



Conceptual complexes in multimodal advertising

Los complejos conceptuales en la publicidad multimodal

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ABSTRACT: Several scholars have dealt with the workings of metaphor and metonymy in multimodal advertisements (see Forceville, 2009; Uriós-Aparisi, 2009; or Pérez-Sobrino, 2017, among others). The present study investigates conceptual complexity to broaden the set of analytical categories to be used in multimodal analysis by making use of some of the latest developments on conceptual complexes, or principled combinations of cognitive models (e.g., frames, metaphors, metonymies), as discussed in Ruiz de Mendoza (2017, 2021) to a multimodal context. Work on conceptual complexity in Cognitive Linguistics has taken two main directions. One is provided by Blending Theory, which focuses on accounting for the emergence of new structure not present in the contributing conceptual constructs after selected integration. Another direction studies patterns of conceptual interaction with a view to finding regularities that can be formulated as high-level generalizations. We will adopt this second direction. The main aim of the study is to test these analytical categories and principles of knowledge organization in terms of their communicative impact within a multimodal environment. A subsidiary aim is to further develop the theoretical apparatus underlying this initial work. Analysing a corpus of 62 multimodal advertisements, we found that: (i) the nature of a frame determines its function, i.e., matrix frames are receiving frames, which ‘situationalize’ conceptual structure, whereas donor frames play a focal role; (ii) sometimes there is no frame integration but rather internal development within a given frame, which is possible thanks to the incorporation of an external element that is not integrated, but simply facilitates the development of the

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frame; (iii) there are also cases in which there is frame composition instead of integration; (iv) metonymy proves to be a licensing factor previous to integration, and (v) high-level non-metaphorical correlations can act as cues for the activation of metaphorical frameworks.

Key words: conceptual complexes; multimodal advertisement; frame integration; frame composition.

RESUMEN: Varios autores han estudiado el funcionamiento de la metáfora y la metonimia en los anuncios multimodales (véase Forceville, 2009; Uriós-Aparisi, 2009; o Pérez-Sobrino, 2017, entre otros). El presente estudio investiga la complejidad conceptual para ampliar el conjunto de categorías analíticas a utilizar en el análisis multimodal haciendo uso de algunos de los últimos desarrollos sobre complejos conceptuales, o combinaciones de principios de modelos cognitivos (por ejemplo, marcos, metáforas, metonimias) (ver Ruiz de Mendoza, 2017, 2021) a un contexto multimodal. Los trabajos sobre complejidad conceptual en Lingüística Cognitiva han tomado dos direcciones principales. Una es la proporcionada por la Teoría del *Blending*, que se centra en dar cuenta de la aparición de una nueva estructura no presente en los constructos conceptuales contribuyentes tras la integración seleccionada. Otra dirección estudia los patrones de interacción conceptual con vistas a encontrar regularidades que puedan formularse como generalizaciones de alto nivel. Adoptaremos esta segunda dirección. El objetivo principal del estudio es poner a prueba estas categorías analíticas y principios de organización del conocimiento en términos de su impacto comunicativo dentro de un entorno multimodal. Un objetivo secundario es seguir desarrollando el aparato teórico que subyace a este trabajo inicial. Al analizar un corpus de 62 anuncios multimodales, comprobamos que (i) la naturaleza de un marco determina su función, es decir, los marcos matrices son marcos receptores, que "sitúan" la estructura conceptual, mientras que los marcos donantes desempeñan una función focal; (ii) a veces no hay integración de marcos, sino un desarrollo interno dentro de un marco determinado, que es posible gracias a la incorporación de un elemento externo que no se integra, sino que simplemente facilita el desarrollo del marco; (iii) también hay casos en los que hay composición de marcos en lugar de integración; (iv) la metonimia resulta ser un factor licenciador previo a la integración, y (v) las correlaciones no metafóricas de alto nivel pueden actuar como pistas para la activación de los marcos metafóricos.

Palabras clave: complejos conceptuales; publicidad multimodal; integración de marcos; composición de marcos.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article offers a preliminary analysis of multimodal advertisements in terms of *conceptual complexes* within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics. Work on conceptual complexes is a recent development of the traditional two-domain approach to

conceptual metaphor originally put forward by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999) within Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In this approach metaphor is seen as a cross-domain mapping in which selected conceptual structure from image-schemas (Johnson, 1987) or frames (Fillmore, 1985) is mapped onto corresponding target structure. We will focus our attention on the potential of such constructs to be combined and mapped rather than on the cognitive process itself. This latter aspect of conceptual integration has been the object of attention of Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), which, as noted by Kövecses (2020: 123) deals with the dynamic processes of meaning-making activity in actual use. Sometimes scholars, e.g., Coulson (1996) have mistakenly seen Fauconnier and Turner's views as overriding the traditional two-domain approach. However, as noted by Grady et al. (1999: 120), the two approaches are complementary to each other, with Conceptual Metaphor Theory dealing with "stable knowledge structures" and Blending Theory with "the dynamic evolution of speaker's online representations" (see also Lakoff, 2008, and Fauconnier & Lakoff, 2014).

The present article adopts the two-domain approach and draws our attention to how selected conceptual structure from contributing conceptual constructs can combine into conceptual complexes to produce specific meaning implications that cannot arise from the isolated conceptual inputs. This approach to complexity, which starts with the pioneering work by Goossens (1990) on metaphor-metonymy interaction, is geared to the identification and classification of interaction patterns; that is, it is interested in the potential aspects of the system (what speakers can do), as revealed by the final product, rather than in online representation. Going beyond metaphor-metonymy interaction into other forms of interaction (e.g., metaphor-metaphor, metonymy-metonymy), some more theoretical work in this respect has been carried out in Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014), Ruiz de Mendoza (2017), and Miró (2018). Other scholars have investigated an array of complex metaphoric and metonymic patterns arising within the visual component of multimodal communication, among them Urios-Aparisi (2009), Müller and Cienki (2009), Hidalgo and Kraljevic (2011), Pérez-Sobrino (2013, 2016ab, 2017), and Pérez-Sobrino, Littlemore and Houghton (2018). In addition, some authors have investigated the hyperbolic ingredient of the patterns listed above (Barbu-Kleitsch, 2015; Peña, 2019). The present article can be situated in the context of these previous studies with special emphasis on how different frames can be integrated.

At its present stage of development, work on interaction patterns requires a clear specification of the roles of the interacting configurations and of the nature of the output of such an activity beyond the emergence of such patterns. We need to know if conceptual interaction processes simply combine concepts or also enrich (specific aspects of) them. We also need to know what guides the process of creating a conceptual complex, i.e., which factors license, block, and cue for productive interaction resulting in such constructs. Engaging in this kind of enterprise requires the accumulation of analytical insights based on new data. Multimodal language combining visual and linguistic clues has proved a productive source for examples of conceptual complexity. For this purpose, the author compiled a corpus of 62 multimodal advertisements that was scrutinized for the identification of the patterns, roles, and constraints mentioned above. Then, a sample of representative cases was selected with a view to illustrating and discussing the new insights.

In the context of these initial considerations, the present paper is organized as follows. Section 2 explains the notion of conceptual complex and how conceptual integration works. This section is necessary to contextualize the methodological decisions laid out in Section 3, which is also concerned with the aims of the study and the corpus

design. Section 4 is devoted to the analysis and discussion of the data. Finally, Section 5 summarizes the main findings of the study and sketches out prospective developments.

2. CONCEPTUAL COMPLEXES

A conceptual complex is any principled combination of cognitive models whose meaning effects arise from both the input components and from inferences logically consistent with the nature of such inputs. As a consequence, the existence of a conceptual complex can be detected from a careful examination of the meaning effects of linguistic expressions, in the case of verbal language, and also from other sorts of non-verbal communication (e.g., visual). Conceptual combination resulting in conceptual complexes can either be novel or become conventionalized over time. We can distinguish between two types of conceptual complexes: (1) those that result from the integration of what Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera (2014) term non-operational cognitive models; and (2) those that result from the integration of operational cognitive models. Within the first group we find traditional frames (Fillmore, 1982) and image-schemas (Johnson, 1987), whereas within the second one we encounter metaphor and metonymy, understood as conceptual mappings acting on frames and image-schemas (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff, 1993; Ruiz de Mendoza, 2011). Let us discuss the different types of conceptual complex in more detail:

(1) Frame complexes. A frame, as originally defined by Fillmore (1982), is a coherent schematization of experience. Frames can be seen as isolates, but in normal everyday cognition they combine with other conceptually compatible frames into more complex scenarios. For example, we can think of a knife in terms of its base domains of size, texture, color and shape (cf. Langacker, 1987), but commonly experience will picture a knife in someone's hand cutting something (e.g., bread, meat) or lying in a kitchen cupboard drawer. This second situation supplies a frame complex, i.e., one where the object in question is not conceived of in dissociation from other related frames. An important aspect of the creation of frame complexes is that complexity can be unconventional; e.g., imagine the weather forecast presenter on TV dressed as a clown or a Christmas tree that, instead of twinkle lights and blown-glass ornaments, features a selection of rock-star pictures. In a frame complex the structure that incorporates the rest of the structure organizing the complex is called the matrix frame. Incorporated items come from donor frames (e.g., the clown frame donates structure to the weather forecast presenter's matrix frame).

(2) Image-schematic complexes. An image-schema (Johnson, 1987) is a pre-symbolic topological characterization arising from how we interact with the environment in terms of motor programs. Like frames, image-schemas can be envisaged in isolation or in combination. When two or more image-schemas combine, the result is the creation of an *image-schematic complex* (Ruiz de Mendoza, 2021: 102). Image-schemas cannot be developed in an unconventional way, as their structure, which is highly schematic, underlies frame structure, and cannot be violated. To give an example, think of the sentence *The ship went off course*. At the image-schematic level, it combines the motion and diversion image-schemas, which are incorporated into the path image-schema, which is the matrix schema.

(3) Metaphtonymy. This term was popularized by Goossens (1990) to designate situations in which metaphor and metonymy integrate. In this kind of interaction, the metaphor becomes a matrix structure that is elaborated metonymically (Ruiz de Mendoza & Galera, 2014: 107). For example, in the utterance *She spoke her heart out*, the heart is metonymic for the protagonist's most sincere feelings. Bringing the feelings out is a

metaphor of revealing them as if they were objects that are displayed for public inspection.

(4) Metaphoric complexes. These include metaphoric chains and amalgams. The former are situations where the target domain of a metaphor also functions as the source domain of a second metaphoric mapping. For example, the utterance *They broke away from the main group* treats physical separation of members of a group (target) as the material separation of part of an object from the whole (source). This target is also the source for institutional separation of part of a group of people from the whole (second target). Amalgams include several possible situations. A common metaphoric complex incorporates a self-standing metaphor into another. For example, *My boss is a pig* ('abusive, immoral') combines PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS with IMMORALITY IS FILTH.

(5) Metonymic complexes. There are many possible patterns. A straightforward one is discussed in Herrero (2020: 267): *Delta Chi is going to their national convention*, where the Greek letters stand for the name of a fraternity, which stands for its representatives at the convention.

At its present stage of development, the assumption is that frames (or parts of them) can be integrated into other frames and image-schemas into image-schemas, whereas metaphors can combine with metonymies and also with other metaphors, and metonymies with metonymies. However, the situation is more complex. First, there is a conceptual prominence issue in the integration of frame structure and of image-schemas, since the integrated elements stand out over the rest and become focally prominent. Second, the integration of frames and of image-schemas can provide complex conceptual inputs for metaphoric and metonymic activity, whether alone or in interaction. The present analysis explores these analytical possibilities.

3. METHODOLOGY AND CORPUS DESIGN

The present study applies the notion of conceptual complex, as laid out in Section 2, to a corpus of multimodal advertisements extracted from the web. The purpose of the resulting analysis is to determine the role of conceptual complexity in multimodal advertising.

The corpus consists of 62 multimodal advertisements taken from the Internet. The usefulness of the Internet as a source for the study of language has been widely acknowledged in the literature (cf. Renouf, 2003; Bergh, 2005; and Bergh & Zanchetta, 2008) because of its enormous size and variety. In order to avoid any bias, the ads were selected randomly from <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/> by means of the search engine provided by the webpage and the medium 'print'.

A preliminary analysis on a small randomized sample of 6 examples pointed to the partial adequacy of the analytical categories used in previous work on multimodal advertising (see e.g., Forceville, 1996, 2006, 2016; Hidalgo & Kraljevic, 2011; Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). Thus, this initial analysis suggested that the patterns identified in this previous literature did not cover all analytical situations. For example, according to expectations, it was observed that sometimes the text constrains the image, while there are other cases in which the text simply reinforces what is presented in the image; in other circumstances, the text helps to contextualize the image. However, rather unexpectedly, it was also observed that the image can be subsidiary to the text, the elements of the image being a mere illustrative or contextualizing complement to the verbal message. We found an example of this last case in the preliminary corpus. The image depicts a couple that have just arrived at a hotel lobby. Apparently, they have been walking as they are carrying

big bag packs. The image also presents two people working at the hotel; one of them is answering the phone, while the other is noting down the information given by the guests. The image simply depicts an everyday situation. However, the text that accompanies the image reads as follows: *Monopoly. Own it all.* It is the text that is conceptually prominent, and the image simply complements the message present in the text.

Then the rest of the examples from the corpus were covered and other patterns emerged. We discuss examples of such patterns in the following section.

It should be noted that the discussion of patterns is intended to abide by the generalization and cognitive commitments put forward by Lakoff (1990) as foundational for the cognitive-linguistic enterprise. The generalization commitment refers to the adherence to characterize general principles that apply to all aspects of human language; the cognitive commitment makes reference to yielding a characterization of language in accordance with what is known about the mind and brain from other disciplines besides linguistics. Following these commitments, our purpose was thus to formulate cognitively and communicatively valid generalizations that apply to a vast number of phenomena. In this regard, the data showed that the notion of conceptual complex allows the analyst to account for the intricacies of examples of multimodal communication based on the combination of textual and visual inputs. The validity of this assertion will become evident in the following section.

The following steps were taken to determine the various conceptual complexes that are present in each of the evaluated advertisements. First, it was checked whether the print advertisement in question was made up entirely of images or if it also contained text. If the second scenario was true, the second step was to examine the function those words served in relation to the image. Third, the image itself was examined. This step required studying the frames and image-schemas used in the advertisement. For that purpose, close attention was paid to the background of the image (matrix frame) with all its elements. Special attention was paid to elements that appeared to be foreign to the matrix frame (i.e., a whole donor frame can be incorporated or simply partial structure from the donor frame). The final step involved determining whether the advertisement contained any metaphors or metonymies. Following these steps carefully was essential in unraveling the complexity of the conceptual design of the advertisement type under scrutiny.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

This section discusses a selection of examples of textual and visual multimodal communication. Each of the examples reveals specific cognitive and communicative characteristics that have not been identified in the previous literature, but also some elements in common with other examples, thus giving rise to specific cases of conceptual complexity. Showing these specific characteristics and grouping them into analytical patterns is an important task in itself. But the use of previously developed analytical categories in the domain of conceptual complexity is also a test of the adequacy of these categories. This is an added benefit of the analysis that ensues.

For ease of exposition, each subsection explores a unique pattern as derived from the analysis of the data. We use different examples to illustrate each pattern. In the discussion any idiosyncrasy within a given pattern is highlighted.

4.1. THE INTERPLAY OF CONCEPTUAL PROMINENCE AND CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION

The notion of conceptual prominence has a long tradition in functional linguistics and discourse studies (Heusinger & Schumacher, 2019). In Cognitive Linguistics, within

the context of Langacker's (1987) perceptual approach to conceptualization, it has been argued to play a role in metonymy. For example, Croft (1993) discusses a conceptual prominence operation which he terms *domain highlighting*. This operation can narrow down the scope of the source meaning representation involved in a metonymic shift, as is the case of the notion of window in *break the window*, whose target domain is window pane. This target notion is obtained by highlighting a part of the source notion of window. Here we study to what extent conceptual prominence plays a role in multimodal advertisements. Our expectation is that conceptual prominence is no less crucial in the creation and understanding of multimodal advertisements than it is to communication in general, since advertisements are but a specialized form of communication.

Figure 1. McDonald's 'on your way all night open' (image reproduced with kind permission from Publicis One Ecuador)



The multimodal advertisement in Figure 1 combines the visual and verbal modes. The advertisement shows the matrix frame of a street at night with two street lamps –one placed opposite the other– and a zebra crossing. The donor frame is the logo of McDonald's, the fast-food chain, which is incorporated into the matrix frame in the place of the lights of the street lamps. The logo is metonymic for the company (LOGO FOR COMPANY), and when imported, it becomes conceptually prominent (as further discussed in Section 4.2.). Moreover, the metonymic target gains conceptual prominence thanks to the shady representation of the matrix frame. This management of visual prominence is further reinforced by presenting the logo at the center of the image, a situation that is matched by the complementary textual support. The text plays a complementary role since all relevant meaning implications can be easily derived on the basis of the image; that is, the text only helps us to follow the intended interpretive route.

The logo is accommodated to the part of the matrix frame with which it shares partial image-schematic structure. In this case, both the light and the logo have the same color and the shape can be accommodated; in fact, the matrix frame is partially forced to integrate the shape of the logo to that of the light. The expectations that we have about McDonald's restaurants is that they generally open during the day and sometimes at night too; nonetheless, the night frame suggests that it may be open at night too, while the presence of the lights suggests that there is some activity taking place when the lights are on; this happens in application of the metonymic pair ILLUMINATION FOR ACTIVITY and DARKNESS FOR LACK OF ACTIVITY. These metonymies are grounded in our experience. When we see light in some locations (e.g., a shop or a house), we infer that there is activity inside them.

The text that accompanies the image, *on your way all night open*, suggests that McDonald's is not just there, in the situation presented in the image, but also in any other similar place, very likely accessible on the main roads of the country. Since it is factually impossible to find all McDonald's open twenty-four hours a day in any random location, the resulting hyperbole, which makes the text more impacting, conveys the idea that the likelihood that travelers may find an open McDonald's any time of the day whichever way they take is higher than people think.

In sum, this example plays with the meaningful cooperation and convergence of conceptual integration and conceptual prominence. It is from the integration of the logo into the street at night frame that the advertiser builds the source domain of the metonymy which endows the picture with meaning. At the same time, this integration draws our attention to the imported element, which is reinforced by the more illuminated pictorial layout of this part of the advertisement.

Figure 2. Nilkamal plastic chairs 'India's most trusted' (image reproduced with kind permission from Makani Creatives, Mumbai, India)

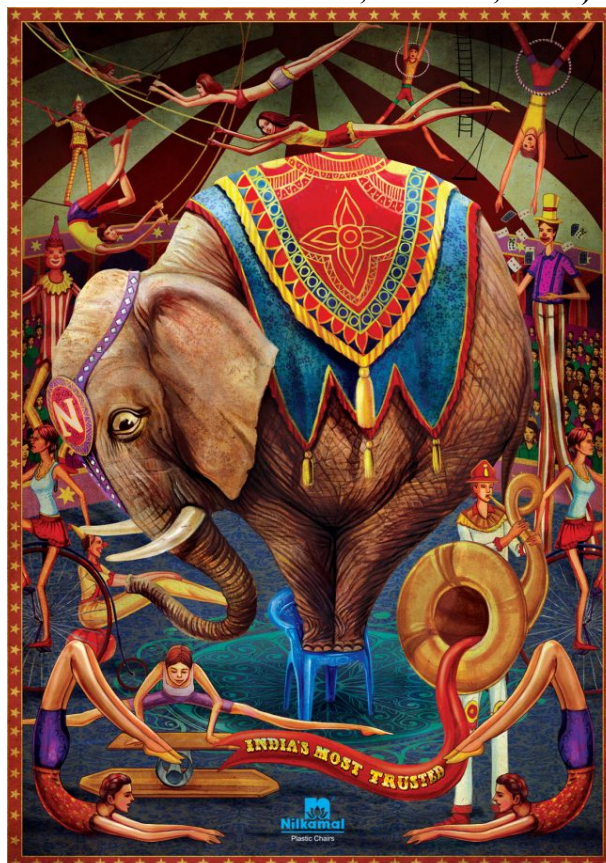
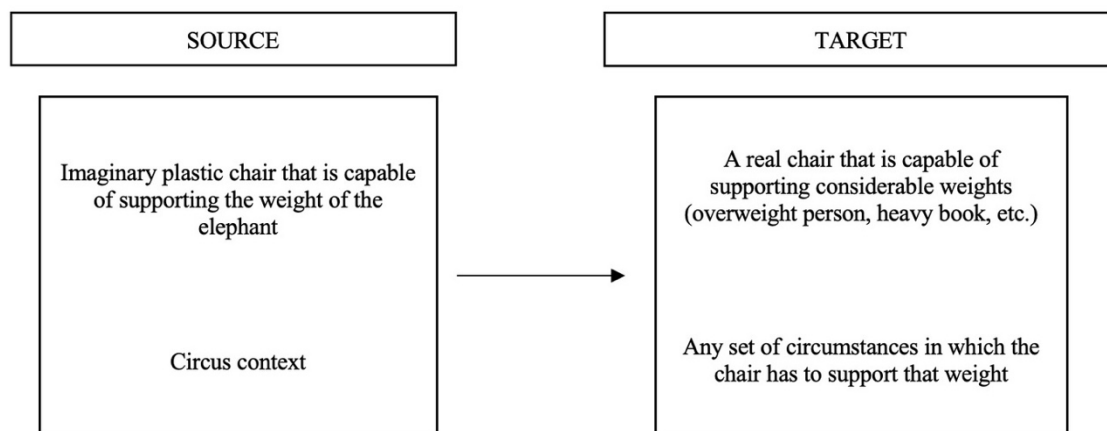


Figure 2 presents another interesting analytical situation in relation to conceptual prominence. Here, the advertisement promotes plastic chairs. The matrix frame is that of the circus, where we find aerials, acrobats, and an elephant, among other elements. The topology of the donor frame (i.e., the chair) is adapted to the requirements of the matrix frame. The plastic chair is incorporated into this frame by making it hyperbolically strong enough to withstand the weight of an elephant. This is possible thanks to a metonymic chain: the elephant stands for its great weight, which in turn stands for any item with a comparable property (ELEPHANT FOR ITS WEIGHT FOR ANY HEAVY ENTITY). The target domain of the last metonymy in the chain generates a hyperbole whose exact nature is specified in Figure 3 below. In this case, the elephant is conceptually prominent because it is placed at the center of the image and it dominates the prospective buyer's visual field.

Let us now concentrate on the donor frame, the plastic chair. It takes the place of the steel platform which bears the weight of an elephant in some circus performances. Its presence in this scenario is striking, since no one can expect a plastic chair, however strong, to take so much weight. The chair is somewhat similar to that platform we are familiar with; however, it is impossible for a plastic chair like the one incorporated into the matrix frame to support the weight of an elephant. The rest of the distortions presented in the image, such as the configuration of the participants, are simply the result of an aesthetic effect.

In sum, two kinds of conceptual prominence can be distinguished in this example; on the one hand, there is the elephant that visually dominates the image, thus producing an impact on the viewer; on the other hand, the chair also becomes prominent by being incorporated into the matrix frame. We have also found that conceptual prominence is inherent to the donor frame that is imported into the matrix. By contrast, the role of the matrix frame is to provide the background against which the donor frame is profiled (see Section 4.2. for a further exploration of the function of matrix frames). In addition, hyperbole has been argued to contribute to the meaning impact of the advertisement. While the literature on multimodal communication has made emphasis on the abundance of combinations of metaphor and metonymy, it has failed to note the importance of hyperbole. In the present example, the hyperbole arises from the target domain of the last metonymy of the metonymic chain identified above.

Figure 3. Hyperbole in *Nilkamal plastic chairs* 'India's most trusted'



4.2. THE ROLE OF MATRIX FRAMES IN FRAME INTEGRATION

One clear function of matrix frames is to create background contextual conditions for other *imported* or *donor* frames to be meaningfully integrated into them. In this process, donor frames acquire focal prominence, while metaphor and metonymy may contribute to working out the ultimate meaning impact of the advertisement. The following three examples illustrate this finding.

Figure 4. FedEx (image reproduced with kind permission from creative director)



The FedEx advertisement (Figure 4) shows a map which integrates two open windows into it. One of the windows is located in the part of the map corresponding to North America and the other in the part corresponding to South America. At one window there is a neighbor who reaches out to hand a parcel over to the neighbor at the other window, who reaches out to take it. The matrix frame is that of the map, and the donor frame is that of the two windows, the parcel, and the two neighbors. The fact that the map is rendered as a wall helps to incorporate the donor frame; the matrix frame helps us to situationalize what is depicted in the image. It has implications in relation to the delivery speed and the effectiveness of the company by suggesting that covering the distance between North and South America is as quick and easy as handing over a parcel between windows. The donor frame, on the other hand, helps us to focalize the idea that the service is personal and easy.

Metaphor, metonymy and hyperbole also play a role in this example (see Figure 5). There are two chained metonymies: the parcel stands for the company, and the company stands for the effectiveness of the company (FEDEX PARCEL FOR COMPANY FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMPANY). In terms of metaphor, the effectiveness of the company is seen as if delivery were as easy as handing a parcel over from one window to another (FEDEX DELIVERY IS AS EASY AS HANDING A PARCEL OVER FROM ONE WINDOW TO ANOTHER). The metaphor is built on the previous metonymic chain. After the metaphor has been activated, hyperbole arises from extremely high speed of window-to-window delivery being used to understand the company's delivery service.

Figure 5. Conceptual complex. FedEx

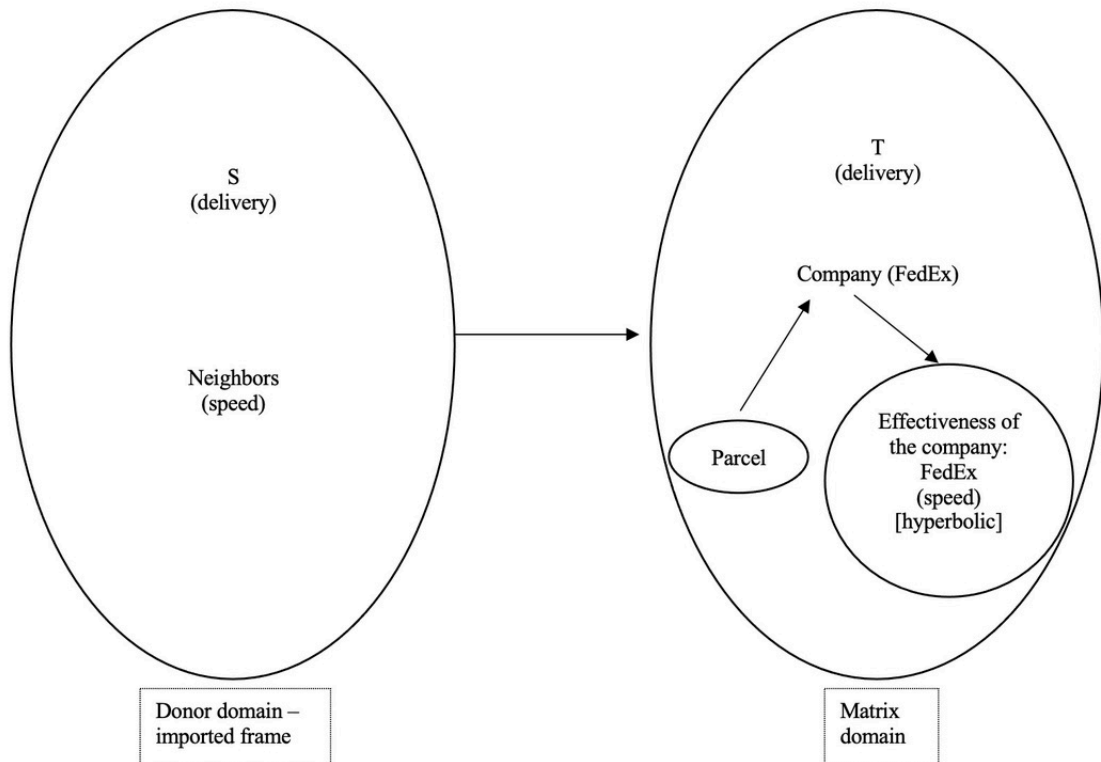
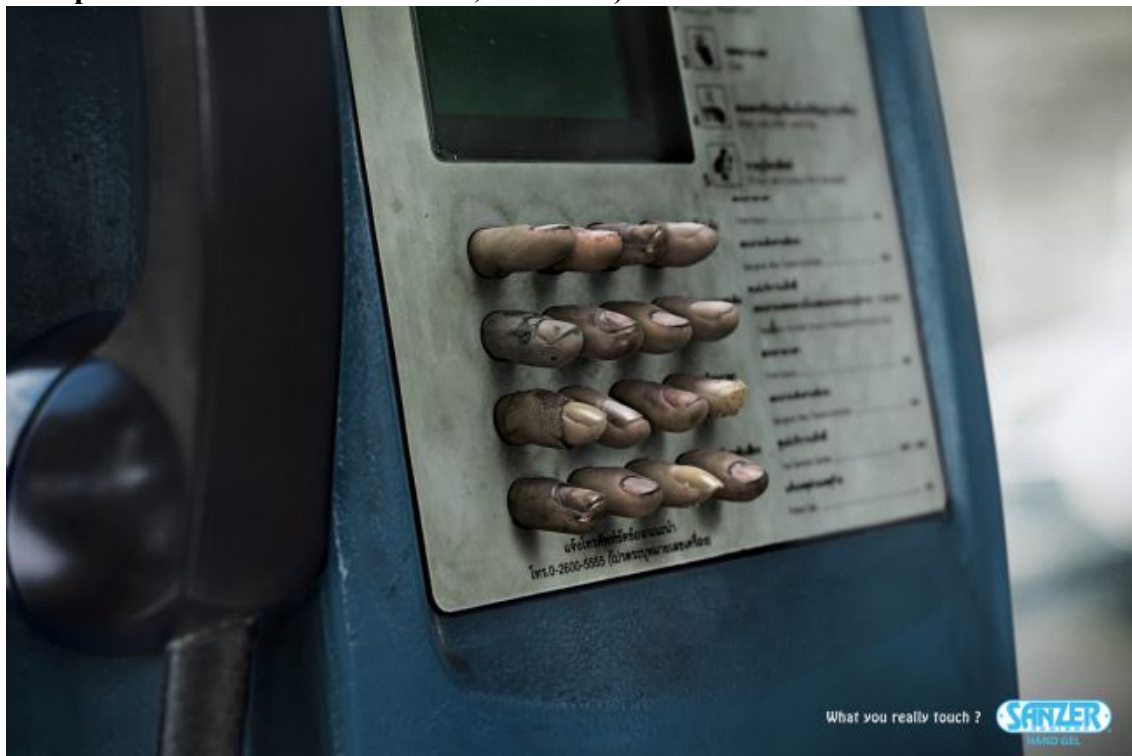


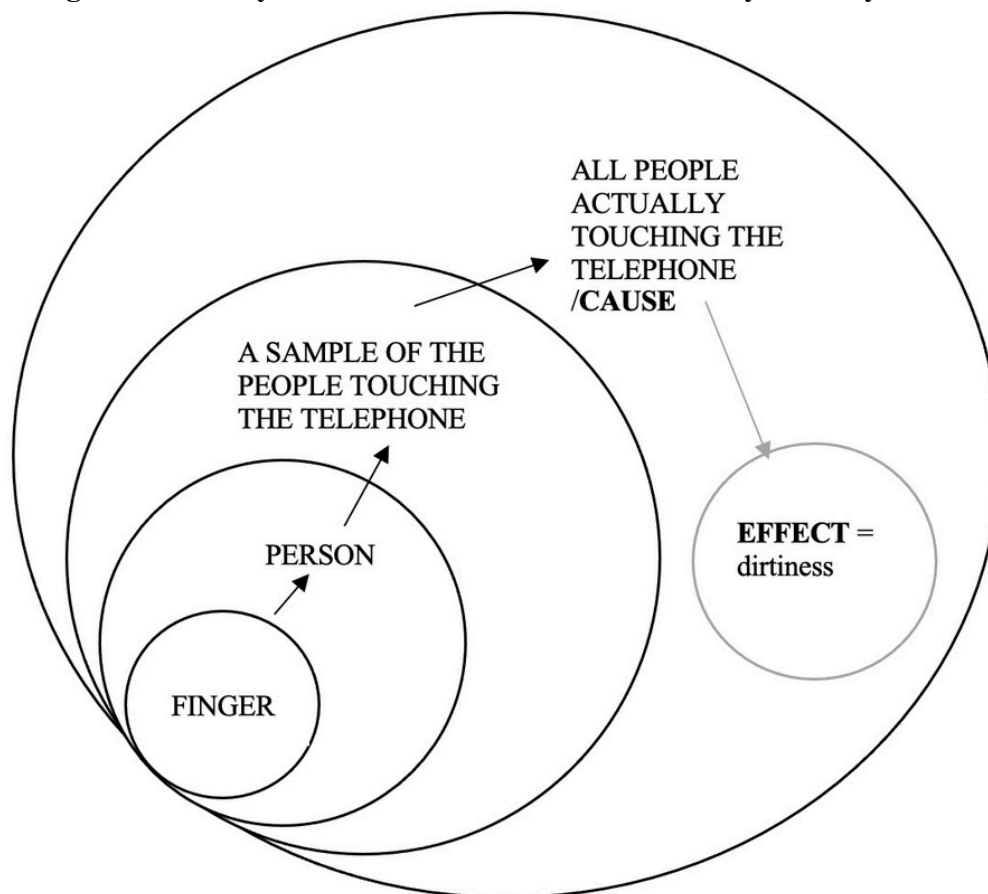
Figure 6. Sanzer hand gel ‘What you really touch?’ (image reproduced with kind permission from Chuo Senko, Thailand)



In Figure 6, a telephone booth (matrix frame) depicts a dirty finger (donor frame) in the place of each of its buttons. A double metonymic expansion operation, followed by

a metonymic reduction operation, accounts for the analysis of this example. Each dirty finger, through a metonymic expansion operation, stands for a person; the whole collection of fingers thus stands for a collection of people that have dialed the phone. Through further metonymic expansion, this collection of people stands for all the people who have *actually* touched the telephone (FINGER FOR PERSON FOR A SAMPLE OF PEOPLE TOUCHING THE TELEPHONE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE ACTUALLY TOUCHING THE TELEPHONE). The dirtiness of the fingers is the cause for the dirtiness of the buttons, which is the effect (CAUSE FOR EFFECT). In this sense, this last metonymic reduction operation depicts a frame shift (see Figure 7). The donor frame supplies the fingers explicitly, while the person and the collection of people are implicit targets. The dirtiness of the buttons becomes focal by being the final metonymic target in the complex chain described above. The matrix frame supplies the contextualizing knowledge necessary to trigger the metonymic shifts which endow the picture with its intended meaning; that is, its role goes beyond providing background knowledge and a coherent context; it creates the conditions (i.e., it acts as a licensing factor) for the donor frame to produce the intended meaning. In fact, the first and the last elements of the chain are essentially the same but from two different angles. We first see the fingers as belonging to a person, and we then see them as causing dirt, so the fingers have a double function. The text *What you really touch?*, which accompanies the image, is complementary to it, and it has a reinforcing function, since the image reveals that what has caused the buttons to be dirty is the amount of people that have touched them with their dirty fingers.

Figure 7. Metonymic chain *Sanzer Hand Gel* ‘What you really touch?’



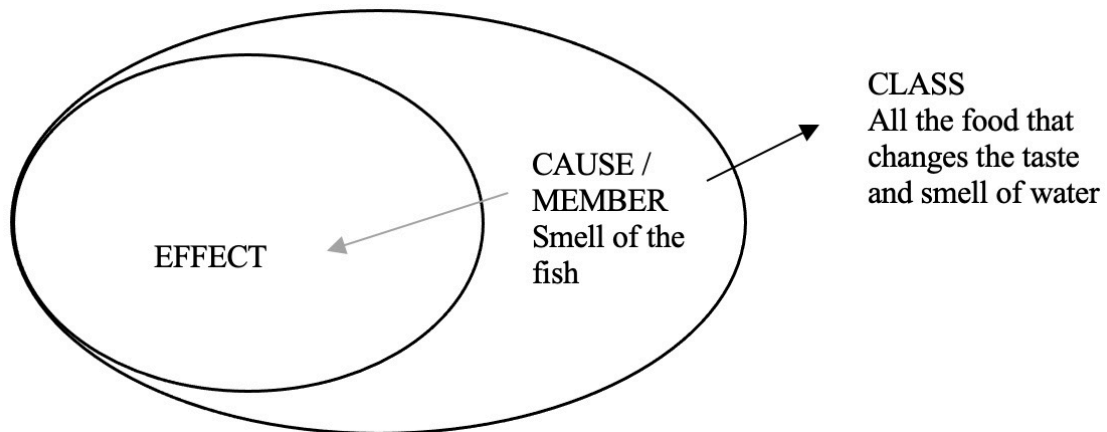
The third example of this subsection (see Figure 8) is an advertisement of bottled water. In the matrix frame water is pouring into a jug, and the imported element that is incorporated into the matrix is the salmon (donor frame). The topology of the salmon is forced into the shape of the water that is being poured; in this way, the imported element is adapted to the matrix frame, in compliance with topological invariance requirements (Lakoff, 1990, 1993), according to which the generic-level topology of the salmon fillets, which stand for the odor they release, are forced to take the shape of water as poured into a glass; in this integration process, neither topological configuration is violated.

The text that accompanies the advertisement reads: *Don't let your water taste like the contents of your fridge.* This verbal message constrains the interpretation of the image, since, without this text, we would not have the fridge frame in mind, which is crucial to the message. The matrix frame situationalizes the scene. We see a kitchen with the different prototypical elements that we find in it, while the donor frame, the salmon, focalizes the bad smell and taste of water caused by the salmon. The conceptual integration is what first occurs in this example, as we saw in the previous example of FedEx, and after that, there is a metonymy whereby the salmon stands for all the food that changes the taste and smell of water (SALMON FOR ANY FOOD). In turn, the salmon metonymically stands for the cause of the effect that produces the bad smell and taste of water (CAUSE FOR EFFECT) (see Figure 9). We have two perspectives of the salmon, and each of them generates a metonymy, those metonymies being complementary, an analytical situation which is not possible in general language use, but which can take place in visual communication. The salmon is the source domain of both metonymies. We could argue that hyperbole is present in this example; it is found in connection to the intensity of the smell, which is represented by a distinctively foul-smelling food, and also by the big piece of salmon if compared to the small base. In fact, other variants of this same advertisement feature meat and green onions.

Figure 8. Bottled water Exito 'Don't let your water taste like the contents of your fridge' (image reproduced with kind permission from Sancho BBDO, Colombia)



Figure 9. Metonymic chain. *Bottled water Exito* ‘Don’t let your water taste like the contents of your fridge’

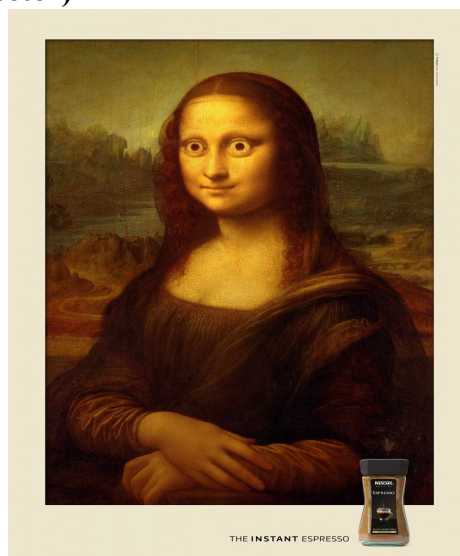


The analysis of the three examples in this subsection has provided evidence of the existence of an invariant in conceptual integration: the matrix frame creates a context for the integration of the donor frame, whose function is to supply the focal structure of the message. When we incorporate a whole donor frame or partial structure from a donor frame, it immediately becomes conceptually prominent. Metaphor and metonymy act on the basis of the integrated elements to produce specific communicative effects. The next section takes us away from integration into a different phenomenon, viz., the internal development of frame elements without the intervention of structure from other frames.

4.3. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A FRAME

Our previous analysis has shown the productivity of frame integration as a prerequisite for combined metaphorical and metonymic activity in the context of visual-textual multimodal advertising. However, integration is not the only strategy to enrich frame structure meaningfully. An alternative meaning-making strategy that is attested in our data is based on the internal development of frame elements. Take Figure 10 as an example.

Figure 10. *Nescafé* ‘The instant espresso’ (image reproduced with kind permission from art director)



In the original painting, Mona Lisa's eyes are almost closed; by contrast, in Figure 10, Mona Lisa's eyes are visibly wide open. There is no incorporation of any external frame to the matrix, but rather a development of the one presented, i.e., the eyes are depicted as more open than usual. This gives rise to a visual metonymy in which wide eyes stand for being alert (WIDE EYES FOR ALERTNESS). But this metonymy is further elaborated through the EFFECT FOR CAUSE metonymy. We see the effect, that is, the eyes wide open, which suggest alertness; the eyes thus stand for the cause of that alertness, that is, the instant espresso. Furthermore, the distortion of the eyes is exaggerated. This has a special communicative impact on the addressee, suggesting full alertness when taking the espresso. The development of the frame is thus unconventional (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza, 2021: 100–101), thanks to the external element, Nescafé.

4.4. FRAME COMPOSITION

Related to the previous section, there are also cases in the corpus in which there is no integration of frames, nor internal development within a given frame, but rather a composition of two frames within an image. Figure 11 illustrates this analytical situation.

Figure 11. *Schusev State Museum of Architecture 'Discover the full story'* (image reproduced with kind permission from Saatchi & Saatchi Russia, Moscow, Russia)

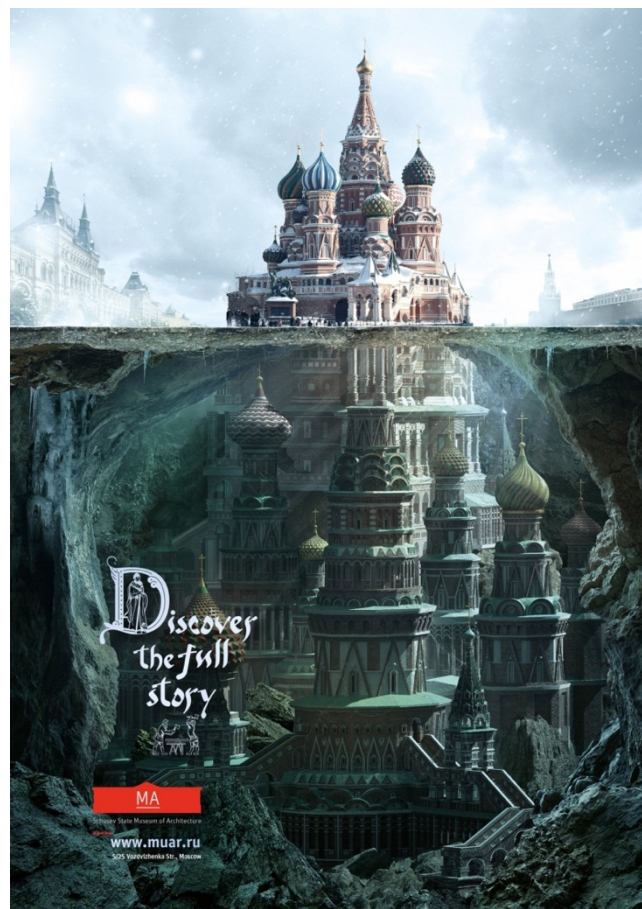


Figure 11 is a multimodal advertisement of a museum of architecture that shows Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow. In the upper section of the advertisement, we see a small part of the cathedral. That part of the image has light; by contrast, in the lower part

of the image, which occupies much more space than the upper part, we find a darker color in what looks like a building in ruins. There is a visual metaphor, KNOWING IS SEEING, which acts as a frame for the whole conceptual process, as it allows us to understand that there are things that we cannot see, but still, they exist; this is mapped onto the museum as a building. As an emblematic building, a cathedral has well-known and lesser-known parts; both kinds of parts can be mapped onto corresponding parts of other buildings. The source of the metaphor is grounded in the conceptual correlation KNOWING IS SEEING, which, in the building-to-building mapping, is carried over to the target domain (see Figure 12). The source domain supports its reasoning structure in the correlation metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING, which helps to create that source domain. The hidden part suggests what you do not know but can figure out when visiting the museum. The image in the picture makes this part visually and conceptually prominent through its bigger size, which makes it dominate our visual field despite its darker hue. Interestingly, unlike the examples previously studied in Section 4.1., here there is a prominence shift. Without endowing the target with visual prominence, the source domain would have been conceptually prominent by default (as happens in previous examples, see e.g., Figure 6 or Figure 8, where the prominent part is the incorporated element, the fingers and the salmon respectively). However, in this case, the target becomes prominent as it occupies more space perceptually. Moreover, the element of light that is present in part of the image acts as an enabling factor through metonymic expansion to the actual action of seeing (LIGHT FOR SEEING). The text, *Discover the full story*, reinforces this aspect of the image, while emphasizing that whatever knowledge is apparently hidden (represented in a darker color) can be discovered thanks to the displays in the museum.

Figure 12. Analysis of *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* ‘Discover the full story’

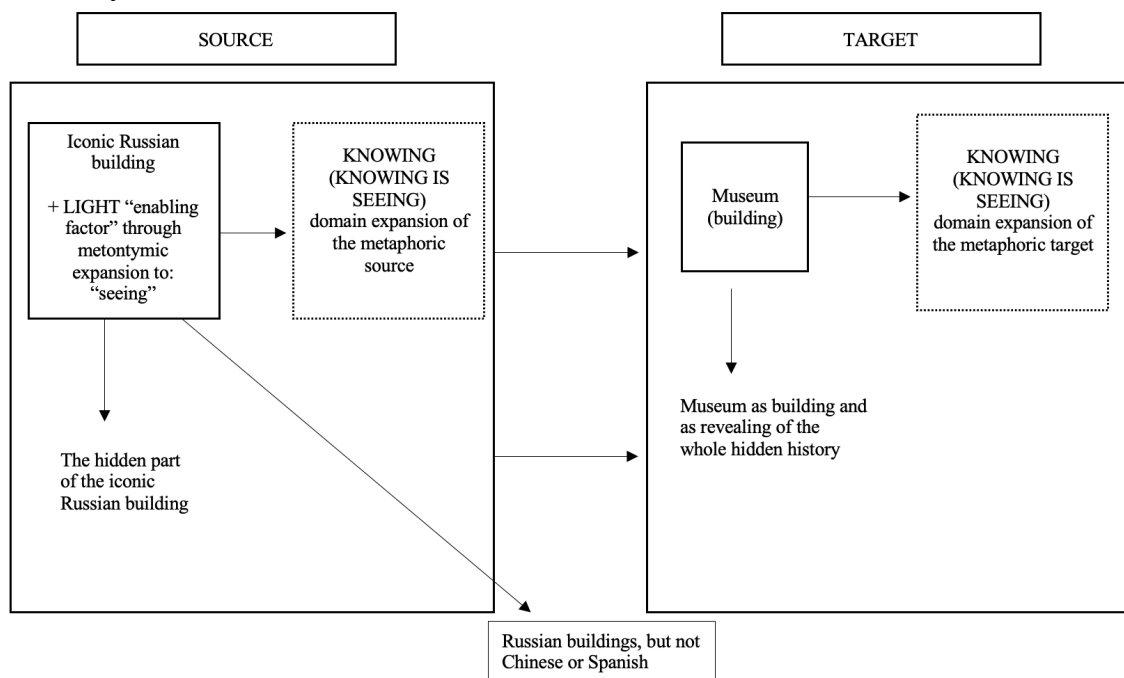
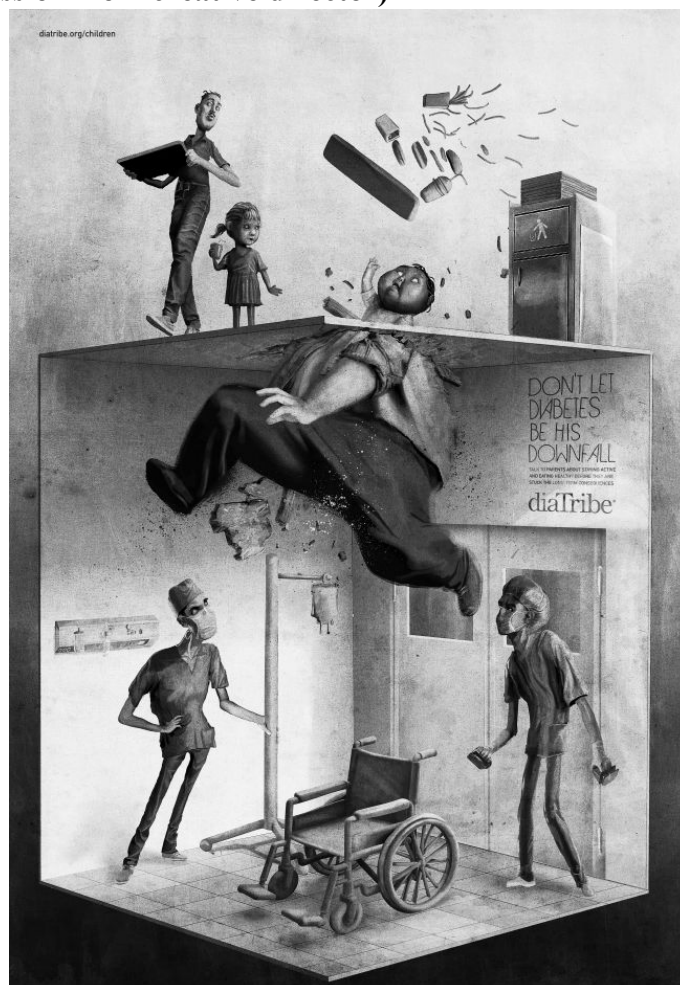


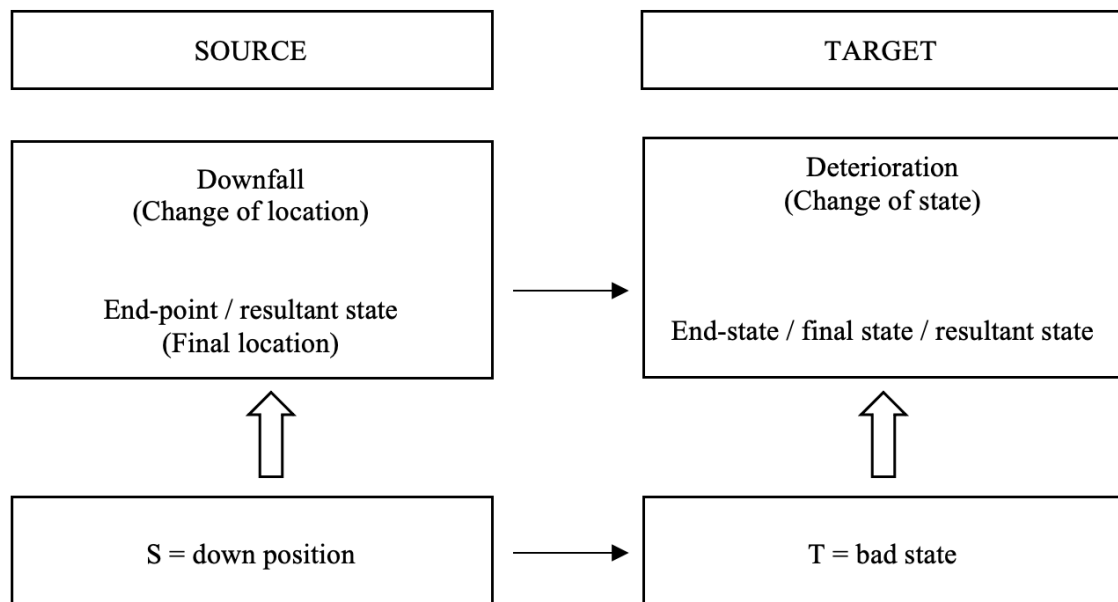
Figure 13. *DiaTribe* ‘Don’t let diabetes be his downfall’ (image reproduced with kind permission from creative director)



Let us now turn our attention to Figure 13. This advertisement, by DiaTribe, also uses frame composition rather than integration. DiaTribe is a foundation that helps people suffering from diabetes. It also strives to raise awareness of this huge problem. The foundation distributes advertisements for this purpose. In Figure 13 we can see two distinct parts, as in Figure 11. In the upper section we identify part of the domain of a fast-food restaurant, as we see the trash can, which is typical of that kind of restaurant, the trays, and some of the food that is served there, such as a hamburger, chips, and a soft drink. In the lower part, the domain presented is that of a hospital, as we can observe the wheelchair, two doctors or nurses, and a dropper. Both domains are metonymic. The hospital stands for the medical care it provides and its results on the patient (HOSPITAL FOR MEDICAL CARE FOR THE EFFECTS OF SUCH CARE). Then, the selected part of the fast-food restaurant stands for the whole restaurant where customers eat so-called “junk food” (JUNK FOOD EATING IN A FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT FOR THE WHOLE RESTAURANT, which is a specification of the more general SUBFRAME FOR FRAME within the domain of meal service providers). As happened in Figure 11, the two frames are assembled imitating a collage. The text in the lower part of the image, *Don’t let diabetes be his downfall*, is metaphoric. It has two functions: it strengthens the impact of the image while drawing our attention to its specific meaning. This meaning arises from the explicit cause-effect connection that the text makes between diabetes and the boy falling. Besides the metaphor present in the text, the image is also metaphoric; in this case we find a visual metaphor, which is created thanks to the combination of the two

images that are at the same conceptual level. The experiential metaphor at work in this example is HEALTH DETERIORATION IS A DOWNFALL. In fact, it is a high-level resemblance metaphor. When people fall, they can get hurt. Both health decline and a downfall imply deterioration. That metaphor is possible because there is resemblance in the effect in both cases, as the similarity of effects licenses the mental association of their corresponding causes, even if the causes are factually unrelated (Ruiz de Mendoza, 2020: 23). Inherent to the downfall is the metaphorical correlation BAD IS DOWN and its counterpart GOOD IS UP. The result of health deterioration is falling down (see Figure 14). *Still fancy those chips?* is what someone could say to that boy. This utterance is ironic. It is an echo of what someone would normally say in the same kind of situation, so that the ironic echo would be metonymic for the whole situation in which the sentence is uttered (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza & Galera, 2014: 178–180; 2020: 287). The echo is an ironic support of the upper part of the image; the text is the source domain of the metonymy WHAT IS SAID IN A SITUATION FOR THE SITUATION, and the implication is represented in the lower part of the image (the boy falling down in the hospital). On closer inspection, the two parts of the image represent different vital moments in the life of that boy. Each of them focuses on a specific moment of that person's life, and each of them is situated at a different point in time. Whereas the upper part represents the boy in his childhood, the lower part represents the same person in another temporal segment, in his adulthood. Between these two crucial points there is a repetitive bad habit, that of eating junk food. We get that implicature thanks to metonymy, as the boy's meal stands for bad eating habits. The repetitive consumption of that type of food is made explicit in the domain of the hospital. There is metonymic support in both parts of the image, as the two specific points lead to the rest of the moments in the life of that person (i.e., AN EVENT FOR A CHAIN OF EVENTS).

Figure 14. Metaphorical amalgam in *DiaTribe* 'Don't let diabetes be his downfall'



Our analysis of the last three multimodal advertisements (i.e., *Nescafé*, *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* and *DiaTribe*) has shown that, besides frame integration, it is necessary to take into account internal developments of the donor frame (the case of

the *Nescafé* advertisement), and frame composition (e.g., the advertisements of *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* and *DiaTribe*).

4.5. METONYMY AS A LICENSING FACTOR OF CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION

As evidenced by the number of advertisements analyzed so far there is a tendency to use metonymy as a prerequisite to conceptual integration, although this may not always be the case. Hidalgo and Kraljevic (2011) have already pointed to the licensing nature of metonymy. In their study, they explored it in connection to metaphor. They found that the function of metonymy is that of motivating metaphor by highlighting aspects of the source or target domains (Hidalgo & Kraljevic, 2011: 158). Here, for purposes of contrast, we will see an example of metonymy being used prior to conceptual integration (Figure 15), and then another where metonymy does not play a role (Figure 16).

Figure 15. *Pnet* ‘A better job is waiting’ (image reproduced with kind permission from PNET.co.za / Saon Group)



In Figure 15 we see a man in his workplace. The matrix frame is that of the workplace. A man is sitting on a chair, and the image has elements that remind us of an office, as on the desk we find a telephone, a calculator, a cup of coffee, a computer, and some folders on a shelf. It is important to observe that the man is playing Solitaire, which is visible on the computer screen. The donor frame is part of a tree or of a rock that has been affected by external agents; thus, the picture does not incorporate a complete frame, but partial structure from that frame. In this case, only the moss that covers a tree or a rock is imported into the most prominent (and meaningful) element of the matrix frame, the man, covering the person's skin in the same way as if it were a tree or rock. The metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS arises from conceptual integration; there is a mapping from the domain of plants to that of people. The implication is that the passivity of that man is similar to the vegetative nature (or apparent physical inactivity) of plants. The text, *A better job is waiting*, cues for the activation of the idea of monotony, which is also

suggested in the image thanks to the conceptual integration of the vegetative aspect. Metonymy emerges from the integration, as the moss metonymically stands for the vegetative context (MOSS FOR THE VEGETATIVE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT GROWS), and without that metonymy it would not be possible to derive the meaning implications of passivity, apathy, etc. Part of the frame (what is portrayed in the image) stands for the whole matrix frame, in this case, the vegetative context; using just part of the frame gives prominence to the meaning implications that the moss carries in the context of the complete image. What we have found is that the metaphor is cued thanks to the metonymic activation, which appears to be an invariant in several of the examples in the corpus (e.g., *FedEx*).

Figure 16. *Dog Chow* ‘Stop treating your dog like a trashcan’ (image reproduced with kind permission from creative officer)



The advertisement of dog food *Dog Chow* (Figure 16) depicts the kitchen frame with all its elements (kitchen utensils, crockery, a bottle of wine, a kitchen island, etc.). However, with a slight change of its topology, a dog is incorporated to the matrix frame. Its form is forced to adapt it to the topology of a trashcan. Thus, the dog acquires some of the elements of a trashcan, such as a pedal or a garbage bag. There is something noteworthy as regards the nature of the donor frame in this particular case, since a dog is not necessarily foreign to a kitchen and, as noted in previous examples, donor frames are usually uncommon to the matrix frames into which they are imported. This example is an exception. As argued in Section 4.2., the elements to be imported are those that become conceptually prominent, as happens in this case with the dog. However, there is no metonymy in this case as the basic aspects of the topology and frame structure of the dog are preserved; however, there is a metaphor whereby the dog is conceived as if it were a trashcan (A DOG IS A TRASHCAN, as a specification of the more generic mapping ANIMALS ARE OBJECTS).

Metonymy may or may not be present in conceptual integration. When there is metonymy, the donor frame only imports part of the frame to the matrix frame, but the

whole, even if not explicitly present, is always latent; if such is the case, it is activated metonymically and it gives meaning to the whole integration. In this connection, the role of metonymy in multimodal advertising has been discussed by Pérez-Sobrino (2017: 3), who acknowledges that “[m]etonymy facilitates the economic design of an advertisement, and more importantly, offers a way to make indirect claims about the product.”

4.6. HIGH-LEVEL NON-METAPHORICAL CONCEPTUAL CORRELATION AS A CUE FOR THE ACTIVATION OF A METAPHORICAL FRAMEWORK

So far, we have seen that metaphor and metonymy are ubiquitous in multimodal advertisements. However, we have preliminarily discovered that a high-level non-metaphorical correlation can also call for the activation of a metaphorical frame. Let us see Figure 17 to understand how this is possible.

Figure 17. Seitenbacher ‘No Wonder You Always Wake Up Hungry’ (image reproduced with kind permission from JWT Wunderman Thompson, Jakarta, Indonesia)



In Figure 17, which advertises a brand of cereals, there are several cases of integration: there is an element that has part of a snake and part of a dentist’s drill; the

teeth are integrated into the topology of the path; the same happens with a sheet of paper, which is integrated into the path image-schema, which at its end is converted into a railroad. There is one more case of integration where a box is depicted with a frightening mouth and eyes. All these situations cause fear in the boy who is sleeping in bed. The path image-schema is crucial here. It is combined with that of a spiral, and the different donor elements are integrated into the matrix frame of the path image-schema. The implication derived both from the image and the text, *No wonder you always wake up hungry*, is that, after a hectic night, when you get up, one needs an energy recharge and there is no better way to achieve that than by eating a bowl of the advertised cereals. The text reinforces the message of the image and, in this sense, it is complementary to it. Each of the elements that appear in the image are metonymic for one particular type of fear; for example, the octopus represents night terrors, the drill represents the fear to the dentist, the snake the fear to predatory animals, etc. The integration of these target elements into one image is iconic of the emotional build-up experienced by the child in his dreams, which can be alleviated when he gets up for a cereal-based breakfast. The sequence of events is integrated thanks to the path image-schema, which acts as the matrix frame of the conceptual complex. The underlying condition–consequence schema is enriched by the visual elements presented in the image. This is possible through the logic of the metaphor LIFE IS A PATH, which acts as a licensing factor for this process. In the present case, there is a condition (the sequence of fears) that leads to the consequence of getting up hungry, which at the same time is the condition of one wanting to eat right after getting up. This finding is consistent with Ruiz de Mendoza's (2017) thesis that when combining a low-level metaphor and a correlation metaphor, the former is built into the latter. The analysis of this example shows that, in multimodal contexts, the underlying correlation needs not be metaphorical; in fact, the high-level conceptual correlation condition–consequence presented above cues the activation of a metaphorical framework (i.e., LIFE IS A PATH) which is metonymically developed (with all the images integrated into the path image-schema).

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis presented here has provided further support for the contention made in previous research on multimodal advertisements that metaphor and metonymy are ubiquitous in multimodal communication. It has also contributed to the study of hyperbole in multimodal contexts already initiated by Barbu-Kleitsch (2015) and Peña (2019). In addition to this, the analysis has revealed other interesting findings: (i) conceptual prominence is crucial when creating and understanding multimodal advertisements; (ii) the nature of the frame determines its function; i.e., matrix frames situationalize, whereas donor frames focalize; (iii) sometimes there is no frame integration but rather the internal development of relevant aspects of a given frame; (iv) there are also cases in which there is frame composition instead of integration; (v) metonymy proves to be a licensing factor prior to integration; and (vi) high-level non-metaphorical correlations can cue the activation of metaphorical frames, something for which there was no previous evidence.

Evidence has been provided that in visual communication it is possible to have two complementary metonymies generated by the same item (e.g., the salmon in Figure 8. *Bottled water Exito* 'Don't let your water taste like the contents of your fridge'), which is not possible in general language use. The analysis of our data also shows that any structure incorporated into the matrix frame often becomes prominent; however, there are some factors that can lead to a prominence shift, such as occupying more space (see

Figure 11. *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* ‘Discover the full story’). In addition, the topology of the incorporated element can be forced to be meaningfully integrated into the matrix frame (e.g., the salmon in Figure 8). Moreover, metonymy, as previously discussed, may or may not be a pre-requisite for conceptual integration to occur (see Figure 15. *Pnet* ‘A better job is waiting’ and Figure 16. *Dog Chow* ‘Stop treating your dog like a trashcan’). Finally, donor frames are in most cases uncommon to the matrix frames into which they are incorporated; however, there can be occasional exceptions, as is the case of the dog in Figure 16, which it is not foreign to the kitchen frame.

All in all, the present analysis is only exploratory. Future work would benefit from a larger corpus, as well as an analysis that also takes other types of advertisements into account to see if the same patterns emerge, or if there are differences in terms of processing.

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FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 1. *McDonald's* 'on your way all night open'

Agency: Publicis One / Leo Burnett Ecuador

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/mcdonalds_mclights_lamps

Date of release: 2018

Figure 2. *Nilkamal plastic chairs* 'India's most trusted'

Agency: Makani Creatives, Mumbai, India

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/nilkamal_plastic_chairs_jumbo_act

Date of release: 2011

Figure 3. Hyperbole in *Nilkamal plastic chairs* 'India's most trusted'

Figure 4. *FedEx*

Agency: DDB, Brazil

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/fedex_usabrazil

Date of release: 2010

Figure 5. Conceptual complex. *FedEx*

Figure 6. *Sanzer hand gel* 'What you really touch?'

Agency: Chuo Senko, Thailand

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/sanzer_phone_booth

Date of release: 2010

Figure 7. Metonymic chain *Sanzer Hand Gel* 'What you really touch?'

Figure 8. *Bottled water Exito* 'Don't let your water taste like the contents of your fridge'

Agency: Sancho BBDO Bogotá, Colombia

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/exito_salmon

Date of release: 2013

Figure 9. Metonymic chain. *Bottled water Exito* 'Don't let your water taste like the contents of your fridge'

Figure 10. *Nescafé* 'The instant espresso'

Agency: Prodigious Norge Oslo

Source: <https://adsspot.me/media/prints/nescafe-mona-lisa-1fd7fce4fce8>

Date of release: 2014

Figure 11. *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* 'Discover the full story'

Agency: Saatchi & Saatchi Russia, Moscow, Russia

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/schusev_state_museum_of

architecture_saint_basils_cathedral

Date of release: 2013

Figure 12. Analysis of *Schusev State Museum of Architecture* ‘Discover the full story’

Figure 13. *DiaTribe* ‘Don’t let diabetes be his downfall’

Agency: Area 23 – An FCB Health Company, New York, USA

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/diatribefoundation_boy

Date of release: 2018

Figure 14. Metaphorical amalgam in *DiaTribe* ‘Don’t let diabetes be his downfall’

Figure 15. *Pnet* ‘A better job is waiting’

Agency: Joe Public, Johannesburg, South Africa

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/pnet_moss

Date of release: 2017

Figure 16. *Dog Chow* ‘Stop treating your dog like a trashcan’

Agency: Publicis Bogota

Source: <https://adspot.me/media/prints/purina-dog-chow-runderkraal-11babbd099d>

Date of release: 2013

Figure 17. *Seitenbacher* ‘No Wonder You Always Wake Up Hungry’

Agency: JWT Wunderman Thompson, Jakarta, Indonesia

Source: https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/seitenbacher_fear

Date of release: 2012