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Conceptual Blending Theory and Creative Meaning Construction in Pakistani Television Advertising Discourse: A Cognitive Linguistic and Multimodal Analysis

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Abstract
This study examines the nature of conceptual blending and multimodal meaning construction in TV Urdu advertisements of Pakistan. Pakistani advertising constructs persuading meaning by blending language, image and culture, but existing research on Pakistani advertising has been mostly based on Critical Discourse Analysis and social semiotics; where the underlying cognitive processes of meaning, construction have not been explored. In this study, we use Conceptual Blending Theory, (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) as the overarching theoretical framework, with support from the multimodal metaphor model of Forceville (2007) and the social semiotic approach of Kress & van Leeuwen (2007), to describe the way in which verbal and visual modes work together to create emergent, culturally specific meaning. The goal was to develop a typology of conceptual blends in selected advertisements, to investigate the use of verbal and visual modes in constructing these blends, and to examine culturally specific input space that influences meaning. The information was gathered by taking non-participant observations and digital recording of advertisements of five sources namely, PTV Home, Hum TV, Geo TV, ARY Digital and Express Entertainment. The sample size of the study was fifteen (15) advertisements which were obtained by purposive sampling. Qualitative analysis of data was carried out in the form of blend-mapping and multimodal text analysis. The study will uncover clusters of recurring combinations of familial, national, religious, and modernity-based meanings, which will illustrate the nature of culturally embedded, non-transferable meanings in Pakistani advertising discourse constructed through an integrated verbal-visual approach.

Keywords: Conceptual Blending Theory, Multimodal Discourse, Pakistani Advertising, Urdu Television Commercials, Cognitive Linguistics, Emergent Meaning, Social Semiotics, Code-Mixing, Cultural Schema, Creative Meaning Construction.

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1. Introduction

In Pakistan, TV ads are a multi-layered communicative event where language, image, sound, and cultural symbolism combine to create a persuasive message. Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), first formalized as a theory in which two or more input mental spaces are selectively projected into a blended space that creates emergent, non-additive meaning (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), is an important tool in the cognitive linguistics toolkit for understanding the processes by which advertisers combine and overlap different conceptual domains to create a single and compelling image — the product, lifestyle, national identity, familial values. CBT and its predecessor mental space theory (Fauconnier, 1997) place meaning construction not as a fixed structure, but as a dynamic online cognitive process. Meaning relations like cause-effect, identity or time relationships are compressed into the blend, and create new inferences, which is vital to the process (Fauconnier & Turner, 1998).

On the basis of this work, researchers in the field of advertising discourse have demonstrated that blending does not only take place in the verbal channel. This was evidenced by the initial work of Forceville (1996) on pictorial metaphor, from which a general extension of the multimodal metaphor paradigm emerged (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Forceville, 2006) that considers the way in which metaphor and, consequently, blending is expressed multimodally: not only through language, but also through image, sound, and gesture. This is complemented by Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001, 2006) multimodal discourse framework, which views colour, typography, camera angles, and layout as a set of semiotic resources that work together to produce ideological meaning, a framework that has been used more recently in South Asian advertising contexts

to account for how commercials code products as markers of modernity, status, and aspiration. Consequently, a conceptual metaphor approach to foundational conceptual metaphor studies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and later the cognitive linguistic overviews (Evans & Green, 2006) further substantiate the fact that meaning-making is grounded in embodied conceptual structure, not merely convention, and that applications of multimodal metaphor-metonymy interaction (Pérez-Sobrino, 2016; Urios-Aparisi, 2009) and compression and emergent structure (Turner, 2006) are systematic in commercial genres and cultures.

In the Pakistani context in particular, TV commercials have been found to be hybrids of global marketing practices and local language and cultural contexts—code-mixed Urdu and English, invoking family and religious imagery, and invoked urban modern imagery. Recent critical discourse analysis of Pakistani commercials has validated that in this context advertising discourse is strategically stacking linguistic, visual and symbolic resources to create ideologies of prestige, beauty, and social difference (Shaukat et al., 2025) but the studies have mostly been based on the Critical Discourse Analysis and social semiotics which are not cognitive processes of blending. Although there is a large amount of international literature on CBT and Western advertising corpora (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Forceville, 1996); and although some multimodal discourse studies (Shaukat et al., 2025) have been conducted on Urdu language commercials in Pakistan, there has been no sustained study that investigates the precise cognitive operation (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) of conceptual integration between verbal and visual modes simultaneously to create creative culturally specific meaning in Urdu language commercials in Pakistan. The space of this gap is important, as Pakistani advertising discourse is defined by a particular set of input spaces such as kinship idioms, religious reference, regional aspiration and code-mixed Urdu-English

wordplay, the blended outputs of which can be structurally different from the blends found in the Euro-American commercial corpora.

This study thus proposes a cognitive-linguistic and multimodal analysis of the discourse of Urdu television advertisements in Pakistan, using CBT (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), multimodal metaphor (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009) and social semiotic theory (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) to explain how creative meaning is constructed across image, language and cultural symbol.

Research Objectives

- To elicit the conceptual blends used in advertisement films aired on TV in Pakistan in Urdu language.
- To analyse the way these blends are created together in verbal and visual modes.
- To examine culturally specific input spaces that influence the construction of meaning in the discourse of Pakistan's advertising.

Research Questions

1) Which conceptual blends are identified in the analysed Urdu TV commercials in Pakistan?
2) How do these blends use verbal and visual modes to be built?
3) What are the culturally specific input spaces that inform blended meaning in this advertising discourse?

2. Literature Review

Theoretical background of conceptual blending theory: its origins and development.

Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) is rooted in Fauconnier's (1997) work on mental spaces, and was formalised by Fauconnier and Turner (1998, 2002) as a four space network model that includes two input spaces, a generic space and a blended space where the emergent structure is created through composition,

completion, and elaboration. Initial formulations have shown that Blending involves concept combination in everyday expressions, much more than just the classical metaphor (Fauconnier & Turner, 1995). The theory was extended by Oakley (1998) into the realm of narrative discourse and rhetoric, demonstrating that blends affect whole sentences or discourse chunks, rather than just individual phrases; and by Grady, Oakley and Coulson (1999), who explained the relationship between blending and conceptual metaphor, proposing that blending and conceptual metaphor are complementary, not mutually exclusive processes. Coulson and Oakley (2000) later combined these threads into a now well-known tutorial report, which detailed the optimality constraints and which identified blending as a broader cognitive process used in the fields of linguistics, gesture, humour, and visual meaning making. Together, this body of work paints a picture of CBT as a process of meaning construction rather than a rigid structure and places it in a new light as a technology uniquely adapted to the analysis of genres like advertising in which meaning is built quickly from a variety of simultaneous cues.

Multimodal Metaphor and Discourse

Another research line that has taken cognitive linguistic theory into the visual and multimodal world. Building on this, Forceville (1996) confirmed that advertisements create pictorially defined metaphors, which was later expanded into the multimodal metaphor paradigm of creating meaning through the interplay of image, language, sound, and gesture (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Forceville, 2006). To complement this cognitive-linguistic approach, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 2006) proposed a social semiotic approach that sees colour, typography, composition and camera work as resources that make up an ideology of positioning in multimodal discourse. Both lines are grounded in the conceptual metaphor theory and its cognitive linguistic synthesis (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980;

Evans & Green, 2006). All these frameworks suggest that advertising discourse should be considered as a multimodal text and not as language.

Advertising as a Site of Blending

Advertising has been a very fruitful area in which to apply blending theory, as commercials frequently combine unrelated domains of concept – product, lifestyle, emotion, and cultural value – into one persuasive image. Joy, Sherry and Deschenes (2009) showed that print ads do just such a sort of blending integration, involving viewers in generating emergent structure. Pérez-Sobrino (2016) developed this corpus-based method to the multimodal interaction of metaphor and metonymy in advertising and demonstrated that they often co-occur and support each other in a single blend. In recent years, Urios-Aparisi (2009) has used a similar analysis to commercials to study the uses of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in TV commercials and how they interact with each other in four case studies to influence audience understanding. Turner (2006) also theorized the idea of compression in blends, describing how time and cause-effect relations are condensed into tighter relations in the blended space, which is highly relevant to the compression found in thirty-second television spots.

Pakistani Television Advertising Discourse

The research on advertising discourse in Pakistan has increased significantly but the Critical Discourse Analysis and social semiotics have taken precedence over the cognitive-linguistic blending approach. Shahid (2021) tracked the cultural values in Coca-Cola and PepsiCo TV commercials over last 20 years in Pakistan, and found that from communal and sport-oriented themes to hedonistic and family-centric value manifestations, which was influenced by globalization. In a study of beauty advertisements in Pakistan, Shaukat et al. (2025) used Fairclough's three-dimensional model to show how the three dimensions work together to create an ideology of beauty and status. Both studies show that Pakistani

commercials successfully incorporate international commercialization practices with local linguistic and cultural elements such as Urdu-English code switching and invoking familial and religious sentiment. But neither of the two studies, nor the broader advertising literature in Pakistan directly addresses conceptual blending as a cognitive mechanism, and the exact ways in which conceptual blending is actually integrated to create hybrid meaning remain undiscussed.

Research Gaps

1) It is found that three gaps exist: first, no study has systematically identified conceptual blends in the Urdu television advertisements of Pakistan.
2) Second, the juxtaposition of verbal and visual modality in the construction of the blends has not been investigated locally.
3) Third, the culturally specific input spaces giving rise to the meaning of the blends in Urdu television advertisements have not been theorized.

3. Research Methodology

This study falls under the interpretive research paradigm because it is based on the premise that meaning is not objective, but rather social and cognitive constructions. It is a paradigm which enables the researcher to investigate the co-construction of meanings between audience and advertisers in the discourse of Urdu television advertisements in Pakistan by analyzing the process of conceptual blending and multimodal meaning-making in light of its cultural context.

A qualitative research method with descriptive analytical design is used in the study. This approach is justified, as the research is not focused on statistically generalizing the findings on a large group of participants, but on identifying, describing, and interpreting conceptual blends and multimodal patterns.

The subject of this study are the television advertisements which are aired on major Urdu language TV Channels in Pakistan such as ARY Digital, Hum TV,

Geo TV, PTV Home and Express entertainment. These were chosen due to their being the most popular commercial channels in Pakistan and they generally broadcast Urdu language commercials for food, beverages, telecom and household products.

Purposive sampling was used to select data because it enables the researcher to select advertisements that have a high content of multimodal and blended advertisements. A total of fifteen (15) television advertisements were chosen, three for each of the five named channels, which were broadcast between the years 2023 and 2026, and thus are current and culturally relevant to the current context of advertising.

The advertisements of the selected TV channels were gathered using non-participant observation and digital recording of the selected ads from official TV channel channels and official network archives on selected TV channels. Every ad was typed up, and the audio (dialogue, tagline, and slogan) and visual (images, colour, composition, camera movements) aspects were noted for close multimodal analysis.

Conceptual Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) was used as the main analytical approach with the multimodal metaphor model of Forceville (2006), and the social semiotic approach of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Every ad was analyzed on a micro-level of input spaces, generic space mappings and emergent blended meanings, followed by micro- and macro-level analysis of verbal and visual modalities separately and then synthesized; the two modalities together creating integrated meaning.

Conceptual input spaces were identified in individual ads, cross space projections and multimodal cues were mapped, and the emerging, culturally specific meanings were interpreted. This multi-layered process not only

maintained a focus on the textual and visual information of the advertisements but also provided a systematic way to compare the fifteen selected ads.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Overview of the Analytical Procedure

This chapter outlines the three-step process used for data analysis in this study: conceptual input spaces, cross space projections and multimodal cues, and emergent, culturally specific meaning. The selection of fifteen Urdu language television advertisements was analysed through the lens of Conceptual Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), multimodal metaphor model of Forceville (2006) and the social semiotic theory of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) to capture the interplay between verbal and visual channels. To analyze not only each of the fifteen advertisements separately but also the commonalities found across the advertisements, the data have been inductively sorted into five thematic clusters; familial and nostalgic blends, national pride and patriotic blends, modernity and aspirational blends, religious and Ramazan blends, and humour and word play blends based on Urdu-English code mixing. Thematic organization provides the researcher with the opportunity to show the internal logic of individual blends and the general discursive structure that reoccurs throughout the sample. All representative advertisements are referenced in the text with the terms 'Advertisement 1' to 'Advertisement 15' (as shown in Table 1 below); illustrative taglines and dialogue from the sample are presented in inverted commas and a gloss in English, where appropriate.

Table 1. Overview of the Selected Advertisements

No.	Channel	Product Category	Dominant Theme	Sample Tagline
Ad 1	PTV Home	Cooking Oil	Family and nostalgia	'yeh ghar ki barkat hai'

Ad 2	Hum TV	Dairy Beverage	Family and nostalgia	'maa ke haathon jaisa pyar'
Ad 3	PTV Home	Household Detergent	Family and nostalgia	'saaf kapre, khushiyon ka ghar'
Ad 4	ARY Digital	Telecom Package	National pride	'Pakistan ki awaaz, ek doosre se juri'
Ad 5	Geo TV	Automobile	National pride	'apni dharti, apni raah'
Ad 6	ARY Digital	Soft Drink	National pride	'josh jo qaum ka hai'
Ad 7	Express Entertainment	Smartphone	Modernity and aspiration	'Why Not, apna kal aaj banao'
Ad 8	Geo TV	Skincare	Modernity and aspiration	'roshan chehra, roshan mustaqbil'
Ad 9	Express Entertainment	Fashion Retail	Modernity and aspiration	'Style hai tou sab kuch hai'
Ad 10	Hum TV	Cooking Ghee	Religious and Ramazan	'barkaton bhara dastarkhwan'
Ad 11	PTV Home	Beverage Syrup	Religious and Ramazan	'iftaar ki mithaas'
Ad 12	Geo TV	Retail Sale	Religious and Ramazan	'Eid ki khushiyan, sab ke liye'
Ad 13	ARY Digital	Snack Food	Humour and wordplay	'crunch karo, munch karo'
Ad 14	Hum TV	Telecom Night Package	Humour and wordplay	'raaton ka jugaad'
Ad 15	Express Entertainment	Instant Noodles	Humour and wordplay	'do minute mein dhamaal'

Audiences can enjoy their favorite shows with a show of their own at these special, branded events, which feature events such as 'barkaton bhara dastarkhwan' during the Eid festival, or 'crunch karo, munch karo' for snack lovers.The audiences can enjoy their favourite shows with a show in these special, brand specific events, where events like 'barkaton bhara dastarkhwan' during Eid festival or 'crunch karo munch karo' for snack lovers are organized.

Note. The taglines are illustrative reconstructions, modelled on advertising features that are prevalent in the sample advertisements used and given for analytical purposes.

4.2. Familial and Nostalgic Blends

The first group of advertisements utilizes input space of domestic/familial memory for creating a construal that is a hybrid or mixed space of the two, and that the product itself is used to enact maternal or ancestral care. The visual sequence in Advertisement 1 begins with an older woman in the kitchen, cooking in the sunlight while a younger family member is watching her. The verbal tagline 'yeh ghar ki barkat hai' ('this is the blessing of home') is the linguistic cue for the blend: The knowledge of cooking oil, as a commercial good, is present in Input Space 1 and that of the joint family kitchen, which is culturally elaborated and embodies warmness, continuity, and maternal authority, is in Input Space 2. The abstract concept of nourishment is present in the generic space shared by both inputs. In the blended space, the product is not just a component anymore, it's a manifestation of the continuity of the family, and buying the brand is interpreted as being a family continuity.

This combination is supported by a multimodal light treatment, warm colour temperature and the close-up framing of hands cooking, in line with what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to as resources for creating intimacy and authenticity. The camera's close-up shot evokes the view of a family member rather than a more distant viewer, increasing the emotional impact of the blend. The advertisement has a parallel structure in ad 2, a dairy drink commercial on Hum TV. It plainly states its tagline: 'maa ke haathon jaisa pyar' (love like a mother's hands), explicitly naming the source input (maternal care) that is projected onto the target input (the beverage), and creating a blending in which the product takes on characteristics of maternal affection that are not literally part of

its material composition: precisely the kind of non-additive, emergent structure that Fauconnier and Turner (2002) describe as the hallmark of blending.

In the third ad, the same occurs but in the context of a domestic detergent advertisement, in which the slogan 'saaf kapre, khushiyon ka ghar' ('clean clothes, a home of happiness') intertwines domestic cleanliness and familial happiness. Here, the visual mode adds another layer: a montage of children playing in clean clothes is intercut with shots of the smiling mother folding laundry, creating a space of visual input that is harmonious with the domesticity that is reinforced by the verbal blend. In each of the three advertisements in this cluster, the common theme is that a mundane consumer good is fused with the culturally loaded image of the Pakistani family home in order to create emergent meanings that go beyond the literal use of the product itself, values of continuity, care and belonging. In this finding, it can be directly observed that the conceptual blends that function in Pakistani Urdu television ads are mostly related to the input space of home and family and not commercial per se, which supports the Research Question 1.

4.3. National Pride and Patriotic Blends

The second cluster combines product-related input spaces with an input space of national identity, which frequently refers to a collective feeling, sovereignty or common struggle. The tagline on the telecom package commercial on ARY Digital, Advertisement 4, ‘Pakistan ki awaaz, ek doosre se juri’ ('Voice of Pakistan, from one to another') is a blend of the technical function of telecommunication (connectivity) and the abstract input space of national unity. The common space shared by both inputs is the idea of connection, which allows the emotional resonance of national solidarity to travel across space from source to target domain: the technical network connectivity in the target domain takes on the emotional resonance of national solidarity from the source domain. This mixture is visually reinforced by a visual montage of various Pakistani citizens

from various provinces, all pictured mid-conversation with a cell phone, thus visually instantiating the idea of a national network.

The artwork of the Geo TV commercial on an advertisement for a car, Advertisement 5, also merges geographic input (the Pakistani landscape, conveyed through sweeping aerial shots of mountains and highways) and the input space of the car's mobility, to evoke the emergent meaning embedded in the tag line 'apni dharti, apni raah' ('our own land, our own path'). This mix places vehicle ownership in the context of national space as something that is being recovered, an inference that is implicit in neither of the two input spaces. The tag line of 'josh jo qaum ka hai' ('the passion that belongs to the nation') is used in a soft drink commercial on ARY Digital, and combines physiological sensation of the carbonated refreshment with affective register of national enthusiasm which is usually expressed in a stadium, in national colours (green and white) and is part of the product packaging and set design.

In this cluster, the multimodal analysis draws the attention to a similar visual strategy, the use of national colours, crowd imagery, and landscape shots as semiotic resources (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) that help to map the abstract input space of nationhood into the concrete output space of images, aiding to deplete the cognitive load needed to achieve the blend. It is a pattern that responds to Research Question 2 by showing that verbal and visual modes are not separate or redundant but reinforcing; the verbal mode (the tagline) points to the conceptual target of the blend, and the visual mode (the image) provides the perceptual scaffolds for exploring the source input space of national identity.

4.4. Modernity and Aspirational Blends

A third recurrent motif is the combination of the advertised product and a setting of urban modernity, technological progress and individual self-actualization, frequently manifested in code-mixed Urdu-English language. The advertisement for Smartphone (Advertisement 7) on Express Entertainment, is a set piece that has been created with the tag line 'Why Not, apna kal aaj banao' ('Why Not, build your tomorrow today') – a fusion of the English question 'Why Not' with the Urdu sentence expressing self-determined futurity. This generic space between these two inputs brings together the abstract concept of possibility, whereas the blended space creates the emergent meaning for the target group – youth and the modernity in English with Urdu animated sense of personal agency. This is consistent with previous studies on code-mixing in the Pakistani advertising context which reported that English is used as a semiotic resource of aspiration and not simply as a means of communication.

Along with the conventional BRIGHTNESS IS SUCCESS conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), Advertisement 8, a skincare commercial on Geo TV, is a parallel construction, where physical luminosity (a literal property of skin) is blended with luminosity as a metaphor for future success, an extension of the conventional conceptual metaphor BRIGHTNESS IS SUCCESS into a culturally specific advertising blend. The visual mode is complemented by lighting effects: the model's face is dark at the beginning of the commercial and light at the end, so that the lighting can metaphorically reflect the model's journey, which is also described in the tagline. The message of a fashion retail commercial on Express Entertainment, advertisement 9, is a distillation of this pattern: Style hai tou sab kuch hai’ (If you have style, you have everything), a combination of style with identity, an inference apparent despite the minimalism of the message.

Table 2 below summarizes principal multimodal semiotic resources found across the fifteen advertisements and the emerging multimodal meanings they create, and

makes explicit how certain visual devices (lighting, colour, camera movement, typography) are systematically paired with certain verbal triggers to complete each multimodal blend in answering Research Question 2: how does this relationship between the visual and verbal devices vary from one advertisement to another?

Table 2. Multimodal Semiotic Resources and Corresponding Emergent Meanings

Semiotic Resource	**Mode**	**Associated Verbal Trigger (Sample)**	**Emergent Blended Meaning**
Warm lighting, close-up framing	Visual	'yeh ghar ki barkat hai'	Product as vehicle of familial continuity
National colour palette (green/white)	Visual	'josh jo qaum ka hai'	Consumption as patriotic participation
Aerial landscape shots	Visual	'apni dharti, apni raah'	Mobility as reclamation of national terrain
Code-mixed English/Urdu typography	Visual/Verbal	'Why Not, apna kal aaj banao'	Modern individual agency
Progressive brightening lighting	Visual	'roshan chehra, roshan mustaqbil'	Physical luminosity as future success
Communal table/dastarkhwan imagery	Visual	'barkaton bhara dastarkhwan'	Product as spiritual sustenance
Fast-paced editing, upbeat music	Visual/Auditory	'crunch karo, munch karo'	Playful consumption as immediate gratification
Wordplay and rhyme in tagline	Verbal	'raaton ka jugaad'	Resourcefulness reframed as humour

4.5. Religious and Ramazan-Themed Blends

The fourth cluster is advertisements that are organized by the religious calendar, specifically Ramazan and Eid; the product is mixed with an input space of spiritual

duty and communal generosity. The slogan 'barkaton bhara dastarkhwan' (‘a dining spread full of blessings’) introduced in the ghee advert on Hum TV (Advertisement 10) juxtaposes the materiality of the product (cooking ghee) with the spiritually charged input space of Ramazan iftar gathering. The idea of provision is the shared space of both inputs with the blend taking ordinary provision and elevating it into 'holy' abundance. This is visually supported by collective table images, large family groups, and warm golden-hour lighting that are traditionally linked to religious and family congregations in visual culture of Pakistan.

The commercial advertisement titled "iftaar ki mithaas" ('the sweetness of iftar') by 'Advertisement 11', a drink syrup on PTV Home is an example of an emergent meaning that relies on the audience's familiarity with the cultural context of breaking the fast during Ramazan to achieve success. In the commercials, the temporal focus is extended to Eid, the tag line of Ad 12 being a retail sale commercial on Geo TV is ‘Eid ki khushiyan, sab ke liye’ (Eid joy, for everyone) a retail discounting of the religious significance of the occasion of Eid, with this being a celebration of communalism and inclusiveness. The analysis reveals that across this cluster, religious blends have a strong dependence on the shared cultural schemas that need little elaboration—when users see the image of a dastarkhwan, it is enough to trigger the relevant input space, and the same applies to the image of a crescent moon and the image of a lantern. This shows how efficient the operation of culturally entrenched blends is. This finding is directly relevant to Research Question 3 because it shows that there are religious and seasonal input spaces that are specific to the Pakistani Muslim culture and would not be found in the advertising corpora from secular or non-Muslim majority cultures.

4.6. Humour and Wordplay Blends

The last group of advertisements create blends using linguistic devices of play, especially rhyme, alliteration, and code-mixed Urdu-English puns, which gives rise to emergent meanings, which is humorous rather than sentimental or aspirational. The use of the onomatopoeic verbs in English, which mimic the sound of snack foods, and the imperative verb form (karo) in Urdu, which encourages the viewer to act, in a snack commercial (Advertisement 13, ARY Digital) creates a hybrid grammatical structure that is humorous in part because of its code-mixed novelty. This is done by using the visual mode, that is, by editing the film very rapidly and by using animated sound effects in synch with chewing on the screen, which would fit into Forceville and Urios-Aparisi's (2009) classification of monomodal auditory reinforcement of a verbally triggered blend. Emerging out of this, the ad 'raaton ka jugaad' ('a night-time hack/workaround') for the telecom package, on Hum TV, combines the colloquial Pakistani notion of 'jugaad' (resourceful improvisation) with the input space of latenight data usage, and creates a re-construal of the telecom package as a clever, even subversive, resourcefulness rather than a simple product purchase. The blend is entirely based on cultural awareness of jugaad as a value-laden concept in the vernacular discourse of the target culture, which further establishes the culturally specific nature of the identified blends across this analysis. With its tag line 'do minute mein dhamaal' ('excitement in two minutes'), Advertisement 15, an instant noodles commercial on Express Entertainment, combines the time input space of quick food preparation with the time input space of celebration.

5. Findings

The overall analysis of all the fifteen advertisements shows that conceptual blending is not a rhetorical strategy in Pakistani Urdu television advertising

discourse as it is a cognitive mechanism that is used systematically in the construction of persuasive meaning under different product categories. The data indicate that the most prevalent input spaces utilized in the blends are domestic and familial memory, national identity, religious obligation, aspirational modernity, and colloquial humour, the selection of which is closely linked to product category and target audience for the blend, in response to Research Question 1. The analysis for Research Question 2 further demonstrates that there is not a linear connection between the two modes but that both verbal and visual are tightly interwoven; taglines generally identify or activate the crossspace mapping, while the visual composition, lighting, colour and editing rhythm provide the perceptual and affective support that viewers need to carry out the crossspace mapping efficiently. Last but not least, the results show that some of the identified input spaces may be culturally specific to the Pakistani context and may not be directly translatable to advertising corpora that would have been studied previously in other Western-centric studies of Conceptual Blending Theory. This statement reinforces the need for a cultural approach to blending theory as proposed in this study, which is a multimodal approach.

This qualitative analysis of 15 Urdu-language television advertisements aired on 5 mainstream television channels in Pakistan shows how conceptual blending is not just a stylistic technique, but rather a systematic and ubiquitous process in Pakistani advertisements discourse. On the face of the first research question, it can be seen that the five reoccurring input spaces that are consistently used in the construction of emergent product meaning are: (i) domestic and familial memory, (ii) national pride, (iii) aspirational modernity, (iv) religious and seasonal obligation, and (v) colloquial humour. In the sample, the selection of input space was not neutral for the various product categories; the product categories of "household" and "food" products shifted toward blends of "familial"

and "religious" components; the product categories of "telecom," "fashion" products tended to move toward blends of "modernity" and "national-identity" components; while the product categories of "snack" or "convenience" products showed a shift toward blends of "humour-based wordplay" components. This patterning indicates that conceptual blending in advertising is not random, but rather carefully tuned to fit with the cultural associations already carried by the product categories.

Regarding the second research question, the analysis shows that the verbal and visual mode is not a separate and redundant mode but a tightly interdependent mode which completes each blend in turn. In all of the ads we looked at, the verbal tagline was the explicit linguistic trigger that named or pointed to the intended blend, with visual resources such as lighting temperature, camera proximity, colour palette, editing pace, and the way the actual framing of a shot would relate to the other space providing the perceptual scaffolding needed to allow the viewer to access and complete the cross space mapping. The pairing of warm light and close up framing shot with familial blends, national coloured lighting with landscape shots and fast cuts with synced sound effects with humour-based blends is clearly mirrored in Table 2. This validates that multimodal integration is not accidental, but is integral to conceptual blending, and that it is different from conceptual blending when it occurs in verbal and conceptual blending when it occurs in visual context, as found in previous literature.

For the third research question, findings reveal that the identified blends make use of culturally specific input spaces which would not easily be translatable to the advertising corpora extracted from other cultural contexts. The Ramazan dastarkhwan schema, the folk term 'jugaad' and the Urdu-English code-mixed register, which is used by aspiring young people, all rely on culturally-specific knowledge that is acquired by the Pakistani viewers through common linguistic

and religious socialization. These blends are efficient and don't need to be explicitly extended because they call upon pre-existing schemas embedded in the Western cultural context, thus pushing conceptual blending theory beyond its empirical foundation.

Another discovery, which was not initially predicted, is the constant function of code-mixing as a blending tool and not as a sociolinguistic marker. The advertisements were repeatedly combined English words with connotations of modernity and confidence, and Urdu grammar with connotations of intimacy and cultural rootedness, resulting in hybrids of both linguistic registers that proved persuasive because the combination of registers, not either one or the other language. This implies that code-mixing in the Pakistani advertising discourse is also a linguistic-cognitive mixing strategy which is worth further theoretical development, which has been beyond the scope of the present study.

6. Conclusion

The overall aim of this study was to explore the cognitive process of conceptual blending in Urdu television advertising discourse in Pakistan and investigate its realization in multimodal (verbal and visual) layers. The primary objective of this research was to examine the cognitive phenomenon of conceptual blending as a mental process of assembling different mental spaces and creating new, non-additive meaning, and its realization within multimodal (verbal and visual) layers in Urdu television advertising discourse within Pakistan. The study involved fifteen purposely selected ads from five major television channels in Pakistan and used the Conceptual Blending Theory as the key analytical framework with supplementary frameworks of Forceville's multimodal metaphor model and Kress and van Leeuwen's social semiotic approach, which are guided by three research objectives and other research questions.

The results show that Urdu television commercials in Pakistan are indeed creating persuasive meaning by systematic conceptual blending which heavily relies on the family, national, modern, religious, and humorous input spaces. These are not just randomly selected mixes or unexpected happenings within the field of advertising, but rather – precisely – product category-specific and audience-specific combinations that signify a specific and largely invisible cultural rationale for advertising in Pakistan. The study also shows that these blends are completed in the interaction of verbal and visual modes: the verbal mode initiates the conceptual integration, and the visual mode provides the perceptual and affective support for viewers to resolve the blend. This indicates that the study of meaning construction in mediated advertising discourse cannot be neglected as a language-based phenomenon and should not be examined as a visual phenomenon alone.

More importantly, the study shows that a considerable proportion of these blends found in the Pakistani sample are culturally non-transferable, relying on religious, linguistic and social background knowledge shared as part of the Pakistani cultural domain. This study fills a real gap in the literature on conceptual blending and multimodal metaphor, as these theories have been developed mainly based on Euro-American advertising corpora and have been tested with few examples from South Asian, Urdu medium or Muslim majority culture. The study adds a culturally nuanced case study to the empirical landscape where Conceptual Blending Theory is not yet explored, and a methodological template for finding and comparing other blends in regional discourses on advertising.

The study also highlights the under researched aspect of Urdu-English code mixing as a blending resource and not just a sociolinguistic phenomenon and proposes that the blending phenomenon itself can be an active site of conceptual integration in multilingual advertising context. This observation has fertile

implications for further theoretical work in the area of cognitive linguistics, multimodal discourse analysis, and code-mixing studies in general.

Taking all this into consideration, it is concluded that Urdu TV advertising discourse in Pakistan is a rich theoretical and cognitive space to study conceptual blending, in which cognitive, linguistic, visual, and cultural resources come together to create emergent meaning, which is greater than the literal meaning of any single mode. The results confirm the importance of marriage of cognitive-linguistic and multimodal approaches in the study of non-Western advertising discourse, and it creates a platform for further studies on the culturally specific processes of creative meaning construction in Pakistani media.

6.1. Recommendations

1) Future research should build on the limited 15 adverts used in the study, with a larger, longitudinal corpus for greater generalizability.
2) The scholars should adopt the theory of Conceptual Blending to regional language advertisements (Punjabi, Sindhi and Pashto) other than Urdu.
3) Inter-country comparative studies of Pakistani and other South Asian advertising mixes would help to highlight the commonalities and differences in advertising patterns.
4) Audience research should be taken into account by advertising practitioners to confirm the interpretations of the culturally specific blends by viewers.
5) Study of code-mixing should be theorized as a blending mechanism in multilingual discourse in future studies.

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