Billboards of Pakistani Automobile Mechanic Workshops: A Study of Visual Literacy Practices

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Abstract

Billboards are a source of immediate, on spot and permanent means of advertising. They do not require much linguistic proficiency for understanding; and the pictures and images accompanying the text correspond with the language to create meanings. The current study explores the visual literacy practices as exhibited on the billboards of auto-mechanic workshops in Pakistan. The study is based on the data collected from three localities of Rawalpindi and the surrounding areas within 100 kilometers radius including: 1) Rawalpindi City 2) Murree City, Company Bagh, Murree Expressway 3) and Dinna, and Gujjar Khan. The sample is collected from two social classes, the middle-middle class and the lower-middle class, in the form of pictures of billboards with a focus on the non- linguistic (visual) images. The model adapted for the research incorporates the theoretical approach of Critical Visual Analysis by Wang (2014) derived from Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Fairclough (1989, 1995) which is further merged with Visual Grammar framework as proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006).

When it comes to the Pakistani Auto-mobile mechanic workshops the visual literacy practices operate as a means to persuade the customers. The aim of the current research is to examine the nature of non- linguistic visual literacy practices employed in designing the billboards of auto-mobile workshops in Pakistan, and to analyse the social and cultural implications of these non-linguistic visual literacies. These visual literacy practices reveal social class identities and professional affiliations. Symbolically the images on the billboards are the vectors to communicate the social and cultural meanings. From the perspective of 'interactive dimension' of Visual Grammar it is examined how modality serves as a marker of the degree of reality in the representation of images as a visual literacy practice as exhibited on the billboards of these workshops.

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The study explores the markers of modality or the factors that define modality of an image including color, reality by dominant society standards, sharpness, brightness, contrast, saturation and image background etc.Thus, the paper throws light on how and why the description and interpretation of these visual literacies need to be viewed in a larger social and cultural context to reveal the possible ways in which they affect the perceptions of viewers and potential customers.

Keywords: Billboards, Pakistan, Automobile Workshops, Literacy Practices, Visual Literacy

1. Introduction

Visual literacy is the process of sending and receiving information visually in the process of communication. It might be characterized as "the capacity to ascribe significance to the pictures" (Georgis, Johnson, Bonomo, Colbert, & al, 1994). The reader employs the critical abilities of inquiry, critique, and reflection to interpret the visuals. It encompasses the set of abilities that allow a person "to comprehend and employ visuals for purposefully interacting with others" (Ausburn 1978: 291). Visual literacy also encompasses both what is seen with the eye and what is seen in the mind. It entails learning the abilities necessary to analyse the social implications of visual pictures, understand their content, and talk about their purposes.

There is no disputing the effectiveness of visuals in spreading ideologies. Images have the power to inspire or elicit an emotional response in viewers. Charts, graphs, photographs, or even the colors and style we choose merely to gather attention are all forms of visuals that are employed more frequently than ever before (Brumberger, 2011). Numerous studies indicate that the ratio of words to visuals has moved significantly, necessitating the development of new types of literacy (Brumberger, 2011).

When it comes to the Pakistani auto-mobile mechanic workshops the visual literacy practices operate as a means to persuade the customers.The ever growing use of visuals in the auto-mobile billboards accompanying new technologies means that visual literacy skills are being employed more and more; and to be able to understand the how and why of visuals is needed now more than ever before. However, in the Pakistani context the research

on the connection between the design of information, visual literacy, and practices of the producer of these messages on the billboards of auto-mobile workshops is limited. The purpose of this paper is to explore the visual literacy practices of Pakistani auto-mechanic workshops, what role the visual literacy plays in creating messages to persuade the target audience. It also focuses on the context, content and communication through images on the billboards of auto-mobile workshops. It further aims to unveil the social and cultural inclinations associated with the visuals used in Pakistan in the context of auto-mobile workshop industry.

1.1 Background

An automobile workshop is a location where mechanics and technicians maintain and repair automobiles. Automobile workshops may significantly help society and the economy achieve goals including poverty eradication, rural development, job creation, and income distribution etc. This industry supplies the most fundamental needs of industrialization, is crucial to the operation of our mechanized agriculture, and the transportation industry.The visual literacy practices as exhibited on the billboards of automobile workshops are quite interesting and important to analyze to see how the messages are created, and sent to the potential customers, and how they are received by them.

1.2 The Research Gap and Significance

In Pakistan, automobile workshop is a tricky but an important domain when it comes to research. The visual practices and images employed in this domain are quite interesting and important to analyse in communicating and creating the messages to the costumers. There is a significant research gap when it comes to the visual communication, particularly on the billboards of automobile workshops. The current research intends to analyse the visual communication and images used on the billboards of the selected automobile workshops of Rawalpindi. The research also aims to examine the relationship between the images and their cultural and social relevance.

1.3 Research Questions
Following are the questions designed for the current research:

- What is the nature of non- linguistic visual literacy practices employed in the billboards of Automobile workshops in Pakistan?

- What are the social and cultural implications of these non-linguistic visual literacies?

2. Literature Review
This section deals with the literature relevant to the current research in two ways: it introduces the concepts relevant to the current research,and sums up the previous researche studies in the area to help in identifying the research gap.

2.1 Visual Literacy
Visual literacy must first be defined before it can be evaluated. John Debes coined the phrase "visual literacy" for the first time in 1969. (Brumberger, 2011; Riddle, 2009; Yeh & Lohr,2010). The use of visual clues or representations to convey and analyse messages has existed from the beginning of human civilization, despite the fact that Debes was the first to describe and coin the term "visual literacy" (Burmark, 2002; Riddle, 2009; Yeh & Cheng, 2010). According to Dastani (2002), "humans now use visualization as a significant method of learning and seeing the world" (as cited in Yeh & Cheng, 2010, p. 244) With the development of new technology like computers, televisions, tablets, and smart phones, the significance of visuals as a way of understanding, communicating, and learning has only increased.

2.2 Visual Literacy Practices
Visual literacy practices include cognitive functions such as critical thinking, visualization, making and creating meaning and utilizing the affective domain that reveals emotions and attitudes as well (Avgerinou & Pettersson, 2011). Understanding and analyzing the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical elements involved in the creation and use of visual materials are made possible by having strong visual literacy abilities. A person who is visually literate can both critically

consume visual media and contribute skillfully to a corpus of shared knowledge and culture. Individual images, like text cannot tell the whole story on their own. In isolation, they often lack the context needed to accurately interpret the content, something that may be difficult to recognize without agile visual literacy skills.

2.3 Literacy Practices Exhibited on Billboards: A Global Perspective

Visual images have played a central role in human communication since the dawn of civilization and they have been the primary medium for illiterate individuals (Pettersson, 2000). Today, globally, the nature of communication is even more overwhelmingly visual. Images, as modes of communication, play a dominant role in our daily activities. Billboard advertising is effective for building brand awareness and broadcasting your business or product or campaign to as many people as possible. Because they are in busy areas, billboards tend to have a high number of views and impressions when compared to other marketing methods.Visual literacy practices are all around us that have everything to do with learning and understanding a given message. It has been observed that visual literacy practices have an empowering effect, creativity stimulation and meaning making enhancing capabilities in the billboards. The visual practices emphasize active construction of knowledge and construction of identities through the use of multi-modes on the billboard advertising across the globe.

2.4 Literacy Practices Exhibited on Billboards in Pakistan

As far as advertising in Pakistan is concerned along with print media, there has been an immense out-burst of advertisements on traditional electronic and modern social media during the recent years. We are surrounded by a sea of advertisements. However, billboard advertisements hold a special place in our context. Though there are multiple types of billboard advertisements, the traditional billboards exhibited outside the shops, usually at the top of their entrance/ door, are a very common feature in our context.

As far as the automobile mechanic workshops are concerned, in Pakistan, the traditional billboards displayed on these shops have proven to be very effective in attracting the customers. Print media advertisement, targeting the audience of workshops,does not prove to be very successful because of

the low education level of the viewers in Pakistan. On the other hand electronic media advertising needs more financial and technical resources. In this context these billboards are source of immediate, on spot and permanent means of advertising. They do not require much linguistic proficiency for understanding; and the pictures and images accompanying the text correspond with the language to create meanings.

Considering the literacy practices exhibited on the billboards in Pakistan, the billboard advertising of the automobile workshops in Pakistan communicates the social responsibilities, cultural manifestations and ideologies of the owners and workers of these shops. The literacy practices used on the billboards are multimodal; where writing combines with the use of symbols, pictures, colors etc. These literacy practices have a sizeable impact on culture and society; and they also forecast the society's culture. Taking into account Street's (1984) socio-cultural perspective to conceptualize literacy as a social practice, it can be said that literacy practices adapted by the automobile workshops on billboards in Pakistan occur in specific social context and they are influenced by the historical, cultural and power structures within these contexts. Both text and other visual literacy practices serve as a tool for shaping the literacy identities that individuals construct, enact and explore in various situations (Moje and Luke, 2009).

2.5 Review of Previous Research and Theoretical Underpinnings

The ternm visual literacy (VL) was coined in the late '60s by Jack Debes (Avgerinou & Ericson, 1997. It usually refers to learning, thinking, interpreting, utilizing, and communicating through visuals. Avgerinou (2001) has documented eleven essential visual literacy skills that include visualization, critical viewing, visual reasoning, visual discrimination, visual thinking, visual association, visual reconstruction, constructing meaning, re-constructing meaning, knowledge of visual vocabulary and definitions, and knowledge of visual conventions.

Kędra and Žakevičiūtė (2019) identified three kinds of visual literacy skills: visual reading, visual writing, and other visual literacy skills which include visual thinking and learning skills. Spalter and vanDam (2008) also reported visual literacy abilities in relation to handling digital visual information. These abilited include: (a) critical evaluation of visuals that are produced

digitally (both two- and three dimensional, static and moving); (b) decision-making on the basis of digital visual representations of data and ideas; (c) using information technology means to create effective visual communications. Significant qualities of the visual literacy skills include their interaction with other sensory skills during information processing (Aisami, 2015), and their learnability, teachability, and capability of further development and improvement (Avgerinou, 2001a; 2001b).

The way we learn, and remember what we learn, is inextricably linked to the way our senses operate. It is thus self-evident that a high proportion of all sensory learning is visual (Patterson, 1962; Rigg, 1971; Spencer, 1991), and consequently its role is central to information processing theories, such as Paivio's 'dual coding' theory (1979; 1983). Importance of visual literacy in education has been widely documented (Yeh & Lohr, 2010), and a solid body of research has focused on the benefits of visual literacy for learning. Visual Literacy integration in the early years of education is strongly advocated (Lopatovska et al., 2018) and has been found to improve learning outcomes in children's creation of multimodal texts (Barton, 2016), facilitate children's development of general literacy (Avgerinou, 2003) and also writing skills as through them children acquire a better sense of observation and increased inferential thinking (Barbot, 2013).
Today visual literacy is more important than ever before. While 21st century learning involves multi-literacies including information literacy, technology literacy, and learning in the content areas, visual literacy skills are also elemental.

2.6 Usefulness of Billboards for Advertising: Examininig Semiotic Aspects

Green (2001) states that billboard advertising serves a beneficial purpose as this advertising is useful both for the business including suppliers of goods and services, as well as the public as consumers of these goods and services. Billboard advertising is a legitimate form of advertisement because it takes at most 2-3 seconds to read one advertisement and local businesses depend upon it to direct customers their way. Therefore, billboard designs need to be attractive to be effective.

Mayr (2013) has advocated semiotic analysis to examine advertisements in order to understand the signs and the messages conveyed through these

advertisements. To him, knowing about the underlying messages and the manipulation of the consumer through advertisements, semiotic approach helps to transform the consumers into more critical customers. Likewise, Juffermans (2008) studied local emplacement and global identities in signboard and billboard literacies in urban Gambia. He found that although 'emplaced' in a typical economy of literacy where both English and writing are expensive symbolic capital, the signboards and billboards in urban Gambia are highly creative and often multimodal pieces of writing.

There is however, a limited research on use of visual literacy practices employed or exhibited on the billboards of automobile workshops; especially in the Pakistani context. This study builds on the prior researches but also expands it beyond the image seeking phase and focuses on visual literacy practices in the context of visuals used on the billboards of automobile workshops in Pakistan.

3. Methodology
This section deals with the methodology employed for the current research. It introduces the sample, theoretical framework and practical framework of the research. Moreover, it clarifies the reader about the nature of the research and process of analysis carried out by the researcher.

3.1. Sample Collection
The researcher has employed purposive sampling for the data collection which is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the area of research. For the sample, the researcher has selected the billboards of automobile workshops from three localities of Rawalpindi and the surrounding areas within 100 kilometers radius including: 1) Rawalpindi City 2) Murree City, Company Bagh, Murree Expressway 3) and Dinna, and Gujjar Khan. The sample is collected keeping in mind two social classes of Pakistan: the middle-middle class and the lower middle class. The areas from where the workshops are selected are identified by the outlook and the knowledge of the social class of Pakistan. The researcher's knowledge of automobile workshops is also taken into account. The data of the current research paper is a part of a bigger project which examines the linguistic and visual literacy practices exhibited on the billboards of mechanic workshops. However, for the

current research paper the data is selected and delimited keeping in mind the images and visuals portrayed on the billboards. Since the focus of this paper is on the non-linguistic (visual) means of communication so only billboards with visuals displayed on them are taken into account. Thus, in the current research 33 workshop billboards are finally included to examine the visual literacy practices displayed on them. The following table provides information of the localities of sample included:

Table 3.1 Tabular representation of the workshops selected

Rawalpindi	Murree	Gujjar Khan
1. Amin Autoworks	1. Riaz motor workshop	1. Bismillah Auto-workshop
2. Pakistan Gear Center	2. Usman Auto Electrician Computerized Checking	2. Alnoor Wheel Alignment Centre
3. Pak-Japan Auto Parts		3. Alnoor Auto Workshop
4. Al Madina Autos	3. Adeel Auto Electrician	4. Azlaan Autos Asif Engineering Works
5. Hassan Ali Auto Gearbux	4. Shakeel Autos Repairing workshop	5. Car Cooling Centre Auto Electrician
6. Rafique Khan Auto Mechanic	5. Al-Shams Autos	6. Abdullah Engineering Works
7. Hameed Shah and Arshad Auto Electrician and Mechanical Diagnostic Expert	6. Star Autos	
	7. Zahoor Kamani Maker	
8. Hameed Shah Car Mechanic	8. Omer Auto Parts	
9. Auto Mobile AC Mechanical Electrical Engineering Services	9. Haider Ali Car cooling Centre	
	10. Star Automobile oil	
10. Zeeshan Wheel Alignment Centre		
11. Irfan Autos and Workshop		
12. New Irfan Auto Workshop		
13. Tariq Kamani Maker		
14. Bismillah Auto Mobile Workshop		
15. Sohail Auto Workshop		
16. Zeeshan EFI Auto Electrician		
17. Niazi Auto Workshop		

Non-Observance of Maxims

Grice (1975) attempts to distinguish the primary four maxims of conversation hidden in the compelling co-employable utilization of language to empower individuals to partake in an effective discussion. He assembles the four maxims as the "Cooperative Principle", as he has expressed; "*Make your conversational commitment, for example, is needed, at the stage at which it happens, by the acknowledged reason or course of the discussion trade in which you are locked in*". (Grice, 1975, p. 45).

In everyday discussion, individuals do not satisfy or notice the maxims in numerous settings of regular day-to-day existence and numerous events (Alvaro, 2011). For some reasons, as might be, a few groups are unequipped for talking plainly in light of apprehension, alarm, faltering, uneasiness, and so forth, or because they will in general lie deliberately. Grice (1975) delineated three different ways of non-recognition of the maxims: disregarding a maxim, quitting a maxim, and mocking a maxim. Subsequently, he put one of all the newer classes of non-recognition of the maxims: Non-observance.

3.2 Justification for Data Collection Tool

Photographs of the selected billboards are taken to capture the non-linguistic visual data. The visual literacy practices exhibited on the billboards through images and non-linguistic visuals are observed and captured in photograph form because observation and visual data capturing (photographs) are suggested by Hamilton (2012) as significant data collection tools.

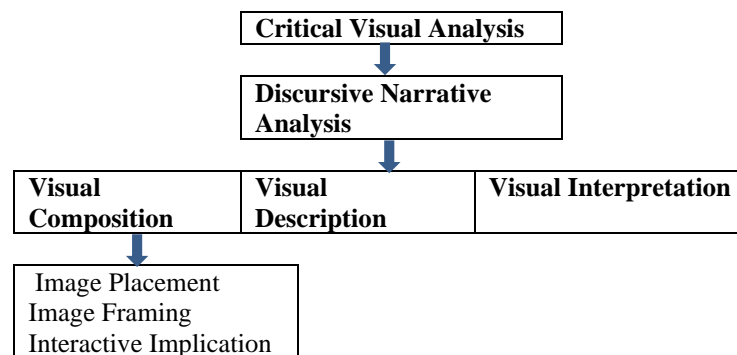**3.3 Theoretical Framework for the Research**

Wang's (2014) framework, the Critical Visual Analysis, derived from Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Fairclough (1989, 1995) is adapted as a model to examine the visual literacy practices and their ideological and social inclinations in the domain of automobile mechanic workshops. With Wang's (2014) framework , Visual Grammar framework as proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) is merged.

To develop Visual Grammar, Kress and Leeuwen adopted and charged Halliday's tripodal linguistic meta-functions with equivalent roles for visual reading. Hence, they accredited every visual composition with 'representational', 'interactional' and 'communicational' characterizations.

This idea forms a key part of the concept of Visual Grammar as a rule for examining images and accounting for the different elements imbued in the visual compositions. Based on social semiotics, this tool affords the possibility of exploring the 'representational structure' of the visual data, which involve the narrative and conceptual details of the image. At its 'interactional level', two kinds of 'participants' are known (Wang, 2014), 'Participants', here, stand for the represented elements in a visual composition (that is, the subjects). It also stands for the viewer interacting with the representations and forming a part of the meaning-making process or communication. On the other hand, the 'compositional system' furnishes details on key elements like image salience and informational values (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006).

3.4 Practical Framework for the current research
Having outlined the theoretical underpinnings in the previous section, this section introduces the practical framework for current research by presenting the model that will be used to analyze the visual literacy practices and images of auto-workshop billboards. The practical framework for the current research is illustrated below:

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        ┌──────────────────────────┐
        │  Critical Visual Analysis │
        └──────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
        ┌──────────────────────────┐
        │  Discursive Narrative     │
        │  Analysis                 │
        └──────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────────────┐
│ Visual       │ Visual       │ Visual Interpretation │
│ Composition  │ Description  │                       │
└──────────────┴──────────────┴──────────────────────┘
        │
        ▼
┌──────────────────────────┐
│  Image Placement         │
│  Image Framing           │
│  Interactive Implication  │
└──────────────────────────┘
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Based on Wang's (2104) *discursive narrative,*in the current research,the framework is adapted in a way that the Discursive Narrative Analysis is carried out by considering three levels: Visual composition, Visual Description and Visual Interpretation. Visual Composition is further catergorised into three levels which include: Image Placement, Image Framing and Interactive Implication. Insights into visual composition then lead to visual description and visual interpretation for meaning-making of these billboard messages.

4. Data Analysis

Although billboards rely on both linguistic and non-linguistic elements to get the message across, the current paper focuses only on visual/ non-linguistic elements exhibited on the selected billboards. As far as the linguistic textual features of these billboards are concerned they are not exclusively or exhaustively examined in the current research. Since the scope of this research paper is limited to only one aspect of research (i.e. visuals) the linguistic data is examined separately under the broader project and the current paper is not concerned with that. However, since linguistic and nonlinguistic visual data occurs side by side; and they co-inside and support each other in the process of meaning –making therefore linguistic instances are referred to when and wherever the visual images co-relate with the linguistic choices to create certain meanings. The discursive narrative analysis of the selected billboards offers examination of dimensions of critical discourse, which includes visual composition, visual description and visual interpretation.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis of Visual Composition of the Selected Billboards

Visual composition is considered as the arrangement of visual elements in the billboards. It deals with how the element of art, design, line shape, color, value, texture, form and shape are organized. The visual composition of the 33 selected billboards from three different localities reveals the visual literacy practices related to this domain. The visual composition includes the examination of visual placement, visual framing and the interactive implication of the image.

Since the data consists of visuals and cannot be explained and understood without a direct reference to the image, the data is presented, described and examined in tabular form to avoid any confusion. It is also pertinent to mention that the data is presented below in three separate tables based on the three localities from where it was collected. However, this tabular division based on localites is just for the sake of ease of reading and understanding the data.

Table 4.1: Locality: Rawalpindi

Billboard No.	Billboard Image	Image Placement	Image framing size and nature of Image	Interactive Implication
1. Amin Auto-works		The visuals of a car and a tool are placed at the left lower bottom of the billboard.	The size of the visual is small; it only covers the lower bottom side of the billboard. The image is printed in a 3d style.	It targets the customers of Corolla car owners, offers services of the digital system of the car.
2. Pakistan Gear Center		The visuals of cars and logos are placed at the bottom of the billboard. Whereas, the visuals of tools (gear tools) are placed at upper right and left sides.	The visuals printed on the billboards are clear, the color and size of the logos are actual representation of the logos on the cars.	The visual composition of the billboard indicates that the literacy practices target the customers who are looking for the service of fixing gear of the cars.
3. Pak-Japan Auto Parts		Visuals of the logos of imported brands are placed at the bottom and left side of the billboard.	The color, shapes and size of the logos of cars on the billboards are actual representation of the logos on the cars.	The billboard offers services of the auto-parts of the imported cars. It is significant to mention that the composition targets the customers of Japanese cars which is supported through the logos.

4. Al Madina Autos		Visuals of cars and tools are placed at the bottom of the billboard.	Visuals framed are clear but the color of all the tools is white which takes away the realistic representative element.	It is interesting to mention that visuals composition tries to take the limelight of the linguistic text on the billboard. The visual makes an offer to the customers of all kinds of vehicle
5. Hassan Ali Auto Gear Bux		The visuals of gear tools are placed on the upper left and right corner of the billboard	The visuals framed on the billboard are not clear, color is not visible properly and the quality of printing is low.	Visual composition highlights the services related to gear of the cars. It is important to mention that the visual composition highlights the specialized mechanic services.
6. Rafique Khan Auto Mechanic		The visuals are placed on both right and left side of the billboard. The linguistic text is surrounded by the visuals	The images of cars and tools are clear. The images of tools seem conventional, the color and shape of the images are clearly visible.	The visualsindicate that the billboard targets the customers of all types of cars and offer all kind of services. The black and white images of cars and tools put the visual message in the background while the linguistic message is forgrounded through green olour and yellow background.

7. Hameed Shah and Arshad Auto Electrician and Mechanical Diagnostic Expert		The visuals of cars are placed at the bottom and the logos are placed at the top.	The color and quality of visuals is quite good. Images printed are in 3d.The color, size and shape of the logos is the representation of original ones.	The visual composition of this billboard is quite interesting. The logos of high end brands presented at the top persuade the customers of high end brands to choose the services of the workshop.
8. Hameed Shah Car Mechanic		The visuals are placed at the left bottom of the billboard.	The color and quality of visual is the representation of the original oil bottles. The 3D printing of the bottle reflect the original image of the bottle	Through the realistic visuals of oil bottles, the visual composition offers imported-oil change services to the customers.
9. Auto Mobile AC Mechanical Engineering Services		Two visuals of cars are placed at the top of the billboards	The color and quality of visuals is clear, and hyper realistic3d style images are used.	The SUV image intends to capture the attention of the customers with high end brand cars.
10. Zeeshan Wheel Alignment Center		Three visuals are placed at the bottom of the billboard. The text on the billboard is placed above which takes the limelight of the images.	Red color used for the images corresponds with the text in red.	Visual of the car offers specialized services to the Corolla car owners for the wheel alignment services.

11. Irfan Autos and Workshop		A partial image of a car is placed at the right side of the billboard.	The car is highlighted in red color and printed in 3d style; the logo of the car is clearly visible.	Visual composition attracts the customers of Corolla car owners.
12. New Irfan Auto-workshop		Logos are placed on the right side of the billboard along with an SUV.	The logos framed on the billboard seem original. The color, shape and quality reflect the originality of the visuals. The visuals of cars are printed clearly.	The customers are targeted by highlighting the logos on the right sidepresented in a visible size.
13. Tariq Kamani Maker		The visuals of logos are placed at the upper corner of the billboard whereas k*amani is centrally projected to reinforce the workshop's specialization as* k*amani* makers.	The visuals framed are conventional, simplified representation of the real images, and hand painted in red color to correspond with the colour of the main text. The black, relatively realistic looking kamani takes the central stage	Visual composition interacts with the customers by projecting the specialized services as *kamani* makers.
14. Bismillah Auto Mobile Workshop		One visual is placed at the right bottom and two logos are placed the top right side of the billboard	The visual framed on the billboard is clear yet small in size; the logos are not clearly visible.	Visual composition indicates that only specific customers (high end brand owners) are targeted in this billboard.

15. Sohail Auto Workshop		Visuals of oil bottles are placed at the right side of the billboard	The realistic visual of the oil bottles is presented in high quality printing. reflects.	The high quality of image goes with the specialized services of imported.
16. Zeeshan EFI Auto Electrician		Visuals of cars and digital tools are placed at the bottom of the billboard.	Visuals are clear and printed in 3d styles. The colors used for the images reflect their original representation..	It is interesting to mention that the visual composition of this billboard targets the audience of high-end car brand ownerswho have modern and computerized technology in their vehicles. The tools presented indicate that it is offering very specialized services.
17. Niazi Auto Workshop		A visual is presented at the center of the billboard.	Visual is highlighted in red color. The printing of the visual presents the image as original	Foregrounded and centralized composition of the car image deviate from the general visual literacy practices where images are placed mostly eith on a side or at the bottem. The image of Suzuki corresponds with the specialized services for the customers of Suzuki only.

Table 4.1 has presented, described and examined the data collected from Rawalpindi. On the same pattern following is the presentation and analysis of the data gathered from the second and third sites respectively:

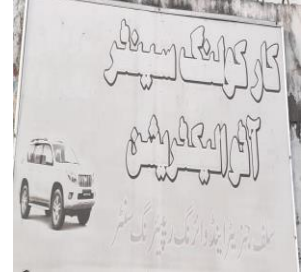**Tabel 4.2 Locality: Murree City, Company Bagh, Murree Expressway**

Billboard No	Billboard Image	Image Placement	Image framing, size and nature of image	Interactive Implication
1. Riaz Motor Workshop		Visuals of car and digital tools are placed at the lower left bottom of the billboard.	The 3D printing, color, size and shape of the visuals indicate the original representation of the visuals.	The composition targets specialized services with digital tools for the modern vehicles.
2. Usman Auto Electrician Computerized Checking		Visual of carsis placed at the lower left side of the billboard whereas, the digital tools are placed at the lower right side of the billboard.	High-end cars in 3D printing with realistic images and computer screens are clearly visible.	The digital tools/ screens grab the attention of the customers to avail the services of computerized checking of their cars.
3. Adeel Auto-Electrician		Visuals of car parts and digital tools are prominently presented on the left side.	The visuals are quite original representation of the tools in shape , form and colour.	The composition offers modern digital and technological solutions along with manual services to the customers.
4. Shakeel Auto Repairing Workshop		The visual shows a car engine presented at the center of left side.	The visual communicates the original representation of a repairing workshop.	The composition targets the skeptical customers who look for authentic repairing services.

5. Al Shams Autos		The visuals of the cars and a few tools are placed at the bottom of the billboard, whereas, the logos of all the known brands are placed at the right and left side of the billboard.	The color, shape, quality and printing presents the visuals as original.	The foregrounded high end car brands target customers of all the known brands. The visual correspond with the linguistic claims of the availability of 'all kinds of parts'.
6. Star Auto Workshop and Auto Electrician		Car parts, wheel and alignment tools are bunched together on a side.	The color, and shape of equipment is realistic.	Multiple tools/ parts brought together advertise the availability of all kinds of services.
7. Zahoor Kamani Makers		The billboard predominentl relies on the visual with very little linguistic text.	The color and shape of the visuals is the original representation of the images.	The logos indicate that the workshop deals with specific brands
8. Omer Auto Parts		He billboard motly relies on the non-linguistic visual message.	The 3D visuals are hyper realistic as the color and shape of logos and cars are the actual representation of the original.	It is worth mentioning that the composition targets the owners of three brands only which are the higher end brands of cars used in Pakistan.

| 9. Haider Ali Car Cooling Center | | Visual of a car is placed the center right side of the billboard, whereas tools and logos are placed at the bottom | The visual of car is clearly printed and visible whereas, the tools and logos are not clearly visible. The color chosen is not very appealing. | The composition projects the specialized cooling services and spare part repair of the Corolla cars. |
| 10. Star Auto Mobil Oil | | A large variety of automobile oils are placed at the bottom of the billboard**.** | The color, size and shape of the visuals represent the original products. | Realistic images of oil correspond with the claim of imported oils. |

Tabel 4.3: Locality: Dinna and Gujjar Khan

Billboard No	Billboard Image	Image Placement	Image framing, size and nature of Image	Interactive Implication
1. Bismillah Auto Workshop		Three visuals of cars are placed on the left side of the billboard.	The images only serve as a general background, and do not directly correspond with the instructions given on the billboard.	As the images only serve as a general background they indicate that the auto workshop offers its services to all type of cars for their general repairing and maintenance.

2. Al-noor Wheel Alignment Center		Apart from two very general images of cars, the visuals of wheels are placed at the leftbottom of the billboard.	The appropriate size, 3D realistic design and shape of tyres corresponds with the name of the shop.	Interactive implication of the visual composition indicates that it targets the customers of wheel alignment.
3. Al-noor Auto Workshop		Visuals of cars are placed at the left bottom of the billboard.	The visuals of cars are not hyper realistic.	The generalize images of cars target the customer of all types of car owners in general without claiming any specialization.
4.Azlaan Auto Asif Engineering Works		The visuals of the tools are placed at the bottom of the billboard.	Images are non-realistic.	The visuals corresponds with linguistic message of specialized services for gear related problems of the vehicles.
5. Car Cooling Center Auto Electrician		The visual of a car is placed at the bottom left side of the billboard.	Though in black and white and of low quality,it is the image of a Land cruiser.	The visual composition indicates that high-end vehicles like a Land cruiser are treated here.
6. Abdullah Engineering Works		The visuals of some tools are presented at the bottom	Very specialized tools with low image quality, and poor shape and form of images are shown which are not identifiable for a common man.	The visuals correspond with the linguistic claim of repair of certain parts. The composition offers services to the customers who are looking for the spare part maintenance and repair.

4.2 Further Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

It is evident from the description and analysis of the image placement as carried out in all the three tables that the visuals are placed in such a way that they grab the attention of the customers and they are made prominent on the billboards. However, it is interesting that these visual images are mostly presented at the left or right side of the billboards or at the bottom. Only two of the billboards majorly rely on the visuals for advertising with very little accompanying linguistic text. Largely the role of visuals is to support the linguistic claims.

The nature of image-framing reveals that the makers of these billboards are aware of the significance of these visuals. It is found that out of 33 selected billboards 29 images are digitally done in 3D prinitig style. It is also important to mention that image framing contributes in making a potential customer a real customer. The way an image is framed persuades the customers: the color, shape, clarity of image etc. have an impact in communicating the ideology behind the projection of a visual. The visual practices are a reflection of the strategies behind the persuasive discourse of the billboards.

Talking about the interactive implication of the selected billboards, it is significant to mention that the visual composition is built in a manner that reveals the kind of services the billboards are trying to offer, and the kind of customers the billboards try to target. It is cruicial to mention that the analysis from the perspective of interactive implication shows that *specialized* services are being offered which include: services for wheel alignment, services to a particular car brand, services for specific spare-parts etc.Thus, a billboard, for instance,targets the customers looking for a specialized digital service of the imported cars. Similary, some visuals projected on the billboards target a particular clientale where the offer is made to the higher-end car users only by presenting the images of higher-end brands and their logos.

In light of the practical framework for the current research based on Visual Critical Analysis, it is important to mention that the visual composition of the images selected from the 33 billborads reveal that visual literacy practices are used to advertise the services and to target specific audience the workshop wants to target. So, 15 out of 33 billboards offer specialized

services to the customers. Also, for instance,16 out of 33 billborads target the owners of a particular car brand. In the same way 23 billboards out of selected 33 potray all the logos of higher-end brands. It is found that visual composition is developed in a manner which tries to convey the meaning corresponding with the linguistic text on the billboards.

On the visual description level the visuals are described by keeping in mind the visual composition; how images are portrayed, what colors are used, and the way images are framed.Considering Visual Grammar, the non-linguistic visual practices on the billboards can be described and interpreted with reference to two major categories: images of cars and images of tools. As far as cars are concerned, we can see the images of all types of cars including Suzuki & Mehran, Landcruiser, Revo, Mercedes Vigo, Toyata Hiace, SUVs etc. However, mostly the images of highend cars are used to create a highend business identity; and smaller cars are used in the visuals only when a very specialized service for them is provided particularly. Logos of all the car brands such as Nissan,Toyota, Daewoo, Suzuki etc. are also used to achieve the same purpose. In the social context where this data is gathered from middle middle and lower middle class areas, the use of the images of highend cars refer to the desire to belong to and get identified with the upper social stratum. It reinforces the desire for upward social mobility.

As far as the images of tools are concerned, images of both modern and conventional tools are used such as tools to fix steering, wheel alignment tools, digital tools to diagnose the problems in the vehicles, *Kamani repair* (shock bearer) etc. are used very frequently. Without reading the corresponding text on the billboards the potential consumers can at a glance understand the nature and type of services offered at a shop.

The description and interpretation of these visual literacies need to be viewed in a larger social and cultural context to reveal the possible ways in which they affect viewers' perceptions. These visual literacy practices reveal social class identities and professionalaffiliations. It is significant to mention that the localities chosen for the data collection (auto-mechanic workshops of Rawalpindi, Murree and Gujjar Khan) belong to the middle-middle class and lower middle class. The living standard of these localities varies from middle-middle to lower-middle classes. The visual communication on the billboards reveal the producers' inclination for the

construction of an upward social identity in certain ways. Foregrounding of big cars and digital tools implies the intention to convey the ideology that the auto-mechanic workshops of Pakistan are equipped with modern technology and they have the facility to diagnose problems of imported high-end cars as well. Symbolically the images on the billboards are taken as the vectors to communicate the social and cultural meanings. In a country like Pakistan where social system is quite strong, the visual literacy practices indicate such social markers that are intentionally used by the producers to create a social impact for instance. Use of the images of cars like SUVs, Mercedes and Land Cruiser is an example.

From the perspective of 'interactive dimension' of analysis, Visual Grammar defines modality as a visual literacy practice towards understanding reality. Modality is the way in which something exists or is done. Modality serves as a marker of the degree of reality in the representation of images as a visual literacy practice as exhibited on the billboards of these workshops. Markers of modality or the factors that define modality of an image include color, reality by dominant society standards, sharpness, brightness, contrast, saturation and image background etc. Modality is also created through the type of shots or frames taken by the camera. For instance, the foregrounded images of expensive cars along with the coverage of digital tools serve as the interactive participants and they play a significant role in persuading the target customers. The type of shot or image framing also contributes to the power relations between the represented and interactive participants; the angle of the shots of the visuals on billboards contributes to the kind of contact that exists between represented and interactive participants. The interactive process of the linguistic visual communication shows that the images are making a direct offer to the target audience and customers to visit the business. The images on these billboards are mostly digitally done as the narrative presentations to convey a diverse form of narrative functions and reflect the cultural and social inclinations as well.

It is further important to notice that 'the process of production and reception are socially constrained' (Janks, 1997, P.329). So, the social and ideological implications of presentation of the logos of different brands and higher-end cars that are foregrounded on the billboards are significant. Visuals of high-end brands exhibit the aspiration for identification with high class social

status as service providers; and at the same time they enable the potential customers to identify themselves as representatives of this class.Overall the analysis reveals that the projection modalities used on these billboards sever as a visual literacy practice which embeds the social and ideological inclinations.

5. Conclusion

The aim of the research was to identify visual literacy practices being used and displayed by the Pakistani auto-mechanic workshops in their professional domain through the billboards; and also, to explore the pathways through which, these mechanics/ owners make use of literacy practices to convey their message to the potential customers. Owners and mechanics of the selected Pakistani auto-mechanic workshops, though not formally educated/literate, are found performing a rich variety of visual literacy practices with regards to their professional lives.Transition in the concept of literacy practices as a set of skills that is situated and contextual, has provided these mechanics with a liberty to frequently shift across and modify these practices in line with the needs of their customers. These visual literacy practices enable them to create their identities in accordance with the rapidly evolving and hybrid postmodern era, where any person is literate if he or she is successfully surviving in his or her socio-economic context.

It is not wrong to say that the representational structure of the billboards employed visual literacy practices which imply the ideological, social and cultural inclinations of the producers of this visual communication on the billboards. All of the symbolic visual processes provide meanings that can be understood and internalized by a viewer or a potential customer in the social context.

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