Multimodal Principles of Jocular Mockery in Political Advertisements

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Abstract

This paper highlights the importance of multimodality as a means to the analysis of jocular mockery in political advertisements. Indeed, jocular mockery has long attracted the attention of scholars due to its importance in daily interactional discourse both within and across cultures. Nevertheless, there is still much forsaken territory to be covered, especially with regards to the way it has been employed in political contexts. Moreover, the focus of pragmatic studies has always been on the verbal aspects of jocular mockery, with the non-verbal aspects being unappreciated despite their significant role in the assignment of meaning. Accordingly, the present paper set itself the task of redressing this imbalance by elevating jocular mockery to a whole new level of linguistic analysis. The endeavor of this paper is thus two-folded, firstly with regards to shedding light on the overlooked language of jocular mockery, and secondly in term of pinpointing the multimodal principles of jocular mockery in political advertisements, which embeds both verbal and non-verbal meaning.
Keywords: jocular mockery; multimodality; pragmatics; politics; advertisements

1.   Introduction

Discourse studies display, by their nature, a strong affinity to language. Language, after all, is the most prominent resource for the social construction of reality and the storage of social knowledge (Berger and Luckmann 1967). Unfortunately, this also means that in actual analysis, researchers often focus on written and spoken verbal text, and ignore, or at least downplay, the importance of other information. Multimodal analysis (e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 2001; Kress 2010) aims at addressing this shortcoming in existing research and acknowledges the multitude of different materials and 'meaning resources' that people use to create and distribute meaningful signs. Over the last decade, multimodal discourse analysis has gained considerable momentum, resulting in a number of edited volumes on the subject (e.g., Jewitt, 2009; LeVine and Scollon 2004; O'Halloran 2004; Royce and Bowcher 2007).

According to Kress (2010: 79), 'mode is a socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning. Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack, and 3D objects are examples of modes used in representation and communication'. Note that Kress uses the term 'mode' in the sense of a 'resource', something to be employed in order to create meaning. How a particular act of communication is screated, then, depends on which resources are available and regarded as appropriate in a specific social situation. Within a particular cultural domain, similar meanings can be expressed in different modes (e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 2001).

2.   Multimodal Principles of Jocular Mockery

According to Kress (2010: 28), a multimodal discourse conveys meaning through a combination of two or more modes. Each mode has its own specific task and function in the meaning making process, and usually carries only a part of the message in a multimodal text. In the following, the five main semiotic modes are discussed with their multimodal principles in accordance with the language of jocular mockery.

2.1. Linguistic Mode

The linguistic mode includes principles that may be spoken or written verbal language. On the one hand, the spoken (oral) meaning is conveyed through spoken language via live or recorded speech and can be monologic or dialogic. Choice of words, phrases, and sentences are organized through linguistic grammar conventions, register, and genre. Composing oral meaning includes choices around mood, emotion, emphasis, fluency, speed, volume, tempo, pitch, rhythm, pronunciation, intonation, and dialect. On the other hand, written meaning is conveyed through written language via handwriting, the printed page, and the screen. Choices of words, phrases, and sentences are organized through linguistic grammar conventions, register (where language is varied according to context), and genre (knowledge of how a text type is organized and staged to meet a specific purpose).

With regards to advertisements, some may include both, usually motion commercials, while others include one or the other, and at times very little is employed at all in communication, as the case with the new trend of minimalist advertising, which challenges the ornamentation and "noise" of traditional advertising.

Discursive Cues

A discourse that is characterized by cohesion and fluency is most likely one which is enriched with a rainbow of discourse cues. There flexibility in use is what makes them a recurrent feature of everyday language use. Discourse markers and discourse connectives are common types of discourse cues that ensure connectivity and logic in any given discourse. Whatever their functions may be, both groups of discourse cues help make what is being said clearer for the receiver, as well as add order and structure to the message communicated.

To begin with, discourse markers are words or phrases commonly used to manage what is being said or written. More importantly, their use is mostly decisive in expressing the attitude of the speaker or writer, which is an important factor in any critical analysis of language use. Thus, when used cleverly, they may help orient the receiver and in turn influence opinions and inflict ideologies. Some familiar examples of discourse markers and their functions are presented below:

Table 1. *Discourse Markers and their Functions*

No.	Discourse Markers	Function	Meaning
1.	Well	To give yourself time to think	Hesitant
2.	My point is, I mean, I guess	To introduce personal opinion	Reassurance
3.	You know, you see	To talk about shared knowledge	Rapport
4.	What I mean is, in other words	To say something in another way	Insistent
5.	Actually, I have to say	To preface what you really think	Stalling

In a study of Donald Trump's political rhetoric, Boyanska (2018) conducted a critical discourse analysis of the recurrent discourse markers in Trump's political discourse. Based on

his linguistic strategy during the 2016 presidential debates, Trump was shown to have used three recurrent discourse markers, namely "Well", "Believe me", and "By the way". All in all, the study highlights the important role of discourse markers in capturing public appeal, which may as well have been what led to Trump's victory in the elections.

Similarly, Schnoebelen (2016) linguistically studies Trump's use of "believe me" in opposition to Hillary Clinton's use of "I believe". Findings proved that in debates, Donald Trump has said "I believe" only 15 times compared to his 40 uses of "believe me". By contrast, Hillary Clinton has, over the years, said "I believe" 125 times and only said "believe me" once. The study also indicates that "believe me" has the form of an imperative: on the surface it is a command to trust. In other words, it directs the audience to attend to what the speaker (me) is saying. This is crucial in political discourse, where it is necessary for audiences to understand the belief structures of candidates.

With regards to discourse connectives, the matter exceeds connecting sentences and moves on to include paragraphs and full texts. By helping build the logical flow of ideas, connectives are crucial to signaling the relationship between sentences and paragraphs. Furthermore, these words and expressions may function differently, whether it is to develop, relate, connect, or even move ideas about in any given discourse. Note some of the more commonly used connectives in the table below:

Table 2. *Discourse Connectives and their Functions*

No.	Connectives	Function
1.	and, also, besides, furthermore, too, moreover, then, equally important, another	Addition
2.	like, in the same manner (way), as so, similarly	Comparison
3.	consequently, thus, since, therefore, for this reason, because of this	Result
4.	for this purpose, with this in mind, for this reason	Purpose
5.	for example, to illustrate, for instance, to be specific, such as, especially	to signal an example or emphasize

Connectives, also known as conjunctions, contribute immensely to discourse structure, namely by indicating the semantic meaning or relationship between what has been said and what is to come. As reported by Schleppeğrell (1996: 280), this is done by creating cohesion in texts, spoken or written, by indicating linkages across varying spans of discourse, and by signaling transitions and displaying the purpose or direction of development of the discourse.

2.1.1. Context Cues
Generally, context clues are hints that an author gives to help define a difficult or unusual word. The clue may appear within the same sentence as the word to which it refers, or it may follow in a preceding sentence. Because most of one's vocabulary is gained through reading, it is an important skill to be able to recognize and take advantage of context clues.

2.1.2. There are at least four kinds of context clues that are quite common
a)   a synonym (or repeat context clue) which appears in that sentence.
b)   an antonym (or contrast context clue) that has the opposite meaning, which can reveal the meaning of an unknown term.
c)   an explanation for an unknown word is given (a definition context clue) within the sentence or in the sentence immediately preceding.
d)   and specific examples (an example context clue) used to define the term.

Additionally, there may also be word-part context clues in which a common prefix, suffix, or root will suggest at least part of the meaning of a word. A general sense context clue lets the reader puzzle out a word meaning from whatever information is available – and this is the most common kind of context clue.

2.1.3. *Others describe context clues in three ways:*

a)   semantic or meaning clues, e.g., when reading a story about cats, good readers develop the expectation that it will contain words associated with cats, such as "tail," "purr," "scratch," and "whiskers".

b)   syntactic or word order clues where the order of the words in a sentence can indicate that a missing word must be (for example, a verb);

c)   and picture clues where illustrations help with the identification of a word.

It should be noted that in reality, communication has a much wider bandwidth than merely words in written form. Indeed, there are tons of other cues depending on the mode, such as prosody (the rhythm of language), facial gestures, and tone of voice. All of these cues are used to guess what a person meant by an utterance.

2.1.4. *Ideophones (Iconicity)*

In the past few years, the typologically widespread phenomenon of ideophones has been defined as "marked words that depict sensory imagery, which belong to an open lexical class" (Dingemanse 2011; Dingemanse 2012; Dingemanse 2019). In other terms, words that tend to evoke an idea in a sound are commonly referred to as ideophones. These are most often vivid impressions of certain sensations or sensory perceptions, as for instance sound (onomatopoeia), movement, color, shape, or action (Nuckolls, 2004: 131).

With regards to word class, ideophones are sometimes known to belong to the phonosemantic class. Indeed, this is not a grammatical word class in the traditional sense of the word (like verbs or nouns), but rather a lexical class based on the special relationship between form and meaning exhibited by ideophones (Voeltz and Kilian-Hatz, 2001: 2). Therefore, ideophones are often characterized as being iconic or sound-symbolic words, meaning that there can be a resemblance between their form and their meaning.

Quite often, ideophones are discussed under other labels, be it descriptives, expressives, interjections, or onomatopoeia. According to Akita and Dingemanse (2019), while onomatopes depict only sound, ideophones depict sensory imagery of all types. In other words, onomatopoeia can be understood as one type of iconic mapping between form and meaning, alongside a number of other mappings. It is worth noting that ideophones are regarded as a specific type of iconicity, namely the imagic type. This sheds light on the notion of iconicity, which is defined as "the resemblance-based mapping between aspects of form and meaning" (Dingemanse et al., 2015).

More importantly, it should be noted that ideophones are not restricted to language in its written and spoken form only. In fact, ideophones work across different modalities to convey greater meaning and motivate greater sensory experience. A multimodal depiction of ideophones is popular among comic book studies (Petersen 2009; Guynes 2014; Pratha et al. 2016; Sasamoto 2019). As well as the attention it receives in studies of multimodal metaphor (Forceville et al. 2010; 2014).

2.1.5. *Interjections (Indexicality)*

As defined by David (2003: 96), an interjection is a word or expression that usually occurs as an utterance on its own and expresses a spontaneous feeling or reaction. In

Zandvoort's terms, interjections are simply "natural ejaculations" (1948: 224). It is indeed a diverse category, encompassing many different parts of speech, including exclamations (ouch!, wow!), curses (damn!), greetings (hey, bye), response particles (okay, oh!, m-hm, huh?), hesitation markers (uh, er, um), and other words (stop, cool). Additionally, the category of interjections is also known to overlap with a few other categories like profanities, discourse markers, and fillers.

From Quirk et al.'s point of view, interjections are purely emotive words which have no referential content. Moreover, some have phonological features that lie outside the regular system of language (whew, tut-tut). Interjections vary considerably according to their language functions. Such functions include surprise (Oh); satisfaction or recognition (Ah); jubilant surprise (Oho, Wow); excitement or delight (Yippee); pain (Ouch, Ow), to name just a few (Quirk et al., 1973: 413).

Accordingly, Ameka (1992) distinguishes between type types of interjections: primary and secondary. The former are "little words or non-words which in terms of their distribution can constitute an utterance by themselves and do not normally enter into construction with other word classes", for example *Wow!* and *Ouch!* (Ameka, 1992: 105). The latter type refers to "those words which have an independent semantic value, but which can be used conventionally as utterances by themselves to express a mental attitude or state", for example *My God!* and *Bloody hell!* (Ibid: 111).

Based on their communicative functions, Ameka (1992) further classifies primary interjections into three main types: expressive, conative, and phatic, which are summarized in the table below.

Table 3. *Primary Interjections and their Functions*

No	Primary Interjection	Function	Example
1.	Expressive	to express emotions and cognition (speaker's state)	Yuk! "I feel disgusted" Aha! "I now know this"
2.	Conative	to get attention or demand action (speaker's wishes)	Sh! "I want silence here" Eh? "I want to know something"
3.	Phatic	used in conversations for back channeling and feedback signaling (i.e., establishing and maintaining communicative contact)	Mhm Uh-huh Yeah

2.1.6. Ideographs (Symbolicity)

In political discourse, an array of ideologically positioned words and phrases are known to manifest and commend the public language, as with the case of ideographs. Also known as a virtue word, an ideograph refers to an abstract concept that is frequently used in political discourse to develop support for political positions by creating or reinforcing particular ideologies. Notably, such words usually do not have a clear definition, but rather are used to give the impression of a clear meaning. From a rhetorical perspective, ideographs are foundational blocks that function to summarize the orientation or attitude of an ideology. Significantly, ideographs are commonly known to surface in advertising, precisely in political campaign advertisements, as persuasive tools for the political speaker.

Robertson defines ideographs as "political slogans or labels that encapsulate ideology in political discourse" (Jasinski, 2001: 308). Meanwhile, Celeste Condit and John Lucaites, influenced by McGee, explain, "Ideographs represent in condensed form the normative,

collective commitments of the members of a public, and they typically appear in public argumentation as the necessary motivations or justifications for action performed in the name of the public" (Condit & Lucaites: 1993: xxii).

Ideographs, then, are mediating links between concrete instances of political discourse and more abstract ideas of political ideology. Hence, their power rests in their ability to instigate social control, namely though the necessary motivations or justifications for action performed in the name of the public. In his study of ideographs, Frank Lutz concluded that advertisers can utilize ideographs as "trigger words" in an advertising campaign (Luntz, 2007).

Marked by angle brackets (< >), some common examples of ideographs include <liberty>, <freedom>, <democracy>, and <rights>. Surprisingly, there is no absolute litmus test for what terms are or are not ideographs, since this is a matter of discourse. McGee (1980) identified several examples of ideographs in Western liberal political discourse, such as <liberty>, <property>, <freedom of speech>, <religion>, and <equality>. It should be noted that, in each case, the term does not have a specific referent. Rather, each term refers to an abstraction which may have many different meanings depending on its context. It is in their mutability between circumstances that give the terms such rhetorical power.

No doubt, ideographs appear in advertising and political campaigns regularly, and are crucial to helping the public understand what is really being asked of them. For example, "equality" is a term commonly used in political discourse and rarely defined. It can refer to a situation in which all people have the same opportunities, or a condition in which social resources are distributed uniformly to different individuals and groups (Jasinski, 2001: 310). The former is the more commonly used definition in US history, according to Condit & Lucaites, although in a socialist or left-leaning political state, the term may refer foremost to the distribution of social resources. Condit and Lucaites depict the racial facet of equality as the dominant meaning in an American context of political discourse, since 1865 (Condit & Lucaites, 1993: xvii).

2.1.7. *Political Metaphors*

Metaphor has been a point of interest for many linguists ever since the ancient times. Following the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphor's we live by* (1980), there was a notable expansion in research concerning metaphorical language and use. They explained the definition of metaphor by the general rule of "X (source) is Y (target)" by maintaining that metaphors generally depend on a relationship of similarity between the two entities. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3), there is a close connection between language, metaphors, and thought, which is the reason why people think in metaphors and transfer their own values and beliefs into them, through positive or negative associations.

The theory of metaphor was further developed by Lakoff and Johnson to be formally known as the "cognitive linguistic view of metaphor". Thus, metaphors were regarded as matters of conceptualization; a correlation between two conceptual domains: the source and target. Moreover, with conceptual metaphors, a larger semantic field is included and hence their meaning is more general (Lakoff, 1986: 218). By asserting that "different linguistic expressions do not necessarily have different metaphorical meanings", Lakoff (1986: 224) points out that "the meaning of the metaphor is cognitive and depends on the mental process in which the expression is treated." Therefore, metaphorical meanings largely depend on their context, even if the linguistic expressions were similar.

Lakoff and Johnson (2004, 15-46) classify conceptual metaphors into three main groups

according to their cognitive role: structural, orientational, and ontological. The following table details the distinction between them (ibid: 36-38):

Table 4. *Types of Conceptual Metaphors*

No.	Conceptual metaphor	Description	Example
1.	Structural Metaphors	• one concept is realized with the help of the other	• LIFE IS A JOURNEY • TIME IS MONEY
2.	Orientational Metaphors	• the entire system of terms is organized in relation to the other based on our physical and cultural experience	• HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP DISEASE AND DEATH ARE DOWN
3.	Ontological Metaphors	• created either by reification or personification abstract events, actions, and emotions become shaped entities or physical objects	• THE INFLATION IS THE ENTITY THE SOUL IS A FRAGILE OBJECT

Political metaphors are symbolically relevant to the goals of politicians and political parties. Such metaphors not only persuade to gain or keep power, but also work to emphasize suitable issues and hide others (Beard, 2000: 36). In light of this, political metaphors are efficient in how vividly and convincingly they symbolize their arguments, rather than how honestly, they convey it to the receiver. Moreover, in order for the metaphor to be affective it requires background knowledge of the world, society, and context in which it is used (Goatly, 1997: 137).

Beard (1997: 17-21) claims that the strategically skillful use of metaphor in political discourse is a gateway to the emotions and beliefs of the receiver, in a way that feels naturally convincing and significantly effective. Obviously, the deliberate choice of words is driven by the ideologies of the writer or speaker with the general aim of appealing to the larger public.

2.2. *Visual Mode*

The visual mode is conveyed through choices of visual resources and includes both still image and moving images. Images may include diverse cultural connotations, symbolism and portray different people, cultures and practices. Visual resources include framing, phrasing, vectors, symbols, perspective, gaze, point of view, color, texture, line, shape, casting, saliency, distance, angles, form, power, involvement/detachment, contrast, lighting, naturalistic/non-naturalistic, camera movement, and subject movement.

2.2.1. *Framing and Phrasing*

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

As a specific feature of visual communication, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 2-3) assert that 'framing' is a reference to the "way elements of visual composition may be disconnected or marked off from each other" in a given context, as for instance in cases of framelines, empty space between elements, discontinuities of color, and so on. Moreover, the concept is further extended to include "the ways in which elements of a composition may be connected to each other" as through continuities and similarities of color, visual shape and the like. Significantly, there exists a relationship of similarity between form and meaning, i.e., iconicity, where "the disconnected elements will be read as, in some sense, separate and independent, perhaps even as contrasting units of meaning, whereas connected elements will be read as belonging together in some sense, as continuous or complementary" (ibid).

Political campaign advertisements provide the perfect canvas for framing, which usually acts as an aid to the transmission of embedded messages. In figure (2), the red and blue colors act as visual boundaries between the two candidates, hence, an indication of their rivalry, as well as being symbolic of their political parties: red for Republicans and blue for Democrats. The American flag breaks the visual separation and highlights the bigger cause, the future of America. Contrariwise, figure (1) exhibits visual integration, with the red color acting as the equalizer and common denominator between the two candidates. The jocular mockery rests behind the visual and verbal message in the poster advertisement, which seems to stress the rejection of both candidates, as if to say that "they both belong to the same team and are unfit to lead America." Comically, the caption "Nope & Noper" is a case of intertextuality, with reference to Peter Farrelly's 1994 comedy film "Dumb and Dumber".

As a multimodal principle, framing exists not only between the elements of a visual composition, but as Kress and Van Leeuwen (1998) assert, it also exists in verbal, gestural, and spatial modes. Yet, in cases of time-based modes, "'framing' becomes 'phrasing' and is realized by the short pauses and discontinuities of various kinds (rhythmic, dynamic, etc.) which separate the phrases of speech, of music and of actors' movements" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 3). In light of this, framing is treated as a common semiotic principle, which is differently realized in different semiotic modes.

2.2.2. Executional Cues

In the realm of advertising and digital marketing, there are cues of the visual type which help viewers' make sense of information quickly. Although seemingly trivial, these tiny details come prepackaged with expectations, working as a sort of mental shortcut for users. On the visual mode, and in advertising to be precise, colors have been known to serve as persuasive executional cues that help build the likability and acceptance of a message. Significantly, using vibrant colors to convey meaning is accompanied by the act of manipulating viewers' feelings and moods so as to get the message across and reach the target audience.

An experimental study conducted by Gorn et al. (1997) claimed that the three dimensions of color: hue, chroma, and value, were all significantly important in the manipulation of viewers' feelings and attitudes. The study concluded that ads containing colors with a higher level of value lead to greater liking for the ad, and this effect is mediated by the greater feelings of relaxation elicited by the higher value color. Moreover, feelings play an equally important role in the effect of chroma, where it was proven that higher levels of chroma elicit greater feelings of excitement, which in turn increase ad likeability.

2.2.3. Political Symbolism

Not surprisingly, symbols play a considerable role in the political arena, most notably in the legitimation of political power. The symbolic dimension of politics has been contrived

by the pioneering scholarship of Thurman Arnold (1935), Harold Lasswell (1951), Lasswell et al. (1965), and Murray Edelman (1988). These studies, and more, tend to generally tackle political symbolism from two competing frameworks, namely in terms of the positive role and the negative one. According to Klatch (1988: 137), the first tradition is that of meaning, "which emphasizes the positive role symbols play in the integration of society". The second tradition is that of masters, "which stresses the use of political symbols in manipulation."

To yield a fuller appreciation, this paper takes into account both frameworks, hence, adopting a multi-dimensional approach to the analysis of political symbolism in electoral campaign advertisements.

2.2.4. *Political Colors*

Figure 3.   Figure 4.

In the advertising industry, it is believed that colors speak a language word cannot replicate. Notably this is true in the visual mode, where colors play a significant role in attracting attention as well as enhancing meaning and amplifying the message. The matter is even more compelling in the political field, where according to Sawer (2007) colors are commonly used to represent a political ideology, movement, or party, whether officially or unofficially. This came about through the intersection of color symbolism and political symbolism, where a set of fixed ideologically oriented political colors persisted to exist in the social and political stream.

Adams et al. (2006: 86) make note of the fact that "political associations of a given color vary from country to country, and there are exceptions to the general trends." At times, parties in different countries that have similar ideologies sometimes use similar colors. The most prevalent colors in the United States are red and blue, with the former symbolizing right-wing ideologies, namely conservatism (Republican Party), and the latter symbolizing left-wing ideologies, namely liberalism (Democratic Party).

It turns out that color coordination is key in political campaign advertisements, be it in websites, palettes, commercials, or logos. It not only gives candidates an opportunity to be unique and reflect issues they care about, but it also allows them to reflect their ideological and political principles. For example, candidates with priorities around climate change, like Amy Klobuchar, are using green (Figure 3), whereas candidates supporting issues around parenthood and women equality, like Marianne Williamson, are including bright pink in their logos (Figure 4).

According to Marian (2007: 39), political colors are known to have national, as well as international, roles in certain social movements. Whether they denote racist, sexist, or even fascist ideologies, colors are reminiscent of the political intuitions and anecdotal evidence (cf. Gorn et al., 1997).

2.2.5. *Political Icons*

As types of communicative signs, icons have a language of their own and may pertain to being the most visible and spectacular symbols of power that visually support ideologies. In the age of digital media and virtual communities, the most popular icons are the ones most deeply connected with ideas they represent. With campaign advertising, it is safe to assume that politics is sea to a range of icons that inherently reflect ideological tendencies. Indeed, icons inherently convey powerful meanings, which are generally created and attached to them through the national public.

2.2.6. *Visual Metaphors*

Figure 5

Figure 6

From a multimodal perspective, (conceptual) metaphors can also be visually depicted, most commonly in the advertising industry due to their persuasive nature. According to Kogan et al. (1980: 7), 'visual metaphor' is the term used to refer to a pictorial analogy suggesting a particular association or similarity, whether it is a physical or a conceptual one. Generally, visual metaphors are interpreted similarly, although each person may comprehend them a little differently. According to Ryoo (2021: 760), "Metaphors are inherently open-ended, and can produce both strong and weak implicatures, the latter of which are alternate readings of the main message that are nevertheless called up in the mind of the interpreter."

The basic aim of visual metaphor is to transmit ideas quickly and easily, making it understandable to everyone. Thus, the technique is helpful in generating layers of meanings and concepts in the minds of viewers. El Refaie (2019) classifies visual metaphors into two main types: spatial visual metaphors and stylistic visual metaphors. The former type focuses on aspects of location, arrangement, size, and whether metaphors are abstract or realistic. The latter type focuses on color, looks, and details more specifically.

The above figures are jocular depictions of visual metaphors on the 2017 covers of Der Spiegel, the German weekly news magazine. The former illustrates a stylistic visual metaphor of Trump being compared to an extremist, with the beheaded statue on one hand, and a bloody terrorist knife on the other. With the caption "AMERICA FIRST", the image draws an analogy of Trump's dictatorship behavior by visualizing him as an extremist who had killed the American dream. The cover coincided with Trump's Muslim ban, which clearly reflected the

racist ideology of banning people from entering America based on their religion.

The decapitated head of the Statue of Liberty, a sacred American symbol, is a precise visual metaphor to the beheading of democracy. Furthermore, what has recently been associated with beheadings is ISIS, so there's a comparison of both sides being extremists.

In figure 2, the cover presents a spatial visual metaphor of Trump in a KKK (Ku Klux Klan) hood, which was published almost a week after he defended the actions of white supremacists and Neo Nazis. The timing of the cover is crucial, since people had suspicions for a long time that Trump held the beliefs of a racist, and the right moment came for the image to surface. By comparing him to the KKK, an American white supremacist terrorist and hate group, the visual metaphor confronts Trump's political ideologies of racism and fascism in a strong manner. Moreover, the visual metaphor, which is captioned "The real face of Donald Trump", allowed the audience to finally come to terms with the idea that America had a racist as president.

2.3.   Aural Mode

With regards to the aural mode of meaning, it is commonly conveyed through sound, including choices of music representing different cultures, ambient sounds, noises, alerts, silence, natural/unnatural sounds, and use of volume, beat, tempo, pitch, and rhythm.

2.3.1. Prosody

Not everything meaningful in language is encoded by grammar or choice of vocabulary. In fact, linguistic functions such as intonation, stress, and rhythm are all but meaningful properties of syllables. Such elements are known as suprasegmentals and tend to be included under the study of prosodic aspects of speech. In the audio mode, prosody takes the leading role in reflecting meaningful features of the speaker or utterance. These features include: their emotional state; the form of utterance (statement, question, or command); the presence of irony or sarcasm; emphasis, contrast, and focus.

In studying the prosodic aspects of speech, two prominent measures are usually distinguished: the auditory measures and the physical measures. The former are also known as the subjective impressions, which are produced in the mind of the listener, whereas the latter are known as the objective properties of the sound wave and physiological characteristics of articulation that may be measured objectively (Hirst, 1998: 4-7).

With prosodic features, it is necessary to distinguish between the personal, background characteristics that belong to an individual's voice (for example, their habitual pitch range) and the independently variable prosodic features that are used contrastively to communicate meaning (for example, the use of changes in pitch to indicate the difference between statements and questions). Granted, the personal characteristics are not linguistically significant (Crystal & Quirk, 1964: 10-12).

Furthermore, Pell (2005) claims that the prosody of an utterance is used by listeners to guide decisions about the emotional effect of the situation. Whether a person decodes the prosody as positive, negative, or neutral plays a role in the way a person decodes a facial expression accompanying an utterance. Indeed, as the facial expression becomes closer to neutral, the prosodic interpretation influences the interpretation of the facial expression.

2.3.2. Music

The analysis of musical meanings has a long tradition in Musicology and Semiotics

studies. Studies from both academics' and communication professionals' areas (Arning & Gordon, 2006; van Leeuwen, 2012) have confirmed that specific musical signifiers (alterations, motifs, tempo, etc.) are consistently related to certain socially shared signifieds (moods, attitudes, moral judgements, etc.), so that the connection between the two is almost inevitable, at least in Western culture.

As Cook (1998) clearly explains, when studying multimedia discourses, we should overcome the biased idea of music as a supplement to the meaning "already" provided by images and words and take into account that music is in fact a source of meaning in commercials. However, in order to achieve the specific objective of this research, the analysis will be mainly focused on the social meanings arisen by the musical soundtrack of audiovisual commercials.

It is worth noting that music in audiovisual advertising is known to have certain discursive features and social meanings that could be best grasped through its communicative functions. After an accurate literature review, the researcher has summarized all the possible functions that advertising musical discourse can perform in audiovisual texts by compounding contributions from studies on advertising music (Huron, 1989) and on music in audiovisual narratives more generally (Wingstedt et al., 2010).

2.3.3. Silence

Silence is a very powerful form of communication. Depending on the situation, the meaning of silence differs on each occasion. Typically perceived, silence is a means of maintaining contact and alliance in the phatic function. The various roles of silence in the metalinguistic function range from its being a discourse marker to reflecting the 'right to silence'.

The focus in this paper will be on silence as medium, not as content – when we talk not about silence but through silence. In this regard, silence is neither bad nor good. It could be both, but so speech as well. It is true that communication can silence, but silence can also communicate. Thus, silence can be regarded neutrally, ontologically – as a fact and power of being.

2.4. Gestural Mode

The gestural mode is craftily conveyed through choices of body movement, facial expression, eye movements and gaze, demeanor, gait, dance, acting, action sequences. It also includes use of rhythm, speed, stillness and angles, including 'timing, frequency, ceremony and ritual' (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009: 362).

2.4.1. Non-Verbal Cues

Surprisingly, discourse cues are not restricted to the spoken and written modes of language; in fact, they tend to exist on the gestural and spatial modes also. This is apparently the case with multimodal discourses that make use of the association between non-verbal behaviors and language to achieve certain communicative functions. The reason is traced back to the fact that about three-quarters of all clauses in descriptive discourse are accompanied by gestures (McNeill, 1992). Moreover, according to Thompson and Massaro (1986: 145), it has been shown that when there is noise or the speech is ambiguous, listeners usually rely on gestural cues.

During a study conducted by Blom & Gumperz (1972), it was identified that posture changes and changes in the spatial relationship between two speakers were generally regarded

as indicators of what they term "situational shifts". These typically refer to momentary changes in the mutual rights and obligations between speakers, which were known to be accompanied by shifts in language style. Additionally, Erickson (1975) concluded from his analysis of college counseling interviews that proxemic shifts seem to be markers of important segments. Significantly, they tend to occur more frequently than any other coded indicator of segment changes; hence, they were the best predictors of new segments in the data.

2.4.2. Action Sequences

Not surprisingly, the sequence of action is explicitly meaningful in both the verbal and nonverbal modes of communication. In the former, action sequence is associated with structure and embodied namely in the various speech acts to reflect the implicit intentions and assumptions of the discourse (Egorova et al., 2013). In the latter however, action sequence is measured in terms of the agility and impact of physical movement. Accordingly, two types of non-verbal action sequences are likely to occur: slow action sequences and rapid action sequences, each of which contributes significantly to the enhancement of the message beyond communicated.

2.5. Spatial Mode

This mode of meaning is tricky and can be conveyed through design of spaces, using choices of spatial resources including scale, proximity, position, boundaries, direction, layout, and physical arrangement of objects in the space. Notably, space extends from design of the page in a book, a page in a graphic novel or comic, a webpage on the screen, framing of shots in moving image, to the design of a room, architecture, *streetscapes*, and landscapes.

2.5.1. Proximal and Distal Cues

In any form of communication, there exists some form of verbal or non-verbal space that helps convey and reinforces the message. Cases in point are the proximal cues and distal cues. The former tends to reference close and intimate connections, whereas the latter are indicative of open or distant relationships. In other words, the distal cues may signal feelings of hostility and arrogance, whereas proximal cues serve as signals of solidarity and familiarity.

2.5.2. Boundary Markers

There is no denying to the presence of communicative boundaries in any form of interaction, be it verbal or non-verbal. Matter of fact, boundaries may range in form and function all with regards to the mode of interaction. With regards to verbal boundary markers, the topic boundary stands out to signal a change from one discourse topic or subtopic to another topic not previously occurring in the current discourse. Contrariwise, the absence of any official boundary marker would further facilitate the process.

Non-verbal boundary markers are of the physical or visual type and tend to include the spatial boundary. In this type, distance and space play a significant role in drawing the boundaries between people or items, which in return signal the type of existent relationship being implicitly mirrored or enforced.

3.   Conclusions

With the gradual transition into the digital age, the multimodal discourse has also evolved considerably and markedly altered to fit in with the current developments. The multimodal discourse implements graphics, anim ations, sounds, and writing, as well as many areas of overlap. Indeed, with the aid of colors, images, and gestures, language is pushed to its fullest potential. Therefore, certain meanings are eligible to interpretation in accordance with

the bigger picture, i.e., the reality behind the discourse. Case in point is the phenomenon of jocular mockery where the many modes used in its production carry certain meanings that can be interpreted by the audience in accordance with the context of situation.

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