

# **Image Schemas in Diasporic Visual Discourse: Peripheral Voices in the Selected Photographs of Afghan Migrants Living in Pakistan**

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## **Abstract**

This study explores the socio-cognitive dynamics of the photographic representation of Afghan Refugees residing in Pakistan. It aims to reveal counter discursivity present in the images of Afghan refugees and accentuate the visual nature of this counter discourse. Data sets taken for analysis consist of five photographs of Afghan refugees retrieved from the album collection of an international photographer Muhammad Muheisen. By adopting an interdisciplinary perspective based on three schools, i.e. Critical Discourse Studies, Social Semiotics and Cognitive Linguistics, the study proposed a Cognitive Grammar approach to traditional Transitivity Analysis. Cognitive transitivity analysis explored the discursive strategy of Structural Configuration by highlighting the cognitive systems such as image schemas, narrative structures and processes in both visual representations and textual taglines assigned to the images by the photographer. The findings of the study revealed the employment of CONTAINER, FORCE, SPACE, and SOURCE-PATH Schemas and dominant presence of agentive and transactional roles of Afghan refugees. The taglines of photographs revealed material processes dominating the discourse, thus, coinciding with agentive representation of Afghan refugees. The findings revealed that image schemas, narrative structures and processes, being embodied sources, preconceptual and mimetic structures, project Afghan photographic discourse as marginalized in the face of Pakistan's Refugee Policies.

**Keywords:** *cognitive linguistics, counter discourse, cognitive transitivity, migration*

## **Introduction**

The beginning of the 21st Century, due to increase in conflicts in various war-driven countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and many others, stormed the world with the issues of migration, specifically that of refugees and asylum seekers (Parker, 2015, p. 1). The United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNCHR) describes refugee as a person who is forced to leave the domains of his/her motherland due to “fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group” (www.unrefugees.org). The United Nations Report (UN) in 2014 reported 14.4 million displaced refugees due to conflicts based on racism and persecution (Parker, 2015). Such ‘conflict induced refugee situations’ give rise to ‘ethical perspectives’ based on ‘humanitarian’ and ‘political and military’ grounds (Grare & Maley, 2011, p. 1). The political perspective on refugee situations links refugee problem to the “larger political issue, in which the host country may share part of the responsibility” (p. 1).

The increase in tension in American-Afghan war leaves no exception for Pakistan regarding the issue of refugee settlement. With more than five million Afghan refugees living in different parts of the country, Pakistan proves itself to be a supporting neighbour to Afghanistan. It has always provided support and accommodation to one of the largest sheltered ‘refugee populations’ i.e. Afghan refugees. Additionally, Pakistan, due to the military operations against terrorism in the north of the country, is confronted with the issue of about 2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Over the past three decades along with the provision of basic facilities such as ‘education’, ‘health’ and ‘right to work’, Pakistan has managed to provide home to Afghan refugees (Grare & Maley, 2011, p. 1; Khan, 2017, p. 2). However, the decrease in economic and financial resources and, above all, the increase in the threat of terrorism instigated the Government of Pakistan to develop and carry out a National Action Plan (NAP) in January 2015 (Ramay, 2016, p. 5) that incorporated annexures replete with rigorous operations to drive Afghans out of the country. Strategies employed for the repatriation of Afghan refugees involved brutalities such as threats and bullying by the Police which resulted in various incidents against the refugees and deprived them of stable conditions of security as compared to what they experienced in Afghanistan (Izhar Ullah, 2017; Simpson, 2017; Tramz, 2014).

The political discursive representation of Afghan refugees in the context of Pakistani Policies has provided spaces to resist ‘dominant representation’ (Cartner; 2009, p. 7). In this perspective, discourse from the UNCHR and various NGOs (International Rescue Committee (IRC), SACH, etc.) provided counter discourse to the policies devised by the Pakistani Government. The counter discourse developed represents the humanitarian violation faced by the refugees. Even though the reports by the United Nations provide statistics of violent acts, nevertheless ‘the battle being waged over the representation of refugees’ fails to project the true atrocities faced by them (p. 7). However, visuals complemented with linguistic discourse pave ways to higher audience engagement while ensuring the dissemination of message and the retention of information (Taminiaux, 2008). According to Hutcheon (2003), “photography, today is one of the major forms of discourse through which we are seen and see ourselves” (p. 55).

The current study, therefore, takes into account the photographs of Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan in order to investigate the emergence of resistance or counter discourse against state policies in the region. Keesing (1992, p. 217-225 in Kolind, 2008, p. 86) explains resistance as ‘an analytical metaphor’ characterized by an array of ‘phenomena’ – the one that never completely fits in every situation. Hence, this study attempts to highlight the ‘intricate’, ‘implicit’ and ‘subtle’ elements of resistance in the photographic representation of Afghan refugees by Muhammad Muheisen. The present study with the focus on exposure of resistance in the photographs, contemplates to prove that visuals ‘counter-ness’ only “exists in relation to the nationalist discourse” which, in this case, are State Policies or National Action Plan (NAP) instituted by the Pakistani Government.

## **Research Question**

The current paper employs cognitive grammar approach to traditional transitivity analysis and attempts to answer the following question:

1. How is socio-cognitive Representational Metafunction (Cognitive Transitivity), reflected in Afghan Refugee Photographs, constructed through cognitive discursive instance of Structural Configuration?
2. How are image schemas, narrative structures, and processes represented in the selected photographs?

## **Refugees’ or ‘Migrants’—Fuzzy Boundaries**

In 2015, narratives on ‘European Migration Crisis’ were replaced by images depicting thousands of people arriving at the shores of Greece. Ninety percent of those who arrived at the shores belonged to countries (Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq) facing war and ‘political unrest’ (Crawley & Skleparis, 2016, p. 48). In this regard, people from such socio-political contexts, reaching European borders or other relatively secure lands, are anticipated or categorized as ‘defacto refugees’. However, practices do not reflect such categorization and many of the people migrating to the Mediterranean shores are deprived of international protection and labelled as ‘economic migrants’ (p. 49).

The differentiation of refugee from migrant is a product of ‘state mechanisms’ (Dimitriadi, 2018, p. 5). Limbu (2009) termed and elaborated ‘refugee’ as a ‘bureaucratic’ and ‘humanitarian’ term; while ‘migrant’ to be a ‘humanitarian’ one but on the basis of economic policies (p. 267). Moreover, the daily media coverage related to images, blogs, policies, etc., speaking on the rights and protection of the group of refugees, also makes a distinction between migrants and refugees (Carling, 2015; Malone, 2015; Taylor 2015; Munro, 2015 in Dimitriadi, 2018).

The battle over the use of terms (migrants/refugees) altogether ignores the actual underlying contextual factor(s) that signify the word(s). The significance of employing the term 'migrants' or 'refugees' in the context of migration has real-world ramifications such as 'legitimacy' of movement and 'claims to international protection' in the lives of people migrating to a particular host country (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 49). In this regard, since the beginning of millennial American wars with Iraq and Afghanistan, various international organizations such as International Organization for Migration (IOM) and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR) have voted to use the term 'mixed flows' and also provided instructions for distinguishing between a 'migrant' and a 'refugee', mostly benefiting the latter (Dimitriadi, 2018, p. 6; Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). Thus mixed groups formed are constituted of refugees, political asylum pursuers and other migratory groups that might include people who are victims of human trafficking and smuggling and sometimes even orphaned children (Kumin, 2014). Even though the classification of groups migrating is somewhat ambiguous and incoherent, nevertheless, in order to maintain the arrival of documented/undocumented foreigners, a host state requires some sort of distinction essential for 'political power' (Collyer & de Haas, 2012; Becker, 2014, p. 468).

Pakistan has always been a friendly neighbour to Afghanistan, however, protection of Afghan war driven migrants has some limitations. Instabilities at Pakistan borders have raised the issue of IDPs and, thus, for the state/policy makers, it has become somewhat difficult to determine the particular assistance needed to a particular moved individual. Consequently, Afghan migrants are facing many issues and are forced to move back to their war-driven country. Moreover, state's decisions on categorization do not usually coincide with that of individuals migrating. Thus motivation of an individual on the basis of either economy or shelter is most of the time overlooked and becomes the prey to political power (Dimitriadi, 2018; Crawley & Skleparis, 2018; Allen et al, 2018). Afghan migrants all over the world are mostly professed as economic migrants as compared to their co-travellers i.e. Syrian migrants and therefore, most of the times, are deprived of the international protection assistance allocated for a refugee(s). Moreover, the movement of Afghans is geopolitically influenced. Thus, among the deprived groups of people, Afghans are met 'with difficulty' to the maximum (Dimitriadi, 2018, p. 5).

### **Significance of the Photographic Message**

The study illuminates the less explored area in migration and refugee studies i.e. visual representation of migrants. The migrants represented in visuals such as photographs, images, and drawings invoke a conceptual medium that is rule-governed by an implicit structure of visual language. Likewise, the textual discourse on migration and the developed message in the visuals also employ mental concepts and cognition in the form of visual grammar/visual syntax

and varying context dependent modes of expression for communication possesses (Cohn, 2007; Cohn, 2010; Miller, 2012). In this regard, visuals, in particular photographic projections of refugees' project, instil and engage their viewers in meaning making process based on their cognitive potentials i.e. mental inferences and assumptions. Therefore, apart from exercising the 'passive act' of recognizing, the photographic image invokes reading of the photograph, 'not as an image but as a text' (Clarke, 1997, p. 27; Burgin, 1982, p. 131). This visual-textual analogy is created on the basis of a relationship created between the reader of the image and the image itself; and the relationship developed is further characterized by the 'problematic', 'ambiguous' and 'contradictory' nature of the meaning(s) generated (Taminiaux, 2008, p. 27). The meaning(s) evolved is/are termed as 'photographic discourse' and is/are therefore a language with its own grammar, lexicons and syntactic structures (Burgin, 1982, p. 131).

The discourse developed is engraved with text within and, thus, like any other piece of discourse, the 'photographic text' represents and re-presents other discourses that are interwoven and intertextual (p. 131). Apart from Burgin, Breton and Barthes have also used the support of images and photographs to "suggest the complicity between the narrator and the visible universe" (Taminiaux, 2008, p. 61). Breton proposed photographs to be helpful in eliminating various long descriptions and, thus, photography 'describes [portrayed ideology] in order to signify the absence of description', which is a visual one (p. 71), and is also a form of evidence that can be subjected to various scientific methods of 'deduction and conclusion' (p. 74). Barthes, while calling photographs as 'subliminal texts', 'ontological desire', and 'critical reflection' of the producer, also emphasized that pictures have to be placed in a given social perspective in order to reveal their own 'tangible reality' (p. 98-100). The photograph both reflects and invents an ideological contextual discourse that never mirrors impartiality and is, thus, condensed with text and enriched with both practice and power of signification (Clarke, 1997, p. 28).

Photographs, apart from becoming a revolutionary part of the media (Stavropoulou, 2016), also manifest cultural perspectives in term of creating a meaning-making realm that is very much dependent on the socio-cultural context. Therefore, in order to read and construct meaningful notions of the Afghan refugee crisis in the photographs taken as data sets, it is necessary to explore and configure the implicit visual ideology as 'as messages from the refugees themselves' represented in the images (Szörényi, 2006, p. 24).

## **Data and Methods**

The study attempts to explore the ideological and political construction of counter-discourse in relation to active participants represented in the visuals. In doing so, it examines how photographs have been involved in the process of creating ideology and politics of 'otherness' to express the condition of the refugees. Baumann (2004, p. 18-19), as opposed to Lacanian 'Other', used the

term ‘othering’ to show the representation of the oppressed, which ‘denotes a more powerful figure or group that shapes one’s conception of self’. He theorizes it as ‘inextricably linked to the process of selfing’ (Ledwell, 2014, p. 8). In this regard, the current paper aims at investigating as to what extent the refugees represented serve as the instrument of ‘otherness’ portrayed by the photographer(s) as the ostracized and marginalized (Baumann & Gingrich, 2004, p. x in Ledwell, 2014, p. 8; Butler 2016; Shim & Nabers, 2011).

In order to examine the representations of Afghan refugees in the selected photographs, the study proposes a comprehensive theoretical framework by combining the fields of critical discourse analysis (CDA), social semiotics and cognitive grammar. Analysing visuals/discourse with ‘models of grammar’ is significant as they initiate comparative approaches to analysis that is not only theory based but also generates organised ‘well-founded observations and generalizations’ (Hart, 2014, p. 5, Martin 2005). Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) has been employed in many studies as it seems to be ‘natural framework’ for CDA (Halliday, 1985; O’Halloran, 2003; Young & Harrison, 2004; Leeuwen, 2006). However, these analytical frameworks are devoid of ‘cognitive import’ in the analysed texts (Billig 2003; Chilton 2005; O’Halloran 2003; Stubbs 1997; Widdowson 2008) and the gap in these analytical frames gives rise to enquire issues such as how mystification and nominalizations in texts, discourse, and speaker/hearer (O’Halloran, 2003, p. 234) simultaneously trigger cognitive form (Billig 2003). Therefore, it is becoming significant and central for a critical discourse analyst to take into account the cognitive perspective and reveal cognitive domains that involve in the meaning-making processes of the discursive realities (Chilton 2005; Van Dijk 2009; Wodak, 2006, p. 180).

Hart, in this perspective, has provided various studies on how cognition is an integral part of migration discourse and how various cognitive construal operations work to provide meanings to the representation of migrants and hosts in a migrant discourse present in the newspapers (2011a, 2011b, 2013 and 2014).

### **Representational Metafunction-Cognitive Transitivity**

Functional approach to language studies looks at language as a system of interlocked linguistic/non-linguistic choices (Halliday, 1994). This means that language is a system that is realized through the functions of given linguistic and non-linguistic choices in a discourse (Li, 2011). The functions of language such as Representational Metafunction can help reveal “what experiences, perceptions, and consciousness are embodied through language” (Li, 2011, p. 203).

Fowler (2013) points out that successful communication of ideologically oriented analysis depends on cognitive processes. Therefore, ideological discursive instances can be interpreted for underlying socio-political ideology

only when both linguistics and non-linguistic variables produce resultant cognitive (image schemas, narrative structures) effects in readers/viewers (Hart, 2014). In this regard, van Dijk (1993, 1995, 1997, 2001 and 2002) points out those ideologies in a given discourse that provide basis for socio-cognitive domain in representing social functions such as experiences and perceptions (Van Dijk, 1995). Therefore, a substantial interpretation of ideological perspectives in a given discourse is required to underscore the connection between social and cognitive functions.

Even though the functional approach to CDA and Social Semiotics do not involve cognitive domain, they do have commonalities with cognitive orientation to discourse studies (Langacker, 1991). First, both functional and cognitive linguistics emphasize that 'linguistic knowledge' is inseparable from 'non-linguistic' underlying construal operations such as gestalt image schemata (Croft and Cruse, 2004; Fauconnier, 1994; Fillmore, 1982; Hart, 2014; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Li, 2011, p. 204; Talmy, 1988). Second, both functional and cognitive approach to discourse view language as a system that reflects and constructs experiences and both linguistic and non-linguistic choices (textual/visual) are grounded in these experiences (Halliday, 1973). Thus, Halliday points out that functional linguistics does not 'contradict cognitive grammar' and is 'cognitive sympathetic' (Stockwell, 2002, p. 70) and, henceforth, cognitive-functional perspective to CDA and Social semiotics aids in both revealing the patterns of ideology and representing the consequent cognitive effects.

A crucial analytical feature of representational function of visual semiotics is transitivity. Transitivity semantically studies representation of meaning in both linguistic/non-linguistic (Li, 2011). However, the exploration of experiences and perception in a given transitivity analysis reflect embodiment and, therefore, coincides with the conceptual domains proposed in Cognitive Linguistics (Langacker, 1991; Talmy, 2000).

Construal operations in Cognitive Linguistics, are in line with 'constructivism in transitivity' (Li, 2011, p. 206) and, therefore, the set of processes in the transitivity analysis is similar to the construction of meaning through basic categories of space, time, events, entities, motion, and force i.e., image schemas (Croft and Cruse, 2004; Fowler, 2013; Hart, 2014). Transitivity structures then, not only reveal ideological patterns at semantic level but also at cognitive level through various conceptual operations such as Gestalt (Hart, 2014).

Henceforth, the study proposes a Cognitive Transitivity Model (see figure 1) and analyzes how representational Metafunction is reflected in Afghan photographic representation, through cognitive transitivity analysis. The study also analyzes how the proposed transitivity system operates ideologically through discursive strategy of Structural Configuration, which is

further realized visually/textually through variables such as Gestalt Image Schemas, narrative processes and circumstances.

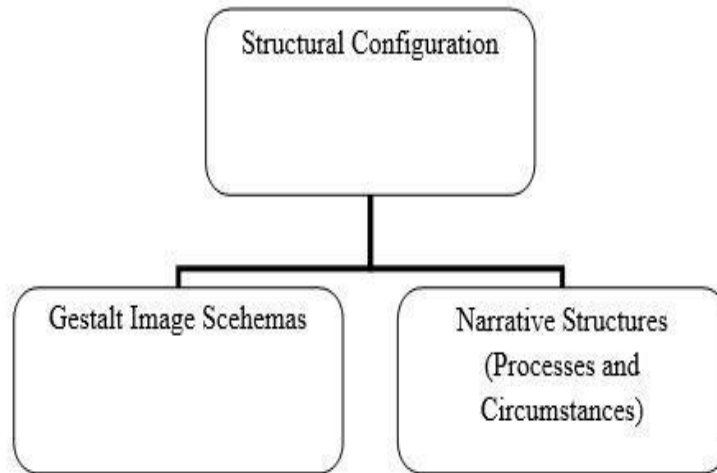


Figure 1: Cognitive Transitivity Analytical Structure

### **Cognitive Transitivity**

The study explores cognitive transitivity through discursive instance of structural configuration which is further realized through image schemas and narrative structures in the Afghan refugee photographs. Structural configuration enables conceptualisation of a given discursive event through a particular set of image schemas. In this perspective, the study explores the realization of Structural Configuration through image schemas. Johnson (2013) and Mandler (2007) define image schemas as intangible knowledge structures derived from continual patterns of experience during cognitive development. They are derived from basic dimensions such as paths, links, containers, and force. Image schemas are crucial to a given conceptual system and facilitate conceptualisation of discursive events. The study explores inventory of image schemas discussed above, drawn from Johnson (2013) and Lakoff and Turner (2009) in the photographs.

Apart from image schemas, the study also explores the narrative processes and circumstances represented in the photographs. The study explores the notion of narrative structure provided by Helen Caple (2013). Caple proposes that photographs are narrative structures that tend to ‘include participants’ represented as if in action (Caple, 2013, p. 60). Apart from this, she also limits press photographs to be non-projective ones i.e. devoid of speech bubbles as in caricature discourse. Furthermore, her model also dismisses the presence of reactional process, which categorically focuses on



participant being nominated as ‘reactor’ (p. 60). Finally, the study also explores the cognitive transitivity patterns in the textual taglines assigned by the photographer to the photographs. Processes such as material, mental, and existential were investigated to reveal the ideological structures implied by the visual producer (Photographer).

## Sample

The paper investigates Muhammad Muheisen’s Photographs (taken from his instagram/Facbook) of Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan. Muhammad Muheisen, twice the winner of the Pulitzer Prize, has been associated with National Geographic Network since 2001. His works are known for refugee coverage all over the world and he runs a non-profit Dutch foundation for refugees. Tag statements used by the photographer, to label and identify a given photograph, are also subjected to analysis for exploring the discursive strategy of Structural Configuration and variables such as image schemas, and narrative structures (processes and circumstances). The photographs chosen for the study have been sorted into five themes which are as follows:

Theme	Figure
Education For Afghan Refugees	2
Childhood in Afghan Slums	4
Afghan Women	6
Elderly in Afghan Slums	8
Livelihood of Afghan Refugees	10

Table 1: Thematic Classification of Afghan Refugee Photographs

## Data Analysis

The analysis of the selected Afghan refugee photographs reveals embodied structures in verbal (tags) and pictorial representations.

## Image Schemas

Figure 2 reflects the provision of education to the Afghan refugees. The photograph shows a makeshift school at an Afghan Slum in Pakistan.



Figure 2: 'a makeshift school in a slum in Pakistan, Afghan refugee children and internally displaced children attending a class.' (Muheisen, 2018)

The picture reflects CONTAINER Schema (see 3a) which shows Afghan children within the landmark (LM), i.e. Makeshift school, whereas the elderly man is in the exterior area i.e. outside the landmark (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 181). The LM consists of two structural elements, the interior (area within the boundary) and the area itself.

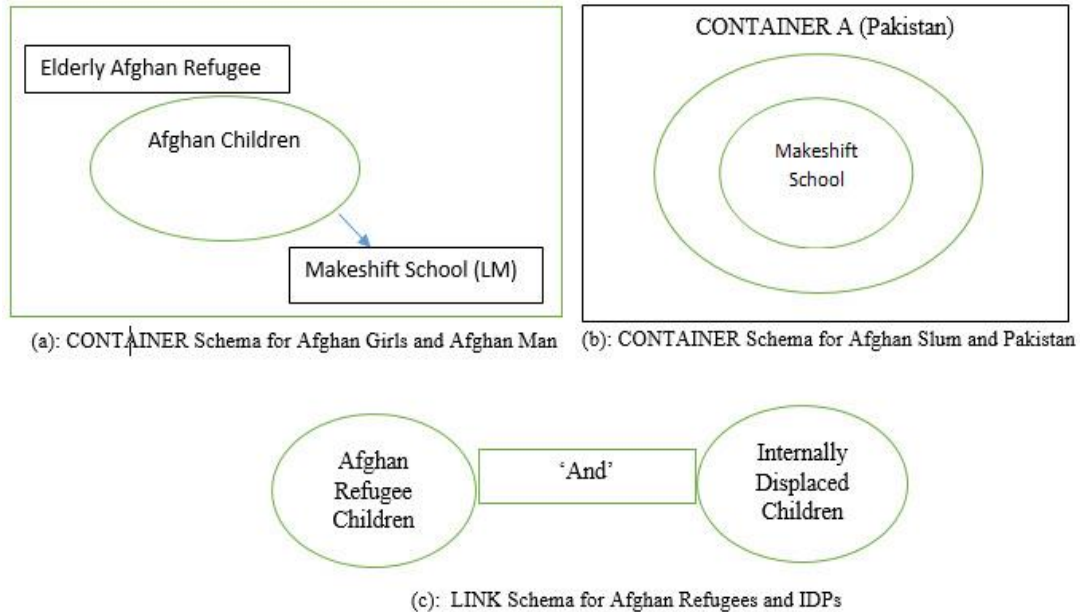


Figure 3: CONTAINER and LINK Schema

The tag statement, ‘a makeshift school in a slum in Pakistan’, also reflects two separate landmarks using nouns such as ‘slum’ and ‘Pakistan’ and preposition such as ‘in’ and thus shows that ‘a makeshift school’ is contained within Afghan Slum and Pakistan’s area boundaries (see figure 3b).

The photograph dominantly reflects the employment of Container Schema, IN-OUT. It carries a plus-minus concept i.e. it can have either positive or negative value (Krzyszowski, 1993). The Afghan refugee children studying in the makeshift school can be regarded as ‘positively charged’ due to the provision of educational facilities at the slum area (p. 317). However, the makeshift school within the premises of a ‘slum’ and being IN, suggests negative value due to adverse environment of refugee slums. Moreover, being Afghan and living in Pakistan also suggests a negative value and an axiological clash as it reflects war-driven escape of Afghan migrants and, thus, relates to the miserable separation from their homeland.

The photograph also represents Space Schema, UP-DOWN. The girls are seen sitting down and studying whereas the books are placed on the top of table, thus showing lack of resources such as essential furniture for a proper school setup. Finally, the label by the photographer expresses individuation through the use of bounded entities ‘Afghan Refugee Children and Internally Displaced Children’ based on LINK Schema (Żywicznyński et al., 2018), as in 3c, that help in constituting the basic understanding of the living conditions of refugee slums in Pakistan and also show that even though Afghan Refugees

and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are two diverse groups, they share the same war-driven migration issues.



Figure 4: 'Wishing you all a Merry Christmas, with an image of an Afghan refugee child in Pakistan holding a balloon.' (Muheisen, 2017)

The second photograph captures and represents a typical day in the life of the children living in Afghan refugee slums and camps (see, figure 4).

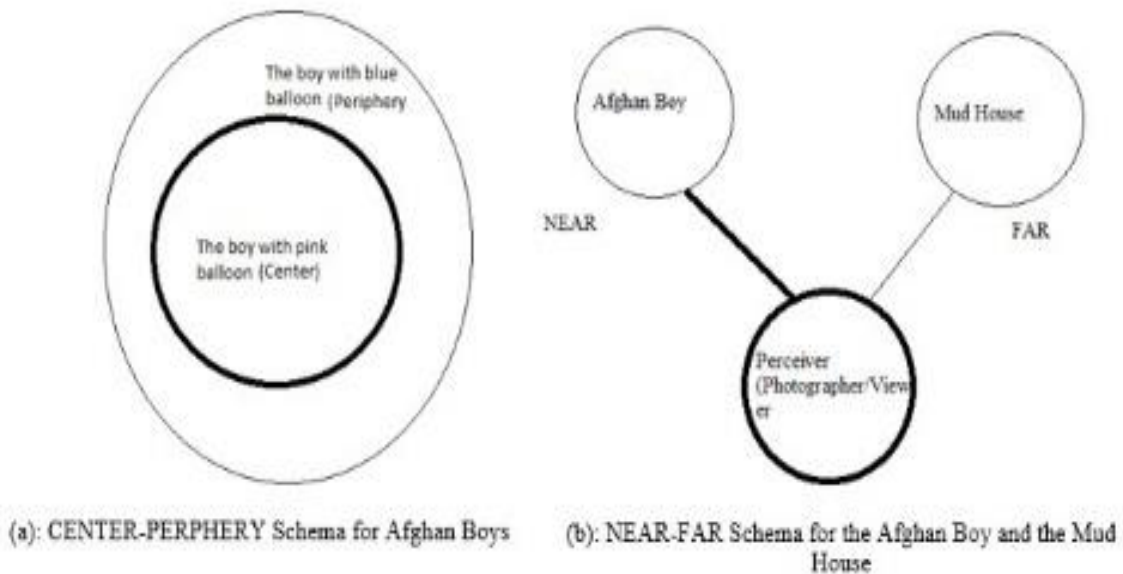


Figure 5: CENTER-PHERPHERY and NEAR FAR Schema

The picture shows PART-WHOLE Schema (see, 5a) and reveals the activities of Afghan refugee children. The picture shows a boy holding a balloon while another child behind him is also seen holding one. The balloon here represents OBJECT schema (Evans & Green, 2006; Żywicznyński et al., 2018) having physical attributes that can be quantified and, therefore, these schema occupy a particular bounded region of space. The photograph also visually shows position of the boy based on CENTER-PERIPHERY Schema. Even though, the photograph highlights another boy at a distance holding a balloon, the boy with the pink balloon is centralized. SPACE Schema in the form of NEAR-FAR (see, 5b) is also embedded within the framework of photograph. The image is captured in such a way that the boy holding the balloon is perceived as near in comparison to the mud house seen at a distance and thus schematized as far. The tag statement used by the photographer also reflects the CONTAINER Schema through the use of preposition 'in', thus determining the status of the Afghan boy as one of the migrants.



Figure 6: 'An Afghan refugee woman walks back to her mud home carrying her laundry on her head after washing it in a nearby stream on the outskirts of Islamabad.' (Muheisen, 2015)

The next photograph by Muhammad Muheisen captures and shows an Afghan woman carrying her laundry and walking towards home (see figure 6). The picture reflects SOURCE-GOAL Schema where woman (Trajector) is being shown moving towards her mud home (CONTAINER Schema). Thus the trajectory, which is shown as the entity that undergoes motion (MOTION Schema), moves from a position inside LM, 'a nearby stream' to occupy a location outside LM, as depicted in the photograph and the tagline assigned by the photographer, 'her mud home' (Cortes, 2017; Coegnants & Kravanja, 2012; Gorska, 2017). Forceville & Jeulink (2011) and Johnson (2007) elaborates that the connection between the viewer and the observed (photograph) is instigated by shifting the camera's angle from the viewer's position towards actors photographed, thus revealing 'source-path-goal image schema' (p. 183) as seen figure 7. Additionally, the attire of Afghan Refugee Woman is also based on CONTAINMENT Schema, i.e. traditional dress of Afghan women is to be worn to cover their bodies completely or to be contained in it.

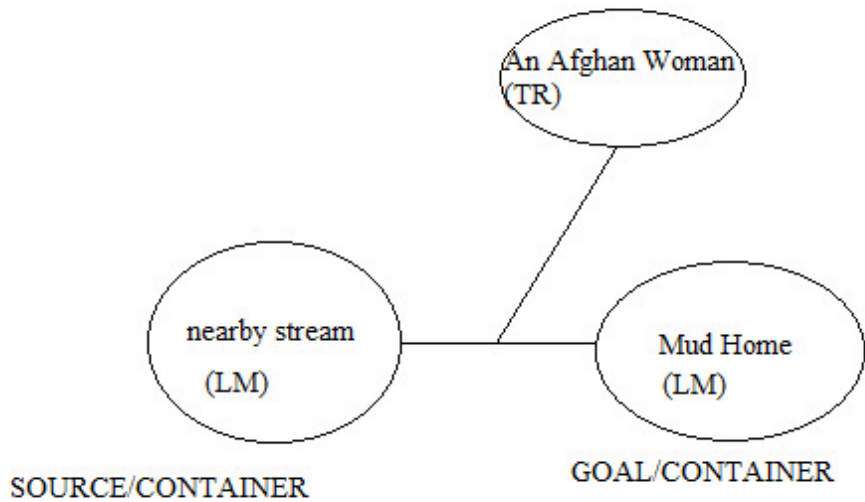


Figure 7: SOURCE-GOAL Schema

The phrase ‘carrying her laundry on her head’ in the tag statement is based on BALANCE Schema where the Afghan woman is giving the embodied meaning of balancing her laundry on her head reflecting the force dynamics of balance of strength i.e. herself being the stronger entity and her laundry being the weaker entity (Talmy, 1988). The representation of Afghan woman, actively participating in daily chores, also reflects the prevalence of balance in the Afghan refugee slum, i.e., Afghan women work along with their men to organize the daily chores. Finally, the word ‘nearby’ is based on embodied experiences of NEAR-FAR Schema.

The photograph in figure 8, captured by Muheisen project the OBJECT Schema i.e. cow and other animals are shown as entities in the image.



Figure 8: 'An elderly Afghan refugee man feeds his cow in a slum near Islamabad.'  
(Muheisen, 2015)

The visual and verbal count noun 'cow' reflects perceptual experiences that can mediate transformation between the COUNT schema which relates to the grouping of individual entities that can be individuated and counted (Lakoff, 1987). Moreover, the CENTER-PERIPHERY schema is also projected by camera zooming to foreground the elderly man and his cow, whereas the slums and Afghan refugees are shown in the background.



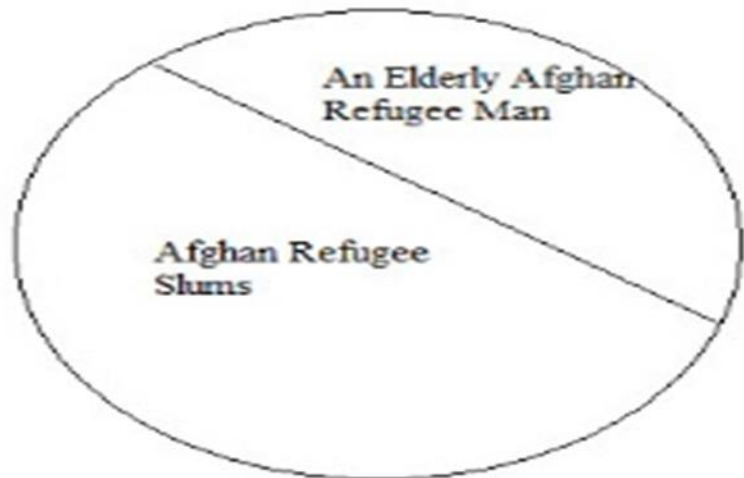


Figure 9: PART-WHOLE Schema

The visual also depicts the PART-WHOLE Schema structuring embodied experiences of the elderly Afghan Refugee with his other refugee migrants (Croft & Cruise, 2004) (see figure 9). Finally, the prepositions used in the tag statement such as 'in' and 'near' impose CONTAINMENT and NEAR-FAR Schemas respectively.



Figure 10: 'Afghan refugee youth push a wooden-cart along an alley of a slum as the sun sets on the outskirts of Islamabad, Pakistan.' (Muheisen, 2015)

The last photograph presents the employment conditions of the Afghan refugees living in the slums of Pakistan (see figure 10).

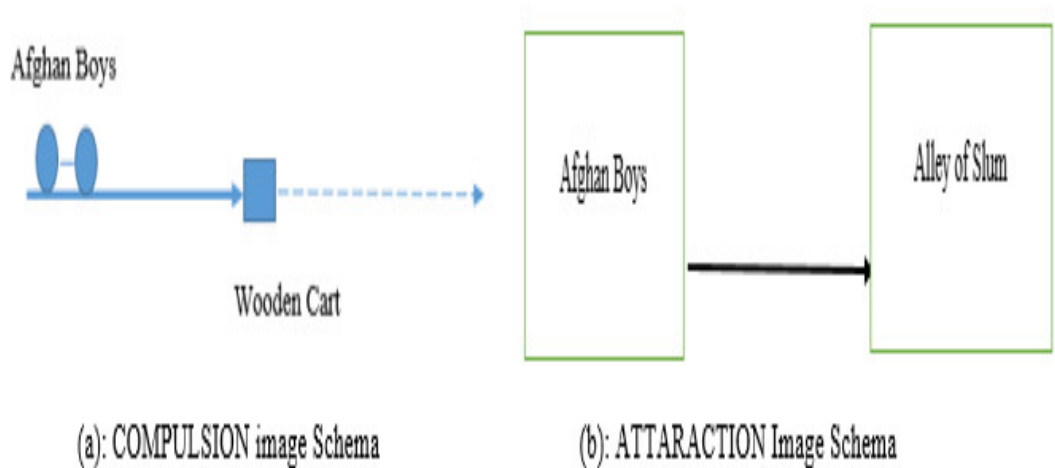


Figure 11: COMPULSION and ACTION Schema

The picture projects clusters or networks of related FORCE image schemas that are diagrammed below. Johnson (1987) identified seven force schemas (BALANCE, COUNTER-FORCE, COMPULSION, BLOCKAGE, RESTRAINT, and ATTRACTION), however, the visuo-verbal modes of the photograph are based on few of them. COMPULSION Force Schema is observed as Afghan boys are seen pushing a wooden cart in the picture while the tag statement also relates the same. COMPULSION Schema emerges from the experience of being moved by an external force, i.e. in the case of the photograph, Afghan boys are represented as external force and wooden cart is being moved on. ATTRACTION Schema (Evan &Green, 2006) also emerges in the verbal-visuo representation. The Afghan boys are seen to push the wooden cart along 'an alley of slum' inclined to follow the path or the alley (See figure 11).

Finally, the setting of the sun in the background produces experiences of SOURCE-PATH-GOAL Schema and CYCLE Schema as the rising and setting of the sun is a cyclic activity that is experienced in daily routine. These schemas relate to the cyclic routine of the Afghan migrants that show, how like the sun, their routine carries on without substantial change in their condition.

### Narrative Structures, Circumstances and Processes

The conceptual structures are characteristically realized by 'taxonomical' representations, while narrative structures involve participants representing actions and events (Caple, 2013, p. 59). In this regard, the selected photographs on the whole represent narrative structures. Moreover, press photographs represent non-projective processes because verbal/speech bubbles do not feature in them. Figure 2, representing narrative structures that are non-

projective in nature, reflects a series of actions (agentive) with 13 actors (refugees) in all (Caple, 2013). The actors in the pictures such as Afghan children, the old man, and a boy are all shown gazing down to objects such as books, hand pump and the ground (Goals). Vectors are formed of the downward gazes of the Afghan Children reading, old man, and the Afghan boy. The gazes of actors are directed towards an inanimate object and, therefore, the narrative structure can be summed as action that is unidirectional and transactional (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). Besides, another action process is expressed by the diagonal table. It is a non-transactional process, since it is not instigated by persons or things and, therefore, does not represent a Goal. Thus, non-transactional processes are analogous to intransitive verbs in language.

In a similar fashion, Figure 10 also represents principal participants i.e. two Afghan boys as Actors and a wooden Cart as a Goal. The vector in the photograph is established with the eye gaze of the boys directed towards the cart and, as mentioned earlier, since the actions of the boys are aimed at an inanimate object i.e. the wooden cart, the narrative structure is unidirectional.

Figure 4, represents a boy holding a balloon and reflects a less common narrative structure in press photography. The image shows actors (boy holding the balloon, Afghan children playing and an old man) and the vectors (outstretched arm of the boy holding the string of the balloon, standing posture of the old man and gaze of Afghan Children), but no Goal. This narrative structure is termed as non-transactional. The vectors originating from the actors direct the viewer's eyes to the emptiness left by the photographer.

Likewise, figure 6, also represents a non-transactional narrative structure, where vectors such as woman holding her laundry is shown without a specified Goal (object). While this imagining/visualizing of the missing information may happen in an instant, it does invoke cognitive effort from the reader and, thus, instigate the already set image schemas. The two images can be classified as action and non-transactional.

Figure 8 contains two foregrounded actors who are engaged in direct correspondence. The position of the old man feeding his cow and the cow responding and eating the fodder forms a clear connection (vector) between the two prominent Actors. They are in connection with each other, thus both portraying roles of actors and goals simultaneously. This construction can be considered as 'action, transactional and bidirectional' (Caple, 2013, p. 60).

What is evident from the representational analysis is that the actors are all shot in a 'recognisable' physical setting Caple (2013) such as mud houses, makeshift schools, scattered garbage, Afghan migrants, lack of basic facilities and the inclusion of animate and inanimate objects. The settings also reflect the adverse living conditions of the Afghan migrants and, thus, contravene Pakistan's policies on the issue of Afghan refugees.

Means of a process are also represented in the photographs. The tools such as books, hand pump, balloon, laundry, wooden cart, etc. reflect not only the means of execution of the action in the images but also help understand the formation of vectors. Finally, the relation of Circumstance of Accompaniment has been represented from distinct participants in the images such as Afghan children (figure 4), Afghan boy, and mud house (figure 6), Afghan refugees, and mud houses (figure 8) and the sun, sewerage canal, and a chicken (figure 10). Therefore, these participants have no 'vectorial relation' with other participants in the narrative structures presented in the photographs. Conclusively, investigating representational meanings in photographs is central to the 'visual structuring of elements' in a given picture (Caple, 2013, p. 69) and to present "unfolding actions, and events, processes of changes, transitory spatial arrangements" (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006, p. 79).

The taglines addressing the photographs are also analysed to explore the represented transitivity processes and participants, and semantic categorisation is explored based on SFG. It can be seen from the taglines that Afghan migrants are prominently highlighted as noun phrases and Actors in action (agentive). Noun phrases, such as 'Afghan Refugee Children' (figure 2), 'Afghan Refugee Child' (figure 4), 'Afghan Refugee Woman' (figure 6), 'Elderly Afghan Refugee man' (figure 8) and 'Afghan Refugee Youth' (figure 10), depict the photographer's ideological position about the Afghan migrants. Amongst the processes, Material process dominates the tagline discourse in verbs such as 'attending', 'walks', 'caring', 'washing', 'feeds', 'pushes' and shows the action performed by the Actors i.e. Afghan migrants carrying out their everyday chores. Existential process is expressed through the use of verb 'sets' for the noun phrase 'sun' to depict existence of sun as the only facility of light and also shows lack of effective shelter facilities. Mental and relational process in the form of the verb 'wishing' and its relation with the Afghan refugee child reflects the sympathetic inclination of the photographer. The verb 'wishing' also reflects an Existential process substantiating the presence of the photographer through the depiction of the expletive empty 'there' (Hancock, 2005, p. 240). Moreover, the taglines reveal the lack of verbal processes and, thus, depict the marginalization and passivity of the Afghan community living in Pakistan. Finally, noun phrases such as 'makeshift school', 'slum' 'mud home' 'outskirts', 'along an alley' and 'nearby stream', apart from indicating the locative circumstance, invoke the conceptualization of living conditions of the Afghan Migrants, lack of basic home making facilities, their marginalization by the Pakistan Government and lack of employment amenities.

## Discussion

Employing cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis and social semiotics, this study has examined cognitive domains and proposed cognitive transitivity model. This study, proposing cognition as a part of transitivity patterns, reveals visual structures in the Afghan refugee photographs and reflects producer's (Photographer's) own philosophically

constructed conceptualisation of events that he wishes to stimulate in order to recognise socio-political discursive goal, the miserable plight of the Afghan refugees living in Pakistan.

Employing cognitive transitivity analysis, the study explores discursive strategy of Structural Configuration which reveals how a particular text/visual producer imposes mental representations (image schemas) to construct our understanding of event structures (narrative structures and processes). Findings of the study reveal the explored image schemas and narrative structures in the photographs. The results show the prominent use of CONTAINER and SPACE Schema. The photographs capturing Afghan refugees contained in mud houses, refugee slums, and makeshift schools reflect their marginalized conditions and highlight the outsider status of the Afghan Migrants. The use of FORCE schema to depict the employment status of refugees reflect that, even in the presence of technological advancement, the migrants are restricted to do basic jobs that employ basic tools such as wooden cart. Other Image Schemas such as UNITY, SCALE, and EXISTENCE impose mental representations of Afghans becoming a marginalized minority and reflect the photographer's attempts to show the callous treatment given to these migrants and voice the plight of passive Afghan refugees.

Narrative processes and circumstances were also explored to construct cognitive transitivity analysis. The analysis of process types elaborates the identity at stake by connecting a particular social group with specific actions. In the case of this study, the photographs revealed Afghan refugees mostly as actors and involved in action/material processes both at visual (Photographs) and textual (Taglines). The photographer communicates socio-cognitive representations of the social group through the processes represented in the visuals. In doing so, the photographer informs his ideology as social practice translated into visual constructions to develop a sympathetic view towards the migrants. Prominent use of material process reflects the daily life chores that an Afghan refugee has to carry out in order to sustain life and, therefore, by capturing such narrative structures and process, the photographer attempts to invite a humanitarian discourse to emerge.

The photographer being a part of media has tried to play a proactive role in capturing the problems of Afghan refugees and exposing discrepancies in NAP which, even though it addresses the issues of Afghan refugees, has failed to develop a comprehensive policy. The unplanned repatriation of Afghan refugees has damaged Pakistan's soft image and 'from a hospitable host', Pakistan "is a country now reluctant to house the remaining refugees" (Guffran, 2006, p. 83). As a result, Afghans are facing mounting challenges such as shutting of camps, depriving of educational facilities, etc., in the face of policy implementation. The depiction of Afghans as a wretched community echoes the silent, couched counter voice of the refugees and even though, the counter-ness in the counter discourse "bears an antagonistic relationship with the dominant discourse", the photographs are an ideological attempt to

suggest change of roles. The photographs capturing the atrocities of Afghans, albeit a weak one, do oppose the strategic discourse (policy) developed (Heracleous, 2006, p. 1060).

## Conclusion

In his work *Anti-Semite and Jew*, Sartre (1948) reviews the status of the dominant media constructions which reduce the identity of the exile to something that works within its own system of representation. Just as prominent media's sovereign position seeks to exorcise the other by reimagining them as inhuman, Edward Said's *After the Last Sky* comments on Palestinian lives as they are captured by Jean Mohr, the Swiss photographer. The book provides a counter view to the notion of representing Palestinians as terrorists and highlights the complex realities of Palestinian identities. The text and photos are noteworthy for their appealing and passionate interplay and, thus, the photographs provide validation to Said's textual depiction of Palestinian conditions (Said, 1999). This study provides space for counter identification of the refugees and implies the repositioning of the exiles as someone to be saved. The photographs construct the events as a collision to the prevalent law and political structures about Afghan Migration and, thus, reflect the ignorance of personhood of the refugee (Holohan, 2019). The various structuring of events in the visuals echo ideological preferences of the photographer who wants his viewers to know, review, and implement humane policies for the Afghan refugees.

At the linguistic level, the cognitive transitivity structures used in the visuals are realized both semantically and syntactically in the photographs. Such structures in each image translate and imply state's stance towards Afghan migrants, and also reveal the connection between visuo-verbal elements and socio-political concerns. Therefore, the connection developed between construal of events in cognitive linguistics to processes and narratives structures in SFG has enabled the researchers to consider the inseparable interwoven threads between language, social meaning, and cognition (Li, 2011).

**Note:** This paper has been extracted from Sara Khan's PhD thesis entitled "Socio-Cognitive Investigation of Migrant Counter Discourse through Photographic Projection of Afghan Refugees."

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