

Construction of Brand Identity through Language in the Video Advertisements of Pakistani Telecom Companies

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Abstract

This research explored the construction of brand identity in the video advertisements of Pakistani telecom companies. Brand identity is constructed mainly by showing competitor's submissive and weaker image rather than by using creative and unique advertising techniques. Data for this research was collected from five advertisements of five telecom companies. Positioning theory was applied on these advertisements. The data showed that all cellular companies of Pakistan were using positioning techniques to make their advertisements and construct the language of their ads to communicate with the society at large. The cellular companies have engaged in such kind of social communication due to the competition in the market of cellular services. This type of positioning in the language of advertisements is helpful in the conflicting and competitive business environment and explicitly or implicitly promotes competition. The research found that the cellular companies are using second order acknowledgement status and putting competitors in the third order status in their advertisements. The study found that Ufone is the company using this language technique mostly in its advertisements.

Keywords: Brand Identity, Linguistic Analysis, Pakistani Telecom Companies, Advertisement, Positioning Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Pakistani telecom companies compete each other often through television advertisements. The five telecom companies namely Ufone, Warid, Mobilink, Zong and Telenor have been sharing the telecom market. The video advertisements of these companies consist of linguistic elements that marginalize the competing companies. One of the most prevalent linguistic strategies for these brands is name-calling, i.e., belittling or humiliating the competitors by referring to their ineffectiveness. This background brought the

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current research into being. A dire need was felt to investigate this phenomenon in depth to how it was done and why it seemed to be the preferred way of constructing a brand identity.

Brand identities are constructed in different ways by different companies, using language in their advertisements. There is a need to explore how companies use language to position themselves and what impact it has on the competitor's brand identities. The research is intended to identify the instances of language use where the companies are trying to use the language to position them as better and superior to other companies. It is important to analyze and find out whether it is mandatory for a company to impact other companies brand identity negatively or is there any company that may not be following a similar strategy and is still making good advertisements to promote its own brand and product.

The cellular companies are using conflict as the main theme of positioning technique in their advertisements to compete each other. The Pakistani company that stands out for using the technique most is Ufone. All companies use the positioning technique by taking positions of second order acknowledgement status, putting the other companies in the third order status, and gaining and up scaling footing through the use of frame.

The most important aspect of this study is the use of conflict in positioning theory as the major theme. In the conventional psychological model, the theoretical studies are based on studying the conflict resolution; however, the major difference comes with the study of conflict in communication itself which is the focus of the positioning theory. It does not mean that the use of positioning theory is only meant to describe the communication or language of conflict but the various themes that go into the belligerent spirit of conflicting communication can become the focus of the study such as positive team spirit. However, in traditional sense, the communication is desired to justify one's position on the basis that 'good will triumph over evil'.

Construction of identity is done in a social context when two members or elements of society interact with each other. Advertisements, the message they convey, and the audience of the advertisements are parts of a society [Norton (2010)]. Therefore, identity construction cannot be separated from society. It involves social and psychological perspectives, motives, and reasons why a brand tends to take a certain position to assign itself a particular identity.

The two variables in this research are the cellular companies and the positioning technique; the company is the dependent variable, and the positioning technique is the independent variable. The terms used in the

analysis chapter are categorized as powerful, authoritative, weak, and submissive. The operational definition of these terms depends on the positioning which the advertisement depicts, based on the characteristics of the language, the message shown in the advertisement as well as the value of the product in the market and the company's profile in the telecom sector. These terms are fluid as they have multiple dimensions of the language, audience impact, and marketability.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

One of the main themes of positioning theory that relates to this research is the conflict. Conflict, portrayed through language, plays an important role in the advertisements of various brands [Langenhove and Harre (1999)]. The other key tenets of positioning theory are different types of positions such as second order status and third order status. The product itself is always at the first order status that is being advertised. The brand or the telecom company, which is making its advertisement, puts itself on the second order status through the use of specific words and phrases and in the mean time positions the competitors on the third order status (Harre, 2005). A couple of other elements are footing and framing. Footing is the position a brand takes for itself, the place it assigns to itself. On the other hand, frame is the overall advertisement and details that portray the brand as superior to the others [Harre and Moghaddam (2003)].

Positioning Theory was initially presented by two psychologists named Rom Harre and Davies but was evolved and improved by Harre and Langenhove together. The reason why this theory was selected for this research is that the positioning theory talks about assigning of certain positions to self and others during a discourse. In the advertisements, one brand assigns a particular position to itself through the creation of a persona through the actor or actress who acts as a brand ambassador. The identity of the brand ambassador or the actor portrays *the self* of the brand. The creation of the actor's identity is done due to the necessity of making a physical object in front of the audience so that they can follow, get inspired from and locate the brand in the real world. The actor's self is portrayed as the self of the product which is not a human being [Van Langenhove and Harre (1999)].

This research involves critical analysis of the language of advertisements. It involves examination of the linguistic strategies for assigning different identities to the speakers and the listeners. The analysis of the language revolves around the construction and deconstruction of brand identities, in the light of what Harre (2005) explained. He believed that language and construction of brand identity are two elements of linguistics that

deal with the use of carefully selected words and phrases by the speaker to give him/herself an identity.

1.3. Significance

This research is carried out with a vision in mind that it will contribute to the advertising industry and the people related to advertisements in Pakistan. It is an attempt to create a realization among the advertising agencies and the clients on how language can be used in the advertisements to attract the potential customers. This research provides useful insight to the students of mass communication, linguistics, media, and advertising. It can also be helpful for the academics, researchers, and advertising agencies.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Positioning Theory is related to the construction of identity in advertisements because it talks about the words and phrases and also the psychological factors behind the use of the language for the purpose of making the speaker look different and unique among others. Whenever a person talks about himself, he is making himself apart from others. This is the hidden and indirect message of every advertisement [Boxer (2001)]. Boxer has analyzed the positioning theory in the perspective of interaction and construction of identity. He believes that the positioning theory, if applied in the advertisements can bring change in the advertising and the image of the brand as well.

Identity is what enables audience or other members of society to recognize someone. Same applies to brand identity. It is merely the representation through language that gives a brand an identity different from others [Karjalainen (2003)]. So, brand identity is constructed through language used in the advertisements.

Brands which are advertised in the advertisements are the symbols of the construction of identities [Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998)]. These symbols make the advertisements look appealing. The overall package creates the identity of the brand and distinguishes it from products of other companies. The package is the complete set up of the advertisement and the features of a brand included and shown in the advertisements [Underwood (1999)]. This is the reason why one company's product looks different from the same product of the other companies.

Positioning theory is fundamentally used in advertisements of products and services of different brands [Zelle (2009)]. It uses the aspect of identity through narrative building and discourse development. At the same time, the narrative can also be transformed into action in order to specify the identity and

portray the distinguishing components of the products or services that differentiate it from other competitors [Deppermann (2013)].

The discursive practices are of pivotal importance when it comes to understanding the role and the selfhood of the speakers [Davies and Harre (1990)]. The language in use, portrays what position the speaker holds in the society. This source is about the ways in which people are positioned in the society with the help of discursive practices [Davies and Harre (1990)]. The actual uses of language made by the speakers who are members of a society are known as discursive practices. It makes them position themselves in a way which is different from the others. The study of selfhood is only possible after understanding the concept of discursive practices and the formation of the self through it. The language which is used in the real context and situations is something that really exists [Davies & Harre (1990)].

This article sheds fruitful light on the topic of construction of identity in the social context. This is how it relates to the topic of the research as it makes the researcher know more about the selfhood and the discursive practices used to position oneself in the society [Norton (2010)]. According to Norton, the audience and the advertisements are parts of a society. Norton's standpoint validates the current research which also points out that construction of brand identity is done within society.

Coming towards the current study, the context of the competitive market in the telecom sector of Pakistan needs to be studied and reviewed. It will clarify the actual reasons and factors which influence the trends in the advertisements of these telecom companies being studied in the current research. This article talks about the competitive strategies used by the telecom companies of Pakistan. The behaviors of the Pakistani customers and users of telecom companies of Pakistan have been studied in this research conducted by Ahmed and Hassan (2013). The research concluded that the companies aim to get the customers loyalty through customer satisfaction. Most of the users were found to be satisfied with the service and quality of their mobile network [Ahmed & Hassan (2013)]. To survive in the competitive market, the telecom companies tend to offer best features at lowest rates so that the customers of other networks switch to their networks. This competitiveness has made all the companies to do what is best for the users. In the end, all the benefit goes to the users, which make them satisfied and loyal to their chosen mobile network.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Objectives

The objective of this study is to explore the types of positions which are taken by the companies in the selected advertisements and to find out whether the positions assigned to one company is a deliberate positioning or forced one and whether the position of one company has any impact on the other company's position or not. The objective is also to explore what other aspects of the positioning theory need to be explored and analyzed for a better understanding of the positioning and construction of identity in the advertisements of the telecom companies of Pakistan.

3.2. Research Question

What impact does positioning have on brand identity of the advertiser and the competitor brands?

3.3. Procedure

This research has used qualitative and descriptive approach. It includes applying a theory on the advertisements of telecom companies of Pakistan; Ufone, Telenor, Mobilink, Zong, and Warid. The theory used is the Positioning Theory which has been presented by two psychologists, named Davies and Harre. This research verified the positioning theory by analyzing the language used in the advertisements, in the light of the theory.

The reason of selecting this theory is that it studies the language and the way in which a brand's identity is portrayed differently from the brands of the other companies. This theory allows the researcher to explore in-depth/hidden meanings of the said words, other than the surface level meanings.

The methodology used in this research is qualitative content analysis. It is a research method that is used to infer valid points from a text to understand it better. The inferences made are related to the sender of the message, the message itself and the audience [Weber (1990)]. The language used in the advertisements of Pakistani telecom companies is the content that has been analyzed in this research. One advertisement of each of the five companies will be selected and studied under the lens of brand identity construction. Therefore, the advertisements, that went on air during the period 2015-2016, selected through purposive sampling, will be analyzed to answer the research question.

Purposive sampling is used to select only those advertisements in which the element of construction of brand identity through language was evident. The aim was to analyze ads that were relevant to the topic of the present

study. It was not possible and would have been irrelevant to select all ads from 2015 and 2016 that did not have construction of brand identity in the light of the topic. Brand identity is not just constructed through language while this study is only based on linguistic aspects of brand identity construction. This is the reason why only those ads are selected which had these aspects in them. Additionally, the research is not aimed at finding out how many ads of the five telecom companies aired during 2015 and 2016. Rather, the study is an attempt to analyze which of the five companies uses language most directly to assign its brand a superior position and at the same time assign weaker and submissive positions to their competitors' brands.

4. ANALYSIS

4.1. Ad 1: Telenor *Talkshawk* Advertisement Aired in 2016

Figure 1. (Telenor is Making TV Ad Against Zong Mobilink and Ufone, 2016)



4.1.1. Description of Ad

In this advertisement of Telenor, the company has portrayed its product better than and superior to other companies (Mobilink, Zeng, Warid, and Ufone). The feature of Telenor that offers the customers to make phone calls to the users of other networks at low rates is being promoted in this advertisement. In this advertisement when the actor replies to the background voice by saying “**baki networks pe bhi tou call krni hain**” (I also have to call on other networks), suggests that neither current network he is using is capable of solving this problem, nor any other except Telenor. This is where the brand of

Telenor is being portrayed as superior and better in terms of lower rates for calling on other networks. The line, “**aik dafa Talkshawk lagaya tou badalne ki zrrat nahi**” (once you switch to Telenor Talkshawk, there is no need to switch to any other network) seals the deal and makes a strong claim that Telenor *Talkshawk* is the ultimate package for users who need to call other networks. This particular language use asserts that Telenor is the superior one and the other networks are submissive and weaker than Telenor. According to Harre and Moghaddam (2003), explaining the Positioning Theory, this specific advertisement contains the linguistic element that positions Telenor Talkshawk in a superior, dominant, and stronger position in comparison to its competitors.

4.1.2. Linguistic Analysis

Telenor network in this act is obviously in the second order status according to the positing theory and is already being explicitly acknowledged and is being provided ‘footing’ to have authority over other networks. The other networks are given third order status as they are explicitly conveyed as useless with the second order status and footing of the powerful network of Telenor. This type of communication uses presupposition through the act of actors and by their speech, that confirms the three order statuses given periodically in the act to each of the networks. The use of frame to impose the storyline in the act is also another important aspect of analysis in the brand advertisement. The frame uses the storyline to imply the wide coverage of the network service as compared to other networks and it shows the frame of network expansion. The act in this advertisement clearly shows the service of the Telenor network to be more widespread into more geographical location than any other network. Therefore, it is not only using the technique of footing and presupposition by ordering but also providing frame to be an evidence or to at least frame the existence of the vast network of Telenor spread across the country more than any other network. The other component of framing is the interconnectivity of the service which is framed in the act that it can also interconnect with other networks due to the superior networking technology it possesses.

4.1.3. Theoretical Perspective

In positioning theory, the preposition of the Telenor advertisement is using the aspect of ‘footing’ which is the third order status in the positioning theory and narratology, the use of narratology is a hallmark of any advertisement for a product on media [Harre (2009)]. The conventional narratology may not always contain the belligerent spirit of competition and simply come across as description of the product services and uses for the

masses. However, the use of narratology in the positioning theory context keeps in consideration the aspect of competition. It uses the narratology of the advertisement to convey the message in a conflicting tone by providing the masses a narration. This narration positions not just Telenor but also other networks which the brand is not oblivious of and comes across as using the other brands to be included in its own advertisement.

4.2. Ad 2: Ufone ad (Sacha Yaar) Targeting Telenor Indirectly

Figure 2. (Ufone Takes on Telenor in Ad on Eid 2015 2016)



4.2.1. Description of Ad

The second advertisement has been made by Ufone and it is named as Sacha Yaar. It consists of sarcasm on the slogan of Telenor, which says Sachi Yaari Sab Pe Bhaari. The Sacha Yaar (a character in the ad) makes statements about his network which portrays it as a submissive network in comparison to Ufone. This is how he positions Telenor as a complete failure and a weak mobile network to Ufone users. In turn, the other two characters are presented as the users of Ufone who do not feel this problem. The entire storyline of the ad is aimed to present Telenor's weak signals and coverage as the lead model is not able to connect a call at his friend's number who is using Telenor. The identity assigned to Telenor is of a company that does not offer trouble free coverage to its users; hence making it a submissive and weaker competitor.

4.2.2. Linguistic Analysis

It showcases that Ufone network surpassed the network vastness of Telenor and beat its niche in the market of cellular networking by providing a loyal and better service to the client. In this aspect the Ufone act only targets Telenor and thus by doing so, it is targeting the best network in the provision of vast services. It is a clever use of the positioning frame which goes beyond the use of implicit ordering and creating a footing for Ufone by going straight for the best cellular service. Therefore, in this act the Ufone is using the positioning theory in the context of scale, as it has increased the scale of positioning by using the conflict or competition communication to order the best cellular service and also framing itself in the context of true and loyal friendship. It frames itself in the context of not only being better equipped in providing wide spread network services as good as Telenor, it also goes on to explain itself as providing it with a disposition of a friend and loyal to the client, as it provides services that never abandon the client. Using the frame of friendship shows networking, strong ties, and connectedness that are stronger under any condition. These are the traits by which Ufone positioned itself in this act. In positioning theory, it shows an explicit external competitive approach towards competing against the best network in terms of viability of network and the internal implicit notion of the frame of friendship. The impact of the act on the audience is to be more intense with the internal implied frame used in context of friendship and the explicit competitive order used for footing. Therefore, the act by Ufone is showing internalizing the experience of cellular networking to be portrayed in the advertisement.

4.2.3. Theoretical Perspective

In positioning theory, the conflict can be addressed using the positioning in the narrative of the act; it does not focus on mitigating, easing, or resolving the conflict but positioning the communicator through narratology in order to justify and communicate the good versus evil position of the competitors. It speaks for the actor that is positioned to take a stance and uses the order status to assign value to members presented explicitly and implicitly in the act [Harre (2009)]. The frame used in the ad shows the loyalty of Ufone service to its customers that it does not abandon the client when the client needs its cellular services in a specific location as opposed to other service providers. This act explicitly shows the actress using her cellular service of Telenor to connect while failing to do so. The use of explicit display, therefore, puts the Telenor service in the third order status and puts the footing for the Ufone in

the first order status. It is different from the advertisement that was used by the Telenor in the previous example as the method used in that advertisement was to assign all other networks to be in third order; however, Ufone only targets one network in this act.

4.3. Ad 3. Mobilink Super SIM

Figure 3. (Mobilink Super SIM ad is a copy of Ufone Utrack TVC? 2016)



4.3.1. Description of Ad

This advertisement is of a super sim introduced by Mobilink. The ad has been shot in a laboratory setting According to the advertisement, Mobilink is the pioneer in the industry with the highest number of subscribers. This advertisement is a very good attempt to prove its dominance over all other competitors. The supremacy assigned to Mobilink in this advertisement is clear and unmatched. There is a subtle and mature way in which Mobilink is portrayed as the company which has always taken the lead in taking new steps and initiatives in the telecom industry. This ad has assigned the identity of the best network which always sets the trend for others to follow. Unlike the other two ads in this research the company has neither verbally nor non- verbally assigned the lesser and weak identity to the competitors. In other words, this advertisement is only about assigning the powerful and dominant identity to Mobilink without misrepresenting the identity of other companies.

4.3.2. Linguistic Analysis

However, it does not mean that it has avoided the positioning of the other networks, in the act as it shows Mobilink to be the father figure of all networks in the country, implying that all other networks are the progeny of Mobilink. This frame is also supplemented with an old figure of a scientist which explicitly portrays the father figure of Mobilink in the marketplace. The powerful depiction of the old figure as studious and dedicated scientist also shows the imagery to be of dominant use in the act due to the powerful and dominant position of the cellular network in the marketplace already. In this advertisement, Mobilink shows the lion's share of the cellular market has already been allocated to the Mobilink service as it was the first in the scientific revolution of cellular networking in the country. Therefore, most of the clients are already connected to the service as they enjoy its network since the beginning of the cellular network services. The implied message in the act is that other companies either learned from the technology of Mobilink or were born out of the Mobilink service.

One of the most important aspects in the framing of the act is the scientific knowledge portrayed in the act serve as the basis of any technological product today. Hence is the epicenter of the scientific development and progress of the product or service. This act shows that the original research and development was carried out by Mobilink and therefore it still has the original knowledge of the technology. It shows the complex relation between the Mobilink services, its clients, and other cellular companies also following the same trend in one act and positions itself as the pioneer in the field. It uses the strong presence of its network services by using it in the positioning to describe the close relationship it has with the society as a whole and that the network is not just competing in the cellular sector for profit making or beating other cellular services in the sector. When compared with other acts from Telenor and the Ufone, the act stands out at positioning itself to be much closer in relationship with the society than any other service.

4.3.3. Theoretical Perspective

The act by Mobilink shows a paternal figure of the network by positioning it in the second order to create a footing of scientifically the originator of cellular services in the country. It has made the trend possible through technological advancement and thus by a legitimate and acknowledged field of science and technology it has emerged to be the first cellular service. This aspect is followed by a powerful narration of the story for frame in the act

that shows a scientist trying to create the best mobile network. It avoids using the narratology to show other services in the ad by approaching their presence in the competitive market explicitly.

4.4. Ad 4. Warid Chotoo Offer

Figure 4. (Warid *99# Offer Chotoo new commercial February 2016)



4.4.1. Description of Ad

The story of this advertisement starts by presenting a young boy (chotoo) who has remembered all the codes offered by all the mobile networks of the companies and hence every member of the family depends on him to tell them the code for calls and messages etc., for which he asks for bribe as well. Consequently, he is shown to have a well-running business within the home. Suddenly, chotoo's business faces a downfall as Warid introduces one code for all offers to be activated. It makes Warid seem very efficient as the customers do not have to remember a list of codes for activating different offers and packages. In other words, this offer makes the users of Warid independent where they do not have to pay money to get to know the codes for being able to use the facilities offered by the companies. In this way Warid tries to become the superior company than the rest of the competitors. One-point worth noticing here is that Warid has tried to make its image superior to the other networks in a subtle way. There is no inappropriate use of language and the entire advertisement is not trying to defame any other competitor. Warid has tried to target a problem which is faced by all mobile users in general, without naming the users of one or two specific networks. This aspect needs to be appreciated

that Warid has upheld the morals and code of conduct and did not try to cross the boundaries of corporate and social responsibility.

4.4.2. Linguistic Analysis

“ab warid k aik code se milay dhairon offers” is the tag line which makes Warid look more efficient and user friendly in this advertisement. The basic feature highlighted in this advertisement is that Warid now offers the easiness to the customers to remember one code for utilizing multiple offers. The line **“ab Warid k aik code se milay dhairon offers”** indirectly means that the users do not have to remember different codes to use the offers offered by the competitors. In this way, the advertisement and the language used in this specific ad assigns Warid a flexible and user-friendly identity. This identity is claimed to be unique and exclusive to Warid only, although that might not be entirely correct as there is a possibility that another company might also have introduced such an offer. Nevertheless, this is the job and duty of an ad maker to portray any aspect of the product to be one of its kind.

4.4.3. Theoretical Perspective

Positioning theory analyses the human relationship and social communication to a great extent [Harre, *et al.* (2009)]. If the act by Mobilink was exploring its link with the society as well as the clients with closer proximity and scientific patronage, then the act by Warid networks also uses the same technique with the use of positioning in its own individual way. It uses the frame of innovation that it has provided with the network, as it shows the innovative way of using the app with such ease that the cellular service seems like a Child’s play to the user. It gives the incentive of getting several offers by just using one simple message. The use of technology in the hands of masses needs to be humanized to be used frequently and easily by people of all ages and groups. If the Mobilink act showed that a father figure created a complex network technology, then this act shows that Warid simplified it for easy use of all in the society.

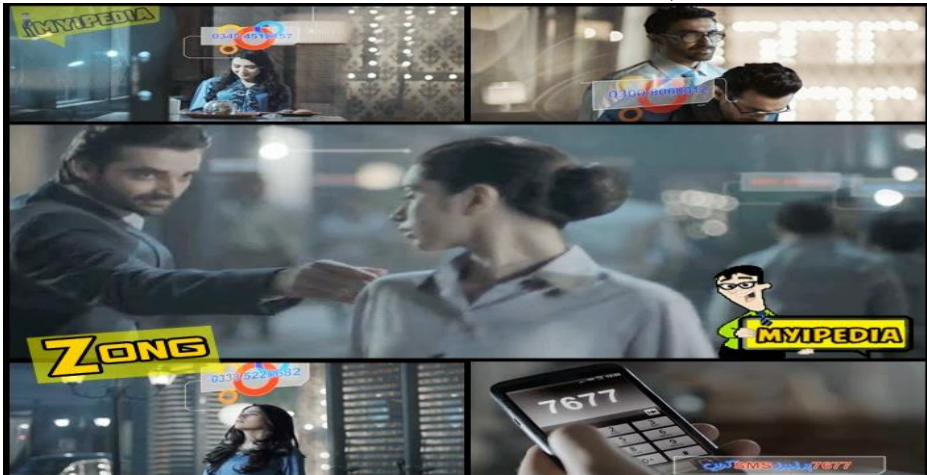
It positions Warid as the second order with a footing followed by the easiness of the code to all offerings, instead of navigating through many codes. This shows that the technology can be further enhanced and made easy for use and it simplifies the complexity of the use of the network device instead of making it difficult to use and difficult to remember. The technology is always a means to lay the burden from its users. In positioning the act for Warid, the frame uses the presentation of a child who can remember all the codes for all offers by other networks. However, for the Warid sim users, there is no reason

to be that meticulous like the child; it only requires the use of one simple code. It shows that the positioning of all other networks including the Mobilink network is burdensome and are therefore in the third order status, except for the Warid as it has the solution and has simplified the technology therefore, it is portrayed to be more user friendly.

The narration of the act uses all of the networks explicitly in one frame; it is visually the most inclusive act showing all the competitors in one act and also being sidelined in the same act with the visual and explicit display of the user friendly and simplified modification done by Warid network. It brings all the networks in one room and creates a conflict of technological devices by showing the complex nature of the networks while the Warid network takes all by one single technological edge and positions the Warid as the top competitor due to ease, not being vastly expanded or oldest. The frame uses a young boy that displays the immature outlook of the other networks in the act that need to follow the complexity of assigning different codes to each service on the mobile network in the country. It is an implied way of ridiculing the competitors by positioning them as belittling the clients or showing them to bear childlike behavior or expect it from the clients.

4.5. Ad 5. Simple Code to Switch to Zong

Figure 5. (New ZONG TV Commercial 2016 -- Featuring Hamza Ali Abbasi, Huma Khan & Mansha Pasha, 2016)



4.5.1. Description of Ad

This act has taken advantage of the creative mistakes done by the elite and already present competitors in the market that had established a political control with their specific technical edges over each other. However, Zong was a new entrant into the market and it had to position itself in the market with a new openness and inclusive manner, and it did so with a liberal and convenient way by allowing the users to keep their former identities as users of other cellular companies networks but just using the ease of one code to join the new network. Henceforth, it positioned itself with the ease of Warid and a new fervor to use the same technical edge to convert to the network of Zong. In an explicit way the Zong act hits all of the companies, and despite the wide networking vastness of Telenor, the brand that boasts of its loyalty to customers; Ufone, the originator of the cellular technology in Pakistan, Mobilink, and the ever innovative Warid providing easy access to customers for all packages in just one message, are all but in danger of losing their customers with one simple technological determinant of converting to a new network by Zong. It shows how fragile the system of cellular services is in front of the new offer by Zong and it puts the Zong network in the second order with the frame providing the presupposition that people are already considering changing to a new network service and that Zong is here to cash in on the opportunity. This act of Zong truly makes a mockery of all services and the market trend by positioning every aspect of mobile network service in the package of technological edge.

4.5.2. Linguistic Analysis

Metaphors, puns, and insinuation are essential to make an advertisement creative, influential, and popular. The advertisement by Zong is no exception. Zong is the latest and is rapidly becoming popular among the customers, though it has a long way to go. The basic package or offer being advertised in this ad is the simplest of the ways to switch the network. Zong is introducing the new and most welcoming way to switch the network to Zong without changing the mobile number or the code. The language in the advertisement provokes the audience to switch from their existing network to Zong. The most interesting thing is that there are no justifications in the form of better quality, services, features, or the rates due to which the audience should be changing their network, almost presupposing that Zong is the best and most powerful network of all. This is a swift way of saying that every user of other network was only waiting for just a simple code to switch to Zong, and

now they have it. The line saying **“bus itna he asaan bana dia hai Zong ne network badalna”** is the one to watch out for. In the video it is shown that a user of the Zong network, a character is touching the people with his hand on the shoulder to transform them into Zong users in a mere blink of an eye. This is just a mockery on the networks of the other companies. Indirectly and subtly manner, the makers of this specific ad are claiming that other networks do not deserve any user to stay on their connection. An open invitation to easily switch to Zong has a lot more than the literal and surface meaning. The message has been conveyed very smartly and covertly. In addition to the simple code to switch the network, there are also a few rewards which will be given to the Zong users who convert their friends and family’s numbers into Zong. The rewards in the form of balance and a Samsung S5 handset are offered to the Zong users and other mobile users. This makes it a strong advertisement which is an attempt to get more and more customers’ loyalty and to increase the number of Zong subscribers. In the underlying meanings this ad is suggesting that Zong is the best mobile network available and they should not be wasting any time in switching and changing their mobile network to Zong.

4.5.3. Theoretical Perspective

As explained previously, the positioning theory shows the complex relationship between humans in the best complex situations of the modern society [Harre (2009)]. In this ad made by the Zong it shows the automation of technology in the society and how it can change the identities of humans in the society. It does not require getting a new brand of sim to change the network now; all it needs in this act is to connect to the network. It positions the code factor displayed in the act by Warid to be the most innovative for the ease and benefit of the users, and now Zong in this act shows the same code factor to be in use but with an explicit way of abandoning the other networks and joining to the Zong network.

In this act the positioning is done by the code factor which is putting the code in the second order status and the other networks as well as the Zong in the third order status. It shows that the competition is not only between the networks but the codes technology now. The cellular service otherwise has always been about service and network; however, this act takes it to a comical limit by introducing a new trend and following it with a simple code. It is not at all about the service, but also about the fact that people like to try new things and trends and hence they can switch but only if it is easy enough to do so. This does not position the company due to its service or better coverage or ease of use, but just making the conversion simpler and easier.

5. CONCLUSION

Qualitative content analysis was used to answer the research question, concluding that the selected companies are using positioning technique to gain competitive advantage over other companies. The study concludes that Pakistani cellular companies are using positioning theory in use of language while competing against each other, and the company that stands out as the one using it most and in the most direct way for its advantage is Ufone. All companies use the positioning technique by taking positions of second order acknowledgement status, putting the other companies in the third order status, and gaining and upscaling footing using 'frame'. Henceforth, this research has attempted to fill the gap in the branding, media, and marketing sectors of Pakistani corporate realm. This research adds to the body of knowledge regarding the construction of identity in Pakistani telecom companies' advertisements.

5.1. Limitations of the Study

The study examined the current trend of the construction of brand identity, a dynamic phenomenon. Brand identity is not constant by nature. It is supposed to change over time. This study has only focused on some of the advertisements that went on air during 2015-16. This study has not included the past and the future trends in the advertisements of Pakistan Telecom Industry. Moreover, the study is based solely on the linguistic element used in the advertisements while semiotic and non-verbal communication aspects remained unexplored.

5.2. Recommendations for the Future Studies

The future research relevant to this topic can focus on the semiotic element to be studied and analyzed along with the linguistic aspect to further explore the phenomenon. In addition, non-verbal communication aspects such as body language and dressing may also be studied to develop a deeper understanding and analysis of the construction and portrayal of brand identity. The dimension of this study can also be broadened by including cross-cultural perspectives.

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Appendix

Links to Video Ads

<http://www.sabi.pk/videos/x3bbshf>

Telenor ad

<http://www.sabi.pk/videos/x2ygt2u>

Ufone ad

<http://www.sabi.pk/videos/x1k7n2f>

Mobilink ad

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pk_a3ePh0VY

Warid ad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzOTRpeg69g>

Zong ad