Analysing Sociolinguistic Components in Condiment Advertising

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Abstract: *Advertising analysis is a widely recognised phenomenon that introduces new research avenues in advertising applications. Analysing the impact of emerging food trends in digital advertising and their influence on consumer decisions is an intriguing study area. This study examines tomato sauce commercials to discover how persuasive methods, visual signals, and content influence customer preferences and decisions. The methodology employed is multimodal discourse analysis, grounded in an interactive sociolinguistic approach to multimodal systems encompassing linguistic, visual, auditory, and gestural components (Constantinou, 2005). The data consists of 33 video adverts, typically 30 seconds long. The multimodal discourse analysis method examines visual advertising and explores how language and visual images work together to shape cultural identities, elicit sensory perceptions, and impact consumer behaviour. The fascinating structure of language, culture, and societal influences blending to create enticing advertising messages are explored. Further research opportunities on the significance of language as an association between initiatives and diverse audiences representing societal values and goals were also suggested.*

Keywords: *Advertisements, Multimodal analysis, Sociolinguistics.*

1. Introduction

Advertising plays a significant role in today's highly competitive commercial environment. It provides valuable information and significantly impacts human choices when it comes to purchasing (Shimp, 2000). Advertising agencies employ compelling strategies by highlighting innovative solutions to consumer concerns to fascinate audiences. In the face of intense competition, advertisers frequently modify their strategies to sustain successful consumer engagement (Khadka & Maharjan, 2017). This study examines the persuasive procedures used in Bangladeshi tomato sauce visual advertisements for shedding light on the complex social subtleties and underlying meanings that motivate these commercials. It also investigates how language impacts the cultural consumption of sauces through discourse analysis and sociolinguistic assessments. This research explores speech patterns, narrative frameworks, and linguistic strategies in food advertising to illustrate how language adaptation connects with diverse sensitivities. Underscoring the importance of language in advertising within the context of Bangladesh, the study traces on social issues like code-switching, registers, and pragmatic aspects of language. This can show communicative potentials to modify behaviours, perceptions and

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societal shifts. Furthermore, this study highlights the significance of appropriate language use in advertising and its consequences for resolving societal challenges to acknowledging language's persuasive power.

1.1 Literature Review

Several significant studies have addressed the field of food advertising. The literature review involves a detailed assessment of earlier research to gain insight into the topic, place the study in its appropriate context, and discover important findings, trends, and gaps in the area.

Lohmann & Kant (2000) investigated the impact of TV ads on children's food attitudes and preferences, highlighting the links between TV viewing habits and attitudes towards junk food. Story and French (2004) conducted a study on food advertising targeting children and adolescents in New York City. They found that various strategies have been used to reach teenagers and toddlers to support brand growth and influence food product purchasing behaviour. The research aimed to examine the impact of food advertising on food choices and to provide current limitations and guidelines. Chester and Montgomery (2009) investigated marketing practices in the food and beverage industry aimed at children and adolescents. In 2020, using Ogilvy's theory, Jingbo Feng studied food advertising and its influence on recipients. Bleakley et al. (2022) conducted a theory-driven content analysis on sports and energy drink advertisements, focusing on the cues and ideas presented in these advertisements.

In Bangladesh, some studies have analysed food advertisements. Haque and Sarwar (2012) studied how media advertisements influence consumers' purchase intentions in the fast-food market, finding online advertising more attractive due to the significant increase in internet users. Huq et al. (2015) examined the efficiency of SMS advertising and customer perceptions Shawon's (2017) study evaluated the aesthetic and creative components of Bangladeshi advertisements, focusing on newspaper ads, billboards, TV commercials, and digital advertising. Kabir (2018) morphologically studied the names of beverages in Bangladeshi commercials, investigating word formation processes and the intended meaning of words and phrases. The findings indicated that words and phrases used in branding and advertising beverages often undergo various morphological word formation processes, resulting in changes in meaning compared to their lexicological definitions.

These studies in Bangladesh had various research goals and intentions. They attempted to uncover insights about consumer behaviour, advertising efficacy, and linguistic implications for branding in the Bangladesh context.

This research explores 33 visual "sauce" advertisements from Bangladesh, applying discourse analysis approach and sociolinguistic theories to analyse sauce consumption. Employing multimodal analysis, it investigates speech patterns,

narrative frameworks, and linguistic tactics to understand language's involvement in producing sensory memories. The research demonstrates how innovative language in food advertising influences customers' views and appeals to varied sensitivities through mixing, code-switching, and language modification. The study highlights the relationship between linguistic innovation and visual appeal in impacting customer decisions, showing the adaptability of language in shaping consumer behaviour.

1.2 Context of the Study

Visual imagery is vital in mass media advertising, drawing attention, emphasising product attributes, and establishing a brand's identity. The language employed in advertisements, which incorporates both auditory and visual components, possesses a compelling influence, eliciting emotions and modifying behaviour. Visual media significantly impacts the human psyche because multimodal discourse allows events and persons to be presented in ways that foster a stronger relationship with the spectator (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001). This study analyses 33 Pran sauce commercials aired on television and YouTube since 2005, focusing on the growing utilization of dynamic visuals beyond conventional television platforms. Both platforms aim to enhance brand recognition and shape consumer purchase intentions, vital elements of advertising effectiveness (Dehghani et al., 2016).

1.3 History of Advertisements in Bengal & Bangladesh

The term "advertising" comes from the French word "advertisement," which refers to information circulated by mass media, especially in wealthy countries (Hardy et al., 2018). Between 40 and 50 per cent of American television advertisements in the 1990s promoted food and drink (Story & French, 2004).

The Calcutta General Advertiser launched advertising in what is now Bangladesh in 1780, followed in 1905 by B Datram & Company. J Walter Thompson began as the first global agency in 1926. The Eastland Advertising Company introduced advertising to Dhaka in the middle of the 1950s. In the 1960s, multinational companies such as Lever International Advertising Services (LINTAS) contributed to advertising in newspapers, on radio, and in movie theaters. The nationalisation of enterprises in 1972 due to the 1969 rebellion limited the growth of the private sector. The 1980s brought color television to the masses, and the 1990s saw the emergence of private TV networks and "scientific advertising". Bangladesh's $1.8 billion advertising sector is expanding by 10% a year, and more than 500 firms employ more than 10,000 people (Hossain, 2022).

Standing out in Bangladesh's advertising landscape, Pran RFL leads the advertising scene with impactful ads and is poised for further growth in 2024. Recognized for producing some of the most effective TV commercials, the company has received accolades such as the "Best Brand" award for its strong media presence and

strategic communication (Kafi, 2023). As a market leader producing 18,000 tons of tomato sauce annually, with processing plants in Rajshahi and Natore, Pran RFL continues to shape the dynamic commercial sector of Bangladesh (The Daily Star, 2021).

This section highlights that advertising in Bangladesh boasts a rich history, having transitioned from its origins in print media to encompass modern digital platforms and experiencing substantial growth and diversification, with prominent entities such as Pran-RFL currently leading the expanding market.

1.4 Research questions

The following two research questions were addressed during the investigation:

1) How do language choices and interactive sociolinguistic aspects in sauce advertising affect consumer perceptions and purchase intent?

2) How can a sauce commercial's visual and thematic features enhance the audience's involvement and product resonance?

1.5 Theoretical Lens

TV commercials, a widespread component of mass media advertising, provide a multimodal discourse that merges spoken language and visual elements. This research explores the multidimensional features of these advertisements to identify how they mutually convey meanings to confront the producer's intended message. This study aims to explore the intricate relationship between language, visuals, and meaning in television advertisements through sociolinguistic and narrative analysis. The purpose of this study is to provide insights into how the PRAN advertisements impact the perceptions of the consumers.

1.5.1 Interactive Sociolinguistics: This study is grounded in interactional sociolinguistics as its theoretical framework. It employs critical discourse analysis that assimilates principles from linguistics, sociology, and anthropology. The above mentioned consistency in language, societal and cultural consistency show aligned perspective with Heller (2005), express the vital approach of how social uses of language construct identities, negotiate relationships, and make sense of the world.

This field offers a complete theory and methodology to understand how individuals signal and evaluate meaning in social interactions based on Joseph Gumperz's (1982) writings. Interactional sociolinguistic analysis is better represented by explaining advertisements and this view is pertinent especially to some mass media commercials. Furthermore, culture forms the rules for indicating and interpreting meaning in communication and also grasps the complexities of interactional sociolinguistics. Thus, close discourse analysis of audio or video-recordings is essential to discover culturally diverse meaning making processes in conversation.

2. Methodology

'Multimodal Discourse Analysis' informed by the ideologies of 'Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)' is employed in this study to examine the linguistic and visual features of Pran sauce advertisements. The underlying ideological implications will be revealed by exploring how these advertisements build and reflect societal norms, gender roles, and socioeconomic class. As the process of evaluating and making meaning of verbal and nonverbal blended qualitative data is called discourse analysis, this study specifically examines the discourse of visual advertisements through multimodal interactional sociolinguistic viewpoint.

The research's methodological engagement is demonstrated in the following sections:

2.1. Research Design

The present study employs a qualitative research approach to examine the multimodal nature of advertisements for Pran tomato sauce. The goal is to comprehend the complex meanings of these advertisements, which are often case-based and lean more towards process investigation than product analysis (Creswell, 2014). The research employs an analytical approach to account for the abundance of data arising from the study. Interactional sociolinguistics is a qualitative analysis investigating contextualization cues that place conversation into the framework, such as verbal or non-verbal signals. These cues can be words with other vocal features such as volume, code-switches, style shifts, formulaic expression, or non-vocal features like gesture, gaze, mimicry, or posture. The research seeks to analyse the contextual cues of advertisement texts through discourse analysis following the interactional sociolinguistic lens, accounting for the communication of meaning through language use.

2.2 Stages of Research

This research was carried out in the following steps:

2.2.1. The text: PRAN-RFL Group, a prominent Bangladeshi corporation, is renowned for its diverse ventures spanning food and beverages, plastic products, and agricultural machinery. Among its subsidiaries, Pran Foods produces various food items, notably Pran sauces. Using the catchy phrase "Pran Sauce, Sauce er Boss" in Bengali and English code-mixing, Pran crafts attractive, innovative ads that resonate with health-conscious consumers. The campaign focuses on promoting the freshness of Pran's tomato sauce, incorporating a consistent colour scheme of red and green across labels and visual advertisements. The simplicity of the ads, coupled with the vibrant colour palette, effectively communicates the organic and enticing nature of the product.

2.2.2 Data collection: The collection involves carefully evaluating 33 distinct 'Pran tomato sauce' advertisements intentionally chosen to represent various

flavours and content. These ads were assembled from television and YouTube platforms, demonstrating the predominant multimedia consumption patterns in today's dynamic advertising companies. For appropriateness of the collected data, both TV and YouTube commercials were included by giving priority to the consumers' preferences. And through this methodology, Pran sauce promotional strategies were also reviewed, as dependency on product consumption by watching digital channels are increasing. Moreover, Prans' suppleness to current consumer trends are also illustrated here.

2.2.3. Data analysis: Through a multimodal lens, the advertising strategies of Pran sauce for this research have been analysed. The different features of Pran sauce are highlighted by using visual components, recurring themes and credible techniques. Sociolinguistic variables were applied to evaluate the visual and social aspects of the advertisements. This helped to uncover the cultural symbols and unseen meanings. Bengali catchphrases and dialogues that are used in these ads were transliterated in Roman alphabets for transparency and consistency. To ensure data accuracy and reliability, strict standards were followed during the data collection period. Different layers of meanings and cultural resonance of the advertisements were also tried to be revealed through interactive sociolinguistic process. Reliable data collection strengthened understanding of the complex interplay between language, society, and communication patterns in a sociolinguistic context. To understand the complex interplay between language, society, and communication patterns in a sociolinguistic context, it is necessary that the data are reliable.

3. Discussion and Findings

Sociolinguistic analysis process was used to explore features like dialect use, code-switching, and speech acts in Prans tomato sauce advertisements. Cotter (2015) asserts that both language structure and cultural context must be considered in media discourse to understand advertising forms and replicated social values, This view also aliens with Gumperz's theory of contextualization cues (1982), which explains how specific language choices (for example, regional dialectal expressions like "ki kos" or "tesh oibo") work as social identity and cultural shape indicator. Such expressions serve as influential tools and as sociocultural markers; at the same time they reinforce familiarity and cultural relevance too. This current analysis show how sociolinguistic theories can be applied straight to advertising contents to reveal the role of language in forming consumer experiences and cultural meanings.

The following sections provide a thorough sociolinguistic analysis of the Pran sauce advertising campaign based on the established language qualities:

3.1 Language Variation

3.1.1 Dialect and accent: According to Levi-Strauss (2008), the linguistic symptom extends beyond the meaning conveyed through written or spoken language to

encompass all social phenomena including elements like clothing, food menus, rituals, and more (Levi-Strauss, 2008). In this case, advertisement discourse in mass media is observed as a language phenomenon notably, the speaker's vocal qualities, including their accent. For instance, phrases like "ki kos," "mama," and "ei mama bolo kon sauce khaba?" evoke informal, familiar speech from local eateries, while old Dhakaiya lines such as "boro baper pola khay, thonga bhoira loiya jay," "100 taka beguni, tesh oibo to!" and "tesh oibo mani, Pran sauce lagay khan pushay jaibo" embed the ads in a culturally recognizable linguistic landscape. According to Pearsell and Pape (2023), such dialect features also build character and social proximity. By embedding these traits, Pran fosters emotional connection, using language not just to inform but to symbolically represent everyday Bengali life.

3.1.2 Code-Switching: Analysing whether code-switching used in the commercial can disclose the multicultural or multilingual nature of the intended consumer. Advertisements that use code mixing are considered more informational by consumers and may attract potential customers (Brahmaiah & Mani, 2018). Pran sauce advertisements use code-switching by blending Bangla and English to create a dynamic linguistic fusion that appeals to a young, urban demographic. The tagline "Pran sauce, sauce er Boss" exemplifies this strategy, where the English word "Boss" is naturally embedded within a Bengali phrase, mirroring everyday bilingual speech. Other examples include: "shobai bored, kintu eder shobar boring life e tok jhal mishti shad firiye anlo ke? Sauce er boss Pran sauce," "Eid e jai ranna koro na keno, super special howa chai," "tiffin er shad barate box e ekta kore Pran mini sauce," and "iftari tai beshi joss." These illustrate how code-mixing is not a flaw but a deliberate and creative tactic that reflects multilingual realities. It enhances relatability, bridges linguistic gaps, and strengthens emotional engagement with consumers, offering sociolinguists a more authentic view of language use in contemporary advertising.

3.1.3 Register: Register is defined by Ure & Ellis (2011) as a language or "style" used in a particular context or set of roles. Pran's advertising effort interacts with its target audience by strategically employing multiple linguistic registers. According to Martin Joo's (1976) register classification Pran sauce tends to follow the 'casual register' to develop a sense of closeness with friends and relatives by using colloquial words and an informal tone, for example- "taja tomator shad e Pran sauce er yummy taste khabarke kore shushadu (the yummy taste of Pran sauce made of fresh tomato makes the meal yummy too)." Meanwhile, 'promotional register' like- "apnar rannar master pieceguloke unnoto korte Pran er hot tomato sauce bebohar korun (Use Pran's premium tomato sauce to boost your culinary masterpieces, for instance)," uses an enthusiastic and convincing tone to attract consumer interest. The 'formal register' emphasises premium quality, aimed at consumers who appreciate premium items, whereas the 'cultural registration' like-'Eid mane anondo, Eid mane khushi, Eid e moja khabar mane Pran sauce beshi beshi' (Eid means joy, Eid means happiness, fun

food in Eid means more Pran sauce), develops a link between the sauce and its users through culinary arts and cultural traditions.

3.2 Norms and Values in Society

3.2.1 Gender Roles: Pran sauce advertisements defy conventional gender norms, aligning with changing social expectations. These advertisements purposefully challenge gender preconceptions, creating a progressive and diverse image by consistently presenting men and women as equally active participants in domestic environments, particularly in cooking contexts. If these advertisements are critically analysed, it can be seen that the explicit visual and verbal reinterpretations act as a belief repositioning of domestic labour, converting it from a gendered expectation to a shared responsibility.

Pran advertisements use inclusive dialogues and gestures to create a more domestic situation for negotiating gender identity, which depict Cameron's (2005) view of language too. In kitchen plots, graphic and audible presence of male and female figures and voices also function as conversational tactics for promoting variety and challenging stereotypical tags. Pran's purposeful use of gender-inclusive storylines show and promote the brand as socially relevant and culturally accustomed.

3.2.2 Socioeconomic class and social upright: Class disctinction is another vital sociolinguistic feature presented in the Pran sauce advertisements. Jaworska (2020) critically analysed and emphasized on the role of corpus linguistics to uncover language patterns in different social contexts. Likewise, Pran's advertisements can be analysed for segmenting audiences through lexical selection to present different levels of cultural meanings. For example, phrases like "indulge in the rich taste profiles of Pran sauce" focus on consumers who value intricacy and fine dining. Again, informal expressions like "slather it on your favourite dishes" or "our sauce is the real Boss" appeal to youth and everyday accessibility. This bilateral strategy openups market reach while subtly reinforcing class recognition. Moreover, Pran's discourse tries to navigate symbolic accuracies to affirm the brand relevance across socioeconomic tiers by offering different voices for different audiences.

3.1.3. Socio-Pragmatic Perspective: The discourses used in the advertisements line up with Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness theory, which emphasizes on building common base and mutual cooperation expression to meet the communicative goals. Directives like "khaben jokhon, sauce er boss i khan" act as softened imperatives, balancing persuasion with social association. Expressives such as "taja tomator shad e Pran sauce er yummy taste" create warmth, while commissives like "angul to chatbei" promise satisfaction. These mentioned politeness approaches increase trust and reduce artificiality by strengthening the brand–consumer relationship. Besides, food-related choices are not just functional but deeply emotional and culturally rooted too. Pran highlights these through interactive speeches in their advertisements.

3.1.4. Cultural Allusions: Cultural elements are authentically integrated in Pran commercials and traditional stereotypes are tried to be avoided. Cultural trends, rituals, clothing, shared meals and traditional customs (especially during festivals like Eid) are featured in these ads to reflect realistic representations. Levi-Strauss (2008) described these as "symbolic systems," where food and clothing carry profound social meaning. Such cultural allusions foster emotional engagement and affirm shared identity. In this way, Pran positions itself not just as a product but as part of cultural practices, building trust and a sense of belonging.

4. Findings

To create persuasive narratives, Pran's advertisements try to bind together language, visuals, cultural symbols, and consumer psychology. The strategic use of code-switching and multilingual elements charms especially the younger- diverse audiences, echoing Gumperz's (1982) contextualization theory.

According to Joo's (1976) framework, Pran's context-specific language agrees for both aspirational and friendly communication, while lexical choices signal class distinctions. These ads also depict men and women equally in cooking roles, reflecting evolving gender dynamics, consistent with sociolinguistic discourse analysis. The use of speech acts and politeness strategies further strengthens emotional engagement and brand reliability. By combining food, language, and ritual, Pran ads serve as cultural texts that reinforce collective identity.

From the discourse analysis perspective, the multimodal strategies used in Pran ads reflect and reinforce power, identity, and cultural influence, allowing them to resonate across social classes, age groups, and regions. This positions Pran not just as a condiment brand, but as a cultural participant in everyday Bangladeshi life.

5. Conclusion

Advertising is a powerful tool for persuasion, and Pran sauce advertisements successfully achieve this by blending language and cultural responsiveness. The campaigns resonate with broad audiences and build cultural connections. However, further research is needed to assess how Pran's inclusive language affects consumer performance over time. As social dynamics evolve, future studies could explore the long-term effectiveness of Pran's linguistic and cultural strategies.

A feasible future direction could be exploring Pran ad's multifaceted communication components from a multidimensional sociolinguistic perspective. This might produce valuable insights to explore how linguistic cue could combine with societal and cultural consequences of Pran sauce better. Precise blending of language, cultural elements and ethical values made Pran advertisements more appealing globally. The advertisements show how consumer behaviour is impacted by their understanding of advertising language intricacies. Overall, this study demonstrates, from a sociolinguistic viewpoint, how Pran sauce advertisements

strategically integrate language, images and cultural components effectively to shape consumer perception and sustain brand engagement.

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APPENDIX

1. Image of Pran visual ad that contains the main catch phrase-

1. Image showing code-mixing in Pran tomato sauce advertisements-

2. Image showing cultural inclusion-