

Has a Fashion Instagram Poster Ads Has Its Linguistic Meaning? (Multimodal Discourse Analysis Approach)

Ria Utami^{1*}, Agung F. Agustian², Hilda M. Putri³

^{1, 2, 3} STBA Yapari-ABA Bandung, Indonesia

Abstract. This research aimed to identify the visual elements of Uniqlo Indonesia Instagram Ads. The method of the study was the descriptive qualitative method. The techniques of collecting data in this research were literature study and documentation. The data sources were eight advertisements analyzed by the Visual Grammar Design Theory of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). The results showed that the Uniqlo Indonesia Instagram Ads implied representational, interactional, and compositional meanings. Representational, Narrative Representation includes of action process; non-transactional was more significant than transactional. Conceptual representation consists of an analytical process. For Interactional, the Participant was Represented than Interactive. The gaze system included Demand being higher than Offer. The social distance was Personal. The Close Social was more significant than Far Social. The perspective had a Subjective image found in terms of High modality. While conveying a message, the ads were directed to attract the viewer.

Keyword: Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Instagram Ads, Representational, Interactional, Compositional Meaning

Received [29 Aug 2023] | Revised [10 Sep 2023] | Accepted [25 Sep 2023]

1 Introduction

Many advertisements have penetrated and used social media as an advertising platform to attract customers. Advertising on the Instagram application can be done with two types of advertising, namely Instagram post ads and Instagram stories ads, both of which have advantages and disadvantages. As reported, the stories feature is excellent because more than 500 million users have used it. Because of this vast potential, many brands increasingly use Instagram Stories ads to promote their products and make it easier to attract consumers. Many companies, especially in the fashion sector, compete to use excellent and effective advertising to attract buyers (Diedrichs & Lee, 2010),

* Corresponding author at: STBA Yapari-ABA Bandung, Indonesia

E-mail address: ria@stba.ac.id

(Bury et al., 2014), (Taylor & Costello, 2017), (Tiggemann & Brown, 2018), (Tiggemann et al., 2019), (Teona et al., 2020). The impact given from each ad is also different, starting from increasing the number of followers and growing likes from posts to increasing the number of product sales. Investigating the fashion Instagram ads' visual elements, there are several research questions: What are the visual aspects, and how are the visual elements represented in Instagram Ads?.

Technology and graphic design development make people present more creative information using images with exciting text and color combinations. The images combine with color, text, and layout to form a discourse that can understand by people. Many aspects are talking about discourse. It can be discussed through advertising, news, posters, political speeches, movies, fashion, games, music, or everything that interacts with human beings.

Multimodal discourse analysis considers how text draws on modes of communication such as pictures, films, videos, images, and sound combined with words to make meaning (Kaltenbacher, 2007). Like all semiotic modes, visual grammar can be analyzed by three metafunctions. (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) Describes three types of social meanings (language metafunction) that are drawn on simultaneously in the use of language: Ideational (what the text is about), Interpersonal (relationship between participants), and textual meaning (how a text has organized the message). By including Halliday's language meta-function ideas, Kress and Leeuwen modify the meta-functions of an image as Representational, Interactive, and Compositional Meaning.

Representational meaning means that any semiotic system has to be able to represent aspects of the experiential world outside its particular method of signs in a referential or pseudo-referential sense. Representational meaning is divided into two main categories of processes; narrative (by directing the viewer along with the patterns or structures in the image and conceptual), and conceptual representation (represents participants in terms of their "class, structure, or meaning) is a static type of representation.

Interactional meaning is the semiotic system that projects the relations between the producer of a sign and the receiver/ reproducer. Five elements are examined to reveal images' interactive meaning: Participant, gaze system, social distance, perspectives, and modality. There are two kinds of images: subjective and objective. There is perspective in subjective images but not in objective ones. Discussing subjective images divided into horizontal and vertical angles shows the relationship between viewers and represented participants. The element of interactive meaning is modality. modality judgments as "social and dependent on what is considered real in a social group for which the representation is primarily intended." There are variables in the modality that will be attending in the analysis; Color saturation, Color differentiation, Color modulation, Contextualization,

Representation, Depth, Illumination, and Brightness. *Compositional meaning* means that any semiotic system has to have the capacity to form texts, complexes of signs which cohere both internally and with the context in and for which they were produced. Three elements are examined to reveal the compositional: information value, salience, and framing. The location of the different components in the overall composition represents the information value. The role of any particular element in the ensemble depends on whether it is placed on the left or right, top or bottom, center or margin. Salience attracts the viewer's attention to different degrees, as realized by factors such as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, tonal value, differences in sharpness, etc. Framing is the presence or absence of framing devices (realized by elements that create dividing lines or solid frame lines) that disconnect or connect aspects of the image, signifying that they belong or do not belong together in some sense.

2 Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative research method that reflects the actual situation without focusing more on the results and their meaning. The research used a multimodal approach to analyze the data. Multimodality is a term used to describe how people communicate using different modes simultaneously. Kress & Van Leeuwen, a multimodal approach, is concerned with interacting with both verbal and visual semiotic modes to realize the communicative functions of the text (Kaltenbacher, 2007). Multimodal is chosen in this research because this is a new way to communicate with others. Nowadays, the study of multimodal discourse analysis is fascinating to be analyzed. For this case, multimodal discourse analysis is the best approach to use in this research because multimodal discourse analysis is the deep understanding of the combination of verbal elements, visual elements, and images (Constantinou, 2005), (Moya Guijarro & Pinar Sanz, 2008), (Norris, 2016), (Yao & Zhuo, 2018), (Lim, 2019), (Sihombing et al., 2022).

The objects of the research were the Uniform Blue Edition of Uniqlo Indonesia Instagram Stories Ads. The data were collected from February until May 2022. Uniqlo Instagram Ads were analyzed using Kress & Van Leeuwen's theory (Representational meaning, Interactive meaning, and Compositional meaning). The data were analyzed in terms of Representational meaning. There are two processes in data analysis: the narrative and the conceptual. In the conceptual process, the data used analytical processes where the viewers understand the picture from the image aspects and the text. The narrative process was discussed one by one in every image. Four primary majors were discussed in interactional meaning; Participant, gaze system, perspective, and modality. In terms of Compositional meaning, the whole data has the same type.

3 Result and Discussion

This picture was a single image of Instagram ads. This picture had six participants touching each other. The participants wore clothes by Uniqlo, which were promoted as its advertisement. They also reflect the blue outfit that could give a classic impression but still be stylish and comfortable.



Figure 1. P1 of Single Image

a. Representational Analysis of P1

In terms of the narrative process, the participants of the following picture are connected by any vector by doing something to or for each other. So the narrative process of this picture is the action of the transactional process.

b. Interactional Analysis of P1

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture is the interactive participants. The participants in the picture interact with each other by showing each other's touch.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the demanding image. It shows eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is close social distance with full shots where the whole figures of the interactive participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. For color saturation, it has many colors, although it is simple and diverse in its color selection. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue tones. The representation of this picture shows a plain blue color background and interactive participants who wear fashion with different styles.



Figure 2. P2 of First Image of Single Video

This picture was the first picture from a slideshow of Instagram ads. The picture contains two participants who don't touch and stare. The participants were wearing clothes by Uniqlo, which promotes its advertisement. They are also reflecting the blue outfit and jeans with a simple style.

a. Representational Analysis of P2

In the narrative process, the participants were not connected by any vector and not doing something for each other. So this picture's narrative process is the non-transactional process's action. They enjoy it in their way by not making eye contact or touch.

b. Interactional Analysis of P2

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture represents the participants. The participants in the picture don't interact with each other.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the offer image. It shows no eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is a far social distance with medium long shots where from the head to the waist of the represented participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue and white tones. The background and the picture of food and drink on the table detail the image's contextualization and depth. This picture has a clear perspective. The existence of the windows hindered even some sunlight; the brightness was not spreading evenly. The representation of this picture shows the represented participants who wear a fashion with simple styles in their activity



Figure 3. P3 of Second Image of Single Video

This picture was the second picture from a slideshow of Instagram ads. This picture contains only one participant. The participant is wearing clothes by Uniqlo, which promotes as its advertisement. This photo shows outdoor activities with the background of a car garage.

a. Representational Analysis of P3

In the narrative process, the participants were not connected by any vector and not doing something for each other because it contained only one participant. So this picture's narrative process is the non-transactional process's action.

b. Interactional Analysis of P3

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture is the represented participant. The participant in the picture is only one participant.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the offer image. It showed no eye contact from the participant to the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is a far social distance with medium long shots where from the head to the waist of the represented participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue and white tones. The brightness, from the good lighting and some supporting ornaments, makes this picture visible even though the background is a bit blurry, but we can see that it is a car garage at home. A blurred background image of a car garage and the participant detailed the contextualization and depth. The representation of this picture shows the participants, a boy sitting in a chair and wearing a fashion with simple styles in outdoor activities



Figure 4. P4 of Third Image of Single Video

The picture shows contextualization and depth. The representation of this picture shows the represented participants who wear a fashion with simple styles in outdoor activities.



Figure 5. First Image of Single Video

This picture was the first picture from a slideshow of Instagram ads. This picture contains two participants who are touching each other. They were reflecting the blue outfit and sneakers with a simple style.

a. Representational Analysis of P5

Regarding the narrative process, the participants were connected by a vector, meaning they did something to or for each other. So the narrative process of this picture is the action of the transactional process. They touch each other but do not make eye contact.

b. Interactional Analysis of P5

1) In terms of participants, this picture is the interactive participants. The participants in the picture interact with each other by showing each other's touch.

- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the demanding image. It shows eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is a close social distance with a full shot where the whole figures of the interactive participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. It has many colors for color saturation, although its color selection is simple and diverse. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue tones. A blue color background and the Participant detail the contextualization and the depth. The representation of this picture shows a plain blue color background, and the represented participants wear a fashion with simple styles.



Figure 6. P6 of Second Image of Single Video

This picture is included in the second picture from a slideshow of Instagram ads. This picture contains two participants who are not touching each other. The participants wear clothes by Uniqlo, which will be promoted as its advertisement. They also reflect the blue outfit and sneakers and wedges with a sporty and feminine look of simple style.

a. Representational Analysis of P6

Regarding the narrative process, the participants of the following picture were not connected by any vector and were not doing something for each other. So this picture's narrative process is the non-transactional process's action.

b. Interactional Analysis of P6

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture represents participants. The participants in the picture are only two participants and not doing anything.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the demanding image. It shows eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).

- 3) The social distance is a close social distance with full shots where the whole figures of the interactive participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. For color saturation, it has many colors, although it is simple and diverse in its color selection. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue tones. A blue color background and the Participant detail the contextualization and the depth. The representation of this picture shows a plain blue background, and the represented participants wear a fashion with sporty and feminine styles.



Figure 7. P7 of Third Image of Single Video

This picture is included in the third picture from a slideshow of Instagram ads. This picture contains two participants who are smiling and not touching each other. They are also reflecting the blue outfit with a formal and casual look.

a. Representational Analysis of P7

Regarding the narrative process, the participants of the following picture were not connected by any vector and were not doing something for each other. So this picture's narrative process is the non-transactional process's action.

b. Interactional Analysis of P7

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture represents participants. The participant in the picture is only two participants and not doing something.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the demanding image. It shows eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is a close social distance with full shots where the whole figures of the interactive participants are visible.

- 4) This picture above has a high modality. It has many colors for color saturation, although its color selection is simple and diverse. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue tones. A blue color background and the Participant detail the contextualization and the depth. The representation of this picture shows a plain blue color background, and the represented participants wear a fashion with formal and casual styles.



Figure 8. P8 of Single Image

This picture was included in a single image of Instagram ads. This picture contains three participants who are touching tree trunks. They were reflecting the blue outfit that can give a classic impression but still be stylish in the summer sessions

a. Representational Analysis of P8

Regarding the narrative process, the participants of the following picture are connected by any vector and touching the tree trunk. So this picture's narrative process is the non-transactional process's action.

b. Interactional Analysis of P8

- 1) In terms of participants, this picture is the interactive participants. The participant in the picture is only two participants and not doing something.
- 2) The gaze system of this picture shows the demanding image. It shows eye contact between participants and the viewers (people who see the ads).
- 3) The social distance is a far emotional distance with medium long shots where from the head to the waist of the represented participants are visible.
- 4) This picture above has a high modality. For color differentiation and modulation, it has a variety of colors presented in a range of blue and white tones. The contextualization and the depth were detailed by the background showing that it's a summer session and

the participant. The representation of this picture shows the represented participants who wear a fashion with casual styles.

4 Conclusion

The angle is the relationship between the image's and designated participants' frontal planes. The two can be parallel, aligned, or from an angle, diverge from one another". The image may also have an oblique or frontal point of view or something between them. These frontal or oblique angles decide the relationship between the represented participants and the viewer. The angle could reveal the viewer's involvement with the defined participants if the angle is frontal. In the case of the oblique angle, the relation is detached; the viewer may not align themselves with the represented participants. Involvement and detachment in depicting humans and animals may also interact with 'demand' and 'offer.' Vertical angle reveals the relation of strength among the viewer and represented participants. When the viewer sees the defined participants from a high angle (Represented participants look small), the connection among them is a type of superiority of the viewer over the represented participants. Suppose the viewer sees the defined participants from a low angle (RPs are fantastic). The relationship between the viewer and RPs is the type of superiority of RPs over the viewer. There is an equal relationship between the RPs and the viewer. The image is at eye level. Neither the viewer nor the RPs have strength over each other; they are on the same level of power.

The fashion Instagram ads participants found are represented, participants and interactive participants. The represented participant is the individuals, places, and things described in the picture. Interactive Participant is the people who interact with each other, the creators, and the image viewers. The element of interactive meaning is found in the gaze system. There were two types of relationships that images could create with the viewer. Demands are when a participant looks out to the viewers; Offer is when a participant has no direct eye contact. The third element of interactive meaning is social distance. There are five types of social distance; Intimate Distance is only the face of the head is visible. Close Personal distance is the head, and the shoulders are visible. Far Personal distance is the visible area from the head to the waist. Close Social distance is the whole figure is visible. Far Social distance is the entire figure, and spaces around it are visible. The size of a frame found was a long shot, full shot.

The Uniqlo Indonesia Instagram ad's visual grammar was symbolic and categorized as non-transactional action. The narrative process and conceptual analysis show that the participants show their style of dress and personality, and the viewers understood the purpose of this ad by paying attention to all aspects. In interactional meaning, it represented participants, demand images, close social distance, a subjective image at eye level, and mostly high modality. Interactional meaning

shows the ad's engagement through clothes and a mix of bright colors to catch the viewer's attention. Compositional meanings represented ideal and real information value, high salience, and disconnection framing. It showed that salience, information value, and frame were critical in providing meaning in the advertisement to convey its intent and purpose.

Besides perceiving a world condition to the viewer from the image producer, the visual meaning conveys a message to the point of attracting the viewer. When promoting the product, the Uniqlo ads also paid attention to things that could be the center of attention, such as the participant's location in the frame, the focus point of the picture, and color and some phrases in these ads.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bury, B., Tiggemann, M., & Slater, A. (2014). Directing gaze: The effect of disclaimer labels on women's visual attention to fashion magazine advertisements. *Body Image*, 11(4), 357–363. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2014.06.004>
- [2] Constantinou, O. (2005). Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Media, modes and technologies. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 9(4), 602–618. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-6441.2005.00310.x>
- [3] Diedrichs, P. C., & Lee, C. (2010). GI Joe or Average Joe? The impact of average-size and muscular male fashion models on men's and women's body image and advertisement effectiveness. *Body Image*, 7(3), 218–226. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2010.03.004>
- [4] Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. (2013). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar*. Routledge.
- [5] Kaltenbacher, M. (2007). Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. Reading images: The grammar of visual design. In *Information Design Journal* (Vol. 15, Issue 3, pp. 292–297). <https://doi.org/10.1075/idj.15.3.13kal>
- [6] Lim, V. F. (2019). Analysing the teachers' use of gestures in the classroom: A Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis approach. *Social Semiotics*, 29(1), 83–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2017.1412168>
- [7] Moya Guijarro, J., & Pinar Sanz, M. J. (2008). Compositional, interpersonal and representational meanings in a children's narrative. A multimodal discourse analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40(9), 1601–1619. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2008.04.019>
- [8] Norris, S. (2016). Concepts in multimodal discourse analysis with examples from video conferencing. *Yearbook of the Poznan Linguistic Meeting*, 2(1), 141–165. <https://doi.org/10.1515/yplm-2016-0007>
- [9] Sihombing, P. S. R., Herman, H., & ... (2022). How To Teach English Conversation? An Implementation of a Multimodal Discourse Analysis Through Images. *English Review: Journal of ...*, 10(2), 431–438.
- [10] Taylor, C. R., & Costello, J. P. (2017). What do we know about fashion advertising? A review of the literature and suggested research directions. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 8(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2016.1255855>
- [11] Teona, G., Ko, E., & Kim, S. J. (2020). Environmental claims in online video advertising: Effects for fast-fashion and luxury brands. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(6), 858–887. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1644144>

- [12] Tiggemann, M., & Brown, Z. (2018). Labelling fashion magazine advertisements: Effectiveness of different label formats on social comparison and body dissatisfaction. *Body Image*, 25, 97–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2018.02.010>
- [13] Tiggemann, M., Brown, Z., & Thomas, N. (2019). (Don't) look here!: The effect of different forms of label added to fashion advertisements on women's visual attention. *Body Image*, 31(October 2017), 88–95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2019.08.011>
- [14] Yao, Y., & Zhuo, Y. (2018). A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of the Promotional Video of Hangzhou. *English Language Teaching*, 11(10), 121. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n10p121>