INVESTIGATING THE CREATIVE USE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FIGURATIVE COMMUNICATION IN ADVERTISING: A COLLABORATION WITH MARKETING PRACTITIONERS

By

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Thesis abstract

This thesis investigates the creative use of figurative communication in advertising and its effect on people's attitudes and behaviors. Figurative communication encompasses the figurative tropes metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun. Cognitive linguistic research has begun to distinguish between conventional (common) and creative (novel) figurative tropes. Figurative tropes can be creative through the novel mappings drawn between semantic and/or conceptual domains. However, less is known about how they are used creatively by extending or elaborating conventional (common) mappings or altering the form in which they take. The thesis examines the creative use of figurative tropes across different modes, genres, registers, and cultures through the analysis of print advertisements, smartphone app icons, and TV commercials. It also proposes ways to study figurative tropes through replicable and explorative approaches that uncover nuances in the dynamic nature of figurative communication in advertising. Advertising offers a diverse and innovative environment to study the creative use of figurative communication its effect on people's attitudes and behaviors. Findings suggest that if the creative use of figurative communication is implemented sensitively, it can have a positive social impact on people's lives. The research involves collaboration with marketing practitioners to gain insight into the intention behind, and nature of, the implementation of figurative tropes in advertising. The experience of collaboration highlights ways to bridge the gap between academia and industry and strengthen partnerships between academic researchers and non-academic organizations.

Dedication

To Thomas Dunne, my love

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I am a strong advocate of collaborative research. As Bolognesi and Werkmann Horvat have stated in their book *The metaphor compass* (2023, p. xiii), "science progresses in the right direction when it is shared, discussed and shaped by the communities of scholars that contribute to its development". I want to thank all of the academic researchers who co-authored with me on the published work I have enclosed as chapters in this thesis: Professor Jeannette Littlemore, Dr David Houghton, Dr Paula Pérez Sobrino, and Dr Yue Guan. In particular I would like to thank Jeannette and Paula for inviting me to collaborate with them on the book *Unpacking creativity: The power of figurative communication in advertising* (written and published in 2021 during my PhD), which made me realize the nuances of figurative communication and helped me formulate my own contribution in my PhD thesis. I have learned a lot from working with you all and hope to continue our collaboration in future projects. Once again I want to thank all the marketing practitioners at Big Cat Agency whom I have had the pleasure to work with during my doctoral program. I also thank all of the representatives from the various organizations I have worked with during my PhD journey, especially the NHS, the Umbrella Health Trust, West Midlands Transport, and Absolutely Fitness. Thank you to all of the participants who took the time and effort to participate in my studies. In particular, I would like to thank members of the cognitive linguistic academic community and marketing practitioners working at Big Cat Agency, who welcomed my interviews with genuine enthusiasm and interest. The interviews were so stimulating!

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Notes

This thesis includes work that has been published or that has been submitted for publication. The thesis is written in US English to be consistent with the variation of English required for the published works. The references and appendices for each chapter will be provided at the end of each chapter.

Publications

Chapter 3

Ford, S., Littlemore, J., & Houghton, D. (2021). Got a Spark with Brook? Engaging consumers in a sexual health campaign through the use of creative (metaphorical) double entendres. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 35(4), 1-29. doi:10.1080/10926488.2021.1913740.

Chapter 4

Pérez Sobrino, P., & **Ford, S.** (2023). What counts as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy? Evolution of inter-rater reliability across rounds of annotation. *Language and Cognition*, 1-29. doi:10.1017/langcog.2023.26.

Chapter 5

Ford, S. & Guan, Y. (submitted, 2023). Making cross-cultural meaning in educational smartphone app icons with metonymy and metaphor. *Metaphor and Symbol*.

Chapter 7

Ford, S. & Littlemore, J. (2023). Exploring the impact of figurative communication and advertising: Reflections on a collaboration between linguistics researchers and a Midlands-based marketing agency. In: H. Price & D. McIntyre (eds), *Communicating linguistics: Language, community and public engagement*. doi:10.4324/9781003096078-14.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Introduction

Figurative communication is a key part of how humans make and convey meaning. Figurative communication is an umbrella term for communication that involves figurative tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun. Generally, figurative tropes enable people to express things that are difficult to explain in literal or concrete terms, such as abstract concepts (e.g. orientation, time), emotion (e.g. love, joy, sadness), complex experiences (e.g. illness, grief), or intangible objects (e.g. ideas, education)[1]. Figurative tropes also enable people to express something as something else, typically referred to as a 'mapping'. This mapping process is useful when there is no pre-existing means to explain experiences or when a topic is embarrassing or taboo. From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, figurative tropes can help us to interpret, process, and understand our environment and experiences on a conceptual level as well as help us to express our wants and needs through linguistic, rhetorical devices (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Wen Xu & Taylor, 2021).

Figurative tropes are pervasive in language. Recurring tropes with particular mappings can become conventionalized over time. However, increasing figurative language research is distinguishing between conventional and creative mappings. Creative figurative tropes are considered to involve a mapping that is novel in some way that can provide a different reading or a different perspective (Forceville, 2016b; Philip, 2016; Semino, 2008). Creativity

[1] Abstract concepts (Duffy, 2015; Woodin & Winter, 2018); emotion (Kövecses, 2003; Littlemore et al., 2023); complex experiences (Littlemore & Turner, 2020; Semino et al., 2017); intangible objects (Cameron, 2003; Reddy, 1979).

can be done either by mappings being wholly original (constructing a meaningful relationship that has never been used before), or by mappings deviating in some way from the norm by extending or elaborating upon an existing conventionalized mapping. Yet, recent research suggests that figurative tropes, such as metaphor, can not only be creative through its novel mapping but also through its novel use (Fuoli et al., 2021; Littlemore, 2022). In our book *Unpacking Creativity*[2], Pérez Sobrino, Ford, and Littlemore (2021c, p. 13) refer to 'novel creative metaphor' as a completely new mapping, and the 'creative use of metaphor' as extending the meaning or altering the depiction (or, 'form') of a conventional metaphor. However, as research into the creative use of figurative tropes is in its infancy, there are still many questions about the nature of creative figurative communication yet to be answered or that require further investigation. Four overarching research questions that are addressed in this thesis are:

- *How is figurative communication used creatively through its meaning and form?*
- *How is figurative communication used creatively across different modes, genres, registers, and cultures?*
- *(How) can the creative use of figurative communication be reliably identified and interpreted?*
- *What effect does creative figurative communication have on people's attitudes and behaviors?*

I have explored these questions through theoretical, empirical, and practical research identifying and interpreting the creative uses and effectiveness of figurative communication in the context of advertising. Advertising is an inherently creative environment and offers many

[2] I co-authored this book with Pérez Sobrino and Littlemore alongside writing my PhD thesis, and some of the ideas discussed in our *Unpacking Creativity* book (published in 2021) have since been developed in this thesis (submitted in 2023).

opportunities to investigate creative figurative communication, its usage, and effect in advertisements. I have also investigated the possibilities for variation in the identification and interpretation of the creative use of figurative tropes in advertising with regards to the genre and culture of advertising, and the cultural and experiential background of the researcher.

While there is considerable research on the use of figurative tropes in language, especially metaphor, there is yet more to be explored with respect to the role figurative tropes play in creative communication *beyond* written and spoken language. The mappings of figurative tropes need not be cued exclusively in one mode, but can also occur across two or more modes, thus being 'multimodal' (Pérez Sobrino, 2017b). In this thesis, I have investigated how the figurative tropes metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun can be used creatively as they work independently and together in an inherently multimodal context (advertising) across multiple modes of text (verbal), image (visual), and film (verbal, visual, and audial) through the analysis of print advertising (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), smartphone app icons (Chapter 5), and TV commercials (Chapter 6).

A core part of this thesis involves collaboration with marketing practitioners working at a marketing agency, Big Cat Agency, based in Birmingham, West Midlands, in the United Kingdom, and academic researchers based at the University of Birmingham (UK). The thesis encloses as chapters published studies (Ford et al., 2021; Ford & Littlemore, 2023; Pérez Sobrino & Ford, 2023) and one submitted for publication (Ford & Guan, 2023) produced from this collaboration. Collaborating with both academics and marketing practitioners throughout my PhD program has informed not only the theoretical contributions of my thesis, but also the implications of my research for practice in the advertising industry and for organizations wanting to provide information, products, and services that help improve people's quality of life.

Big Cat specializes in working with clients motivated by making positive social change. During the course of my research for this thesis I have worked with Big Cat on campaigns for a number of organizations such as the UK National Health Service (NHS) to encourage the Pakistani community to take up a booster COVID-19 vaccination, private and public health clinics to raise awareness of mental and sexual health services, fitness groups to get people back to exercise after the COVID-19 lockdowns, and West Midlands Transport to encourage people to take up cycling in the city as a healthy alternative for transport. These collaborative projects have informed the practical research reported in this thesis.

Working with Big Cat has provided insight into the process of creating a campaign and the use of figurative tropes to communicate messages about a product, service, brand, or ideology the brand supports (although, as I show in Chapter 3, these messages are not always understood by viewers in the ways that they are intended by marketing practitioners). To find out more about the effect of the creative use of figurative communication, I conducted an experiment (Ford et al., 2021) that measured people's attitude toward, and interpretation of, figurative tropes and advertisement messages, and their behavioral intentions to engage with a sexual health campaign. This study is enclosed as Chapter 3.

Working with a non-academic partner organization has presented its own challenges. None more so than learning how to communicate with, and understand, one another in order to facilitate an informative and productive partnership. At the beginning of my PhD research, I conducted interviews with both marketing practitioners and academic researchers specializing in cognitive linguistics and figurative language to establish and compare what they understand by, and how they measure, creativity and effectiveness in the context of advertising. This research informed how researchers and marketing practitioners can work better together, and may help to bridge the gap between academia and industry. The findings

from this research are reported in Chapter 2. A reflection on the challenges I faced during my collaborative partnership with Big Cat and the potential solutions I found to be helpful is provided in Chapter 7. The findings from both chapters (2 and 7) will aid future linguistic researchers (and potentially researchers in other fields) in collaborating with partner organizations outside the academic sphere.

1.2. Literature review

Figurative tropes enable us to talk or think about something in terms of something else, but each figurative trope operates in a different way. In this section I have reviewed existing research to establish the working definitions of figurative tropes addressed in this thesis: metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun. I have studied how they operate, particularly together, in ways that may lead to creative mappings and use. I have also reviewed research on the impact of figurative tropes in multimodal communication such as advertising that establishes current academic practices on how to measure the effectiveness of such tropes in a creative context. At the end of this section, I have refined my overarching research questions (from Section 1.1) and explained how they are addressed more specifically in the following chapters.

1.2.1. Metaphor

One figurative trope that has received a lot of scholarly attention over the years is ‘metaphor’. Metaphor is a pervasive trope in everyday life, operating across multiple different modes of communication, such as written discourse (Pragglejaz Group, 2007), spoken discourse (Goatly, 1993), images (Forceville, 1996), gestures (Cienki & Müller, 2008), sounds and music (Zbikowski, 2009), and film (Forceville, 2016b), among others. Its versatility makes it an interesting topic of study for creativity.

Metaphor creates meaning by drawing together two unrelated concepts by means of a comparison, where one concept (the source domain) maps or transfers information onto another concept (the target domain) that helps us interpret the target (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). For example, in the English expressions "love is a two-way street", "their relationship is at a crossroads", and "the couple have come so far together" it is implied that love (target) is a journey (source); be that travelling down a path ("street", "crossroads") or traversing distance ("come so far") (Grady, 1997). The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (formulated to a large extent by Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) argues that metaphors exist not only in our language but also in our thoughts and actions. These 'metaphors in the mind' are referred to as 'conceptual metaphors'. In the example of LOVE IS A JOURNEY, 'love' is an abstract concept that is conceptualized as a 'journey' of movement. Another example is in the expression "I'm feeling down today" where 'down' suggests the conceptualization of sadness or negativity as having a downward orientation, or contrastively "I'm cheering up" where the upward orientation is associated with happiness or positivity (Woodin & Winter, 2018). Metaphor can also feature in our actions (e.g. gestures or body posture), known as 'embodied metaphor', which suggests that our bodily experience can reflect or aid our cognitive processing through metaphor (Littlemore, 2019).

1.2.2. From conventional to creative metaphor

In the metaphor literature, a distinction is made between so-called 'conventional metaphors' and 'creative metaphors'. One could argue that metaphor in itself is a creative phenomenon, as it draws together two unrelated domains to communicate new information about something. New research from Winter and Strik-Lievers (2023) shows that metaphoricity

correlates with higher creativity ratings[3]. They argue that, all else being equal, the more metaphorical expressions are, the more creative they are perceived to be. However, different areas of the brain are activated for the processing of conventional metaphor and novel (creative) metaphor, which suggests some kind of distinction in these familiar and unfamiliar conceptual patterns (Mashal et al., 2007; Subramaniam et al., 2012).

From a linguistic perspective, it is generally acknowledged that conventional metaphors are those that are used more often and are lexicalized in language; whereas creative metaphors deviate in some way from metaphors common in language (Philip, 2016; Semino, 2008). From a cognitive linguistic perspective, a conventional metaphor is considered to be salient in terms of familiarity, frequency, appropriateness, and prominence in the mind. In contrast, creative metaphor is less so, yet plays on existing, conventional concepts and presents them in a new light (Giora, 2003). Therefore, some researchers suggest that conventionality and creativity work on a cline (Philip, 2016).

The nature of conventionality, however, is debatable. While some researchers argue that conventional metaphors should be understood by everyone, others argue that conventional metaphors may be common in a particular kind of discourse or speech community (but not in others), thus making these metaphors conventionalized in that community of practice. The former argument assumes the existence of 'universal metaphor' that is a metaphor common across all people due to their shared human features of the body and the brain. However, the idea of 'universality' has been frequently challenged (Kövecses, 2008). Indeed, not all of human kind has similar bodies or brains. For instance, there exist physical disabilities, different environments humans inhabit, ethnic and cultural variation, and neurodiversity that

[3] Metaphoricity is a term that assumes metaphor as a gradable phenomenon. Winter and Strik-Lievers test how adjective-noun pairs with higher domain distance (that is, domains that were more contrasting) were considered. to be more metaphoric, and more creative, than adjective-noun pairs with lower domain distance (that is, literal or closer to literal meaning).

means people have different perspectives (Littlemore, 2019). A more conservative, and arguably more realistic, point of view is the case where *many* people can share common conceptual metaphors, referred to as 'primary metaphors' (Grady, 1997).

An example of a conventional metaphor is in the English expression "I get the idea" where 'get' means 'to understand' but also metaphorically frames 'the idea' as being something tangible; something of which one can grab a hold. This particular metaphor is a 'conduit metaphor' that frames ideas as being packaged and sent by the speaker to the receiver who then unpacks them to interpret their meaning (Reddy, 1979). The metaphor IDEA IS TANGIBLE OBJECT features across many English expressions, and frames ideas as objects such as buildings, food, commodities or resources (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, pp. 46–48):

We need to *construct* a strong argument: IDEA IS A BUILDING

That gives us *food* for thought: IDEA IS FOOD

That's a *worthless* idea: IDEA IS A COMMODITY

They *ran out* of ideas: IDEA IS A RESOURCE

Compared to research on metaphor more generally, research branching into creative metaphor is somewhat limited. There has been much academic debate about what 'creativity' as a broader phenomenon means and how it is operationalized in communication. This debate I discuss in more detail in Chapter 2. As a preview, the most acknowledged attribute of creativity is that it involves some kind of novelty; it communicates or conceptualizes something in a new way. Semino (2008, p. 53) argues that "a consideration of the conceptual dimension of metaphor allows us to distinguish between different kinds or degrees of creativity in the use of metaphor in language". In other words, when recognizing creative metaphor in language (or indeed in other modes of communication) we should also consider

how metaphor may operate on a conceptual level; whether it offers a new way of looking or thinking about an entity or offers a new perspective on something that suggests the metaphor is creative/novel.

Some conceptual metaphors are conventional as they capture reoccurring conceptual mappings (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). However, Semino (2008, p. 50) argues that we can have a novel conceptual metaphor that is "consistent" with a conventional conceptual metaphor but that "cannot easily be subsumed under any of them". Semino (2008, p. 36) provides an example of a creative conceptual metaphor used to describe the pain of an oncoming headache experienced by Emma, the protagonist in Ian McEwan's (2010, p. 60) novel *Atonement* (underline is my own):

> *"She felt in the top right corner of her brain a heaviness, the inert body weight of some curled and sleeping animal."*

Semino explains that the metaphor conceptualizes the feeling of an oncoming headache as moving around the head, as stabbing or burning and threatening Emma's wellbeing, which can be said to be a conventional metaphorical personification[4] of pain. However, this animal metaphor deviates from a conventional metaphor for a headache and instead frames the headache as a furry animal that is initially asleep and later awakens and moves around in the head as an animal in a cage, representing the onset of a migraine.

Metaphors that involve creativity are sometimes referred to as 'novel metaphors'. Philip (2016, p. 224) describes novel metaphors as metaphors that are "infrequent and unfamiliar in the language at large" and/or that have not yet been lexicalized (Semino, 2008). Yet,

[4] Personification portrays an inanimate or abstract object or animal as having human attributes (Delbaere et al., 2011).

determining at which point a metaphor is used frequently enough to transform it from 'creative' to 'conventionalized' is unclear. Philip (2016, p. 226) suggests that "we can only say that a metaphor is novel in relation to our personal experience of the language", or with reference to extensive corpus data that provides a certain degree of objectivity to the claim. While a metaphor might be conventional for some people, it might be perceived as creative in a discourse community that has not experienced it before. Therefore, when researching creative metaphor, or indeed other creative figurative tropes, it is important to consider whether the audience of the metaphor in question would perceive it as creative or not. This consideration of intentionality and perception of creativity, however, can be complex, and is discussed further in Chapter 2.

1.2.3. Creative use of metaphor

Past research has referred to creative metaphor as presenting a wholly original mapping. Fuoli et al. (2021) suggest that genuinely creative metaphors are uncommon. Sometimes metaphors may only be completely original to a specific discourse community, and cannot be generalized to wider humanity. Moreover, it is argued that more often than not, creative metaphor builds on existing mappings. Creative metaphor does this in different ways. Recent work on creative metaphor suggests metaphor can be *used* creatively by extending or elaborating on established, conventional metaphors (Fuoli et al., 2021; Semino, 2008). Indeed, the term 'creative use of metaphor' may be more appropriate to avoid the potentially mistaken assumption that there is a completely new mapping (Littlemore, 2022). Developing Lakoff and Turner's (1989) four-point typology of novel metaphor in poetry, Semino (2008, pp. 40–41) explains how novel metaphor can be used creatively in language.

- *Extension* is "the mapping of [additional] elements [or element] from the source domain that are not conventionally mapped onto the target domain" (Semino, 2008, p.

44), which is done by “adding a new element to the source domain” (Kövecses, 2002, 47 / 2010)

- *Elaboration* presents “an existing element of the source in an unusual way” (Kövecses, 2002, p. 47)
- *Combination* occurs when multiple metaphors cue multiple elements that inform a source domain in order to convey more information than an independent metaphor (Lakoff & Turner, 1989), which constructs a complex metaphorical scenario
- *Questioning* “points out the limitations or inadequacy of a particular conventional conceptual metaphor” (Semino, 2008, p. 48) and thus has a critical function

Fuoli et al. (2021, p. 78) show further patterns for how the creative use of metaphor can manifest in the language of written film review discourse, summarizing these patterns in two overarching categories: (1) introducing a new metaphorical mapping or (2) presenting a conventional metaphor in a new way. They suggest the ways in which a conventional metaphor can be manipulated creatively are by:

- Altering the valence (affect, emotion)
- Introducing a new collocation (associated words)
- Altering the tense or part of speech of a conventional metaphor (or phraseology, Barnden, 2015)
- Adding more detail to a conventional mapping (extension)
- Using it in a new context or for a new referent (elaboration)
- Having a double reading: one literal, one figurative (similar to that of a pun)
- Combining multiple conventional metaphors, and/or combining it with other figurative tropes such as metonymy or personification

Taking these patterns into account, there appears to be a continuum of creativity, from a

completely novel mapping (never-before-seen), to extending or elaborating upon a conventional metaphor in some new way, to conventional metaphor that is frequently used.[5]

Some researchers are beginning to use the term 'creative metaphor' to encompass more aspects of creative variation in metaphor. Forceville (2016b, p. 7) defines creative metaphor (in film) as having "two phenomena [source and target] from different categories [domains] that have not previously been linked in this way, and this gives rise to a new perspective on and/or evaluation of the target domain." In this definition, creative metaphor is not merely novel, but can also serve pragmatic functions in communication by being insightful, evaluative, and even therapeutic. Indeed, Fuoli et al. (2021) show how creative metaphor can serve an evaluative function as a critique in film reviews, while in therapy sessions creative metaphors can be elaborated upon in creative ways by both client and therapist to explore feelings that may otherwise be hard to express (Tay, 2013). In advertising creative metaphors can be used to attract the attention of viewers and present the product as desirable (Pérez Sobrino, 2017b).

Despite there being some discussion of creative and novel metaphors in the literature, the line of research regarding the 'creative use' of metaphor is still in its infancy and requires much more empirical exploration to understand the ways in which metaphor can be creative across various contexts, genres, and cultures.

1.2.4. Creativity through meaning and form

Metaphor can be creative in the way it conveys meaning through underlying conceptual patterns. Evidence of metaphor's versatility across multimodal contexts, however, suggests

[5] 'Dead metaphor' is a metaphor that is so entrenched in communication (e.g. "falling in love" and "broken hearted") that it is no longer processed as being metaphorical and are more likely considered to be closer to literal meaning than figurative meaning (Müller, 2008, pp. 79–80). This thesis does not concern itself with dead metaphor, and focuses instead on the creative side of the continuum.

that metaphoric creativity could also occur in the variation of its depiction. In other words, it is not only the *meaning* conveyed through the mapping of the metaphor, but also the *form* in which the metaphor takes that can contribute to its creativity. For instance, a visual realization of a metaphor may be novel by using different modes (visual or verbal) or visual elements (color, shape, shadow, etc.) in a novel way, while the underlying conceptual mapping is conventional (Semino, 2008, p. 174). Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021c, p. 13) distinguish between 'novel creative metaphor' and the 'creative use of metaphor'. Novel creative metaphor involves a completely new mapping, while the creative use of metaphor involves extending the meaning or altering the depiction of a conventional metaphor.

Visual metaphor

One way metaphor can be creative is through visual innovation. Giora et al. (2004) describes innovation as deviation from the original source. While Giora et al. focused on innovation in language, other research has shown that innovation can occur in the visual mode. Studying figurative communication in the visual mode explores creativity (innovation), as a deviation of form, such as the layout or orientation, rather than necessarily of meaning or content (Arts & Schilperoord, 2016; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004). Visual innovation can create a novel image that plays off an original image or 'base entity' (Xiao, 2016). The original image can be iconic or symbolic of a known object or event, such as the crossing pictured on The Beatles' *Abbey Road* album cover (Figure 1.1, left). Novel elements can involve additions, detractions, or manipulations of the original image to create a new image, much like the 'extension' talked about above with regards to linguistic creative metaphor. Figure 1.1 (right) shows an advertisement for the Volkswagen 'Beetle' car that sets up a creative visual metaphor through the visual manipulation of the original album cover by The Beatles, by

replacing the band members with Beetle cars. The Beatles being known for their popularity, talent, and innovative style may be qualities Beetle cars want to map onto its product.



Figure 1.1. Left: Original album cover for Abbey Road by The Beatles. Right: Print advertisement for Beetles cars using visual innovation (from Arts & Schilperoord, 2016, p. 62)

When studying metaphor in multimodal static and dynamic contexts, such as print and TV advertising, one must take into account not only the innovative nature of the messages that are conveyed but also the innovative ways in which these messages are presented. Both of these kinds of innovation invite the viewer to construct new mappings and provide them with new perspectives.

A number of typologies (Forceville, 1996; Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004) categorize how visual metaphor can be creative in advertising through not only its meaning (i.e. the kinds of mappings that are made), but also how it is represented in the advertisement (i.e. the form that the metaphor takes). These typologies are demonstrated with select examples of advertisements, rather than a corpus study of multiple advertisements, which means that their typologies might not be generalizable. However, as each typology can

map onto the other, this indicates a possible trend in how visual metaphor can be used creatively through its form in print advertisements. Despite using some different terms for each kind of visual structure of metaphor, their definitions are similar enough to match each category as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Matching the visual structures proposed in three typologies for visual metaphor to demonstrate how metaphor can be used creatively through form in print advertising (summarized from Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c, p. 40)

Forceville (1996, 2008)	**Gkiouzepas & Hogg** (2011)	**Phillips & McQuarrie** (2004)	**Definition**
Pictorial simile	Juxtaposition (whole entity)	Juxtaposition	Target and source are juxtaposed and/or a unified entity belonging to one domain/category is understood in terms of the other
Hybrid metaphor	Synthesis (part of the entities)	Fusion	Visually conflating target and source into a single, 'impossible' entity
Contextual metaphor (absence of source) / Integrated metaphor (target implies the source)	-	Replacement	Source and target domain are represented separately, where one domain is present and the other is absent

To demonstrate what these categories look like, I first explain Figure 1.2 that shows an advertisement for the Xperia mobile phone. The *juxtaposition* of side-by-side images compares the phone on the left (target domain) to a chameleon on the right (source domain)[6]. The chameleon visually taking the shape of the phone aids the metaphorical comparison. Taking the visuals on their own, one might infer that the phone is adaptable like a chameleon such that the phone can adapt, and be customized, to suit the needs of the customer. Taken with the taglines "made to adapt" under the chameleon and "made of imagination" under the phone, the advertisement conveys a more elaborate message. It implies that that the phone is *more* than an imitation of an existing phone (like a chameleon imitates the colors of its environment), and is instead a phone of imagination (being innovative, new). While the interpretation of the visuals alone can provide a relevant message about the new phone, the combination of the visuals with the verbal tagline elaborates the metaphor into a narrative about the phone's capabilities. Later, I discuss how metaphor domains can operate not only in visuals but also across different modes within the same space, known as multimodal metaphor.

[6] When verbalizing this mapping, one could say the phone is 'like' a chameleon, in accordance with Forceville's (1996, 2008) *visual simile*.



Figure 1.2. Print advertisement for Sony Xperia mobile phone using metaphor as juxtaposition (text: "Made to adapt. Made of imagination.")

Second, Figure 1.3 advertises Heinz tomato ketchup using *fusion*, whereby the tomato ketchup (target) bottle is visually portrayed as a pile tomato slices (source). In reality, a bottle of ketchup would not consist purely of tomato slices, and thus this creates an 'impossible gestalt' or 'impossible entity'. The visual incongruity hints at a metaphorical comparison between the Heinz ketchup and the natural ingredients of tomatoes.



Figure 1.3. Print advertisement for Heinz tomato ketchup using metaphor fusion (text: "No one grows ketchup like Heinz.")

Third, Figure 1.4 is an advertisement for Black & Blaze coffee that visually *replaces* an on/off switch with a mug of coffee. The "on/off" labels and the shape resemblance of the coffee mug to a switch help with the construal of the coffee mug being in the place of a switch. The mug points toward "on" with its handle that implies that Black & Blaze's coffee will 'turn you on'; be that turning on your energy levels with a caffeine boost or turning your custom to them from competing brands.



Figure 1.4. Print advertisement for Black & Blaze coffee using metaphor replacement (text: "Black&Blaze")

More recent research has adapted visual metaphor typologies and applied them to studies of metaphor in multimodal and filmic advertisements (Bort-Mir, 2019; Pan & Tay, 2020). However, these have as yet received little empirical research. I take these typologies to analyze the creative use of metaphor in TV commercials for sports brands in Chapter 6. Commercials offer a dynamic environment for creative metaphor to thrive in, involving multiple modes: spoken and written language (e.g. dialogue, narration, text), visuals (e.g. images, motion, gestures, etc.), and audio (e.g. sound effects and music).

Multimodal metaphor

Different modes of communication have different affordances for making and presenting meaning. There is a growing body of research that looks at how metaphor can operate not

only in different modes, but *across* different modes. Multimodal metaphor is when the source and target domains feature in two or more different modes, such as in a verbal *and* a visual mode (Forceville, 2006). Figure 1.5 is an advertisement for Nivea anti-ageing face cream 'for men' with the call to action "recharge your skin" (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c, p. 12). The advertisement uses a multimodal metaphor FACE CREAM IS A BATTERY as the source domain (battery) is cued both in the visual presentation of the face cream (similar shape; lid resembles a positive connector) and in the verbal text "recharge". The metaphor conveys the claim that the face cream will energize the skin, making it look fresher and younger. Despite the creative depiction of the face cream in this advertisement, the meaning is based on a more conventional mapping. A common English expression "recharge your batteries" has semantic associations with concepts such as 'reinvigorate' and 'rejuvenate' that suggest a transformation in energy levels. The multimodal creative metaphor thus elaborates on a conventional metaphor to convey information about the product through its novel depiction as a battery.



Figure 1.5. Print advertisement for Nivea face cream 'for men' involving a novel multimodal metaphor (text: "Recharge your skin. Nivea Men.")

Building scenarios and combining tropes

Much metaphor research distils metaphor verbalization to two domains: the target domain and the source domain. That is likely done to ease the process of comparing metaphors across datasets. But there are more complex interactions of domains that are better explained as a scene or scenario (Musolff, 2006; Semino, 2008), or as a conceptual blend of multiple schema that create a narrative (Fauconnier & Turner, 2003). Barnden (2015) proposes that creative metaphors can involve conceptual elaborations of familiar metaphorical scenarios that transcends being limited to any one domain. The elaborations one can make with creative metaphor are thus open-ended. For example, in therapy discourse, clients can construct a creative metaphor to describe how they are feeling, and then the metaphor is picked up and

elaborated upon by the therapist to explore how the client responds to treatment or trauma, and in turn the client may build upon this metaphor, and so on (Tay, 2013).

In Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), conceptual blending refers to integration networks where two (or more) input spaces containing different information combine together to create a novel, blended space or meaning (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Although CBT presents an attractive way to explain how multiple items of information can combine to create a metaphor, how much blending actually happens with conventionalized mappings is questionable, because people may instead use trained associations rather than processing a blend from scratch. Gibbs (2001) proposes that CBT is more useful as a framework that can help explain, post-hoc, the conceptual patterns and blends of processing a metaphor, as opposed to necessarily predicting how we process it. In this thesis, I accept that metaphor can elaborate into scenes or scenarios and even mental spaces in which multiple interpretations are explored. The expansive nature of figurative scenarios can make it difficult to pin down what figurative tropes are involved, which is a challenge we faced in Chapter 4.

Another way metaphors can build a scenario is by amalgamating multiple metaphors. Metaphors can connect with one another by sharing a source and/or target domain, referred to as a 'metaphoric chain' (Ruiz de MendozaIbáñez & Mairal Usón, 2008), 'metaphoric complex' (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Pérez Hernández, 2011), or 'metaphoric amalgam' (Pérez Sobrino, 2017b). However, there is a distinction between these labels. Metaphoric complexes and metaphoric amalgams involve the integration multiple domains in a kind of network of associations; whereas metaphoric chains involve a succession of metaphors that attach to one another through one shared domain. Metaphors can combine to form a network of associations of a similar or the same quality (Langacker, 1987). For instance, metaphors GOOD IS UP ("Things are looking up"), MORE IS UP ("My income rose last year"), and

HAPPY IS UP (“You’re in high spirits”) associate with each other through verticality and elevation, and positive qualities (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, pp. 16–18).

Metaphor can also combine with other figurative tropes, such as metonymy, personification, and pun, to extend or elaborate mappings and build scenarios. In order to understand how metaphor can work with other figurative tropes in creative ways, we first need to define these tropes.

1.2.5. Metonymy

Metonymy is a linguistic and conceptual operation (Radden & Kövecses, 1999), where “one thing is used to refer to something else, to which it is closely related in some way” (Littlemore, 2015, p. 5). Radden and Kövecses (1999) categorized the conceptual patterns of metonymy in an Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM) that constitutes two overarching categories: WHOLE AND PART and PART AND PART. Whole-and-part metonymies use a whole entity to refer to part of one, as in “The White House announced this morning” where the White House (a whole entity) is used to refer to the people who work at the white house (a part). Whole-and-part metonymies can also use part of an entity to refer to a whole one, as in “The hired hands are here” that uses part of the human body, the hands, to refer to the people hired to work (Littlemore, 2015, p. 23). Part-and-part metonymies side-step the semantic/conceptual domain, as in the example “I’ll have a glass to celebrate” where glass refers to a drink of something (Littlemore, 2015, p. 22).

While conventional metonymies can be considered as being closer to literal and concrete meaning, creative uses of metonymy can extend mappings to more abstract connections (Peirsman & Geeraerts, 2006). Similarly to Fuoli et al. (2021) for metaphor, Littlemore (2022) argues that there are rarely truly original mappings for metonymy. Rather, the creative

use of metonymy plays off conventional metonymic relationships, at least on some level of abstraction. There is limited research on the creative use of metonymy at this stage. However, two studies by Littlemore and Tagg (2018) and Littlemore (2022) have initiated categorizing ways in which metonymy can be creatively used through its meaning (1) and its form (2). Interestingly, Littlemore and Tagg (2018) note that categories for the creative use of metonymy are not mutually exclusive, in that one instance of metonymy could be creative through its meaning and/or its form. They propose a framework for categorizing the different creative uses of metonymy as literary creativity in text messages:

1. ICM-based creativity – exploitation of relationships within or across ICMs for creative purposes
    a. Extended use of same underlying cognitive model
    b. Juxtaposition
        i. Juxtaposition of two metonyms from different ICMs
        ii. Juxtaposition of two contrasting metonyms from same ICM
        iii. Juxtaposition of both literal and metonymic meaning
        iv. Juxtaposition of two different metonymic readings of the same word
2. Form-based creativity
    a. Repetition
        i. Alliteration
        ii. Parallelism
        iii. Co-construction/re-use
    b. Deviation from expected form

Littlemore (2022) refines these categories in a more recent study. Metonymy is abundant in language, but can also be found in visuals and other modes, just like metaphor (Forceville,

2009; Littlemore, 2022; Pérez Sobrino, 2017b; Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Littlemore (2022) demonstrates how the creative use of metonymy can occur in modes other than language by providing examples of metonymy in static images and TV programs:

- Meaning-based creativity
    a) Juxtaposition of two established metonymic relationships
    b) Extension/elaboration of established metonymic relationship (creative at some level but can be traced to a conventional metonymy, or combining with other tropes such as metaphor)
    c) Twice-true metonymy (double reading that compares literal and figurative meaning)
    d) Personification (re-literalization of personified to literal meaning)
    e) Discourse level (applied to a new context or topic)
- Form-based creativity
    a) Juxtaposition (two meanings metonymically related to one another are contrasted)
    b) Grammatical readjustment (using item for a different part-of-speech)[7]

Both studies argue that patterns for the creative use of metaphor can be applied to the creative use of metonymy. For example, the 'juxtaposition' of metonymic mappings may be seen as equating to Lakoff and Turner's (1989) *combination* of metaphoric mappings (see Section 1.2.3). Metonymy can mark a shift in focus within a domain by juxtaposing conventional and new readings. "New meanings can often emerge from the blend of source and target that are not intrinsic features of either the source or the target" (Littlemore, 2015, p. 104). This blend creates "hypothetical relationships" that are more creative and dynamic than

[7] Form-based creativity can occur through grammar, in that it changes a word class and alters the register. This relates to Halliday's 'grammatical metaphor' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

metonymy's standard 'referential' function and can often result in humor (Barcelona, 2003b; Littlemore, 2015, p. 122). Metonymy also draws attention to different parts of a domain and/or highlights parts of a scene or event that would normally be in the background. Metonymy can point toward an absent entity by referring to something that represents its absence. For example, Tiny Tim's crutch propped up in the corner of the room of the Crachett's house in *A Christmas Carol* (Dickens, 1843) serves as a metonymy for Tiny Tim who is at that moment hypothetically dead.

In advertising, metonymy is very useful because it can refer to concepts in a way that is more compact and attractive to the viewer. In Figure 1.6, the HTC mobile phone replaces the letter 'o' in you. By doing this, it suggests that the phone can be a part of you – the customer – as an extension of your identity or abilities. The advertisement refers to the phone as a "Legend". In English, to be a 'legend' is to be someone who is respected or renowned. This semantic association can be metonymically mapped onto the phone but further mapped onto the customer if they own the phone. Thus there are multiple metonymies LEGEND FOR RESPECTED PERSON and PHONE FOR PART OF YOU that create a scenario where you, the customer, can become legendary (if you buy the phone).



Figure 1.6. Print advertisement for HTC mobile phone using visual metonymy and metonymic scenario (text: "Designed by use, personalized by you. HTC Legend.")

1.2.6. Metaphor and metonymy: A beautiful friendship

Metaphor frequently combines with metonymy. In a corpus of 210 multimodal advertisements from a range of sectors, Pérez Sobrino (2016) found that 56% of the advertisements contained metaphor and 43% contained metonymy. Of these total instances of metaphor and metonymy, 30% of the advertisements used metaphtonymy. Metaphtonymy is a metaphor-metonymy compound that occurs when metaphor and metonymy share a target or source domain (Goossens, 1990). Take the English phrase, "lend me your ears" that means 'pay attention'. It combines a metaphor ATTENTION IS EARS with a metonymy EARS FOR LISTENING through the shared domain of 'ears', which is the target for the metaphor and the source for

metonymy. Metonymy can ‘motivate’ or ‘provide access to’ a metaphor to help make sense of a metaphorical mapping and attach additional information to the metaphor (Barcelona, 2003a; Urios-Aparisi, 2009), resulting in more informative messaging (Al-Sharafi, 2004; Brdar, 2007). As such, the metaphor frames the ears as something that can be exchanged for attention, and the OBJECT FOR ACTION metonymy informs the kind of attention required.

Some instances of metaphtonymy may become conventionalized. However, metaphtonymy may also be used creatively, particularly when elaborating on a scenario by introducing an additional layer of meaning or information to a figurative message. The combination of metaphor and metonymy creates a greater degree of figurative complexity (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c). The ability to make more complex conceptual mappings is useful to advertisers as they can elaborate on information about their product. Figure 1.7 advertises an ice cream brand, Kaku, that visually depicts cows with ice cream sticks in their backs (Pérez Sobrino & Littlemore, 2017, p. 387). The cows are thus metaphorically depicted as being ice cream. This construal is assisted by the visual resemblance metaphor comparing the ice cream cows with the realistic ice cream image in the bottom right corner. Metonymy provides further information about the ice cream through the association with cows as producing organic milk, a construal also guided by the verbal (written) tagline “pure milk”. The metaphtonymy, COW (for organic/pure milk) IS ICE CREAM, is cued by domains that are represented in both visual and verbal modes, and conveys the message that the ice cream is made from natural ingredients. In some cases metaphtonymy is necessary to interpret the message in a way that presents the product as desirable. In the case of Figure 1.7, metonymy is essential to guide the construal that the ice cream is made from pure cow milk, as opposed to the metaphor alone that may suggest that the ice cream product is cruel to animals.



Figure 1.7. Print advertisement for Kaku ice cream using multimodal creative metaphtonymy (text: "Kaku. Pure milk ice cream.")

1.2.7. Personification

We have seen that metaphor and metonymy can combine to create new or altered mappings to convey new or elaborated information. Metaphor and metonymy can also blend with other figurative tropes such as personification.

Personification is when an entity (concept, object, or living being) is attributed human features or traits (Delbaere et al., 2011). Verbs such as *give*, *get*, *take*, *make*, *go*, and *come* are basic human actions. When they are used to describe an inanimate object such as "The lamps seemed to *give* no light", they are technically personifying the lamp (Dorst, 2011, p. 121,

italics in original). However, as these verbs are used so frequently in English expressions they are conventional, or even 'dead' personifications (i.e. they are no longer processed as figurative). Personification can be used creatively, however. Figure 1.8 shows an advertisement that depicts painted fingernails as eyes for a pair of MAX shoes. This is a novel way of depicting shoes as a living entity. Yet it is open to interpretation whether the shoe behaves like a person (hinted in the visual of the shoes having eyes), or whether the shoe is a part of the customer (conveyed in the verbal tagline, "You are what you wear").

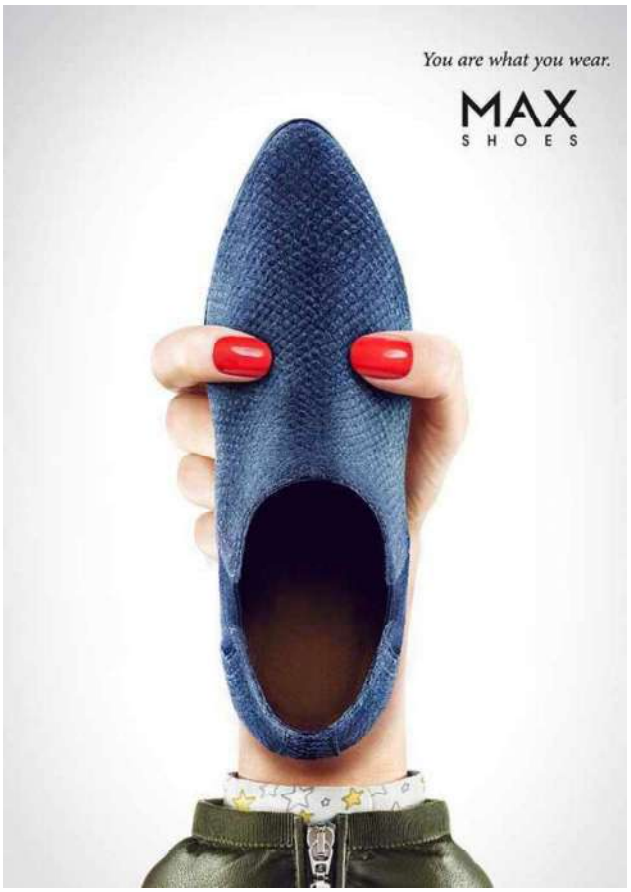


Figure 1.8. Print advertisement for MAX shoes creatively using personification (Text: "You are what you wear.")

Classifying personification's relationship with metaphor or metonymy can be tricky. Personification can have a metaphoric or metonymic reading (Dorst, 2011; Steen, 2007).

"This paper thinks…" has a metaphoric reading ESSAY IS A PERSON (Low, 1999, p. 221), while "The office telephoned to ask…" has a metonymic reading OFFICE FOR OFFICE WORKER (Dorst et al., 2011, p. 278). Personification can also have both a metaphoric and metonymic reading simultaneously. Figure 1.9 shows an engineer working with their Cat phone beside them. There is a metaphoric interpretation of the mobile phone being portrayed as a working man that compares human and phone features. There is also potential for a metonymic interpretation whereby the properties of a working man (e.g. strength and resilience) are mapped onto the phone without necessarily understanding the phone as an animated being. These examples illustrate that the boundaries of figurative tropes can be fuzzy and that tropes can overlap (Barnden, 2010). What interpretation is salient may rely on the context or the knowledge of the viewer. This issue relates to one of the research questions of this thesis that is explored in Chapter 4: *(How) can the creative use of figurative communication be reliably identified and interpreted?*

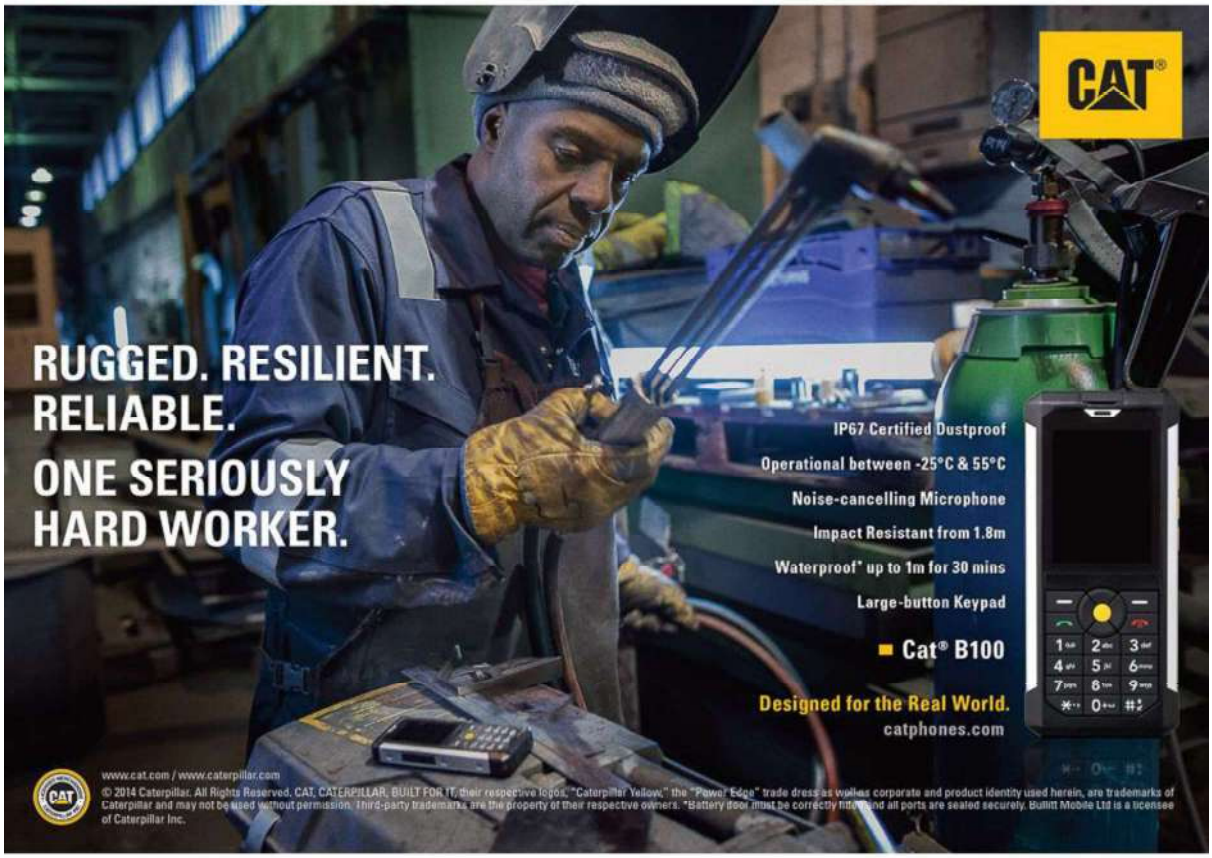


Figure 1.9. Print advertisement for Cat mobile phone using personification with a metaphoric and/or metonymic basis (text: "Rugged. Resilient. Reliable. One seriously hard worker.")

1.2.8. Pun

Puns have a double reading, in that they can be understood in two different ways. Puns are similar to the 'twice true' and juxtaposed readings creative metaphors and creative metonymies can have, making puns a useful companion when constructing a joke. Van Mulken et al. (2005, p. 707/711) defines two types of puns. (1) Puns where both readings can be relevant, such as in an advertisement slogan for a flashlight "a gift that leaves you beaming" where 'beaming' can be interpreted as the flashlight or as the satisfied smile of the owner. (2) Puns where one reading is relevant, as in the slogan for an aids charity, "How to stop yourself dying for sex – Don't aid aids" where one interpretation "'How to stop yourself

wanting sex very badly' is discarded in favor of 'How to stop yourself being killed by a sexually transmitted disease'", because the latter interpretation is more relevant to the perceived intended message of the slogan. There is also a metonymy here, in that the broader domain of 'sex' more specifically relates to 'a disease of sexual activity', i.e. a sexually transmitted infection (STI).

Puns do not operate exclusively in language and can also operate in images. Visual puns "use one or more symbols (picture and/or text) to suggest two meanings or two different sets of associations" (Abed, 1994, p. 46). It is possible to combine images to make a visual pun, or to use an image or symbol to refer to a word that has the same meaning or a similar sound (Giorgadze, 2015). Figure 1.10 shows an advertisement for a coffee brand where the visual pun plays on the resemblance of a coffee mug and a handbag. The item can be perceived as either item and so has a double reading, or perhaps more appropriately a double *viewing*. The tagline "coffee on the go" similarly implies the object can be a coffee mug ("coffee") or a handbag ("on the go"). There is also a metonymy present that connects the coffee mug to the coffee product in question (be it liquid or beans) as the mug stands as a container for the coffee.



Figure 1.10. Print advertisement for Naber coffee brand using a visual pun, or a multimodal pun-metonymy (text: "Naber Kaffee. Coffee to go.")

1.2.9. The impact of figurative communication

Thus far I have reviewed how figurative tropes may be used creatively, drawing on examples of linguistic, visual, and multimodal communication. I am also interested in the affect the creative use of figurative communication has on people's attitudes and behaviors. One way to investigate this is to study the use of figurative communication in advertising and how audiences respond to it. Advertising is typically associated with selling products, but it is also used by non-profit organizations that raise awareness of important social issues. Investigating the effect of the creative use of figurative communication in advertising may help to improve the effectiveness of social campaigns to subsequently have a positive impact on people's lives.

Optimal innovation

Research suggests that figurative tropes can affect people's attitudes toward advertisements and brands, and that figurative tropes are more effective than literal language or literal images (i.e. showing the product in its true form) (Burgers et al., 2015; Delbaere et al., 2011; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019; Sopory & Dillard, 2002; Van Mulken et al., 2005, 2010). One reason for the affective appeal of figurative tropes in advertising is to do with incongruity. The incongruity created between what is meant and what is implied presents a puzzle to the audience and requires them to solve the puzzle in order to understand the message. Seeking resolution stimulates parts of the brain associated with reward processing (Mobbs et al., 2003) and positive emotion (Citron & Goldberg, 2014). Thus, people find pleasure from resolving the incongruity between domains.

According to the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (OIH), when asked to interpret creative uses of language, people prefer it when an optimal amount of cognitive work is required to figure out the relevant meaning (Giora et al., 2004). Optimal innovation appears to be related to complexity. If a message is too complex, people find it frustrating; whereas if a message is too simple then people find little to no 'reward' for figuring it out. When applied to advertising, optimal innovation is likely to elicit higher appreciation from customers than messages that are too simple or too complex.

Figurative complexity and visual complexity

Subsequent studies have applied the OIH to a cline of figurative complexity. Pérez Sobrino (2017b, p. 73) places on this cline the figurative tropes metonymy, metonymic chain, metaphor, metaphtonymy, metaphoric complex. The idea is that more effort would be

required to figure out the medium to high figurative meaning (metaphor and metaphtomymy) and less effort would be required to figure out the literal to low figurative meaning (literal and metonymy). The intermediate degrees of figurativeness (i.e. metaphor, metonymic chains, and metaphtonymy) were perceived as being more persuasive than simpler and complex operations (Pérez Sobrino, 2017a).

Another way of operationalizing figurative complexity is to group simple figurative operations (those that operate alone, as in a single metaphor or a single metonymy) and complex figurative operations (those that operate in combination, as in metonymic chains, metaphoric complexes, and metaphtonymy). Pérez Sobrino et al. (2019) found that simple figurative operations were *less* appealing than complex figurative operations.

Contrastively, Sopory and Dillard (2002) found that single metaphors were more persuasive than multiple metaphors. However, they also found that unconventional metaphors that were not entirely novel were perceived as persuasive, which supports the OIH. The results suggest that optimal innovation may not only concern figurative complexity but also the degree of novelty. Burgers et al. (2015) found that print advertisements with conventional metaphors were perceived as less complex, yet more creative and more persuasive (eliciting favorable brand attitude and purchase intention) than advertisements without conventional metaphors (tagline meanings were closer to the literal)[8]. These findings raise questions about what influence the perception of the degree of complexity and the degree of creativity has on people's attitudes and behaviors.

Innovation can occur not only through meaning but also through form. Van Mulken et al. (2010) tested Forceville's (2008) typology of visual metaphors in addition to a 'no metaphor'

[8] It is important to note here that conventional metaphors were compared to the absence of conventional metaphor, and were not compared to instances of creative metaphors.

condition and measured their perceived complexity. The results showed that no metaphor, followed by simile, hybrid, and contextual metaphor were perceived as being least to most complex. The degree of appreciation (perceived positive or negative perception of the advertisement) formed a 'U-shaped curve' meaning that no metaphor and contextual metaphor conditions were the least appreciated on either side of the complexity continuum. Simile was moderately appreciated by being moderately complex, and hybrid metaphor was appreciated the most by being considerably complex. Van Mulken et al. (2014) later tested Phillips and McQuarrie's (2004) typology for visual metaphor according to its visual structure (visual complexity). As discussed in Section 1.2.4, Phillips and McQuarrie's typology maps onto Forceville's (1996, 2008) and Gkiouzepas & Hogg's (2011) typologies. Van Mulken et al. (2014) replicated the result from their previous study, finding that juxtaposition, fusion, and replacement were least to most complex, and the appreciation of these visual metaphor structures produced a 'U-shaped' curve, with juxtaposition and replacement being less appreciated than fusion. This concurs with the OIH because the 'optimally complex' hybrid/fusion metaphor was most appreciated while the simpler and overly complex visual metaphor structures were appreciated less.

Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021c) have distinguished two ways in which figurative creativity can be investigated: through *figurative complexity*, referring to the creative use of conceptual mappings, and *visual complexity*, referring to the complexity that lies in the creative use of form and the way the figurative tropes are depicted. Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021b) found that figurative complexity and visual complexity in advertisements influences the advertisements' engagement (likelihood that the advertisement would attract attention) and perceived effectiveness (likelihood that the audience would purchase the advertised product). They also found that advertisements that were more visually complex ("content-rich") were perceived as

being more engaging than visually simpler ("schematic") advertisements, although they were equally persuasive (content-rich and schematic advertisements were not statistically different for the persuasiveness measure). As this was an initial pass at measuring the impact of figurative complexity and visual complexity, more research is required to explore the affective relationship between creativity and complexity, and effectiveness measures such as appeal, engagement, and persuasiveness. In Chapter 3, I test how metaphor and double entendre (pun) influence people's attitudes and intended behavior toward a sexual health campaign. In Chapter 5, I investigate the use of metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun according to their figurative complexity and visual complexity in smartphone app icons.

Metaphor can increase viewers' perceived persuasiveness of an advertisement (Sopory & Dillard, 2002) and the likelihood of their purchasing the product advertised (Burgers et al., 2016; Chang & Yen, 2013). Pérez Sobrino et al. (2019) distinguish between 'perceived' and 'actual' effectiveness, whereby perceived effectiveness involves self-reported ratings by participants to a study that reflects attitude toward advertisements, and actual effectiveness involves measuring the behavioral reaction of people triggered by advertisements. Most, if not all, 'effect studies' for metaphor focus on perceived effectiveness, while there is little to no research on the influence figurative tropes have on actual effectiveness. This may be due to researchers not having access to, or not having established, actual impact data that could be facilitated through partnerships with organizations that would assist them in testing, or at least observing, the behavioral impact figurative tropes have in live campaigns. Moreover, there appears to be little mention in the literature of the impact of *creative* or the *creative use* of figurative tropes beyond metaphor.

My collaboration with the advertising agency Big Cat has provided me with industry insight into how they measure the behavioral impact of their campaigns. Big Cat and other

advertising agencies use what they refer to as 'key performance indicators' (KPIs) that can include a mirage of different metrics, from click-through rates (i.e. rate of clicks on an online advertisement) to conversions (i.e. amount of clicks have converted into product purchases), or more approximate measures such as reach (i.e. estimated amount of people exposed to an advertisement based on website traffic or physical footfall into a store or at a bus stop, for example). In Chapter 2, where I report results from interviews with academics and advertisers, I discuss in more detail how creativity can be measured with regards to its effectiveness in advertising and consider the implications for measuring the perceived and actual effectiveness of the creative use of figurative communication. Chapter 3 measures the effectiveness of different formulations of creative expressions in a sexual health campaign involving metaphor and double entendre (puns), by means of perceived effectiveness in a controlled experiment. While it was not possible in that study to have a controlled measure of actual effectiveness, observing the KPI data collected by Big Cat served as an indication of the impact of the campaign using creative metaphor compared to previous campaigns.

1.3. Research questions and chapter summaries

In light of literature review, I have refined my overarching research questions into six specific research questions that I address in turn. This thesis explores the creative use of the figurative tropes metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun in the context of advertising. Advertising offers a diverse and creative backdrop in which to study these tropes, and covers different genres (and product sectors), modes (print advertising, app icons, and commercials), and registers (and cultures).

Refined research questions:

1. What does creativity and effectiveness mean to academic researchers and marketing practitioners, and how can we align our understanding of each other to collaborate on research?
2. What effects do different formulations of creative figurative tropes have on people's attitudes and behaviors?
3. (How) can we reliably identify and interpret creative figurative tropes in advertising?
4. (How) can culture, genre, and register influence the creative use of figurative tropes?
5. (How) can creative figurative communication be used in advertising to address social issues?
6. What challenges and possible solutions are there for successfully collaborating with marketing practitioners?

RQ1. What does creativity and effectiveness mean to academic researchers and marketing practitioners, and how can we align our understanding of each other to collaborate on research?

At the beginning of my PhD program, I conducted a series of interviews with academic researchers specializing in the field of cognitive linguistics and marketing practitioners working at Big Cat Agency. These interviews established a baseline understanding of creativity and effectiveness in the respective disciplines from which I could build an informative collaboration to research the creative use of figurative communication in

advertising.

Academics researching figurative communication tend to rely on the analysis of secondary data to uncover patterns, and they posit ideas as to why these patterns occur without consulting the author of the data. My collaboration with Big Cat Agency provided access to primary data of live campaigns, and provided insights into how figurative communication is used and how its effectiveness is measured in the advertising industry. Moreover, it has allowed me to explore ways in which collaborative research can help to bridge the gap between academia and advertising, and to make my thesis contributions relevant to both theory and practice.

RQ2. What effects do different formulations of creative figurative tropes have on people's attitudes and behaviors?

Figurative tropes can be used creatively through manipulating their meaningful relationships and their form. Different formulations can be used when presenting creative figurative tropes in language and images. However little is known about how these different formulations impact perceived effectiveness. In Chapter 3, I have enclosed a published study (Ford et al., 2021) that I conducted with Littlemore and Houghton, in collaboration with Big Cat Agency and Umbrella Health, a nonprofit organization providing advice on, and testing for, sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The study investigated the perceived effectiveness of different formulations of double entendres and metaphors on appeal, humor, the likelihood of social media engagement, and intention to seek more information about STIs. The study manipulated the formulation of tropes at the level of grammar, semantic meaning (creative versus conventional), and narrative position. We also analyzed how ratings varied according to people's differences in age, gender, and education level, and qualitatively analyzed to what

extent participants interpret and understand the advertisement message.

RQ3. (How) can we reliably identify and interpret the creative use of figurative tropes in advertising?

There exist multiple identification procedures for linguistic and multimodal metaphor (Bort-Mir, 2019; Pan & Tay, 2020; Pragglejaz Group, 2007; Stampoulidis & Bolognesi, 2019; Steen et al., 2010). However, there are virtually no procedures for identifying metonymy (cf. Littlemore, 2015), nor any procedures that acknowledge the collaborative role other figurative tropes play with metaphor and metonymy[9]. Metaphor and metonymy identification can be slippery because there is not always a clear path toward, or distinction between, the construal of metaphoric and/or metonymic relationships (Barnden, 2010).

In Chapter 4 I enclose a co-authored published study (Pérez Sobrino & Ford, 2023). The study developed an annotation manual that tracked the identification and interpretation of multimodal metaphor *and* metonymy in advertisements by two researchers across multiple rounds of annotation. An open question in research on multimodal figuration is how to mitigate researcher bias in identifying and interpreting metaphor and metonymy; an issue that determines the generalizability of the findings. Little is known about the causes that motivate different annotations. Inter-rater reliability (IRR) tests are useful to investigate the sources of variation in annotations by independent researchers that can help inform and refine procedures[10]. Inspired by existing procedures for verbal, visual, and filmic metaphor identification, we formulated instructions to identify multimodal metaphor and metonymy and tested it against a corpus of generic advertisements and genre-specific advertisements. We

[9] As far as the author is aware.
[10] I have also used IRR tests to highlight variation between analysts to explore cultural variation in the figurative complexity and visual complexity of smartphone app icons in Chapter 5.

drew attention to potential factors that may explain variation in the application of such an annotation manual, such as the researchers' background knowledge and the genre conventions of the advertisements.

The annotation manual is openly accessible so that it may be used as a template for future research. Reporting the refinements we made to our annotation manual follows reflexive practice that allows the researcher to reflect on the knowledge they bring to the data analysis and makes analysis more transparent and more replicable. In the sole-authored Chapter 6, I integrated this reflexive practice into a procedure that explored the creative use of metaphor in TV commercials, and considered how metaphor can be used creatively both alone and in combination with other figurative tropes.

RQ4. (How) can culture, genre, and register influence the creative use of figurative tropes?

Research has shown that metaphor can vary in its usage and meaning across cultures (Littlemore & Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021a), and genres and registers (Caballero, 2016; Deignan et al., 2013). It can also vary according to individual difference variables such as age and gender (see Littlemore, 2019). However, there has been comparatively little research on the variation of the creative use of metaphor across genre, register, and different groups of people, and even less on figurative tropes metonymy, personification, and pun.

Chapter 5 presents a modified version of a study submitted for publication that is co-authored with Yue Guan. We investigated how figurative tropes are used creatively in education smartphone app icons from different cultures. We applied a framework for analyzing the use of figurative language in relation to genre and register (Deignan et al., 2013)

and match it with a new criterion for studying the creative use of figurative tropes with regards to their figurative complexity and visual complexity (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c).

RQ5. (How) can creative figurative communication be used in advertising to address social issues?

As mentioned under RQ2, Chapter 3 investigated the creative use of double entendre and metaphor in a sexual health campaign that aimed to promote the importance of getting tested and treated for STIs. Examining the effect of double entendre and metaphor, we were able to provided Big Cat Agency with recommendations that they integrated into the campaign prior to launch. Although the creative use of figurative tropes cannot be said to be the cause of the campaign's success in increasing the uptake of STI testing kits and subsequent diagnoses and treatments, it nevertheless contributed to advertising practice and to a campaign that made a real social impact.

Multimodal metaphor has been found to be frequently used in advertising, with research predominantly focusing on examples of print advertising (Forceville, 2006, 2016a; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Pérez Sobrino, 2017b; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c). Yet research is beginning to branch out into TV commercials (Bobrova, 2015; Forceville, 2007, 2016b; Pan & Tay, 2020). In Chapter 6, I contribute sole-authored empirical research into multimodal metaphor in filmic commercials by adapting recent identification procedures developed for this purpose: the Filmic Identification Procedure (FIMLIP, Bort-Mir, 2019) and the Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure in Video Advertisements (C-MIPVA, Pan & Tay, 2020). I investigated how the meaning and form of multimodal metaphor and metonymy can be used creatively to position brands in relation to social issues. I also critically evaluate whether these brands are using figurative communication in ways that are useful to advocate for positive

social change.

RQ6. What challenges and possible solutions are there for successfully collaborating with marketing practitioners?

Chapter 7 presents a published co-authored chapter (Ford & Littlemore, 2023) in which I reflect upon my experience of working with a non-linguistic partner organization, Big Cat Agency. We identified the challenges and proposed solutions to those challenges to aid future researchers looking to collaborate with non-linguistic organizations as a part of their research.

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Secondary references

Figure 1.1a. (left)

Title: Abbey Road
Brand: The Beatles
Studio: EMI, Olympic and Trident
Date produced: 26th September 1969
Place: London, UK
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbey_Road
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.1b. (right)

Title: The Beetles
Brand: Volkswagen
Agency: Bates Reklamebrya
Date produced: 7th April 2007
Place: Oslo, Norway
Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/the-beetles
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.2.

Title: Made to adapt
Brand: Sony Ericsson
Agency: McCann, New York
Date produced: August 2011
Place: United States
Source: https://adsspot.me/media/prints/sony-ericsson-xperia-made-to-adapt-03567cf029df
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.3.

Title: Slices
Brand: Heinz
Agency: McCann Erickson
Date produced: 5th December 2007
Place: London, UK
Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/slices
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.4.

Title: Coffee turns you
Brand: Black&Blaze
Agency: Inhalt&Form Werbeagentur BSW
Date produced: December 2013
Place: Zurich, Switzerland
Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/coffee-turns-you
Accessed: July 2023

Figure 1.5.

Title: Battery: Recharge your skin
Brand: Nivea
Agency: FCB Inferno
Date produced: June 2014
Place: London, UK
Source: www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/nivea_battery
Accessed: July 2023

Figure 1.6.

Title: HTC Legend
Brand: HTC
Source: Google Image Advanced Search, 9th February 2017
Accessed: February 2017

Figure 1.7.

Title: Cow
Brand: Kaku
Agency: Brand 8
Date produced: May 2012
Place: Beijing, China
Source: www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/kaku_cow
Accessed: July 2023

Figure 1.8.

Title: Face
Brand: MAX Shoes
Agency: Jung von Matt
Date produced: September 2014
Place: Switzerland
Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/face-c32976c7-fda4-440e-b0ec-d4fb1ceeea23
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.9.

Title: 01_CAT WELDER FINAL ARTWORK
Brand: Cat
Agency: Conor Masterson
Place: England, UK
Source: https://www.conormasterson.com/portfolio/category/advertising/caterpillar-mobile-phone-welder
Accessed: August 2023

Figure 1.10.

Title: Coffee to go
Brand: Naber
Agency: FCB Vienna
Date produced: October 2007
Place: Austria
Source: https://www.adforum.com/creative-work/ad/player/6704660/coffee-to-go/naber
Date accessed: July 2023

CHAPTER 2. DEFINING CREATIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS: INTERVIEWS WITH MARKETING PRACTITIONERS AND ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS

2.1. Introduction

Creativity and effectiveness are key components of commercially successful and award-winning advertising (IPA, 2011). However, there is little academic research on how these components operate in marketing practice (Stewart, 1992). Despite there being academic interest in figurative tropes in advertising, especially metaphor (e.g. Forceville, 1996; Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004; Van Mulken et al., 2010), there are no studies that consult marketing practitioners on their creative process or intentions[11]. Past academic studies of figurative tropes in advertising have relied on the intuition of the researcher to interpret an advertisement message, which is sometimes referred to as the 'intended' message (e.g. Forceville, 2016, p. 10). Intention, however, can never be truly confirmed without consulting the original author. Collaborating with a marketing agency is one way to understand the process of campaign creation and the decisions that go into implementing figurative tropes in advertising.

One of the main aims of this thesis is to provide empirical evidence that helps us understand how figurative communication is creatively used in advertising and what effect it has on understanding, attitude, and behavior. To achieve this, we need to establish what

[11] To the best of the author's knowledge of the cognitive linguistic literature, and except for Pérez Sobrino et al (2021c) who report from a program of research involving the doctoral researcher and collaboration with Big Cat Agency, from which program this thesis was born.

creativity and effectiveness mean to marketing practitioners and academic researchers, how they are operationalized and measured. Interviewing both marketing practitioners and academic researchers enables a comparison of their responses. Exploring their respective opinions on the collaboration between academia and advertising may uncover perceptions these disciplines harbor about each other. Such insights may offer opportunities to improve the exchange of knowledge between, and outcomes for, theory and practice. This chapter aims to answer the following research questions (RQs):

1. What do marketing practitioners and academic researchers (specializing in cognitive linguistics) understand by creativity and effectiveness?
2. How is creativity and effectiveness operationalized and measured in the context of the advertising industry and academic research?
3. What implications do these definitions have for studies measuring the effectiveness of the creative use of figurative communication in advertising?

To address the research questions, I interviewed 7 marketing practitioners working for the Big Cat Agency and 10 academic researchers specializing in cognitive linguistics and figurative communication to uncover:

- What they understand about creativity and effectiveness
- How creativity and effectiveness are operationalized and measured
- Their perceptions of the 'rules of thumb' for measuring creativity and effectiveness in the broader marketing industry and academia
- Their perceptions of the collaboration of marketing practitioners and academic researchers

Big Cat is a marketing agency based in Birmingham (UK) that works with clients in hospitality, leisure, retail, public service, and not-for-profit who pursue the improvement of

people's lives. I have collaborated with marketing practitioners working at Big Cat throughout my doctoral program on a range of projects to learn about the process of campaign creation and the implementation of figurative tropes to help build brand awareness, appreciation, and engagement. This experience informed my analysis. The interviews were conducted in 2020, in the first year of my doctoral program. The results provided me with insights into how to improve and strengthen my collaborative partnership with Big Cat throughout my doctoral program (completed in 2023).

Past research suggests that the definitions of creativity and effectiveness vary between agencies (Hurman et al., 2020) and within agencies (Koslow et al., 2003; Young, 2000). Therefore, I anticipated evidence of differing definitions for creativity and effectiveness between practitioners within Big Cat. I also reviewed marketing research publications to understand the definitions of creativity and effectiveness in the broader marketing industry.

In Section 2.2, I review marketing industry research to establish current definitions of creativity in campaigns and methods for measuring campaign effectiveness. I then review the academic debate concerning creativity as a research topic and its relationship with effectiveness in Section 2.3. In Section 2.4, I detail my interview design and method. In Section 2.5, I report how practitioners at Big Cat define creativity and effectiveness, their perception of how the broader marketing industry understands these two concepts, and their perception of academia. I then report how academics specializing in cognitive linguistics understand creativity and effectiveness, their perception of how the wider cognitive linguistic field understands these concepts, and how they perceive advertisers. I continue with a discussion that compares the responses from the advertiser and academic participants in Section 2.6. Finally, I consider the implications of my findings for research on the creative use of figurative communication in advertising.

I henceforth refer to the interviewed marketing practitioners as 'advertisers' and the interviewed academic researchers specializing in cognitive linguistics and figurative communication as 'academics'. The responses from the advertisers and academics cannot represent the whole population of the marketing industry and academia. Yet, as these participants are members of these respective disciplines, they can be said to be indicative of collective opinions within their area of expertise. This provides a basis for future research to expand upon with a larger sample across marketing agencies and academic fields.

2.2. The effectiveness crisis

Just over a decade ago, the marketing world began reviewing its definition of marketing effectiveness and how it can be measured (Field, 2019; Hurman et al., 2020; IPA, 2011). According to studies carried out by 'marketing industry research'[12], effectiveness can mean a number of things. It can refer to consumer attention to the campaign, the campaign's cultural relevance, increased product sales, or company growth (from their net income), or achieving high ROI (return on investment), among other metrics (Hurman et al., 2020). "This lack of shared language of effectiveness has made it more difficult than it should be to identify and learn from the best work to become more effective in future" (Hurman et al., 2020).

In response, a global marketing study (Hurman et al., 2020) analyzed 5,000 effectiveness case studies[13] to develop a framework called The Creative Effectiveness Ladder (CEL, Figure 2.1) that identifies three campaign variables aligning with effectiveness that represent "the sustained commercial performance of a brand": media spend, campaign duration, and number

[12] 'Marketing industry research' is not affiliated with a university institution but is carried out independently by a specialist information/data/analytics company for businesses (including marketing). These companies are often in association with advertising organisations such as the Institute for Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), Cannes Lions, and WARC that house databases of campaign case studies.
[13] Sourced case studies recorded in 2011 to 2019 from the Creative Effectiveness Lions, WARC Effectiveness Database, and IPA Databank.

of media channels used. They coined the term 'creative commitment' to capture the combination of these campaign variables (i.e. the time, money, and channels committed to a creative idea). Allocating creative commitment scores to 120 Creative Effectiveness Lions winners[14], and later 3600 cases in the WARC Database, they found that creative commitment had a positive correlation with commercial success (effectiveness).



Figure 2.1. Creative Effectiveness Ladder framework developed by Hurman et al (2020)

[14] Winners from the Creative Effectiveness category at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, which is an annual, international advertising competition.

Applying the CEL framework to campaigns released over the past decade, Hurman et al. (2020) discovered a decline in creative commitment, with companies investing less in campaigns, for shorter durations, over fewer media channels. The decline in creative commitment "suggests that current trends in the industry are leading in the opposite direction of effectiveness". This decline is referred to as the marketing industry's 'effectiveness crisis' (Field, 2019). According to Hurman et al. (2020), 'effectiveness' is defined by commercial success, and 'creativity' strikes the balance of business metrics that results in commercial success.

However, other frameworks exist that aim to unify the definition and codification of creativity, such as Leo Burnett's 7+ HumanKind Scale (Burnett, 2023; Figure 2.2), and Heineken's Creative Ladder (Jack, 2015; Figure 2.3) that place the effects of creativity in a hierarchy from least to most valuable in terms of business success. As these frameworks focus on the business outcomes of creativity, they fall short of defining what creativity is as a concept and what it looks like in practice. Furthermore, the fact that they are developed by individual companies for internal use puts into question how much the hierarchical categories of creativity are based on research and how generalizable they are to be operationalized in wider marketing practices.



Figure 2.2. 7+ Humankind Scale developed by Leo Burnett



Figure 2.3. Creative Ladder framework developed by Heineken

The Gunn Report (IPA, 2011) supposedly "provides an objective answer" to measuring how levels of creativity can impact the effectiveness of a campaign (IPA, 2011, p. 8). The report analyzed 435 campaigns over the 1996-2010 annual IPA Effectiveness Awards competition stored in the IPA Databank[15]. They developed a creativity score based on the number of awards a campaign received at the top 46 global creative competitions for advertising. The higher the number of the awards, the more creative the campaign. The awards are judged by panels of advertising experts. According to the report, the so-called 'creative campaigns' (campaigns that received awards) were more efficient at achieving commercial success and high business metrics (e.g. share of voice and growth) than non-creative (non-awarded) campaigns, and are therefore deemed to be more effective. This supports previous findings from Binet and Field (2007).

Creativity, although talked about as a separate phenomenon to effectiveness, is always related to the effectiveness of a campaign in the marketing industry research: a creative campaign is an effective campaign. However, marketing research codifies creativity in different ways. For Hurman et al. (2020), a creative campaign is one that delivers on commercial success; whereas for The Gunn Report (IPA, 2011), a creative campaign is one that is awarded a creativity prize by advertising experts. For me, Hurman et al.'s definition is inadequate because there is evidence that creativity, especially in such a dynamic industry as advertising, is more than its commercial impact. It is perhaps unsurprising that marketing industry research focuses on commercial gain, as it is one of the core goals of marketing: to sell (be that a product, brand, or idea) and to persuade consumers to engage. But this focus hides other aspects of creativity that are yet to be documented in marketing industry research, it seems. To me, The Gunn Report's definition of creativity, presents a paradox. A campaign

[15] The Gunn Report builds on previous research by Leo Burnett that analyzed 400 of the most awarded commercials and campaigns in the world from 1992 to 1995.

is creative if it is rewarded as being creative by advertising experts, but how do the advertising experts know what creative is if the award is what distinguishes creative campaigns (awarded) and non-creative campaigns (non-awarded)? Hurman et al. announces that the CEL will serve as new scoring criteria for Cannes Lions Awards for creativity. However, how creativity is operationalized beyond commercial gain remains unclear.

Another point to consider is whether advertisers use the word 'creative' polysemously. Through my work with Big Cat and my completion of the EffTest Certificate[16], it has come to light that the term 'creative' is used by marketing practitioners to refer to different things: (1) the creativity of a concept or campaign, just as one would describe a creative (novel) idea, (2) the noun 'creative' to refer to a part or example of a campaign such as an advertisement, and (3) 'creatives' to refer to people working in an advertising agency's creative department, who are involved in the conceptualization and production of campaign material. Yet the reports do not refer to any of these versions of creativity. I interviewed 'on the ground' marketing practitioners who work at Big Cat to explore how they define creativity. This will help to draw a clearer picture as to what creativity looks like in practice, as well as to determine whether, and if so, how, they consider the ideas put forward by marketing industry research.

2.3. Creativity as a concept or an effect

The definition of creativity has endured much academic debate over the years. It has been considered a quality of genius (ancient Greek), of the divine (early Western), of artistry (early modern), and of a human trait (late modern) (Albert & Runco, 1999; Swann et al., 2017). In more recent research on creativity, the often cited definition is that "creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e., original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e., useful,

[16] The Eff Test Certificate is a 35-hour training course followed by an examination on how to measure effectiveness. The course is hosted and certified by The Institute for Practitioners in Advertising (IPA).

adaptive concerning task constraints)" (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999, p. 3). Mayer (1999, p. 450) identifies two overarching features of creativity as 'originality' and 'usefulness', shown in Table 2.1, that synonymize with novelty (originality) and appropriateness, value, and adaptability (usefulness) in Sternberg and Lubart's definition.

Table 2.1. Summarizing two overarching features of creativity, 'originality' and 'usefulness'

Author, Chapter	**Originality**	**Usefulness**	**Quote (pp. 449-450)**	**Perspective**
Gruber & Wallace, 5	Novelty	Value	The creative product must be **new** and must be given **value** according to some external criteria	Product
Martindale, 7	Original	Appropriate	A creative idea is one that is both **original** and **appropriate** for the situation in which it occurs	Product
Lumsden, 8	New	Significant	Creativity is a kind of capacity to think up something **new** that people find **significant**	Process
Feist, 13	Novel	Adaptive	**Novel** and **adaptive** solutions to problems	Process
Lubart, 16	Novel	Appropriate	Ability to produce work that is **novel** and **appropriate**	People
Boden, 17	Novel	Valuable	Generation of ideas that are both **novel** and **valuable**	People
Nickerson, 19	Novelty	Utility	**Novelty** is often cited as one of their distinctive characteristics, and some form of **utility** – usefulness, appropriateness, or social value – as another	Product

There are, however, different perspectives to study creativity. Mayer (1999) proposes three broad perspectives that sees creativity operating on a personal level, a production level, and a processing level:

(1) **People –** individual creativity and creativity as a characteristic/trait of creative people

(2) **Product –** creative production or (computer) simulation of creative production

(3) **Process –** creative thinking or cognitive processing

The study of linguistic creativity examines language production, finding that creativity can vary according to different people, across different genres and modes of communication, and signal different ways of processing and interpreting different social environments. Carter (2004) and Swann et al. (2017) show that linguistic creativity can occur in everyday communication and involve word play, parts of speech, figures of speech (e.g. idioms), repetition, humor, the creation of alternative realities (e.g. twice-true metaphors, puns), and the blending of discourses (e.g. genres, modes). They also note that much of everyday linguistic creativity is subject to it being relevant within a specific context, which prevents random, meaningless combinations of ideas being labeled as creative.

From reviewing creativity as a concept in academic research, we can see that the overarching features of creativity are, in essence, novelty and effectiveness. While studying the concept of creativity is an interesting philosophical debate, it is only a part of the picture. While Swann et al. (2017) argues that creativity is a concept and therefore has no objective property, it is possible to give a more objective view of creativity if one believes that creativity has an effect that is measurable. Such is the opinion of Csikszentmihalyi (1999, p. 314) who states that "whether an idea or product is creative or not does not depend on its own qualities but on the effect it is able to produce in others who are exposed to it", be that an effect on people's thoughts, actions, or feelings. Exactly what this 'effect' entails is not made

clear. However, it may be presumed that effect could represent a change of attitude or perspective, similar to the definition given by Forceville (2016, p. 7) for creative metaphor that "gives rise to a new perspective on and/or evaluation".

There is some debate concerning whether creativity can be said to exist if it is not recognized by others as being creative. As Carter (2004, p. 48) puts it, "originality becomes bona fide creativity only when it is…recognized, accepted, and valued as such both by the community of peers of the creative individual and by the guardians of the particular artistic or scientific domain in or with which the creator works". Csikszentmihalyi (1999, p. 321) explains this idea using the famous Dutch artist, Van Gogh.

> *"A hundred years ago those canvases [by Van Gogh] were just the hallucinating original works of a sociopathic recluse. They [the paintings] became creative only after a number of other artists, critics, collectors interpreted them in terms of a new aesthetic criteria and transformed them from substandard efforts into masterpieces."*

The label of 'creativity' is attributed as an award given by others rather than as Van Gogh processing original perceptions of the world in his mind and manifesting these in art form. But it strikes me that there is a difference here between the personal creativity Van Gogh experienced in painting his canvases (the personal creative act), and the external creativity that is recognized and evaluated by others (the social impact). Therefore, I repudiate Csikszentmihalyi's argument. The process of painting for Van Gogh *was* a personal one and a creative act that enabled him to explore his mind and express his visions through his experimentation with vivid color and post-impressionistic imagery. We know that it was used as a form of personal therapy for Van Gogh from his diary entries and letters to his brother, Theo (Van Gogh Museum, 2023). Moreover, other scholars agree that creativity can operate

on an individual level as well as be creative on a broader social level. This distinction has been attributed multiple labels such as 'person-centered' (creativity for oneself) and 'environment-centered' (creativity that must be sanctioned by others, and refers to the cultural environment) (Lubart, 1999), or creativity as 'new to me' ("person creativity") and 'new to everyone' ("historical creativity") (Boden, 2004).

Furthermore, creativity is not only a one-off event, but can occur across multiple parties. It can be an individual product (monologic) or can be co-created (dialogic) (Carter, 2004). Advertising can involve co-creation of meaning between the advertiser and the viewer. The advertiser will have an idea as to what message they want to communicate and position cues that aid the construal of this message, but what is communicated depends on the viewer's interpretation. This could result in them understanding it, picking out additional details, or misinterpreting the message. This returns to the idea that "creativity makes no sense unless it is accepted by others in the domain" (Carter, 2004, p. 38). Thinking about creative messages in advertising, if the message is not properly understood by its audience, then it may be considered as being unsuccessful in its communicative purpose, and thus ineffective. Yet the ineffectiveness here relates to the interpretation of the message and whether this is 'rightfully' received by the audience, or not, rather than whether the advertising itself is creative or not. Although, it is possible that an advertisement is unable to be understood because it is 'too creative' for the audience to interpret if they do not have the shared knowledge, or there is insufficient contextual information provided to guide the audience toward a specific interpretation. What is deemed creative may depend on the context (creative for some but not necessarily for all; creative in one environment but not another), making the measurement of the effectiveness of creativity difficult, and suggests that it cannot be measured in exact terms (Bolognesi & Werkmann Horvat, 2023).

Having reviewed research on creativity, it is clear that finding a single definition is difficult. Creativity has different nuances and communicative purposes depending on the discipline from which it is approached, the method that is used to research it, and the research questions asked about it. Creativity is subject to dynamic and fluctuating patterns such as context constraints like genre conventions and subjective market approaches and practices. However, understanding what creativity means according to the field of cognitive linguistics will assist in the study of the creative use of figurative tropes as both linguistic and conceptual operations.

The term 'effectiveness' is used in the literature on metaphor in advertising. However, the precise parameters of what constitutes effectiveness remain somewhat elusive and approximate. Studies on metaphor generally assume that to be effective, metaphor use must generate a favorable response from the viewer. That is, a positive disposition toward the metaphor, the advertisement, the brand, or the product advertised, or an inclination toward sharing information or fulfilling the call to action in the advertisement. These are all measures of perceived effectiveness that observe effects on viewer attitudes and intended behavior in controlled conditions, taken to indicate tangible shifts in viewer attitudes and behaviors in a natural environment. Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2019) distinguish between two kinds of effectiveness as 'perceived' and 'actual' effectiveness, and contend that these measures address different research questions and methodologies.

Perceived effectiveness scores can be an unreliable predictor of genuine impact as people often overestimate an advertisement's persuasiveness in relation to actual sales (Dillard et al., 2007). In most cases, however, access to concrete sales data eludes academics. Consequently, academics rely on perceived effectiveness as a proxy measure to actual effectiveness, using probing questions such as "'How effective do you believe this advertisement is?' or 'Is this

advertisement likely to make people want to buy the product?'" (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c, p. 33). While many academic studies lack the means to measure actual effectiveness, their research is still advantageous. Experiments that scrutinize viewers' responses to figurative communication in advertising offer valuable insights into the influence of figurative tropes on people's attitudes and intended behaviors. Furthermore, by examining large corpora of secondary data, researchers can identify patterns, hypothesize correlative factors, and construct models that predict behavior that can be later tested in a natural scenario.

As we have seen in Section 2.2, the marketing industry has various metrics for which to measure actual effectiveness, such as social media impressions, click-through rates, website traffic, and sales conversions that can lead to impact on brand distinctiveness, market share, and profit growth. While these measures are undoubtedly valuable, market research sometimes lacks the in-depth analysis of academic inquiry. The demands of the fast-paced industry often constrain marketers' ability to thoroughly delve into the reasons for consumer attitudes and behaviors, leading them to predominantly rely on metrics or intuition for assessing campaign performance. By collaborating with each other, academics and marketing practitioners can bridge the gap between perceived and actual effectiveness.

2.4. Method

The method involves five stages: (1) design, (2) participant recruitment and conducting the interviews, (3) transcription, (4) analysis, and (5) reflexive considerations.

2.4.1. Design

I conducted synchronous, remote, semi-structured, non-invasive interviews via Zoom (www.zoom.us). I based my interview design and analytical approach on ethical practices for

qualitative interviews (King et al., 2019; Rapley, 2004) and considered the implications of insider research through reflexivity (Mercer, 2007; Simmel, 1950). To address the research questions, I asked participants about their understanding of these two concepts and their application in relation to their own experience and specialism to facilitate a broader discussion rather than limit them to a single sentence definition. I also explored their perceptions of the assumptions marketing practitioners and academic researchers may have about these concepts to better understand the different schools of thought within the respective disciplines. See Appendix 1 for the full interview questions.

2.4.2. Participants

Participants were recruited via email through OnceHub (2020). Interviews were carried out in December 2020. I first piloted two interviews with an academic and advertiser participant to review the questions (e.g. order, relevance, etc.), appropriate interviewer conduct, and interview duration, and troubleshoot any technical issues. I then interviewed 10 academics specializing in the field of cognitive linguistics and 7 advertisers working across different roles at the Big Cat at the time of the interview.

The interviews took place exclusively online via Zoom in 2020. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes to 1.5 hours. Participants provided written and verbal consent prior to the interview and were told the study was to "investigate certain beliefs and approaches in the academic (linguistic) and marketing profession regarding advertising campaigns and communication".

Participants were not given the questions in advance to encourage them to voice their true opinions rather than produce ready-prepared answers. At the start of the interview, participants were asked about their role at work and their career as an icebreaker to become

comfortable with being recorded. To anticipate potential technical issues, I recorded the interview via the Zoom platform as audio, video, and automatic transcription, and simultaneously via an external Dictaphone (Hewson, 2012; Matthews & Cramer, 2008).

2.4.3. Transcription

I manually corrected any errors or missing information in the automated transcription. I underlined text to denote tonal emphases and inserted square brackets to denote [inaudible] speech, when the participant [laughs], and marked tones of voice such as [sarcasm].

2.4.4. Thematic analysis

The interview corpus constituted 109,545 words (exclusively interviewee responses; the advertisers = 47,108; the academics = 62,437 words). Stage 3 (transcription) served as the first part of the analysis as it gave me an overall impression of the data. Further analysis was carried out utilizing a thematic analysis approach. NVivo12 was used (QSR International Pty Ltd., 2020) to annotate the data, initially with a template of a priori themes (based on the three research questions) that expanded as additional subthemes emerged in the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that repeated concepts are an indicator of a potential theme, so I focused on these when reporting my results.

While the interview sample is small, the opinions are indicative of academics and advertisers because the participants not only talk as individuals but also "as members of 'broader' collectives" (Rapley, 2004, p. 28). This chapter gathers initial research that will help to inform future studies on this topic with larger samples.

2.4.5. Reflexivity

It is not possible to remain completely neutral in interviews. However, a reflexive approach can help researchers critically reflect on their "social background, assumptions, positioning, and behavior impact on the research process" (Gough, 2003, p. iv) to mediate the impact of researcher bias, and to gauge the reliability of the research. With qualitative research, "all research is carried out from a particular 'standpoint' by researchers who bring their subjective values and meanings to their endeavors. This subjectivity is not treated as a problem to be avoided but as a resource that can be developed in ways that augment and intensify social research" (King et al., 2019, p. 174).

Another reflexive consideration relates to this study as insider research, whereby a researcher has prior knowledge of the participant, their world, and/or each other (Mercer, 2007). The participants were known to me, and I to them. Thus, we had an established rapport, meaning participants may have been more willing to share their opinions. I conducted the interviews as an 'honorary native' to the advertising industry (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007), having studied marketing industry research and completed the EffTest Certificate beforehand, which aided the accuracy of my interpretation of the data.

In order to further mediate researcher bias, I produced a series of semi-structured 'fixed' interview questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2011), utilizing acknowledgements and probe questions (e.g. elaboration, clarification, and completion; Patton, 2014; Rubin & Rubin, 2011) when necessary to draw out information (Edwards & Holland, 2013; King et al., 2019). I remained "neutral towards the topic while displaying interest" through a friendly and open manner to encourage natural participant responses (Fielding & Thomas, 2016, p. 286) and to mediate participants exaggerating for effect (Mercer, 2007). I avoided using minimal responses (e.g.

‘mm’ and ‘yeah’) and non-verbal communication (e.g. nodding and frowning) to avoid participants misinterpreting that certain answers were more/less acceptable than others (Rapley, 2004; Swann et al., 1982). At the end of each interview, participants were given the opportunity to add further comments.

2.5. Results

In this section, I report how the advertisers and the academics understand creativity and effectiveness in theory and in practice. I follow this with a comparison of the advertiser and the academic responses. We have seen in Section 2.2 that creativity and effectiveness can be understood differently across agencies (Hurman et al., 2020), and creative differences between marketing roles within agencies are suggested (Koslow et al., 2003; Young, 2000). It is not the focus of this chapter to directly observe the differences in responses between the advertisers working at Big Cat, and specific roles are not individually identified due to anonymity concerns. However, Table 2.2 reports the identification codes allocated to participants with their discipline to facilitate comparison.

Table 2.2. Identification codes allocated to participants with their respective discipline. The codes reflect the order in which I interviewed participants, and missing codes were allocated to participants with whom the interview did not take place

Type	Identification code
Academic	002
Academic	008
Academic	009
Academic	012
Academic	013
Academic	014
Academic	015
Academic	017
Academic	018
Academic	020
Advertiser	001
Advertiser	003
Advertiser	004
Advertiser	005
Advertiser	011
Advertiser	019
Advertiser	021

2.5.1. Advertisers

I report the dominant themes identified in the coding process that detail advertisers' understanding of creativity and then effectiveness, followed by their perception of others' understanding of these concepts, in the marketing industry and in academia. Themes were ranked according to the number of participants, number of contributions, and richness of the data. The top three themes for creativity (novelty, emotion, and problem solving) and effectiveness (objectives, emotion, and cognitive effort) are reported below.

2.5.1a. Creativity

Advertisers did not give one definition of creativity; rather, they provided a set of 'ingredients' for what constitutes creativity. For example, one of the advertisers suggested:

> *"The definition for creativity is doing something distinctive or unexpected or definitely a form of art, whatever format it is. Self-expression. Trends. A way of communicating something, whether that be visual or text" [003, Advertiser].*

In this quote alone we can pick out several ingredients of creativity: creativity as distinctiveness, unexpectedness, art, self-expression, trend-setting, communication, and multimodality. As evidenced by the responses from the advertisers reported below, many of these ingredients are interlinked.

Upon considering these ingredients and analyzing the dataset, I identified three dominant themes: creativity as novelty, creativity as emotion, and creativity as problem solving. The advertisers also discussed the constraints they perceived to be placed on creativity in the marketing industry. I report these findings as they inform how creativity may thrive or not in advertising depending on certain conditions, and provide lesser-known insight into how creativity is constructed during the process of creating a campaign.

Novelty

For the advertisers, novelty was one of the key ingredients of creativity. There were three kinds of novelty that the advertisers described: (1) "it's coming up with something that either uses borrowed interest in a new way, or [(2)] it's come up with something completely new, a new concept that is interesting to a consumer", or (3) making a campaign or product different to stand out from competitors: "Creativity has got to come from a point of do[ing] something

different. Otherwise, you are just wallpaper" [003]. One of the advertisers provided an example of Compare the Market insurance comparison company:

> *"Ten years ago [Compare the Market] were just like any other comparison site. They realized that they were in a commodity market driven by price, driven by 'we'll get you a cheaper deal', that the race to the bottom line is not going to work. So they created the Compare the Meerkat character, Oleg, to be distinctive, to stand out by doing something different and then adding in humor to the point where it's now a category leader, market leader, and for me that is creativity" [003, Advertiser].*

Here we can see that companies can make themselves stand out from their competitors by introducing characters and integrating emotional messages, and humor, into their campaigns. When defining creativity as novelty, some of the advertisers used the terms "differentiation" and "distinctiveness" as synonyms, as in the quote above, whilst other advertiser participants suggested that these terms represent different concepts. According to Sharp (2016, p. 5), differentiation highlights a brand's or product's difference from its competitors while distinctiveness is how a brand or product can be identified among its competitors, via color, logo, tagline, symbol, celebrity, or advertising style. Differentiation may therefore be the marketing equivalent of creativity through meaning in academic literature, while distinctiveness is the marketing equivalent of creativity through form in the academic literature. In this "new world view", distinctiveness is deemed a more effective strategy than the "past view" of differentiation (Sharp, 2010, p. 119). However, it is clear from the data that not all the advertisers shared this same perspective and many still viewed these terms as synonymous. This disparity of term use may have an impact on how the effectiveness of creativity is measured in marketing practice.

Emotion

The advertisers described creativity as being "strategic and emotional" [001]. The quote below describes how emotional messaging can be used as a strategy to persuade people to engage with a campaign's call to action.

> *"Whatever action you're trying to create, you're basically just think[ing] of creative ways to frame that…Create some emotion and desire for someone to want to do that, whether that's through gaining something or the fear of losing something or something happening they don't want to happen, and then spark people into action" [004, Advertiser].*

The advertisers also discussed creativity as emotional messaging that uses the irrational (right) side of the brain, in contrast with factual (more literal) messaging that uses the rational (left) side of the brain. They gave an example of Coca Cola, whose marketing focuses on the feeling of drinking the product (i.e. the emotion), rather than what the drink contains (i.e. the facts). Emotional messaging was considered to be more creative than rational messaging, such that "emotional messaging gives you a broader variety of creative concepts that you can utilize and exploit whereas rational messaging, although you do have to be creative, it provides a limited syllabus that you can utilize" [005]. The reference to different sides of the brain was not only applied to campaigns in which creativity occurs through emotional messaging, but also to the thought processes that the advertisers themselves go through when creating a campaign: "[An advertiser uses] the rational, problem solving side of your brain…but you also need the emotional, right side of your brain to kick in and give it a bit more of a creative spin" [004].

Some of the advertisers suggested that the campaign itself does not necessarily have to be

emotional content but must create an emotional response: “It's not that the ad has to be emotional, the response has to be emotionally driven.” For example, “the Domestos adverts; if you’re advertising that kind of cleaning product, the ad could still be quite rational[ly] driven but the result would be emotional, like it’s going to keep you safe or it’s going to kill germs and that’s going to protect you” [004].

The advertisers also described emotional messaging in advertising as being novel, thus making this kind of emotive advertising different and distinctive in the market.

> *“Whenever an advertisement has caught me off guard it’s because it’s tapped into an emotion, a reasoning, that perhaps I hadn’t looked at before and it sort of breaks the mold, it breaks the foundation of something that I would just naturally assume was relevant to the appropriated brands. So I think creativity is being able to cut through the noise of the thousands of advertisements” [005, Advertiser].*

In this section, we can see that the advertiser participants distinguished factual and informative messaging as ‘rational’, and creative and emotive messaging as ‘irrational’ or ‘emotional’. While emotion is not necessarily irrational (Pham, 2007), the advertisers seemed to conflate emotional and irrational. This suggests that the advertisers perceive emotional messaging as an irrational act rather than something that is based on logic and factual information. Another interesting point raised was that emotional campaigns do not necessarily have to contain emotional content but trigger an emotional response from consumers that persuades them to engage with the campaign’s call to action.

Problem solving

Many of the advertisers viewed creativity as a tool to solve problems posed by clients (be that a dip in sales, or low market share, etc.). One suggested that an advertiser first needs to identify “what problems [the client is] coming up against, and then the communication and

the strategy can be applied laterally and creatively to overcome that problem" by "taking a linear problem and turning it on its head and thinking about it from an unexpected point of view that gets people to take notice" [003]. In other words, for the advertisers, creativity is encompasses not only the 'artistic' creativity in campaigns (e.g. in its design, its messaging, etc.) but also a process or strategy used to interpret problems and frame solutions that are attractive and persuasive to consumers and that differs from competitors.

Perception of others: What constitutes and constrains creativity in marketing

This section reports the advertisers' perceptions of how the industry understands creativity. They suggest what impact these understandings (or misunderstandings, some of the advertisers argue) have on how creativity is operationalized in campaigns and constrained within the workings of a marketing agency and its clients. These findings are important to this study as they highlight lesser-known attitudes within the advertising industry that have an impact on how creativity is defined, understood, and operationalized.

Some of the advertisers saw creativity as an innate ability or personality trait that some people possess and others do not: "I think it's both a science and an art being able to be creative, but for me…creativity is the ability to be very open minded and look at the sort of niches that perhaps other people would not have pursued before" [005]; "it's about having imagination…people have got like a specialist creative mind" [011].

Conversely, other advertiser participants argued that creativity as creative thinking can be used by any job role.

> *"A lot of the agency tends to see [the creative department] as where the creativity comes from, whereas creativity, true creativity, should come from all departments and all people in all job titles. You've just got different specialisms…True creativity within*

business is creative thinking applied to a problem, whatever that specialism" [004, Advertiser].

For example, another area in the agency where creativity can occur is the creative brief. The creative brief is a document written by a strategic or marketing director that sets out the objectives and parameters of a campaign. Writing the brief can be a creative process in itself, with many creative decisions involved, including the linguistic choices: "Often I'll write it and then I'll look at a specific word and think, how can that word be stronger? How can that be how can that bland word be changed into a visual word? Because visual words help creatives come up with ideas" [003]. The creative brief was described as the linchpin of creativity in a marketing agency, as it can encourage or crush creativity:

"True creativity works by being imprisoned, almost, in certain ways…If you know you can't do X, Y, and Z, you find ways to get around that; whereas, if you've got an open infinite brief, it's really hard. I think it was David Ogilvy [(WARC from home, 2020)] said 'give him the freedom of a tight brief'. The more open a brief is or the more things the brief needs to achieve, the harder it is to come up with a creative solution because you've got nowhere to go and you don't know where to head" [004, Advertiser].

These advertisers suggest that "sometimes constraints for something actually amplify creativity" [004]. However, some constraints are less helpful for creativity, such as time; the amount of time available to conceptualize and produce a campaign as "creativity doesn't really thrive in the short-term environment" [021]. As the quote below suggests, the organic creative process is something that needs time to develop.

> *"There's a misconception within the advertising and design industry in that you just turn creativity on like a switch…[but] you need to let it sink in and digest it and think about it…[Creativity is] not a process that you can write down, like maybe filling in a spreadsheet or doing your accounts or something. It's not like a step by step thing. The creative process is a lot more organic than that and it works differently for each person" [004, Advertiser].*

Creativity also depends on the client's urgency, budget, and preference for the campaign that is often limited or may diverge from what an agency recommends: "You've put together this amazing campaign…and you think it's God's gift [laughs] and then unfortunately it's incongruent with that your client wanted" [005]. There is sometimes an additional challenge for advertisers in showing clients the effectiveness of research-informed campaign concepts.

> *"There's the added difficulty of how do you explain [creative concepts] to other people. Particularly clients, whom we're, for the most part, way ahead of in terms of what is marketing effectiveness, what is behavior science, what is creativity, and why should you give a damn" [001, Advertiser].*

In other words, translating research to something that is understandable, relatable, and desirable to clients, even when recommendations come from marketing practitioners, can make the difference between a concept being accepted and a campaign being rolled out, or not.

In this section, we have seen that for advertisers, creativity is not only an artistic quality for advertisements, but also a means to think creatively about a problem and to find a creative solution that is different to market competitors.

2.5.1b. Effectiveness

The advertisers said that creativity had an important role in advertising effectiveness: "Creativity and effectiveness do go hand in hand" [005], and "everything else being equal, creativity is a multiplier of effectiveness" [001]. Other key elements of effective advertising are: (1) ensuring the campaign outcomes address the *objectives* initially set out by the client, (2) integrating *emotion* into campaigns, and (3) triggering a certain level of *cognitive effort* on the part of the consumer to work out the meaning of the campaign message. Objectives, emotion, and cognitive effort are reported as the dominant themes below.

Objectives

All except one of the advertisers agreed that an "an effective campaign has got to be driven by an objective" [003] set by the client, and ultimately deliver on the client's objective. The process to ensure that effectiveness is achieved is:

> *"To lay out your goals, constantly monitor them, update them as needs be, and then achieve them at the end of the campaign. And if you don't achieve them at the end of the campaign it's also then the ability to reflect and be able to adapt them later on" [005, Advertiser].*

The advertisers suggested that although achieving the objective of the campaign may not always be possible, it is important to evaluate why the campaign did not address the objective to inform future practices.

Emotion

The advertisers related creativity and effectiveness to rational and irrational messaging. The

advertiser participants appeared to perceive emotional messaging as an irrational act or way of thinking (see Section 2.5.1a, Emotion). “Creativity in terms of clear emotion lead messaging is more effective than rational feature and benefit messaging” [001] because “people don’t remember brand’s messages really, they often just remember how you made them feel” [019]. The advertisers referred to market industry research by Wood (2019) that reports positive emotions such as happiness and humor are “more effective, more memorable, [have] a higher recall than an ad that is rational or negative” [001]. They also suggested that emotional messaging is more effective than rational messaging “because it creates an empathetic link between the viewer and the brand” [005] (Binet & Field, 2013) and touches “on all the senses [that] can stimulate you to be really engaged by that message. Rational doesn’t have that” [003]. In other words, emotional messaging is more effective than rational messaging because it is better equipped to signal empathy and engage people by being multisensory. Yet, some advertisers did caveat this by acknowledging that a “factual [rational] message, in the right context, is certainly effective too” [021].

> *“Rational is more logical thinking, more left brain. So it’s less salient in the brain, but it can be used to reinforce some of those emotional messages with more of a logical description of what the advert is or what the product is” [021, Advertiser].*

Whilst emotional messaging is more effective in terms of memorability and connecting with consumers on a deeper, empathetic and sensory level, rational messaging can be used to complement this in different contexts and for different purposes, such as for “government level causes and public sector advertising, where you do have to provide factual information” [005] (e.g. COVID health announcements). Moreover, messaging that is rational but can convey information in a creative way is effective because “people aren’t going to listen otherwise” [005]. Creativity makes the messaging stand out.

The advertisers warned that creativity "resonates differently with different people" and "if you don't get the correct emotion and you don't understand your audience on a deeper level then it's going to make everything a little bit harder" [005]. Depending on the size of the audience population, the probability of emotional messaging being effective may vary.

> *"If we're trying to reach a broader audience, then the risk of it not resonating with them increases. The more targeted you can be in your advertising, the more effective it can be" [003, Advertiser].*

Although other advertisers (albeit fewer) saw appealing to a broader audience as a challenge that offers more opportunity for creativity: "When you're trying to target a variety of different people, it's always good to come in with multiple creative elements" [005]. Some of the advertisers suggested that creative campaigns should be based on elements that are relevant and familiar to the target audience by "looking at ads targeting them, like what sort of language, color, typography that they use, imagery and stuff like that and just like the visual language of that of ads" [021]. They mentioned that storytelling is another useful strategy because it "resonates with different audiences across different channels" [003] due to its ability to be emotional and multisensory. Storytelling relates to a broader academic field of 'narrative', which I explore with regards to the creative use of metaphor and double entendre in advertising in Chapter 3.

In summary, the advertisers believed that targeted, emotional campaigns were more effective (and potentially more creative) than broad, rational campaigns.

Cognitive effort

The advertisers described cognitive load as "the Goldilocks of what is the right amount" of

work that needs to be done on the part of the consumer to figure out a message [001]. According to the quote below, there is a balance to be struck between the effort required to construe the meaning of an advertisement and its appeal to the target audience:

> *"Don't make the creative too easy to comprehend and don't make it too difficult to comprehend. So it's that fine balance of 'oh that's interesting because it's made me work a little bit harder, but I get it, oh I'm going to remember it now.' And it starts to build those memory structures in your brain over a long period of time to a point where you're more favorable to the brand and more likely to buy a brand" [003, Advertiser].*

Moreover, there must be some reason for the consumer to care about what message the campaign is communicating; a motivation to make the effort. If "there is some existing relationship or awareness of the brand, that means that they're willing to put that extra effort in, if they couldn't give a monkey's then they won't" [001]. Sometimes the motivation for consumers to put the effort in to construe the message depends on how established, or well known, the brand is.

One of the advertisers used an analogy to explain how creativity can be most effective as a single, emotional message (referred to as a tennis ball) rather than a complex message: "if I throw you a tennis ball, you'll probably catch it; if I throw you four tennis balls, you won't catch any of them" [001]. The tennis ball analogy can apply not only to campaigns but also to creative briefs that outline the objectives. "Sticking [creative concepts] to multiple objectives is actually tougher because you're trying to meet multiple things and you might choose to do one thing because it kind of meets objective and then it just becomes a like a mismatch of different messaging" [021]. Therefore, according to the advertiser participants, a simple,

single, emotional message is more effective than multiple, complex, and rational messages.

Perception of others: Effective marketing practices and academia

This section reports the advertisers' perception of what the industry assumes is the definition of effectiveness. The advertiser participants believed that across the industry, marketing practices lack support from up-to-date scientific research, and that there is a fear of risking investment in longer term business growth and a preference for safety in prioritizing short term sales. The advertiser participants also discussed their perceptions of academic researchers and universities. This is an important finding as it offers lesser-known attitudes of marketing practitioners about academic researchers. This insight may have important implications on how linguistic researchers can collaborate more successfully with marketing practitioners.

Uninformed marketing practices and the fear of risk

The advertiser participants suggested that the lack of rigorous research on which the advertising industry bases its practices has resulted in confirmation bias for effective advertising. One advertiser explains by using a metaphor that compares uninformed marketing practices as being a course of leeches that were believed to cure all ills during the medieval period:

> *"Where marketing is right now is a bit like being a medieval doctor…You know, how medieval doctors used to think a course of leeches was the cure for everything? If you were sick and you had a course of leeches and died it was too late for the course of leeches to work, whereas if you were ill and then had a course of leeches and got well again, then clearly the leeches were the reason that you are now well. I don't know the scientific description for that kind of thing, but a lot of what we [marketing*

practitioners] do is assume that the leeches is the answer. You don't really know how we got to that" [001, Advertiser].

They then explained how confirmation bias can affect advertising strategy:

"If you look at any watch ad, every single watch face is at ten to two to frame the logo [gestures hands in a 'v' shape]. Now is that the best way to sell watches? Or every drinks brand sponsors a football competition or a football club. Is that the right thing? Because everyone else does it and you don't get sacked from IBM. So there's no theory, there's no research behind having your watch face at ten to two, there's no theory behind sponsoring football tournaments" [001, Advertiser].

The advertisers perceived that many marketers still operate using classic economics. Classic economics assumes that consumers are rational beings, and that highlighting different features about a brand or product to consumers will grow the business. However, the advertiser participants referred to market research on behavioral psychology that suggests that "we use heuristics or mental shortcuts to just do things as quickly as possible and we don't look for the best quality, the very best option" [001]. Being different to other brands is not enough; a brand must also be distinctive in some way by standing out from the market competition. One suggested that this idea:

"Goes against the assumptions of most marketing managers that 'I must go with the flow, follow the crowd', and that is based on no data or research. It's just, well they do it. If Gucci do it, then my little watch brand should do it, if Carling do it then my little drinks brand should probably do it because I don't have the budget or the knowledge of how to try and test and learn and adapt" [001, Advertiser].

Some of the advertiser participants suggested that marketing managers and practitioners

may also fear being too creative with their advertising as it could prove risky in not producing the guaranteed results they need to address clients' objectives. Marketing managers were therefore believed to follow the trends of what has previously been perceived as effective, potentially constraining creativity and perpetuating the 'myths' of marketing effectiveness.

> *"Some categories that are managed by marketing directors are probably a little bit afraid of trying something new. Probably down to the fact that if the campaign doesn't work, at least they can say, 'well competitor X did something similar'…A lot of brands follow category conventions because it feels safe to do so. You think about beer brands and their advertising and sponsorship of football…that's a convention that a lot of people just expect to happen now" [003, Advertiser].*

The pressure on advertising employees on delivering the results and achieving the objectives steers advertisers to consider: "Can you produce a good return on investment and are you able to achieve the sort of immediate superficial factors that my essentially that my boss will be looking for?" [005]. Smaller brands especially may believe that they cannot afford to take the risk of doing something different (creative).

> *"There is a fear of failure…That is because the short termism of quarterly financial results, the short termism of 'we need to hit the numbers now'…[so marketers assume that] if you do what everyone else does, you're less likely to be sacked than going and doing something completely crazy and testing that" [001, Advertiser].*

The above quote suggests that issues around creativity go beyond theoretical debate and abstract marketing results, and have a direct impact on the livelihood of marketing practitioners. Adopting the established norm may be considered a sound career decision to ensure job security. It stifles creative thought even further when combined with the pressures of achieving business objectives.

To secure the return on investment in campaigns, a lot of value is placed on sales and click attribution that provides short term results, and subsequently puts weight on digital marketing: "People will invest in short term sales and digital channels because they mistakenly assume that it's all about that click…and the stuff that leads to that click are kind of ignored" [001] such as outdoor channels (e.g. billboards, bus stop posters, etc.) [001, 004, 003]. Marketing practitioners therefore focus on digital marketing over other kinds of marketing (e.g. outdoor billboards, store footfall, etc.), and equate campaign awareness (e.g. views and website visits) to campaign effectiveness when it does not necessarily have any concrete outcome: "You can't assume that because people have seen the advert they've actually done anything with it. Impressions don't account for business impact" [003]. Furthermore, "there's a lot of talk in the industry, pretty much ever since digital started, about snake oil and agencies making massive amounts of money, by talking nonsense and pulling the wool over clients' eyes" [004]. This raises questions over ethical business practices when marketing agencies use digital metrics as a persuasive strategy to procure business from clients. This has serious implications for the clients involved as it affects their potential investment and marketing success.

Perception of academia

Two common perceptions among the advertisers interviewed were that universities are complicated and their research is inaccessible. These perceptions of academia would discourage marketing practitioners from working with researchers based at a university: "The university's very complicated and I still don't really know what it is [the university]…is trying to learn. That would put me off [engaging with them]" [001]. The advertisers' perceptions of academia may exist due to not understanding fully what academia is, what researchers do at a university, and how academic research could be relevant to them.

However, some of the advertisers commented that university marketing courses are outdated and do not keep up with the modern world:

> *"The marketing books and the universities and stuff don't tell you about it [behavioral science; a recent introduction of a body of research in marketing]. There's no behavioral science…taught in it. There's no consumer psychology taught in it. It's built off Porter. It's built off the shoulders of all these marketing giants" [001, Advertiser].*

Some advertisers claimed they did not have the time to work with academics who are not informed of latest schools of thought in the marketing industry "because we have to stay really laser focused on what we're trying to achieve, because we've got a profit imperative. You have to really stay on top of the game. If there's the incentive to do that as a lecturer, would you still be using the old books? I'm saying to lecturers, have you read this, have you heard of that, what about this, have your heard of Les Binet[17]? 'Err, no.' And these guys are at the leading edge" [001].

Many of the advertisers suggested that, for collaboration to be successful, the academic researchers need to "keep talking to the market, keep talking to the brands, the supply chain to see what is hot. It's almost like lecturers need to do internships or whatever the industry or placement version is for them" [001]. However, this suggested approach appears to be one-sided, with academics putting themselves more out there than advertisers.

These findings raise a challenge to appeal to and help educate advertisers on what academic researchers do, and what the benefits of working with researchers are. This approach would improve theory and practice. Research could also explore solutions for how

[17] Les Binet is a prominent marketing industry researcher who has conducted a series of large scale studies on advertising creativity and effectiveness (Binet & Field, 2007, 2013, 2017).

to reciprocate information in a collaborative partnership between research and industry. in Chapter 7, I reflect further on these challenges and posit solutions for a successful partnership between linguistic and non-linguistic partner organization based on my experience.

2.5.2. Academics

We now turn our attention to how the academic participants define creativity and effectiveness. While there were some similar themes between academic participants and advertiser participants, some differing themes emerged from the data. The top three themes for creativity (novelty, intention, and cognitive effort) and effectiveness (emotion, targeted campaigns, and cognitive effort) are reported below.

2.5.2a. Creativity

Similarly to the advertisers, the academics suggested different dimensions of creativity:

> *"Some people think it's just divinely inspired, whereas others, it's a general aspect of human intelligence. And I think that we can all be creative. Does it have to be innovative, brand new? Does it have to be appropriate, valuable? I think surprising is another description…combining familiar things in some sort of new way that is as yet still appropriate. All these things are facets of creativity" [013, Academic].*

This quote echoes some descriptions of 'creativity as a concept' reviewed in Section 2.3, such as creativity as a divine power, as a part of human cognition, as innovation or novelty, as well as 'creativity as an effect' inasmuch as it being appropriate (relevant) and valuable. An additional dimension given here is 'surprise' that is described as "combining familiar things in some sort of new way". This could relate to the idea of optimal innovation where the incongruity of combining familiar things in a new way signals a different reading that is

unfamiliar and unpredictable, and therefore surprising to the interpreter. Studies have shown that resolving the incongruity of meaning in figurative tropes can elicit emotional reactions including arousal and pleasure (Giora et al., 2004; Houghton et al., 2022).

Another academic [020] proposed three levels of creativity:

1. **Semantic** *"is conveying a very novel message in terms of metaphors or elaborated re-contextualization of what is a conventional metaphor but you derive it in new ways"*
2. **Design** *"in terms of textual patterns at the level of the word, like you can embed rhymes or alliteration...or you can be widely multimodal"*
3. **Contextual** *"is to what extent adverts establish a dialogue with society and cultural idiosyncrasies"*

Each level was addressed in some way by the academic participants. The contextual level was discussed particularly in relation to novelty, which is reported in the next subsection, followed by a discussion about whether creativity is intentional or not and about creativity as a balance of cognitive effort.

Novelty

Similarly to the advertisers, the academics discussed creativity in terms of "taking something that is familiar and presenting it in a new way. It can be getting you to think in different ways" [012]. With respect to advertising, academics suggested that creativity is "when something that has not been considered previously is brought to the table" [012] and *that* something highlights "features that stand out or are foregrounded in some way or are unusual or unexpected" [017][18].

[18] Underlined quoted text denotes tonal emphases.

However, some academics did not believe it possible to be truly original. “I don't think genuine creativity actually exists; I think all creativity uses existing materials and recombines them in new ways” [002]. The academics suggested that while creativity means to be original, one cannot “do something that is genuinely so original that is outside of any frame of reference” [014].

> *“I don’t think creativity means just doing whatever you want. I don’t think it means being sparklingly original all the time…I think creativity involves using and building on established patterns or maybe changing them in sort of minor ways, but not changing them so much that they suddenly become completely novel or completely unknowable or completely beyond the parameters that people usually operate within” [014, Academic].*

Therefore, if creativity is to be understood it must operate within certain boundaries because making meaning relevant operates within some kind of context. The context in which creativity occurs thus constrains creativity to some extent. The academics largely agreed that “creativity means different things in different contexts” [009] and to different audiences. Novelty and context were often discussed together:

> *“A lot of work has looked at the way in which people re-contextualize previous creative uses so that creativity is not just something that is completely new or novel, but usually involves an adaptation of something that has already been used and this is normally linked to observing creativity in context; that is, how given social, cultural, historical contexts provide the grounds for creative uses of things which were already part of our experience, but which were not necessarily very creative before but they acquire this new turn or twist” [017, Academic].*

When referring to advertising, the academics agreed that successful creativity (i.e.

creativity that is understandable, meaningful, and ultimately persuasive):

> *"Awakens this array of latent and sleeping knowledge that we have about the world. So it's not just the product, the product itself, or the intended message, but also this vast amount of knowledge that we have about the product, about our previous experiences [and] with that, our feelings, our subjective prejudices or thoughts about it" [020, Academic].*

According to the academics, a successful advertisement does not only present information about a product or the advertisement's message (e.g. call to action), but also draws on subconscious associations people have with certain thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Drawing on these associations means that advertisements can more closely resonate with its viewers and ultimately makes advertisements more persuasive.

Many of the academics also discussed the idea that creativity must, on some level, be purposeful or useful.

> *"You have to have a reason for being creative…It can be expressing a thought, changing your listener's standpoint on a given a topic…to find a creative solution…to a problem…[to] create a product that is innovative" [015, Academic].*

Thus, creativity must *do* something or *achieve* something; it must have an *effect*. For example, "if you want to make some sort of creative pair of scissors, at some point, regardless of all the modifications that you introduce, they need to be able to cut paper" [020]. The creative pair of scissors must fulfil its purpose. This analogy can be applied to creative advertising: the creativity in advertising must persuade the viewer to engage with its call to action, or at the very least it has to gain the viewer's attention to consider it.

Intention

When comparing some of the academic responses, a debate arose about whether creativity exists if the original author intended their work to be creative. On the one hand, creativity has got to have "some level of deliberateness" [009] and have "an intention behind it" [020], and "if something's original for an individual and meaningful for an individual, I think it can tick the creativity box" [009]. For example, if a cat walks up and down a piano that happens to produce a tune, this is not creative on the part of the cat as it is not intended and merely coincidental. Whereas another individual such as a "composer, who produces the exact same tune after trial and error, could be creative" [013] because the composer has a reason for composing the tune, while the cat does not. This, for some of the academics, is the difference between creativity (intentional) and not creativity (not intentional).

What happens if creativity starts out as an unintentional act? Another argument is that the creativity could be new to the individual despite their not, at least initially, intending to produce something that is creative. For example:

> *"I just get some paint on the canvas and start messing with it. And then something emerges; I noticed something, sometimes accidentally, and then I build on it and if it goes someplace then I just keep doing that…I find creativity to be a mixture of randomness, probably subconsciously driven expression, also consciously noticed things that emerge, and then some degree of skill, working with materials if it's a physical form of art, and making it follow the path you want it to" [018, Academic].*

This quote suggests that while there was no initial intention to be creative, there was an intention to engage in a form of 'creative play', through paint in this instance. This opinion coincides with the belief that creativity could be an "organic" process [009] in that one may

not initially intend to be creative but the human ability to make meaning attributes a form of expression to it and sometimes this can inform the intention behind it.

Conversely, some academics argued that while the individual doing the 'creating' may not perceive what they do as creative, it could be creative if others believe it is: "I might have produced something that I don't think is especially creative, whereas it might be perceived as being incredibly creative and innovative" [013]. This argument questions whether an external entity is required to validate the existence of creativity. It relates to the debate discussed in Section 2.3 about the existence of creativity being contingent on the 'recognition' of creativity by others.

There was no definitive answer provided by the academics for how creativity should be classified with respect to intentionality, although the arguments could derive a continuum of intentionality and creativity, from personal creativity to perceived creativity. This continuum would range from (1) fully intentional creativity on the part of the author to (2) no initial author intention to be creative evolving into being creatively meaningful to (3) intentional or not on the part of the author but perceived as creativity on the part of the receiver of the message. I discuss intentionality further in Section 2.6.2.

Cognitive effort

Most academics commented that some degree of cognitive effort is required to process and interpret creativity in action. They suggested there needed to be a balance of familiarity and complexity for creativity to be understandable and appealing to its audience.

> *"If it's just all out there and utter trippy chaotic craziness then nobody's going to be able to make sense of it. But if it's actually something that is using existing materials, something familiar but also something new, then perhaps people can relate to it" [002, Academic].*

Many of the academics referred to the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (Giora et al., 2004; also see Section 1.2.9), whereby creativity has "to be somewhere in the sweet spot of innovation or creativity…has to be somewhere in the middle of complexity" [015]. The academics reflected upon optimal innovation with respect to advertising: "With creative campaigns it's about thinking outside of the box, it's about pushing boundaries" [012] but "you need to be careful to not be too out of the box. There's a fine line to tread between being original and not being too original, and doing something that is sort of trite" [014]. Put simply, "there's an optimal level of ingenuity" [018]. The advertisers had the same idea and referred to this phenomenon as the 'Goldilocks effect', getting the creativity and complexity of meaning 'just right' to be the most effective (appealing).

Perceptions of others: Researching metaphor and ethical advertising

This section reports the academics' perceptions of cognitive linguists studying metaphor, commenting on some of the assumptions and pitfalls about metaphor identification. The academics also discuss their perception of advertisers and the potentially (un)ethical implications of conducting research in collaboration with marketing practitioners.

The challenges of researching creative figurative tropes

Another theme was the discussion of issues associated with the study of metaphor as a property of figurative language and creativity. One academic used an analogy, "whoever's got a hammer is looking for a nail" [008] where metaphor researchers are the hammer and the

metaphor is the nail, to explain that "metaphor scholars want to find metaphors everywhere. So we are naturally conditioned to see metaphors and therefore we must be careful not to make the mistake that only via a metaphor you can have creativity" [008]. They advised that metaphor should be considered as only one way to be creative, or one factor of creativity because there are many other factors that contribute toward creativity. Furthermore, a metaphor researcher "should also be careful in suggesting that an effective advertisement has to have metaphors" [015]. Using a metaphor creatively may assist in making a campaign more effective but there are many other factors that may also contribute toward its effectiveness.

Other academics contemplated what can be the creative use of figurative tropes in language. One explained that using figurative tropes such as metaphor in language can make it:

> *"A very creative form of language but it's [figurative tropes are] so predominant that it's oddly in a way not creative as well; I mean we use it all the time. I just used a hyperbole [laughs] without even really meaning to. So it can be extremely creative but it's also very commonplace" [018, Academic].*

The frequency and familiarity of certain figurative tropes, and the ways in which they are used in language, can impact the perceived creativity of those tropes. The nature of figurative tropes sometimes being creative and other times commonplace depending on the context, frequency of use, and its familiarity to the speaker "makes it even more difficult to make generalizations about how ads can be creative…It's very difficult to capture this [creativity] into some kind of algorithm or model" [008]. It is especially difficult because the interacting factors of context, frequency of use, and familiarity can vary considerably between different people or genres of advertising.

Another interesting academic point was that while developing a theory or model to help explain creativity may be useful for study, it "doesn't help us to be creative" [008]. The goal of explaining what creativity is and then explaining how to *do* creativity are different research questions and require their own dedicated research before being able to find connections between them. This highlights the disparity between the theory of the creative use of figurative communication and the practice of implementing creative figurative tropes in advertising. Unlike many studies on figurative language, my collaboration with Big Cat offers the opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice such that I can observe two things: (1) whether, and if so how adequately, creativity theory explains how Big Cat use figurative tropes in their advertising, and (2) how my research findings are implemented by Big Cat and what effect this has on people's attitudes and behaviors (see Chapter 3).

Perception of advertisers

Here I highlight two main comments that related to the academics' perception of the advertising industry. Interestingly, both comments matched the advertisers' perceptions of marketing practice being based on either no scientific research or outdated research (see Section 2.5.1b).

One common comment was that "a lot of these [creative] decisions in the past have been driven by gut" [012] (as opposed to being informed by research) that might have resulted in the advertising world having a "slightly narrow definition" of creativity [009]. Moreover, while marketing practitioners may produce effective advertising, they may not actually understand why it is effective. Essentially, their potential ignorance of recent research means their marketing practices may be outdated. Another academic pointed out that this may also be due to a delay between academic research being published and it being observed by the

advertising industry.

> *"The idea that people are rational…is certainly something that is influenced by psychology. But if you think about it, Kahneman and Tversky [authors of popular science book 'Thinking Fast and Slow'], that research has been going on for forty, fifty years and it's now really taking up a lot of steam in the last few years with the publication of Thinking Fast and Slow, which was like shared so widely amongst managerial circles. It's really showing you that there was like a few decades time lapse between the ideas actually taking fruit in advertising" [002, Academic].*

Academics also commented on the growing trend in emotional advertising that assumes humans act irrationally and rely on heuristics. The advertisers reported emotional messaging as one of the key ingredients for creativity and effectiveness in advertising (see Section 2.5.1a and Section 2.5.1b). However, the academics suggested that "humans have always been irrational [and emotional], but it's just that advertisers have changed their ideas about how they're going to interact with an audience" [002]. The academics therefore perceived the advertising industry to be 'behind the times' by basing marketing practice on outdated assumptions from old research.

Ethics

The ethics of advertising was a topic almost unique to the academic participants (only one of the advertiser participants commented on ethical practice). Some of the academic participants suggested that working with partner organizations, especially businesses, can sometimes be a bit one-sided.

> *"It's unfair if all of that work is given away for free to people who use it to for profit, for making money, that then is not shared with who provided the knowledge" [015, Academic].*

One reason attributed to having an unequal partnership was that the researcher's desire to apply research to advertising contexts to make a positive impact in society can overshadow the setting up of mutually beneficial outputs with partnered organizations. Academic participants also questioned the ethics of research in improving the effectiveness of campaigns that could be taken to persuade audiences to buy things they do not want or need, versus something that would potentially improve their quality of life.

> *"[Research] to find the most effective way of selling this thing that nobody actually needs but it's a way of wasting their money, then that is that might present some sort of ethical problem for academics" [013, Academic].*

Where academic research looks at how to improve the effectiveness of advertising, there is the potential for it being used for commercial purposes rather than for positive social impact. Research findings "can be borrowed by the private industry, which is used purely for the sake of profitability, which is not necessarily an inherent evil, but it's not as charitable" [018]. Academics suggested that research that benefits profit-making business distracts from issues that are perceived as being more important or urgent.

> *"If you're advertising things to people and tapping into kind of more irrational messaging and making them spend money that maybe don't have or, you know, encouraging people to whatever you know, fly around the world, buy cars, and what have you, at a time when we should be thinking about global warming, climate change, and what have you, then that's kind of irresponsible" [014, Academic].*

It is impossible to only allow effectiveness research to reach non-profit organizations, especially with open science increasing the accessibility of research. Therefore, this may be an inevitable and unsolvable ethical dilemma that is one of the limitations of this kind of research. However, there are increasing cases of profit-driven businesses contributing to the

betterment of society as a form of corporate social responsibility (see Chapter 6). Profit-driven does not necessarily equate unethical or insensitive marketing.

Contrastively to the academics, only one advertiser mentioned ethics when discussing their learning about marketing strategy on a course. The absence of ethical practice in the marketing practitioner interviews cannot be taken as a sign that advertisers disregard ethical practice. There is not enough data to compare responses between the academics and marketing practitioners. Further research could investigate whether, and to what extent, ethical practice is something advertisers consider as a part of their creation of campaigns.

2.5.2b. Effectiveness

When considering what makes an effective campaign, the academics discussed several themes. The emotion, the target audience, and the cognitive effort involved in processing the campaign message are reported below.

Emotion

Similarly to advertisers, academics deemed the role of emotion to be very important to advertising effectiveness. Some academics suggested that "an effective campaign is one that makes people think on a certain level, that taps into some form of quite sort of basic, emotional kind of response" [009] that could include "emotional appeal, sometimes through humor but sometimes through nostalgia" [013]. Interestingly, both groups of participants equated irrationality with emotion. One of the reasons the academics deemed effectiveness to involve emotional messaging was that "we are much more sort of prone to act based on irrational, subconscious, emotional sort of things because ultimately emotion is what sits at the driver's seat of all decision making processes" [002]. According to the academics,

emotional messaging would be more likely to resonate with people and be more persuasive in doing so, than more rational and factual messaging. Furthermore, they suggested that advertisements with an emotional element are more memorable:

> *"I only remember the very emotional adverts…the adverts that tap into our basic emotions, like feeling alone or being with being with someone, having been scared, or being comforted by a person you love, that sort of thing" [020, Academic].*

One academic mentioned that constructing a narrative combined with emotion makes for a more memorable campaign, which concurs with the advertisers' recommendation for storytelling. The academics also agreed with the advertisers that the approach to a campaign being more factual or more emotional depends on the needs of the consumer:

> *"If I'm looking for furniture, [factual information is] what I want. But if I'm looking for something that maybe is a bit of a luxury, then some sort of connection to old times, some sort of more emotional appeal might be valuable" [013, Academic].*

In this section, we have seen that academic participants identify the benefits of emotional messaging over factual messaging. Their opinions concur with those of the marketing practitioner participants, that emotional messaging can resonate with advertising audiences on a deeper level and is more memorable than factual messaging, especially if it is used as part of story. However, sometimes the effectiveness of emotional versus factual messaging can vary according to the product category or needs of the consumer.

Targeted campaigns

Engaging the right target audience in the right way is the linchpin to effective advertising, according to many of the academics.

> *"You can think of the most wonderful metaphors in the world to promote your product but before you have attracted the attention of your audience, nothing happens" [008, Academic].*

A campaign needs to capture the attention of its audience to ultimately sell a product. This relates to the argument for creativity in an advertisement only being effective if it is noticed by others as being creative (see Section 2.5.2a).

> *"Creativity does one of those three major things: it gets people's attention, puts an idea in somebody's head, or makes it stay there" [018, Academic].*

Once a campaign has got the audience's attention, "a good advertising communicator needs to take into account what are the values and attitudes and beliefs of the target audience…to be optimally relevant" [008], and pay "attention to the cultural and subcultural and group demographics, specificities of the consumers you [advertisers] want to target" [015]. Playing off shared knowledge and language is useful because "if I use phrases that you recognize, we immediately have a sort of sense of shared sort of social experience that automatically bonds people" [014]. Attention-grabbing campaigns that are in some way relevant and using knowledge shared with its audience are more effective, according to the academics.

Cognitive effort

A middle-ground of optimum complexity and effort required to process a campaign message was considered by the academics to be more effective than if it is too simple or too complex:

> Leaving the audience to infer part of the message *"confers a sense of ownership of the message…there's also research that says that the more creative this campaign is, the*

more effective is going to be as well, the more memorable or outstanding…adverts are appreciated [most] at this medium point of creativity and perhaps even towards the more basic end, not definitely the absolute crazy novel type of creativity, that's perhaps much more typical of artworks that doesn't have like a proper intention the way advertising does" [020, Academic].

The following explains that more cognitive effort required by the audience can result in the campaign being more satisfying and memorable:

"If you are asking audience to do the extra mileage, you are actively engaging them… that extra work translates into them be more likely to memorize the product… that extra step of insight that you have to generate yourself also gives you a sense of satisfaction… if you can use that emotion and make your audience…associate that positive emotion with the product and with your brand" [002, Academic]

Conversely, some academics suggested that "sometimes simplicity can be the most effective way forward; sometimes less is more" [012]. Cognitive fluency means "the easier it is to process a stimulus, the more it is liked" [002]. Participant [002] explained cognitive fluency by referring to Oppenheimer and Frank (2008), who showed that when the font of a text was easier to read, people liked the message more. "Creativity needn't be complex…I think creativity can be extremely simple" [009] because "you can't have a message that will take too much time to figure out because I can't be bothered; I really don't care that much about ads to figure out their subtle message" [013]. Participant [014] suggested that a more straightforward message may be quicker to figure out, and in a fast-paced environment like advertising, this may be better than having more implicit messaging that takes longer to interpret. Optimal innovation with a factor of complexity is not the only way to achieve effectiveness, the academics suggest.

2.6. Discussion

In Section 2.6.1, I compare the responses from the advertisers and academics in terms of what they understood by creativity and effectiveness (RQ1) and how they operationalize and measure these concepts (RQ2). In Section 2.6.2, I discuss how these responses compare to existing marketing industry research and academic research. In Section 2.7, I consider implications of this research for studies measuring the creative use and effectiveness of figurative communication in advertising (RQ3).

2.6.1. Comparing definitions of creativity and effectiveness between interviewed participants

The results show some similarities but also differences in the definitions of creativity and effectiveness between the interviewed advertisers and academics, and in relation to the broader literature in the respective disciplines.

To summarize, the marketing practitioners defined creativity in advertising as:

- **Novel** ideas, that are either completely new or play on existing ideas in a new way, that are **unexpected** and **different** to market competitors' ideas
- **Emotional** and **sensory** (rather than rational and factual) messaging or elicits an emotional or sensual response from the receiver of the message
- **Relevant** to the target audience and **desirable** to interpret

The academic researchers defined creativity as:

- **Novel** ideas that present new or foregrounds existing information in a way that is **unusual** or **unexpected** in the context in which it is found

- Optimally **relevant** and **familiar** to its audience, and optimally **complex** in its meaning

Both advertisers and academics agreed that there was no single definition for creativity, and that effectiveness could mean different things depending on the goal of a campaign or communicative act. Yet, advertisers and academics defined creativity in a similar way: as something that *can* communicate a completely new meaning, but *more likely* plays on existing ideas in a new way, and as something that is relevant and familiar enough to the receiver of the message for them to be motivated to recognize and/or interpret the message behind it. These qualities match those related to the creative use of figurative tropes in Chapter 1. However, there were some differences in definitions. While the advertisers suggested that creativity must be different to market competitors' ideas, the academics suggested creativity must be different from the norm set out by the context. The advertisers stated that for them, creativity must be emotional and sensory rather than rational or factual. I discuss these findings in the following sections.

For effectiveness, marketing practitioners defined effectiveness as:

- A result that **satisfies the objectives** set out by the client
- **Emotional** and **sensory** messaging that conveys a single, **optimally complex** message **relevant** to the target audience

Academic researchers defined effectiveness in advertising as:

- **Emotional**, **irrational**, and **implicit** messaging that is **attention-grabbing**, **optimally complex**, and **relevant** to the target audience

Again, there were similarities between the definitions each group gave for effectiveness, such that an effective campaign uses emotional and sensory messaging that is optimally

complex and relevant to the target audience. They also agreed that an effective campaign is creative in some way, which links the two concepts together in the context of advertising. However, the participants also picked out different features of effectiveness. The advertisers noted that it is essential for an effective campaign to satisfy the objectives, or goals, of the campaign initially set out by the client. The academics noted that an effective campaign must attract audience attention above all else before it has a chance at communicating its message. The fact that the advertisers did not mention this 'attention-grabbing' ingredient for effective campaigns may be because this requirement is a given in their discipline.

2.6.1a. Goldilocks effect: Optimal innovation versus cognitive fluency

Both advertisers and academics discussed the degree of cognitive effort required to process and interpret creative ideas. The academics cited the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (OIH, Giora et al., 2004) that posits that a message is most appealing when complex enough to pique one's interest for interpretation, yet not too simple nor too complicated as to make it unsatisfying or frustrating to solve. The advertisers had the same idea but referred to balance of innovation as the 'Goldilocks effect', getting the creativity and complexity of meaning 'just right' to be effective. This demonstrates that advertisers and academics understand the same concept of optimal innovation but use different terms to refer to it.

Advertisers and academics also agreed that creativity itself need not be complex and that it can carry simple messages that may sometimes be more effective. The academics discussed this idea with respect to the Cognitive Fluency Theory (CFT) whereby the easier something is to process, the more appealing it is (Oppenheimer & Frank, 2008). Similarly, advertisers suggested that having too many messages or interpretations from one advertisement, for example, may overpower the consumer, eliciting less interest in the campaign. They argued

that sometimes having a single, simple, emotional message is more effective than multiple, complex, and rational messages. Although advertisers did not have a name for cognitive fluency, they nonetheless reported the concept. It could be that the 'Goldilocks effect' they referred to in getting the message 'just right' encompasses the selection of simple and complex messages depending on their appropriateness to the product category and the consumer's needs.

Chang (2013) shows that the conceptual fluency of an advertisement narrative and the perceptual fluency of an advertisement image (i.e. relevance of the image to the narrative) is more appealing to viewers than a complex advertisement narrative-and-image relationship. A similar fluency-affect-liking relationship was found by Belke et al. (2010) whereby fluent, relatable titles given to artwork elicited higher appreciation of the art from the viewer than when the artwork had influent, unrelated titles or no attributed titles. Thus the advertiser-academic perception of cognitive/conceptual fluency sometimes being more appropriate and appealing is supported by academic research.

It could be said that the CFT challenges the OIH in that being complex (as OIH posits) is not always better. The conflict between the CFT and OIH suggests multiple factors should be considered when predicting the appeal of varying degrees of creativity. For example, the product category, the viewer's familiarity with the product/brand, and the viewer's need for cognition[19] are known factors that influence the appreciation of advertisements and their complexity (Chang et al., 2018; Chang & Yen, 2013).

[19] Need for cognition (NFC) is "the tendency for [or inclination of] an individual to engage in and enjoy thinking" and the elaboration of meaning (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982, p. 116). People with higher NFC are more likely to succeed in interpreting visual metaphors in advertisements and be faster and more appreciative of complex metaphorical messages than those with low NFC (C.-T. Chang & Yen, 2013; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019).

2.6.1b. Relevance and familiarity

Both participant groups stated that a campaign needs to be somewhat relevant and familiar to the consumer to be optimally effective. Relevance and familiarity can be elicited by shared knowledge between advertiser and consumer whilst introducing a slight "twist" to the meaning of a message. Advertisers suggested that the more targeted a campaign is to a particular group of consumers (and the more relevant the emotional message is), the more effective the campaign. Meanwhile, the academics suggested that targeting the campaign will make it more effective in capturing the attention of viewers, essential for the advertisement to persuade them to engage with the campaign. The difference here is what the respective participant groups prioritized as the reason for targeted campaigns, rather than disagreeing with one another. Yet, there may be an overlap here, in that research shows emotion increases the likelihood that consumers will pay attention to and share campaigns (Botha & Reyneke, 2013; Cotter, 2008). Figurative tropes such as metaphor and metonymy can trigger an emotional response to advertisements that arouses viewers (Houghton et al., 2022; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021b, 2021a).

2.6.1c. Emotion: Rational or irrational?

Interestingly, advertisers referred to factual and informative messaging as 'rational', and creative and emotive messaging as 'emotional'. The academics broadly concurred with this distinction, although they mentioned emotion with respect to the effectiveness of campaigns rather than creativity. The data indicates that advertisers used emotional messaging as a proxy for irrational decision making (decisions based on heuristics and emotion). Yet, research shows that thought processes involving emotion can result in rational or irrational decisions (Damasio, 1998; Pham, 2007). Emotion can pair with facts for rational decisions, such as

feeling hungry and being hungry, eliciting a rational decision to search for and consume food (Damasio, 1998). Despite this emotion-decision relationship becoming subconscious over time, it nonetheless results in a rational decision. Why, then, are advertisers linking emotion purely with irrational decision making and contrasting this with rational decision making?

One reason may be the substantial influence that marketing industry researchers Binet and Field have on marketing practice. They posit that most human decisions are irrational, and that emotion is the primary driver of behavior. For example, "a (difficult) rational decision such as 'how much am I prepared to pay for this [product]?' is replaced by an (easier) emotional one such as 'how much do I like this [product]?'" (Binet & Field, 2013, p. 50). In one study[20], they found that campaigns using emotional messaging are more effective (i.e. produce more brand and business effects) than campaigns using rational or combined rational-emotional messaging. To an external eye, their study implies a contrast between rational messaging and emotional messaging, and that emotional messaging can stand in the place of irrational decision making (even though emotions can be rational or irrational). This comparative relationship between emotional and rational messaging may have therefore been adopted by marketing agencies without the caveat that emotion can be rational or irrational.

The conflation of emotion and irrational decision making may impact the measurement of creativity and its effect in campaigns. It may also cause issues concerning the definition, interpretation, and practical implementation of these phenomena in research. However, as this finding is based on a limited sample, further investigation goes beyond the scope of this chapter. Examination in greater detail utilizing a larger sample of participants across different marketing agencies is required.

[20] Binet and Field analyzed 996 campaigns released between 1980 and 2010 in the IPA Effectiveness Databank.

Advertisers and academics agreed that emotion was a key ingredient of an effective campaign. Although there may appear to be agreement between the two groups, when one considers that advertisers may be conflating emotional and irrational messaging, there may be a hidden misalignment regarding the understanding of emotional messaging. Nevertheless, emotion combined with storytelling was believed by both advertisers and academics to enhance the effectiveness (appeal and memorability) of campaigns. They also agreed that sometimes factual messaging may be more appropriate than emotional messaging depending on the product category and the needs of the consumer. Rational messaging can be useful when advertising a particular product or service that needs to communicate factual information (e.g. public health announcements, or car model specifications), and rational messaging can also complement emotional messaging (e.g. consumers looking for gym membership may want to know the benefits of exercise whilst learning the opening times and cost of their local gym).

For advertisers, storytelling can be emotional and multisensory in a way that resonates with a broader audience and can translate to different channels of communication, making it a more versatile communications strategy. Like the discussion about cognitive complexity versus fluency, the context of the advertisement, the product category, and the status of the viewer (their product/brand familiarity, past experience, and cognitive needs) can provide a more nuanced picture of what quality is most effective in a campaign. Storytelling relates to a broader academic field of ‘narrative’, which I explore in Chapter 3 through manipulating the position of creative metaphor and double entendre in a sexual scenario (before sex, during sex, and after sex) in a sexually transmitted infections awareness campaign.

2.6.1d. Creativity as a strategy

Both advertisers and academics discussed the idea that creativity can contribute to changing one's perspective or behavior. However, advertisers defined creativity not only as an 'artistic' quality in campaigns (e.g. in its design, its messaging, etc.) but also as a strategy for creative thinking and problem solving. Creative thinking, they said, can be used to interpret problems posed by clients and to frame solutions that are attractive and persuasive to consumers and distinctive from competitors. This quality of creative thinking was not mentioned by the academics. Although the absence of a quality cannot directly be said to be disagreement between the groups, it is nonetheless interesting to observe what was prioritized when defining creativity. This difference in prioritization could reflect the advertisers' experience with creativity as not only a communicative act but also as an integral part of their business planning and strategy, and as a product to sell to clients.

There were also differences in perceptions between advertisers within the agency. Some advertisers saw creativity as an innate ability or personality trait that some have and others do not; whereas others believed that creativity could be integrated into different roles within the agency as a form of creative thinking. The former perspective was more likely to come from advertisers in executive roles and the latter from creative roles. This supports previous research that found differences in the perceptions of advertising creativity between roles within advertising agencies (Koslow et al., 2003; Young, 2000).

One feature of effectiveness that advertisers raised and academics did not was that an effective campaign must satisfy the initial objectives set out by the client. This reflects the industry in which marketing practitioners work to the requirements of the job, to produce a profit or benefit the client's brand or business within a specified time. Interestingly, they

commented that sometimes client preference can impact how creative a campaign is, when a client dislikes a particular creative idea produced or whether they prefer a less creative (or more conventional) approach. Creativity can also be constrained by deadline or budget.

Interestingly, marketing practitioners in the creative department of the agency had contrasting views regarding whether constraints on creativity are good or bad. On the one hand, the creative marketing practitioners suggested that constraints, such as having a specific brief and limited time, can enhance creativity as it provides a frame in which to be creative. This idea aligns with the academics' discussion about creativity needing a 'frame of reference' so that it is grounded in some context, and is therefore not "just all out there and utter trippy chaotic craziness" [002]. Essentially, original thought cannot exist in a vacuum. Conversely, other advertisers suggested that creativity does not operate well in a short-term environment, meaning that creative ideas need time to ruminate in the mind and develop organically to avoid being rushed and contrived.

One important finding was that, for the advertisers, creativity goes beyond theoretical debate and has a direct impact on the livelihood of marketing practitioners. Pressures on marketing practitioners to achieve business objectives and gain short-term results means that many practitioners opt for creating campaigns that follow similar paths to previous successful campaigns. This strategy is also perceived as being more affordable and less risky. While adopting a strategy that emulates previous campaigns may be considered a sound career decision to ensure personal financial and job security, advertisers suggested that this can stifle creativity because the 'safe strategy' rehashes previous campaigns rather than pushes boundaries. This trend for 'safe' marketing has deeper implications for the marketing industry (see Section 2.6.2).

2.6.1e. Intentionality of creativity

Another difference between advertiser and academic definitions of creativity was in relation to whether creativity is intentional or not. While advertisers implied that creativity is a deliberate act (despite sometimes a creative idea needing time to ruminate), the academics were more undecided about whether creativity is intended or naturally occurring. These varying perspectives may reflect the participants' disciplines. Advertisers regularly construct campaigns that achieve the goals set out by business objectives, while the academics are trained in questioning different perspectives to explore phenomena. Due to the complexity of the academic debate concerning creative intentionality, I discuss it in its own section (2.6.2).

We have seen that marketing practitioners and academic researchers have similar and different understandings of what creativity and effectiveness mean in relation to advertising (see Table 2.3), and how definitions of these compare between the two groups. How does this study progress our understanding of what creativity and effectiveness means in the marketing industry and academia? To answer this question, we need to ask another: How do these definitions for creativity and effectiveness compare with those in marketing research and academic literature?

Table 2.3. Summary of similarities and differences in the understanding of creativity and effectiveness by marketing practitioners and academic researchers

	Marketing practitioners	**Academic researchers**
Creativity		
Similarities	No one definition for creativity Novel, unexpected (different)	No one definition for creativity Novel, unexpected (contextual)
Differences	Emotional (not factual) Strategy (risk) Strategy for problem solving to achieve objectives Innate or shared process for creative thinking	Types – semantic, design, context Cognitive effort to process Purpose/intention
Effectiveness		
Similarities	Goldilocks effect (balance cognitive effort to process) Emotional (positive, balance with rational messaging) Targeted, relevant	Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (balance cognitive effort to process) / Cognitive Fluency (simple is appealing) Emotional (balance with rational messaging) Targeted, relevant
Differences	Achieve objectives Research informed Risk (not fear)	Attention-grabbing Ethical considerations

2.6.2. Defining creativity and effectiveness in marketing and academia

In this section I compare the definitions given by marketing practitioners and academic researchers with definitions given in marketing industry and academic literature respectively. I also review how advertisers and academics perceive the marketing industry and academia at large.

2.6.2a. Marketing practitioners and the marketing industry

In marketing, creativity and effectiveness are inextricably linked: an effective campaign is a creative campaign, and vice versa. Marketing industry research suggests that creative campaigns are award-winning and are especially effective for long term business growth. However, we have seen that creativity is more than the commercial and award success of a campaign. For marketing practitioners, creativity involves creativity through the manipulation of meaning (differentiation) and form (distinctiveness), a balance of simplicity and complexity, and the use of emotional and sensory cues.

According to marketing industry research, non-creatively-awarded campaigns are more effective than creatively-awarded campaigns when used for short term profit gain (Binet & Field, 2007). Short term effects "do not require that a campaign engages long-term memory (a strength of emotional campaigns)" and therefore "rational campaigns tend to outperform emotional ones on this metric" (IPA, 2011, p. 23). In comparison, longer term effects take time and money to measure. According to marketing industry research and the advertisers, many marketing practitioners associate creativity with an element of risk and shy away from being 'too creative' in their campaigns for fear not achieving the metrics they need to accomplish business objectives. Creativity is more than a theoretical concept to marketing

practitioners; it is a tangible product that can affect their job security. The pressures marketing practitioners face regarding client objectives and preference, time, and budget constrains creativity. With a decline of investment in creative campaigns, fewer successful campaigns are showcased in the marketing databanks (e.g. IPA, WARC, etc.), which subsequently makes this creative pathway less attractive compared to the tried-and-tested method of less creative campaigns (Field, 2019).

However, some marketing industry researchers argue that when creativity is defined with respect to a balance of business metrics and commercial success, creativity is "not the 'risky' adventure that many in general management would appear to believe" (IPA, 2011, p. 15). The Gunn Report (IPA, 2011) suggests that cutting a campaign budget can still achieve brand targets. However, there is conflicting evidence. The report shows that "the benefit of creativity increases dramatically as the budget rises (and can be completely negated if it is cut too far)" (IPA, 2011, p. 17). Yet, it shows that "campaigns generating higher numbers of business effects [even on a lower budget] are clearly associated with higher levels of creativity" (IPA, 2011, p. 20), and those associated with lower business effects (even on a higher budget) are less creative. This leads to a confusing picture of what creative campaigns can achieve within various constraints. This uncertainty may be why creativity is perceived as a risky strategy in the marketing industry.

The advertisers suggested that over the past fifteen years research from behavioral science has been gradually adopted by the marketing industry, providing an alternative perspective to marketing practice that is based in research (Chabris & Simons, 2011; Kahneman, 2013; Shotton, 2018; Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). These insights have been developed by marketing professionals and incorporated into a new school of thought for marketing practice (Binet & Field, 2007, 2013, 2017; Field, 2019; Hurman et al., 2020; Sharp,

2010, 2016). However, even now, these insights will no doubt take time to integrate into marketing agencies. One of the reasons for the apparent delay for research being adopted may be due to the inaccessibility of academic research to marketing practitioners.

2.6.2b. Academic researchers and academia

The academic definition of creativity converged on Sternberg and Lubart's (1999, p. 3) definition that "creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)." This appears to support the idea that creativity and effectiveness are connected. Novelty is related to its effect, its appropriateness, how it fairs in context. But, who is the judge of the effect, of the appropriateness, of creativity? Does there need to be a judge? The Gunn Report (IPA, 2011) defines creativity as that which is deemed creative by marketing experts that present campaign awards. This relates to the academics' debate about whether the existence of creativity is dependent on its intention by the author and/or its perception by the receiver as it being creative.

First, the academics suggested that creativity should not only be meaningful but also be purposeful. One explained that "you could just write a paragraph describing a field of daffodils and that would be meaningful. Yet the creativity comes in terms of how it forces you to see daffodils in a new way. It's kind of de-familiarizing it" [009]. Here, creativity conveys an additional inference that invites the audience to interpret something new about the daffodils that elaborates on their existing knowledge of these flowers. It is this 'seeing the daffodils in a new way' that represents the purpose of creativity in advertising; capturing consumer attention and persuading them to see the product or brand in a new light to highlight

a feature, or building on the consumers' existing brand knowledge and reinforcing positive associations. This ties in with the academics' comments that creativity can involve new mappings, but that these mappings are only meaningful in reference to existing knowledge and a frame of reference, or context. In sum, creativity *presents* something in a new way (with respect to some frame of reference/context) and/or invites the audience to *think* about something in a new way.

Second, academics had divergent opinions on whether creativity is classifiable if an act is intentional or unintentional. There appeared to be four branches to this argument that work on a continuum of intentionality and creativeness: (1) if creativity is not intended by the author then it is not creative; (2) if creativity is not initially intended but is identified later by the author then it is creative; (3) if creativity is not intended by the author but is perceived by the audience to be creative, then it is creative; and (4) if creativity is intended by the author, then it is creative. I have summarized the academics' classifications of creativity in association with author intention and audience perception of creativity on an intentionality-by-creativity scale (IxC) in Table 2.4. I added point (5) that states an intention by the author as being creative, as well as it being perceived by an audience as being creative. The IxC scale shows that the more intentional the author is about being creative or the more an audience perceives something as creative, the more likely that something is classified as being creative.

Table 2.4. Intentionality-by-creativity scale; summarizing arguments for the classification of creativity according to author intention and audience perception

Point	Intentionality	Creativity classification	Example
1	Unintended	Not creative	A cat that walks across the piano keys without any intention other than to walk across a piano is not creative in the sound it makes from the piano keys
2	Unintended initially but found later through play	Creative	Painting without a meaningful or creative purpose initially, but finding meaning as the activity develops ('creative play') and ultimately realizing that the meaning is creative (original or elaborative in some way)
3	Unintended by author but perceived by audience as creative	Creative	A cat that walks across the piano keys without any intention other than to walk across a piano but someone hears it as tuneful
4	Intended by author, but not perceived by audience	Creative	A composer who produces a tune has a reason for composing the tune and intends to be creative
5	Intended by author and perceived by audience	Creative	A composer produces music that is performed at a concert and appreciated by the audience

Reflecting upon the IxC scale, I recall a question posed on a panel for classifying creative metaphor at the Creative Power of Metaphor Conference in 2019. The question was: 'creativity for whom?'. As one of the academics interviewed in this study puts it, "does something have to be creative for the first time ever in all of humanity, or creative for you as a person", or indeed other people, to be classified as creativity? If it is creative to the individual, it can be creative, but something can also be creative to different people in different ways, even if the author did not intend to be creative. From this, another question arises: if the author intended something to be creative to a particular audience, but that audience does not perceive it as creative, whilst another incidental audience does, is it classifiable as creative? Reaching an answer to this intentionality debate requires further study. However, I believe creativity is subject to the individual. My position is that creativity may be intended by the author and not perceived by an audience, creativity may not be intended by the author but be perceived by an audience, or creativity may be intended by the author and perceived by an external audience.

The goal of advertising is to communicate information about a product, brand, or ideology. To fulfil this goal, creative advertising is effective if creativity is intended by the advertiser and perceived by the audience. Whereas if the intended message is not perceived by the audience then the message may have been misinterpreted or missed entirely, which for an advertiser would be a potentially unsuccessful, ineffective campaign. However, the audience may have their own interpretation and bring new layers to the meaning of the advertisement, creating a sense of 'ownership' of the campaign's meaning, which could result in higher appreciation than they may have experienced with the intended message. Thus, predicting the interpretations of campaign audiences is complex, but when creativity plays on familiar experiences and shared knowledge in a new way there may be a higher likelihood that the

intended message is communicated. Academic research into how the creativity of figurative tropes can effectively communicate therefore needs to be conducted in collaboration with marketing practitioners who establish the intended meaning. This collaborative approach is taken in Chapter 3.

2.6.2c. Marketing and academic perceptions of each other

The findings from these interviews suggest that there is a disconnect between the marketing industry and the academic world. There are many reasons why academics and advertisers may speak and understand differently about the topics 'creativity' and 'effectiveness', not least because of the varying experience and incentives the respective parties have with advertising: academics pursue the acquisition of knowledge, and advertisers (although many are curious) are more focused on business. As one advertiser puts it, there is no immediate incentive for an advertiser to engage with academia, which requires extra time and effort that does not have an immediate return. So, working with academics, who operate on a slower timeline due to their conducting more in-depth study, may not marry with the advertisers' industrial culture. How can we build a collaborative partnership is equally motivating and beneficial?

There are several challenges for collaboration between marketing practitioners and academic researchers. One is that the academic and advertising worlds base their belief systems and knowledge on different sources of research. Historically, marketing practice has been based on experience and trial-and-error. According to the data in this study and the research conducted out by marketing professionals, the marketing industry has only recently begun to adopt insights from larger scale research into their creative practice, despite such research about marketing strategies and impact existing long before 2010 (e.g. Binet & Field, 2007, 2013, 2017; Hurman et al., 2020; IPA, 2011).

Another challenge is accessibility. An interesting finding from this study was that on the one hand advertisers do not readily have access to academic research, and on the other hand some current schools of thought in the marketing industry are not necessarily being discussed in the marketing scholarly literature (at least not in the same way). Advertisers, being seemingly unable to access (or perhaps feeling alienated by) academic research have turned to their own research, and based their approach to advertising practice on several key studies by prominent marketing researchers in the industry (e.g. Binet & Field, 2007, 2013, 2017; Field, 2019; IPA, 2011; Wood, 2019).

The perceptions academics and advertisers have of each other is also another challenge that needs to be considered when setting up a collaborative partnership between these two parties. Some perceptions identified in this study highlight that there are instances of misinformation and ignorance about what the other does and how it functions. The lack of dialogue between academics and advertisers may be one of the causes for this. It is all very well in theorizing and studying advertising academically, but when generalizations are made, or there are implications for marketing thought and practice, there must be more conversations between academics and advertisers to ground findings in the current marketing context so that it may be more relevant and accessible to the industry rather than alienating.

2.7. Conclusion: Implications for investigating the creative use and effectiveness of figurative communication in advertising

Research question 1 asked ‘what do marketing practitioners and academic researchers specializing in cognitive linguistics understand by creativity and effectiveness?’ There was not a single definition for creativity or effectiveness; however, merging the advertiser and the academic participants’ definitions as a ‘best fit’ may prove constructive for collaborations

between marketing practitioners and academic researchers. These 'best fit' definitions are provided below.

Creativity consists of *novel ideas that present new or foregrounds existing information in a way that is unusual or unexpected in the context in which it is found, and relevant to the audience (and market competitors) that perceives it.* For the advertisers, creativity also involves emotional and sensual (rather than rational and factual) messaging or elicits an emotional or sensual response from the target audience.

Effectiveness involves *emotional, irrational, and implicit messaging that is attention-grabbing, optimally complex, and relevant to the context, product, and target audience*. For the advertisers, effectiveness must also satisfy the objectives set out by the client.

For marketing practitioners, creativity is not just a theoretical concept but a tangible product. Creativity is perceived as an innate ability or personality trait that defines the job in a creative department, or as a strategy for creative thinking and problem solving. Moreover, translating creative ideas and reasons that may be effective to clients can be the difference between the acceptance and declination of a campaign concept, and this translation often depends on using the kind of language that clients (laypeople) can understand. Creativity can be constrained by the creative brief, time, budget, client expectations that can encourage or stifle creativity, just as much as it can be constrained by the context in which it is placed and the perspectives of the receiver of the message.

Research question 2 asked 'how is creativity and effectiveness operationalized and measured in the context of the advertising industry and academic research?' The definition for creativity provided here closely relates to that outlined in creativity theory discussed in Chapter 1, whereby creativity can produce something that is completely new or something

that is familiar but altered in some new way. Whether something is deemed creative is dependent on whether its meaning or form is intended to be creative and/or perceived as being creative by a receiver.

Effectiveness appears to be measured in different ways by the marketing industry and academia. The definition of effectiveness in the marketing industry is in a state of change. The appropriateness of the measures for effectiveness depends on the objectives and research questions set out prior to campaign creation and research. For instance, campaign effectiveness for marketing practitioners may relate to how well it satisfies the objectives of the client or to the degree of impact it has on the business (e.g. profit, sales, campaign awareness, etc.). Comparatively, effectiveness for academic researchers may explore a theoretical aspect of the creative use of how tropes can be manipulated in different ways or how accurately people interpret a campaign message that creatively uses figurative tropes.

Now we better comprehend how academics and advertisers understand the concepts creativity and effectiveness (RQ1), and how they are operationalized and measured (RQ2), we must reflect on research question 3, which asked, 'what implications do these definitions have for studies measuring the effectiveness of creative figurative communication in advertising?' The diversity of definitions for creativity and effectiveness shows that creativity is a multi-faceted and dynamic phenomenon that can have different effects depending on its context of use and audience. This highlights the need for further research into the creative use of figurative communication and its effect on people's attitudes and behaviors. The research on creativity would also benefit from developing methods that explore the expanse of the phenomenon.

Studies on the topic of creativity in advertising can benefit from collaboration between

academic researchers and marketing practitioners to understand the different perspectives of each discipline, and how theory may inform practice and vice versa. The insights provided by this chapter help to bridge the gap between academic research and marketing practice. The chapter uncovers insider knowledge of the marketing industry that is more detailed than the broader scope of reviewing marketing industry research. Understanding the language marketing practitioners and academic researchers use even to refer to similar concepts can help make research and collaborative discussions more accessible to each party. A useful insight from the academic responses was that when studying the impact of creative figurative tropes such as metaphor, it is important to keep in mind that metaphor is only one way to be creative, and there are many factors that may contribute to a campaign's creativity.

Future research can expand upon this chapter's work to include other marketing agencies to explore wider approaches to creativity and effectiveness, and the extent to which ethical practice is considered as a part of the creation of campaigns. Further avenues of collaboration in this area may include building a practice-informed curriculum for universities, improving links between research and societal impact, increasing access of research to inform practice, and career development and networking opportunities for academics interested in marketing to improve their practical skills which may inform theory. To explore creativity further, research may pursue: (1) describing creativity (determining how to measure creativity); (2) comparing creativity (creative versus non-creative material/people); or (3) relating factors to creativity (relationship between creativity scores and other cognitive measures/manipulations that effect creative production).

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Appendix 1

The appendix shows the survey questions used to interview participants.

Note: The text in **purple** denotes potential script in case the participant needs clarification of what the question asks.

Interview questions

Contextual information:

1. *What is your job/specialism?*
2. *Why did you choose working in this industry as a career?*

Broader questions:

3. Generally speaking, what do you understand by 'creativity'?

Effectiveness:

4. *When approaching a campaign brief to design/plan/launch a new campaign, what kinds of things do you consider? (e.g. target/brief, approach, channels, launch strategy, etc.)?*
5. *Generally speaking (without the pandemic), what do you think makes an effective campaign? OR what are the features of a good campaign?*

6. *Are there any conventions/assumptions in your specialised area regarding effectiveness that are taken at face value? Why do you think these conventions are used?*
    a. *Provide an example of when you found convention/s to prove effective and explain why you think that was the case.*
    b. *Provide an example of when you have found convention/s not to work and explain why you think that was the case.*
7. *Are there any new conventions that have established themselves over the past 2 years; more generally speaking, without the pandemic?*
    a. *Why have these come about, do you think?*

b. *Are they useful/effective?*

Creativity:

8. *Generally speaking (without the pandemic), what do you think makes a creative campaign?*
9. *Are there any conventions/assumptions in your specialised area regarding creativity that are taken at face value? Why do you think these conventions are used?*
   a. *Provide an example of when you found convention/s to prove effective and explain why you think that was the case.*
   b. *Provide an example of when you have found convention/s not to work and explain why you think that was the case.*

10. *Are there any new conventions that have established themselves over the past 2 years; more generally speaking, without the pandemic?*
    a. *Why have these come about, do you think?*
    b. *Are they useful/effective?*

Figurative creativity:

11. *What are your thoughts on a campaign with rational messaging (i.e. factual/literal) compared to a campaign with irrational messaging (i.e. creative/emotional/'lateral'/'indirect')?*
    a. *What features would be involved in each?*
    b. *Are there any particular design elements that would be particularly effective in this kind of campaign?*
    c. *I've heard…give viewers 80% of the message and leave them to work out the remainder; what do you think about this, and how do you think this might be done according to your business specialism?*

d. *I've heard…campaigns that resonate with the viewer on an emotional level are more effective; what do you think about this, and how do you think this might be done?*

12. *How might you approach/develop a campaign that aims to speak to different kinds of people, as opposed to one that has a targeted audience?*

Coronavirus:

13. *Has the Coronavirus pandemic challenged the effectiveness of campaigns? What is considered effective during these times?*
14. *Has the Coronavirus pandemic challenged/changed the creativity of campaigns? What is considered creative during these times?*

Collaboration reflections:

15. *What is your opinion about the collaboration between marketing creatives and academics? Is it good/useful? What are the outputs from it?*

a. *How do you think this kind of collaboration might impact the industry?*

b. *How do you think this kind of collaboration might impact your work?*

16. *What are the challenges of collaboration?*
17. *Is there anything that could be achieved through collaboration between marketing creatives and academics (or academic research) that is not currently being done?*

Closing questions:

18. Do you have any further comments about what we have spoken about today?

19. To follow up some of these ideas, would you mind me approaching you for interview in 1, 2, and 3 years' time?

CHAPTER 3. GOT A SPARK WITH BROOK? ENGAGING CONSUMERS IN A SEXUAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN THROUGH THE USE OF CREATIVE (METAPHORICAL) DOUBLE ENTENDRES

Ford, S., Littlemore, J., & Houghton, D. (2021). Got a Spark with Brook? Engaging consumers in a sexual health campaign through the use of creative (metaphorical) double entendres. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 35(4), 1-29. doi:10.1080/10926488.2021.1913740.

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Got a Spark with Brook? Engaging Consumers in a Sexual Health Campaign through the Use of Creative (Metaphorical) Double Entendres

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a study conducted in collaboration with a marketing agency and a nonprofit organization (NPO) providing regional sexual health services, which included advice on, and testing for, sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The study investigated the relative effectiveness of different formulations of double entendres on appeal, humor, the likelihood of social media engagement, and intention to seek more information about STIs. Advertisements containing double entendres were significantly more appealing and humorous if: (1) the grammatical formulation did not cue the intended meaning; (2) the double entendre involved a creative metaphorical expression; and (3) the double entendre referred to the middle part of the sexual scenario, referring to action rather than intent or result. Participants' ratings varied very little according to their age, gender, and education. However, a qualitative investigation of the free-text responses revealed that there was some variation in the types of interpretations that were offered by participants depending on their age, gender, and education. The marketing agency incorporated our findings into their live campaign, which resulted in a notable increase in: (a) website traffic and social media engagement; (b) STI home-testing kits ordered; and (c) STI kits returned for testing, compared with previous campaigns.

Introduction

In 2018, a total of 447,694 cases of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were diagnosed in England, which constituted a 5% increase from 2017 (Public Health England, 2018). Sexual health is a stigmatized and embarrassing topic for many people, and this can make them unlikely to disclose health concerns, or access testing and treatment. As a result, infections often go untreated and thus proliferate (Baylis, Buck, Anderson, Jabbal, & Ross, 2017; Hood & Friedman, 2011). For this reason, public and private health services need to find effective ways to communicate about sexual health and dispel the stigma surrounding it. In order to attract attention and change public behavior, they need to develop awareness-raising campaigns that present this sensitive, taboo, and potentially stress-inducing topic, in a striking and memorable way.

One way in which they might do this is through the use of humor. Humor involves the subversion of an expected script, resulting in a degree of incongruity that needs to be resolved (Attardo, 1997, 2010). It often involves an element of surprise (Eisend, 2018). When used in advertising, humor has been found to elicit positive attitudes toward the product due to its ability to attract attention, to trigger emotional arousal, and to be processed quickly (Eisend, 2009). Furthermore, the use of humor in advertisements has been found to enhance consumer take-up of the messages they seek to convey

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(Sparks & Lang, 2014). The use of humor is particularly well-suited to the presentation of sensitive, taboo, and potentially stress-inducing topics, such as sexually transmitted infection. This is because of humor's ability to reduce levels of fear and threat through a process of "emotional shifting from a neutral or negative emotional state to a positive one" (Chan, 2014, in Chen, Chan, Dai, Liao, & Tu, 2017, p. 282; Henley & Donovan, 1999). Furthermore, the use of humor has been shown to be an excellent device for mitigating potential embarrassment (Chapple & Ziebland, 2004). The disinhibiting effect of humor allows taboo topics to be presented in a way that is more socially acceptable, resulting in more positive evaluations of the content they contain (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 2003; Ziv & Gadish, 1990).

A potentially useful humorous device, particularly when advertising embarrassing subject matter such as sexually transmitted infection, is the double entendre. A double entendre is a form of pun, which means that it can be understood in two different ways: "an innocuous, straightforward way, given the context, and a risqué way that indirectly alludes to a different, indecent context" (Kiddon & Brun, 2011, p. 89). The fact that double entendres work on different levels, and contain an element of unexpectedness, means that they are a useful tool in advertising, where they have been shown to attract attention (Abass, 2007) and resonate with viewers (Djafarova, 2008). The fact that double entendres allow people to talk indirectly about sex whilst appearing to talk about something completely different makes them an ideal tool for use in advertising campaigns focusing on sexual health.

Humorous double entendres are likely to be even more effective if they are used in combination with metaphor. Metaphor serves as a bridge, transferring features or meanings associated with one entity to another unrelated entity, highlighting associations between them which reveal features that have previously been hidden or have gone unnoticed (Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). While metaphor is frequently used in advertising to highlight desirable features of a product or service (Forceville, 1996; Pérez-Sobrino, 2017; Pérez-Sobrino, 2016b), it can also be used by advertisers to foreground serious topics (Pérez-Sobrino, 2016a) or make indirect claims about what is being advertised (McQuarrie & Phillips, 2005). Moreover, like humorous double entendres, metaphors have been shown to mitigate the impact of explicit content by presenting it in an indirect way (Henley & Donovan, 1999; Pérez Sobrino, 2017).

Like double entendres, when metaphors are used creatively, they involve a degree of incongruity between different entities, contrasting what is expected with what is expressed and bringing about an element of surprise. Resolving this incongruity can lead to a heightened sense of reward in the viewer, and this has been shown to make people particularly likely to appreciate and remember campaigns containing metaphor (Littlemore & Pérez-Sobrino, 2017; Van Mulken, Le Pair, & Forceville, 2010).

But what exactly do we mean by creativity here? For an idea to be considered "creative", it must be both original and effective (Runco & Jaeger, 2012) and combine novelty with appropriateness (Carter, 2004). There are therefore certain "rules" governing the creative process which prevent random, meaningless combinations of ideas from being labeled as "creative". Linguistic creativity often involves some kind of "language play" (Cook, 2000). This might entail drawing attention to possible double meanings of certain words and expressions. This kind of creativity is involved when double entendres are produced. Creativity can also involve "novel analogies or combinations between conceptual elements which have been previously unassociated" (Carter, 2004, p. 47). This kind of creativity is involved in the creation of a new (or "creative") metaphor.

As well as involving completely new mappings and therefore being intrinsically novel, metaphor can also be *used* in creative ways. These include, for example, extending a conventional metaphor in a novel way, using a conventional metaphor in combination with other conventional metaphors or metonyms in a novel way, or making use of dramatic contrast (see Fuoli, Littlemore, & Turner, 2021 for a more extended discussion of the different ways in which metaphor can be used creatively). The fact that creative, humorous double entendres and metaphors have both been found to be effective tools in advertising, particularly when sensitive or taboo topics are involved, suggests that

a combination of the two will be a powerful and effective way of advertising services related to sexual health.

In this paper we present the findings from a study which explored the effectiveness of different formulations of creative, humorous double entendres, some of which contained creative metaphors, in the context of a sexual health awareness-raising campaign. The study was conducted in collaboration with a marketing agency (Big Cat Agency)[1] and a regional nonprofit public sexual health service based in Birmingham, UK (Umbrella Health).[2] Umbrella Health is a UK National Health Service (NHS) Trust that runs sexual health clinics across Birmingham and Solihull in the UK, and distributes kits which test for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Umbrella and Big Cat were developing a campaign to improve awareness of sexual health, and to increase the number of STI testing kits that people ordered. The ultimate aim was to reduce the spread of STIs in the region.

For the campaign Big Cat had created a number of poster advertisements, each containing a creative, humorous double entendre that made reference to a place in Birmingham or Solihull. In the campaign, some of these double entendres also worked with metaphor, either by comparing two unrelated entities (a Birmingham landmark and a sexual referent), or by resulting in a metaphorical reference to a sexual activity, in order to highlight the campaign message about sexual health. In each case, the meaning could be twisted to refer to a way of contracting an STI. An example of one of the posters is shown in Figure 1. A table showing all of the posters that were developed for this campaign, along with explanations of their geographical referents and double entendre senses is provided in Section 3 below.

"Queensway Tunnel" is a road tunnel that runs through the center of Birmingham. However, here the fact that it is referred to in the context of a sexual health awareness-raising campaign means that it acquires a new meaning, where it refers instead to a woman's vagina. The double entendre here lies in the fact that "Queensway tunnel" refers both to a place in Birmingham and to a sensitive, slightly risqué topic. The metaphor lies in the visual comparison between a tunnel and a vagina, and in the relational comparison whereby both can be "entered". Advertisements where the double entendre resulted in a metaphorical reference to a sexual activity included one which involved a pun on the place name "Sparkbrook", which was reformulated into the question: "Got a spark with Brook?", which means "Do you find Brook (sexually) attractive?" Here the word "spark" is used metaphorically, but there is no metaphorical comparison with the place. This is a conventional metaphorical expression, but in some cases, the resulting metaphorical expressions were creative. For example, in another advertisement, the independent shopping and business workplace known as "The Custard Factory" was reformulated into the question: "Having Fun with his Custard Factory", which refers to the idea of playing with a man's genitalia. This is a completely novel metaphorical expression, which does not exist in everyday English. Thus in this campaign, we can see two kinds of creativity: creative word play (in the double entendres) and creative metaphor. All of the advertisements in the campaign that we worked on involved a creative double entendre, and some contained a creative metaphorical expression.

The aim of our study was to investigate different factors that may impact upon the effectiveness of these double-entendre-based advertisements. Specifically, we investigated whether the effectiveness of the advertisements varied according to (1) whether or not the grammatical formulation cued the intended meaning; (2) whether or not the double entendre involved a creative metaphorical expression; and (3) whether or not the double entendre referred to the beginning, the middle, or the end of the sexual scenario. More detailed explanations of these three ways in which the formulation of the double entendre was varied, and our reasons for selecting them, are provided in the following section. The concept of "effectiveness" was broken down into six areas ("humor", "appeal", "intention to seek further information", "intention to read on social media", "intention to like/comment/share", and "intention to tag a friend"). These variables, and our reasons for selecting them, are explained in more

[1]Big Cat Agency: www.bigcatagency.com.
[2]Umbrella Health: www.umbrellahealth.co.uk.

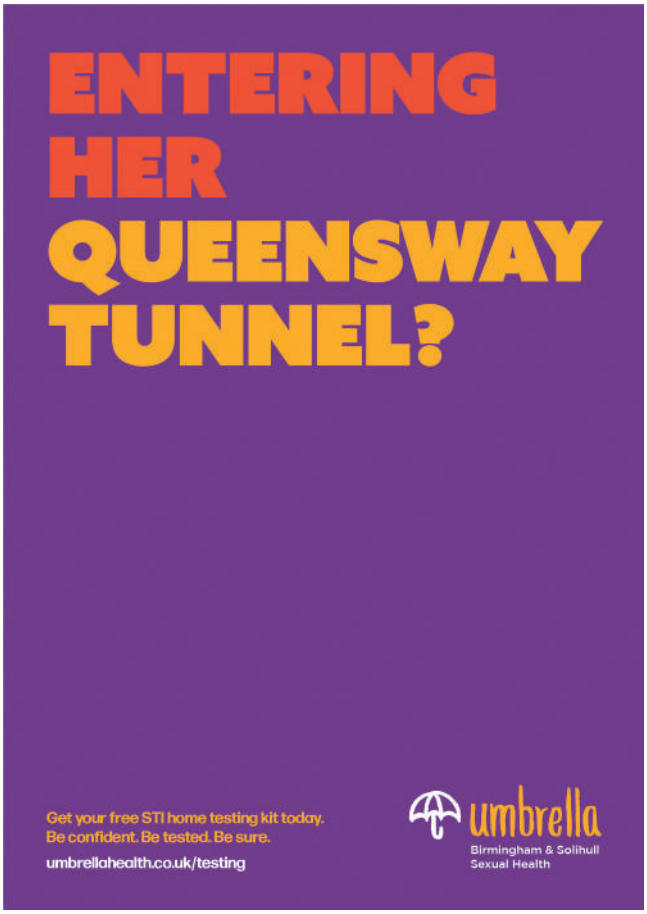


Figure 1. An example of an advertisement containing a figurative double entendre. © Umbrella Health Trust. Reuse not permitted.

detail below. In addition to comparing the effectiveness of the different formulations, we also examined the impact of the age, gender, and level of education of the participants on their responses to these formulations. This is because Umbrella Health was interested in exploring the potential impact of the campaign on these different demographic groups.

Research questions and hypotheses

The two research questions underpinning this study were:

(1) To what extent do different formulations of double entendres in the context of a sexual health awareness-raising campaign influence people's attitudinal and behavioral responses?
(2) Do these findings vary according to the gender, age, and level of education of the participants?

In order to investigate the first question, we varied the formulation of the double entendres in three ways. Our first type of variation involved the grammatical formulation of the double entendre. Examples of this type of variation are shown in Figure 2. In some of the advertisements the name of a landmark in the UK city of Birmingham was used without inserting any additional words. For example, there is a shopping center in Solihull called "Touchwood". As we can see in Figure 2, one of the advertisements made this into a double entendre: "Going to Touch Wood?", which serves as an



Figure 2. An advertisement containing the landmark without word insertion (a) and an advertisement containing the landmark with word insertion (b). © Umbrella Health Trust. Reuse not permitted.

innuendo for engaging in non-penetrative foreplay or sex with a man's penis. In other advertisements the name of the landmark was split up by inserting additional words, in order to cue the intended meaning in a more explicit way. As we can see in Figure 2, for example, "Sparkbrook" (as we saw above) is a place in Birmingham, but this advertisement split the name into two and inserted a word to make the question: "Got a spark with Brook?", which, as we discussed above, suggests that someone may be contemplating a romantic (or sexual) relationship with a woman called Brook.

We expected that advertisements where the landmark appeared without word insertion would be more positively evaluated because viewers have to do more work to determine the sex- or STI-related meaning. On the first viewing they may simply see the name of the landmark, and then there is likely to be a moment of sudden insight when they see the double meaning. Feelings of sudden insight in creative contexts such as this have been found to be a source of pleasure (Kounios & Beeman, 2015). In contrast, when they see the word insertion formulation, the work has already been done for them; the word insertion formulation cues an interpretation that is closer to the intended sexual meaning and is therefore potentially less rewarding.

In our second type of variation, we compared double entendres that contained a creative metaphorical expression with those that did not. As we saw above, double entendres are puns that may lend themselves to a risqué interpretation. Research shows that puns that have an additional creative meaning elicit higher appeal than puns that only one relevant conventional meaning (Van Mulken et al., 2010; Van Mulken, Van Enschot-van Dijk, & Hoeken, 2005). As we saw above, creative metaphors cue novel yet meaningful comparisons between entities, and can have multiple relevant interpretations. People feel a sense of reward when they "get" the meaning and thus find them more appealing (Littlemore, 2019; McQuarrie & Phillips, 2005; Pérez-Sobrino, Littlemore, & Houghton, 2019; Van Mulken et al., 2010). Therefore, we expected that double entendres that resulted in

a creative metaphorical expression would be more positively evaluated than double entendres that resulted in a more conventional expression.

Examples of advertisements that fall into each of these categories are shown in Figure 3. The Custard Factory (as we saw above) and Digbeth are both well-known places in Birmingham. On the left, as discussed above, the creative metaphorical expression being used to refer to sex-related activity: "Having fun with his custard factory?" is being used to refer to sex-related activity. The meaning of this expression can be understood in context, but it is by no means a widely used expression in English. On the right, we have an example of a conventional expression "Dig Beth?". "To *dig* someone" is a conventional (though somewhat old fashioned) expression in English, meaning "to be attracted to someone".

In our third type of variation, we compared advertisements where the double entendres referred to the beginning, the middle, or the end of a sexual scenario in which an STI might be contracted. Examples of advertisements that fall into each of these categories are shown in Figure 4. Advertisement (a) on the left features a double entendre that makes reference to the initial stages of a sexual relationship, where one person finds another sexually attractive: "Got a spark with Brook?". Advertisement (b) makes reference to the "central" part of a sexual scenario where partners are engaging in the sexual act: "Exploring their botanical gardens?". Advertisement (c) on the right features a double entendre that refers to the end of the scenario, where one has contracted an STI: "Is your acocks green?" Sparkbrook, the Botanical Gardens, and Acocks Green are all places in Birmingham.

Here, we hypothesized that double entendres referring to the middle of the sexual scenario would be more effective than those referring to the beginning or end of the scenario. One reason for this is



Figure 3. An advertisement that contains a double entendre resulting in a creative metaphorical expression (a) and an advertisement that contains a double entendre that did not result in a creative metaphorical expression (b). © Umbrella Health Trust. Reuse not permitted.



Figure 4. Examples of advertisements referring to different stages of the sexual scenario. © Umbrella Health Trust. Reuse not permitted.

that the middle of the scenario involves "action". Studies have shown that references to physical action have a stronger effect on the reader because they can activate the sensorimotor cortex, allowing the reader to create a mental simulation of the action (Cacciari et al., 2011; Citron & Goldberg, 2014; Citron & Zervos, 2018; Gallagher, 2008; Gallese & Lakoff, 2005; Matlock, 2006). This enables the reader to relate to the stimulus and empathize with its meaning. In light of this, one might hypothesize that viewers would find the middle part of the scenario more appealing.

Another reason why we anticipated that the advertisements referring to the middle of the scenario would be more effective relates to the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (Giora et al., 2004). According to this hypothesis, when people are asked to interpret creative uses of language, they prefer it when an optimal amount of work is required to reach the relevant meaning: not too much so as to be too complex, and not too little so as to be too easy to decipher. At the beginning of the scenario, the viewer needs to process the rest of the scenario in order to understand its relation to STIs. At the end of the scenario, the STI symptoms are revealed and most of the work required to reach the intended meaning has already been done. Therefore, in the central scenario there is likely to be an optimal amount of work involved in working out the intended meaning.

In order to answer our second research question, which focused on differences between the participants, we included a balanced sample of participants in terms of age, gender, and level of education. We studied these variables as a main effect in their own right, and in interaction with the three ways of varying the formulation that were described above.

We explored our research questions both quantitatively and qualitatively. That is, in addition to asking our participants to rate the advertisements according to appeal, humor, and intended engagement, we also asked them to write down their interpretations of the advertisements. We identified and analyzed key semantic fields in the interpretations using corpus software in order to establish whether they varied according to the nature of the advertisement and/or according to the characteristics of the participants. To sum up, here are our two research questions again, this time with the three specific hypotheses that we tested in Research Question 1:

(1) To what extent do different formulations of double entendres in the context of a sexual health awareness-raising campaign influence people's attitudinal and behavioral responses?
   H1 Double entendres that have additional words inserted into the original place name will be less effective than ones that do not

H2 Double entendres that contain creative metaphorical expressions will be more effective than ones that do not

H3 Double entendres that refer to the middle ("active") part of the sexual scenario will be more effective than ones that refer to the beginning or end of the scenario

(2) Do these findings vary according to the gender, age, and level of education of the participants?

Methodology[3]

To test our hypotheses we developed a cross-sectional, repeated-measures online survey in collaboration with both Big Cat Marketing Agency and Umbrella Health. The survey was designed to facilitate the further development of advertisements for use in the sexual health campaign.

Survey design

The survey was designed using Qualtrics.[4] Participants were shown the same twelve advertisements and asked to respond to a number of questions after each advertisement was displayed. Advertisements were presented in a random order to counterbalance fatigue effects (Savage & Waldman, 2008), primary and recency effects (Miller & Campbell, 1959), and practice effects. Information about the participants' age, gender, and level of education was also collected.

The twelve advertisements varied in terms of how the double entendres were formulated in the three ways outlined above, namely: (1) with and without word insertion; (2) with and without a creative metaphorical expression; and (3) whether they referred to the beginning, middle, or end of the sexual scenario. The same twelve advertisements were used to test all three variables, which means that each of the individual advertisements was involved in testing all three hypotheses. We acknowledge that the quasi–experimental design of our study is somewhat problematic as it contains confounds. However, the fact that we were conducting this study in collaboration with a marketing agency and their client, using real place names, meant that it was necessary to reach a compromise between the need for experimental rigor and the requirements of our collaborators. Furthermore, ecological validity was a key consideration in the study. There are a limited number of place names in Birmingham and the surrounding area that lend themselves to the kind of double entendres that were deemed appropriate for this campaign. If we were to use a different set of posters to test each of our hypotheses, this would have required at least 36 place names to have been found, which would not have been possible without compromising the variables investigated. Another approach to the study might have involved manipulating a smaller number of posters in different ways so that the other variables under investigation remained constant. However, the adoption of such an approach would have led to a significant reduction in ecological validity as it would have resulted in expressions that do not sound natural in English. The study was designed to be as rigorous as possible within the given constraints, and was developed with the following categorical Independent Variables (IVs).

Independent variables

To develop the first independent variable (IV1), the grammatical formulation of the headlines for each advertisement was coded as either "without word insertion" or "with word insertion". "Without word insertion" headlines used landmarks (e.g. "Touchwood" was presented as "Touch Wood") with no new words inserted splitting up the landmark. "With word insertion" headlines split up the landmark with extra words in order to cue the intended meaning more directly (e.g. "Sparkbrook" was changed into "Spark with Brook").

The second independent variable (IV2) was formed by categorizing the advertisements according to whether there was a creative metaphorical expression in the intended meaning. We coded an

[3]The materials and data from the study are available at Open Science Framework Repository (OSF): https://osf.io/4jsg9/.
[4]Qualtrics, version 04/2019, www.qualtrics.com.

advertisement as containing a creative metaphorical expression if the resulting expression combined concepts in a new way, or if it gave a new interpretation to an existing metaphorical expression. For example, the headline "Popping in his Mailbox" (which refers both to a shopping center known as "The Mailbox" and to male sexual penetration) was coded as containing a creative metaphorical expression because "popping in his mailbox" is not a commonly used expression in English. We coded "Touch Wood" as not containing a creative metaphorical expression because "touch wood" is a common expression, which is used to refer to masturbation.

The third independent variable (IV3) required the categorization of each advertisement according to the part of the sexual scenario to which they referred. Here we coded them into three categories: (1) "beginning", referring to a sexual interest in someone (e.g. "Dig Beth?"; to "dig" someone means "to be attracted to them"); (2) "middle", referring to a sexual activity during which an STI could be contracted (e.g. "Exploring their Botanical Gardens?" is a metaphor for sexual activity involving the groin region); and (3) "end", referring to the point at which STI symptoms begin to show (e.g. "Is your Acocks Green?"). A summary of how we coded these advertisements is shown in Table 1.

Dependent variables

Six dependent variables (DVs) were created to assess the effectiveness of the three independent variables. We first asked participants to rate each advertisement on a scale from 1–5 according to (1) how humorous they found it to be, (2) how appealing they found it to be, and (3) whether they would seek further information from Umbrella after having seen the advertisement. We then asked three separate questions regarding the extent to which they would engage with the campaign on social media, drawing on the framework proposed by Leek, Houghton, and Canning (2019, p. 118) as guidance. This involved asking them to rate on a scale from 1-5 the extent to which they would: (1) view/read the advertisement on social media, (2) like, comment or share the advertisement, and (3) tag a friend in the advertisement online. These questions were designed to provide an insight into how the double entendres used in the advertisements affected the participants' attitudes and intentional behavior regarding the campaign.

A seventh response was collected using an open-ended textbox to collect participants' interpretations of each advertisement. In this box, they were asked to write their answer to the question: "What do you think the writing at the top of the advert means, and how do you think it relates to the service that is being provided?". The responses to this question were later used for a corpus-based analysis of participants' understanding of the advertisements. In order to control for prior knowledge, we also asked participants to rate the extent to which they were familiar with Umbrella Health.

Participants and procedure

The survey was distributed to participants across the West Midlands (the region in the UK where Birmingham is located) via Prolific,[5] a participant recruitment tool offering an ethical honorarium for participation time (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Each participant received £6.00 per hour, pro-rata, for completion of the survey. A total of 376 participants were recruited. Of these, 21 were excluded from the analysis. The reason for this is that five participants had provided incomplete responses, 13 had not indicated that they were currently resident in Birmingham or the West Midlands, two had noted that their gender was non-binary and one had recorded that they did not identify with a specific gender. Although we were reluctant to exclude these last three participants from the analysis, one of our main research questions concerned the impact of gender on the response patterns, and the non-binary sample was insufficiently large for us to include in the statistical tests.This left 355 participants, of whom 179 were male and 176 were female. Age and education are reported in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

[5]Prolific: www.prolific.co.

Table 1. Advertisements coded according to the three formulations.

Birmingham landmarks	Description	Headline	Meaning of double entendre	Grammatical Formulation (IV1)	Creative Metaphor (IV2)	Part of sexual scenario being referred to (IV3)
Touchwood	Shopping center	*GOING TO TOUCH WOOD?*	Engaging in non–penetrative forepay with a man's penis	Without word insertion	No	Middle
Acocks Green	Area of southeast Birmingham	*IS YOUR ACOCKS GREEN?*	Is your penis green because you have contracted an STI?	Without word insertion	No	End
Digbeth	District in central Birmingham	*DIG BETH?*	Are you attracted to Beth?	Without word insertion	No	Beginning
Handsworth	Area of northwest of Birmingham	*COPPING A HANDS WORTH?*	Are you holding someone's breasts, penis, etc.?	Without word insertion	No	Middle
Botanical Gardens	Public gardens situated in Edgbaston, Birmingham	*EXPLORING THEIR BOTANICAL GARDENS?*	Are you touching someone's groin?	Without word insertion	Yes	Middle
Mailbox	Shopping center and business offices (housed in the former headquarters of the post office)	*POPPING IN HIS MAILBOX?*	Are you having anal sex with him?	Without word insertion	Yes	Middle
Custard Factory	Independent shopping and business workspace	*HAVING SOME FUN WITH HIS CUSTARD FACTORY?*	Are you playing with his genitalia?	Without word insertion	Yes	Middle
Queensway Tunnel	Queensway tunnel is part of the A38 road that runs through central Birmingham	*ENTERING HER QUEENSWAY TUNNEL?*	Are you having vaginal sex with her?	Without word insertion	Yes	Middle
Sparkbrook	Area in southeast Birmingham	*GOT A SPARK WITH BROOK?*	Might you be starting to have a relationship with Brook?	With word insertion	No	Beginning
Sarehole Mill	Restored 18th Century working mill in Birmingham	*SAREHOLE BEEN THROUGH THE MILL?*	Is your bodily orifice damaged as a result of having contracted an STI?	With word insertion	No	End
Castle Vale	Housing estate in northeast Birmingham	*HIDING YOUR CASTLE UNDER A VALE?*	Are you hiding your pubic region because it is not well and is therefore unsightly?	With word insertion	Yes	End
Great Barr	Area in northwest Birmingham	*IS YOUR BARR NOT SO GREAT?*	Is your penis not well?	With word insertion	No	End

Table 2. Participant age in years and percentage of sample.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18–25	77	21.7
26–35	100	28.2
36-50	115	32.4
51+	63	17.7
TOTAL	355	100.0

Table 3. Participant level of educational attainment and percentage of sample.

Education	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	2	0.6
GCSE/O Level (or equivalent)	63	17.7
A-Level (or equivalent)	125	35.2
Undergraduate (or equivalent)	114	32.1
Postgraduate (or equivalent)	51	14.4
TOTAL	355	100.0

Participants were asked to indicate which age group they were in but not their actual age. The age ranges were chosen to reflect Umbrella's specific targets in their market research. They were also a client requirement; Umbrella Health was seeing an increasing number of people over the age of 50 contracting STIs. They hypothesized that this was a result of people in this age group becoming more sexually active, following a divorce or the death of their spouse, and they were worried that many people in this age group were living without the knowledge of having contracted an STI, and, as a consequence, were spreading infection(s). Umbrella were therefore looking for a campaign that would be effective for this (undifferentiated) age group. They were also worried that asking the participants for their actual age may be off-putting. For these reasons, participants were asked to indicate to which age group they belonged but not their precise age, meaning that we were unable to record specific ages of participants; we acknowledge this as a limitation of the study. The fact that we were collaborating with both the client (Umbrella Health) and the marketing agency (Big Cat Agency) meant that their needs had to be taken into account when designing the study.

The sample reported a low mean score for brand familiarity (M = 1.4, SD = 0.889). This indicates that participants were mostly "not familiar at all" with the Umbrella Health brand. Therefore, participants' responses and intention to use the service were, for the most part, not based on the brand's reputation or status in the West Midlands area but on their consideration of the information provided in the advertisements that they were asked to view in our study.

Analytical procedures

In order to establish whether the different formulations affected the perceived effectiveness of the advertisements, we conducted three repeated general linear models (ANOVAs) for each independent variable (grammatical formulation, presence of creative metaphorical expression, and part of sexual scenario being referred to) with each dependent variable (humor, appeal, intention to seek more information, intention to view/read on social media, intention to like/comment/share on social media, intention to tag a friend on social media). The variables age, gender, and education were entered as covariates and examined for both main effects and interaction effects with the three independent variables.[6] A Bonferroni correction was applied to reduce the likelihood of making a type I error (i.e. a false rejection of the null hypothesis) resulting from our use of the same data in all three models. Therefore, acceptable significance values are those where $p \leq .017$ ($p \leq .05/3$).[7]

A qualitative analysis of the free-text responses was conducted in order to provide additional insights into the reasoning behind participants' quantitative ratings, and to establish whether the types of interpretations offered by the participants varied according to their age, gender, and level of education. We used AntConc corpus analysis software (Anthony, 2019) to explore word frequencies, keywords, and collocations. Wmatrix's semantic tagging function was used (Rayson, 2008, 2009) to identify the key semantic domains to which the participants referred in their interpretations of the advertisements. We identified and analyzed the key words (and their collocations) and the key

[6]Where tests violated the assumption of sphericity, the Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied (see Field, 2007). Otherwise, we report when Sphericity Assumed values.

[7]Mauchly's Test of Sphericity was significant for the main effects of the six independent variables; therefore we henceforth report the Sphericity Assumed values.

semantic domains that characterized the participants' responses to the different formulations of the advertisements, and the responses that were provided by participants grouped by age, gender, and level of education.

AntConc assumes that the observations within corpus data are independent. However, in our data, some of the participants made repeated use of the same expression; for example, by saying that they "don't understand" when commenting on more than one advertisement. This means that the distribution of response types across the different participants were somewhat uneven, leading to issues relating to dispersion (Gries, 2019). We therefore use our corpus data to guide our interpretation of how participants responded to the advertisements, whilst remaining aware of the limitations of this approach.

We report the log-likelihood (*l*) with a Bonferroni correction (as above) and effect size (Cohen's *d*) for keywords, and the mutual information (MI-score) statistics for keyword collocations that are within a 5-left and 5-right window span. We consider MI-scores greater than 3.0 to indicate that the observed frequency of co-occurrence is greater than that expected by chance (Gries, 2010, p. 12; Hunston, 2002). For the semantic domain analysis, a 99% confidence interval was used with a log-likelihood value of 6.63 or over (Rayson, 2008). Using a 99% confidence interval rather than a 95% confidence interval also helps to account for the over inflation of word occurrences in our sample distribution.

Results

Here we report findings with respect to our main research questions and hypotheses regarding the impact on the effectiveness of the three different ways of varying the formulation of the double entendres. Significant main effects were found for each of the three formulations (IVs) on the DVs (humor, appeal, social media views, social media likes/comments/shares, social media friend tags, and seeking more information). There were no significant main effects of participant age, gender, and education for the models conducted. However, significant interaction effects were observed for IV3 ("reference to different parts of the sexual scenario"), with both age and gender. In order to fully explore the reasons for the quantitative findings, we also present our analyses of the data from the free-text responses.

The presence or absence of word insertion (IV1)

The results showed a significant main effect for presence or absence of word insertion on humor ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 23.452$, $p < .001$), appeal ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 16.459$, $p < .001$), and likely intention to view or read ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 27.691$, $p < .001$), like, comment, or share ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 7.211$, $p < .01$), or tag a friend ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 9.691$, $p < .01$) in the advertisements on social media, and likely intention to seek more information ($F_{(1,\ 346)} = 16.127$, $p < .001$). Advertisements without word insertion scored significantly more highly for each DV than advertisements with word insertion. Our first hypothesis was therefore accepted (see Figure 5).

Findings from our corpus-based analysis of the free-text responses suggested that participants found it harder to identify the meaning of the advertisements with word insertion than advertisements without word insertion. They were significantly more likely to say that they were "not sure", had "no idea", or "[did] not understand" the meaning of advertisements with word insertion compared to advertisements without word insertion. Moreover, the semantic domains NEGATIVE (e.g. "no idea"; $N = 865$, $l = 299.9$), UNDERSTANDING (e.g. "I do not understand"; $N = 157$, $l = 77.53$), and NO KNOWLEDGE (e.g. "confused"; $N = 65$, $l = 53.68$) were more likely to appear in the free-text responses to advertisements with word insertion than in the responses to the advertisements without word insertion. Within the semantic domain NEGATIVE, participants also commented that advertisements with word insertion were "not a good attempt at humor" and were "not especially humorous".

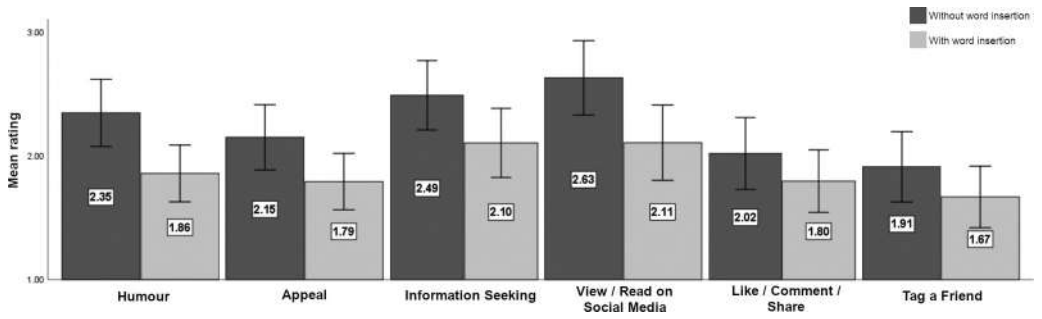


Figure 5. Mean ratings for advertisements without word insertion compared to advertisements with word insertion.

In contrast, participants found it easier to pick out key information in the advertisements without word insertion. For example, they were more likely to mention "STI testing" and "checks" (in EDUCATION: N= 336, l= 13.84) for the advertisements without word insertion than advertisements with word insertion, in addition to identifying the importance of the "service", "protection", and "help" Umbrella provides. Participants were also more likely to use words relating to humor when talking about the advertisements without word insertion. Key words here included "funny", "joke", "smile", and "humorous" (in HAPPY; N= 330, l= 14.83).

These findings indicate that the participants preferred the advertisements that did not involve word insertion because they found them easier to understand and funnier. This is interesting as these were the advertisements that did not cue the intended meaning, and one might therefore have expected them to be harder to understand. On the other hand, the fact that the place name was relatively unadulterated in these advertisements makes it clearer that some sort of pun or double reading is intended, and this may have made it clearer to the participants what kind of interpretative work was expected of them.

The presence or absence of a creative metaphorical expression (IV2)

The descriptive statistical data showed an overall trend whereby double entendres that resulted in creative metaphorical expressions for sex-related activities were more positively evaluated than those that did not (see Figure 6). However, the inferential statistical analyses showed that significant main effects could only be found for humor ($F_{(1,\ 346)}$ = 5.703, p= .017) and "likely intention to view or read the advertisement" ($F_{(1,\ 346)}$ = 7.948, p< .01). No significant main effects were found for appeal, intention to like, comment, or share, or tag a friend in the advertisements online, or seek more information (all p's> .017). Therefore, our second hypothesis was only partially accepted.

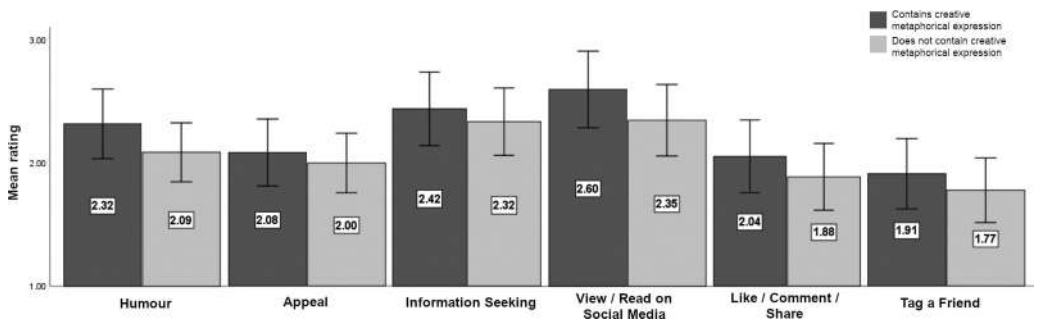


Figure 6. Mean ratings for advertisements with and without a creative metaphorical expression.

In the keyword analysis we observed that, in comparison with the advertisements that contained creative metaphorical expressions, when participants were writing about the advertisements that did not contain a creative metaphorical expression, they were more likely to say that they had not understood the meaning. NEGATIVE (N= 1094, l= 53.8), UNDERSTANDING (N= 192, l= 19.32), and NO KNOWLEDGE (N= 72, l= 14.04) emerged as key semantic domains. Interestingly, this suggests that participants found it easier to understand the advertisements that contained creative metaphorical expressions than ones that did not. This may also relate to their expectations regarding the genre of advertising; people expect to find creativity in this genre and may therefore be surprised or disappointed when it is not there.

Reference to different parts of the sexual scenario (IV3)

We found a significant main effect for the part of the sexual scenario that was being referred to on humor ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 5.41, p< .01), appeal ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 4.205, p= .015), likely intention to view or read online ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 9.696, p< .001), like, comment, or share online ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 4.605, p< .01), and tag a friend ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 4.238, p= .015), and likely intention to seek more information ($F_{(2, 345)}$ = 4.462, p= .012). Our examination of within–subjects contrasts (see Figure 7) suggested that advertisements where the double entendre referred to the middle of the scenario scored significantly higher than those where the double entendre referred to the beginning or the end of the scenario for all six measures of effectiveness: humor (middle vs. beginning: p= .018[8]; middle vs. end: p< .001), appeal (middle vs. end: p< .001), likely intention to view or read online (middle vs. beginning: p< .01; middle vs. end: p< .001), like, comment, or share online (middle vs. end: p< .001), and tag a friend (middle vs. end: p< .01), and seek more information (middle vs. end: p< .001). Thus, our third hypothesis was accepted.

Of the three IVs, only reference to different parts of the sexual scenario (IV3) resulted in significant interaction effects with demographic variables. Effects were observed for IV3 with gender on appeal (F= 4.647, p= <.01), with age on humor (F= 3.824, p< .001), with age on likelihood to "like, comment, or share" the advertisement online (F= 3.114, p< .01), and with age on likelihood to tag a friend in the advertisement online (F= 3.307, p< .01). We found a significant interaction effect for double entendres referring to the middle compared to the beginning of the sexual scenario with gender on appeal (F= 7.681, p= <.01). We also found significant interaction effects for age with double entendres referring to the middle of the sexual scenario on humor (middle vs. beginning: F= 4.327, p< .01; middle vs. end: F= 4.355, p< .01), for double entendres referring to the beginning of the sexual scenario on "intention to like, comment, or share" advertisements online (beginning vs. end: F= 3.474, p= .016), for double entendres referring to the beginning of the sexual scenario on likely intention to tag a friend (beginning vs. end: F= 3.437, p= .017), and for double entendres referring to the middle of the sexual scenario on likely intention to tag a friend (middle vs. end: F= 3.694, p= .012).

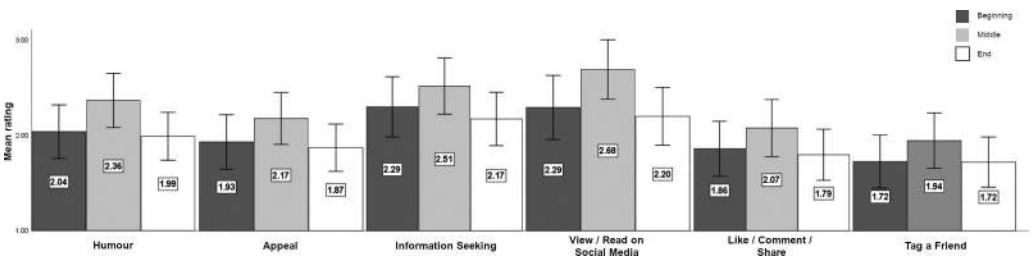


Figure 7. Mean ratings for advertisements where the double entendre referred to the beginning, middle, and end of the sexual scenario.

[8]While this was not significant according to our Bonferroni correction ($p \leq .017$), it was supported by Pillai's Trace Test (p = .001) suggesting that it is highly likely to occur more than chance. Therefore, we consider this result worthy of note.

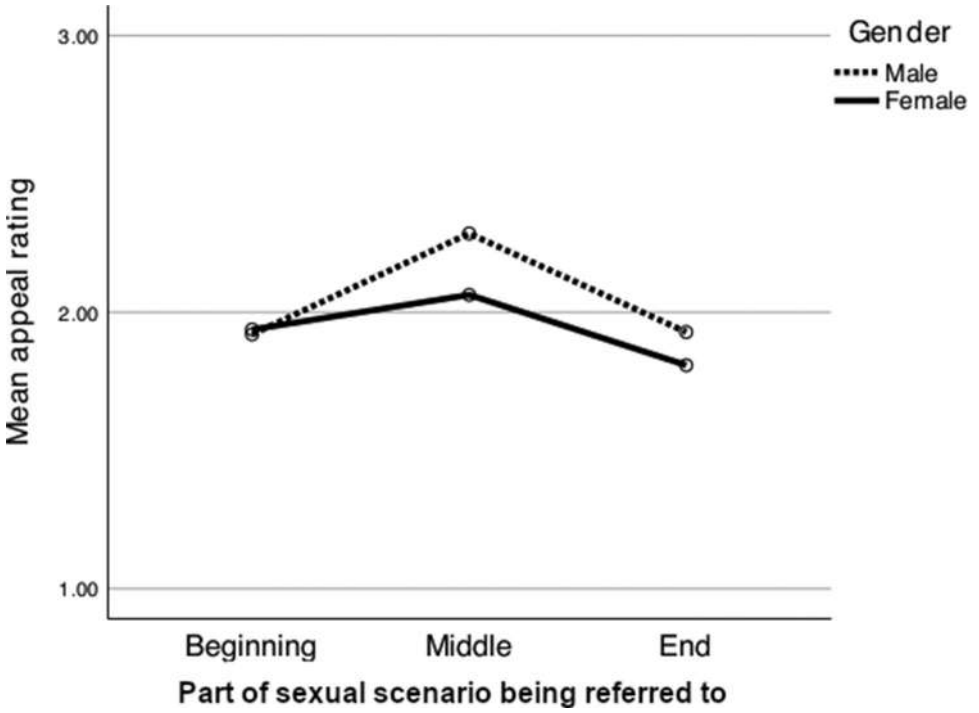


Figure 8. Mean appeal ratings for advertisements referring to the beginning, middle, and end of the sexual scenario, by gender.

In terms of gender, we can see in Figure 8 that the mean scores for appeal were the most disparate between males and females for advertisements that referred to the middle of the sexual scenario, with male participants finding them more appealing than female participants. With reference to age, Figure 9 shows that for advertisements that referred to the middle of the sexual scenario, participants aged 51 or more years were less likely to find the campaign humorous than participants aged 18 to 50 years. Figures 10 and 11 show that the oldest participants (aged 51+ years) were the least likely to like, comment, or share, and tag a friend in the advertisements on social media and, along with participants (18–25 years), were less likely to engage with advertisements online than participants in the two central age groups (26–35 years and 36-50 years), especially when the double entendre referred to the end of the sexual scenario.

Our corpus-based explorations of the free–text responses showed that there were differences in how male and female participants wrote about the advertisements. In comparison with female participants, male participants were more prone to positively evaluate the advertisements (EVALUATION: GOOD: N= 113, l= 14.15; HAPPY: N= 245, l= 11.12), noting the use of "double entendre" (N= 14, l= 20.12, d= .0011) with reference to ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY (N= 482, l= 8.46), using words such as "penis" (N= 157), "vagina" (N= 44), and "genitals" (N= 34). In contrast, female participants commented on there being a STRONG OBLIGATION OR NECESSITY (N= 168, l= 8.80) to get "tested" (N= 133, l= 46.87, d= .0095) for "protection" (N= 20, l= 20.14, d= .0014). Of the 20 responses mentioning "protection", only two responses framed it as being the man's responsibility to get protection against STIs. For the majority of responses, participants either suggested that it was the woman's responsibility to protect herself (N= 9), or talked more generally about the importance of protection during sexual intercourse (N= 9). In comparison to female participants, male participants made little mention of the importance of sexual health in their responses.

Participants aged 18–25 years were significantly more vocal than any other age group about there being a STRONG OBLIGATION OR NECCESSITY (N= 162, l= 5.88) for the individual to get tested

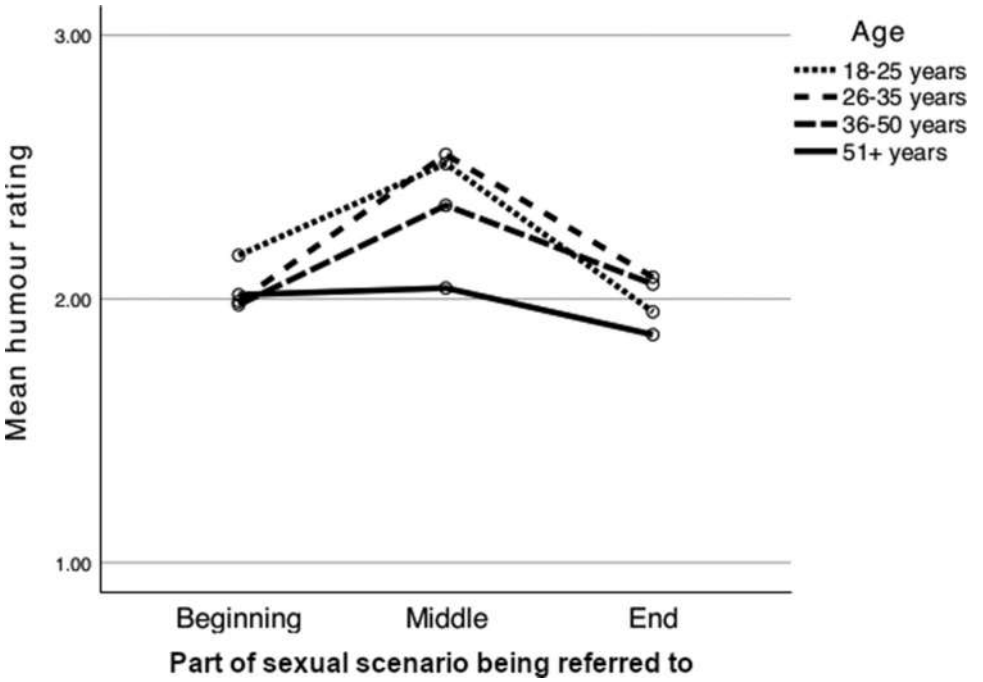


Figure 9. Mean humor ratings for advertisements referring to the beginning, middle, and end of the sexual scenario, by age.

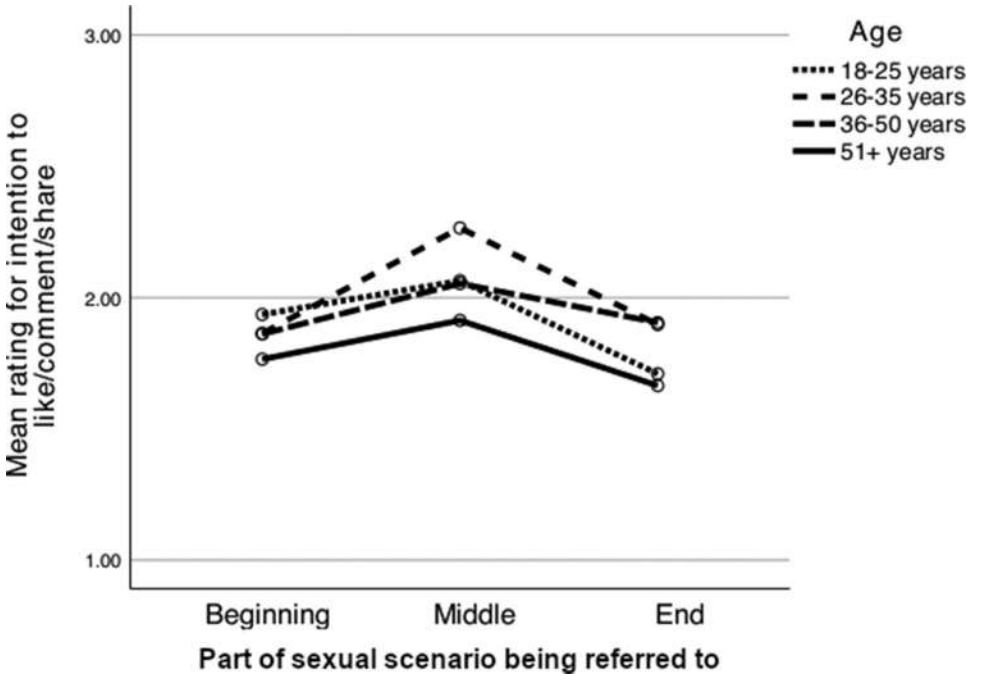


Figure 10. Mean ratings for intention to like, comment, or share the advertisements referring to the beginning, middle, and end of the sexual scenario, by age.

for STIs. We saw in Figures 10 and 11 that participants aged 26-35 years tended to give the advertisements higher scores than the other age groups. These participants were more likely to evaluate the advertisements positively in their free–text responses (HAPPY: N= 164, l= 13.79;

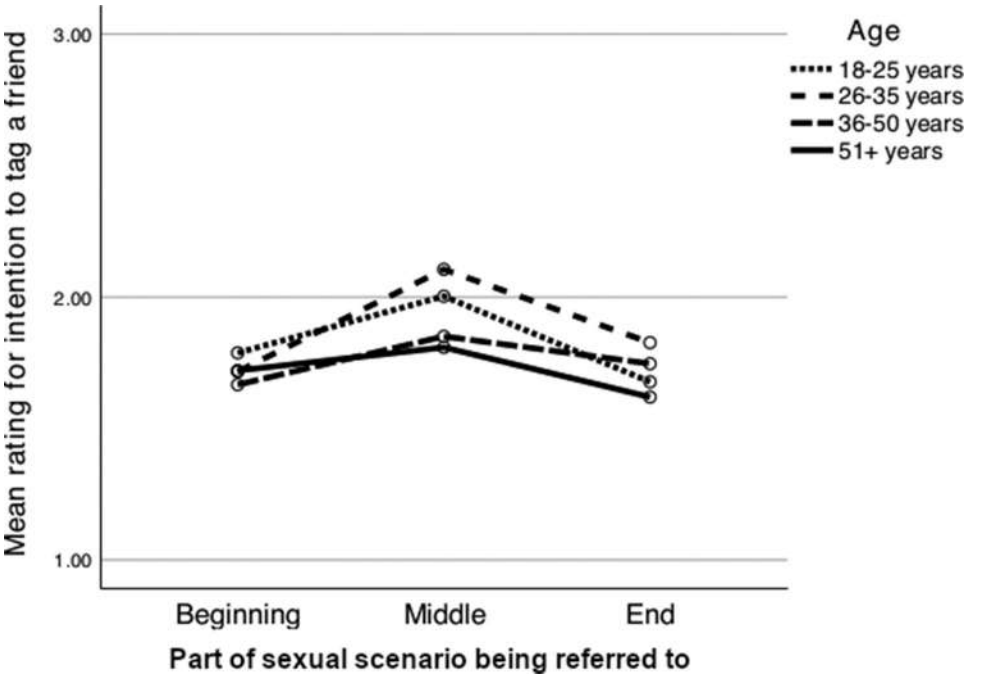


Figure 11. Mean ratings for intention to tag a friend in the advertisements referring to the beginning, middle, and end of the sexual scenario, by age.

GOOD EVALUATION: *N*= 10, *l*= 8.00; EASY: *N*= 20, *l*= 8.99), as they were more likely to recognize the "joke" (*N*= 45, *l*= 21.23, *d*= .0055) as an "innuendo" (*N*= 48, *l*= 29.68, *d*= .0059) that "related" (*N*= 51, *l*= 22.85, *d*= .0063) to sexual health and sexual health services as well as to Birmingham landmarks. The qualitative data showed that health issues and concerns were discussed more by the older participants. For instance, participants aged 36-50 years were more likely to mention specific "clinics" (*N*= 24, *l*= 22.9, *d*= .0028) in Birmingham, and participants aged 51 years and over focused more on what the service advertised "offered" them (*N*= 15, *l*= 18.65, *d*= .0034). Participants in this eldest age group were more likely than participants in the other age groups to make reference to the need for "tests" (*N*= 11, *l*= 20.36, *d*= .0025) in order to prevent or minimize their risk of contracting a sexually transmitted "infection" (*N*= 16, *l*= 22.11, *d*= .0036).

Impact of the campaign

The findings from our study suggested that the advertisements would be more likely to be successful if: (a) they did not have extra words inserted into the original place name, and thus did not cue the intended meaning too explicitly; (b) they contained a creative metaphorical expression referring to a sex-related activity; and (c) they referred to the middle of the sexual scenario, rather than the beginning or the end. We therefore recommended to Big Cat Agency and Umbrella Health that they include more items that met these three criteria in the campaign.

Big Cat acted on our recommendations by including more advertisements in the campaign that satisfied these criteria. The resulting sexual health campaign was launched in June 2019 with great success. It must be noted, however, that while the campaign outcomes were positive, there are likely to have been other factors that contributed to the campaign's success besides the characteristics that were identified in our study. Moreover, the results from one campaign are not enough to conclusively prove the success of the changes that we suggested.

The marketing evidence showed a considerable increase in engagement with this campaign in comparison with previous campaigns. It also showed a strong increase in engagement with Umbrella's services in comparison with that seen in the months prior to the campaign's launch. Outdoor posters had a greater reach than targeted, reaching 655,648 people over the targeted 608,984 (an increase of 7.66% over target). In terms of online social media engagement: Facebook posts increased from 1,495 in 2018 to 64,776 in 2019; advertisement impressions in 2019 were 237,439 with 2,168 clicks, up from 156,706 impressions and 939 clicks in 2018; and Google AdWords impressions increased by 1,000 people in 2019. During the campaign, the website attracted 17,799 users, an increase of 1,000 over the previous STI campaign, with "Appointments" page, the first step to ordering a kit or booking a health check, views increasing by 1,000. The number of STI testing kits ordered from Umbrella increased by 51% (from 3,784 per month to 5,729 per month) over the course of the campaign (April-July 2019). Approximately 10% of the kits tested positive meaning that an additional 778 STIs (including HIV) were diagnosed and treated as a result of the campaign.

Discussion

Overall, the results from our study show that advertisements containing double entendres were significantly more appealing and humorous if: (1) the grammatical formulation did not cue the intended meaning; (2) the double entendre involved a creative metaphorical expression; and (3) the double entendre referred to the middle of the sexual scenario, focusing on action rather than intent or result. Participants' ratings varied very little according to their age, gender, and education. However, a qualitative investigation of the free-text responses revealed that there was marked variation in the types of interpretations that were offered by participants depending on their age, gender, and education.

In our study, we have shown that double entendres can be formulated in different ways, which lead to varying degrees of effectiveness. Variation in formulation can take place at the level of grammar (as we saw in our first type of variation, where we looked at whether the landmark had been split up to cue the intended meaning), semantics (as we saw in our second type of variation, where we compared the effectiveness of advertisements with and without a creative metaphorical expression), or narrative (as we saw in our third type of variation, where we compared the relative benefits of using the double entendre to refer to the beginning, middle, or end of the sexual scenario). We found that of these three ways of varying the formulation, the first and the third exerted the strongest effect, as they affected all six dependent variables. The presence of a creative metaphorical expression affected only two of them.

Our findings add nuance to the general proposition that advertisements that are more creative, or where the viewer has to do more work to reach the intended meaning, or which contain a strong element of surprise are more likely to be effective than advertisements that do not exhibit any of these characteristics. Our findings also provide tentative support for Giora et al.'s (2004) Optimal Innovation Hypothesis. In our third way of varying the formulation, three choices were offered and the choice involving a median or "optimal" amount of interpreting effort was favored, such that participants had to work out some of the sexual scenario themselves, but not too much nor too little. There may be a confound here in that the central part of the scenario was also the most active part, and we saw in Methodology section that metaphors referring to action are more likely to be appreciated than ones that do not. Further research would be required to disentangle these two possibilities.

Two of the findings in this study are somewhat unexpected and are therefore intriguing. In general, the mean scores were rather low on all counts, regardless of the advertisement under consideration, although the marketing evidence shows that the campaign itself was very successful. This suggests that quantitative scores of perceived effectiveness are somewhat limited as a proxy for actual effectiveness. Embedding advertisements in an environment emulating natural exposure (e.g. website mock-up) may provide more ecologically valid measures of perceived effectiveness.

The second interesting and unexpected finding comes from our analysis of the free-text responses provided by participants when answering questions about advertisements with different grammatical

formulations, and advertisements with and without creative metaphorical expressions. These free-text responses appear to suggest that participants found the advertisements in which the landmark appeared with no word insertion easier to interpret than advertisements with word insertion. The participants also appeared to find advertisements that contained creative metaphorical expressions easier to understand than advertisements that did not. These findings run counter to our expectations; we had predicted that the advertisements with word insertion would be easier for participants to interpret because much of the work required to reach the meaning had already been "done" for them. We had also expected advertisements containing creative metaphorical expressions to be more difficult to interpret than advertisements without creative metaphorical expressions. One possible explanation for this relates to the genre of advertising. People may expect to find creativity in this genre, particularly when humor is involved and, to some extent, they may be primed to look out for it. When it does not appear, feelings of perplexity and confusion may ensue as the advertisements are not conforming to genre conventions. This suggests that the genre must be taken into account when conducting research into the ways in which people respond to creative metaphors.

Finally, turning to individual differences, we found an interaction effect for gender, with male participants finding advertisements that referred to the most sexually explicit part of the sexual scenario (the middle) more appealing than females. This finding is in line with previous work showing that men tend to be more comfortable with sexually explicit content in advertisements than women (Eisend, 2018; Pope, Voges, & Brown, 2004; Prendergast & Hwa, 2003). Our qualitative analysis of the free–text responses showed that male participants were more likely to pay attention to the humorous effects, while female participants were more concerned with their perceived obligation and responsibility to get tested as a means of protection against STIs. The emphasis on women being more responsible than men for obtaining protection against STIs in a sexual relationship reflects a traditional view of gender roles.

We also found that younger participants (18-50 years) found the most sexually explicit part of the advertisements more humorous than older participants (51+ years). These results may reflect a generational taboo for talking about sexual activity, whereby the older generation are not as able to talk about sex and may find it more embarrassing and offensive than the younger generations (Myers, Deitz, Huhmann, Jha, & Tatara, 2019). The older participants were the least likely to like, comment, or share, or tag a friend in the advertisements on social media compared with other participants. This might be because the older age group is less likely to be active on, or familiar with, social media, and therefore be less likely than younger participants to engage with the campaign online. How different age groups interact with social media in general will also affect the findings, and requires further research. Older participants also appeared to be more concerned with their health and so took the advertisements more seriously. These findings highlight the fact that in any study of this kind, effectiveness ratings are likely to be shaped by personal experiences and societal expectations. This underscores the extent to which studies of advertising effectiveness are context-sensitive.

The findings from this study appear to suggest that double entendres used in this context are most effective if they contain an element of surprise, if they are optimally innovative, and if they contain a creative metaphorical expression. These findings could usefully be explored further in different contexts, with different populations, and with different genres of advertising.

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Data availability statement

The data and output supporting the results and analyses presented in the paper can be found on the Open Science Framework Repository: https://osf.io/4jsg9/.

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CHAPTER 4. WHAT COUNTS AS A MULTIMODAL METAPHOR AND METONYMY? EVOLUTION OF INTER-RATER RELIABILITY ACROSS ROUNDS OF ANNOTATION

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ARTICLE

What counts as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy? Evolution of inter-rater reliability across rounds of annotation

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Abstract

An open question in research on multimodal figuration is how to mitigate the analyst's bias in identifying and interpreting metaphor and metonymy; an issue that determines the generalizability of the findings. Little is known about the causes that motivate different annotations. Inter-rater reliability tests are useful to investigate the sources of variation in annotations by independent researchers that can help inform and refine protocols.

Inspired by existing procedures for verbal, visual, and filmic metaphor identification, we formulated instructions to identify multimodal metaphor and metonymy and tested it against a corpus of 21 generic advertisements and 21 genre-specific advertisements (mobile phones). Two independent researchers annotated the advertisements in six rounds. A joint discussion followed each round to consider conflicting annotations and refine the protocol for the ensuing round.

By examining the evolution of inter-rater reliability results, we found that (1) we reached similar levels of agreement for the identification of metaphor and metonymy, although converging on the interpretation of metonymy was more difficult; (2) some genre specificities made it easier to agree on the annotations for mobile advertisements than for the general advertisements; and (3) there was a consistent increase in the kappa scores reaching substantial agreement by the sixth round.

Keywords: advertising; inter-rater reliability; metaphor and metonymy identification; multimodality

1. Introduction: what should count as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy?

Much of the work carried out in metaphor studies has focused on defining what metaphor is and how to identify it. The most basic definition of metaphor puts it as a figurative operation that uses one entity (source domain) to understand another (target domain) that is from a different semantic and/or conceptual domain (Lakoff

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& Johnson, 2003). In the literature, metaphor is typically denoted as 'A (target) IS B (source)'. Agreeing on what should count as metaphor is instrumental not only for theoretical purposes to build more robust, replicable analyses but also for methodological reasons: given that many experiments rely on metaphorical stimuli, a shared understanding of what metaphor is makes findings more reproducible and generalizable, thus feeding back to the theory framing the experiment.

Most existing procedures for metaphor identification have been tested on a singular semiotic mode, namely verbal discourse (MIP, Pragglejaz Group, 2007; and its later expansion to MIPVU, Steen et al., 2010), and are carried out with the support of dictionaries and corpus tools. Both procedures work on the level of the word by contrasting the contextual meaning of a word with the basic meaning of that word, as defined by a dictionary. If there is a mismatch between meanings, the word is annotated as having potential for metaphorical interpretation (metaphoricity).

However, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, as metaphor is a conceptual operation rather than a purely linguistic one, it can naturally manifest in other modes beyond text, such as in images (El Refaie, 2003; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009), sounds and music (Zbikowski, 2009), smells (Velasco-Sacristan & Fuertes-Olivera, 2006), and gestures (Cienki & Müller, 2008), among others. Multimodal metaphors occur when the target and/or source domain is signaled in different modes (Forceville, 2009b). In advertising, the target domain usually coincides with the product or a feature of the product, upon which positive attributes borrowed from a different domain are mapped (Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). For example, in Figure 1, the

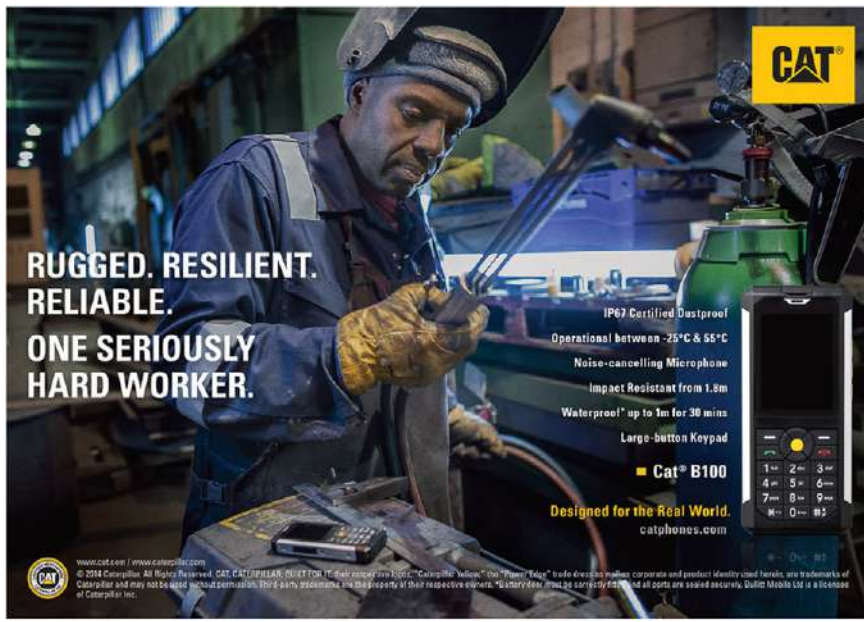


Figure 1. Advertisement for Cat mobile phone (Text: "Rugged. Resilient. Reliable. One seriously hard worker."). Provided courtesy of Caterpillar. © Caterpillar Inc. All rights reserved.[1]

[1]We are grateful to the owners of the copyrighted material included in this publication for granting permission to reproduce their advertisements. Whenever permission was sought but not acknowledged or granted, we include QR codes with a link to the source of the image.

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mobile phone advertised (target) is framed as a hard worker (source), which suggests that the phone will be resilient and strong for the consumer. Cat phones are products targeted at manual laborers, who need a phone that has the properties that are mapped from the source to the target domain.

Despite the emerging scholarly interest in multimodal metaphor and metonymy, more work needs to be devoted to establishing a step-by-step procedure for the identification of multimodal figurative operations in multimodal contexts in order to make research findings more generalizable, transparent, and replicable. While procedures designed for the identification of metaphor in texts are helpful, they are not directly applicable to the identification of metaphor, let alone metonymy, in multimodal discourse. An extension of MIPVU to visual data is VISMIP (Šorm & Steen, 2018), where analysts are instructed to mark images as metaphorical if the context suggests that two incongruous elements present in an image belong to different domains, and that the context is inviting the viewer to compare them. But even VISMIP, and its extension to moving images FILMIP (Bort-Mir, 2019), rely on verbal tools such as WordNet to infer a contrast between basic and metaphoric meaning. The lack of established corpora of multimodal metaphors and metonymies equivalent to that of, for example, the British National Corpus (BNC, Davies, 2004) or the Corpus of Contemporary America English (COCA, Davies, 2008), and a lack of automatized systems for identification, restricts large-scale analyses of multimodal metaphor and metonymy (Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). The characteristics of visual language, the affordances and limitations of annotating metaphorical mappings, as well as other features such as genre conventions, call for the formulation of specific methodological tools.

A similar research need applies to metonymy, another figurative operation that refers to an entity from a related semantic and/or conceptual domain to another entity (Forceville, 2009a), such as "Hollywood" to refer to the place where films are recorded (Littlemore, 2015). Metonymy is typically denoted as 'B (source) STANDS FOR A (target)'. Much in the same way as metaphor, metonymy is a conceptual operation that can manifest across different modes (see Forceville, 2009a, for an introduction to the notion of multimodal metonymy). For example, in an advertisement for the giffgaff mobile phone network (Figure 2), the fist is standing for a fist bump, a gestural signal for respect that giffgaff gives the customer @LayolaLotus.

When dealing with authentic data, such as real advertisements, an additional challenge for the identification of metaphor and metonymy in discourse is that they can be context-specific and innovative (Hidalgo-Downing & Mujic, 2020; Littlemore & Tagg, 2018). The nuance of these operations in different contexts requires more attention from analysts in order to refine what counts as a metaphor and metonymy and to decide how their identification is operationalized in specific contexts. Researchers have developed various procedures that aim to achieve a higher percentage of agreement in what metaphors are identified across multiple analysts, although there has been virtually no attention paid to identification procedures for metonymy.

In our article, we present a procedure for multimodal metaphor and metonymy identification (with a focus on advertising) and put it to the test by conducting an inter-rater reliability study. It is not our aim to offer a coded, usable dataset, but rather to explore the extent to which two researchers can agree on their annotations of figurative operations in multimodal advertising, identifying the main challenges, refining the working definitions as much as possible, and raising potential red flags. Our threefold aim is to do the following:

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Figure 2. Advertisement for giffgaff mobile phone network (Text: "*fist bump*@LayolaLotus. We don't like contracts. But we do like you."). Illustrator: Serge Seidlitz.

1. Lay out an annotation manual to identify and annotate multimodal metaphor and metonymy in advertising;
2. Draw attention to other potential variables that may explain variation in the application of an annotation manual (e.g., researchers' background knowledge, genre conventions);
3. Raise awareness of the benefits of inter-rater reliability tests as a tool to refine an annotation manual.

Inter-rater reliability refers to the extent to which independent analysts make similar annotations based on the same set of rules. High inter-rater reliability scores indicate that a procedure is transparent enough for two independent annotators to produce similar annotations and can therefore be taken as a proxy for the robustness of a procedure. By examining inter-rater reliability results we do not intend to find a replacement for, or propose a complete set of answers addressing, existing procedures; rather, we aim to raise a set of considerations for researchers attempting consistence in their annotation of multimodal metaphor and metonymy or for researchers interested in developing identification procedures for multimodal figurative operations.

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The research questions (RQ) driving our study are as follows:

RQ1. Can multimodal metaphor and metonymy be reliably identified?

Our main working hypothesis is that we can agree on some basic features of what should count as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy, and therefore predict that similar annotations by different analysts can be reached in a reliable way. However, we do envision a degree of mismatch in our annotations. We formulate two additional research questions to deal with potential sources of variation in the annotation between analysts and propose ways to address them.

RQ2. If multimodal metaphor and metonymy can be reliably identified, is reliability subject to genre conventions?

Does product-specific advertising posit stricter genre conventions that make the presence of some metaphoric or metonymic mappings more predictable than generic advertising? In order to address this question, we compare our annotations of generic advertisements (i.e., a range of products and services) with our annotations of genre-specific mobile phone advertisements (that sell phones or data plans). We predict that the narrower range of potential persuasive messages in mobile advertising is more likely to constrain the number of potential metaphorical and metonymic source domains invoked, potentially making these mappings more predictable. For instance, many mobile advertisements display hands (rather than a full depiction of a person) in order to convey the user's ownership of their new phone. The commonality of this visual metonymy is specific to this genre of advertising. Generally, hands are not only associated with ownership, and in other contexts the depiction of a hand may mean something else entirely.

RQ3. Does reliability increase with analyst experience gained with practice?

In many identification protocols, resolving analyst disagreement is addressed as a 'discussion and reconciliation' process without reporting many details; likewise, the nature and degree of successful training in using the procedure are barely mentioned. Whereas we test and track the evolution of analyst experience in more depth by asking the following question: To what extent does splitting the annotation over several rounds, with interim discussions of the cases of disagreement, raise the level of agreement between analysts? We predict a steady improvement in the consistent application of the procedure, with higher levels of inter-rater agreement toward the final round of annotation. However, given the inherent creative (and sometimes disruptive) nature of the examples under scrutiny, we envision reaching a threshold of agreement that cannot be surpassed, although we cannot anticipate when in the process it will be placed.

In Section 2, we review existing procedures that identify multimodal metaphor and consider how these may be used to develop a procedure for identifying multimodal metaphor and metonymy, and justify our research questions. We explain our new procedure in Section 3, detail our method and inter-rater reliability tests in Section 4, and discuss our findings in Section 5. We illustrate the steps of our procedure with examples from our corpora of 41 authentic advertisements, and discuss the main challenges encountered in the identification and characterization of multimodal figurative communication. We conclude this paper by returning to the question driving our study, 'What counts as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy?' in Section 6.

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2. Procedures to identify multimodal metaphor and metonymy

Our procedure has been inspired by the work carried out by scholars in the field of multimodal metaphor identification. In this section we present and compare the affordances of earlier procedures, and inter-rater reliability measures, against ours. We do not wish to make any claims as to the validity of one procedure over another, nor as to particular inter-rater measures; rather, we wish to motivate our decisions in the formulation of our own variables of interest and criteria for annotation and analysis. See Table 1 for a comparison of the procedures reviewed in this section in terms of the following variables of interest: (a) consideration of semiotic modes, (b) annotation of metonymy, (c) identification, interpretation, and inter-rater reliability of multimodal metaphor, and (d) role played by genre.

2.1. Consideration of semiotic modes

Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) propose a cognitive, semiotic identification procedure for multimodal metaphor in Greek street art, based on VISMIP, whereby the verbo-pictorial scenario (street art) is marked as metaphorical if it stimulates the viewer to disentangle incongruities that belong to different domains. Stampoulodis and Bolognesi analyze metaphor as a form of polysemiotic communication that combines two interacting semiotic systems: language and depiction. They explain that various sensory modalities, such as sight (visual), hearing (auditory), smell (olfactory), touch (tactile), and taste (gustatory) may be triggered according to the viewer's perception (further explanation in Stampoulidis et al., 2019). For example, an advertisement for earphones may trigger auditory perceptions, or for an ice cream may trigger gustatory perceptions, despite the product only being presented visually.

With the growing interest in multimodal metaphor studies, more combinations of different modes are being acknowledged, although research extending metaphor identification to more than the verbo-visual modes is still embryonic. Interdisciplinary procedures combining cognitive science and film studies are the filmic metaphor identification procedure FILMIP (Bort-Mir, 2019), and the procedure for the identification of multimodal metaphor in TV commercials (Bobrova, 2015), later developed into the creative metaphor identification procedure for video advertisements C-MIPVA (Pan & Tay, 2020). FILMIP is intended to be a "dynamic version of VISMIP," considering visuals, written discourse, spoken discourse (voice), sound, and music, and is concerned with the identification of metaphoricity (Bort-Mir, 2019: 110). Bobrova (2015) and C-MIPVA focus on the construction of metaphor through filmic techniques where incongruence or the interaction of different modes in moving images "contribute to creating a noticeable and impressive transfer of meaning between two different things [concepts attributable to a target and source domain] to assist in achieving a commercial purpose" (Pan & Tay, 2020: 217).

While in our procedure we maintain the modal distinctions of verbal (written discourse) and visual (image) modes, we understand, and take into account, the role verbo-pictorial elements can play in sensory inputs that may contribute toward the main message of an advertisement.

2.2. Annotation of multimodal metonymy

While Stampoulidis and Bolognesi, Bobrova, C-MIPVA, and FILMIP have discussed instances of metaphor, there is little to no discussion of metonymy or measurement

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Table 1. Summary of affordances of multimodal metaphor identification procedures

	Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019)	Multimodal metaphor in TV commercials (Bobrova, 2015)	FILMIP (Bort-Mir, 2019, develops VISMIP)	C-MIPVA (Pan & Tay, 2020, develops Bobrova, 2015)	Pérez-Sobrino and Ford (present paper)
a) Consideration of semiotic modes	Verbal & visual	Verbal & visual & auditory (sound/ music)	Verbal & visual (spoken/ written) & auditory (sound/music)	Verbal & visual	**Verbal & visual**
b) Annotation of metonymy	No (although they acknowledge metonymy as 'other figurative operation' that occurs in the corpus)	No	No	No	**Yes**
c) Identification, interpretation, and inter-rater reliability of multimodal metaphor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	**Yes**
d) Role played by genre	Graffiti	TV commercials	Perfume commercials	Commercials	**Advertising (generic and product-specific)**

of inter-rater reliability for metonymy. As metonymy plays a crucial role in motivating and providing access to metaphorical meaning, we believe metonymy should be involved in the process of metaphor identification at least to some degree. In an attempt to unify the identification of both metaphor and metonymy under an umbrella procedure, Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2019) developed a number of steps to identify metaphor *and* metonymy in multimodal advertising, which we take up and update in the present article.

The starting point of these steps is similar to that of VISMIP, and Stampoulidis and Bolognesi, in that one should identify the incongruous part of the advertisement under consideration. In the next two steps, Pérez-Sobrino, Littlemore, and Houghton decided which items of the advertisement should correspond to the target domain (which usually coincides with the product or service being advertised) and the source domain (that is, the invoked scenario whose features are borrowed to portray a positive image of the product or service being advertised). In a final step, they decided whether the mapping between both domains is metaphoric or metonymic. The authors reached strong agreement with metaphor (Krippendorff's alpha = 0.71) but only weak agreement with metonymy (Krippendorff's alpha = 0.45)[2]. With metonymy identification still in the early days, further research is required to create, test, and refine the operationalization of metonymy identification procedures, as is our contribution with this article.

2.3. Reporting inter-rater reliability results for the identification and interpretation of multimodal metaphor

One way to measure the robustness of an identification procedure is to test the extent to which the interpretations annotated by the researchers following the same set of instructions converge or diverge from each other. Inter-rater reliability scores are a good indicator of such gaps and also highlight the specific place where adjustments are needed in the procedure, thus contributing to reducing the subjectivity inherent to the task of identifying figurative language 'in the wild'. As can be seen in our analysis, in some cases achieving high inter-rater reliability scores is possible through the elaboration of the working definitions and clear examples; in other cases, the procedure reaches its limit because some advertisements are deliberately ambiguous.

Relying on inter-rater reliability tests to improve metaphor identification is a relatively recent strategy followed by researchers across linguistics, psychology, rhetoric and communication studies, among other disciplines (for a thorough review, see Bolognesi et al., 2017). Increasing the validity and reproducibility of inter-rater reliability scores for metaphor analysis has been achieved through a number of methods: the collaborative coding of multiple researchers (Maslen, 2016), participant involvement in the analysis (Davies et al., 2015), triangulating metaphor identification with other sources such as interviews or field notes (Armstrong et al., 2011) or consulting the literature (e.g., Grady, 1997), and acknowledging one's own cultural, experiential background as an analyst (Declercq & Van Poppel, 2023). As is the case

[2]Scores greater than 0.7 conventionally indicate strong agreement, whereas scores between 0.5 and 0.7 indicate moderate agreement (see Bolognesi, 2017). Further discussion about different interpretation of agreement scores can be found in Section 2.3.

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with our study (see Section 4.2. 'Procedure'), having researchers with different linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds can result in a critical examination of data and procedure as it brings different perspectives and, as Declercq and Van Poppel (2023, p. 7) put it, "makes visible the unconscious layers of interpretation that occur in any qualitative analytical process."

Inter-rater reliability is commonly calculated using Cohen's kappa (Cohen, 1960). Kappa scores differ from percentages in that they range from 0 (null agreement) to 1 (complete agreement). A score of 0 means that the obtained agreement is equal to chance agreement; a positive value means that the obtained agreement is higher than chance agreement. Although there is no consensus on how to interpret kappa scores, scores above 0.80 are acknowledged to ensure an annotation of reasonable quality. Scores above or equal to 0.67 are also acceptable, provided that significance is reached (Artstein & Poesio, 2008).

Whereas the rule of thumb in psychology is that strong agreement should be 85% or higher, in the specific case of metaphor identification, the convention is that strong agreement is achieved through scores greater than 0.7 (Bolognesi, 2017) or even 0.8 (Carletta, 1996). For instance, in their study on metaphor identification in street art, Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) found strong agreement for metaphoricity (Cohen's kappa = 0.865). They tested the reliability of their interpretation of metaphor (i.e., conceptual labels for source and target domains) using a four-step procedure that aimed to identify the content of the metaphorical message in the street art corpus. Two external analysts evaluated the extent of agreement between the authors in order to check whether the procedure led to the same labeling of metaphor. According to the external analysts, there was agreement between the authors for identifying the topic of the street art and for whether there were incongruous elements present; however, the authors' decisions over whether the elements belonged to different domains and conveyed a pragmatic message were less reliable. Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019: 1) suggested these latter results may have been due to the variability in individual analysts' pragmatic interpretation that was dependent on "conceptual, contextual, socio-cultural and linguistic knowledge."

Similarly, Bort-Mir (2019) trained two analysts and engaged one untrained analyst to test the reliability of each step of the FILMIP in two perfume commercials, which resulted in high agreement (Fleiss κ and Krippendorff reliability tests were all above 0.7). However, the qualitative interpretation of 21 and 18 analysts for two commercials, respectively, varied considerably (from 50% to 3.8% agreement), which Bort-Mir suggested may be due to individual differences in cultural and social background, their level of expertise, and the complexity of the task, although these factors were not tested.

Pan and Tay (2020: 234) found that when verbalizing metaphor in moving images, conceptual labels could differ between analysts. Verbalizing non-verbal metaphors is not a neutral task (Forceville, 2009b), and a "certain degree of individual variance…is unavoidable" (Pan & Tay, 2020: 234). However, Pan and Tay demonstrate that this issue can be resolved; the analysts discussed the linguistic expression of metaphor prior to their testing the inter-rater reliability, which resulted in high agreement of metaphoricity (Fleiss' kappa $k = .78$).

In light of the inter-rater reliability research reviewed here, we examine the inter-rater reliability scores of metaphor and metonymy identification *and* interpretation in the collaborative coding of two researchers. Our annotation manual feeds from a

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combination of inter-rater reliability tests performed on initial annotations done independently by the researchers and subsequent discussions to assess the extent of agreement to refine the procedure for the ensuing round of annotations. This is so because an acknowledged drawback of pursuing high reliability (indicating replicability) is that it is sometimes linked to oversimplified coding schemes that fail to capture relevant but nonreplicable interpretations. The analysts should, therefore, try to find a middle ground between highly replicable and highly accurate coding systems (Krippendorff, 2013). We consider reasons for agreement and disagreement, including the researchers' linguistic, cultural, and experiential background, their expertise in metaphor analysis (taking into account their knowledge of the literature on this topic), and advertising genre, consulting the literature and inventories on metaphor domains when necessary.

2.4. Role played by genre

An additional variable in these studies is genre. According to Caballero (2016: 195), genre is a particular kind of discourse that groups together usage events and routines as norms that serve conventionalized communicative functions. Genre norms may shape the kinds of metaphors or metonymies that are used in the context of that genre. For instance, Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) focused on the role played by the specificities of street art, whereas Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2019) focused on advertising. Bort-Mir (2019) tested five perfume advertisements to demonstrate the application of FILMIP, a genre of advertising that is ripe with the use of figurative meaning, particularly metaphor (Lievers, 2017: 52), as metaphor helps convey via the TV screen the most ineffable of senses: smell (Levinson & Majid, 2014). Pan and Tay (2020) found that identifying creative (i.e., uncommon) multimodal metaphors in 10 commercials for tangible products was more likely to result in agreement between analysts than for intangible products. Their findings suggest that the type of product (like genre) may influence the ease with which analysts can identify metaphors in commercials.

What these studies (Bort-Mir, 2019; Pan & Tay, 2020; Stampoulidis & Bolognesi, 2019) suggest is that the expertise and contextual knowledge of the analysts play a crucial role in the reliability of identifying metaphor in multimodal discourse, as well as genre. An aspect that has not been paid enough attention is the expertise gained by analysts over the course of their annotations. Steen et al. (2010) report a series of independent studies showing that kappa scores increased as the analysts became more familiar with the procedure (in this case for verbal metaphor identification). In our study, we have added genre and a practice effect as variables to explore variations in the reliability scores for identifying and interpreting multimodal metaphor and metonymy according to figurative language type (RQ1), advertisement type (RQ2), and round number (RQ3).

3. A stepwise procedure to annotate multimodal metaphor and metonymy in advertising

As we have shown in the previous section, our procedure differs from others in its explicit interest in multimodal metonymy alongside metaphor. Our procedure expands previous work by Pérez-Sobrino (2017) and Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2019).

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In four steps, the procedure aims to detect the potential for figurative meaning in printed multimodal advertisements and to discern whether or not it is metaphoric and/or metonymic. It does not aim to provide instructions to formulate conceptual labels (as is the case, for example, of MetaNet, Jiang et al., 2020), although we did annotate our own interpretations of identified metaphors and metonymies to perform an inter-rater reliability test.

A full version of the procedure with the refinements we made at each round of annotation is available in an openly accessible repository: https://osf.io/eg583/. However, due to space constraints, we illustrate a summarized version of the steps with an example for buyresponsibily.org from our corpus.

3.1. Step 1. Formulate the main message of the advertisement

First, the analyst needs to summarize, in a single sentence, what the advertisement is about. Given that advertisements usually have multiple co-occurring metaphoric and metonymic mappings at work (for a review, see Pérez-Sobrino, 2017), we decided to verbalize what would be considered as the main persuasive message of the advertisement under consideration. That way we would disregard secondary but pervasive mappings, such as metonymies like LOGO FOR BRAND. For example, in Figure 3, the message could be phrased as "irresponsible shopping exploits workers." Although this advertisement may seem straightforward, there are more narratively complex advertisements with multiple co-occurring messages where it is not always clear what the actual mapping is that promotes the product.



Figure 3. Advertisement for buyresponsibly.org (Text: "What's behind the things we buy? Buyresponsibly.org").

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3.2. Step 2. Identify what product or service is being promoted

As pointed out by Forceville (1996: 121), the product tends to coincide with the target domain of the mapping; that is, whatever it is the advertisement claims about the product, positively or negatively. In Figure 3, reckless, irresponsible, unethical shopping is verbally cued by the word "buy" and visually cued by the shopping trolley and the white price tag.

3.3. Step 3. Elicit what is being said about the product (or its related attributes)

This step involves looking at the visual, verbal, or verbal-visual (multimodal) incongruity presented in the advertisement (if there is one) and describing what ideas are borrowed from another domain to talk about the product. As pointed out by Forceville (2009b: 30), verbalizing non-verbal metaphors is never neutral, given that there is no "like" or "is like" structure to link source and target domains. We do not wish to make any claims in this regard, and use verbalization exclusively for practical purposes. In order to identify the most likely source domain in the advertisement, we rely on previous research on visual operations undertaken in the field of cognitive linguistics, visual semiotics, and marketing (for a detailed review, see Pérez-Sobrino et al., 2021: 40). Specifically, we resort to the triggers for visual similarity formulated by Gkiouzepas and Hogg (2011): *juxtaposition* of the visual unit identified as target domain in step 2 with something else; *replacement* of such target domain for another element that feels incongruous in the visual context; and *fusion* of the target domain with another thing. For Figure 3, we annotate the trolley as the source domain as it is replacing a cage (because of its display and size) in which the workers are trapped.

3.4. Step 4. Establish if the mapping is metaphoric, metonymic, or both

In this step we decide whether the relationship between the target and the source domains identified in steps 2 and 3 is metaphoric or metonymic to best describe the message verbalized in step 1. Be aware that there may not be a relevant figurative connection there, in which case the advertisement can be annotated as having no metaphor or metonymy. Step 4 is probably the hardest step, as it involves connecting the different verbal and visual elements annotated in previous steps. In our case, the task involves deciding whether the image of the trolley, the price tag, the words "the things we buy" (referring to the idea of shopping), and the cage with prisoners inside (visually cueing exploitation) are connected through an A IS B (metaphor) and/or A FOR B (metonymy) mapping (where A is the target and B is the source).

In the context of general and genre-specific (mobile phone) advertising, our initial definitions for metaphor (TARGET (product/company) IS SOURCE (verbo-pictorial context)) and metonymy (SOURCE (feature of the product/company) FOR TARGET (product/company)) were refined over six rounds of annotations with the following result: metaphor as TARGET (product/service/company) IS SOURCE (feature/function of product/service/company in the verbo-pictorial context); and metonymy: SOURCE (feature/function of product/service/company) FOR TARGET (product/service/company). Further indications as to what counts as metaphor and metonymy are noted in our annotation manual.

With respect to Figure 3, the incongruous elements in the picture, the trolley and the cage, are distinct enough for a metaphoric mapping to take place; they allow for

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the interpretation of the advertisement in terms of visual metaphor. However, the advertisement is not about trolleys, but rather about reckless shopping. It can thus be argued that the visual depiction of the trolley provides a point of access to a more complex (and increasingly difficult to depict in a straightforward way) idea of shopping through a further multimodal metonymic mapping. This mapping interaction between the visual metaphor and multimodal metonymy is also known as *metaphtonymy* (Díez Velasco & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2002).

3.5. Summary of main refinements added over the course of rounds of annotation

The absence of a finite set of conceptual labels to formulate source and target domains, and the sometimes-intended ambiguous nature of advertisements, makes it hard to reach an exact or similar interpretation of the advertisement. However, over the course of the rounds of annotation we learnt a number of lessons that helped us narrow the gap between our annotations. These refinements were critical to revisit what should count as agreement for the inter-rater reliability studies. Together with a compilation of illustrative examples (taken as 'gold standards'), these revisions were added to the manual over the course of six rounds of annotation following a color coding system that indicates the precise rounds in which they were incorporated. We briefly overview below the three most relevant refinements: (a) inclusion of metaphoric scenarios within the 'metaphor' label, (b) discarding logos from the 'metonymy' label, and (c) annotating personification as a separate category.

(a) Metaphoric scenarios. When the message identified was more general and represented a narrative event or a scenario, we annotated it as a figurative operation involving 'SCENARIO A' and 'SCENARIO B' (Musolff, 2006), and therefore fell within the metaphor category. For example, an advertisement for a guitar (Figure 4) shows an exit sign with a person running toward the fire exit holding a guitar (the rock star), followed by other people (crazy fans): SCENARIO A (exiting the building due to a fire) is mapped onto SCENARIO B (rock band running to escape crazy fans).

(b) Logos. As can be seen in the example above, many (if not all) advertisements show a logo that metonymically affords access to the company, or provides essential information about the company. Logos are often displayed in one of the corners of the advertisement, outside what can be considered the main image or main message, and act merely as a subsidiary link between the product and the company. Although logos convey key information through the choice of colors (Jonauskaite et al., 2020), typeface (Hyndman, 2016), and sounds used in the name (Spence, 2012), in our study the logo and its typography should only be coded if they are a part of the main image and contribute to developing the main narrative of the advertisement. An example of the narrative potential of logos in advertising can be seen in Figure 5, where the different typefaces and corporative colors help to cue the different 'businesses' mentioned in the advertisement.

(c) Personification. We added a separate category for *personification* because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish whether it has a metaphoric or metonymic basis. For example, an advertisement for shoes (Figure 6) portrays a person's fingers with painted nails as eyes for a pair of shoes with the caption "You are what you wear." Is it that the shoe behaves like a person through the attribution of human attributes (hinted at in the visual part of the advertisement), or that the shoe is a prominent part of the customer to the extent that it defines who they are (most likely interpretation

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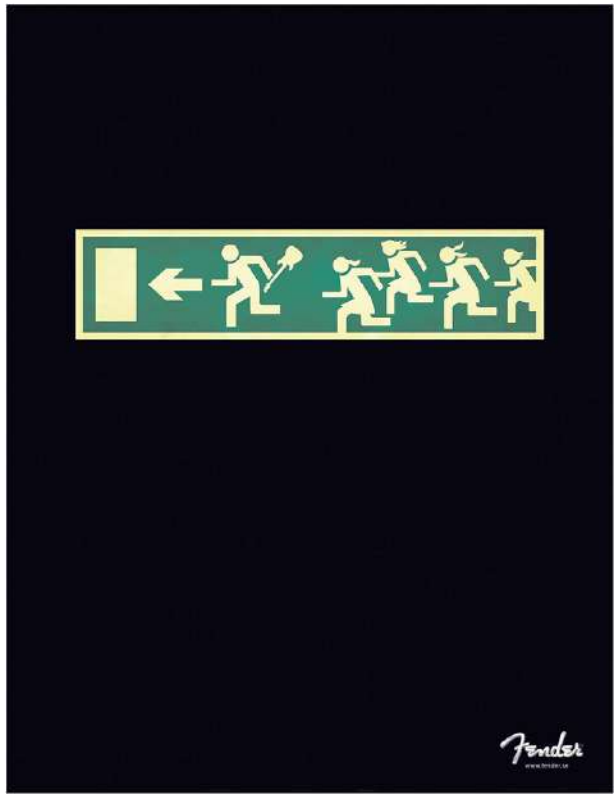


Figure 4. Advertisement for Fender guitar. The Fender logo and headstock are registered trademarks of FMIC.



Figure 5. Advertisement for Peugeot.

conveyed in the verbal part)? Personification can involve non-human creatures as the source domain, but still refer to human traits or features that personify that entity. For example, a genie or angel are mythical beings (non-human), but they take human form and have human mannerisms; therefore, depending on the mapping in the

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Figure 6. Advertisement for MAX shoes (Text: "You are what you wear").

advertisement, these can be annotated as personification, and it is taken out of the metaphor-metonymy annotation given its ambivalent interpretation.

Overlapping metaphors and metonymies. A potential challenge for annotation was cases where metaphor and metonymy interacted in the advertisement. Do we need to annotate them both? In such cases, not mutually exclusive interpretations were determined as agreement if there was a singular, more basic figurative operation that could underlie the interpretations. Consider an advertisement for a mobile phone (Figure 7) that is referred to as a 'comeback', which has double meanings: the phone is back on the shelves to buy, and the phone is like a famous star making a comeback/return to the stage. This pun is part of the wit of the advertisement and leads to different interpretations about what is mapped. We decided through discussion that an underlying primary metaphor for JOURNEY (that one could return from) encompassed these different meanings and still communicated the core message of the advertisement.

These examples were used as the 'golden standard' in our annotation manual; that is, we used them as cases of reference as to what counted as agreement. The reader may refer to the annotation manual for a more detailed discussion of these and other examples.

4. Methodology

We acknowledge that this is a small-scale study, but our findings shed light upon indicative effects that invite a larger-scale replication to confirm them. However, in order to compensate for the limitations of the dataset, and increase the reproducibility and relevancy of our procedure, we provide below a clear account of our materials and methods. Our dataset, annotation manual, and R scripts are available in a public repository: https://osf.io/eg583 (advertisements are not included due to copyright reasons). For further arguments in this line, see Bastian (2016).

4.1. Materials

A random sample of 42 advertisements was selected from two larger corpora of advertisements compiled for two previous studies (Ford, 2017; Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). In order to inform RQ2 (that looks into genre as a source of variation in reliability scores), Ford randomly selected 21 generic advertisements from a corpus of 210 advertisements that promoted a variety of physical goods and services (explained

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Figure 7. Advertisement for Lumia phone (Text: "Everyone loves a comeback").

in Pérez-Sobrino, 2017, pp. 82–84), where the researcher collected a balanced number of examples for seven types of goods, including products and services; and in order to ensure the representation of the corpus, the researcher only retained every third advert of those initially found. Ford sampled 21 mobile phone advertisements that sold mobile phones, and call and data plans from a corpus of 48 advertisements (Ford, 2017). All the generic advertisements were extracted from the database Ads of the World (www.adsoftheworld.com) and the genre-specific advertisements for mobile phones were extracted from Advanced Google Search. For our study, the advertisements were grouped into six rounds of seven advertisements each (three rounds of seven generic advertisements and three rounds of seven mobile phone advertisements).

4.2. Procedure

Figure 8 shows the stages of our study. After compiling the corpus (1), we drafted the annotation manual (2). The stages covered in detail in this paper are the annotation of

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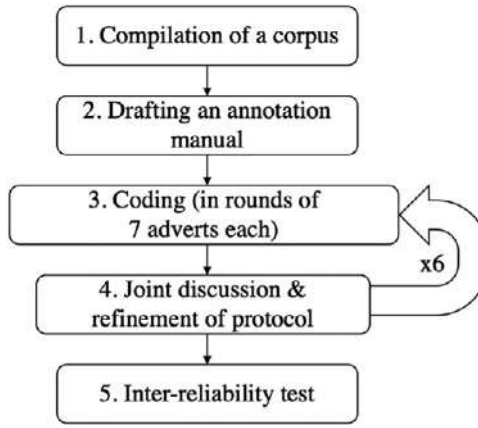


Figure 8. Stages of the study.

the 42 advertisements in six rounds of seven advertisements each, preceded by a training round of three advertisements to cohere understanding of the initial procedure (3), with interim discussions of the annotations (4), and the inter-rater reliability test (5, explained in more detail in Section 4.3).

We annotated the advertisements independently following the four-step procedure described in Section 3. We met after each round to discuss diverging annotations with respect to our identification and interpretation of metaphor and metonymy, and our labeling of source and target domains, to see at which step of the procedure our annotations differed and to consider any refinements that needed to be made to the annotation manual. The purpose of these meetings was not to agree on any specific interpretation over another, as sometimes several readings are equally valid, but to find the best way to revise instructions that are too general. We documented each refinement in our annotation manual after each round of annotation. We noted any instances of pervasive mappings that we removed from further analysis (e.g., LOGO FOR BRAND). Declercq and van Poppel (2023, p. 7) refer to this as establishing necessary "cut-off points on the continuum" of novel to conventional metaphors (and metonymies) in the analysis. We also documented any difficult cases so that we could refer back to them as examples in future annotation rounds. The revised procedure was applied in the subsequent rounds of annotations.

Refining the annotation manual over rounds of annotations developed our shared understanding of source domains and target domains and what metaphor and metonymy is in our multimodal advertising corpus. Our annotation manual became a tool to consult as we independently analyzed the data, with it assisting with difficult or on-the-fence cases (similarly to Declercq & van Poppel, 2023). The annotation manual also enabled us to remain more consistent with our independent annotation, as well as establishing our collaborative definition of metaphor and metonymy in this context.

The researchers in this study are both linguists with a shared interest and expertise in metaphor and metonymy in advertising. Their cultural background is different: Pérez-Sobrino is Spanish and Ford is British. For future researchers interested in our procedure, we suggest that at the beginning of the annotation manual they establish

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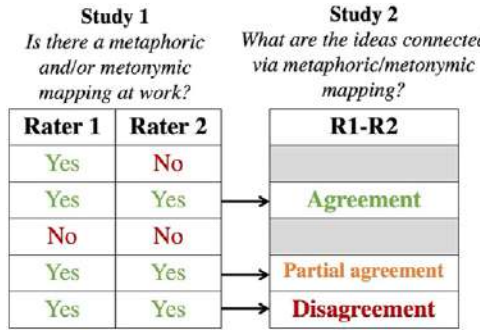


Figure 9. Visual summary of the two reliability tests conducted.

crucial background knowledge about metaphor and metonymy to assist in the reproducibility of the analysis.

4.3. Inter-rater reliability tests

We conducted two complementary tests to check the reliability of our procedure (see Figure 9). In *Study 1*, we performed an inter-rater reliability test on our annotations on the potential of the advertisement presenting a metaphoric and/or metonymic mapping. This annotation corresponds to step 4 in our procedure, where we asked whether the product advertised (target domain, step 2) and what was being said about it (source domain, step 3) were best described in terms of a metaphoric or metonymic mapping, involved both, or none. Given that we are two researchers annotating the same number of stimuli (42 advertisements) and have a binary categorical answer for the two figurative operations (treated independently: is there a metaphor? yes/no; is there a metonymy? yes/no), we report Cohen's kappa (Cohen, 1960). This statistical test measures the agreement between two analysts in a way that takes into account the possibility of agreement occurring by chance, thus making it a more robust measure than observed agreement. Cohen's kappa ranges from 0 (null agreement) to 1 (complete agreement).

In *Study 2*, we retained the cases for which both analysts agreed on the potential for metaphoric and/or metonymic interpretation (as independent annotations) and investigated the extent to which we interpreted the mapping in the same way. In other words, we measured the extent to which we identified similar target (step 2) and source (step 3) domains in the mapping. This follow-up study is relevant for two reasons. First, because there might be several overlapping figurative messages at work in the advertisement, but not all of them might be equally relevant. If we are to test the reliability of the procedure, we should be able to discern the most relevant message from the supporting or accessory messages. Second, because even if we agree on what is the main message of the advertisement, we may pick up on different multimodal cues to interpret the advertisement depending on our background, preferences, or previous experience, which might lead to slightly different interpretations of the advertisement. As illustrated in Figure 11, after examining our annotations in steps 2 and 3, we coded them as 'similar' whenever our annotations for source and target domains referred to similar ideas (we did not look at a finite set of conceptual labels since there are many mappings that could reflect the creativity of advertising

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messages). If there was only one coincidence (either source or target domain), we coded it as 'partial' agreement. If we picked up on different multimodal cues and ended up with different source and target domains, we coded it as 'different' interpretations.

5. Findings

5.1. Study 1. Identifying multimodal metaphor and metonymy

We now report the results from our first inter-rater reliability test, where we explore the extent to which two independent analysts, following the instructions summarized in Section 3, are able to agree on their annotations of multimodal metaphors and metonymies in our corpus of advertisements. This task is a yes/no issue concerned with the identification of a metaphor or metonymy structuring the main message of an advertisement. The identification of the ideas connected in the mapping is a more qualitative matter and is dealt with later in Study 2. To assess the level of agreement between two analysts, in line with the previous research using inter-rater reliability tests as a tool to validate metaphor identification procedures reviewed in Section 2.3, we interpreted the kappa scores based on definitions outlined by Altman (1990) for slight (0.2–0.4), fair (0.4–0.6), moderate (0.6–0.8), and substantial (0.8–1) agreement. This is perhaps a conservative approach to assess the agreement of our annotations, provided the sometimes-intended ambiguity of the advertisements that makes annotation subjective. However, given the scarcity of studies of a similar nature to take as reference, we decided to adopt the conventional interpretation of kappa scores. Future research should question and consider more flexible levels of agreement.

5.1.1. Headline finding: multimodal metaphor and metonymy can be reliably identified in advertisements, and it gets better with practice

Figure 10 shows the evolution of the kappa values reported for the identification of metaphor and metonymy across six rounds of annotations (RQ1). The kappa scores for both metaphor and metonymy increase in a consistent fashion across rounds, from almost null agreement for metaphor in the first round ($\kappa < 0.2$) to above moderate in the latter rounds of annotation ($\kappa = > 0.6$), and from fair ($\kappa = 0.4$) to perfect ($\kappa = 1$) agreement for metonymy.[3] We report Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) in Figure 5 to show whether the agreement increases or decreases with practice (RQ3) by correlating Cohen's kappa with the number of rounds. The analysts benefited from practice as they were more likely to converge in their annotations towards the final rounds, with a faster evolution for metonymy ($r = 0.95$) than for metaphor ($r = 0.82$).

What Figure 10 shows is that, whereas inter-rater reliability improved across rounds for both metaphor and metonymy ($k > .6$, moderate to substantial), there was

[3]The first two rounds are excluded from the test because one of the researchers annotated "yes" with respect to metonymy in all advertisements, which prevents a reliability test to be conducted since there is no way to assess whether it is a deliberate or random annotation. Whilst this is not necessarily wrong, since metonymy is a highly pervasive persuasive device in advertising, we later adjusted the granularity of our understanding of metonymy to be able to discern the main metonymies carrying the greater weight of the persuasive message, and discard accessory metonymies.

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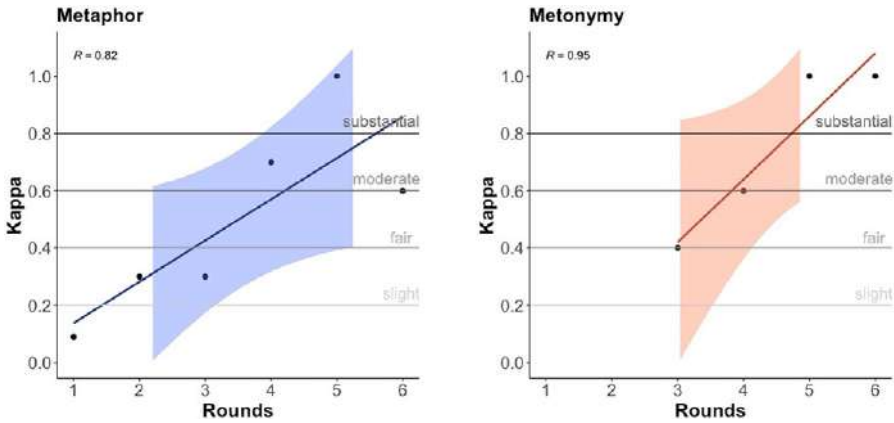


Figure 10. Evolution of inter-rater reliability by figurative language type across rounds.

a better performance for metonymy. This might be because the understanding of what counts as metonymy is more constrained in our procedure to focus exclusively on the main message and exclude supporting or accessory metonymies to be annotated, such as the logo standing for the brand. We included in the procedure an explicit instruction to annotate instances of personification as a separate category (see our analysis of Figure 1). This was a critical decision because personification can be interpreted as not only having potential for metaphoric interpretation (by portraying a mobile phone as a working man, thus prompting the connection between human and phone features) but also metonymic (whereby the properties of a working man, e.g., strength and resilience, are mapped onto the phone, but without necessarily understanding the phone as an animated being); however, we are fully aware of the ambivalence of such a figurative mechanism as personification.

A question that remains unanswered is whether the improvement in the agreement between analysts was due to practice over rounds of annotations, or whether the constraint on narrative range in mobile phone advertising was the factor that made it easier to spot metaphors and metonymies. To address this, we break down the rounds by type of advertisement (rounds 1–3 for generic advertisements and rounds 4–6 for genre-specific advertisements) to explore the trends by advertisement type (RQ2 and RQ3).

5.1.2. Headline finding: the specificity of mobile phone advertisements makes it easier to spot metonymy, but not metaphor

With regard to metaphors in generic advertisements (rounds 1–3), analysts did not converge much in their responses, but practice helped to raise agreement in their annotations by the end of round 3 (r = 0.87). The really interesting pattern appears when we compare the performance for metaphor and metonymy in mobile phone advertisements (rounds 4–6). As shown in Figure 11, the performance for metaphor and metonymy identification followed opposite trends in rounds 4–6 for mobile phone advertisements. Although the agreement was higher at the beginning for metaphor than for metonymy ($\kappa = 0.7$ and $\kappa = 0.6$ in round 4), the kappa scores for

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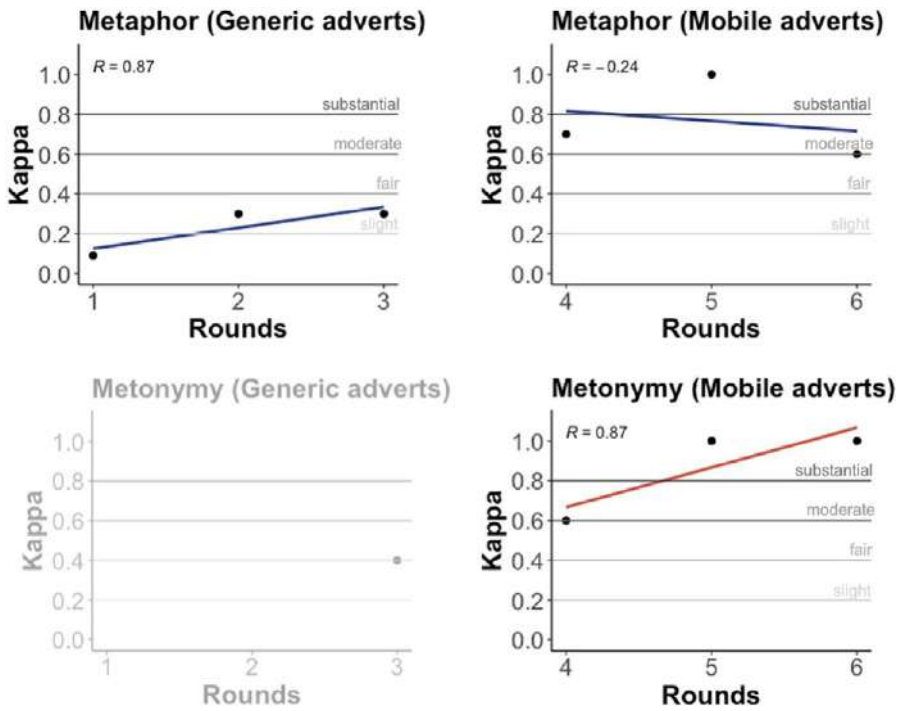


Figure 11. Evolution of inter-rater reliability by figurative language type by advertisement type and across rounds.

metaphor decreased by the final round, whereas it increased to perfect agreement for metonymy ($\kappa = 0.6$ and $\kappa = 1$ in round 6).

Overall, the analysts reached moderate to substantial agreement in their annotations of metaphor and metonymy in mobile advertisements; still, a closer look at the Pearson's correlation coefficient shows a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.87$) between observed inter-rater agreement and rounds of annotation for metonymy, meaning that researchers got better in agreeing upon their interpretations of the advertisements, but a weak negative relationship in the case of metaphor ($r = -0.24$). This is probably due to the fact that there are some overarching metonymies that tend to appear in advertisements about phone apps (e.g., a musical note that stands for playing music, in Figure 12), phones (e.g., a human hand next to a phone that stands for ownership over the phone), or data plans (e.g., portraying a SIM card to prompt Internet browsing).

For the case of metaphor, agreement decreased in the sixth round of annotation (even though it was still higher than for generic advertisements) because some of the advertisements from the mobile corpus contained several overlapping messages. This made the researchers pick different structuring verbalizations of the advertisement, which had consequences for the identification of the main metaphor at work. It highlights a creative license that makes advertisements more engaging as they allow for multiple valid readings of the same campaign; but that naturally hinders the

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Figure 12. Advertisement for EE mobile phone network (Text: "More beats per minute. Download albums superfast with mobile #4GEE. Only on EE.").

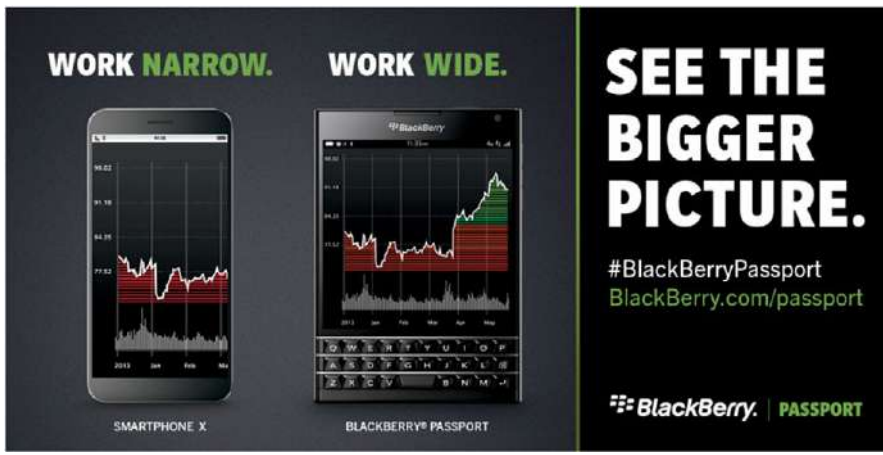


Figure 13. Advertisement for Blackberry phone (Text: "Work narrow. Work wide. See the bigger picture."). ©2014 BlackBerry Limited. BlackBerry Passport® smartphone advertisement is used with permission from BlackBerryLimited. All Rights Reserved.

success of our task, which for the sake of practicality was restricted from the beginning to the identification of a single 'main' structuring metaphor. In order to illustrate this, see Figure 13 where phone size correlates with the power of the phone to get more information; a visual manifestation of IMPORTANCE IS BIG (Yu et al., 2017). But here the 'bigger picture' can also be taken literally, since the size of the screen is larger too, and therefore both literal and figurative readings apply.

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5.2. Study 2. Interpreting multimodal metaphor and metonymy

In Study 2 we assessed the extent to which we agreed on the interpretation of the advertisement by triangulating the qualitative information provided in our respective verbalizations of the main message of the advertisements (stage 1), our annotations of what we perceived to be the product being advertised (stage 2), and what was being said about it (stage 3). The difficulty of this task is that, whereas we might have a general feel that the product is being compared to something else, sometimes highly creative and complex advertisement designs make it hard to discern what the actual ideas are that are being connected via metaphor or metonymy.

5.2.1. Headline finding: it is easier to agree on the interpretation of metaphors rather than of metonymies, although the higher specificity of mobile advertisements lowers the agreement scores for both figurative operations

Figure 14 demonstrates the evolution of agreement between the interpretations for advertisements featuring metaphor and metonymy in both generic and mobile advertisements made by both analysts over the six rounds of analysis. Although similar interpretations were overall more frequent than partially similar and dissimilar interpretations for both metaphoric and metonymic advertisements, both analysts were likely to converge more in their interpretations for metaphor (82% of coincidence on average) than for metonymy (54% of similar interpretations on average). In other words, it was easier to have a similar interpretation of the advertisement if it was based on metaphor. Supporting evidence can be found in the evolution of different interpretations that decrease across the three rounds for metaphoric and metonymic generic advertisements, as well as the low rate in mobile advertisements, but increase for metonymic mobile advertisements. One possibility that may explain the increase of different interpretations of metonymic advertisements in the mobile corpus is that it

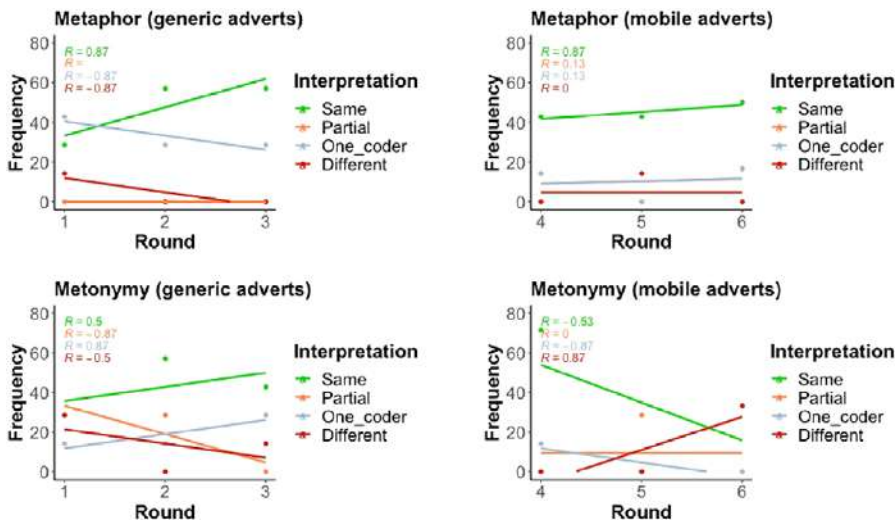


Figure 14. Evolution of agreement in the interpretations by figurative language type, by genre, and across rounds.

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Figure 15. Advertisement for O2 network (Text: "Surprises of all sizes every time you top up").

was usual to find multiple co-existing metonymies supporting a main metaphor, which sometimes led the researchers to pick up on different (yet still viable) cues to the metonymies (based on the main image, words, typography, background color, etc.).

Interestingly, the advertisements that led to partially similar or different interpretations in mobile advertising were more likely to convey abstract messages, such as data plans, or were campaigns promoting the company. Similar interpretations were more likely to be reached for advertising products of a more concrete nature, such as phone handsets. Finding ways to encode an abstract idea in images is a challenging task that makes advertisers resort to creative strategies that sometimes make the advertisement harder to work out.

We identified two major reasons why metaphor and metonymy interpretation in mobile phone advertisements could have been more difficult than in generic advertisements. First, regarding metaphor, sometimes the narratives set up complex scenarios to shed light on a hard-to-depict service, such as top-up plans. In Figure 15, the advertisement is connecting the idea of topping-up with the game of duck-fishing – a game typically found at a fairground, where prizes are found on the underside of the duck once it has been caught. Although these ideas are sufficiently distinct to be connected via metaphor rather than via metonymy, viewers may pick up on different cues to work out the message that top-up plans have surprising rewards associated with ducks. Indeed, the analysts came up with two related, but different, interpretations: on the one hand, phones are like rubber ducks, and there is a surprise when they are topped-up or caught; on the other, topping-up can be understood as the act of duck-fishing (game), a metaphorical mapping that shifts the focus from the object to the action. The verbal part of the advertisement does not clarify things, as it refers both to surprises "of all sizes" (hinting at the different sizes of the ducks) and to "top-up." Although both analysts identified the same frames for both the metaphorical source and the target domains, they picked up on different multimodal cues to extract the ideas being compared in the metaphoric mapping. In this case, we marked the interpretation as different, as neither the source nor the target domain coincided in the two possible readings of the advertisement.

The second reason has to do with metonymies. We have mentioned that some metonymies can be treated as 'usual suspects' in mobile advertising, as they are likely to appear across different campaigns. An example of HAND FOR OWNER can be seen in our previous analysis of Figure 2, a very recurrent metonymic mapping in

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mobile advertisements. However, the hand is depicted in the shape of a fist bump, which evokes more concrete connotations than a hand holding a phone. A fist bump has multiple meanings depending on the cultural knowledge or prior experiences; it may cue respect, power, a greeting, happiness, or belonging to a community. The multiplicity of part-whole mappings makes it harder to interpret the same metonymic mapping. Whereas this might not be a problem for advertisers, as they may intend audiences to consider the advertisement as a whole, it may be a challenge for this study as it makes it hard to agree on what message is intended by the advertisement.

6. Conclusion

In summary, our study tests the reliability of an annotation procedure that allows the systematic analysis of multimodal metaphor and metonymy, and suggests that identification may become easier after practice. The second study reported agreement on the actual interpretation of metaphors and metonymies by means of reliability analyses.

Our two studies have shown that a systematic stepwise procedure and inter-rater reliability tests can help to improve the consistency of the identification of metaphor and metonymy in multimodal contexts (RQ1). We reached moderate to substantial agreement in identifying the potential for a metaphoric and/or metonymic interpretation of the advertisements (Study 1), but not so much for the interpretation of such mappings (Study 2), as we did not always pick up on the same multimodal cues to work out the frames connected via figurative mappings. Metonymy was, to a certain extent, harder to identify, mostly for two reasons: (1) part-whole connections are sometimes difficult to disentangle, which makes metonymies sometimes border the literal; and (2) in some cases, it is harder to decide what the main metonymy is, as we usually find several at work providing economic points of access to a main metaphor.

In response to the issue of genre (RQ2), we did find that some metonymies were highly pervasive across mobile phone advertising, which confirmed our hypothesis that knowing the specificities of the genre at work may be useful to 'train' the eye for spotting metonymies. However, besides personification, we did not find any recurrent metaphors in mobile advertisements, and therefore genre did not play any role in raising agreement for metaphor identification and interpretation.

Finally, we found evidence to support our hypothesis that reliability increases with analysts' experience gained with practice (RQ3). We found that we improved the consistency between our annotations for the potential of a metaphoric or metonymic reading of the advertisements (Study 1), but not so much for the selection of the domains connected via such figurative mappings (Study 2). We sometimes struggled to decode the more sophisticated advertisements for phone companies and data plans, given that companies had to find ways to depict abstract services in concrete, visual ways. Therefore, in the process of identification and interpretation of metaphor and metonymy, it is crucial to have training rounds to clarify issues before starting the actual annotation, to hold group discussions of controversial examples to revise the procedure, and to be patient as the evolution in the agreement does not always follow a linear fashion. Ultimately, we need to acknowledge that there is a threshold that

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cannot be surpassed given the inherent subjectivity of the task, and analysts must consider joint annotation and discussion.

We posit that our take on the identification of multimodal metaphor and metonymy has a number of benefits to the field of figurative communication and multimodality in that it:

a) is sympathetically timed with the rise in multimodality research to further our understanding of multimodal figurative communication;
b) builds on existing procedures with new empirical research; and
c) acknowledges metonymy as a cognitive and linguistic operation in its own right, and provides a framework from which more empirical research on multimodal metonymy in discourse can be conducted.

While we do not have a definite answer to the initial question driving this article, 'What should count as a multimodal metaphor and metonymy?', our studies have shed light on the fact that the distinction between metaphor and metonymy goes far beyond the traditional definition based on cross-domain and internal-domain mappings. A procedure for multimodal metaphor and metonymy identification and interpretation should at least address the following issues (and should therefore be taken up by further research):

(a) The gradability of metaphor, or *metaphoricity* (Dunn, 2015; Hanks, 2006; Müller, 2008), as the boundaries between metaphor and metonymy are sometimes blurred. We have seen that in the case of personification, where two readings are feasible (Dorst, 2011), and in the case of multiple metonymies that provide concrete points of access to a more abstract metaphor, it makes up a composite that is sometimes hard to disentangle (see Goossens, 1990; Ruiz Ruiz de Mendoza, 2000; and Pérez-Sobrino, 2017 for a multimodal application).

(b) The role of *background knowledge* the individual analyst has on a topic/genre to perceive a given metaphor as figurative or not. In our case, revising the corpus of mobile phone advertisements in advance was helpful to clarify doubts about unknown terminology or phone features, and also to spot (and discard) some genre-specific metonymies that were pervasive across mobile advertisements.

(c) The stylistic ways by which *similarity is cued* in non-verbal contexts, where there is no "is" or "is like" text to flag the metaphoric mapping (Forceville, 2009b: 31). In our studies we looked at the conceptual incongruity between the product and the surrounding context, and/or the text or images next to it.

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Figure 1. Advertisement for Cat mobile phone (Text: "Rugged. Resilient. Reliable. One seriously hard worker."). Provided courtesy of Caterpillar. ©Caterpillar Inc. All rights reserved. Retrieved on 9th February 2017, original source (last accessed: 10th May 2023): https://www.conormasterson.com/portfolio/category/advertising/caterpillar-mobile-phone-welder.

Figure 2. Advertisement for giffgaff mobile phone network (Text: "*fist bump*@LayolaLotus. We don't like contracts. But we do like you."). Illustrator: Serge Seidlitz. Retrieved on 9th February 2017, original source: www.newsworks.org.uk.

Figure 3. Advertisement for buyresponsibly.org (Text: "What's behind the things we buy? Buyresponsibly.org"). Source (last accessed: 10th May 2023): https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/shopping-cart-4a93aea6-6fb6-47e6-a42e-6771e2baeb11.

Figure 4. Advertisement for Fender guitar. The Fender logo and headstock are registered trademarks of FMIC. Source (last accessed: 10th May 2023): https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/exit-b0d175d4-bc81-458d-ba7b-fbe42fff0639.

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Figure 12: Advertisement for EE mobile phone network (Text: "More beats per minute. Download albums superfast with mobile #4GEE. Only on EE."). Retrieved on 9th February 2017, original source: www.newsworks.org.uk.

Figure 13: Advertisement for Blackberry phone (Text: "Work narrow. Work wide. See the bigger picture."). ©2014 BlackBerry Limited. BlackBerry Passport® smartphone advertisement is used with permission from BlackBerryLimited. All Rights Reserved. Retrieved on 9th February 2017, original source: news.phonesltd.co.uk, source (last accessed: 10th May 2023): https://blogs.blackberry.com/en/2014/09/meet-blackberry-passport.

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CHAPTER 5. MAKING CROSS-CULTURAL MEANING WITH METONYMY AND METAPHOR IN EDUCATIONAL SMARTPHONE APP ICONS

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Abstract

Education apps are the most widely available category of app used on smartphones and are accessible worldwide (AppBrain, 2022; AppsFlyer, 2021). While smartphones provide global access to educational resources, smartphone interfaces are often tailored to specific cultures rather than universal users (Yus, 2021). We compare 60 education app icons from the UK (*N*=30) and China (*N*=30) regarding the use of figurative tropes metaphor and metonymy, and visual and multimodal design, to explore how culture, genre, and register may influence choices of meaning and form in app icons. We apply a framework for analyzing figurative language use that integrates notions of genre and register (Deignan et al., 2013) to the multimodal context of education apps. We provide more empirical evidence for a relatively new concept 'visual complexity' (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021c) that analyses visual structure as being on a cline from content-rich (detailed) to schematic (minimalist). We found cultural variation in the use of figurative tropes, and visual and multimodal design elements, in education apps from the UK and China. UK app icons were more schematic, using more visual metonymy, while Chinese apps were more content rich, using text and a variety of figurative tropes including personification of animals that had different symbolic meaning for the respective cultures.

5.1. Introduction

Education apps are the most widely available category of app used on smartphones and are accessible worldwide (AppBrain, 2022; AppsFlyer, 2021). While smartphones provide global access to educational resources, smartphone interfaces are often tailored to specific cultures rather than universal users (Yus, 2021). Figurative language and visual design can capture the attention of smartphone users and convey information about an app that may persuade them to

download it (Burgers et al., 2016). Analyzing the variation in the figurative language and design of education app icons may provide clearer insight into how best to communicate with international students and how to make educational resources more appealing and engaging. Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021a) suggests that the ways in which apps communicate to users can vary across cultures. They found cultural differences in the use and meaning of figurative language and aesthetic design in US and Japanese food and drink app icons.

While figurative language can be understood by people from different backgrounds (often being based on common human experiences), figurative language can also vary considerably in its use and meaning across different cultures, contexts, genres, and registers (Deignan et al., 2013; Kövecses, 2003, 2017). In this study, we take Deignan et al.'s framework that analyses the variation of figurative language with respect to genre and register, and apply it to visual and multimodal (text, image, and color) figurative tropes to help explain the cross-cultural meanings generated in education app icons from the UK and China. We examine how figurative tropes and visual design work together in education app icons to establish how they communicate with smartphone users from different cultures. We consider how genre and register (Deignan et al., 2013) influence the figurative complexity (independence or interaction) of figurative tropes (including metonymy, metaphor, personification, and pun) across modes, and the visual complexity of app icon design, involving forms that are on a cline from content-rich (detailed) to schematic (minimalist) (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021d). Our research highlights conceptual, and visual and multimodal, patterns that represent education and educational activities. These findings may enable education providers to optimize their educational material to better appeal to and engage international students. Understanding how meaning is created in different cultures through figurative tropes and design may also inform the construction of educational resources that appeal to specific and/or multicultural and

multilingual student cohorts (Allen & Seaman, 2013; White et al., 2010).

In Section 2, we review research on figurative tropes and cultural variation in apps, and frameworks that analyze figurative language variation according to genre and register, and visual structure. In Section 3 we detail our corpus and analytical procedure. In Section 4, we discuss metonymy, metaphor, and other figurative tropes in UK and Chinese education app icons and their cross-cultural meaning, and conclude in Section 5.

5.2. Literature Review

First, we highlight the importance of studying figurative tropes in education app icons, and the need for further research on the role visual and multimodal forms play in communicating information. Second, we describe how and why we apply Deignan et al.'s (2013) framework for figurative language, genre, and register to the multimodal education app icons, and how we combine this with the concepts of figurative and visual complexity (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021d).

The competitive nature of app stores means that apps that can convey functional information to users at a glance are at an advantage. However, the limited visual space of app icons means that app companies must be very efficient with their design choices. One way to package information into a small space is to use figurative tropes such as metonymy and metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Littlemore, 2015). Metonymy refers to one entity (the target domain) as something else (the source domain) that is from the same semantic and/or conceptual domain (Forceville, 2009a). In doing so, it acts as a form of shorthand (Littlemore, 2015). In marketing contexts, the target is usually the product (such as the app), an attribute of the product, or the function of the product, and the source domain highlights features that may be desirable to potential consumers of said product (Pérez Sobrino, 2017). App icons are one

of the first things smartphone users see when searching for an app, meaning app icons operate as their own form of marketing. Apps use metonymy in their icons. For example, athletic workouts depict a weight or body part like a muscly arm or torso (source) to metonymically stand for the act of working out (target) (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021b).

Another figurative trope, metaphor, compares the target to a source from a different semantic and/or conceptual domain in order to provide information about the target (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). For example, apps for network security commonly use a shield in their icon, which metaphorically represents the app as defending the phone against internet viruses (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021b). In 500 transportation apps, Burgers et al. (2016) found that 49.8% had visual metaphor in the icon (N=249 apps). Apps containing visual metaphor were more likely to be downloaded than apps without visual metaphor, suggesting that metaphor can contribute to app success by being more appealing and persuasive than non-metaphor. An app's visual appearance can also motivate user selection and satisfaction (Bowman et al., 2015; Kumar & Noble, 2016; Merhi, 2016). Understanding how figurative tropes and visual design elements work together in education apps may be useful to education providers wanting to optimize their learning provisions and make them more appealing to students.

There is growing research interest in the visual and multimodal structures metaphor and metonymy take and how different structures cue different tropes in advertising (e.g. Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004). This research is based on print advertising, such as billboards, where there is a considerable amount of visual space to convey detailed information to viewers. However, app icons have a limited visual space to communicate with smartphone users and therefore require a different framework to analyze their use of figurative tropes.

Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021d) identified that visual structure can be manipulated by its "visual complexity". Visual complexity operates on a continuum from content-rich to schematic. Content-richness refers to "elaborated images displaying a wide array of colors and shapes, and creating the illusion of volume", and schematicity refers to "plain drawings with a minimum use of colors and no reference to shape or volume" (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021a, p. 145). Kieras & Hornof (2014) suggest that app icons are becoming more schematic than content rich over time.

In their study of food and drink app icons, Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021a) found that while app icons are generally more schematic, the visual complexity can vary according to the app's cultural origin. For instance, they found US app icons are more schematic than Japanese apps. They also observed that apps used more metonymy than metaphor in their icons, as often the choice of colors had metonymic links to food or drink items, such as pink in bakery apps standing for sweet food (e.g. cakes and doughnuts). While there is some intercultural agreement on the meaning of color, color meaning is not universal (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). For instance, while US apps for curry takeaways were orange, Japanese curry apps were yellow, which possibly reflects the different colors curries have in the respective cultures due to differing ingredients. US apps were red for fast food in general; whereas Japanese apps were red specifically for apps selling noodles, suggesting a cultural association with red that is more general for the US but more specific for Japan. They also found that Japanese apps had higher figurative complexity than US apps. Japanese apps were more likely to use clusters of metonymies and metaphors that simultaneously conveyed related messages (making their messages more complex), whereas US apps were more likely to have single instances of these figurative tropes in their icons (conveying simpler messages).

Kövecses (2017, p. 75) states that context and culture are "inseparable" from the use and

meaning of figurative tropes such as metaphor and metonymy. While Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021a) demonstrates potential for cultural variation in app icon meaning and form, they offer no explanation of how features such as genre and register may have influenced the choices of tropes and design elements of the apps. Deignan et al. (2013) propose a framework for analyzing variation in figurative language use by integrating the notions of genre and register. Deignan et al. (2013, p. 12) argue that "when analyzing the forms and functions of figurative language, it is important to take into account the discourse community, genre, and register in which it is used", as these features can inform the variation of language use by "different groups of language users, in different contexts, and for different purposes" (2013, p. 15).

If genre and register are so crucial to the study of figurative language use, we first need to establish what they constitute. In other words, what *is* genre and register? Genre is "associated with the analysis of entire texts, while register analysis tends to view texts as composites of linguistic features" (Deignan et al., 2013, p. 26). Genre constitutes "stages" and "purpose", both of which shape the conventions associated with particular kinds of texts including the use of figurative language (Deignan et al., 2013, pp. 22–25). Staging considers the steps that texts take to communicate their narrative to the audience. This part of the framework is not as relevant to app icons, which are meant to be perceived at a glance. Communicative purpose, however, is relevant to the study of apps. The communicative purpose of app icons is to *inform* users of the app's function and to *persuade* users to download the app. Figurative tropes and their depiction may communicate what the app is for, in order to inform the audience of its capabilities (e.g. helping users to learn a new language), and present desirable results to persuade users that they can achieve these results by using the app (e.g. become proficient in a new language).

Some research refers to genre as the "context of culture" and register as the "context of

situation" (e.g. Halliday, 1978; Kövecses, 2003, 2017). "Culture" can refer not only to national cultures (e.g. British and Chinese), but also to discourse communities. According to Deignan et al. (2013), the discourse community is an important feature of a genre. Discourse communities are groups of people who have "texts and practices in common" (Barton, 2017, p. 75). When analyzing the meaning and form of figurative tropes in app icons, we can consider the discourse communities to which the education app icons belong, and what goals and ideologies the communities may have that might influence their perception of the app icons. The discourse communities associated with app icons are, for the most part, smartphone users looking for education app icons to download, although the further specifics of the discourse community (like subgroups) may vary according to which educational function the users look for (e.g. communities looking for language learning apps versus learning how to play the piano). Another kind of discourse community is education providers and app developers that aim to communicate what their app does and convey claims as to its competency. In our study, we consider the role the app function plays in influencing the choices of figurative tropes and visual/multimodal design for an app icon to appeal to certain groups of discourse communities.

The national cultures smartphone users belong to may also influence their identification and interpretation of figurative tropes and visual design. Langacker (1987) describes this as "alternative construal". People from different cultures may understand the same situation (and by extension, the same cognitive operation or figurative trope) in multiple ways, or apply different cognitive operations to the same situation. In our paper, we focus on UK and Chinese cultures and consider the cultural knowledge required to annotate the corpus of icons.

Register (or 'context of situation') is based on three components: field, tenor, and mode (Halliday, 1978). Field refers to the topic or subject matter, and the language that the

communication activity is featured in, which aids the interpretation of figurative language (Goatly, 1997). For education app icons, the field would be education or educational activities in English or Chinese.

Tenor refers to the people involved and their relationships with one another, and combines with the notion of discourse communities, as both involve the communication between people. To our 'discourse communities' explanation above, we add that the relationship between the app (or producer of the app) and the smartphone user could be a transactional one. The app's producer offers the app as a product for smartphone users to download, and smartphone users seek to download what app they deem most suitable to fulfil their educational needs. However, depending on the app's function, education apps may also portray themselves as a kind of entertainment, as an educational game, for example. The tone of the relationship may therefore modulate depending on how the app wants to connect with its target audience.

Mode refers to the channel of communication and its function in the wider context. App icons make use of verbal (text) and visual (images, shapes, colors) modes in their design. Figurative tropes such as metonymy and metaphor operate not only in the verbal mode (spoken and written language) but also in the visual mode (Forceville, 2009a; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009), and in multiple modes at once, whereby the target and source of a metaphor or metonymy can be cued across different modes (Forceville, 2009b, p. 25; Pérez Sobrino, 2017). In this study, we analyze app icons for their use of verbal and visual modes, including compositional elements such as orientation, arrangement, and foregrounding and backgrounding, among others. These compositional elements are somewhat related to Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006a) research on visual grammar. They suggest that while individual visual elements can carry their own meaning, the synergy of visual elements forms a more

elaborate understanding of what is communicated. Therefore, analyzing the mode and compositional elements together may create a richer picture of what information app icons can convey through their design.

In our study, we keep the overarching field (topic) the same across the corpus as education apps so that we may shine a spotlight on the differences between app audiences from different cultures (tenor), and the way different modes cue figurative messages about the app (mode). Deignan et al.'s (2013) framework was based on the research aim for investigating the variation in figurative language use in the verbal mode of spoken and written language. In our study we expand their framework by applying it to app icons that are composed of verbal and visual modes, and examine how figurative tropes metonymy and metaphor operate within and between these modes in education app icons. Similarly to Deignan et al. (2013, p. 16), we consider the interaction between tropes metonymy and metaphor, and the use of other figurative tropes when they interact with metonymy and metaphor, as we explore the figurative complexity of app icons.

Metonymy and metaphor can work together as 'metaphtonymy', when they share a target or source domain that creates a semantic and/or conceptual connection (Goossens, 1990). Figure 5.1 provides an example taken from our corpus of education app icons. The PlantSnap app uses a metaphor to represent the camera as a plant, visually cued by a leaf growing from the camera. The leaf itself provides access to this metaphor through metonymy in that the leaf, a part of a plant, stands for plants as a whole ("PART FOR WHOLE"). One could go a step further by relating the metaphtonymic meaning to the app's function where the camera metonymically stands for the act of capturing a plant to identify it (i.e. the object used for the action stands for the action itself). Without metonymy working with metaphor here, the constituent visual elements of the camera and the leaf would be much less informative for the

user to interpret the function of the app.

Table 5.1. Example of app icon with metaphtonymy

Icon	Name	Function	Metaphor	Metonymy	Connection
	PlantSnap: FREE plants identifier and succulent	Identifies species of plant using the smartphone camera	CAMERA IS PLANT	LEAVES FOR PLANT	Metaphoric source + Metonymic target

Other figurative tropes interact with metonymy and metaphor, such as personification (Delbaere et al., 2011; Pérez Sobrino, 2016b), anthropomorphism (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007a; Burgers et al., 2016), puns (Ford et al., 2021; Guan & Forceville, 2020), and hyperbole (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2002). Personification is when an entity (concept, object, or living being) is attributed human features or traits (Delbaere et al., 2011). In a previous study, Ford (2019) found multiple instances of personification occurring in app icons. For example, a fox in the *Firefox Browser* was described as 'fast', a bull in the *ABull Browser* as 'powerful', and a lion in the *Brave Browser – Fast Adblocker* as 'brave'. The human traits associated with these animals can be mapped onto the app itself to make it more desirable. Anthropomorphism is a kind of personification that attributes human features or traits to animals (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007b). Burgers et al. (2016) found that transportation apps used anthropomorphism, as well as metaphor, to communicate information about the app's function. In our study, we identify personification in the first instance, and then consider whether it is anthropomorphism if the anthropomorphic meaning is necessary to interpret the app's function.

Identifying personification in the first place, however, can prove tricky. Research suggests that personification can have a metaphoric or metonymic reading (Dorst, 2011; Steen, 2007). The phrase "This paper thinks…" uses the metaphor "ESSAY IS A PERSON" (Low, 1999, p. 221), while "The office telephoned to ask…" uses the metonymy "OFFICE FOR OFFICE WORKER" (Dorst et al., 2011, p. 278). This exemplifies that the boundaries of figurative tropes are not necessarily mutually exclusive. We therefore consider the trope definitions as guidelines that can be useful explorative tools for making cross-cultural meaning as opposed to distinct categories. Furthermore, considering the genre and register may inform which figurative mappings are needed to interpret the relevant meaning.

Puns "use one or more symbols (picture and/or text) to suggest two meanings or two different sets of associations" (Abed, 1994, p. 46). In our analysis, we identified instances of homophonic pun (different meanings from the same sounding word) and visual pun (different meanings from a single image). Hyperbole emphasizes a scenario as "more extreme than it actually is (or in some cases, could ever be)" (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021d, p. 15). In our study, we report the interaction of metonymy and metaphor in app icons, and their interaction with other tropes including personification (anthropomorphism), pun, and hyperbole, when it proves necessary to interpret the meaning.

As there are few studies that have investigated the use of figurative tropes in app icons (let alone for education) from different cultures, we approach this study as exploratory and qualitative. We use inter-rater reliability tests to indicate the extent of analyst agreement in cross-cultural meaning. The scores provide us with a starting point from which to examine potential cross-cultural variation in our analyses. This approach contrasts with previous inter-rater reliability studies (e.g. Bort-Mir, 2019; Pragglejaz Group, 2007; Šorm & Steen, 2018) where agreement is sought as the ideal result. Instead, we are interested in the instances of

disagreement between analysts that may highlight instances of variation. We take a theoretical stance in that the same app can have multiple different meanings to different people. We acknowledge that cultural differences cannot account for all variation in our analyses as there will be many other factors at play. In our analysis, we address variation between analysts more directly, drawing on examples where cultural and linguistic knowledge may play a role in the difference in the identification and interpretation of tropes in the app icon.

5.3. Method and materials

5.3.1. Corpus

We selected the top 60 education apps from the Education category of the UK Google Play Store (N = 30) using a Samsung Galaxy S9 smartphone on 28th July 2021 between 13.00 and 14.20 (UTC +1) and the Chinese Huawei app store (N = 30) using a Huawei smartphone on 22nd July 2021 between 19.00 and 19.51 (UTC). UK education apps were ranked in the 'Top Charts' according to popularity (app downloads and reviews). Chinese education apps were ranked according to their cumulative downloads (total downloads by app users) and a 5-point user rating. The app name and description were translated into English using Google Translate (2021) to avoid analyst translation bias (Hubscher-Davidson, 2009). The analysts are native to the UK (first author, A1) and China (second author, A2) and specialize in metaphor studies. A1 is fluent in English only, and A2 is fluent in both English and Chinese. These analysts belong to different discourse communities, which may prove another interesting aspect to explore.

5.3.2. Analytical procedure

We conducted our analysis in four stages. First, we recorded information about the selected app icons (app rank, downloads, name, description) and their design (colors, images, text) to assess their visual complexity. Second, we independently analyzed the app icons with their name and description using the procedure below. Third, we conducted two inter-rater reliability tests to observe the extent of variation in the identification and interpretation of tropes in the app icons, which served as a starting point to study instances of cross-cultural meaning. Fourth, we considered the influence of genre and register on our identification and interpretation of tropes and visual/multimodal elements by adopting Deignan et al.'s framework (2013), explained in Section 2.

Our analytical procedure (Figure 5.1) combined the procedure used by Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021a) based on semiotic theory[21] with Pérez Sobrino's (2016b) procedure for identifying multimodal metaphor and metonymy. We use the procedure as an exploratory tool and do not make any claims as to its robustness, although its use has been largely reliable (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019; also see Chapter 4). We explain each step of our procedure in turn.

[21] Pérez Sobrino et al.'s (2021b) procedure was adapted from Beasley and Danesi's (2010, p. 24) eight-step protocol based on semiotic theory (i.e. identifying signs and sign systems that make meaning).

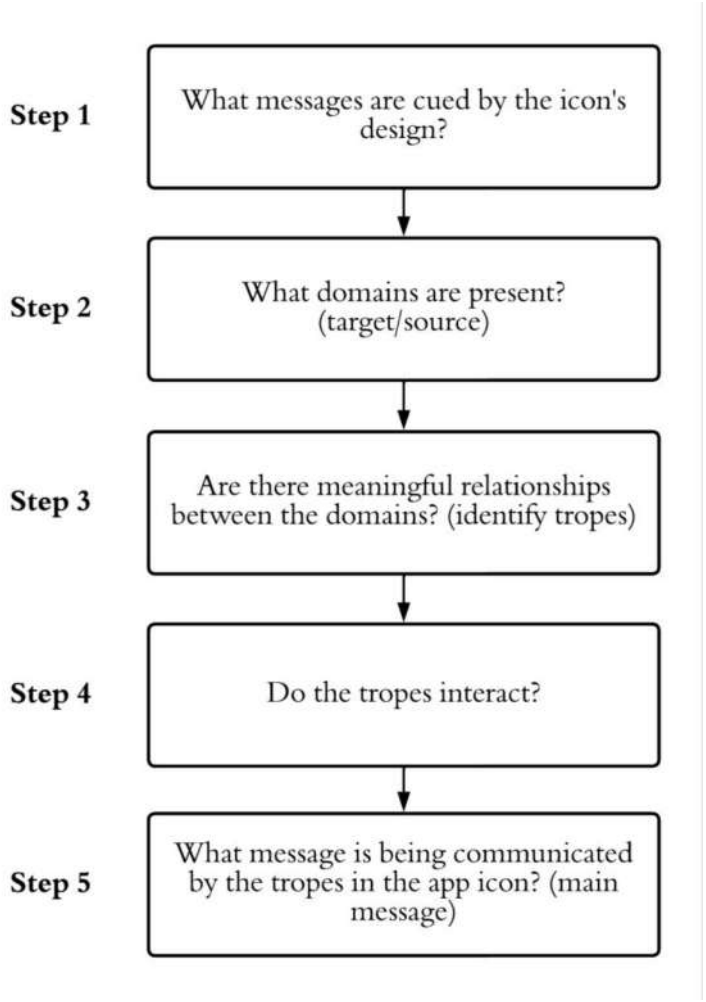


Figure 5.1. Procedure to identify figurative tropes in app icons

Step 1 (what messages are cued by the icon's design?) establishes the analysts' impression of what the icon communicates about the app's function, considering the design elements and contextual information provided by the app's name and description. There may be multiple messages relevant at this step.

Step 2 (what domains are present?) considers potential source and target domains that are relevant to the message(s) construed in Step 1. At times, it may be unclear what element is a source or target domain. Noting possibilities makes it easier to refer back to should the meaningful relationship present itself more clearly in subsequent steps.

Step 3 (are there meaningful relationships between the domains?) determines whether there is a figurative relationship between the domains identified in Step 2, and if so what figurative trope(s) are active. There may be single or multiple instances of these tropes occurring. In this study we consider metaphor, metonymy, personification (and anthropomorphism), pun, and hyperbole (defined in Section 5.2).

Step 4 (do the tropes interact?) should be completed if the answer to Step 3 is affirmative. Step 4 considers whether there are singular or multiple figurative trope(s) present and to identify whether they interact (i.e. they share one or more source and/or target domain). Categories may involve (a) no trope, (b) singular trope, (c) multiple tropes not interacting, or (d) multiple tropes interacting. This step also determines the degree of figurative complexity an app icon has. Singular tropes are simpler and multiple/interacting tropes are more complex (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019).

Step 5(what message(s) is (are) being communicated by the tropes in the app icon?) provides analysts with the opportunity to reconsider the message established in Step 1 and select the one that is most relevant. An analyst will bring their own biases and knowledge to the analysis, even when using a step-by-step procedure (see Chapter 4). Adding this final step mediates the risk of missing ideas that challenge or lie outside of the analysts' initial understanding of the analyzed material, or that come to light when making meaning. This step is useful in the early stages of analysis when analysts are still learning how to apply the procedure, and is based on reflexive practice (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 6 for more discussion on reflexivity).

Once the analytical procedure was complete, we considered whether the use of tropes and/or design elements varied according to the genre and/or register of the app icons, and

according to the discourse communities involved in its interpretation – the app producer, smartphone users, and the analysts themselves. To aid with this, we conducted two inter-rater reliability tests (IRRs).

The IRR tests explored the extent of agreement between two analysts in: (1) identifying figurative tropes in a corpus of 60 app icons; (2) interpreting these tropes. For Test 1, we asked: *Is there agreement between the analysts regarding which figurative trope/s that are identified in the app icon?* We coded our answers as 'yes' if the same figurative trope(s) was (were) identified, 'partially' if the same figurative trope(s) was (were) identified but there were other figurative tropes also identified (e.g. if one analyst identified metonymy and the other metonymy *and* metaphor), and 'no' if none of the same figurative tropes were identified. We report Cohen's kappa (Cohen, 1960) as we treat these three categorical answers independently. This test accounts for the possibility that agreement occurs by chance. Cohen's kappa scores range from 0 (null agreement) to 1 (complete agreement), and indicate fair (0.21-0.4), moderate (0.41-0.6), and substantial (0.61-0.8) agreement (Altman, 1990; Landis & Koch, 1977).

For Test 2, we coded the analysts' interpretation of the mapping as 'same' for cases that shared the same domains, 'partial' for shared parts of the domains, and 'different' when different domains were interpreted. We anticipated that there may be instances where each analyst interprets the app icons at different levels of abstraction. For example, while one analyst may identify an overarching figurative trope, such as a metaphor, another analyst may break the figurative trope down into a metaphtonymy; a metaphor-metonymy compound where the metonymy informs the metaphor (Littlemore, 2015; Barcelona, 2003; Urios-Aparisi, 2009). In our study we coded this as 'partial' agreement.

5.4. Results

In this section, we report and discuss our findings. For ease of reference, we henceforth use code 'C' for Chinese app icons and 'U' for UK app icons, followed by the number of the app's rank; for example, 'C1', 'C2', 'C3', etc. refers to the first, second, third, etc. ranked app. We also refer to analysis conducted by the first and second author as A1 and A2 respectively.

5.4.1. Describing the corpus

Before we look at the figurative dimension of app icons, we look at the distribution of app functions shown in Table 5.2. The functions of UK apps varied more than Chinese apps.

Table 5.2. Percentage of app functions in UK and China sub-corpus

App culture	App function	Number of apps (N)	Percentage of sub corpus (N/30*100)
UK	Identification (plant, insect, constellations)	9	30
	General online learning (institution)	6	20
	Language learning	4	13.3
	Driving license theory	4	13.3
	Learning to play a musical instrument	2	6.7
	Learning to paint	2	6.7
	Creating a story	2	6.7
	Beauty	1	3.3
	Total	**30**	**100**

China	Online learning (primary/secondary level)	19	63.3
	MOOCS	7	23.3
	English language learning	4	13.3
	Total	**30**	**100**

Generally, UK app icons were more schematic and visual, while Chinese app icons were more content rich and multimodal, often using Chinese text and symbols to convey information about the app. Table 5.3 shows instances of single and multiple interacting tropes were more common in UK and Chinese app icons than single and multiple non-interacting tropes. This result suggests that, despite the constrained visual space of app icons, relatively complex messages can be created using single and multiple tropes. With multiple tropes, there may be more room for different interpretations of the icons.

Table 5.3. Counts for figurative complexity

Corpus	**Trope**	**A1**	**Percentage**	**A2**	**Percentage**	**Average**
UK	No trope	3	00.10	1	00.03	2
	Single	9	00.30	21	70.00	15
	Multiple, no interact	6	00.20	0	00.00	3
	Multiple, interact	11	36.67	7	23.33	9
	Other symbolism	1	00.03	1	00.03	1
UK total apps		**30**		**30**		
China	No trope	4	13.33	3	00.10	3.5
	Single	13	43.33	11	36.67	12
	Multiple, no interact	1	00.03	4	13.33	2.5
	Multiple, interact	5	16.67	5	16.67	5
	Other symbolism	7	23.33	7	23.33	7
China total apps		**30**		**30**		

Table 5.4. Number of figurative tropes identified in education app icons by A1 and A2 analysts

Corpus	Trope	A1	Percentage of apps (30)	A2	Percentage of apps (30)	Average
UK	Metonymy	23	76.7	25	83.3	24
	Metaphor	4	13.3	1	03.0	2.5
	Personification	3	10.0	2	06.7	2.5
	Hyperbole	1	03.0	1	03.0	1
	Pun	0	00.0	0	00.0	0
	Other symbolism	1	03.0	1	03.0	1
	None	3	10.0	1	03.0	2
UK total counts		**35**		**31**		**33**
China	Metonymy	10	33.3	11	36.7	10.5
	Metaphor	4	13.3	5	16.7	4.5
	Personification	6	20.0	5	16.7	5.5
	Hyperbole	0	00.0	2	06.7	1
	Pun	0	00.0	5	16.7	2.5
	Other symbolism	7	23.3	7	23.3	7
	None	4	13.3	3	10.0	3.5
China total counts		**31**		**38**		**34.5**

As shown in Table 5.4, metonymy was used the most in both UK and Chinese education app icons compared to other tropes, suggesting that metonymy is a feature of app icons more generally. However, metonymy featured more in UK app icons than in Chinese app icons. Personification was used more in Chinese app icons than UK app icons, often personifying animals (anthropomorphism). Pun and hyperbole were identified almost exclusively in the Chinese app icons. Pun appeared in two forms: visual and homophonic. As there were few instances of hyperbole, we do not discuss it further. In the corpus we found instances of figurativeness that did not classify as one of the considered figurative tropes. We classified these instances as 'other symbolism'. Due to space constraints, we do not discuss these instances in the results.

5.4.2. Inter-rater reliability

There was moderate agreement (beyond chance) in the identification of tropes between the analysts overall (κ=0.52), for UK app icons (κ=0.5), and for Chinese app icons (κ=0.45) (Table 5.5). From these scores, we can see that the identification of tropes in apps varied a little more between analysts than in the UK sub-corpus. One reason may be that A2 was able to identify figurative tropes A1 could not due to A2 having stronger cultural and linguistic knowledge of Chinese than A1, particularly for apps that relied on text in the app icon to cue meaning. A1 and A2 could be said to be a part of different discourse communities relative to their native cultures that enabled one analyst to construe more granularity than the other analyst.

Table 5.5. Counts of agreement between analysts for the identification of tropes

Agreement	**UK**	**China**
Yes	23	16
Partial	3	8
No	4	6
Total	**30**	**30**

Chinese apps contained more text (*N*=14) than UK apps (*N*=6) that cued meaning. Many Chinese apps with text had a red background color (Figure 5.2) that the analysts interpreted differently. In China, red represents happiness, beauty, vitality, luck, and success (Adams & Osgood, 1973; Jacobs et al., 1991; Xing, 2009). Red can also be metonymic for these Chinese values through domain expansion (<) and reduction (>) processes forming a metonymic chain, starting with red's resemblance to the Chinese flag: "RED > CHINESE FLAG < CHINA > CHINESE VALUES". A2 knew the cultural symbolism of red representing luck in China, while A1 did not. A1 therefore interpreted the red color as having a more concrete

resemblance to the Chinese flag. On the one hand, the positive valence associated with red may be one reason as to why it is used in app icons. One of the app's communicative purposes is to persuade customers to download the app. Therefore, using red to associate positive Chinese values with the app may appeal more to a Chinese discourse community. On the other hand, using red may implicitly claim that the app has been endorsed by the Chinese government or its people, implying that the app is credible and popular. This may provide another way to persuade users to download the app. UK app icons did not use red as a background color at all, which presents the red color choice as a visual feature in the register of Chinese education app icons.

C2	C3	C12	C16	C21
学习强国	**网易有道**词典	一起学	学而思网校	高途课堂
Xuéxí qiángguó	Wǎngyì yǒu dào cídiǎn	Yīqǐ xué	Xué ér sī wǎngxiào	Gāo tú kètáng
Learning to make powerful	*NetEase Youdao dictionary*	*Learn together*	*Xue'er si online school*	*Gaotu classroom*



Figure 5.2. Examples of Chinese education apps with red backgrounds and white text

All five puns were found exclusively in Chinese education app icons and manifested in textual and visual elements, producing homophonic puns (different meanings from the same sounding word) and visual puns (different meanings from a single image) (Yu et al., 2020). A homophonic pun was found in C21 where the text **高途** (gāo tú) meaning 'high way' is homophonic with the Chinese characters **高徒** (gāo tú). In China, **高徒** refers to highly skilled apprentices or outstanding students. This implies that the user can be a skilled apprentice or

outstanding student if they use the app.

Table 5.6. Counts of agreement between analysts for the interpretation of tropes

Agreement	UK	China
Same	17	7
Partial	8	6
Different	5	17
Total	**30**	**30**

In Table 5.6, we can see that there was more agreement in the interpretation of tropes in UK app icons than Chinese app icons, and contrastively more disagreement in the interpretation of Chinese app icons than UK app icons. One reason may be that the differences in design elements and figurative tropes used in UK and Chinese education app icons make it easier or more difficult to interpret. UK app icons contained more metonymy that could be easier to interpret cross-culturally because metonymy is closer to literal meaning (Littlemore, 2015), and in the apps the visual representation of objects was more likely to be iconic of the actual object, or represent the action related to the object. For example, in Figure 5.3, an app for learning to play the piano visually presents five piano keys to stand for the whole piano, and by extension the piano stands for the act of learning to play piano. In comparison, Chinese app icons were more likely to contain a variety of different tropes that are arguably more abstract and less grounded in reality (e.g. metaphor, personification, symbolism, etc.).



Figure 5.3. Schematic app with metonymic chain: Simply Piano (formerly JoyTunes) (U12) for learning to play the piano

5.4.3. Metonymy

In this section we examine how metonymy is used in UK and Chinese education app icons.

5.4.3a. UK education apps

In UK app icons, there were many cases of "PART FOR WHOLE" metonymy. Metonymy is useful as an economical trope in that it can package more information about an app than literal meaning. Metonymy can expand messages based upon even the simplest visual representations such as those in app icons.

One common type of "PART FOR WHOLE" metonymy was "MEMBER OF CATEGORY FOR WHOLE CATEGORY" (Littlemore, 2015, p. 20), which was used in several apps that enabled users to identify a species of plant or bug through the smartphone camera (henceforth 'ID apps', Figure 5.4). ID app icons presented a single plant, flower, or butterfly that acts as a member of a species to stand for the whole species. ID apps can identify a species of plant or bug from capturing only part of the organism with the smartphone camera. This capability is visually represented in the app icon as part of a plant stands for the whole species. To support this construal, these apps used a box camera (U23), or a focal frame to metonymically stand for a camera (U1, U9, U11, U14) that, in turn, stands for the act of capturing a picture to identify the species, as in the "OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION" (Littlemore, 2015, p. 29).

On closer inspection, there are multiple metonymies at play that amalgamate to form an overarching metonymy OBJECT FOR FUNCTION. The objects being the source domain (flowers, plants, and insects) lead to the construal of the target domain that is the function of the app (to identify flowers, plants, and insects). This conceptual pattern frames the

communicative purpose of the app, which is to inform smartphone users that the app can be used to identify things. The more ID apps use similar design elements in the visual mode and metonymies as register features, the more these app designs and conceptual patterns become conventionalized, meaning that the plant or bug could become metonymic for ID apps and serve as a kind of genre convention for these kinds of apps.

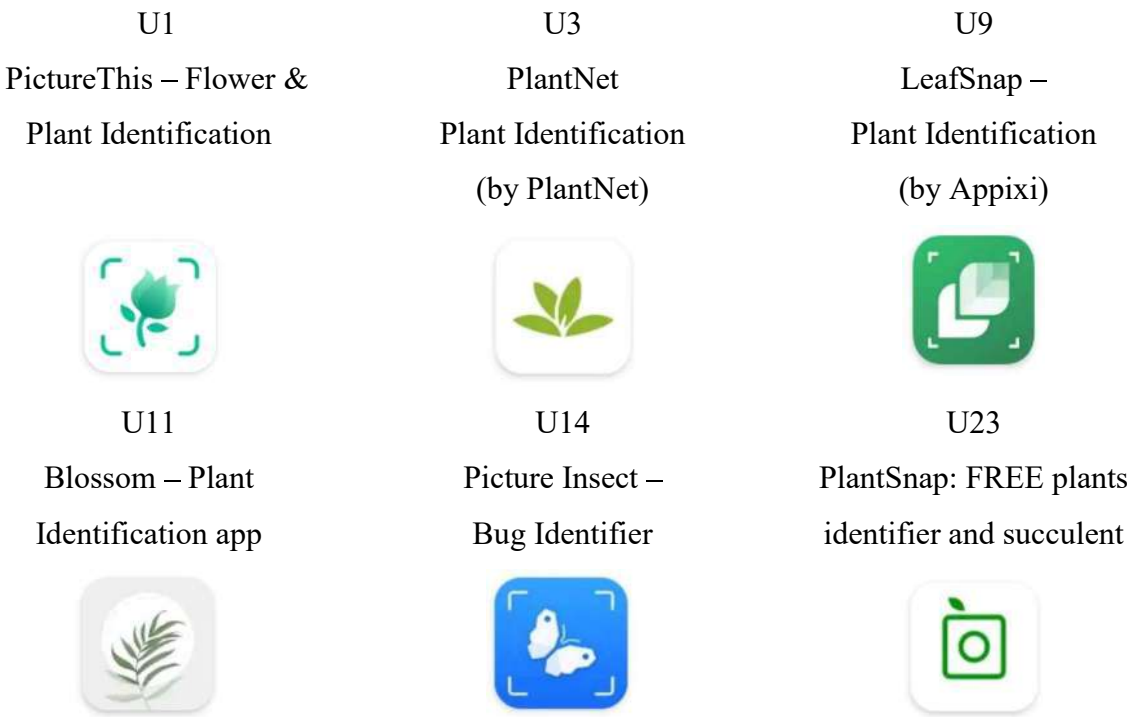


Figure 5.4. Plant and bug identification apps from UK education app sub-corpus

UK education apps commonly used "OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION" metonymy that relates to an educational activity. Figure 5.5 shows app icons with a pair of scissors for hair styling (U4), a sausage and fork for cooking (U26), 'L' learner plate for learning to drive (U15, U17, U22), and a constellation in the night sky for stargazing (U20, U29). Some app icons only showed a part of the object to stand for its whole, such as a guitar pick and guitar headstock for guitar instrument (U7), piano keys for piano instrument

(U12), and brushstroke for paint (U13[22]). The metonymies connect through a shared domain, forming a metonymic chain (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Masegosa, 2011). For example, "GUITAR HEADSTOCK FOR GUITAR" forms a metonymic chain with "GUITAR FOR PLAYING GUITAR" through the shared domain 'guitar'. Other apps form metonymic chains in similar ways: "PIANO KEYS FOR PIANO FOR PLAYING THE PIANO" and "BRUSHSTROKE FOR PAINT FOR PAINTING". The commonality of this kind of metonymic chain, and "OBJECT FOR ACTION", could set up a higher-level metonymy active in the context of app icon design such that the object stands for the function of the app, "OBJECT FOR FUNCTION". This shows how visual metonymy can expand the information the app is able to convey about its function to prospective users.

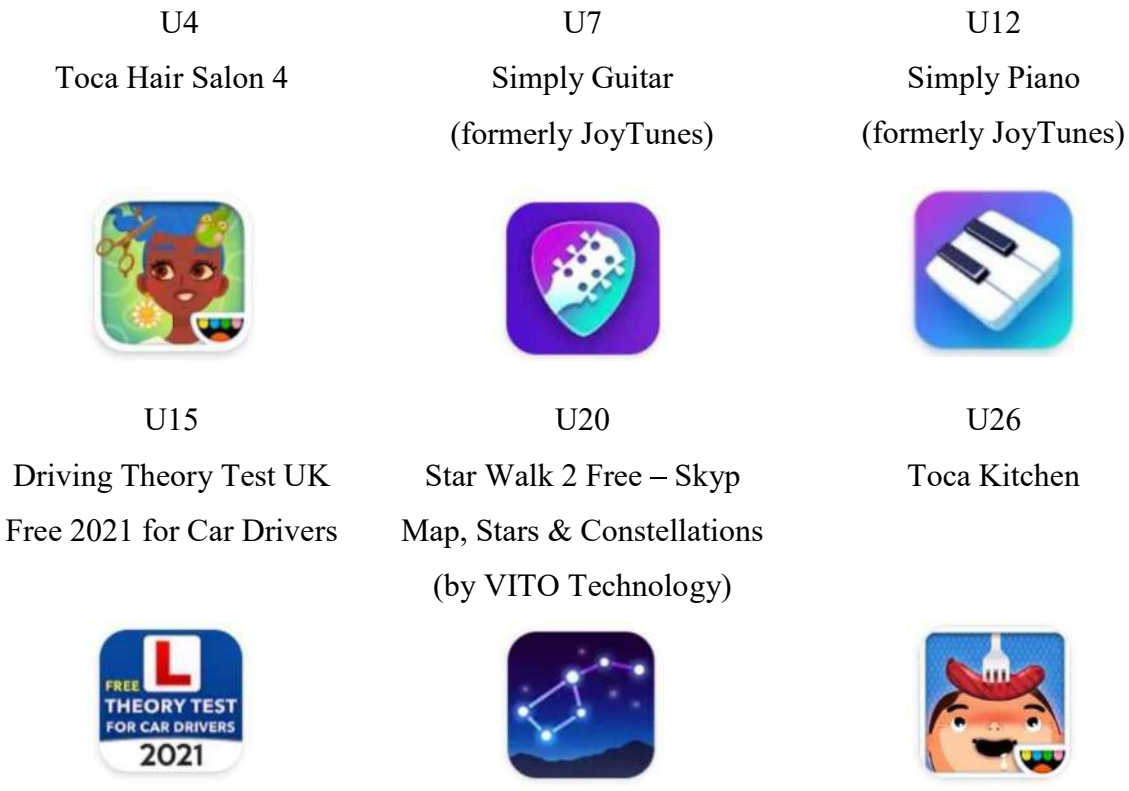


Figure 5.5. Examples of "OBJECT FOR ACTION" metonymy in UK education app icons

[22] Not shown in Figure 5.5 because the app no longer existed by the time of publication.

We found that metonymy in education app icons could be visually economical in other ways too. Some of the app icons mentioned above (e.g. U4, U7, U26) had more than one visual element that cued the source domain. This kind of metonymic pattern is classified by Pérez Sobrino (2017, p. 106) as a "MULTIPLE-SOURCE-IN-TARGET" metonymy, whereby multiple elements of a product are presented as "equally prominent subdomains that simultaneously provide viable access to the most encompassing domain" such that viewers "count on more than one point of access to the advertised product". For example, the visual elements in U4 are a girl, hair being cut by a pair of scissors, and an eyeshadow palette, that all equally provide associative access to the act of 'beautification'. These elements can be perceived as multiple metonymic source domains for OBJECT (GIRL, HAIR, SCISSOR, POWDER BOX) leading to the construal of the target domain FUNCTION (BEAUTIFICATION). Similarly, U7 cues the playing guitar through both a guitar pick and a guitar headstock. U26 shows a sausage, fork, and a drooling child, for cooking.

5.4.3b. Chinese education apps

In the corpus, Chinese education app functions were more specific, focusing on homework assistance and tutoring. Many Chinese app icons used education artefacts to metonymically stand for the app's function (Figure 5.6), such as a notepad for writing (C1, C23, C24), a magnifying glass for research (C4), a mortar board for graduation and academic success (C6), and a book for reading (C11). Chinese education apps also used marking symbols such as the number 100 or 100% (C1, C10), ticks (C5, C23), and a star (C13) to metonymically stand for good grades.

The metonymies identified reflect an underpinning "PROPERTY FOR CATEGORY" relationship "where a salient property of a category can be used to refer to a category as a

whole" (Littlemore, 2015, p. 20). The education artefact can stand as a salient property of the app's educational function, such as a tick standing for marking homework, or a mortarboard as studying in order to successfully graduate. These metonymic mappings occur in the visual mode, as in the image of the mortarboard, and in the verbal mode, as in the numerical text of '100'. The marking symbols imply that if a user has the app, they will get top marks in their homework and will graduate; a persuasive message that plays on the recognized symbols of marking and numeric metaphor in educational discourse. Academic achievement is often measured numerically, and receiving a better mark is presented on an axis of verticality, such as aspiring for a 'higher grade', being 'above average', or achieving '100%' (examples from BNC Consortium, 2018). The relationship between verticality and desirable grades could also activate the conceptual metaphors GOOD IS UP, that associates elevation with positive valence, and MORE IS UP, that associates elevation with increased mass (i.e. higher grades) (Kövecses, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Woodin & Winter, 2018). This example shows how metonymy works together with metaphor to convey the claim that using the app will help the user to attain good grades.

C1	C5	C6	C11	C13
作业帮	快对	华为教育中心	樊登读书	学习通
Zuòyè bāng	Kuài duì	Huá wéi jiàoyù zhōngxīn	Fán dēng dúshū	Xuéxí tōng
Homework help	*Quickly*	*HUAWEI Education Center*	*Fan Deng reading*	*Learn to pass*



Figure 5.6. Examples of metonymic Chinese education app icons

In this section we have shown how metonymy can be used to highlight different aspects of educational activities in apps from the UK and China. The difference in metonymies used in UK and Chinese apps is likely due to there being more of a certain kind of app in each sub-corpus (e.g. UK apps have more ID apps and Chinese apps have more apps for school homework) as the metonymies are representing different source and target domains (albeit related to education, the overarching field). While difference between UK and Chinese apps may suggest a trend in the kinds of educational activities that are popular in the respective cultures, more apps need to be sampled to confirm this hypothesis.

5.4.4. Metaphor

The app icons used key metaphors from educational discourse to frame learning, such as "UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING" (Deignan & Cameron, 2009; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 48) and "ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IS UP" (Cameron, 2003). For the former metaphor, apps used magnifying glasses to portray the visual search for knowledge (e.g. C4 in Figure 5.7). When we learn or understand something, we talk about it as becoming visibly perceptible to us. Representations of light were used to signal the acquisition of knowledge as an "enlightening" experience (e.g. C13, C19 in Figure 5.7).

Education can be conceptualized on a vertical access, with good academic achievement being in a higher position. In C13, the star appears to be moving through space toward an elevated destination in the top-right of the app icon that ties in with the "ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (or progress) IS UP" metaphor. Other research suggests that the top right space in particular is perceived as being better than top left, bottom left, or bottom right on a diagonal axis in visual design (e.g. Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006b; Woodin & Winter, 2018). Using a familiar metaphor may mean that information about an app helping users attain high

academic achievement can be construed quicker, which could serve as an advantage against competing apps that have a similar function in the app store.

C4	C11	C13	C19
小猿搜题	**樊登读书**	**学习通**	**扇贝单词英语版**
Xiǎo yuán sōu tí	Fán dēng dúshū	Xuéxí tōng	Shànbèi dāncí
Little apes search questions	*Fan Deng reading*	*Learn to pass*	yīngyǔ bǎn *Scallop word English version*



Figure 5.7. Metaphor in Chinese education app icons

In the classroom, stars are symbols of success. The phrase "You're a star!" or "superstar" is commonly used in teaching contexts to praise pupils for their academic achievements. "Reach for the stars" is another common phrase in educational contexts, to mean "set your goals high"; in other words, aspire to achieve demanding goals. The meaning of the star in relation to the app raises the question: Is the star in the app icon referring to the academic quality of the app (i.e. it is a mark of the app's competency), or is the star referring to users themselves as a star if they use the app (i.e. they are already good pupils if they use the app to help with their education)? The answer remains unclear. The space constraints and lack of cues in the app icon mean that either interpretation could be equally likely. This raises another question concerning the nature of the tenor relationship between the app (producer) and the app user: Is the relationship transactional (i.e. app fulfils function required by user) or affectional (i.e. app compliments the user for choosing the app)? How the relationship is

understood likely depends on the user's interpretation of the app.

C11 (in Figure 5.7) is a reading app. It was interpreted in two different ways by the analysts: A1 interpreted the reading app as using a metonymy "BOOK FOR READING" ("OBJECT FOR ACTION"), and A2 construed a metaphor "READING IS A MOUNTAIN". The metaphor frames the users' experience of reading as climbing a mountain and ultimately frames the completion of their reading as reaching the top of the mountain. Ormell (1996, p. 67) posits that "climbing a mountain, seeing the gradually improving view on the way up and, finally, seeing the view from the top" can represent the process of learning. There is evidence for a visual pun here, as the upturned book physically resembles a mountainous shape. The play on a visual pun combines the metaphor and metonymy to provide a more informative claim of the app's function and capabilities: the app is a reading app (book) and can help the user improve their reading skills (climbing a mountain).

5.4.5. Personification

Personification was more prevalent in the Chinese apps (N = 6) than in UK apps (N = 3). Most instances of personification involved animals (i.e. anthropomorphism). Animals featured in 8 Chinese and 5 UK apps, and other creatures featured in 2 UK and 2 Chinese apps such as a green monster (U5) and an onion (C27). Some animal apps, however, did not signal personification because the animals were not 'humanized'; they displayed no visual cues for human attributes or behavior. These apps were not deemed to be metonymic nor metaphoric because the meaning was formed by cultural association rather than by activating comparative (metaphor) or related (metonymy) mappings of conceptual or semantic domains.

C7

一起作业

Yīqǐ zuòyè

Work together



C14

小伴龙

Xiǎo bàn long

Little companion dragon



C17

小猿口算

Xiǎo yuán kǒusuàn

Little ape oral arithmetic



U8

MindPal – Brain Training

(by Elektron Labs Inc.)



U5

ClassDojo

(by ClassDojo)



C27

洋葱学园(原洋葱数学)

Yángcōng xué yuán (yuán yángcōng shùxué)

Onion Academy (formerly Onion Math)



Figure 5.8. Selection of Chinese and UK education app icons with animals and creatures

Animals and living characters were represented as waving or smiling (i.e. human behavior), having human facial features and expressions, or wearing human clothing (see Figure 5.8). For example, C7 shows a rabbit wearing a t-shirt whilst winking and waving to the user, C14 shows a dragon with human eyes and smile, and C27 shows an onion with big eyes. Many of the anthropomorphized apps were for children's education. The rounded cartoon style, and friendly facial expressions (smiling, laughing) and gestures (waving) portray the apps as cute and user friendly. These design choices may serve to improve the tenor relationship between the app and the target users: children, and parents who decide what apps their children use. Many products aimed at children used similar design elements such as

soft, round shapes, and friendly cartoons or animals that may result in child products having their own recognizable register. Using familiar design elements may attract children to engage with the app, and encourage parents who want their children to learn safely and have fun to download the app. The actual effect these design choices have on app downloads should be explored in another study.

The use of animals and characters as symbols is embedded in the Chinese culture, such as animals (e.g. rat, ox, tiger, etc.) for the Chinese calendar, and the dragon symbolizing strength. Animals can be construed as symbols of desirable qualities one would acquire when using an education app, as well as suggesting what users can achieve as a result of using the app. C14 uses a personified dragon to signal its symbolic meaning of strength and monarchy, and plays on a idiom in China, 望子成龙 (Wàngzǐchénglóng), which in this context means parents wish their children to be high achievers who are successful in their careers. Therefore, the claim is that children can improve their early childhood education with the help of this app. Other examples of symbolism include a monkey and an owl that represent intelligence and wisdom in both UK and Chinese culture, suggesting that the user can become more intelligent and wiser because of using the app.

Metaphors interacted with personification in both sets of apps. In China, children are often metaphorically compared to plants, flowers, and animals, implying that children (potential app users) grow and bloom as they learn, or that they are powerful (dragon) and clever (monkey). This cultural connection may make education apps desirable to parents, caregivers, and teachers who can download it for their children to use. For example, C17 personifies a monkey as it wears human clothing and waves (displays human behavior). In both UK and in China, a monkey can be seen as a clever animal and is often compared to a clever person, or more specifically a child (the monkey itself appears to be young and so

carries some visual resemblance to a child). These apps draw on the desires of a parental discourse community to develop a stronger tenor relationship between the app and the parent, claiming that the app can help the parent to support their children with their education.

Anthropomorphism is closely related to metaphor. Anthropomorphism has even been described as a type of metaphor (Delbaere et al., 2011; Hart et al., 2013; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) as it presents human agents with human-like characteristics, motivations, intentions, and emotions by using cross-domain mapping from a human domain to another inhuman domain that typically does not have human characteristics (Burgers et al., 2016; Epley et al., 2007). The use of anthropomorphism and metaphor guides users to a more specific interpretation of the app function, in that C17 is not just for education generally but for children's education specifically.

5.5. Discussion

In this paper, we have tested the relatively new concept of visual complexity (schematic to content rich) and figurative complexity (single to multiple, interacting figurative tropes) in education app icons. We have also taken a framework originally designed for examining the variation of figurative language use in written and spoken language and applied it to multimodal communication in education app icons. In doing so, we have posited reasons for variation in the design and figurativeness of education app icons according to cultural, genre, and register features.

We found evidence that education apps icons vary in their visual complexity and figurative complexity, and that these aspects vary cross-culturally. UK education app icons were more schematic, visual, and iconic, and used more metonymy. In their initial exploration of visual complexity, Pérez Sobrino et al. (2021c) suggested that schematic images may offer

more opportunities for interpretation because these images have less content on which to guide the viewer. However, in this study we found that the more schematic icons, such as those in the UK apps, were easier to identify by both analysts than the content-rich icons that featured more in the Chinese apps. We posit a couple of reasons for this. First, as metonymy is considered to be closer to literal meaning (Littlemore, 2015), the interpretation about what the app is and what it does may be more intuitive and result in higher agreement between the analysts. Second, despite the lack of detail in the app icon design, many UK apps presented objects that were iconic of the educational activity (OBJECT FOR ACTION, e.g. piano for learning to play piano), acting as shorthand that provided adequate information to interpret the function of the app.

Chinese app icons were more content rich, more multimodal, and had more metaphor and a broader range of other tropes. These tropes were more abstract and reliant on linguistic, cultural, and individual knowledge, which may be one reason why at times agreement proved difficult between analysts. The Chinese education apps in particular used personification and referred to Chinese cultural values and symbolism that provided a richer interpretation of the app. The difference in visual complexity between UK and Chinese app icons may reflect a different kind of communicative approach, such as a show (UK, schematic/iconic) versus tell (Chinese, content-rich).

Keeping the field ‘education’ the same across the corpus shone a spotlight on the differences between app audiences from different cultures (tenor), and the way different modes cue figurative messages about the app (mode). For example, multiple apps in the Chinese sub-corpus aimed at helping with children’s schoolwork. While the function of the app is for the use of school children, we may perceive a subtle difference in the design of the app icon in that it may be aimed at appealing to both the parent and the child user. These apps

signaled this through the metonymic/metaphoric display of high marks (e.g. 100) and user-friendly anthropomorphized characters associated with intelligence (e.g. monkey). These design choices draw on the desires of a parental discourse community that want the best education for their child, and develop a tenor relationship between the app and the parent by claiming that the app can help the parent to support their child with their education. At the same time, the use of anthropomorphized characters may appeal more to the child user. Thus, the app's use of different design elements and figurative tropes may convey nuanced messages to different discourse communities (e.g. child versus parent) and yet still fulfil its communicative purpose to inform and persuade the user to download it.

We realized that the function of the app could also serve as a field for educational activity, or as a subfield of the overarching field of education. It is likely the case that as more apps with a particular function employ similar design elements, these elements become recognizable as part of its own register, representing a 'category' of app (Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021b). Register features found in education contexts were also found in the education app icons. For example, marking artefacts (star, tick), educational artefacts (book, notepad), and conceptual metaphors associating elevation with good academic achievement. In our study, the functions of UK apps varied more than Chinese apps. A larger corpus analysis may reveal trends of which kinds of education apps are generally more popular in different cultures.

App designers could consider using iconic metonymy to communicate an app's function to a global audience, as we found iconic metonymy to be easier to interpret cross-culturally. Metaphor could be used to appeal to a more culturally specific audience as we found metaphor more likely to reference specific linguistic and cultural knowledge. Personifying animals in app icons may be one way to appeal to a Chinese audience, as it is culturally familiar. Despite the small visual space that confines app icons, there were many cases of

multiple tropes being active in one icon, implying that the communicative power of figurative tropes in a multimodal context should not be underestimated. The balance of figurative complexity and visual complexity should be examined more closely regarding how appealing it is to smartphone users.

Testing how users respond to different app designs and figurative tropes and how they interpret them may reveal how they conceptualize online education, what kinds of educational activities might appeal more (or less) to particular cultural audiences, and ultimately indicate what these audiences would download. These insights may prove useful for app designers and education providers.

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CHAPTER 6. MULTIMODAL METAPHOR AND METONYMY IN SPORTS COMMERCIALS: THE CONTROVERSIAL ROLE OF SPORTS BRANDS IN TACKLING SOCIAL ISSUES

Abstract

Sports brands can raise awareness and inspire positive change to improve sport and public health using figurative tropes (metaphor and metonymy), but how they communicate to their audience is sensitive and requires a deeper understanding of these figurative tropes and the potential damage that may be incurred when they are used insensitively.

I investigate how multimodal metaphor and metonymy can construct meaning in sports commercials through the use of the Filmic Metaphor Identification Procedure (Bort-Mir, 2019). I also explore the ways in which meaning is shaped by the forms metaphor and metonymy take by using a combination of the Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure in Video Advertisements (C-MIPVA, Pan & Tay, 2020) and Phillips and McQuarrie's (2004) visual metaphor typology. I expand the list of filmic components that can guide audiences to interpret film/commercials in a certain way (Bordwell et al., 2016). Methodologically, I argue that the identification of these tropes cannot be separated from their interpretation as FILMIP and C-MIPVA have suggested. I thus develop an Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP) that integrates the identification and interpretation metaphor with a reflexive approach.

To demonstrate IMEP, I analyze 33 sports commercials released between 2015 and 2021

sampled from adforum.com. A total of 27 commercials featured multimodal metaphor as a part of their core message, framing sport in terms of domains such as (super)natural force or substance, conflict, and stage performance, among others. My findings shows that while important social issues are raised by sports brands in a way that could be seen as empowering, some brands use metaphor to frame these issues in a way that perpetuates stereotypes and stigma.

6.1. Introduction

Sport is a social practice that reflects our cultural values and moral codes, but it can also shape them (Elcombe, 2012). In recent years, more top sports brands are advocating positive social change. Many award-winning brands receiving the Grand Prix (top) prize at the Cannes Lions Intentional Festival of Creativity (one of the most prestigious advertising annual awards) have demonstrated their advocacy for bringing about social change in their campaigns. For example, Nike's Air Max Graffiti Stores[23] e-commerce campaign saw Nike funding local graffiti artists to reinstate iconic graffiti characters in São Paulo, Brazil, successfully influencing policy change to keep the graffiti characters as part of the city's heritage. Nike used these graffiti sites as a geolocation for customers to pre-order new Air Max trainers. In this respect, sports brands are aiming to do some good in the world, rather than merely lining their pockets. This 'good' can relate to corporate social responsibility (CSR).

CSR is "a company's commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects on society and maximizing its long-term beneficial impact" (Mohr et al., 2001, p. 47). CSR in sport is often achieved through community outreach, providing unique sports resources to

[23] Source information about all the commercials cited in this chapter are listed in Appendix 1.

raise awareness, running initiatives to ameliorate social issues, and setting up charitable foundations (Babiak, 2010; Sheth & Babiak, 2010; Walker & Kent, 2009). In some cases, like the Nike Graffiti Stores, it can even involve policy change. Consumers expect a certain level of CSR from organizations as a social, ethical obligation (Mohr et al., 2001). However, CSR has also been criticized as a 'greenwash' strategy for corporate behavior and PR (Frankental, 2001). Sheth & Babiak (2010) interviewed sports executives to find that while executives perceived CSR as a means to do good in society, they also used it as a business strategy to differentiate from competitors and gain favorable brand evaluation. CSR has been shown to enhance an organization's public image and reputation (Walker & Kent, 2009), consumer evaluation, and purchase intention (Mohr & Webb, 2005; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Therefore, CSR has a persuasive influence over people's attitudes and behaviors. The visibility of sports in society means top sports brands are influential in both economy and culture, making them powerful activists (Kern, 2000). However, how popular sports brands use and communicate about social issues strikes a very delicate balance between societal benefit and business goals. It is the manner of communication sports brands use that I investigate in this study, specifically with regards to the role of figurative tropes in sports commercials (video advertisements).

Research shows that sports media frequently uses figurative tropes metaphor and metonymy (Grgić & Nikolić, 2013; Matulina & Čoralić, 2008; Nordin, 2008; Pinar Sanz, 2005; Vierkant, 2008). Metaphor as conflict/war is very common in sports discourse (Sabo and Jansen, 1998; Nordin, 2008; Vierkant, 2008). In a newspaper headline for ice hockey, "Vegas Golden Knights beat Florida Panthers in game five for first Stanley Cup", and Vegas Golden Knights are the "last one's standing" after they "gave everything they had", the game is metaphorically framed as a physical fight to the death (BBC Sport, 2023). In the sports

news headline "Tennessee Tramples Kentucky", Tennessee and Kentucky metonymically stand for the sports teams operating within those states (STATES FOR UNIVERSITIES FOR SPORTS TEAMS) and "tramples" activates a metaphorical frame for sport as combat (example from Kövecses, 2017, p. 67). Elcombe (2012, p. 210) suggests that "in many ways, employing the war metaphor leaves sport increasingly prone to harmful attitudes". In fact, studies have shown that sports brands that use a sports-war metaphor in their advertising can appear to sanction violence and portray aggressive behavior as more acceptable to audiences (Bryant, 1989). War metaphors in sport are also said to idealize masculinity (Jansen & Sabo, 1994). We can see here that the way in which metaphors are used can have serious effects on societal values.

TV is one of the main media channels for sports coverage and sports marketing. Sports have become a part of promotional culture, particularly through the inclusion of professional athletes, sports teams, and sports events in sports marketing that act as signifiers of particular values (e.g. Usain Bolt as standing for high performance and breaking records[24]) or political movements within the sports industry (e.g. Colin Kapernick standing for, or rather kneeling for, human rights[25]) (Whitson, 1998). In subsequent marketing, these figures can become metonymies for the values and movements they are associated with in society. Sports media, such as TV, can use empowering strategies that offer opportunities for positive social change (Real, 1998). However, for a long time, sports media and marketing has been a male-centered genre, often underrepresenting and devaluing women, and ethnic minorities (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Sabo et al., 1996[26]; Theberge & Cronk, 1986). In some aspects sports media is pushing forward an improvement to the social agenda. However, it can also harbor outdated ideology

[24] Usain Bolt is a Jamaican sprinter who holds the world record for sprinting 100 metres, 200 metres, and 4 × 100 metres relay.
[25] Colin Kaepernick is an Amercian footballer who knelt in protest of racial injustice in America during the national anthem prior to a match in 2016.
[26] The study addressed black, white, Asian, and Latino Hispanic ethnicities.

that perpetuates stereotypes that are potentially damaging to certain demographic groups and minorities.

If sports brands play an influential role in our societal, cultural, and moral values, sports brands that advocate for positive social change should be encouraged. However, as previous research has cautioned, we still need to be wary of what information brands communicate and how they do so to ensure that their messages are sensitive to the social, cultural, and historical climate, and how they portray marginalized and/or vulnerable target groups. Research insights on this topic may prove useful for sports brands in learning more about the power of metaphor and metonymy and the importance of striking the right balance when using these tropes to tackle social issues in their marketing.

In this study, I investigate how figurative tropes metaphor and metonymy are used by sports brands in their commercials (video advertisements) to position the brand in relation to key social issues in sport, such as accessibility and discrimination, gender fairness and inclusion, racism, and social injustice (Centre for Sport and Human Rights, 2022). The aim of this study is to explore how sports brands use figurative tropes creatively to advocate positive social change, and to evaluate or question whether this is done sensitively or insensitively that may be potentially damaging to target or minority groups. To achieve this aim, I draw on previous metaphor identification procedures developed for analyzing metaphor in commercials. While these procedures focus on the identification of metaphoricity (the potential for metaphor), I combine steps from these procedures, and integrate reflexive practice, to form a new Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP). IMEP is designed to aid the exploration of the creative use of metaphor (and metonymy) in commercials. I consider the *meaning* of the sports brand messaging and how they are communicated through metaphor and metonymy (i.e. through the mapping of domains), as

well as what *form* the message takes (i.e. through the layout, orientation, filmic components, etc.). This exploration will contribute to research on the creative use of figurative communication.

6.2. Multimodal metaphor in marketing commercials

Metaphor connects two unrelated domains that use the source domain to highlight information that maps onto and informs our interpretation of the target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). In marketing, the target is usually the product or a product attribute (Forceville, 1996; Pérez Sobrino, 2016a). Metaphor not only operates in language, such as sports news headlines, but also in various modes such as images (Forceville, 1996), gesture (Cienki & Müller, 2008), and sound and music (Zbikowski, 2009). Multimodal metaphors cue the source and/or target domain in more than one mode (Forceville, 2009, p. 23). For example, in Figure 6.1, Nike visually replaces a pair of lungs with Air Max trainers to signal the metaphor TRAINERS ARE LUNGS. The trainers as a source domain are also cued in the text next to the Nike logo, "AIR MAX".



Figure 6.1. Nike print advertisement for Nike Air Max trainers using metaphor and metonymy. TEXT: "They keep you alive. Nike Air Max." (Burmistrov, 2012)

Metaphor does not always occur in isolation. It is often complemented by other figurative tropes (Guan & Forceville, 2020; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019; Pérez-Sobrino et al., 2021; also see Chapters 3, 4, and 5). Metonymy in particular frequently works with metaphor and provides additional associations that inform the metaphor; a phenomenon known as 'metaphtonymy' (Goossens, 1990; Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Masegosa, 2011). In the Nike example, the metaphor is complemented by a metonymy, in that the lungs (now trainers) stand for our air supply. Accompanied by the caption "They keep you

alive", we can interpret the advertisement message as Nike claiming that the trainers are essential for your (the customer's) life, just like air. The pun of 'air', with the life-giving air, Air Max trainers aids this interpretation, cementing this claim in the customer's mind. Puns give a double reading that is often used to humorous effect, making advertising more appealing and memorable (Abass, 2007; Summerfelt et al., 2010; Van Mulken et al., 2005).

Research on multimodal metaphor in advertising has focused largely on print advertising, as demonstrated in Figure 6.1 above, in which metaphor is cued through verbal (text) and/or visual (image, color) modes (e.g. Burgers et al., 2015; Forceville, 2012; Hidalgo Downing & Kraljevic Mujic, 2013; Hidalgo-Downing & O'Dowd, 2023; Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2020; Littlemore & Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Pérez Sobrino, 2014, 2016a, 2017; Pérez Sobrino & Littlemore, 2017). Metaphor in film and marketing commercials is a relatively new area of research (Bort-Mir, 2020a; Bort-Mir & Bolognesi, 2022; Forceville, 2006, 2007; Forceville & Paling, 2018; Hidalgo-Downing et al., 2016; Pan & Tay, 2020; Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Some research has begun to look into how metaphor in commercials can influence viewers' emotional and attitudinal responses (Houghton et al., 2022; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2021b, 2021a).

The filmic nature of commercials gives sports brands more opportunity to leverage the creative use of tropes across various modes in order to communicate nuanced arguments (within the commercial) that positions them in relation to a broader social context (outside the commercial). Bordwell et al. (2016, p. 59) suggests that "usually, we can't isolate a particularly significant moment and declare it to be *the* meaning of the whole film". Films are so complex and intricate in their composition and longevity that it gives viewers more scope to explore multiple meanings through multiple modes taking various forms. Therefore, filmic metaphor is dynamic because metaphor can be cued across modes and across shots and

scenes.

Forceville (2016, p. 10) suggests that the construal of metaphor works on a continuum from "inescapable" to "possible". *Inescapable* means the viewer needs to construe the metaphor in order to understand the intended message. *Possible* means that there is opportunity for the viewer to construe a metaphor that is not necessarily required to understand the main message of the film but that may provide additional information. Therefore, for some viewers, the construal of a metaphor must be motivated by necessity rather than merely peripheral interest. The blessing and curse of metaphor researchers is that they are so practiced in identifying metaphors that they can identify a plethora of metaphorical meaning that are not necessarily the most salient (see Chapter 2).

To overcome this issue, Pérez Sobrino and I proposed in Chapter 4 that analysts should prioritize metaphors that contribute to the most salient message. Some studies (e.g. Forceville, 2016) refer to this as the 'intended message', based on the assumption that the aim of advertising is to present a product, service, or brand in a positive light. However, as one cannot know the true intended message of an advertisement without consulting the author (of which few, if any, metaphor studies do), I refer to the salient message as an 'essential' construal that reaches a core message. This essential message is rather like Forceville's 'inescapable' metaphor but without the assumption that the analyst's interpretation is the one intended by the advertiser. I regard the salient message as one that relates to information about the product/service (be that good or bad), the brand, or an ideological issue the brand is promoting (e.g. social issues).

A way to improve the replicability of metaphor identification across analysts is to use a tried and tested identification procedure. Relatively recent identification procedures have been

developed to identify metaphor in filmic discourse, namely the Filmic Metaphor Identification Procedure (FILMIP, Bort-Mir, 2019) and the Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure for Video Advertisements (C-MIPVA, Pan & Tay, 2020). The limited empirical research for these procedures thus far shows their application to TV commercials (Bort-Mir, 2019, 2020a; Bort-Mir et al., 2020; Bort-Mir & Bolognesi, 2022; Pan & Tay, 2020).

Film making and film viewing are complex and dynamic processes, more so than static images (e.g. billboards, posters, etc.) because in film, metaphor can manifest not only in a single shot, but across a sequence of shots, and even across the whole film itself (Bordwell et al., 2016; Bort-Mir, 2019). Moreover, in films, "there is a wide range of elements through which the domains of the metaphor can be represented" (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 67). Müller & Kappelhoff (2018, p. 47) state that "metaphorical conceptualizations in audiovisual images cannot be grasped as static entities that can be described according to the formula 'A is B' (target domain is source domain). Rather, they should be understood as networks of interlocking figurative interactions that can extend over the entirety of a film, video, etc. as a dynamic process. They are thus a matter of a compositional whole of cinematic discourse. Furthermore, Cameron (2018, p. 18-19) sees metaphor in film not as a discrete object but as a process of "metaphorizing", known as 'metaphoricity', that involves identifying "potential" metaphor rather than "fully-fledged" metaphor. This allows for more explorative approaches, and is especially productive for individual analysts who wish to conduct preliminary analysis on a new topic, such as this study on metaphor in sports commercials, whilst they acknowledge the potential for analytical subjectivity.

To identify metaphoricity in a multimodal context, Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019, p. 10) explain that one has to identify "creative divergences" that present an incongruous element, or elements, that will "trigger the viewers' attention" and "invite" them to resolve

the incongruity, leading to an interpretation of the message. “If the incongruous elements belong to different domains and the context suggests that they need to be compared, then the image is marked as metaphorical”, a signal for metaphoricity.

Metaphor in advertising often uses conventional metaphors that are familiar and well-known to their target audience to convey information efficiently to mediate the risk of misinterpretation. However, advertising is also an innovative environment that uses metaphor creatively to stand out from competitors. Metaphor can be creative in its meaning as well as its form. According to Bordwell et al. (2016, pp. 51–52), form in film is “the way parts work together to create an overall effect” and “the overall set of relationships between a film’s parts.” Form is sometimes assumed to be “less important than whatever it’s presumed to contain [the meaning]” but form can cue the viewers to frame certain expectations or view the film in a certain way and highlight some aspects over others. When studying metaphor in multimodal and dynamic contexts, one must consider not only its innovative messages but also its innovative presentation of these messages.

FILMIP and C-MIPVA identify metaphor in commercials by different means. FILMIP focuses on the metaphoricity in film (i.e. what metaphors are presented), while C-MIPVA considers the form of metaphor (i.e. how metaphor is presented) in video advertisements. The different foci of each procedure assist my study of the creative use of meaning and form for metaphor and metonymy in sports commercials. I acknowledge that there are other procedures that identify multimodal metaphor that could be applied to TV commercials (e.g. Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Stampoulidis & Bolognesi, 2019). However, these procedures were not designed with film or video advertisements in mind and instead focus on static advertisements or graffiti, and are therefore inappropriate for this study. I follow with an evaluative description of FILMIP (Section 6.3) and C-MIPVA (Section 6.4), and raise some issues

inherent in the identification procedures (Section 6.5). I then argue why and how I combine steps from FILMIP and C-MIPVA to guide my analysis of the creative use of multimodal metaphor in sports commercials (Section 6.6).

6.3. FILMIP

The most recent metaphor identification procedure for film is the Filmic Metaphor Identification Procedure, (FILMIP), developed by Bort-Mir (2019). "FILMIP is a filmic metaphor identification procedure that can be understood as being the dynamic version of VISMIP (Šorm & Steen, 2018)" (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 110) [27]. FILMIP, like VISMIP, identifies incongruities where the context invites a comparison and determines whether this comparison constructs a metaphorical mapping (comparing source and target domains to reveal more information about the target domain). There is yet little empirical research using FILMIP; however, FILMIP was designed based on identifying metaphoricity in TV commercials, which makes it appropriate to use in this study.

The procedure, visualized in Figure 6.2 and summarized in Figure 6.3, involves two phases: (1) content analysis and (2) metaphor identification. Phase 1 aims to assist the researcher in establishing a general understanding of the film several times as "preparatory viewing" (Rossolatos, 2013, p. 9), to break down each component of the film into shots, sequences, and scenes[28], and to verbalize what is perceived and what is the overall meaning. When breaking down the commercial into segments, FILMIP asks analysts to denote the modes that are active, and briefly describe an image in a sentence using the components for

[27] VISMIP stands for the Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure.
[28] A shot is considered the most 'base' unit. Multiple shots constitute a scene, or setting, and multiple scenes constitute a sequence of shots across scenes". It is the "interaction of the 3 structural units from which filmic meaning is built: sequence > scene > shot" (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 128).

agent, action, object, recipient, and setting[29].

Phase 2, similarly to VISMIP, utilizes the criterion of incongruity as a signal for metaphoricity, and tests whether there is a cross-domain comparison and an indirect message being communicated.

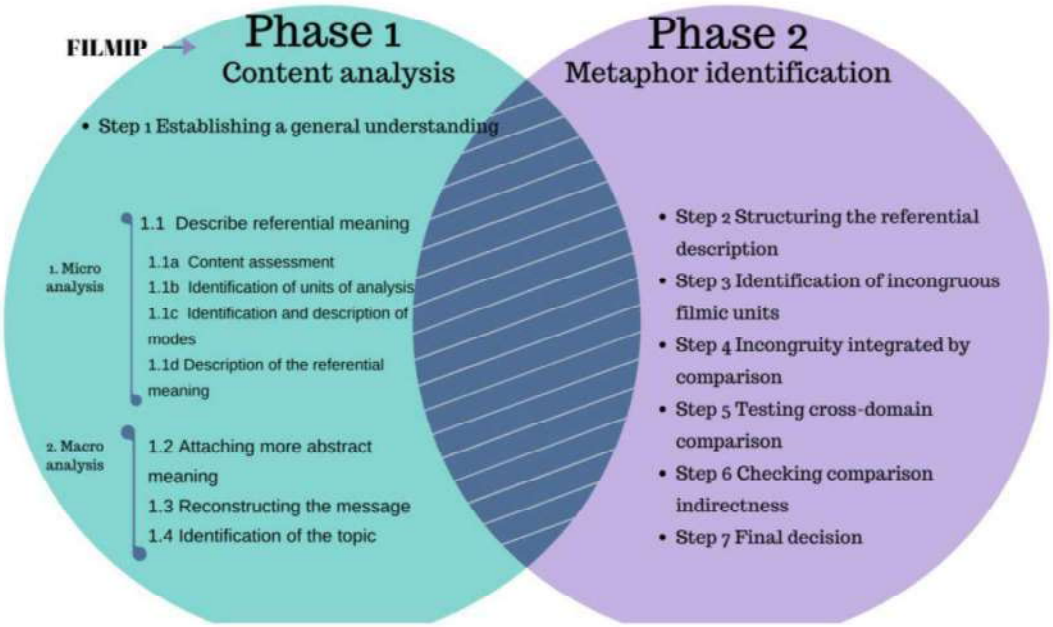


Figure 6.2. Diagram of FILMIP from Bort-Mir (2019)

[29] These components originate from a framework developed by Tam and Leung (2001) to describe visual materials.

A streamlined summary of FILMIP:

1. Watch film clip five times
2. Identify units (shot/scene/sequence) and modes
3. Identify potential, salient meanings derived from step 1
4. State the main message and product/service
5. Identify any incongruity between filmic units
6. Is there metaphoricity? If all three criteria (a, b, and c) are positive, then mark as metaphoricity:
    a) Is there any comparative incongruity between topic/unit/mode/meaning?
    b) Does the comparative incongruity derive from two different conceptual domains?
    c) Does the indirectness of the comparative incongruity provide further meaning?

Figure 6.3. A streamlined summary of FILMIP

Bort-Mir applies FILMIP to perfume commercials, one of which was for Black Opium perfume by Yves Saint Laurent released in 2015 (Sephora Brasil, 2016). The commercial shows a female character[30] desperately searching for something. Bort-Mir points out that the music lyrics describe someone longing for their lover, which leads the audience to believe the female is also searching for their lover. The female finds a male character, but instead of kissing him, she takes the perfume he is holding and sprays it on herself in relief. The Black Opium product name aids the audience's detection of incongruity between the protagonist

[30] For descriptive purposes in this chapter, the gender of characters in the commercials is assumed to be in accordance with stereotypical feminine and masculine features.

searching for her lover and the protagonist searching for the next hit of opium perfume. The incongruity has a metaphoric relationship BLACK OPIUM PERFUME IS A DRUG; the perfume is compared to a drug that is desirable and addictive. Filmic components also complement the construal of the salient message. The use of dark colors associates with the product (color coherence), the close-ups of the protagonist looking distressed increases the drama of the scenario. The protagonist's quick movements signal desperation for the drug/perfume, and the male character, whom the audience initially assumes is the lover, is reframed as the drug dealer of the drug/perfume.

When analyzing multimodal metaphor, it is important to define what is meant by 'mode'. I follow Bort-Mir's classification of five modal categories that views modes as communicative or articulatory acts (Müller et al., 2009) (see Table 6.1). The mode of communication can differ from its sensory input. For instance, spoken language and non-verbal sound are auditory inputs but they are different kinds of communicative acts. Modes benefit from being separated from inputs to provide more detail in the analysis.

Table 6.1. Modes identified through FILMIP (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 125). I have added musical components and reference to filmic components to Bort-Mir's classification of modes in bold

Mode	Input	Features
Written discourse	Visual	• Slogan • Written text • (typography/font; color)
Spoken discourse	Auditory	• Dialogue • Monologue • Voice-off (absent narrator) • Voice-over (present narrator) • Tone of voice • Actors/characters

Music	Auditory	• Genre
		• Type (diegetic = heard by audience/characters; non-diegetic = heard only by audience)
		• **Musical elements**
		  ○ **Dynamics**
		  ○ **Form/arrangement**
		  ○ **Harmony**
		  ○ **Melody**
		  ○ **Rhythm**
		  ○ **Texture**
		  ○ **Timbre**
		  ○ **Tonality**
		• **Lyrics (overlaps with spoken discourse)**

Non-verbal sounds	Auditory	• Artificial (man-made; synthesized) • Natural (e.g. nature, human, animal, silence)
Visuals	Visual	• Images • Icons • Color • Salient objects • Kinematic (camera movements, perspective, lighting, etc.) • Gestures/facial expressions • **See** • **Table** 6.3 **for additional filmic components**

Bort-Mir (2019, p. 76) advises the analyst to have at least a "surface level" understanding of cinematographic tools and techniques ('filmic components'), that filmmakers use to construct an onscreen narrative, in order to identify through which filmic modes may cue metaphoricity. Filmic components and the ways in which they are used can influence one's understanding of a film. Bort-Mir (2019, p. 53) suggests that "even the technological medium by which the filmic material is projected (e.g. feature films on the big screen at a cinema, a video on a mobile phone, etc.) may affect the process of perception and understanding. The filmic genre that we are watching also plays an important role in its [the film's] comprehension, since the filmic narrative is framed within a particular structure and through a particular style."

'Form' is sometimes deemed less important than 'content' (Bordwell et al., 2016, p. 52). However, it is important to break down what filmic components (forms), contribute to the makeup of metaphor(icity) to develop our knowledge of how metaphor works and manifests in filmic commercials, with considerations for genre and viewing medium. Without these insights: (a) there is more room for error across multiple analysts, (b) metaphor identification is more subjective, and (c) metaphor identification may fall short of appreciating the nuances of filmic discourse genres, and potentially miss metaphors that might be salient but lie beyond the awareness of the analyst. Gestalt psychology suggests that the things we perceive can have meaning as independent parts as well as a whole (Koffka, 2013). Indeed, as Cameron (2018) pointed out, film viewing is experienced as a whole, as a combination of elements that interact and intertwine, rather than as isolated and independent parts. Therefore, filmic components should be noted when determining the meaning both within the film's structural units and the whole film.

Bort-Mir bases their analysis of filmic components on Brown's (2016) suggestions.

However, Bordwell et al. (2016) provide a more detailed account of filmic components, some of which are missing from FILMIP including mise-en-scène and cinematography. Rossolatos (2013) provides more components involving kinematic elements and dialogue (see Table 6.2). Filmic components can direct viewers' attention and shape what they perceive and expect, and thus understand, from the film. I have therefore developed a checklist of filmic components in Table 6.3 that combines the filmic components considered by Bort-Mir with those considered by Bordwell et al. (2016) and Rossolatos (2013) as potential cues for metaphoricity. I refer to this checklist to examine the creative use of metaphor through form in sports brand commercials. I enclose the mode and filmic component checklists in Appendix 2.

Table 6.2. Comparing the filmic components considered by FILMIP and other research

Bort-Mir (2019)	**Rossolatos (2013)**	**Bordwell et al (2016)**
Shot	-	✓ ** Including: speed of motion
Lens/Frame	-	✓ ** Including: contrast, exposure, focus,
Camera Movement	-	✓ ** Including: camera position/mobility
Color	✓	✓
Lighting	-	✓ *
	-	Setting*
	-	Costume/makeup*
	Actors/characters Including: kinematic elements (gesture, facial expression, proxemics)	Staging/performance*
-	Slogans/text	-
-	Dialogue	-
-	Tone of voice (“feel”)	-
* Mise-en-scène components **Cinematographic components		

Table 6.3. Complete, combined checklist of filmic components

Filmic component	Elements
Shot (cinematography)	• **Contrast –** comparative light and dark areas of frame • **Exposure –** relative light through lens • **Focus** - length/selective/effects (overlaying) • **Duration** • **Speed of motion –** frame rate (cuts)/freeze-frames
Lens/frame (cinematography)	• **Shape** (aspects ratios) • **Mobile framing –** when the camera position/mobility change during the shot
Camera position/mobility (cinematography)	• **Angle –** straight-on/high/low • **Level –** canted/balanced • **Height –** relative to object of interest (e.g. can have low height with straight-on angle) • **Distance –** extreme long shot/long/medium long/medium/medium close-up/close-up/extreme close-up • **Pan –** camera swivel on vertical axis • **Tilt –** camera swivel on horizontal axis • **Tracking/dolly –** camera position travels • **Crane –** camera moves beyond ground level
Color (mis-en-scene), in relation to all other techniques	

Lighting – highlights/shadows	• **Quality** – intensity (hard/soft) • **Direction** – frontal/sidelight/backlight/underlight/top light • **Source** – key light (primary)/fill light (fill in/soften) – high-key light = soft, low-key light = sharp/defined • **Color**
Setting – where we are (mis-en-scene)	
Costume/makeup (mis-en-scene)	• **Attention** • **Change** • **Stereotypical**/symbolic role
Staging/Performance (mis-en-scene)	• **Kinematic elements** (gestures, facial/bodily expressions) • **Dialogue** (spoken/sung)
Text/slogans (written	

6.4. C-MIPVA

Pan and Tay (2020) developed the Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure for Video Advertisements (C-MIPVA) that, like FILMIP, is based on MIP(VU) (Pragglejaz Group, 2007; Steen et al., 2010) and VISMIP (Šorm & Steen, 2018). C-MIPVA is summarized in Figure 6.4.

Summary of C-MIPVA (Pan & Tay, 2020, p. 8-9):

- Watch commercial for context and identify product
- Segment the commercial with reference to the five filmic techniques (one segment may have more than one filmic technique)
    1. Transformation of images
    2. Depicting non-existing gestalt
    3. Replacement of objects/scenes
    4. Juxtapositions
    5. Simultaneous cueing of different modes, without visual incongruity
    6. (Conditional) If no filmic technique identified, does the object/scene shown in one mode but name it as another object/scene in a different mode?
        i. If 'yes', proceed to next step
        ii. If 'no', mark as non-metaphorical
- Within each segment, determine whether there are different concepts connected by the filmic techniques and/or by the interactions of different modes
    1. If 'yes', identify the concepts and proceed to step 4
    2. If 'no', mark segment as non-metaphorical
- For each pair of concepts, is there a transfer of meaning?
    1. If 'yes', proceed to step 5
    2. If 'no', mark segment as non-metaphorical
- Does the transfer help construe an alternative meaning?

Figure 6.4. Summary of C-MIPVA (Pan & Tay, 2020, p. 8-9)

C-MIPVA accounts for more creative forms of metaphor in commercials. This is done by examining metaphor's depiction through filmic techniques. Pan and Tay (2020) mean something different by 'filmic techniques' in their procedure to FILMIP's 'filmic components'. Pan and Tay base their definition on Bobrova's (2015) classification of metaphor in visuals, which relates to the form of metaphorical relationships between modes:

- *Transformation of images* – "converting one feature or the entire entity into another" (Bobrova, 2015, p. 123)
- *Depicting non-existing gestalt* – combination of entities forming one single hybrid entity (Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011)
- *Replacement* – one entity has been replaced by another entity (Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011)
- *Juxtaposition* – juxtaposed horizontal or vertical alignment of shots or sequence (Bobrova, 2015)
- *Simultaneous cueing of different modes* – two entities/concepts signaled in different modes (Forceville, 2009)

Interestingly, with the addition of *transformation*, these descriptions of filmic techniques converge with similar categories for metaphor form by Philips and McQuarrie (2004): *juxtaposition* (side-by-side comparison), *fusion* (combining into a single gestalt), and *replacement* (one modally present domain and another absent domain). As discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.4, these categories for visual metaphor also converge with Forceville's (1996, 2008) *simile*, *hybrid*, and *contextual* metaphor. Again, although these visual structures for metaphor are referred to by different names by different researchers, they converge on common patterns for metaphor form that can be applied not only to print advertising but also to commercials.

Pan and Tay demonstrate their procedure using a selection of commercials from a range of product categories. For example, a commercial for Express Mail Service by China Post shows an air hostess buckling in an EMS package. The package replaces a human passenger, such that the incongruity invites a metaphorical mapping EMS PACKAGE IS HUMAN PASSENGER. The context of the airline safety procedures enables us to construe that the care air hostesses provide for their passengers is comparative to the care the EMS company provide for their packages. The creative use of metaphor here is delivered by the manipulation of form in that the package visually replaces the passenger. An example of *juxtaposition* was found to occur across multiple repeated shots, first of a facial cleansing bottle (the target product) and then of a mechanical pencil (the source). Flicking between shots of these two objects signals a comparison between them, such that the facial cleanser is construed as being as easy to use as a mechanical pencil: quick clicks to produce the graphite to draw (or cleanser to clean), and erasing imperfections on the page (or on the skin).

One main criticism I have for C-MIPVA is the priority given to the visual mode. Four of the five categories for filmic techniques are dedicated to the visual mode, whilst all other modes cueing creative metaphor are lumped together in one category: 'simultaneous cueing of different modes'. These 'other modes' include written language, spoken language, nonverbal sounds, and music (taken from Forceville, 2008, p. 183). Having more visual categories may reflect humans' visual dominance (over other senses) in their perception of the world (Stokes & Biggs, 2014), and with the act of viewing a commercial being experienced on the TV or device with a visual display. There is also less research in metaphor studies on how the form of modes can cue metaphor in multimodal commercials, compared to research on the use of visuals, on which to base generalizable categories.

Pan and Tay use the filmic technique categories to segment the commercial. Their (2020,

p. 12) criterion for marking the 'simultaneous cueing of different modes (not visual)' category is "the timespan of the whole video" because "visuals exploit more than one mode." This being the case, then all (or almost all) commercials would be marked with this criterion, which tells us little, if anything, about how creative metaphor is cued by different modes in specific parts of the commercial. Commercials are multimodal in nature. As with the previous Black Opium example, the storytelling was guided by the visuals in the commercial and other modes such as the music, lyrics, and motions the character made.

C-MIPVA's criteria for categorizing creative metaphor limit the scope of the procedure to identifying visual incongruity that has a metaphorical relationship. Paying almost exclusive attention to the visual mode without allowing much interactivity between modes is a limitation of the procedure. It highlights that more work needs to be done to expand 'form' typologies across different modes to adequately understand the creative use of metaphor.

It raises several questions. Would it be a multimodal juxtaposition between music and visuals if different musical motifs accompanying visuals of different characters later combined when the characters visually met onscreen in a commercial? One could argue that the music is compared to the persona of the characters as it features side-by-side as the characters visually play out onscreen. Or could it be considered a kind of fusion if two different written taglines combine to create an altogether new product name? Or are there other kinds of form structures that are more appropriate for modes other than visual? It is beyond the scope of this study to define more refined categories for form across modes other than visual. However, it offers an opportunity for future research. For now, in my study, I use C-MIPVA's visual structures to base my analysis of sports commercials, whilst considering how they may apply to other modes in the commercials.

6.5. Arguing for an integrated, explorative approach

In this section, I raise three critical issues with metaphor identification procedures such as FILMIP and C-MIPVA. The first relates to the distinction procedures make between the identification and interpretation of figurative tropes. The second relates to the lack of reporting the refinements made to a procedure when applying it to a specific dataset. The third relates to the limitation of metaphor identification procedures being solely for metaphor that consequently miss out on the interconnectedness of metaphor with other figurative tropes that provides interesting, and sometimes crucial, mappings that inform the salient message.

Both FILMIP and C-MIPVA provide a systematic method for identifying metaphor in commercials. The first step of FILMIP and C-MIPVA, like other metaphor identification procedures (e.g. Bort-Mir, 2020b; Pan & Tay, 2020; Pragglejaz Group, 2007; Steen et al., 2010), is to observe the material to gain a general understanding of its content and context, although for FILMIP and C-MIPVA. Next, FILMIP and C-MIPVA segment the commercial. FILMIP segments the commercial into sequences, scenes, and shots. C-MIPVA segments the commercial into visual structures and the simultaneous cueing of different modes without visuals (henceforth referred to as 'form structures'). They then move on to identify instances of incongruity (i.e. unusual given the context). The incongruity is classified as metaphoricity if it invites a comparison or transfer of meaning between entities or domains that provides an indirect or alternative meaning. The choices of filmic components can be incongruous with other components. For example, the music could be incongruous with the visual depiction of an event, or there could be incongruity in the camera movements between shots (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 148).

However, there are several issues with the two procedures. Firstly, FILMIP and C-

MIPVA *separate* the identification of metaphor and the interpretation of metaphor. After watching the commercials, these procedures instruct the analyst to immediately move on to segmenting the commercial. The initial impressions of the commercial are not recorded. I argue that interpretation is *integral* to the identification of metaphor. As humans, we are hardwired to make immediate meaning from our environment, often without objective, or even conscious, awareness of what constructs this meaning. Viewers (and analysts) naturally seek to make meaning, to make *sense*, of a commercial before consciously breaking it down into its constituent parts. So why ask analysts to objectively segment a commercial before interpreting it? Identification procedures attempting to objectify analysis are therefore unrealistic. Even metaphor scholars, who have trained to identify metaphors in various contexts, have an automatic initial impression of what a commercial (or text) means. This initial impression needs to be recorded. The process of interpreting the commercial occurs even before metaphorical domains are noted down. Indeed, deciding what meaning is transferred between two domains involves a kind of interpretation. So, why separate identification with interpretation of metaphor when they are so clearly intertwined?

Secondly, studies using identification procedures often omit reporting refinements they make to how the procedure is applied to specific datasets. Instead, I argue for a reflexive approach to the analysis. Reflexivity is a process by which researchers can critically reflect on how their "social background, assumptions, positioning, and behavior impact on the research process" (Gough, 2003, p. iv). For example, in Chapter 4, Pérez Sobrino and I included an annotation manual template reflecting on the evolution of our identification procedure over multiple rounds of annotation. This approach allows for more transparent research. I discuss the refinements I make to the analytical procedure I use in this chapter in Section 6.6.3.

Thirdly, metaphor identification procedures are confined in their scope, being limited to

identifying metaphoricity without acknowledging interactions with other figurative tropes. Most metaphor identification procedures focus on establishing the metaphor (cf. Pérez Sobrino, 2017; Pérez Sobrino et al., 2019). But sometimes how we get to the meaning of the metaphor, that is, how we are guided to construe the source and target domains, can be facilitated by metaphor's interaction with other figurative tropes. For instance, metaphor frequently works with metonymy, personification, and pun that help give metaphor its meaning (see Chapters 3, 4, and 5). I argue for developing a procedure that allows the analyst the space to *consider* whether other tropes interact with metaphor to reach the salient message in a commercial. As suggested in Chapter 1, one of the ways metaphor can be used creatively is through its interaction with other tropes. Therefore, a more open-minded approach to metaphor identification would provide us with a deeper understanding of how metaphor conveys meaning, and how metaphor is used creatively.

In sum, I argue that the identification and interpretation of metaphor (and indeed other tropes) are interconnected and cannot be separated. I therefore propose an integrated, explorative approach to the identification and interpretation of metaphor. I create a new procedure that integrates steps from FILMIP and C-MIPVA with a reflexive approach, which I refer to as the Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP). The approach acknowledges the initial impressions of the analyst, records the refinements made to the procedure during analysis, and allows space for the analyst to consider whether other figurative tropes play a role with metaphor in the salient message. With this approach, I advocate using an integrated procedure as an explorative tool. Procedures that solely identify replicable metaphors may inadvertently omit nuanced, creative instances of metaphor that are potentially more subject to an individual or minority group, but that are of equal importance to the study of metaphor and metaphoric creativity. I demonstrate this new procedure with a

case study exploring the creative use of metaphor in sports commercials in Section 6.6.2.

6.6. Method

6.6.1. Constructing the corpus

I selected 33 sports commercials by four award-winning sports brands Nike (*N*=15), Adidas (*N*=11), Gymshark (*N*=4), and Reebok (*N*=3) released between 2015 and 2021. The chosen sports brands had won awards at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. Choosing brands that had been awarded for creative campaigns increased the likelihood of creative uses of metaphor and metonymy occurring in the commercials. I selected award-winning commercials from adforum.com (2021) and expanded my search to YouTube (2021) for other campaigns from these brands during the time period. See Appendix 1. for details of the commercials.

6.6.2. Integrated metaphor exploration procedure (IMEP)

IMEP combines steps from FILMIP and C-MIPVA with additional filmic components and integrates reflexive practice. The procedure is designed to be used as an explorative tool to uncover the creative uses of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in commercials. Below I illustrate IMEP with an example of Reebok's commercial *Storm the court* (Figure 6.6). See Appendix 2 for the checklists for modes (A), filmic components (B), and form structures (C).

IMEP contrasts to previous metaphor identification procedures in that it is used as a guide that facilitates the investigation of figurative meaning rather than linear instructions that must be followed in order. Analysis (especially analysis that looks for the creative use of metaphor in a multimodal and dynamic environment such as commercials) may mean that analysts

naturally jump around the steps to fill in what they find. For instance, an analyst may have an initial impression of the commercial but simultaneously be struck by the use of lighting in a particular scene, or a strange narrative arc for the characters, or a seemingly odd choice of music or sound effect. At this point, I would encourage analysts to note down anything that stands out, even if it does not follow the seemingly linear structure of IMEP with its numbered steps. This also supports the reflexive approach, in that as the analyst progresses through the analytical process for each commercial, they may reflect on how they construct their interpretation and identify instances of figurative meaning by considering the mappings and filmic components that built their construal of the salient message.

As a caveat, I cannot claim that IMEP produces replicable results as I do not test for this. What I demonstrate is how IMEP addresses my research aims to explore the creative use of metaphor and metonymy in sports commercials, and how I use these findings to consider how creative uses of these tropes position the sports brands in relation to social issues in sport.

Step 1. Watch the commercial

This first step seeks to gain a general understanding of what the commercial is communicating by watching the entire commercial twice through. The first time, the analyst is to watch passively, as a consumer would. The reader is encouraged to watch the commercial alongside this explanation by scanning the QR code in Figure 6.5. Figure 6.6 provides a summary of stills that illustrate the main events in the commercial.

SCAN ME

Figure 6.5. Scan to watch Reebok's *Storm the Court*

Figure 6.6. Summary of stills that illustrate the main events in the Reebok commercial Storm the court. Captions are provided for accessibility reasons and are not an explicit part of IMEP



Basketball players playing basketball game



Girl appears on the court and stops gameplay



Rocks levitate around the trainers



Girl begins dancing whilst staring at the basketball players



Basketball players begin dancing one by one, and the court audience follow suit



Girl kicks the basketball and stamps her trainers on the ground, whilst the caption appears “sport the unexpected” (followed by a black screen with the Reebok logo)

Step 2. Initial impression

This second step asks analysts to note their initial impression of the commercial.

FILMIP asks the analyst to identify the topic of the commercial that is typically the product or service being advertised. However, the product is not always the focus of commercials. As I will show in my sports commercial analysis, sometimes the topic is the brand, or a social issue or ideology that the brand raises awareness of in the commercial or claims to support. Indeed, more brands, especially well established and popular brands, are beginning to speak out about social issues as a kind of CSR (see Section 6.1). Brands are becoming more than their product and integrating what they stand for into societal issues and values. I have therefore expanded the topic categories to address these additional elements.

In IMEP, analysts should note their initial impression of the commercial by answering the following questions, ideally in no more than one sentence for each.

(a) What happens in the commercial? This should consist of a brief description of what is observed in the commercial

(b) What is the topic of the commercial? Note whether the commercial is primarily referring to the product, brand, or an ideology. For the most part, this will be to sell a product or promote the brand, but it could raise awareness of a social issue and/or position the brand in relation to a particular ideology

(c) What is being said about the topic? This is where the salient message is realized

In *Storm the court*, the salient message is realized through the answers to these questions thus:

(a) Girl hypnotizes basketball players and audience to win the game

(b) Product – new model of Reebok trainers

(c) Reebok trainers can grant the wearer power to win the game in a way that competitors cannot predict

The analyst can watch the commercial again, or multiple times, to help formulate the salient message, and to make any changes to their initial impression. The analyst should record any alterations they make. This approach exercises reflexive practice, enabling analysts to add to or remove details from their construal of the salient message. The salient message is strongly connected to the context as well as the content, mode, filmic components, and form of the commercials. In a first watch, these elements may not be consciously realized. If they are and they present some form of incongruity (see Step 3), then the analyst is welcome to make a note of elements that stand out to them. Once we have established the initial impression of the salient message, it is in these later steps that we break down whether there is any incongruity (Step 3), and whether it creates a meaningful figurative relationship (Step 4).

Step 3. Incongruity

Whilst viewing the commercial, the analyst may notice instances of incongruity. Incongruity occurs when something is unusual given the context. This can mean it is unexpected or completely new, stands out or is perceived as being different from the norm, and/or invites a comparison between concepts or entities (including filmic components, segments, or form structures). Once incongruity is noticed, the analyst can set about defining the nature of this incongruity.

FILMIP distinguishes three kinds of incongruity: property incongruity, topic incongruity, and modal incongruity (Bort-Mir, 2019, p. 185). Property incongruity occurs when properties that are presented "are incongruous with the properties that are typically true of that component", which can refer to physical, behavioral, or emotional attributes of an action, object, or character. Topic incongruity is when there is "any incongruity related to the topic", which in this case is the product, brand, or ideology. Modal incongruity is when there is "incongruity within each of the identified modes". The modal incongruity can combine with C-MIPVA's segmentation categories that label the different forms figurative tropes may take, including juxtaposition, fusion, replacement, and transformation. Modal incongruity may also involve incongruity between filmic components.

As analysts become practiced with IMEP, they may be able to focus on specific kinds of incongruity occurring in relation to the meaning or form of the commercial. However, it is recommended to use the checklists for modes (A), filmic components (B), and form structures (C) as a guide. These will help analysts identify where incongruity may lie. It is important to be open minded to the possibility that incongruity is created through not only one aspect, but several working together.

In *Storm the court*, the girl appears to have supernatural powers, sourced through her Reebok trainers. Trainers sourcing power is incongruous with its properties of being an item of inanimate footwear. This can be said to be both topic-incongruity and property-incongruity.

Step 4. Figurative relationship(s)

In the example, we can see that the girl is portrayed as having supernatural powers sourced through the Reebok trainers. At this point the analyst should pick out potential domains and decide whether these domains have a figurative relationship. As with FILMIP and C-MIPVA, the incongruity is classified as metaphoricity if it invites a comparison or transfer of meaning between domains (concepts, entities) that provides an indirect or alternative meaning.

To identify the cross-domain comparison, FILMIP uses WordNet, software that provides a list of layers of meaning of a word (Fellbaum & Tengi, 2023). FILMIP compares the verbalization of the domains with the base meaning to identify whether the use of the domain in the commercial is different to its base meaning. If so, it is marked as metaphoricity. As the verbalization of metaphor is never an entirely neutral activity (Forceville, 2009), I decided not to use the WordNet tool in IMEP. Using WordNet, a tool for written language, for visual or auditory modes, and conceptual mappings, confines these visual/auditory modes and concepts to the written mode.

In the example, the incongruity stated in Step 3 signals a metaphor TRAINERS ARE SOURCE OF SUPERNATURAL POWER. Considering the author of this commercial wishes to sell trainers, their underlying message may be that if you, the customer, wear these trainers, you can become supernatural. Here there may be a metonymic link between trainers and the owner of the trainers (the customer) that transfers the supernatural, empowering ability of ‘storming the court’ onto the customer. By considering the communicative act the commercial

projects to the viewer, the salient message might in fact be that 'Reebok (trainers) can empower you to play sport in a different way'. This would also tie in better with the tagline shown on the penultimate shot of the commercial, 'Sport the unexpected'. This process demonstrates the role that figurative tropes other than metaphor can play in the construal of metaphor. The thought process also demonstrates the reflexive approach of revisiting and reviewing the initial analysis as part of IMEP.

Step 5. Form of the figurative relationship(s)

Once we have realized the salient message and the presence of a figurative meaning in the commercial, the analyst needs to consider the form in which the figurative meaning takes. This will aid the exploration of the creative use of figurative communication in commercials.

As discussed in Section 6.2, there may be instances when a comparison may not easily fit into an A (target) is B (source) formula as one domain compared to another, but may involve a comparison between scenarios, experiences, or genres. For instance, *Storm the court* uses filmic components typical of the horror movie (e.g. low lighting with shadows, dog howls, music involving chanting, short frames that create a jumpy feel, etc.), and narrative components (e.g. featuring a monster or supernatural event – the girl possessing the players and audience members to do her bidding). It is worth noting here that multiple modes are also being used, such as visual lighting (low light, shadows), and auditory music and sound effects (chanting, dog howls).

By borrowing horror filmic components, the commercial draws on associations with the horror genre and maps these features onto the sports commercial. This could be argued as cueing another metaphor SPORTS COMMERCIAL IS HORROR GENRE. The girl stares creepily into the basketball players' eyes, hypnotizing them to dance along with her. The

dancing stops the game in its tracks, and at the end we see the girl kicking the basketball to continue the game 'her way'. While this analysis produces another metaphor, this metaphor ties in with the construal that the girl is a supernatural being, possessing power through her trainers that enables her to play the game differently on the court. Here we can see how metaphors cued by different means can corroborate into an overarching metaphorical narrative that conveys the salient message of the commercial.

We have spoken about how the modes and filmic components contribute to the construal of the salient metaphorical message in this commercial[31]. We can also consider whether the metaphor GIRL (wearing trainers) IS SUPERNATURAL BEING is cued through any form structures, such as those proposed in C-MIPVA. Throughout the whole commercial, the girl has her supernatural powers, so there appears to be no cue for transformation here. However, one might argue that the girl is fused with another entity to form an impossible gestalt; the girl combines with a supernatural being. While this form structure may not tell us anything new about the metaphor, it adds to the story of how the metaphor can be used creatively through both its meaning and form.

Breaking down the commercial into segments of shots, scenes, and sequences as FILMIP does, or (mostly) visual structures as C-MIPVA does, may be useful for analysts that wish to explore metaphor on a higher level of granularity. That is, finding multiple instances of metaphor occurring within the commercial. Conversely, if the aim of the analyst is to gain an impression of the overarching metaphors used in the commercial, as is my aim in this study, then breaking down the commercial into segments may not be necessary. Having said this, it could be useful to referent a description of a particular moment in the commercial where the

[31] The 'salient metaphor' here operates with respect to the salient message of the commercial, according to the analyst. I acknowledge the possibility that another analyst may analyze the commercial differently. Yet, the point of IMEP is for it to be used as an exploratory tool that brings forth creative metaphorical mappings and forms.

metaphor occurs. Alternatively (and perhaps this is an easier option), analysts could use timestamps to refer to specific moments when a metaphor is cued, or to refer to a particular shot where certain filmic components are used that help cue the metaphor. This choice should be guided by the research aims of the study, and is a choice IMEP leaves to the analyst.

As a reminder, the analyst may watch the commercial again at any step in IMEP and make any changes to their construal of the salient message, the incongruity, the mapping of metaphor or other tropes, or the filmic components or segments that cued the construal. These alterations may include adding elements that analysts have previously missed in viewing the commercial, but that they consider to be essential to cueing the salient message. All changes made to the analysis should be recorded to be transparent and demonstrate sound reflexive practice.

Summary of the Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP)

1. Watch twice – once passively, once with intent to analyze
2. Initial impression
    a) What happens in the commercial? Brief description
    b) What is the topic of the commercial? Product, brand, or ideology
    c) What is being said about the topic? Salient message
3. Is there incongruity?
    a) Property
    b) Topic
    c) Mode (A), filmic components (B), form structures (C)
4. Does the incongruity cue a figurative relationship?
    a) Cross-domain comparison for metaphor
    b) Are there other figurative relationships that help cue the metaphor (e.g. metonymy)?
5. What form does the figurative relationship take?
    a) Mode (A)
    b) Filmic components (B)
    c) Form structures (C)

Figure 6.7. Summary of the Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP)

Once metaphor (and other figurative tropes) has been found through IMEP (see Figure 6.7), further research aims of the study can be addressed. We can consider the broader context of the commercial, examine how figurative tropes are used creatively (through their meaning and form) to communicate about social issues through sports commercials, and evaluate

whether this is done sensitively.

6.6.3. Refining the procedure

Here I report the challenges I faced when using IMEP, and comment on how making refinements enabled me to better explore my research question: *How are metaphor and metonymy used creatively in sports commercials to position sports brands in relation to social issues?*

6.6.3a. Deciding the salient message and the salient metaphor

One of the main challenges was identifying the salient message of a commercial. As the commercials were selected based on their association with the four sports brands, their duration varied. Some durations were extensive, compared to previous studies of commercials that limit each example to approximately 01:00 minute long (e.g. Bort-Mir, 2019; Pan & Tay, 2020). Many commercials in my dataset were rich in figurative communication, using multiple metaphors and metonymies among other figurative tropes that were equally relevant to the commercial's overall message. For example, the Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner* commercial was 03:08 minutes long, during which time there were multiple sequences with different citizens of London explaining the challenges they face to attend training and be successful in their chosen sport through novel metaphorical and metonymic mappings. Deciding which mapping was the most salient therefore proved challenging.

To illustrate this challenge, I provide a QR code (Figure 6.8) for the reader to watch the commercial, and summarize several sequences within *Nothing beats a Londoner*.



Figure 6.8. Scan to watch Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*



Figure 6.9. Still from sequence 1 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, 0.19 of 3.08 minutes



Figure 6.10. Still from sequence 2 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, 0.31 of 3.08



Figure 6.11. Still from sequence 3 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, 0.37 of 3.08 minutes



Figure 6.12. Still from sequence 4 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, 0.55 of 3.08 minutes



Figure 6.13. Still from sequence 6 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, 1.15 of 3.08 minutes

Sequence 1 (Figure 6.9) featured a young boy running two miles across London to get to training. The boy is running so fast, he transforms into a being like the Flash[32]. His speed is cued by high speed of motion (frame rate) and long exposure of city lights that he passes. Once he gets to the football pitch he materializes a football, still running so fast that he blows

[32] The Flash is a fictional DC superhero that can run at super speed.

away the clothes of one opposition member while scoring. Sequence 2 (Figure 6.10) shows another young boy, again walking miles to get to training, carrying a massive bag of kit, which is later revealed to contain a fully grown adult. This suggests that the boy is abnormally strong for his age. Sequence 3 (Figure 6.11) portrays a woman running through the city at night, being chased and grabbed by skeleton ghost riders[33]. This scene metaphorically compares the experience of running alone at night in a city to the perils of being hunted by ghost riders[34]. The scene also creates a horror movie link by using typical filmic components of that genre, such as dark lighting, a quick close-up shot of a skull that growls at the runner, and a skeletal hand snatching at the runner's heels coinciding with a sudden musical strike. These typical horror movie components could be said to make a metonymic link to the genre itself. Horror brings emotive associations of danger, and feeling scared and vulnerable, that can be metaphorically mapped onto the character's experience of running. Sequence 4 (Figure 6.12) shows a young girl fighting with her family as if she were knocking down targets in a boxing ring. The scene metaphorically compares domestic abuse to a boxing match by replacing a mother and father figure with targets that are punched down by the girl in self-defense. Sequence 6 (Figure 6.13) sees a young boy being struck by lightning sent from a football god in the sky, Gareth Southgate[35], transforming the boy into a player for the England football team.

From these five examples alone, which make up only half of the commercial's duration, we can see the use of various metaphorical mappings cued by various filmic components and form structures to portray the challengers Londoners face to get into professional sport. Aside

[33] Ghost riders are mythical beings that are flaming leather-clad skeletons possessed by the devil.
[34] A study by Brockschmidt and Wadey (2022) found that of 121 runners living in London, 84% of women experienced some form of street harassment, compared to 50% of men. Another survey conducted by Women's Health and Runner's World (2021) found that of 2,000 participants, 60% of women had experienced harassment and endangerment whilst running.
[35] Gareth Southgate is a professional football manager of the England men's national team.

from Sequence 8, the other sequences mentioned can be subsumed by an overarching metaphorical mapping SPORTSPERSON IS SUPERNATURAL as many of the characters possess, or gain, supernatural powers that enable them to excel in their chosen sport, despite the challenges they face in accessing sports training.

There were other sequences when considering the whole commercial that did not (quite) fit into the supernatural metaphor. Sequence 3 side-stepped the supernatural metaphorical mapping; instead of portraying the female runner as having supernatural powers, it drew on associations with supernatural villains in the horror movie genre to construct a metaphorical mapping. It may be that this metaphor is better verbalized as SPORT IS FILM GENRE. Using metaphor to draw on intertextual links between different genres was also found to occur in other commercials in the corpus. For Sequence 4, one could assume the girl has turned her parents into boxing targets through her own magical ability, but this ability for transformation is not clearly shown and so the construal of the supernatural metaphor is unsupported. The war metaphor is more relevant to the cues provided in the commercial, such that SPORT IS WAR. This war metaphor occurred in other sequences in the commercial as well.

To establish a salient metaphorical message, the metaphors that were construed the most were prioritized; hence, SPORTS PEOPLE ARE SUPERNATURAL BEINGS, SPORT IS FILM GENRE, and SPORT IS WAR. There were other mappings not shown in this explanation that were peripheral, less frequent mappings. Depending on the research aims and how granular the analyst wants to be with their analysis, procedural decisions can guide the analyst to make decisions to satisfy the procedural criteria that might not wholly reflect the complexity and dynamic nature of filmic commercials.

6.6.3b. Deciding the level of granularity for analysis

Another challenge is determining the level of granularity an analyst annotates for metaphoric and metonymic mappings. Mappings identified at different levels of granularity will affect which mappings are deemed to make the salient message. Indeed, the message itself may change depending on which level the analyst approaches the data. In the *Nothing beats a Londoner*, there are multiple mappings cued at the level of the sequence that result in different messages being communicated (compare the boy running superfast to get to training with the female runner feeling unsafe at night). While at a higher conceptual level an overarching salient message summarizes the most frequent mappings we have SPORTSPEOPLE ARE SUPERNATURAL BEINGS. Higher still, we can reflect on what the mappings say about sport in general. Sport, as represented by the sport brand, can be portrayed as granting supernatural power, implying that sport is, or at least contains, a supernatural substance or force. It is this metaphorical mapping that is displayed in the summary table in Section 6.7.1. Grouping commercials through a higher-level figurative mapping enables us to identify overarching trends in sports commercials and examine how they use figurative tropes to position themselves in relation to social issues.

Determining the level of granularity in analysis is down to the analyst themselves and is guided by the research questions they have. Recording figurative tropes operating at different levels of granularity can construct a more complex understanding of how these tropes are used by sports commercials, as we have done by examining the different layers of mappings in the *Nothing beats a Londoner* commercial. For this study, I was interested in how sports commercials used figurative tropes to position themselves in relation to social issues. The higher-level SPORT IS A SUPERNATURAL SUBSTANCE/FORCE presents a metaphorical mapping that is used across multiple different commercials and enables the analyst to group

potentially similar commercials together. The sharing of a common mapping suggests that it could be a more conventional mapping in this genre of sports marketing. But how this overarching mapping is reached (which we know by delving deeper into the analysis of each commercial) can reveal how the more familiar supernatural metaphor may be creatively used in sports commercials. Therefore, overarching metaphors were recorded, which enabled me to group commercials in themes to analyze. Derivations of overarching metaphors were also recorded to provide more detail as to how figurative tropes may be used creatively in this genre.

6.6.3c. Deciding how to classify personification

There were instances of personification in the commercials, whereby a human character or inanimate product represented the brand. Personification typically presents inanimate objects or living beings as possessing human attributes or behavior (Delbaere et al., 2011). For example, in Gymshark's commercial *The flex effect*, a woman wearing the Gymshark sportswear whilst walking to the gym acts as a personified version of the brand and its product. Personification is a tricky trope when identifying metaphor and metonymy because personification can have a metaphoric or metonymic structure (Dorst, 2011). In Chapter 4, Pérez Sobrino and I classified personification as a separate category to metaphor and metonymy in our annotations as we needed to test the inter-rater reliability between metaphoric and metonymic annotations in advertisements. However, in this study I did not intend to count the instances of metaphor and metonymy occurring in the commercials, but rather focus on how these tropes are used creatively. One way in which metaphor and metonymy can be used creatively could be its use of personification. Therefore, I left the debate about personification being metaphoric or metonymic to a case-by-case basis when

analyzing the creative construction of metaphor and metonymy.

6.6.3d. Removing pervasive mappings to focus on creativity

As with the refinements we made to the analytical procedure used in Chapter 4, in this study I disregarded secondary but pervasive mappings in my annotation, such as the metonymies LOGO FOR BRAND and COMPANY NAME FOR COMPANY, to save distracting from the novel mappings of metaphor and metonymy. In the corpus, I also found instances where the salient message involved a metaphorical scenario or narrative, such as the one discussed above in Sequence 4 of Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*, where the runner's experience of running at night in the city is compared to running away from ghost riders. These experiential domains are broader than ones that can be defined by a single concept, such as a character having supernatural powers that result in a metaphor PERSON IS SUPERNATURAL BEING. I annotated experiential mappings as metaphorical scenarios as involving 'SCENARIO A' and 'SCENARIO B' (Musolff, 2006). Metaphor use can enhance the emotion viewers associate with the characters onscreen by guiding viewers to evaluate the affective meaning presented through visuals, music and sound, and motion (Fahlenbrach, 2014, 2017). Pathetic fallacy is one such (albeit more dramatic) example that could associate, for instance, a storm with dark clouds, lightning, and the sound of rain, with an onscreen character undergoing some kind of inner torment. Returning to the *Nothing beats a Londoner* runner sequence, the filmic components associated with horror movies can heighten the viewer's sense of the fear and vulnerability the female runner is feeling when running alone through the city at night.

6.7. Results

6.7.1. Describing the corpus

Multimodal metaphor and metonymy were used in creative ways through their meaning (novel mappings) and form (filmic components and form structures). The tropes highlighted several social issues in sport such as accessibility, domestic abuse, inequality, and mental health. The tropes also construct associations between the sports brand and the social issue to convey the brand's position on the topic – as supporting or challenging these issues – and/or as an empowerment strategy for the target audience, or viewers who can relate to the commercial. How this is done, and whether it is done sensitively, is discussed below.

Overall, 85% (*N*=28) of the commercials contained a multimodal metaphor. The most frequent overarching multimodal metaphor in the commercials (see Figure 6.14) was one framing sport or sports players as a natural force (lightening, breaking through stone) or substance (iron, stone, fire), or as having supernatural powers (25%, *N*=7). This metaphor was followed by the metaphor for sport as conflict, a fight, or a battle (14%, *N*=4), then sport as a stage on which players perform (9%, *N*=3), and metaphorically framing the commercial itself as a film genre including sci-fi/adventure, horror, and a game show (11%, *N*=3). Other metaphors involved young male footballers transforming into professional footballers (7%, *N*=2), and portrayed sport skills development as music development (7%, *N*=2). There were also two commercials that metaphorically personified the brand. See Figure 6.14 for a summary of multimodal metaphors that occurred in more than one commercial. There were some commercials that had more than one salient metaphor and are thus featured in multiple groups. These metaphor groups are reported with respect to how the creative use of multimodal metaphor positions sports brands in relation to social issues.

Metonymy featured as part of the salient message independent of metaphor in two of the commercials (7%), which are reported in Section 6.7.4. Otherwise, metonymy was most active in driving associations that informed metaphorical mappings.

Summary of multimodal metaphors in sports brand commercials

- SPORT/FOOTBALL IS (SUPER)NATURAL FORCE/SUBSTANCE x 7
    1. Nike *What Girls Are Made Of*
    2. Nike *Nothing Beats a Londoner*
    3. Nike *Unlimited You*
    4. Reebok *Storm the Court* (supernatural)
    5. Nike *The Last Game* (supernatural)
    6. Adidas *Create Your Own Game* (supernatural)
    7. Nike *We Play Real* (supernatural, not)
- SPORT IS CONFLICT/FIGHT/BATTLE x 4
    1. Nike *What Girls Are Made Of*
    2. Adidas *Odds*
    3. Nike Nothing *Beats a Londoner*
    4. Adidas *Never Walk Away*
- SPORT IS STAGE x 3
    1. Nike *What Girls Are Made Of*
    2. Adidas *Create The Answer*
    3. Adidas *Impossible Is Nothing*
- COMMERCIAL IS FILM GENRE (sci-fi/adventure, horror, game show) x 3
    1. Nike *The Last Game* (sci-fi/adventure)
    2. Nike *Nothing Beats a Londoner* (horror)
    3. Gymshark *Black Friday Sale* (game show)
- BOYS ARE (NOT) PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS x 2
    1. Nike *Winner Stays*
    2. Adidas *Create Your Own Game*
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT IS MUSIC DEVELOPMENT x 2
    1. Nike *Ripple*
    2. Reebok *Sound of Combat*

Figure 6.14. Summary of multimodal metaphors in sports brand commercials

The commercials used a range of filmic components and form structures to cue multimodal metaphor and metonymy. Table 6.4 shows counts of form structures used to cue multimodal metaphor in the commercials. Juxtaposition was the most common, followed by fusion, replacement, and transformation respectively. These form categories were not mutually exclusive; sometimes multiple categories of form delivered a single multimodal metaphor. Filmic components and form structures are discussed below in relation to each of the metaphors that portray key social issues identified in the sports commercials.

Table 6.4. Counts of categories for the creative use of form for multimodal metaphor in sports commercials

Juxtaposition	Fusion	Replacement	Transformation
13	9	5	4

As this study analyzes sports commercials released during 2020 and 2021, I now consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health and fitness industry. The pandemic enforced a national pause on group activities, including sport, severely impacting the health and fitness industry. Metaphor played a role in communications about the pandemic. The #ReframeCovid project[36] found 13% (N=75 of 564) of texts about the pandemic used sport-related source domains. For example, finding a cure is "a race [source] against the virus [target]" (Olza et al., 2021, p. 112). The metaphorical connection between the pandemic and sport may therefore have been used in the sports commercials released between 2020 and 2021. In the corpus, I found that two commercials compared the experience of the pandemic to the experience of training, expressing feelings of isolation and demonstrating some actions

[36] The #ReframeCovid project was a crowd-sourcing open-access project with a global network of linguists collecting various and alternative metaphors used to talk about aspects of the pandemic. Results were published in an article by Olza, Koller, Ibarretxe-Antuñano, Pérez Sobrino, and Semino (2021).

taken to adapt training techniques for home workouts. However, due to space constraints, I prioritize the discussion of other social issues such as accessibility and equality.

In the following sections, I discuss how the creative use of multimodal metaphor and metonymy positions the brand in relation to social issues such as accessibility, inclusivity, and equality in sport.

6.7.2. Sport as a (super)natural force or substance

The findings showed that sports brands use multimodal metaphors as empowerment strategies to inspire their audiences. Multiple commercials presented 'ordinary' people engaging in sporting activities as gaining supernatural abilities, or as embodying natural forces and substances.

Some examples of the supernatural metaphor have already been discussed in Sections 6.6.2 (Reebok's *Storm the court*) and 6.6.3 (Nike's *Nothing beats a Londoner*). In *Storm the court,* the mapping is depicted through the use of filmic components typically associated with the horror genre (e.g. low lighting, dog howls, chanting), and the form structure *fusion* that presents the girl as being supernatural (rather than being compared to something else that is supernatural). The implied transaction of power between the trainers and the girl could be seen as an empowerment strategy by Reebok. Reebok, through their metonymic association with their trainers (PRODUCT FOR BRAND) imply that they can help customers, or give customers 'power', to push the boundaries of sport and be creative in their game play. It is unclear what social issue(s) this commercial addresses. However, there may be perceived property incongruity between the muscular Black men, typically associated with being basketball players, and the petite Asian woman as someone less typically associated with basketball. This incongruity poses a challenge to the audience that asks: should not anyone be

able to play basketball?

Nothing beats a Londoner highlights the challenges young people face to access sport in London. Most challenges are associated with high rates of poverty and crime in the London area including domestic abuse [37]. These social issues are alluded to in the commercial through the storytelling of each young character. For example, two of the boys must run to training because they cannot get a lift and do not own a bicycle. A girl (boxing) and a boy (rowing) endure daily domestic abuse. Another girl risks running alone through the city at night. Despite these challenges, the young people are shown to acquire a superpower and to accomplish their goals in their chosen sport. Unsurprisingly, all the young people featuring in the commercial are wearing Nike sportswear. In this commercial an association is made subliminally between Nike sportswear and overcoming adversity to gain success in sport. This association can map onto the brand such that Nike are seen as supporting London's youth.

Zooming out, the metaphor can frame the superpower as being the key to tackling social issues. The depiction of the metaphor presents social issues in a way that is not hyper-realistic but stylized. For instance, a girl running alone through the city is like running away from monsters in a horror movie, or fighting with parents is like punching down targets. The metaphor mediates the severity of the social issues in a way that slightly distances the viewer so that the commercial is more entertaining and appealing. However, in doing so it may be perceived as making light of these issues.

Another interesting example is Nike's *We play real* commercial (see Figure 6.15 and Figure 6.16). Nike frames black sportswomen as magicians. Black sportswomen are portrayed

[37] UK government reports show that 25% of London residents are living below the poverty line (Leester, 2023). One in eight crimes reported to the Metropolitan Police are some form of domestic abuse (BBC News, 2021; Metropolitan Police, 2022).

onscreen as sparkling with gold dust, summoning tennis balls out of thin air, and making a single football multiply on the football pitch. Simultaneously with these depictions, a voice-over narrates:

> *"It's not magic. Yeah, we can make things float, make something appear out of absolutely nothing, but even the greatest magicians worked at that trick. It's not magic. It's organic…This is the real thing."*

The combination of the visuals and narration sets up a metaphor BLACK SPORTSWOMEN ARE MAGICIANS. But the visuals of black sportswomen performing magic juxtaposes with the narrator's suggestion that it is not magic at all. The juxtaposition therefore immediately negates the metaphor, flipping from black sportswomen as magicians to black sportswomen who are just good athletes whose talent is real and organic.



Figure 6.15. Scan to watch Nike's *We play real*



Figure 6.16. Stills from Nike's *We play real*

The commercial plays off the #BlackGirlMagic movement founded on Twitter by CaShawn Thompson in 2013[38]. #BlackGirlMagic celebrates the accomplishments and beauty of black women. Interestingly, Nike chooses to negate the #BlackGirlMagic phrase, which has long stood for celebrating black women and their strengths. Why does Nike seemingly negate a movement that is already empowering black women? In recent years, many companies have piggybacked on the movement for their own gain (e.g. campaigning, merchandising, etc.), and has become politicized even within the black community, with some suggesting that some 'black girl magic' is better than others (For Harriet, 2020). Nike have clearly taken a movement that campaigns for racial equality and tried to make it their own by turning the concept on its head. Nike demonstrates a creative use of multimodal metaphor through negation in their commercial, but to what effect? Further research could test what effect this kind of creative metaphoric message has on the target audience of the black community to determine whether it is considered empowering or potentially damaging.

[38] For more information, visit CaShawn Thomspon's website: www.cashawn.com.



Figure 6.17. Scan to watch Nike's *What girls are made of*. The commercial is in the Russian language, so appropriate subtitles are recommended whilst watching the commercial

There were several commercials that constructed the metaphor SPORT IS A NATURAL SUBSTANCE. Nike's *What girls are made of* commercial exemplifies this metaphor, and uses it to celebrate feminism in sport (see Figure 6.17). The commercial presents a young girl singing to a packed theatre about what girls are made of. Initially, she sings that girls are made of things that are traditionally associated with femininity, "Flowers and of rings, made of gossip and of marmalade" whilst the audience smile pleasantly. However, apparitions of famous sportswomen representing different sports (ice skating, gymnast, boxing, skateboarder, sprinter, bodybuilder) soon appear around the theatre, apparently only visible to the singing girl, and give a proud nod to the girl. Thus empowered, the girl goes on to sing at a louder dynamic and quicker tempo. She sings that girls are made of harder substances such as iron, battles, bruises, punches, clenched fists, stone, strength, and fire, coupling these aspects with values such as striving, self-dedication, perseverance, grace, pride, bravery, independence, and skill. Upon hearing these seemingly contrasting lines of verse, the audience looks confused, possibly questioning why the girl is singing incongruently with traditional gender stereotypes. The audience's confusion invites the viewer to also ponder on

this incongruity.

The girl's song creates a contrasts between the softer and more delicate metaphors for femininity as flowers or marmalade, and harder yet more natural substance metaphors for iron, stone, and fire, associated with masculinity (Deignan et al., 2013). A metonymic link is also made between each natural substance and a sport because the moment the substance is mentioned in the song coincides with a shot of a different sportswoman entering the theatre performing their respective sport. For instance, "iron, battles" coincides with the appearance of a female ice skater, activating the metonymy IRON FOR BLADES and BATTLE FOR ICE DANCE BATTLE. Similarly, "bruises, punches" stand for actions and result of boxing that coincides with a shot of a boxer throwing punches, and "will harder than stone, fire" stands for the body builder that may refer to the feel of muscle mass and adrenaline that is described in English as 'fire coursing through the veins'. The metonymies associate the materials with different sports performed by the women in the theatre and in doing so, expands the referent of the metaphor to all sportswomen being natural substances.

Through the song, Nike portrays sportswomen as having more assertive attributes as a means to empower them. In doing so, the metaphor transfers masculine properties onto the sportswomen to justify their skill in sport. The historically male-dominated domain of sports has meant that much of sports marketing present sportswomen either in relation to their physical attractiveness and domestic roles, or as possessing masculine traits (Birrell & Cole, 1994). The metaphor and metonymy that Nike uses to try to empower their female audience seem to perpetuate the mapping of masculinity onto successful sportswomen. Questions that arise from this are: Do women need to be associated with masculine attributes in sport media to be taken seriously? Are there any alternative mappings that might be more useful to present sportswomen that avoid perpetuating the projection of dichotomous femininity versus

masculinity?

6.7.3. Sport is war

Some of the commercials used multimodal metaphor to frame messages about campaigning for gender equality in sport using a war metaphor. However, Adidas' use of war metaphor in their commercial *Never walk away* (Figure 6.18) could be seen as controversial.



Figure 6.18. Scan to watch Adidas' *Never walk away*

The commercial showed female athletes talking about their experience with gender equality in sport. These women were presented as strong, determined, and resilient in becoming professional in sport. These qualities were cued through the visuals of sportswomen doing strength training and in some of the voice-overs given by different women, "I never felt I'd quit" and "There's no day I feel like losing". These instances of visuals and language could be empowering to aspiring sportswomen. However, other aspects of the commercial suggested that the women are training for war. Parts of their voice-overs constructed a war metaphor (key word underlined), "I always felt like I was just fighting to even have a chance to make it", supported by a subsequent shot demonstrating a training technique that involves

waving a rope, known as ‘battle rope training’.

The war metaphor conveys that female athletes are fighting to obtain equality in sport with their male counterparts. But is this a fight they should have to engage in in the first place? The commercial goes on to glamorize this ‘fight’ as something that female athletes have to do to have a professional career in sport. “The harder the struggle, the more glorious the triumph” can be taken as meaning that the more they suffer, the greater their reward will be, such that their fight for equality will be a greater prize (EQUALITY IS PRIZE).

The use of color in this commercial is also worthy of note. The commercial is primarily in greyscale, which could allude to the ‘black and white’ competition of two opponents – female and male – battling it out to get to the top of the sports game. There are, however, flashes of color: red on an Adidas top, a blue Adidas sports jumper, and green grass. Giving color to Adidas products makes it stand out from the greyscale of the rest of the commercial that discusses struggle with adversity. There may also be a comparison between adversity in their experience of training and in their gaining recognition in sport. Highlighting Adidas highlights their advocacy for women obtaining equality; however, this message appears to be controversial, not least due to the use and glamorization of the war metaphor.

While Adidas’ commercial attempts to empower women by using a war metaphor that encourages women to fight for equal rights in sport, it highlights the fight as a natural part of aspiring for a career in sport, and hides issues that may be the reason why women have to over-perform to achieve the equivalent of their male counterparts in a sporting career. The commercial tells women to keep fighting but offers no real solutions and instead perpetuates the war metaphor in sport discourse (Deignan et al., 2013; Matulina & Čoralić, 2008; Vierkant, 2008). In this case, is the commercial really helping to tackle gender equality in

sport, or is it riding on the conflict that the issue has already caused to position the brand as advocating for gender equality without any social responsibility?

Another commercial by Adidas uses a war metaphor but constructs this through wordplay accompanied by iconic shots. Adidas' *Odds* commercial (Figure 6.19) advertises trainers sold in an odd pair for amputees.



Figure 6.19. Scan to watch Adidas' *Odds*

A male voice-over first introduces a male war veteran who has lost one of his legs in battle and runs with a prosthetic blade:

> *"Odd, isn't it. For a man to run when technically he shouldn't even be walking. To compete in a marathon on one leg when really he should be sitting at home watching it".*

The commercial makes use of wordplay with the word 'odd' as it is voiced over shots of the war veteran training for a marathon. Odd is used to mean different things in the commercial: odd for strange, odd for uneven terrain, and against the odds for probability of success. The relevance of playing on the word 'odd' becomes clearer at the end of the commercial when the product is revealed as an odd pair of Adidas trainers.

Further wordplay occurs that draws a metaphorical comparison between the war the veteran fought in and the war he fights now with his disability: "[odd] to survive death in a war and still have a war to fight". Metaphoric wordplay also creates a sense of irony for things that would be typically considered bad at war but are reframed as being good in the context of doing sport with a disability, such as "shrapnel cutting through the body, and a blade cushioning the thrust". The disabled veteran is referred to as 'odd' to play on the words 'against the odds', as in "to run against all odds to prove nothing is odd". By the end of the commercial, the character is said to have "evened out the odds". Although trying to be inclusive of disability in sport by subverting the supposed 'oddness' of a disabled person running, this commercial may still be seen as controversial in the sense that being disabled is considered 'abnormal' in the first place.

6.7.4. Sports celebrity stands for social justice

Metaphor appeared to be the main contributor to the salient message of the sports commercials. However, there were two instances where metonymy played the key role. The first instance was in Adidas' *Billie Jean King Your Shoes* commercial (Figure 6.20). Billie Jean King (BJK) is a legendary tennis player who advocates for gender equality in tennis (King, 2023). Adidas collaborated with BJK by launching a campaign that took existing Adidas trainers and redesigned them to replicate BJK's own 'winning' shoes. There are a couple of metonymies that are born from this collaboration: (1) BJK trainer design stands for BJK themselves, and (2) BJK stands for sporting excellence and gender equality. These metonymies share the domain of BJK and thus create a metonymic chain (Pérez Sobrino, 2017, pp. 102–105): BJK TRAINERS FOR BJK FOR SPORTING EXCELLENCE/GENDER EQUALITY. The creative use of metonymy here is placing the association between BJK and gender equality into the design of a pair of trainers. The

redesigned trainers become a concrete symbol of what BJK stands for, serving as a reminder of an important cause. It also positions Adidas as a facilitator and advocate of the values BJK represents, alongside serving as a commercial venture for Adidas to sell more shoes and the 'redesign experience'.



Figure 6.20. Scan to watch Adidas' *Billie Jean King your shoes*



Figure 6.21. Scan to watch Nike's *Dream crazy*

The second instance of metonymy is in Nike's *Dream Crazy* commercial (Figure 6.21) that encourages sportspeople to push against prejudice and adversity to pursue their dreams. The commercial constitutes shots of a diverse spectrum of people doing sport. The commercial finishes with a scene featuring Colin Kaepernick, an American footballer who knelt in protest of racial injustice in America during the national anthem prior to a match in 2016. Kaepernick is framed as a metonym for American civil rights activism and anti-racism. In showing Kaepernick, Nike assimilates their position in support and raising awareness of a social justice cause.

6.8. Discussion

This study has examined the creative use of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in sports commercials and evaluated how these kinds of figurative communication can position sports brands in relation to social issues in sport. When metaphor is used critically and sensitively, these tropes have the potential to help lead positive change. However, when implemented uncritically and insensitively, there may be damaging effects both on the target groups and on the brand itself.

There were several ways that multimodal metaphor and metonymy were used creatively in the sports commercials. There were uses of similar metaphors featuring across different commercials that might suggest more conventional mappings. These metaphors match source domains often found in written and spoken sports discourse[39], including war, nature and natural forces, materials and substances, supernatural phenomena, and theatre (Deignan et al., 2013; Matulina & Čoralić, 2008; Vierkant, 2008). However, in the commercials these more familiar metaphors were used creatively in multiple ways. Metaphor was accompanied by interacting figurative tropes such as metonymy, irony, and personification as conceptual creativity, as well as wordplay as linguistic creativity. Metaphor (and these other figurative tropes) was also used creatively through its depiction. Metaphoric creativity through form occurred across multiple modes, filmic components, and form structures.

Metaphor drew comparisons across visuals, music and sound effects, and spoken dialogue (particularly voice-overs). Filmic components were often borrowed from a different genre, such as horror, sci-fi, adventure, and game shows, or used filmic components to highlight the brand's role in a cause (e.g. color, frame rate). The sports commercials made

[39] Football commentary, football reports, and supporter discourse

applied metaphor in a variety of form structures to signal metaphoric incongruity, such as fusion of supernatural being with human being in *Storm the court*. More research is needed to examine how the visual form structures in C-MIPVA may apply to other modes, or indeed to uncover other kinds of structures that may be more appropriate to explore creativity across different modes. Having said this, there were instances following the description of the form structures from C-MIPVA that did apply to the creative depiction of metaphor in the multimodal commercials, such as the juxtaposition between the visual depiction of black sportswomen as being magical, and the voice-over negating this metaphorical mapping in the *We play real* commercial. There is much more to explore with regards to the creative use of metaphor through form. The breadth of form elements that contributed to the construal of metaphor in the commercials suggests that the importance of form should not be underestimated.

In addition to looking at how metaphor is used creatively in commercials, this study explored how metaphor may be used by sports brands to highlight their position on social issues in sport. I questioned whether choices of creative metaphor were used sensitively or were potentially damaging to target audiences and/or minority groups. The findings show how that the creative use of figurative communication could be useful to raise awareness of social issues and empower target groups to take action (Eastman & Riggs, 1994; Real, 1998). In doing so, sports brands engage in some kind of CSR that facilitates positive social change by speaking out about important issues in sport through their marketing.

However, there is a fine balance between empowerment and exploitation. Nike employed the creative use of negation in their commercial *We play real* that played off the #BlackGirlMagic and Black Lives Matter movements the aim to empower the black community. Negation in advertising is a technique known as ‘subvertising’ (Tseronis &

Forceville, 2017) or 'shockvertising' (Pérez Sobrino, 2016b), and is often used by charities and non-profit organizations raising awareness of social issues (Hidalgo-Downing & O'Dowd, 2023; Pérez Sobrino, 2016b). As Nike portrayed a celebration of black talent in their commercial, they tread a fine line between joining the side of empowerment, or exploiting these associations for their own gain to the point that it goes against what the movement stands for. In their attempt to make the message of #BlackGirlMagic their own and bring something new to it, they negate the motto of the very movements that celebrate black innovation. Further research should be conducted to measure the impact this way of reframing existing campaigns has on the target audience.

Sports brands also must be careful when using a typical metaphor (e.g. war). War may perpetuate conflict and distrust instead of helping the cause. Adidas' use of the war metaphor in *Never walk away* could encourage and inspire women to fight for gender equality in sport, while at the same time the war metaphor glamorizes the struggle and implies that conflict comes with the territory. But does it have to be this way? One wonders whether an alternative metaphorical mapping could frame a more constructive and diplomatic approach that would help shine a light on systemic causes. In fairness, proposing what might cause the issues goes beyond the scope of sports brands. However, a better awareness of the power of figurative tropes could help brands think more carefully about how they use figurative communication in their marketing.

While some of the commercials could be seen as using empowering strategies to tackle social issues and advocate positive change, there are instances where particular metaphors, such as war, are acting as a double-edged sword. They may be seen as spurring sports people into action to improve the conditions of sport; however, it may be perpetuating the conceptualization of sport as a fight that should not really have to be a fight in the first place.

It may not be the place of sports brands to suggest solutions for broad social issues, but one wonders whether using the same commonplace metaphors is really the most effective way to raise awareness and empower audiences, whilst positioning themselves as advocates of positive social change.

These findings raise two questions:

1. **How useful is it to build on an existing stereotype to negate this through metaphor?**

   For example, in Nike's *What girls are made of,* women are stereotypically seen as delicate beings made of flowers and marmalade, but this is subverted to suggest that women are tough, hard substances (like men). While the subversion may be seen as empowering and challenging the traditional view of women, in this case, it is still drawing on stereotypical associations of women to subvert the message.

2. **Would it be more (or less) empowering to show, for example, female sportswomen in a new light altogether; something altogether creative rather than perpetuating the acknowledgement of stereotypes?**

   One could argue that a metaphor must be built on some kind of existing knowledge or familiar frame of reference in order to be meaningful (see Chapter 2). With this view, even though the commercials sometimes perpetuate stereotypical metaphors that are potentially damaging, the metaphor builds an argument that suggests problem-solution pathway, such as 'keep fighting', and 'we've got your back'. Whether or not this is the most effective way of empowering audiences requires further research.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide solutions to whether sports brands should take more responsibility for the messages they communicate about social issues in sport, and indeed their consideration of the form in which their message take in their commercials.

However, this chapter does offer an initial talking point on which to base further research that investigates how figurative tropes such as metaphor may be useful to catalyze positive change. Metaphor can play a role in influencing the attitudes and behaviors of people (see Chapter 3), and their quality of life. So, it is possible to utilize the power of metaphor for good in society. The omnipresence of advertising makes it a tool for transmitting key messages that may help improve public health, but the boundaries of creativity with regards to the meaning and form metaphor takes is a vital consideration that should not be taken lightly.

6.9. Opportunities for further research

In conclusion, sports brands can raise awareness and inspire positive change, but how they communicate to their audience is sensitive and requires a deeper understanding of the power of figurative tropes and the potential damage that they may incur when they are used insensitively.

The study asks more questions than it answers, but it was always the intention of this chapter to begin an exploration of how brands position themselves in relation to social issues through multimodal, creative metaphor, as a basis for future research. The explorative and reflexive nature of IMEP enabled me to keep an open mind and observe creative uses of metaphor through meaning and form. The identification and interpretation of metaphor and metonymy in this study was not tested for replicability with another analyst. Thus, my analysis may contain some subjectivity.

I acknowledge that my study examines a relatively small selection of sports brands. A larger sample would increase the generalizability of my results. Selecting commercials across a broader range of years the commercials were released would enable a longitudinal study to examine whether the meaning and form of metaphor in sports commercials has changed over

time, and whether this reflects any market trends or contextual societal events. As advertising is global, further research could consider the implications of linguistic and cultural audiences when identifying and interpreting metaphor and metonymy in sports commercials. The corpus analysis could also be expanded beyond sport to include other health and fitness products and brands to compare the empowerment strategies across the sector.

There were no commercials in the corpus that portrayed characters as identifying as transgender, non-binary, or gender fluid. Due to the relatively small sample of sports commercials in the corpus, no claims can be made as to whether commercials representing these groups were missed by chance during the sampling process or whether sports commercials do not provide much representation for these groups generally. Future research should explore this topic further and examine how these groups are represented in this genre of advertising.

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Appendix

Appendix 1.

List of sports brand commercials selected and reference information. All URLs were last accessed on the 31st August 2023.

Year	Brand	Title	Duration (minutes)	Author/uploader	URL	Date uploaded
2015	Nike	The Last Game	07:02	mycoolvideos	https://youtu.be/KriBQVhsgZk	08.12.2015
	Nike	Ripple	02:00	OnlineGolf	https://youtu.be/L2e8sbpyj_g	09.04.2015
	Reebok	Be More Human	01:01	Darren Heitner	https://youtu.be/olPj2kh-SD0	27.01.2015
	Nike	Winner Stays	04:12	SportsOnScreen	https://youtu.be/eGUor824a74	25.04.2014
2016	Adidas	Your future is not mine	01:15	Myntra	https://youtu.be/F1kd63fLt9k	23.02.2016
	Adidas	Create Your Own Game	01:32	goodgate productions	https://youtu.be/5PhEyGj3xq8	29.06.2016
	Reebok	Sound of combat	01:24	RFE Fitness	https://youtu.be/KCy1I_xjMlM	25.08.2016
	Nike	Rise 2.0	01:59	AKQA	https://youtu.be/nGuOA_EJ8qk	15.01.2016
	Adidas	Never follow feat. Paul Pogba	01:20	adidas Football	https://youtu.be/kKRmbS_b250	22.11.2016
2017	Nike	What are girls made of?	02:00	NikeWomen	https://youtu.be/Y_iCIISngdI	06.03.2016
	Nike	My sole story	02:13	Patrick Collister	https://youtu.be/vhTLIGssTnI	25.01.2022
	Adidas	Original is never finished	01:00	Vision Invisible	https://youtu.be/-19YaVqwioc	25.01.2018

	Nike	Unlimited you	02:58	Technical Jadoun	https://youtu.be/IA7ULX_V4jk	15.05.2017
	Adidas	Odds	01:48	Taproot Dentsu	https://youtu.be/y404N9XlA-U	09.09.2016
	Adidas	Creative positivity	01:15	Marien	https://youtu.be/RR2kJJU3BCA	13.11.2017
2018	Gymshark	Build your legacy	01:35	Gymshark	https://youtu.be/Wt5SlONIRZ0	05.12.2018
	Adidas	Create the answer	01:00	Sportsmans Warehouse	https://youtu.be/LXvXUQrHVOQ	05.06.2018
	Gymshark	The flex effect	02:00	Muscle Bar	https://youtu.be/nwwc4rK26wE	06.02.2018
	Nike	Nothing beats a londoner	03:08	SportsOnScreen	https://youtu.be/mEB1C59hCvs	09.02.2018
2019	Nike	Dream crazy	02:05	AdTV	https://youtu.be/WW2yKSt2C_A	12.11.2018
	Nike	Just Do It At The Church	01:56	INSIDER LATAM	https://youtu.be/OcPMxwqV8BQ	18.06.2019
	Reebok	Storm the court	01:13	Speaking Human	https://youtu.be/Z7Yk77LzdAQ	27.03.2019
	Adidas	Billie Jean King Your Shoes	00:45	Hila Bouskela	https://youtu.be/Hifgta6VHTE	06.08.2019
	Nike	Never ask	01:37	TWOMEN ADVERTISING	https://youtu.be/gKuKHL8rOXc	14.01.2021
	Nike	Air Max Graffiti Stores	02:02	W&V	https://youtu.be/g0q_cn9rbBQ	19.06.2019
	Adidas	Never Walk Away	00:45	Academy of Art University Athletics	https://youtu.be/iKmyicnu7aU	13.02.2019
2020	Gymshark	Black Friday Sale	03:26	Gymshark	https://youtu.be/dwXNg7MjLsQ	05.11.2020

	Gymshark	Be a visionary	00:50	Joris Brunot	https://youtu.be/YXXa9oYrPCI	09.12.2020
2021	Nike	You Can't Stop Us	01:30	Marketing The Rainbow	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcXTnyCmQbg	07.12.2020
	Nike	Play New	01:00	Antony Kalamut	https://youtu.be/-Z2KCXKfbAQ	03.06.2021
	Nike	We play real	01:00	Nike	https://youtu.be/SY4Pl75BJPQ	07.03.2021
	Adidas	What's one more	02:08	Kaizzen	https://youtu.be/2doBWM9x_Wg	05.08.2020
	Adidas	Impossible is nothing	01:00	Adidas Football	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECLJ5Jo-HV0	10.06.2021

Appendix 2.

Checklist A for modes

Mode	Input	Features
Written discourse	Visual	• Slogan • Written text • (typography/font; color)
Spoken discourse	Auditory (unless transcribed = visual)	• Dialogue • Monologue • Voice-off (absent narrator) • Voice-over (present narrator) • Tone of voice • Actors/characters

Music	Auditory	• Genre
		• Type (diegetic = heard by audience/characters; non-diegetic = heard only by audience)
		• **Musical elements**
		  ○ **Dynamics**
		  ○ **Form/arrangement**
		  ○ **Harmony**
		  ○ **Melody**
		  ○ **Rhythm**
		  ○ **Texture**
		  ○ **Timbre**
		  ○ **Tonality**
		• **Lyrics (overlaps with spoken discourse)**

Non-verbal sounds	Auditory	• Artificial (man-made; synthesized) • Natural (e.g. nature, human, animal, silence)
Visuals	Visual	• Images • Icons • Color • Salient objects • Kinematic (camera movements, perspective, lighting, etc.) • Gestures/facial expressions • **See checklist B for filmic components**

Checklist B for filmic components

Filmic component	Elements
Shot (cinematography)	• **Contrast –** comparative light and dark areas of frame • **Exposure –** relative light through lens • **Focus** - length/selective/effects (overlaying) • **Duration** • **Speed of motion –** frame rate (cuts)/freeze-frames
Lens/frame (cinematography)	• **Shape** (aspects ratios) • **Mobile framing –** when the camera position/mobility change during the shot
Camera position/mobility (cinematography)	• **Angle –** straight-on/high/low • **Level –** canted/balanced • **Height –** relative to object of interest (e.g. can have low height with straight-on angle) • **Distance –** extreme long shot/long/medium long/medium/medium close-up/close-up/extreme close-up • **Pan –** camera swivel on vertical axis • **Tilt –** camera swivel on horizontal axis • **Tracking/dolly –** camera position travels • **Crane –** camera moves beyond ground level
Color (mis-en-scene), in relation to all other techniques	
Lighting – highlights/shadows	• **Quality –** intensity (hard/soft) • **Direction –** frontal/sidelight/backlight/underlight/top light • **Source –** key light (primary)/fill light (fill in/soften) – high-key light = soft, low-key light = sharp/defined • **Color**

Setting – where we are (mis-en-scene)	
Costume/makeup (mis-en-scene)	• **Attention** • **Change** • **Stereotypical**/symbolizes role?
Staging/Performance (mis-en-scene)	• **Kinematic elements** (gestures, facial/bodily expressions) • **Dialogue** (spoken/sung)
Text/slogans (written)	

Checklist C for form structures

- Transformation of images – "converting one feature or the entire entity into another" (Bobrova, 2015, p. 123)

- Fusion (depicting non-existing gestalt) – combination of entities forming one single hybrid entity (Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011)

- Replacement – one entity has been replaced by another entity (Gkiouzepas & Hogg, 2011)

- Juxtaposition – juxtaposed horizontal or vertical alignment of shots or sequence (Bobrova, 2015)

CHAPTER 7. EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF FIGURATIVE COMMUNICATION AND ADVERTSIING: REFLECTIONS ON A COLLABORATION BETWEEN LINGUISTICS RESEARCHERS AND A MIDLANDS-BASED MARKETING AGENCY

Ford, S. & Littlemore, J. (2023). Exploring the impact of figurative communication and advertising: Reflections on a collaboration between linguistics researchers and a Midlands-based marketing agency. In: H. Price & D. McIntyre (eds), *Communicating linguistics: Language, community and public engagement*. doi:10.4324/9781003096078-14.

Contribution statement:

- **Conceptualization:** Samantha Ford, Jeannette Littlemore
- **Data curation:** Samantha Ford
- **Formal analysis:** Samantha Ford
- **Investigation:** Samantha Ford
- **Methodology:** Samantha Ford
- **Project administration:** Samantha Ford
- **Supervision:** Jeannette Littlemore
- **Validation:** Samantha Ford, Jeannette Littlemore
- **Writing – original draft:** Samantha Ford
- **Writing – review & editing:** Samantha Ford, Jeannette Littlemore

11

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF FIGURATIVE COMMUNICATION AND ADVERTISING

Reflections on a collaboration between linguistics researchers and a Midlands-based marketing agency

Samantha Ford and Jeannette Littlemore

Introduction

Metaphor is a powerful and widely used device in advertising, and there has been a substantial amount of research into the roles that it plays and the reasons for its success (Chang and Yen 2013; Gkiouzepas 2015; Jeong 2008; Pérez-Sobrino 2016; Phillips and McQuarrie 2002). However, much of this research has been laboratory-based, and much of the analysis of metaphor in advertising has been reliant on researchers' intuitions to interpret the 'intended message' of an advertisement. The main reason for the lack of real-world focus in this area is largely due to the fact that there has been limited proactive engagement with professionals from the advertising industry itself.

Research into the role played by metaphor in advertising has much to gain from the inclusion of input from advertising professionals. Metaphors can be read in many different ways, and the ways in which they are understood by metaphor scholars may differ considerably from the ways in which they are understood by the creative professionals who produced them or indeed the consumers at whom they are targeted (Littlemore and Pérez-Sobrino 2017; Pérez-Sobrino et al. 2019). In academic metaphor studies, a metaphor is deemed to be 'effective' if it has elicited a positive response from participants, or if the participants have said that the advertisement would make them more likely to buy the product that is being advertised or to engage in the action that is being promoted (Fishbein et al. 2002: 239). As the majority of academic studies have not incorporated actual distribution and sales data for live campaigns, perceived effectiveness measures (e.g. self-reported participant ratings) are deemed to serve as a 'best estimate' to indicate the degree of 'persuasive potential' (Dillard et al. 2007: 617) and as a proxy for actual effectiveness (i.e. how people would respond to a live campaign).

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However, 'perceived effectiveness' scores can be unreliable in predicting actual effectiveness, as people tend to over predict the extent to which an advertisement may encourage sales or lead to behavioural change (Dillard et al. 2007).

Moreover, some of the research into the role played by metaphor in advertising has tended to assume that the main goal is to 'sell a product,' whereas advertising is increasingly being used for brand building (i.e. building a brand's reputation) or for discussing a particular ideology or social issue (Binet and Field 2013). Indeed, the annual Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity for innovative campaigns frequently awards top prizes to agencies who have produced campaigns that enact a social duty, whether that be charitable donations and investment in community projects (e.g. Nike: *Just Do It HQ at The Church*[1]) or the incorporation of inclusive considerations of their product design (e.g. IKEA's *ThisAbles*[2]). Therefore, the notion of an 'intended message,' which is discussed in much of the metaphor literature, cannot be accurately confirmed without consulting the original authors of the advertisement, and little research has been done that asks advertisers what exactly they intend to communicate when developing campaigns.

In our research, we have attempted to bridge the gap between metaphor researchers and advertising professionals by working together on research projects based around advertising campaigns that are in the process of being developed. The research began as an EU-funded Marie-Curie funded project, EMMA: *European Multimodal Metaphor in Advertising*,[3] with Dr Paula Pérez-Sobrino as the Research Fellow. The aim of this project was to explore people's comprehension of, and emotional responses to, metaphor in advertising across different cultures. Within the context of the EMMA project, we worked with various communication and branding agencies, ranging from large-scale multinational organisations to small local agencies, in order to gain a deeper understanding of how metaphor is used in advertising and received by consumers.

Through these partnerships, we hoped to gain deeper insights into the intended messages of the advertisements and to explore first-hand how and why certain metaphors are used in campaigns, as well as to measure how people engage with metaphor and whether the use of metaphor in different formats contributes to advertising effectiveness. Working with advertising agencies meant that we were able to access and observe measures for both perceived and actual effectiveness.

Enter Big Cat…

Our most successful and enduring partnership has been with the Birmingham-based marketing agency Big Cat Agency.[4] We first met the CEO of Big Cat, Anthony Tattum, at a Birmingham 'Business Breakfast' event at which business leaders and researchers are invited to give talks on a common theme. The theme of the Business Breakfast at which we presented was: *Examining Language in Business*. We had not met Big Cat before the event, but during the course of the event where we each presented our ideas (EMMA on 'metaphor in advertising'

and Anthony from Big Cat on 'creative clarity') we realised that we had a common interest in maximising the effectiveness of the language used in advertising and that there was therefore potential for collaboration. Our collaboration grew out of a mutual interest in gaining an insight into the workings of metaphor in advertising and in measuring its impact on consumer attitude and behaviour. We believed that we could investigate these issues by combining our knowledge of metaphor in linguistics with the extensive experience of Big Cat in creating campaigns.

The partnership began in 2018 and was informal to begin with. It has since transitioned into a collaborative PhD project with Samantha Ford as the PhD student, and Jeannette Littlemore and Anthony Tattum as joint lead supervisors. The project is funded by the Midlands4Cities Doctoral Training Partnership, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) government body. In the context of this more formal collaboration, we have conducted studies that have investigated the effective use of metaphor in different environments in advertising, including websites, logos and billboards.

The variety of clients with whom Big Cat works, including charities, healthcare and leisure providers, and the range of media through which they work has provided us with opportunities to use a variety of approaches and frameworks in our research. We have combined eye-tracking technology and electro-dermal measurements (EDA) with focus groups, interviews, surveys and corpus linguistic techniques to test the use and effectiveness of figurative language in five Big Cat campaigns for clients (to date, 2021): Right Track (professional training solutions); Solihull Community Housing (housing association); Aspire's Channel Swim (spinal cord injury charity), Umbrella Health (sexual health NHS trust); and Absolutely Fitness (gym brand). We have also contributed to a number of other projects and clients including the Mental Health and Productivity Pilot (MHPP) funded by MidlandsEngine and Coventry University for mental health at work[5]; Royce Lingerie, specialised lingerie for post-operation and maternity women; and BHSF health insurance.

This collaborative work has had multiple benefits, which have included extending the reach of the clients with whom Big Cat works (many of whom are charities), improving creative practice in Big Cat itself and (for us) deepening our understanding of the ways in which advertising and communication work, which has had a significant impact on our academic work.

The benefits of collaborating with Big Cat

Working with Big Cat has been highly beneficial to our research. It has opened our eyes to the real aims of communications and branding campaigns, which are often more subtle than we had previously understood them to be. We have had opportunities to develop research projects and investigate aspects of figurative language that we would never have thought of investigating. These have

included, for example, investigations into the interaction between metaphor and humour in the context of creative puns; the interaction between language, colour and shape in terms of metaphorical expression; and studies of the myriad different forms that metaphorical creativity can take in different forms of expression. The research projects have provided us with an opportunity to work with large amounts of naturally occurring data and this has helped us to develop theoretical approaches that are more reflective of 'real-world' communication (some of which are reported in Sobrino et al. 2021). Recommendations that we have made arising from our research have been implemented in developing campaigns, and the impact of our work has been measured objectively through product sales, consumer behaviour, website traffic and social media engagement, where comparisons have been made with previous campaigns that had been created without insights from our research. Developing relationships with marketing professionals has also broadened our network, providing potential opportunities for future collaborations.

Big Cat have benefitted from the collaboration too. We have provided them with findings based on rigorous research studies that, when implemented, have helped their clients, many of whom are charities and non-government organisations (NGOs). The collaboration has also helped them to improve their creative practices, as well as contribute to the overall success of their campaigns. This has added a unique selling point (USP) to their business which has helped them to attract new clients.

The challenges we have faced and how we have overcome them

Somewhat ironically, one of the main challenges that we have faced in this collaboration involves language. One of the first things that we discovered when working with Big Cat is that academic linguists and marketing professionals sometimes use different words to talk about very similar concepts, and conversely, that we sometimes use the same word to mean very different things. We have therefore needed to take great care in explaining terminology to one another and not assume that those on the other side of the collaboration will necessarily understand exactly what we mean. For example, we have found that, when using terms such as 'metonymy' and 'hyperbole' with Big Cat, it is useful to illustrate them through the use of memorable examples, and in turn, when Big Cat uses terms such as 'marketing effectiveness,' they provide detailed explanations showing the complexity of the meaning of the expressions. Even the word 'metaphor' has been susceptible to different interpretations. Big Cat employees tend to use the term somewhat loosely, to refer to different kinds of creative language, and are less familiar with the idea of implicit, conceptual metaphors. They have been interested to learn of the work that has been conducted on the use of metaphor in forms of expression other than language.

In order to learn more about how to 'speak each other's language,' we have had to ask many questions in order to clarify unfamiliar terms. Furthermore, in order to familiarise ourselves with the genres that characterise the advertising workplace, we have observed meetings between Big Cat and their clients, attended events with marketing audiences (e.g. The Marketing MeetUp, Birmingham[6]) and read up about marketing trends by marketing experts (Binet and Field 2007, 2013, 2017, 2019; Chun et al. 2018; Field 2019). We have also continued to learn throughout the partnership, and one of the authors (Ford) has taken up several training opportunities, including studying for and receiving the Eff Test Certificate, accredited by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA). She has also attended behavioural science workshops delivered by Richard Shotton, author of *The Choice Factory* (Shotton 2018). These opportunities have been made accessible through Big Cat, who have always been willing to share their resources with us. In taking these opportunities, we have not only expanded our knowledge and appreciation of the industry in which we are researching metaphor but we have also developed our ability to interpret and converse with our partners more effectively.

We approached the early stages of our partnership with an open mind and an adaptive attitude, which helped to build rapport. We tested out different ways of working together, identifying similarities and differences in our respective goals. For each project, this has meant identifying what each party wants to achieve, who should correspond with whom and how frequently we need to meet. We review the progress of the project on a regular basis and ensure that everyone involved is aware of the outputs to date. We communicate with each other at each step, check whether the project is on track and decide whether it needs to change course. Sometimes unexpected findings lead us down new and unanticipated paths. At times, we have had to negotiate the requirements of a particular project, including the need for academic rigour (i.e. sample sizes with suitable power and effect size for reliable statistical inferences to be made) and the potential for open access research and publication of findings from the studies that we have worked on together. In these discussions, we have emphasised the importance (for us) of gaining recognition from our institution, funders and academic peers.

We found out very early on in our partnership that academics and advertisers sometimes work to very different timelines. While academic studies require space to think about, design and conduct, advertisers work on a fast-paced schedule with multiple client campaigns in various stages of production at any one time, with sometimes only a few months from client instruction to campaign creation to the distribution of a live campaign. A fast turnaround for reports of our study findings has sometimes involved intense periods of work. In order to deal with this issue, we have been somewhat selective in terms of which campaigns we choose to work on. In general, we tend to choose campaigns that are beneficial to society, such as professional training, housing, public health charities and trusts, and fitness and wellbeing brands. We have found that the brief

reports we produce for Big Cat summarising our findings provide the basis for longer publishable papers.

Maintaining regular contact has been an integral component of our relationship. Samantha Ford (co-author) has a hot-desk space at the Big Cat office where (before the Covid-19 pandemic) she worked once a week to work among the marketing staff. Samantha's physical presence within the organisation has served multiple purposes. In addition to providing a physical manifestation of the partnership, it has also facilitated progress in-person updates, enabled us to attend in-agency meetings with clients to gain a contextual understanding of each campaign and allowed for spontaneous conversations in which exchanges of expertise and discussions have taken place that may have otherwise been missed.

The view from Big Cat

We felt that it would be useful in this chapter not just to present our own view of the collaboration but also the views of Big Cat. As part of the research collaboration, we have conducted interviews with seven colleagues[7] at Big Cat, including the CEO, creative designers, account managers, human resources and administrative staff. We asked them, among other things, to talk about the kinds of things they consider when putting together a campaign, how they define creativity and effectiveness in advertising and what benefits and drawbacks our collaboration has brought. Here, we collate some of their thoughts.

Many of the Big Cat employees commented on the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and expertise that the collaboration has brought: 'It's a mutually beneficial relationship … born out of longevity … we [advertisers] are trying to be more scientific and you [academics] are trying to understand the area of industry that you're interested in, and so it is that two-way relationship' [001]. They particularly appreciated the academic rigour that the collaboration has brought to their work: 'If you're supported by academic rigour and you're supported by theories that have a foundation in academia, then you're going to make so much more progress and you'll also develop a wider array of understanding than you ever would by just trying to figure it out of the macro sense' [002].

Some commented on the importance of effective communication that acknowledges the different backgrounds of those involved in the partnership: 'I would just say that communication is the absolute key to building an established relationship between any two bodies who technically speak two different languages, as it were. Finding the middle ground and being able to discuss and having a secure and confident open area where people can ask their questions, people can say, actually you know what, I don't understand that, please could you explain a little bit more' [002].

The advertising professionals commented on the fact that the research can make the mechanics of the creative process more tangible and can facilitate easier communication within a creative team as well as with clients: 'For all those times we couldn't put a label on something and you knew that you had to achieve a certain

objective but you weren't quite sure how, it gives you both the support when you go to your clients to sort of explain and verify what it is that you're discussing' [002]. 'It makes a campaign a lot more effective when you've got all these different angles and different pieces of information; we learn a lot of things along the way as well' [006]. Others commented on the fact that applying advertising practices that are supported by academic research can also strengthen pitches to clients: 'If you can start bringing actual research into your pitches, that is a really strong statement. Once people understand that what you're trying to say is actually backed up by strong academic principles, then it adds a lot of weight to what you're saying' [005].

Some interviewees reflected on the wider implications of the partnership: '[A collaborative academic-practitioner partnership] is about different viewpoints, but it's [also] about breadth and depth of insight and understanding' [001]. In other words, it is not just identifying the use of figurative language in advertising but interrogating how and why figurative language is used creatively in advertising and thinking about the impact of language more generally: 'It's really, really useful to have the bank of knowledge from an academic perspective because it gives us [advertisers] that robust proven evidence-based approach… Gut feeling intuition is not enough alone' [004]. The added value provided by the collaboration was a focus of many of the interviewees: 'Something that is quite widespread within marketing … if you look at some of the adverts I've seen, you know, there's not real insight to it at all. It's just they've grabbed a celebrity and they've put his or her face on the ad without really any thought. I guess it does work to a certain extent. But to be more effective, it's got being driven by an understanding of the audience. That's where it starts. The more you can understand that audience, the better. And then you can apply the studies and experiments and then you can test it' [004].

Some of the interviewees commented on the need to find a balance between 'hard-nosed' empirical research and the creative process, and on the complementary nature of these two approaches: 'I think for me, I've always been nervous about testing creative campaigns because there have been so many stories of campaigns that have actually turned out to be really effective… but I think it's all down to the context of how you test it' [003]. 'It does worry me a little bit in terms of people getting stuck on numbers… I know that numbers are important to a campaign to see what a campaign's reach is, for example, but I wouldn't want that to influence the creative side of it' [007]. These interviewees suggest that combining academic rigour with practical observation of consumer behaviour may provide more realistic insights into creativity. For instance, [003] explains that academic lab testing may encourage more rational responses from people because they are presented with an advertisement and asked to explain how they feel about it; whereas, observing people viewing an advertisement on TV at home focuses more on their emotional response in a natural setting: 'I think there's always a bias to people responding to questions. So, for me, robust research, and the ways academics can help, is to assist agencies and marketers in testing their creative [campaigns] through observing people, asking people questions, whatever tricks

they've got up their sleeves, and then putting that all together to get a better picture' [003]. A common theme that ran through all of the interviews was the need for synergy and a recognition of the respective skillsets and approaches that are brought by advertisers and linguists.

A case study: working together on a sexual health campaign

One of our most successful studies conducted through this partnership is our work with Big Cat on a sexual health campaign developed for Umbrella Health (Ford et al. 2021). Umbrella Health is an NHS trust with sexual health clinics based in Birmingham and Solihull, UK. Umbrella wanted to increase the uptake of home testing kits for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the form of increased orders and returns for testing in the West Midlands region. Sexual health is still a stigmatised subject in the UK (and further afield), and so Umbrella were looking for a way to raise awareness of sexual health and STI testing in a more indirect and palatable way. Metaphor lends itself very well to this task, as it can be used to talk about something in terms of something else (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003) and has been found to engage attention and elicit positive attitudes from viewers in the context of advertisements (Pérez-Sobrino et al. 2019; van Mulken et al. 2010). Humour can also serve as a powerful tool for mediating embarrassment caused by sensitive topics (Chapple and Ziebland 2004) and increase people's acceptance of messages involving sex-related topics (Sparks and Lang 2015).

We were a part of this campaign at every stage, from conception to distribution of the live campaign, which meant that we were able to make recommendations to Big Cat and to Umbrella, based on our findings for how metaphor and humour may be used effectively together in this campaign. Our study involved an online quasi-experiment that presented 12 advertisements to 355 participants from across the West Midlands region. The advertisements used humorous double-entendres (i.e. puns that can be interpreted in 'an innocuous, straightforward way, given the context, and a risqué way that indirectly alludes to a different, indecent context'; Kiddon and Brun 2011: 89) of well-known landmarks in the West Midlands. The names of these landmarks could be alternatively read as referring to sex- or relationship-related activities. For example, there is an area of Birmingham called 'Sparkbrook.' One of the advertisements in the campaign contained the question 'Got a spark with Brook?' – which suggests that someone may be contemplating a romantic (or sexual) relationship with someone called Brook. In another advertisement, the independent shopping and business workplace known as 'The Custard Factory' was reformulated into the question: 'Having fun with his Custard Factory?' which refers to the idea of playing with a man's genitalia.

As we can see in these examples, the double-entendres had a metaphorical basis. The decision to employ metaphor in the context of double-entendres was driven by the fact that double-entendres (like metaphor) work on different levels and contain an element of unexpectedness. They have been shown to be a useful

tool in advertising in that they attract attention (Abass 2007) and resonate with viewers (Djafarova 2008). The fact that double-entendres allow people to talk indirectly about sex, whilst appearing to talk about something completely different, makes them an ideal tool for use in advertising campaigns focusing on sexual health.

We tested the effectiveness of advertisements where the double-entendre had been manipulated in three different ways: (1) with and without word insertion; (2) with and without a creative metaphorical expression; and (3) whether they referred to the beginning, middle, or end of the sexual scenario.

It is beyond this chapter to go into more detail of this study (for more details, see Ford et al. 2021). But in summary, we found that the advertisements with double-entendres that kept the place name together without word insertion (making the cue for the alternative meaning more indirect), that made use of creative metaphors and that referred to the most active 'middle' part of the sexual scenario (sexual intercourse) were rated higher for perceived effectiveness, humour and likelihood of engagement on social media (e.g. like, comment, share or tag a friend). We recommended to Big Cat and Umbrella Health that they include more of these effective items in their campaign, which went live in June 2019. A corpus-based analysis of the free-text responses revealed variation in the types of interpretations that were offered by participants depending on their age, gender and education, and this information was also used by Big Cat to help them target the campaign more effectively.

The campaign was highly successful in comparison with expected outcomes and previous campaigns. Marketing evidence showed that outdoor engagement with the campaign exceeded its target by 7.66% (N = 655,648 from prospected 608,984) and on Facebook, online post views increased by 63,281 from the previous year (2018). During the campaign, the Umbrella Health website attracted 1,000 more unique visitors than prior to the campaign, with the 'Appointments' page (step one for ordering an STI kit) views also increasing by 1,000 unique visitors. A 51% increase of STI testing kits were ordered and returned for testing (from 3,784 per month to 5,729 per month) during the campaign (April–July 2019). Of these kits, 10% tested positive meaning that an additional 778 STIs (including HIV) were diagnosed and treated as a result of the campaign.

It is important to note that there are likely to have been multiple factors that contributed to the campaign's success and that our contribution was only part of the picture. However, this case study provides an example of how metaphor research can at least contribute to improvements in sexual health.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the benefits, opportunities and challenges we have faced in our ongoing collaborative partnership with Big Cat. Working with Big Cat has enabled us to learn more about each other and about our respective industries, and to contextualise and empirically test our research on figurative

language and creativity in advertising. Finally, we would like to say that as academics engaging with non-academic or non-linguistic partners, we must ensure that we speak plainly for lay audiences but also remember that the research and expertise we offer is specialist and valuable. We have found that collaboration with practitioners can lead to developments in the theoretical underpinning of the discipline and to the methods that are employed in the research as well as to improvements in professional marketing practices, client services and (in some cases) public health and wellbeing.

Top tips

- Try to involve your non-academic partner in the design of the study from the outset.
- Expect to be working with different timeframes and work out ways to deal with this.
- Be on the lookout for terminology that means different things to you and your non-academic partner.
- Look for opportunities to learn from your non-academic partner and consider how this learning might contribute to your discipline.

Acknowledgement

We would like to give a special acknowledgement to Dr Paula Perez Sobrino for leading the foundational work on which our collaborative research has been based.

Notes

1 Nike's *Just Do It HQ at the Church* was a collaborative campaign that renovated a disused Church in Chicago to give young people a safe space to play basketball, in an area with high rates of gun violence on the streets, and was awarded the 2019 Cannes Lions Grand Prix for Industry Craft (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcPMxwqV8BQ).
2 IKEA's *ThisAbles* was a collaborative campaign that produced specialised add-ons to IKEA furniture using 3D printing that increased the accessibility of furniture for people with disabilities and special needs, winning the 2019 Cannes Lions Grand Prix award for Health and Wellness, among other awards (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0PA_VpLlDw&t=1s).
3 Visit the EMMA project website for more details (https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/edacs/departments/englishlanguage/research/projects/emma/index.aspx).
4 Big Cat Agency (www.bigcatagency.com).
5 Mental Health and Productivity Pilot (MHPP, www.mhpp.me).
6 MeetUp is a platform for events by groups (very similar to Eventbrite), and The Marketing MeetUp group in Birmingham holds regular events that involve networking opportunities with and talks by marketing experts (www.meetup.com/The-Marketing-Meetup-Birmingham).
7 Advertisers are attributed ID codes to anonymise their data and adhere to ethical practices, denoted as e.g. [001], [002], etc.

CHAPTER 8. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to investigate the creative use and effectiveness of figurative communication in collaboration with marketing practitioners. I addressed this aim by conducting a series of studies that:

1. Established what is understood by creativity and effectiveness in academia and in the advertising industry in order to bridge the gap between academic theory and marketing practice
2. Explored the creative use of figurative tropes – metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun specifically – in the context of advertising through their meaning and form
3. Tested how people responded to variation in the formulation of creative figurative tropes in advertising

The inherent creative and dynamic nature of advertising provided a backdrop to examine how figurative tropes are creative not only through their meaning (the meaningful yet unusual connections made between domains) but also through their depiction (the different forms the tropes take). I have studied the creative use of figurative communication at the level of grammar, semantics, narrative, mode, register, genre, culture, ideology, and cognition. I found multiple, different ways that figurative communication can be creatively used. Figurative communication can be creatively used by constructing completely novel mappings (mappings that are wholly original and have never occurred before) or by altering conventional, or expected, mappings or forms (by applying them to a new context, by extending them through the combination of tropes, or by depicting them in a different form). Exactly how figurative communication can be creative through novel and extended/elaborated mappings and depictions was explored in more depth in this thesis through six refined research questions

(RQs) that were addressed by each chapter, summarized below.

1. What does creativity and effectiveness mean to academic researchers and marketing practitioners, and how can we align our understanding of each other to collaborate on research?
2. What effects do different formulations of creative figurative tropes have on people's attitudes and behaviors?
3. (How) can we reliably identify and interpret creative figurative tropes in advertising?
4. (How) can culture, genre, and register influence the creative use of figurative tropes through their meaning and form?
5. How can creative figurative communication be used in advertising to address social issues?
6. What challenges and possible solutions are there for successfully collaborating with marketing practitioners?

RQ1. What does creativity and effectiveness mean to academic researchers and marketing practitioners, and how can we align our understanding of each other to collaborate on research?

Creativity and effectiveness are two of the key concepts on which my thesis is based. Establishing the baseline definitions of these two concepts in theory and practice (in academia and in marketing) was crucial to successfully collaborate with marketing practitioners. Chapter 2 explored how academic researchers and marketing practitioners define creativity and effectiveness through a review of secondary research and a series of interviews with 'on the ground' representatives.

There was no single definition of creativity or effectiveness in academia and marketing, although there was a considerable convergence on what these concepts meant within and between the two groups. I identified the 'best fit' definitions as a foundation on which to communicate with marketing practitioners by using terms and perspectives that we shared. This built a stronger collaborative partnership in which to research and test the creativity and effectiveness of figurative communication in advertising (addressed in subsequent research questions and their respective chapters). The best fit definitions were thus:

> Creativity consists of *novel ideas that present new or foregrounds existing information in a way that is unusual or unexpected in the context in which it is found, and relevant to the audience (and market competitors) that perceives it*.
>
> Effectiveness involves *emotional, irrational, and implicit messaging that is attention-grabbing, optimally complex, and relevant to the context, product, and target audience*.

Academia and marketing have their own additional ideas as to the scope of creativity and effectiveness. This was particularly the case for the marketing practitioners who, unsurprisingly, brought in how these concepts were applied in the advertising industry; creativity, for example, as a strategy for creative thinking and a conceptual product to sell to clients.

There arose some academic debate concerning whether creativity had to be intended or not in order to be deemed creative. The debate about intentionality can relate to the ongoing debate in metaphor studies concerning whether metaphor can be deliberately (intentionally) produced. Contributions from Steen (2015) and Gibbs (2011) offer respective sides of the

argument for and against the Deliberate Metaphor Theory (or DMT). Steen originally proposed DMT, positing that "deliberate metaphor use is the intentional use of a metaphor *as* a metaphor" (Steen, 2015, p. 67, original italics). Deliberate metaphors can occur particularly, although not exclusively, in language where the production process involves an intentional decision to draw attention to cross-domain mappings. Deliberate metaphors could therefore occur, although not exclusively, in creative communicative activities such as writing. This idea could extend to the possibility of deliberate metaphors being used in advertising. However, DMT does not claim that deliberate metaphor is necessarily creative (as Steen leaves it open that deliberate metaphors can be conventional metaphors), but just that deliberate metaphors are intended as metaphors. DMs are typically marked in some way to signal an invitation to the receiver to interpret the mapping. In language, this can be done so through pragmatic signals, such as "imagine X" or "think about X as Y" (G. Steen, 2015), or metalinguistic signals such as "it's not like X, it is like Y" (G. Steen, 2017, p. 2). It therefore stands to reason that it may be possible for visual or multimodal cues to mark a need for the viewer to resolve incongruity that has been planned by the author of the advertisement (although research on deliberate metaphor is yet to expand into modes of communication beyond language).

However, Gibbs (2011, p. 28) argues that "it is not evident from the existence of the metaphors alone that they were deliberate" and thus intentional. Intentionality can only truly be known by consulting the original author. Even when consulting the original author, as I did with marketing practitioners, they are not always able to describe what exactly makes an advertisement with a metaphorical mapping, and how they have done so. They sometimes just know intuitively that it is creative in some way. With Gibbs' counter-argument in mind, it might be more appropriate to understand DMT as describing the *perception* of deliberate uses

of metaphor rather than necessarily knowing for sure whether they were intended that way (without consulting the original author). The perception of creativity being intentional is indeed one of the arguments for creativity in the academic debate in Chapter 2; however, the resolution to this debate is yet to be reached.

There were differences in the way in which effectiveness was measured in academia compared to marketing. While academia tend to use perceived effectiveness ratings (e.g. self-reported appeal scores or intention to purchase) as a proxy for actual effectiveness (e.g. behavioral change), marketing practitioners measured effectiveness in relation to how well it achieved the objectives of the campaign (e.g. to increase profit margin, sales, campaign awareness, etc.). When collaborating with external partners, especially those organizations or companies that operate on a business model making profit, is important for researchers to be aware of the fact that this may affect what outcomes are considered desirable. Researchers, and their partners, should strive to agree the conditions of the partnership that make it mutually beneficial.

The interviews also raised a number of issues concerning these concepts. Not least, the lesser-known perceptions of academic and marketing assumptions and their perceptions of each other. Some of these perceptions enlightened how the connection between academia and advertising may be made more accessible and better informed. The question regarding the ethics of collaboration between research and marketing is a sensitive one. Ultimately it is unfeasible to contain research that helps social, not-for-profit organizations benefit society to the use of only these organizations as opposed to profit-driven businesses, especially as research is increasingly disseminated via open access. Instead of viewing this as a 'bad result' for this kind of research, instead we can see it as an opportunity to consider how businesses may also benefit society through the way they communicate, as I initially explored in Chapter

6 with sports brands.

The interviewed academic researchers suggested that wholly original mappings are possible yet uncommon. It was argued that without any frame of reference, wholly original mappings could result in seemingly random connections between domains. Meaning does not exist in a vacuum and requires some frame of reference in order for creativity to make sense. Creativity therefore has to have some degree of appropriateness or relevance to the perceiver in order for it to be considered meaningful or 'effective' (Carter, 2004; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). The frame of reference, however, may be clear to some people and not others, depending on their linguistic, cultural, or contextual knowledge and experience.

My collaboration with marketing practitioners provided insight into the motivations and intentions of marketing practitioners constructing a new campaign, and into the inner workings of how creative figurative communication is applied in marketing practice.

RQ2. What effects do different formulations of creative figurative tropes have on people's attitudes and behaviors?

Creativity in figurative communication can occur in the variation of their formulation. Chapter 3 manipulated the creative use of metaphor and double entendre at the level of grammar, semantics, and narrative, to test how people respond to creative figurative communication in an awareness advertising campaign for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The results provided part support for the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis, finding that a formulation of metaphor and/or double entendre that may require some degree of cognitive

work to figure out the message was more effective. However, we also found that simpler, conventionalized formulations do not necessarily mean that they are easier to understand. Somewhat surprisingly, the participants in our study found the simpler grammatical formulation and the conventional metaphor harder to understand. We believed this to be a product of the genre of advertising. We surmised that people expected to have to figure out a creative message and when it was too simple, and they could not find the 'hidden meaning', it was incongruent with their expectation of the genre. Therefore they found this frustrating, and thus less appealing and less persuasive.

As we know that quantitative perceived effectiveness measures may be limited in its proxy for actual effectiveness, we complemented data collection with qualitative free-text responses that gave a fuller, nuanced picture as to how people were interpreting the metaphoric and double readings. This revealed a trend toward creative metaphor being more appealing and persuasive than conventional metaphor, that would not have been uncovered if purely quantitative research had been carried out.

Big Cat integrated our findings into the campaign before it launched. The campaign's objective to increase the uptake of STI home testing kits increased by 51% compared to previous campaigns, meaning that more people were able to be diagnosed and given the treatment that they needed. While there were more factors involved in the success of the campaign, the indicative improvements metaphor and double entendre made to the appreciation and persuasiveness of the campaign opens the doors for further research in this area. The study illustrates the positive social impact collaboration between academics and advertisers can have.

RQ3. (How) can we reliably identify and interpret creative figurative tropes in advertising?

In Chapter 4, with Pérez Sobrino, I developed a stepwise procedure to identify and interpret multimodal metaphor and metonymy in advertising. We also used inter-rater reliability tests to help improve the identification of metaphor and metonymy in multimodal contexts.

If producing replicable metaphors is your aim, then we recommended that analysts either initially annotate data together, or annotate the data independently in rounds and meet to discuss their application of the procedure after each round. At this point, analysts can discuss any controversial or borderline instances, recording any refinements they make to the procedure to more accurately capture the data. These discussions will help the analysts learn where the boundaries are for their procedure. The identification of metaphor and metonymy becomes easier when the analysts are practiced in using the procedure, although the replicability of annotations may not always follow a linear pattern. In our study, we provided an annotation manual that can serve as a template for future researchers. In this manual we highlighted several refinements that may prove useful to researchers studying advertising. The refinements considered whether to count single instances of metaphors and/or metaphoric scenarios, the pervasive metonymy of LOGOS FOR COMPANY/BRAND, personification as a metaphoric and metonymic reading, and cases of overlapping metaphors and metonymies.

One of the main challenges we faced when developing our analytical procedure was deciding on which tropes framed the salient message of the advertisement, as opposed to peripheral messages. This was a challenge I also faced in Chapter 6 where I analyzed sports commercials for their creative use of metaphor and metonymy. Despite the efforts of scholars to categorize the identification and interpretation of figurative tropes to enable comparative

research, the figurative tropes we study as researchers are inherently complex, dynamic, and creative. If our aim as researchers is to distil the operations of figurative tropes in various channels, modes, genres (etc.) of communication then we have to be transparent in where we set the boundaries of our analysis. I argue that one way to do this is through reflexive practice.

Reflexive practice enables the analyst to reflect on their own annotations with regards to how and why they have reached their initial impressions. This approach is useful to researchers studying figurative phenomena as figurative tropes can be slippery, being at times indistinct from one another, and difficult to pin down in only one pass of the data. Revisiting analysis is not a bad thing. In fact, it can help the analyst delve deeper into the workings of figurative tropes in the material of study. However, it is important to note any changes that are made as the interpretation of the tropes develops during the analysis process. This also provides transparency and may aid in replicability, although this is yet to be tested and would be an interesting avenue of future research.

Another way reflexive practice may improve the transparency and replicability of identifying and interpreting figurative tropes is the disclosure of the analysts' experience with the data (e.g. their knowledge of the genre and its conventions), their experience with the analytical procedure, and their linguistic and cultural knowledge that may guide mapping certain domains over others. We explore how these details may influence annotations of metaphor and metonymy in Chapter 4 and in Chapter 5. We do not label this reflexive approach as such in Chapter 4 (and it is less of a focus in Chapter 5). However, in Chapter 6 this approach is developed more thoroughly as a part of an Integrated Metaphor Exploration Procedure (IMEP).

IMEP is designed to integrate reflexive practice into the process of analyzing figurative

tropes. It takes the position of prioritizing exploration over replicability. Although, as I have discussed above, the reporting of refinements made to the procedure that is used can make analysis more transparent and aid future researchers to understand the decisions made by the original analyst. This in itself could contribute toward the research's replicability. This approach can be especially useful if the analysis is carried out by a single analyst, because it cannot be tested for replicability in the 'traditional' sense of achieving high inter-rater reliability (IRR) scores (taken to indicate high agreement) between multiple analysts, as in previous metaphor identification studies. Indeed, contrary to previous uses of IRR tests that aim to seek agreement between analysts, in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 we used IRR tests to highlight areas of variation between analyst annotations. Using IRR tests in this way, in Chapter 5 we were able to uncover instances where the figurative complexity (meaning) and visual complexity (form) vary according to the cultural origin of the material and the cultural background of the analyst. I discuss the influence of culture, as well as genre and register, in the following section that addresses RQ4.

Another reason for developing IMEP was to integrate the processes of identification and interpretation of metaphor. I argued that interpretation occurs even before identification of metaphor. Metaphor identification procedures FILMIP (Filmic Metaphor Identification Procedure) and C-MIPVA (Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure in Video Advertisements) separate these two processes. Despite observing the material first, the initial impression the analyst has of its meaning is not recorded in FILMIP and C-MIPVA. The first record is the breaking down of the material into segments *before* the analyst apparently interprets the domains involved in potential cross-domain mappings that result in the formation of figurative relationships. Admittedly, previous metaphor identification procedures MIP(VU) and VISMIP do pay attention to the contextual meaning of the whole text or image

under scrutiny, and this is a key part of the procedure.

Analysts should not be perturbed by the fact that the identification and interpretation of figurative tropes, especially in a creative context such as advertising, is an inherently subjective process. Indeed, for research to progress, sometimes it is more useful to observe differences in how analysts construe figurative communication in its various forms so as to access new ways to analyze the material and learn more about the nuances of the figurative phenomena. However, there is a troubling view associated with previous metaphor identification procedures MIP(VU) and VISMIP. Šorm & Steen (2018, p. 55) stated that "it is also important that analysts arrive at a general understanding in a systematic and reliable manner. Ideas about what a visual [also written language] shows and what it is about may differ between analysts. If these ideas differ too strongly, there is no point in continuing the procedure of identification." The main aim of MIP(VU) and VISMIP, then, is to identify reliable metaphors, which is problematic to the study of metaphor because this approach could miss out on creative instances or multiple metaphors that contribute to the main message that are equally important, merely because these metaphors do not replicate across different analysts. In my view, this approach confines us to only one part of what metaphor is. The idea that there is "no point" in exploring metaphors that are not replicable stunts the progression of the research field. The development of IMEP in Chapter 6 takes a different perspective to metaphor study in that it *explores* metaphor, and in particular creative, perhaps even individualistic, metaphors to perform an initial reach into the extensive world of metaphor as a dynamic, creative phenomenon.

There are, of course, limitations to IMEP, being in its infancy. Yet it offers plenty of scope to expand in future research. IMEP was developed for the purpose of the study into the creative use of metaphor in commercials, rather than figurative communication more

generally. However, it does consider the interaction of other figurative tropes with metaphor (e.g. metonymy, personification, pun, wordplay, irony) when they play a role in construing the salient message. There is opportunity to take the explorative and reflexive approach of IMEP and expand it to incorporate other figurative tropes occurring in their own right. IMEP was based on FILMIP and C-MIPVA and so its design focuses on analyzing metaphor in the context of commercials. However, I argue that metaphor is a dynamic trope in any case, as we have seen from its versatility across different modes of communication, genres, registers, cultures, languages, etc. explored in this thesis. Therefore, IMEP's approach explores this dynamic nature that might provide deeper insight into the creativity of metaphor (and a little of metonymy), and perhaps later of other figurative tropes.

RQ4. (How) can culture, genre, and register influence the creative use of figurative tropes?

To delve deeper into the potential variation of figurative tropes and their creative use, I conducted research that I reported in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. In Chapter 4, working with Pérez Sobrino I found that the creative use of figurative tropes can vary according to the genre of advertising, and an analysts' knowledge of the genre can also influence the kinds of domains and mappings that are identified and interpreted. In Chapter 5, with Yue Guan I applied a framework by Deignan et al. (2013), that is designed to look at the variation of figurative language use according to genre and register, to a multimodal context of education app icons.

With regards to genre, we investigated whether, and how, the communicative purpose of the apps and the discourse communities involved in its creation and perception informed the

variation of figurative tropes and design elements in education app icons. We suggested that the difference in app functions could equate to differences in field (topic) as a register feature of app icons, because patterns of tropes and design elements corresponded to particular app functions. For example, apps that enabled users to identify different species of bug or plant used visual signs of a singular leaf or bug as metonymic referents to identify its species using the smartphone's camera. We also found that different design elements could signal different figurative messages to different discourse communities of the app. For example, the app could appeal to child learning and parents wanting their child to have a good education.

We also found that some app icons had instances of multiple metonymies that equally contributed to the communicative purpose of the app, to inform app users of its function and to appeal to them to download it. However, these metonymies could be combined so that multiple sources domains that used objects to infer the action they are used for) informed a broader, overarching target domain OBJECT FOR APP FUNCTION. This kind of metonymy is known as a multiple-source-in-target metonymy, previously found in print advertisements (Pérez Sobrino, 2017, p. 106). The level of abstraction at which analysts study figurative tropes can guide what tropes are identified, and how much detail is uncovered. This highlights an important methodological decision that needs to be made clearer in studies looking to identify and interpret metaphor and metonymy, and indeed figurative tropes in general.

We found that distinguishing the basis of personification was difficult as it can have a metaphoric or metonymic reading (we faced the same issue in Chapters 4 and 6). Having said this, personification was almost exclusively found in Chinese app icons. We suggested that the use of animal characters was a key part of the Chinese culture, which might make this figurative trope and design technique more familiar and appealing to a Chinese audience.

In summary, culture, genre, and register are important factors to consider when analyzing figurative tropes. Chapter 5 also offered empirical research for the creative use of figurative tropes in advertising in a confined visual space (app icons) while previous research has largely focused on advertising billboards and posters.

RQ5. (How) can creative figurative communication be used in advertising to address social issues?

RQ5 aimed to expand theoretical research by considering its social impact on people and critically evaluating how creative figurative communication may be useful tools in addressing social issues. RQ5 was addressed by Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. Chapter 3 investigated the effectiveness of the creative use of metaphor and double entendre in a sexual health awareness campaign in collaboration with Big Cat Agency. Metaphor and double entendre combined with humor to mediate the potentially embarrassing topic of STIs. This is yet another example of how metaphor can combine forces with other figurative tropes to be creative. In this study we found that metaphor, double entendre, and humor contributed toward making a positive impact on people's lives by helping to increase the uptake of STI home testing kits that meant more people got the diagnosis and treatment that they needed.

Chapter 6 examined how figurative tropes can be used creatively through its meaning and form in commercials to position sports brands in relation to social issues (e.g. accessibility and equality). This was an explorative study, as the actual impact of the ways in which these tropes are used was not tested on people's attitudes and behaviors. However, the study examined how the creative use of figurative tropes could be done sensitively in a way that created empowering messages, or insensitively in a way that played off conventionalized

metaphors which drew attention to outdated and potentially damaging perspectives toward accessibility and equality. These conventionalized metaphors also highlighted and glamorized social struggles rather than addressing systematic causes. Metaphors can carry a lot of baggage, and sometimes trying to reclaim a metaphor for better reasons is not possible. While it might be beyond the scope of companies to truly enact social change, the study nonetheless showed that how companies communicate messages should be considered carefully.

There were a number of ways that figurative tropes were used creatively through meaning and form. One was through conceptual creativity, whereby metaphor combined with (sometimes multiple) different tropes such as metonymy, irony, and personification. Another was linguistic creativity that involved metaphor and wordplay (supporting Carter, 2004). An argumentative strategy, negation, was also used to flip around existing social movements (e.g. #BlackGirlMagic and Black Lives Matter, and feminism) and for brands to make the negated message their own empowerment strategy. The question I asked was why negate a movement that is already empowering? Perhaps a completely new creative mapping would be useful here.

Figurative tropes were also used creatively through their depiction across modes (e.g. visual, music/sound, spoken and written dialogue), filmic components (often borrowed from other genres), and form structures (e.g. juxtaposition, fusion, replacement). The form structures were proposed by C-MIPVA, and were inspired by previous research from Forceville (2009), Bobrova (2015), Gkiouzepas & Hogg (2011), and also relatable to Phillips and McQuarrie (2004). In the study, I initially explored whether these form structures could be potentially expandable from visual to other modes. It also raised the question whether it might be more appropriate to form new categories for other modes? A study dedicated to testing out form structures across other modes, and trying to answer the proposed question, is

required to make further headway.

RQ6. What challenges and possible solutions are there for successfully collaborating with marketing practitioners?

This RQ brought the thesis full circle. In Chapter 2, the first empirical study, explored how academic researchers and marketing practitioners understood creativity and effectiveness, as well as ways in which these two groups could collaborate well together. Utilizing some suggestions found in the interviews, and progressing through the collaborative partnership during my PhD program, I recorded the challenges and reflected on possible solutions to a successful collaboration with Jeannette Littlemore in Chapter 7. Working with Big Cat Agency has enabled us to learn more about each other and about our respective disciplines, to empirically test our research on figurative language and creativity in advertising, and contextualize the findings within both theory and practice, and to have impactful research to the betterment of society. At the end of the Chapter, we provided some tips for linguistic researchers to work with non-linguistic partner organizations. Clear and constructive communication is key to a successful partnership, which involves establishing:

- A baseline understanding of concepts and terminology (as in Chapter 2)
- Expectations for the partnership (i.e. aims and outcomes)
- Timeframes realistic to the both parties
- A willingness to learn from each other and open mindedness to supplement/challenge our existing perceptions and knowledge
- Value of the contributions made to the partnership

Yet, more work that needs to be done to better connect academia and industry. Possible

actions include:

- Developing a system that facilitates academic and advertiser training so that both camps are brought up to speed on the knowledge and culture within each other's disciplines, and to correct any misinformation or misunderstanding of each other's disciplines
- Improving the balance of mutual benefit to avoid the potential for exploitation
- Researching more into the ethical practices of the marketing industry

Concluding statement

In this thesis, I have investigated the creative use of figurative communication in advertising. Figurative communication encompasses figurative tropes metaphor, metonymy, personification, and pun and double entendre, with interactions from humor, irony, and wordplay. Figurative communication can be creative through variation in its *meaning* as conceptual mappings (different figurative tropes) and figurative complexity (from a single trope to the combination of multiple tropes, or figurative scenarios/narratives), and its *form* across different modes or multiple modes, visual complexity (schematic to content rich), design components (e.g. text, color, shape, lighting, frame rate, etc.), and form structures (e.g. juxtaposition, fusion, replacement, transformation). The creative use of figurative communication in advertising can vary according to culture, genre, register, semantics, narratives, and grammar. It can also influence people's attitudes and behaviors, and contribute to positive social change. Yet, figurative communication needs to be used sensitively and in relation to the context (social, historical, cultural, etc.), genre, register, and its depiction to avoid perpetuating stereotypical and insensitive messages.

Methodologically, I have proposed new ways to study metaphor as well as other figurative tropes such as metonymy, personification, and pun through both replicable and explorative approaches. IRR tests can be used as a means to notice the variation as well as the similarity of annotations between analysts to explore creative instances of figurative communication. I have argued for the integration of reflexive practice that records changes made to analytical procedures, discloses analyst backgrounds, and acknowledges the subjectivity and nuances of dynamic figurative tropes to produce more open research into creative figurative communication.

The thesis has an academic and applied basis that contributes to both theory and practice. I exhibited how collaborative research both within academia (co-authored work), and academia with industry can progress our understanding of theory and of practice. I have demonstrated how linguistic researchers (and by extension researchers in general) can successfully collaborate with marketing practitioners (and non-linguistic/non-academic businesses and not-for-profit organizations).

Future research

At present in the field of cognitive linguistics there is limited research on the creative use of metaphor, and even less research on the creativity of other figurative tropes. Therefore, any further studies in this area would be welcome to provide a more nuanced understanding of how creativity can occur through meaning and form on linguistic, visual, multimodal, and conceptual levels. The topic would benefit from expanding research on creative use across different contexts, genres, and populations. There still needs to be more research that explores creativity further by:

1. Describing creativity: determining how to measure creativity;

2. Comparing creativity: creative versus non-creative material and people;
3. Relating factors to creativity: relationship between creativity scores and other cognitive measures and manipulations that effect creative production.

Throughout the thesis I have suggested opportunities for future research. For the studies I present in my thesis, all would benefit from replication with larger sample sizes or different population of participants (e.g. interviews across multiple marketing agencies) in order to test the generalizability of my findings. Future research could further explore the role of form in the creative use of figurative communication. In particular, I would be interested to test whether visual form structures (i.e. juxtaposition, fusion, replacement, and transformation) can be applied to the formulation of other modes, or categorize other structures that are more appropriate to modes other than visual. Future research can test whether there is a cline of creativity for figurative communication that might position different kinds of creativity to degrees of creativity, which would further research that tests the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis (Giora et al., 2004). One big question mark that arose in my thesis was the debate concerning the intentionality of creativity as a criterion for creativity. I would like to investigate whether the IxC table I developed in Chapter 2 stands up against empirical data.

Future studies could also apply the annotation manual template and integrate reflexive practice into their analytical procedures for figurative tropes, and test the replicability of IMEP. Further research is required to create, test, and refine the operationalization of identification procedures for figurative tropes such as metonymy. Another area for future research would be to test how messages that use creative figurative tropes in relation to social issues are received by people from various communities, and to see whether reactions vary according to the variation in the formulation of the tropes' creativity through meaning and/or form. Similarly, further research should measure the impact of reframing or negating existing

concepts has on target audience(s).

We need more research projects that improve links between researchers and non-academic organizations that can facilitate positive social impact. There are already a select number of linguist researchers working with partner organizations to improve the use of metaphor and its positive impact in society. For example, Semino (e.g. “Metaphor Menu”, 2019) works with cancer trusts on conversations about cancer and patient care, Tay (e.g. 2013) works with psychotherapists and counselling services, and Littlemore and Turner (e.g. 2019) work with miscarriage charities. Further avenues for future collaboration may include:

- Building a practice-informed curriculum for universities;
- Increasing the access of research to related industries;
- Facilitating opportunities for career development and networking opportunities for academics interested in industry to improve their practical skills that may (re)inform theory.

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