

A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ENERGY DRINKS ADVERTISEMENTS IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This qualitative study presents a multimodal discourse analysis of energy drink advertisements in Pakistan, focusing on how meaning is constructed through the interaction of visual and linguistic resources. The study adopts a qualitative approach to explore the multimodal strategies employed and the interaction between linguistic and visual elements in constructing persuasive advertising meanings. A purposive sampling technique is used for data collection. As a theoretical framework, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal framework of visual design, the research examines three energy drink advertisements, namely Red Bull by Red Bull GmbH, STING by PepsiCo, and Prime Hydration by Prime Hydration. The study finds that energy drink advertisements use strong multimodal strategies combining visuals, language, colour, and composition to create persuasive meanings. The products are mainly shown through conceptual representation, where they act as symbols of energy, freshness, and vitality rather than being part of a story. Advertisements frequently use symbolic visuals such as lightning, water droplets, ice, and natural elements, along with colour schemes like red, blue, and green, to reinforce emotional appeal. Interactional features like close-up shots, low angles, and occasional direct gaze increase engagement and product dominance. Together, these elements help build a strong sense of identity and aspiration. As a result, consumers are guided to see the drink as a symbol of energy, high performance, social status, and defiance, which ultimately encourages them to buy it.

Keywords: *Multimodality; Multimodal Discourse Analysis; Energy Drinks Advertisements*

1. Introduction

In contemporary consumer culture, advertising functions as more than a commercial tool for product promotion. It is a dynamic discursive site where meanings, identities, and cultural values are actively constructed and disseminated. By integrating visual imagery, language, sound, and symbolic elements, advertisements shape the ways consumers perceive both the products being sold and their own self-concepts (Stibbe, 2024). In the context of energy drink advertising, promotional messages frequently transcend functional claims, such as enhanced stamina or mental alertness, to associate product consumption with broader concepts like physical strength, masculinity, personal success, and an energetic lifestyle. In fact, these

meanings are not universal but are deeply embedded within specific cultural and national contexts, necessitating localised analysis.

Despite the rapid global expansion of energy drink markets and a substantial body of existing research on advertising discourse, Pakistan remains significantly under-examined in multimodal advertising studies. Much of the prior scholarship has concentrated on Western or international advertising campaigns, leaving a critical gap in understanding how local Pakistani cultural norms, gender roles, socioeconomic aspirations, and linguistic practices are reflected and reinforced in energy drink advertisements. There is an urgent need for focused research that investigates how these advertisements generate meaning for Pakistani audiences.

This study directly addresses this gap by conducting a multimodal discourse analysis of selected energy drink advertisements in Pakistan. The research is guided by the following questions:

1. What multimodal strategies are employed in energy drink advertisements in Pakistan?
2. How do linguistic and visual elements interact in beverage advertisements to construct meanings, influence consumer perceptions, and increase product sales?

To explore these questions, the study analyses a small but representative dataset comprising three advertisements from three major energy drink brands, namely Red Bull, Sting and Prime Hydration operating in Pakistan. By systematically examining both visual and textual semiotic resources, this research aims to provide critical insight into how advertising discourse functions within the Pakistani cultural context and to contribute to broader scholarly discussions in multimodal analysis

1.1 Background of the Study

Advertising has evolved into a powerful medium through which meanings, social identities, and consumer desires are constructed, negotiated, and disseminated. According to Danesi (2015), advertisements serve as cultural artefacts that reflect individuals' mindsets, social positions, and ideological commitments. Similarly, Hamid (2015) argues that through the strategic deployment of images, language, and symbolic representations, advertisements forge emotional connections between products and abstract concepts such as happiness, success, and physical attractiveness. In doing so, they significantly influence how individuals perceive themselves and others, encouraging the adoption of particular lifestyles, consumption patterns, and value systems. Consequently, advertising plays a pivotal role in shaping social identities and driving consumer behaviour within contemporary societies.

In modern media environments, advertisements rarely rely on language alone; instead, they employ a coordinated combination of linguistic, visual, and symbolic resources to maximise persuasive impact. Beverage advertisements, in particular, offer a rich site for multimodal investigation due to their heavy reliance on compelling imagery, culturally grounded symbols, and strategically crafted language. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert that communication is not limited to written or spoken language alone; rather, meaning is generated through the integration of multiple semiotic modes, including images, layout and design, colour, gesture, and sound. Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) provides a systematic framework for examining how these diverse modes interact to produce coherent and persuasive meanings. Furthermore, MDA aims to uncover the underlying power relations, ideologies, values, beliefs, and identities embedded within both linguistic and other semiotic resources. By accounting for all meaning-making channels, MDA moves beyond traditional text-centric analysis to offer a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary advertising discourse.

This study applies multimodal discourse analysis specifically to energy drink advertisements in Pakistan. It investigates how different semiotic modes, such as written text, visual images, colour schemes, compositional layout, and culturally specific references work together to construct persuasive messages, generate meaning, and shape consumer perceptions within the unique cultural and commercial landscape of Pakistan.

1.2 Problem Statement

Advertising, particularly in the beverage industry, has become a highly strategic form of communication in Pakistan, where energy drink brands increasingly rely on both linguistic and visual resources to attract consumers. Despite the growing presence of such advertisements, there is limited scholarly attention on how multimodal strategies are used to construct meaning and shape consumer responses in beverage advertisements (Feyaz, Suleman, & Abbas, 2025). In particular, it remains unclear how language and visual elements work together in energy drink advertisements to influence consumer perceptions and contribute to increased product sales. There is also a lack of comparative analysis of different energy drink brands within Pakistan and how each brand constructs meaning differently through multimodal choices. Therefore, this study addresses the gap by applying multimodal discourse analysis to energy drink advertisements in Pakistan to explore how visual and verbal elements combine to create persuasive meanings and shape consumer attitudes.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To identify the multimodal strategies used in energy drinks advertisements in Pakistan.
2. To examine how linguistic and visual elements interact in beverage advertisements to construct meanings, influence consumer perception and increase product sales

1.4 Research Questions

1. What multimodal strategies are employed in energy drink advertisements in Pakistan?
2. How do linguistic and visual elements interact in beverage advertisements to construct meanings, influence consumer perceptions and increase product sales?

3. Literature Review

The study of multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) has provided foundational tools for understanding how meaning is constructed through the interplay of various semiotic resources, including language, images, sound, and gesture (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Departing from text-centric models of communication, MDA posits that meaning emerges from the co-deployment of visual, verbal, and auditory modes. Kress and van Leeuwen's earlier seminal work, *Reading Images* (1996), established a systematic framework for visual grammar, arguing that images follow structural rules analogous to linguistic syntax. This framework has been enormously influential; its application often assumes a universal Western visual literacy, raising questions about its cultural specificity when applied to non-Western contexts such as Pakistan.

Building on this, Jones (2024) expands multimodality to encompass all communication channels beyond spoken or written language, emphasizing the simultaneous operation of multiple modes. While useful, Jones's broad definition risks analytical vagueness if not anchored by a concrete methodological toolkit. In advertising, this multimodal integration is particularly salient. Percy and Elliott (2020) assert that advertisements are fundamentally persuasive artifacts, carefully calibrated to target audience psychographics through the strategic combination of words, colors, layout, and imagery. However, their analysis leans

heavily on Western consumer behavior models, which may not adequately address the collectivist, family-oriented, or economically stratified realities of Pakistani consumers, where energy drinks are often marketed as aspirational lifestyle products rather than functional beverages.

De Mooij (2019) contributes a critical insight into how visual presentation can distort perceived product attributes, such as making sugary drinks appear natural or healthy. This point is crucial for energy drink advertising, which frequently employs motifs of extreme sports, vitality, and cognitive enhancement to mask high caffeine and sugar content. Yet, De Mooij's work, like many cross-cultural advertising studies, tends to treat culture as a static variable, potentially overlooking how global energy drink brands (e.g., Red Bull, Sting, Predator) localize their multimodal strategies in Pakistan for instance, by using national colors, Urdu typography, or local celebrity endorsements. The absence of Pakistan-specific empirical research in this review is striking, as the country represents a unique market where youth bulges, rising energy drink consumption, and conservative socio-religious norms intersect.

Turning to empirical MDA studies, Juliantari (2014) examines *The Conjuring* movie poster using Dyer's framework and Saussurean semiotics. While methodologically sound, this study focuses on horror film marketing, a genre with limited cultural overlap with non-alcoholic stimulant beverages in Pakistan. Moreover, reliance on Saussure's signifier/signified dyad can reduce multimodal analysis to static identification of signs rather than dynamic processes of meaning-making, especially in time-based or interactive digital advertisements like TikTok or YouTube ads for energy drinks.

Fang (2019) offers a diachronic and cross-industry analysis of advertising language, incorporating vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics. Although comprehensive, Fang's approach remains overly focused on linguistic features, treating multimodal elements as secondary enhancements rather than co-equal meaning-makers. These risks perpetuating logocentrism, which MDA originally sought to overcome. Similarly, Unuabonah (2013) applies van Leeuwen's communicative acts model and Yuen's Generic Structure Potential to HIV/AIDS posters in hospitals. The study demonstrates multimodal efficacy in public health messaging, but its purposive sampling of only six posters from two hospitals limits generalizability. More critically, health communication posters operate under different rhetorical constraints than commercial energy drink ads, which often rely on ambiguity, desire creation, and brand mystique. Translating findings from public health to energy drink advertising in Pakistan thus requires caution.

Thus, the existing literature provides robust theoretical and analytical foundations from Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar to localised semiotic applications, several gaps persist. First, there is a conspicuous absence of MDA research on energy drink advertising specifically, particularly in non-Western, Muslim-majority countries like Pakistan. Second, most studies privilege static texts over dynamic digital media like video ads, social media campaigns, which now dominate youth-targeted marketing in Pakistan. Therefore, a multimodal study of energy drink advertising in Pakistan is not merely a replication of existing methods but a necessary intervention that tests the cross-cultural validity of MDA frameworks while addressing urgent public health and consumer culture questions.

4. Research Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative research approach as its method. It focuses on 3 energy drink advertisements collected from the official websites of three different beverage manufacturing companies.

4.1 Theoretical Framework.

This qualitative study uses the multimodal framework developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), as presented in *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. In the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), multimodal discourse analysis refers to the analysis and interpretation of communication that involves multiple modes of representation and communication, such as language, images, gestures, sounds, and spatial arrangements. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) emphasise that communication often occurs through combinations of these different modes, each contribute to meaning-making in its own way. Kress and van Leeuwen provide a framework for examining how visual components like images, colours, and layouts interact with text and other modes to create meaning in their work on multimodal communication, especially in their book *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, first published in 1996. Kress and van Leeuwen identify three major aspects of meaning in multimodal communication.

Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theoretical framework of visual grammar explains how images create meaning in a structured and systematic way, similar to language. It is based on three main types of meaning: representational, interactional, and compositional meaning. Representational meaning refers to how images depict people, objects, and events in the world. It focuses on what is being shown and how actions, processes, and relationships are represented visually. This includes narrative processes (showing actions or events) and conceptual processes (showing categories, identities, or ideas).

Interactional meaning explains how images connect with the viewer. It looks at how visual elements such as gaze, angle, and distance create a relationship between the image and the audience. For example, whether a participant in an image looks directly at the viewer can create engagement, while camera angles can suggest power or equality. Compositional meaning refers to how visual elements are arranged within an image to create overall meaning. It includes aspects such as layout, information value, salience and framing. Together, these features organise the image and guide how it should be interpreted.

5. Data Presentation and Analysis

Advertisement of Red Bull Energy Drink by Red Bull GmbH



Figure 1

An Analysis of the Red Bull Advertisement Using the Multimodal Framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006)

Main Category	Sub Category & Code	Application in Ad
Representational Meaning	Symbolism CR-S	Droplets on the can signal vitality, while the green trees and blue sky symbolise nature and freshness.
	Colour CR-C	Blue and green hues convey calmness and health, while the red logo provides energy and passion.
Interactional meaning	Distance: Intimate DIS-I	A medium-close shot emphasises the sensory texture of the condensation on the can.
	Angle: Low ANG-L	The camera looks up at the can, making the product appear "heroic" and imposing.
Compositional Meaning	Saliency SAL	The can grabs immediate attention through its central placement and sharp focus
	Framing FRA	Trees on both sides create a natural border making product elite

According to Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) multimodal framework of visual design, the advertisement mainly uses conceptual representation rather than narrative, because there are no people performing actions. Instead, the focus is on the Red Bull can itself and what it symbolises, a refreshing and energising drink. The can is placed in the centre and made much

larger than other elements, which immediately draws attention and makes it the main focus of the image. The background also adds meaning: green trees and a bright blue sky suggest nature, freshness, and vitality. Water droplets on the can further emphasise that the drink is cold and refreshing. The colour scheme supports these ideas, with blue and green creating calmness and a natural feel, while the red and yellow logo adds energy and excitement. The open road in the background suggests freedom, travel, and adventure, linking the drink to an active lifestyle.

In terms of interactional meaning, the advertisement creates a strong connection with the viewer through its visual choices. The close-up shot makes the can appear near and detailed, allowing viewers to notice features like the water droplets, which reinforce the idea of freshness. The low camera angle also makes the can look powerful and important, giving it a heroic quality that encourages the viewer to associate the drink with strength and confidence.

For compositional meaning, the advertisement uses salience and framing to guide attention. The bright sky and logo at the top represent the “ideal,” suggesting energy and positivity, while the road at the bottom represents the “real” and everyday life. The can stands out in the centre due to its size and contrast with the bright background, making it the most dominant element. Trees on both sides frame the image and direct attention toward the product. Overall, the composition positions Red Bull as a central, powerful, and iconic product.

Advertisement of STING Energy Drink by PepsiCo.



Figure 2

An Analysis of the STING Advertisement Using the Multimodal Framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006)

Main Category	Sub-Category & Code	Application in Ad
Representational Meaning	Conceptual: Symbolism- CR-S	The lightning bolts wrapped around the bottle serve as abstract symbols for energy and vitality.

Main Category	Sub-Category & Code	Application in Ad
	Conceptual: Colour-CRC	The vibrant red of the liquid and the text symbolise passion and high energy.
Interactional Meaning	Gaze: Demand- GAZ-D	The subject looks directly into the lens, creating a direct address to the viewer.
	Angle: Low- ANGL	The camera looks up at the bottle, making it appear heroic, imposing, and strong.
Compositional	Information Value- IV	The slogan "LIFE KA SWITCH ON" is on the right ("New"), presenting the product's effect as the solution.
	Framing-FRA	The bottle is isolated in the centre-left of the frame, making it an iconic, stand-out element.

In accordance with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal framework of the *Grammar of Visual Design*, representational meaning focuses on what is happening in the image and how the subjects are presented. In this advertisement for Sting energy drink, there is a clear action where the young man pushes the Sting bottle forward toward the viewer, creating a direct connection between the actor and the audience. Further, the bottle is enlarged and placed at the centre in the foreground, making it the dominant element in the image. Lightning bolts around the bottle act as symbols of power and energy, reinforcing the idea that the drink provides vitality and freshness. The strong red colour of the drink, cap, and text further represents passion, excitement, and energy. Additionally, the young man represents youth, performance, and an energetic lifestyle.

Interactional meaning explains how the image connects with the viewer. In the above advertisement, the young man looks directly at the camera, which creates a sense of direct engagement and invites the viewer to interact with the drink. The bottle is shown in a close-up shot, allowing viewers to see its details clearly and creating a more personal and intimate connection. The camera angle is slightly low, making the bottle appear powerful and

impressive, which symbolises the strength and energy the drink claims to provide to the customers.

Compositional meaning refers to how different elements in the image are arranged to create meaning. In this image, the Sting bottle is placed prominently in the foreground as the main focus, while the slogan “LIFE KA SWITCH ON” appears on the right side, suggesting the positive effect or result of consuming the energy drink. Furthermore, the bottle and the lightning bolts immediately attract attention due to their bright red colour, sharp focus, and strong contrast with the blurred background given in the advertisement. Furthermore, the bottle is visually separated from the urban background through strong focus, which makes the product stand out and appear iconic and most importantly.

Advertisement of Prime Hydration Blue Raspberry Drink by Logan Paul and KSI



Figure 3

An Analysis of the Prime Hydration Blue Raspberry Drink Advertisement Using the Multimodal Framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006)

Main Category	Sub Category & Code	Application in Ad
Representational Meaning	Conceptual: Hierarchical CR-H	The bottle is enlarged, making it the dominant product focus.
	Conceptual: Functional CR-F	The label displays "Hydration" and "16.9 FL OZ," highlighting specific benefits and volume.

Main Category	Sub Category & Code	Application in Ad
	Conceptual: Symbolism CR-S	Water droplets symbolize vitality; mint leaves represent nature; ice cubes signal refreshment and pleasure.
Interactional meaning	Distance: Intimate DIS-I	A close-up shot of the bottle suggests a personal/sensory connection to the "feeling" of the drink.
Compositional Meaning	Information Value IV	The "Ideal" (Flavour) is at the top; the "Real" (Hydration facts and volume) is at the bottom.
	Framing FRA	Weak framing is used as the water splashes, and ice is integrated with the product, connecting it to its environment.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal framework of the *Grammar of Visual Design*, the advertisement focuses on the Blue Raspberry bottle as the main element, placing it in the centre and making it much larger than everything else in the picture. It immediately grabs attention. In terms of interactional meaning, the label clearly shows words like "Hydration" and "16.9 FL OZ," which provide useful information about the drink's purpose and quantity. Moreover, several visual elements contribute to the symbolic meaning in the ad. Water splashes and droplets convey freshness and energy, while mint leaves suggest a sense of nature, health and purity. Ice cubes reinforce the idea of a cold, energetic and refreshing drink. The dominant blue colour reflects the Blue Raspberry flavour and evokes a cool, refreshing feeling, while the green leaves add a natural touch to the product.

In terms of interactional meaning, there are no people in the advertisement, so it simply presents the product for observation rather than directly engaging the audience. Further, the close-up shot creates a strong visual connection by showing details like condensation and texture, making the drink more appealing and stronger. The camera angle is at eye level, which makes the product look accessible and easy to drink.

Looking at the composition meaning, the bottle is the most noticeable element because of its central placement, sharp focus, and strong contrast with the background. The word "PRIME" stands out due to its large, bold font, which increases the importance of the product. Furthermore, the layout also follows a clear structure. The flavour name "Blue Raspberry" is placed at the top, representing the main idea or promise, while the "Hydration" text and volume

details are at the bottom, providing factual information. Finally, elements such as water, ice, and leaves come together around the bottle, forming a cohesive composition that highlights freshness and a sense of natural refreshment and relief.

6. Results and Discussion

Three advertisements were analysed, namely Red Bull by Red Bull GmbH, STING by PepsiCo, and Prime Hydration by Logan Paul and KSI. Each advertisement was analysed using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) three meta functions: representational, interactional, and compositional meaning. Red Bull advertisement contains no narrative processes. No human actors or actions are present. Representational meaning is realised through conceptual symbolism (CR-S), water droplets on the can, green trees, and a blue sky. Colour symbolism (CR-C) includes blue, green, and red. In the interactional domain, the advertisement employs a medium-close shot (DIS-I) and a low camera angle (ANG-L). No gaze is present, as the image contains only the product. Compositionally, the can is centrally placed with high salience (SAL) achieved through size contrast and sharp focus. Framing (FRA) is provided by trees on both sides, creating a natural border.

The STING advertisement differs from Red Bull in containing a narrative process. A young male actor extends the bottle toward the viewer. Representational meaning also includes conceptual symbolism (CR-S) through lightning bolts wrapped around the bottle and colour symbolism (CR-C) through vibrant red on the liquid, cap, and text. Interactional meaning features a demand gaze (GAZ-D), as the actor looks directly at the camera. The camera angle is low (ANG-L), and the bottle is shown in a close-up shot (DIS-I). Compositionally, the slogan "*LIFE KA SWITCH ON*" is positioned on the right side of the image, coding for information value (IV) as "New." Framing (FRA) is achieved through a shallow depth of field, isolating the bottle from the urban background.

The Prime advertisement, like Red Bull, contains no narrative processes. Representational meaning includes conceptual hierarchy (CR-H) (bottle enlarged and centrally placed), conceptual functionality (CR-F) (label displaying "Hydration" and "16.9 FL OZ"), and conceptual symbolism (CR-S) (water droplets, mint leaves, ice cubes). Colour symbolism includes blue and green. Interactional meaning shows no gaze, no human participants. A close-up shot (DIS-I) is present, and the camera angle is eye-level. Compositionally, information value (IV) follows a vertical structure: the flavour name "Blue Raspberry" is at the top (Ideal), while "Hydration" and volume details are at the bottom (Real). Framing (FRA) is weak, as water splashes and ice cubes are integrated with the product rather than separated.

The results show that all three energy drink advertisements rely predominantly on conceptual representation rather than narrative action. Symbolic elements like droplets, lightning, ice, mint leaves, strategic colour use like red, blue, green, and compositional salience as central placement, sharp focus appear consistently. However, notable variation exists in gaze present only in STING, camera angle eye-level only in Prime, and framing weak only in Prime.

Answer to Research Question 1: Multimodal Strategies Employed

Energy drink advertisements in Pakistan employ four main multimodal strategies. First, symbolic substitution is achieved through visual metaphor rather than literal product representation. Lightning bolts in STING signify energy and intensity, while water droplets in Red Bull and Prime connote freshness. In Prime, additional motifs such as ice cubes and mint leaves further evoke refreshment and natural purity. This reflects Kress and van Leeuwen's

(2006) view that conceptual processes function to classify and symbolise rather than narrate action.

Second, colour symbolism plays a central role. Red in STING communicates passion, excitement, and heightened energy, whereas blue in Red Bull and Prime indexes coolness, hydration, and calmness. Green, used in Red Bull and Prime, reinforces associations with nature, health, and freshness. These colour choices are not arbitrary but are grounded in widely recognised cultural associations.

Third, interactional techniques shape viewer engagement. Low-angle camera perspectives in Red Bull and STING construct the products as powerful, dominant, and heroic. Across all three advertisements, close-up framing enhances intimacy and intensifies sensory appeal. However, direct gaze appears only in STING, indicating that demand imagery is more strongly associated with human presence rather than product-only compositions.

Fourth, compositional strategies organise meaning through visual structure. Saliency is created via central placement, scale contrast, and differences in focus. Information value follows a consistent Ideal/Real arrangement: the upper section typically presents aspirational claims such as flavour or energy, while the lower section provides factual details like volume or hydration. Framing varies from strong, naturalised borders in Red Bull to weaker, more integrated framing in Prime.

Answer to Research Question 2: Interaction of Linguistic and Visual Elements

Linguistic and visual elements interact in three complementary ways. First, linguistic anchorage: text reduces visual ambiguity by fixing meaning. In Prime, water droplets could suggest coldness, purity, or freshness, but the label “Hydration” anchors the interpretation specifically to bodily refreshment. Similarly, STING’s lightning imagery is semantically stabilised by the slogan “LIFE KA SWITCH ON,” framing energy as activation. In contrast, Red Bull relies more heavily on visual signification, as the absence of a slogan leaves elements such as droplets and natural scenery more open-ended.

Second, multimodal reinforcement: meaning is strengthened through repetition across semiotic modes. STING combines lightning visuals with the verbal cue “switch on” to repeatedly encode energy. Prime similarly pairs ice, droplets, and mint imagery with the verbal signifier “Hydration,” reinforcing refreshment. Red Bull, by comparison, foregrounds visual communication, with linguistic input largely limited to branding, resulting in a less explicitly reinforced message.

Third, lifestyle construction through mode integration: both image and language work together to construct aspirational identities. The visuals present idealised environments, open roads and natural landscapes in Red Bull, urban dynamism in STING, and clean, minimal freshness in Prime, while the language clarifies the functional promise of each product (energy boost, hydration, refreshment). Combined, these modes position the products not simply as beverages but as identity markers associated with youth and performance (STING), natural vitality (Red Bull), and health-conscious refreshment (Prime).

6.1 Comparison with Prior Literature

These findings extend previous MDA research in several ways. Juliantari’s (2014) analysis of movie posters emphasised narrative representation, but the present study finds that energy drink advertisements prioritise conceptual representation almost exclusively. This suggests that product type influences mode selection: functional beverages rely on symbolic meaning, whereas entertainment media rely on narrative. Unlike Fang’s (2019) cross-industry

comparison, which found balanced use of text and image, the present study identifies visual dominance in energy drink advertising, with language serving a secondary anchoring function. This may reflect the youth-oriented, visually saturated media environment in Pakistan. Unuabonah's (2013) study of health posters found that direct gaze increased message recall. The absence of direct gaze in Red Bull and Prime is therefore notable. One explanation is that product-centered composition prioritizes iconic symbolism over interpersonal engagement, a hypothesis requiring further testing.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

The findings suggest three refinements to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal framework when applied to energy drink advertising. First, object-oriented interactional meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen originally conceptualised interactional meaning (gaze, angle, distance) primarily in relation to human participants. The present study demonstrates that low camera angles and close-up distances applied to inanimate products still construct power relations and intimacy. This extends the framework to include object-oriented interpersonal meaning, where products themselves become social actors through compositional and interactional choices. Second, the dominance of conceptual over narrative representation in product advertising. Kress and van Leeuwen treat narrative and conceptual processes as equally available options. However, in energy drink advertisements, conceptual representation (symbolism, classification) systematically outweighs narrative. This suggests a genre-specific weighting within the framework: advertisements for functional products prioritise "what something is" conceptual over "what something does" narrative. Third, linguistic anchorage as a determinant of interpretive closure. The framework acknowledges that different modes contribute to meaning, but it does not formalise the degree to which language constrains visual interpretation. The comparison across three advertisements shows that the presence or absence of linguistic anchorage affects interpretive openness. Red Bull no slogan allows broader symbolic readings; STING and Prime (explicit slogans/labels) close down ambiguity. This introduces the concept of modal determinacy as a theoretical variable.

6.3 Conclusion

This study conducted a multimodal discourse analysis of three energy drink advertisements in Pakistan namely Red Bull, STING and Prime, using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework. The findings show that these advertisements rely predominantly on conceptual representation, colour symbolism (red, blue, green), low camera angles except Prime, close-up distances, and compositional salience to construct meanings of energy, freshness, and vitality. Linguistic elements serve primarily to anchor visual symbols, as seen in STING's "*LIFE KA SWITCH ON*" and Prime's "*Hydration.*" Empirically, this is the first systematic MDA of energy drink advertising in the Pakistani context. Theoretically, the study extends Kress and van Leeuwen's framework by demonstrating that interactional meaning can be constructed through camera angle and distance applied to objects not only to human participants.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on a small sample of three energy drink advertisements in Pakistan using a qualitative multimodal discourse analysis approach. It limits the generalizability of the findings. Since only three advertisements were analysed, the results may not fully represent the broader landscape of energy drink advertising in Pakistan. Additionally, the study does not include audience reception or consumer responses, which could have provided deeper insight into how these advertisements are perceived and interpreted in real-world contexts.

6.5 Future Directions

Future research could expand the sample size by including a larger and more diverse range of energy drink advertisements from different regions and media platforms in Pakistan. Further studies could also adopt a mixed-method approach by combining multimodal discourse analysis with surveys or interviews to explore audience interpretations and responses. This would help bridge the gap between textual/visual analysis and consumer perception. In addition, future research may investigate the role of social media influencers, digital marketing strategies, and video-based advertisements, which are increasingly important in shaping consumer behaviour. Comparative studies between Pakistani energy drink advertisements and those from other countries could also provide valuable cross-cultural insights into advertising discourse and multimodality.

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