentally

friendly terminology within consumer discourse in Pakistan constitutes an information discourse, a symbolic discourse, and a reputation discourse all at once. In industries ranging from food, bottled water, household goods, retail, and real estate development, environmental meaning is created by compressed evaluative markers rather than elaboration of environmental criteria.

One especially relevant conclusion pertains to semantic openness. Words like natural, better, green, responsible, and sustainable owe their discursive effectiveness in large part to interpretive ambiguity. Semantic openness allows for wide-ranging positive interpretation while limiting the task of providing communicative justification. This does not necessarily mean deception; yet, it certainly provides an opportunity for interpretive discrepancy.

Moreover, the data reveal that Pakistani consumer sustainability discourse is forward-looking. Phrases like "greener tomorrow," "better future," and "responsible tomorrow" shift environmental validation into future temporal frames. Future orientation is strategically crucial

since it allows for positive ethical consistency without the need for comparable operational detail in the present.

A further pattern observed across cases involves the interplay between textual and visual meaning. Environmental messaging often arises not only as an effect of lexical content but in connection to visual reinforcement. The use of green coloration, leaf imagery, references to water, open environments, and natural scenes enhance ecological implications. This demonstrates that environmental discourse is inherently multimodal and cannot be comprehended solely via lexical analysis.

Last but not least, the extended discussion of cases reinforces the point that outright lies are few and far between in the current sample set. Greenwashing effects are often realized in terms of omission, ambiguity, and symbolic reference to ecology rather than falsehoods per se. That is precisely why discourse analysis retains its importance as a methodology.

Communicative effects may not always be comprehended by means of factual verification.

### **Final Integrative Discussion**

The additional empirical data contained in this study permits a more accurate appreciation of the operation of eco-friendly language in Pakistani consumer communication. Throughout the dataset, the phenomenon of environmental meaning is found to result not from the inherent properties of words, but rather from the process through which linguistic choices, evaluations, expectations, visual signs, and larger socio-economic dynamics interact.

An important insight that can be gained from the study is the understanding that the discourse of sustainability in Pakistan is descriptive, persuasive, and legitimizing at one and the same time. The documents analyzed do not only describe the environmentally-related features of products

and services, but they also legitimize the companies and developments described in terms of care, progress, and future-mindedness.

This conclusion supports Fairclough's general assertion that discourse is an instance of social practice. The persuasive power of environmental language cannot be attributed solely to lexical items. Instead, it is derived from the larger discursive contexts that give rise to and inform such

language use. Modern consumer markets in Pakistan are defined by their increasing urbanisation, increasing visibility through digital media, competitive markets, and increased ecological consciousness among consumers. In such environments, environmental language serves as an increasingly valuable linguistic resource for achieving market differentiation.

As shown by the corpus analysis, lexical condensation is one of the principal strategies used for the establishment of environmental legitimacy. Words such as natural, pure, green, better,

recyclable, responsible, and sustainable act as highly condensed carriers of meaning. This makes it possible to activate more than one desirable meaning at the same time. Natural could imply notions of health, purity, genuine products, and eco-friendliness. Responsible and sustainable suggest the concepts of future-mindedness and ethical responsibility. Better implies some improvement environmentally without comparison.

This kind of lexical economy proves to be efficient communicatively. Packaging texts,

advertising phrases, poster slogans, and social media texts function under conditions of concision and scarcity of attention. In such conditions, brief positive attributes work as strategic tools for their ability to evoke quick positive evaluation. However, precisely due to their semantic openness, they leave room for interpretation.

Interpretive flexibility is crucial for grasping how greenwashing effects are at play in this

particular research context. The results of the study indicate that greenwashing cannot be treated as mere falsification of facts. False statements that can be easily proven as such are rather few. On the contrary, interpretive asymmetry appears to be a much more common phenomenon.

Interpretive asymmetry emerged in several recurring forms.

The first instance of comparative ambiguity included comparative statements like "less

plastic” and “environmentally better.” In both cases, there is communication of relative improvement, without making the comparative basis explicit. In the absence of a clear referent, consumers might interpret the comparative statement far more widely than the information would allow.

The second phenomenon included the practice of omission and/or erasure. For example, when an environmentally friendly bottle is described as being “recyclable,” there can be truth to the statement in terms of what the bottle’s materials might make possible. However, the practical considerations of infrastructure for waste recovery and recycling do not come into play in the communication at all. This does not mean that the statement is inaccurate. Rather, the statement highlights one environmentally positive characteristic, while ignoring the contextual considerations.

Finally, hidden tradeoffs included instances in which the limited scope of positive ecological characteristics are emphasized, while the negative environmental impacts of other factors remain ignored. An especially good example comes in the context of real estate marketing, through phrases like “smart sustainable living” or “a life in nature.”

Lastly, visual misframing was an important factor influencing the perception of the environment. Green color schemes, images of leaves, water as metaphor, country imagery, as well as nature in general were common features contributing to ecological framing. Visual cues like those would often be accompanied by quite generalized assertions. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the multimodal aspect of sustainability communication.

Secondly, according to the data collected, it appears that environmental rhetoric often distributes responsibility. Consumer-oriented texts often appeal to the audience to take an active part in environmental protection in their everyday choices. Such expressions as “choose better today” and “small actions make a big difference” can thus be regarded as an appeal to take responsibility for the environment through consumption. From a critical point of view, it might mean that attention will be partly shifted away from other sources of environmental influence and responsibility.

Specifically, the setting of Pakistan itself offers special analytical relevance. The context of environmental discourse in Pakistan is one where ecological imperatives can be sensed, but where communicative regulation is relatively inconsistent due to the market-oriented nature of the discourse. The problems of air pollution in cities, plastic waste buildup, water shortage, and

environmental vulnerability are all part of everyday environmental awareness. On the other hand, the growth of consumer markets in urban centers means that ethical symbolism will become increasingly important.

Eco-linguistically, then, the dissertation demonstrates that environmental discourse cannot be seen only as transmission of information but as an act of meaning-making itself. Language structures the interpretive process that enables environmental truth to emerge. Consumers do not just engage with environmental information, but with environmental

stories, evaluative frames, symbolism, and lexically evocative content.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Recommendations for Consumer Brands**

These results indicate that Pakistani consumer brand names would be well served by a greater level of precision and context within their sustainability communications. While positive general ecological descriptions can be appealing for marketing purposes, they increase both credibility and interpretive accountability when they are more specific.

If environmental enhancement is stated as a benefit, then interpretive clarity will also require explicit comparative standards, measurable references, disposal requirements, certifications, and context for explaining intended meaning. In fact, terms like less plastic acquire much more meaning when they are paired with quantified amounts and reference points.

It is also important to avoid confusion between the environmental qualities of a product and overall company sustainability efforts.

#### **Recommendations for Regulatory Bodies**

The thesis also stresses the need for better communicative guidance in regard to environmental claims in Pakistan's consumer market environment. The emphasis in regulation should be on comparative claims, general ecological claims, environmental superiority, and disclosure conditions.

This is not about imposing limitations, but rather ensuring clarity in interpretation. Communicative standards that can bring about clarity will help improve consumer trust in sustainability claims.

#### **Recommendations for Higher Education**

This study has certain significant implications in relation to English linguistics, media studies, business communication, and higher education overall. The topic of environmental communication is not just an issue of policies or marketing strategy but also one that deals with linguistic aspects related to semiotics, framing, presuppositions, modality, evaluation, multimodality, and discourse analysis.

Thus, eco-linguistic literacy and critical media literacy could be incorporated by universities into communication courses. This will enable students to have an analytical approach towards examining how ecological messages are framed and how there might be a distinction between semantic and pragmatic sustainability communication.

#### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research can build on this research through large sectorial corpus analysis, Urdu-English discourse analysis, multimodal image analysis, and audience studies in order to see how consumers decode sustainability messages.

Additionally, comparative South Asian studies may be conducted to determine if there are any common patterns in neighbouring South Asian markets like India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

## Conclusion

This dissertation analyzed eco-friendly language use, sustainability claims, and greenwashing in consumer brand communication from Pakistan using an empirical, qualitative discourse analysis approach. Specifically, utilizing the theoretical insights of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Carlson's greenwashing typology, this research project studied the linguistic construction of environmental meaning and the impact of certain communicative practices on legitimacy, responsibility, credibility, and trustworthiness perceptions.

It was found that environmental meaning is hardly ever communicated explicitly through factual statements alone. On the contrary, environmental legitimacy is often constructed using linguistic mechanisms of condensation, semantic openness, evaluation, presupposition, symbol, position, and evidential selection. Consumer-oriented environmental communication tends to employ positive lexical condensations which allow for favorable ecological interpretation while lacking relevant contextual information.

In most cases, greenwashing was not conducted via explicit falsifications. In contrast, it was shown that greenwashing practices tend to involve weaker claims, omission, hidden trade-offs, ambiguities, and environmentally suggestive framing. This analytical point is essential, as it

reveals that greenwashing is not necessarily practiced by stating false facts explicitly.

The study also highlighted the significance of the Pakistani context in studying eco-linguistics. The language is used amidst fast-growing urban consumer markets influenced by digital visibility, branding, environmental aspirations, and differential communicative regulation. Such circumstances make the choice of words highly significant because they influence how environmental responsibility will be perceived socially.

In terms of theoretical contribution, the dissertation adds to eco-linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and contemporary English linguistics through its demonstration that environmental communication is inherently a matter of discourse, semiosis, and interpretation. Words like 'natural,' 'pure,' 'green,' 'better,' and 'sustainable' not only reflect but also construct the socially constructed meanings associated with environmental issues.

It thus concludes that linguistic accountability is imperative in order to achieve more effective environmental communication. This can be achieved via clearer language use, adequate contextual information, enhanced consumer eco-linguistic literacy, and higher standards of communication.

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