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Trump's Election Billboards: A Multimodal Cognitive Study

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Abstract

Multimodality is the analysis of language besides other modalities (images, sounds, gestures, video images, etc.). Election billboards as a kind of multimodal text is used during elections to promote a candidate's image and advertise their presence. The current study seeks to analyze a sample of Trump's 2020 election billboards in the American presidential election billboards as a type of multimodal texts from the view point of Multimodality and Cognitive Semantics. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model and Langcker's Construal

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Theory (2013) are used to demystify how the visual and linguistic elements cooperate to serve the purpose of the billboard as a whole.

The visual elements are analyzed based on Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) Grammar of Visual Design model. On the other hand, Langacker's construal operation model is used for the analysis of both linguistic and visual elements as a cognitive semantic theory. The analysis's findings indicate that the models are essential to constructing and deciphering the meaning of political election campaign billboards, and they also prove that in constructing meaning, the visual and textual elements of Trump's election billboards complement one another even though the focus on the linguistic elements is observed to be higher to some extent rather than that of the visual elements.

Key Words: Cognitive Semantics, Langacker's Construal Theory, Multimodality, Election Billboards. Trump.

لوحات ترامب الانتخابية : دراسة معرفية متعددة الوسائط

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المستخلص

تعددية الوسائط هي تحليل اللغة إلى جانب الأساليب الأخرى (الصور والأصوات والإيماءات وصور الفيديو وما إلى ذلك). تُستخدم اللوحات الإعلانية الانتخابية كنوع من النص متعدد الوسائط أثناء الانتخابات للترويج لصورة المرشح والإعلان عن وجوده. تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى تحليل عينة من اللوحات الإعلانية لانتخابات ترامب لعام 2020 في لوحات الإعلانات الخاصة بالانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية كنوع من النصوص متعددة الوسائط من وجهة نظر تعدد الوسائط والدلالات المعرفية. تم استخدام نموذج (Kress and van Leeuwen (2006 و Langcker's Construal Theory (2013) لإزالة الغموض عن كيفية تعاون العناصر المرئية واللغوية لخدمة الغرض من

لوحة الإعلانات ككل. يتم التحليل العناصر المرئية بناء على النموذج كريس و لوين، من ناحية أخرى، يستخدم نموذج لانكاكر للعملية التأويلية لتحليل كل من العناصر اللغوية والمرئية كنظرية دلالية معرفية. تشير نتائج التحليل إلى أن النماذج ضرورية لبناء المعنى وفق رموز معنى اللوحات الإعلانية لحملة الانتخابات السياسية، كما أنها تثبت أنه عند بناء المعنى ، فإن العناصر المرئية والنصية للوحات الإعلانية الانتخابية لترامب تكمل بعضها البعض على الرغم من التركيز على العناصر اللغوية. لوحظ أنه أعلى إلى حد ما من العناصر المرئية الكلمات الدالة: الدلالات المعرفية، نظرية لانكاكر، التعددية، لوحات الإعلانات الانتخابية. ترمب .

Introduction

Election campaign billboards are effective tools for publicizing political candidates and increasing public awareness of them. They entail the merging and interacting of different concepts. The genre of election billboards has increasingly attracted the attention of scholars in different areas of language including, semantics, pragmatics and multimodality. However, they are still undiscovered in terms of some linguistic approaches as Cognitive Semantic approach integrated with multimodality with which this study is concerned. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, American campaign billboards particularly, Trump's billboards have not been studied from this angle where both visual and linguistic components are uncovered and analyzed. The current paper tries to show the efficiency of these linguistic models in revealing the integration of both visual and linguistic elements to construct meaning in the election billboards. The study hypothesized that the visual and textual elements of election billboards complement one another in the meaning-construction process, and meaning construction in Trump's election billboards as an American political billboards is kind of text-based rather than solely image-based.

. The study is carried out to answer the following questions:

1. How meaning is enacted in selected billboards?
2. How visual and linguistic elements are organized in the selected billboards? And how they cooperate to construct meaning?

For this purpose, three American presidential election billboards of Trump for 2020 presidential election are selected randomly by the researchers to be analyzed in the light of the eclectic model of Kress and van leeuwen's (2006) and Langacker's construal operations models.

2. American Election Billboards: An Overview

According to Panagopoulos and Ha (2015:393) in order to motivate and persuade people in elections, political campaigns use a variety of methods. One of those methods is *mass media* that are used to connect candidates with the electorate such as television, radio, newspapers, billboards, signs, and posters. Hence, an election billboard or a poster as a kind of outdoor advertising is defined as "a static or moving image that announces the existence of a candidate and promotes his or her image" Monica and Madalina (2013:1). Concerning American election billboards, Kaid(2006:37) suggests, historically, political

advertising in early elections in the United States took the form of posters, billboards, and printed materials and the form and style of American political billboards change throughout history. Concerning the style, design and the graphic component of political billboards/posters in America, Craven (2013:3) indicates that, in developed countries such as the United States of America, established laws, organizations, or companies guide both designers and advertising companies in their activities in the advertising industry. As for the choice of graphic components to be included in a design, this is frequently influenced by whether the billboard is part of a campaign or made independently. All parties in recent American elections have used styled designs that are sometimes little more than big corporate type logos, devoid of photographic pictures. Their posters have a lot in common, with stylized flags and sans-serif letters dominating against a blue background (Siedman, 2008:6). More so; Kaid (2006:41) regards issues (issues concerns) and images (personal attributes) to be two more important contents of political billboards in United States.

It is worth indicating that symbolism and visual symbols are also two more elements of billboard designs in American political ads that facilitates the delivery of politically relevant information to the voters (Nikolskaya and Pavlina,2021:767) and (Sidman,2017:383). Further, written statements is another element of election billboards, that should be succinct and sloganized according to designers, and that ornate lettering and artistic renderings should be avoided since they may divert attention away from the essential message (Siedman ,2008:7).

3. A Multimodality: An Overview

It is well acknowledged that communication in the modern world does not rely solely on spoken language; nonverbal communication is also important. Multimodal communication entails the use of both linguistic and visual elements. For the projection of meaning, this last one uses semiotic resources (Ademelkum and Olateju, 2016:1). It is probably fair to say that, much of the work in multimodal discourse analysis is based on Halliday's (1978, 1989a) social semiotic approach to language, which views language as one of many semiotic resources (such as gesture, images, and music) that people use to communicate or construct meaning with one another (Paltridge, 2012:170). Hence, language operates to describe the social situations that contribute in creating meanings. One might say that, multimodality is seen as an interdisciplinary field, that aims to go beyond approaches in which mode was inextricably linked to theory and discipline, often in mutually defining ways. Writing was handled by linguistics in such approaches, while images were handled by art history, and so on. As a result, a complete analysis of a text would be impossible without the inclusion of other modes. That is, in order to understand the construction of meaning when cooperating with language, one needs a multimodal analysis (Kress , 2011:38). The works of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) and Michael O'Toole (1994, 2010) were recognized as the foundation for multimodal studies in the 1980s and 1990s.

In their *Grammar of Visual Design* developed for the analysis of images, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) distinguished between three different types of meaning (also called metafunctions) namely, representational, interactive and compositional (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:41-59). Each metafunction has a specific indication and processes. The metafunctions chosen by the researchers in this study are explained as follows:

A) *Representational Metafunction*, based on the idea of how semiotic modes represent objects and how these modes are experienced by human. Two major processes are

recognized within this metafunction, which are narrative and conceptual processes. Narrative processes which is the focus of this study, represent patterns of phenomena and experiences in terms of participants, circumstances, actions, and events, as well as processes of change, whereas conceptual processes represent classificatory, analytical, and symbolic structures.

- B) *Interactive Metafunction* deals with social relations between the producer, the viewer, and the represented object. It includes contact, social distance, and attitude, whereas modality refers to the degree to which a mode represents something to be taken as “true” or “real”

4. Cognitive Semantics: An Overview

Cognitive semantics as a branch of cognitive linguistics, investigates "the relation between experience, embodied cognition, and language." (Evans & Green, 2006:50). Conceptual structure and conceptualization are two crucial facets of meaning that cognitive semantics investigates. The former focuses on how knowledge is represented in the human conceptual system, whereas the latter discusses how meaning is generated (Evans, 2007:26). The second facet of meaning is the focus of this study. Meaning is equal to conceptualization, according to cognitive semantics. Yet, human perception is not taken into account in formal or truth conditional semantics; instead, it just illustrates how words relate to an external world (Evans & Green: 2006:774). Human perception plays a significant role in the production of meaning. The ability to perceive a scene or scenario from different perspectives and make distinct remarks on it, depending on what we want to say about it and how much information we want to include in our description, is one of our most fundamental cognitive abilities and it is known as *construal* in cognitive semantics (Casad, 1995:24).

According to Hamawand (2009:16) *construal* refers to the speaker's ability to conceptualize a situation in a variety of ways and to use various linguistic expressions to reflect these conceptualizations in discourse. Two lexical items may have the same content but differ in how the speaker interprets it. With each alternative, the speaker modifies his or her conceptualization and concentrates on a particular aspect of the situation they are describing. Each alternative is realized in language in a unique way. Consequently, according to cognitive linguists, linguistic meaning is composed of conceptual contents as well as the ways that language users perceive these conceptual contents. However; it is worth noticing that, there are different, but overlapping, models of the *construal* operations proposed by the classical cognitive linguists, and there is disagreement among scholars over the taxonomies of *construal* operations. Two of Langacker's classification is the focus of this study. He recently revised his taxonomy, reclassifying *construal* mechanisms or operations into the four major types Langacker (2008, 2013: 55-85) which are (specificity, Prominence, Focusing and perspective) each has a number of sub categories. The categories and sub categories that are chosen by the researcher in this study are explained below:

- a. **Prominence:** Language structure exhibits a wide range of asymmetries, which justifies the interpretation of some aspects as being more salient or prominent than others (Langacker, 2008). **Profiling** is one of the categories of prominence that is the focus of this study: An expression's conceptual ground is a specific conception that acts as the basis for the expression's meaning. The maximal scope, or more specifically the immediate scope, that is displayed on stage and serves as the focus of viewer attention,

can be thought of as this base. The onstage area is surrounded by a certain substructure known as the profile that captures the most attention.

- b. Perspective:** In the same way as conceptualization (metaphorically) entails viewing a scene, perspective describes how such viewing is arranged, with the assumed vantage point being the most visible feature. **The viewing arrangement**, which is concerned with vantage point (VP), is one of the dimensions of perspective that Langacker addresses and is used in this study . Another important characteristic of construal and a closely related aspect of VP is the contrast between **subjective** and **objective** construal, sometimes known as subjectivity vs. objectivity. According to Langacker, objectivity entails a maximum distance between the conceptualized object and the viewer so that they do not come into contact. While Subjective construal, on the other hand, involves a participant's interpretation of how the visual elements are presented.

5. The Adopted Model

The current study, to account for meaning construction in election billboards as a type of multimodal political discourse depends on an eclectic model, which consists of two models, which are Kress and van Leeuwen's *Reading Image: The Grammar of Visual Design* (2006), and Langacker's *Construal Operations* (2008\2013) model, which is a cognitive semantic model. Each model consists of a number of items, each items has a number of sub-categories. The table below shows the main items adopted in the current study:

Items of the adopted model \ Multimodal Cognitive						
1.	Representational	Narrative	Action	transaction	Actor	
					Goal	
				Non transactional	Actor	
					Non goal	
	Prominence	Profiling				
2.	Interactive	Contact	Demand			
			Offer			
		Social distance	Close shot	Intimate		
				Close personal		
			Medium shot	Far personal		
				Close social		
	Far social					
		Attitude	Horizontal angle	Frontal	Involvement	
				Oblique	Detachment	
		Vertical angle	High	Powerful		
Eye level			Equality			
		Low	Low of representation			

	Perspective	Vantage point
		Subjectivity
		Objectivity

Table (1) the Adopted Model

6. Data and Methodology

The sample of the present paper consists of three political American election Billboards of Donald Trump used in the 2020 election campaign. They are chosen randomly from internet websites. The process of data analysis is carried out at two levels: visual and linguistic. At Visual level, the selected sample is to be analyzed according to both models while at linguistic level, only the items of construal operation are applied. The study is qualitative in nature because it aims to investigate and describe each billboard's political design, what underlying ideas it may convey, and how the chosen billboards' meanings were produced.

7. Method of Analysis

An overview and description of each billboard will be provided before the analysis. The purpose of the billboard and its intended impact on the addressee will be taken into consideration next. The third stage of the analysis will concentrate on the linguistic and visual elements that the billboard designer uses to create the meaning that the message is meant to convey.

8. Data Analysis

Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) model, with its selected metafunctions, integrated with selected construal operations of Langacker's (2013), to conduct a scrutinized qualitative analysis for each billboard. Each billboard is explained separately.

Billboard No.1



Figure (1)

Political Billboard of the candidate of the Republican Party, Donald Trump

On the billboard: This political billboard features the candidate of the Republican Party, Donald Trump for presidential 2020 general election. The purpose of this billboard is to endorse Trump and the republican philosophy that this candidate is attempting to revive, which is to Make America Great. And to spread liberty and freedom against communism and socialism which they accuse Biden of.

The Analysis: Regarding the **representational structure**, on the **visual level**, this billboard identifies two types of participants: individuals (Trump and Pence) and objects (colors, symbols, slogans). The participants in the billboard are portrayed as *Major Actors* via a transactional action process, making the viewers the *Goal* since their eye contact and hand gestures create a connection between them and the viewers. This image can be altered to depict candidates pleading for attention and support. Concerning cognitive analysis, profiling is an important aspect of conceptualizing the prominent visual aspects in this billboard. The entire billboard is the conceptual base, and the maximal scope of its substructure profiles entities within their immediate scope, which includes images of Trump and Pence on the right side of the billboard as the most profiled visual element, which serves as the first instance of profiling in this billboard, they are the most prominent features that might draw the viewer's attention since they are provided in a larger size, with more brightness, and are situated in the right front angle. The second element of profiling can be noticed in Trump and Pence's facial expressions, smiles, hand gestures, and glances toward the electorate, which convey hope, triumph, and a brighter future for Americans. The third example is the predominant color of the billboard, which is represented by the shade of Red. This profiles Trump's Republican Party membership. The last example of profiling on the visual level is the logo which profiles the republican's main slogan for 2020 general election in America.

On the **linguistic level**, the designer of the billboard uses some techniques like, font type, size, location, etc. of the linguistic expressions to profile them against other elements. The first profiling linguistic expression is the name *Trump* for which the American election

network is the base, which is written in red, bold, capital letters to emphasize the idea that Trump has a strong, promising character to lead America. Similarly, the profiled linguistic expression *Choose Freedom* is displayed in bold, large font size, and red color. The designer appears to be implying here that Trump, as a member of the Republican Party symbolized by the red color, is capable of providing Americans with freedom if re-elected. The third instance of profiled linguistic expressions is the phrases "*Freedom, Liberty, VS communism & Socialism*" which is given more prominence due to its location in the frontal near angle and it profiles Trump's election Campaign through which the designer wants to show that, choosing Trump paves away to spread Liberty and freedom against communism and socialism which the Republicans accuse Biden of. The linguistic aspects in this billboard, on the other hand, profile either thing or relation. Relations are profiled by verbs, whereas things are profiled by nouns. As a result, the verb *vote* profiles relationship between Trump and his supporters. Similarly, other verbs in the billboard like *choose* profiles a relation too. The nouns on the other hand profile a thing, like Freedom, communism, socialism, Trump along with the numerical expressions 2020, all profile things. This billboard on the **visual level** is categorized as a "demand" in the **interactive meanings** since the two primary participants (Trump and Pence) are looking directly at the viewer. They appear to be appealing to the observer with a visual "you," urging them to create an unexpected interaction. The participants who have been shown also seem to be pressuring the viewer to do something (voting in favor of them). The participants are clearly inviting the viewer to engage in a relationship of social affinity from the smiles on their faces, the way they stand and look at the viewers and their hand gestures. In terms of *social distance*, a close-up shot is made showing Trump and Pence's head and shoulder; as a result, this is regarded as having a close social distance between the viewer of the billboard and the represented participants. Trump and Pence are from a horizontal angle perspective, are photographed at a frontal angle. As a result, the viewer is engaged in the world of the participants. Both are seen at an eye level by the viewer, indicating equality relationship between the viewer and the represented participants. Taking *perspective* as a dimension of construal operation into consideration, it can be said that perspective is evoked by the vertical viewing arrangement between the overall billboard as the object of conceptualization, the viewer or conceptualizer, and the setting of the billboard's context or scenario. The vantage point, as part of the viewing arrangement, refers to the viewer's actual location. As a result, the observer of this billboard takes a vertical vantage point, directing his attention to the onstage zone that encompasses the profiled object, the image of Trump and Pence. While the maximal scope, which covers all other visual aspects that contribute to the overall meaning of the billboard. The parameter of subjectivity and objectivity is closely related to the vantage point. The objective construal of the current billboard involves the factual description of various components like the design, the borders, the colors, individuals, things, and the gestures. Hence, describing the image of Trump, Pence, their facial expressions and gestures, gives an explicit objective construal of the image in which the conceptualizer is off stage. The implied subjective construal of the billboard in which the conceptualizer is onstage, on the other hand, shows that Trump and Pence are the ideal, confident, powerful and deserved candidates for leading America. On the **level of linguistics**, however; different types of fictive vantage points are identified in this default viewing arrangement. The linguistic expression "vote Trump 2020" refers to the temporal vantage point represented by the year 2020. Trump is a compositional deixis

that identifies the identity of the image of the individual standing on the billboard's right side. In terms of the vantage point's subjectivity and objectivity, the linguistic expression "Choose Freedom" is a subjectively construed as an imperative construction that refers directly to the ground and profiles the interlocutor's relationship since they are put onstage as they are part of the perceived scenes (i.e., the object of conceptualization). The linguistic expression "vote Trump 2020" is another instance of subjective construal elicited by imperative constructions. The speaker expects the hearer to perform the act of voting for trump as President of the United States. Some linguistic expressions such as "Trump," 2020, and "Freedom, Liberty, VS Communism & Socialism" are objectively construed since they refer to separate entities and do not necessitate any action on the part of the viewer.

Billboard No. 2



Figure (2)

Political Billboard of the candidate of the Republican Party, Donald Trump

On the billboard: Donald Trump, the Republican Party's nominee for president in the 2020 U.S. general election, is featured on this campaign billboard. Through the help of symbols, allusions, logos, slogans, colors, and textual arrangements, the designer hopes to influence Americans to vote for trump in the general election of 2020.

The Analysis: Trump is the major actor represented in terms of a **representational structure**, on the **visual level**, and the objects represented include the American flag, logos, written texts, and symbols. This billboard uses a *transactional action* process to represent what is unfolding. Trump is portrayed as a *Major Actor*, whose arm, while holding the baby in a flag, generates a vector connecting him with the flag, making the baby in the flag the *Goal*. Another vector emanating from his face shows the viewer that Trump is gazing at the infant he is holding in the flag which is a sign that he is looking at American people's future and he is holding them and regards himself to be responsible for their future. Accordingly, this image can be transcoded as Trump looking at the baby in the flag.

Cognitively speaking, a piece of the visual content is prominent within the immediate scope of the construed visual elements. This prominent area is called *profile*. The billboard as a whole serves as the conceptual base for its profiled visual aspects. Profiling is attained here by the use of formatting strategies like as coloration, size, and location. As a result, the first profiled visual elements could be Trump's image and the American flag he is holding, the baby in the American flag, and the logo of the republicans that are all profiled against the whole billboard. These are the most visible parts that might draw the viewer's attention because they are large in size, have more illumination, and are positioned in the billboard's left, right front corner and the center. Profiling can also be performed through the use of symbols and metonymy. Because Trump is a metonymy for the American president, the image of Trump profiles the president of the United States. Trump's holding of the American flag is noteworthy. That symbolizes Trump's profound devotion to America. Another instance of profiling is the baby in the flag that Trump is holding, it symbolizes the American people's future is in Trump's hand. The fifth example of profiling can be seen in Trump's facial expressions and gaze, which is oriented towards the infant in the flag he is carrying, indicating that he is concerned about the future of the American people and considers himself to be responsible for it. The last visual instance of profiling is the logo, which profiles the Republican Party's major slogan for the 2020 general election in America.

On the **linguistic level**, the first example of profiling is the linguistic expression *Trump*, which is displayed with capital, bold, regular font and given a Blue bright color against a white background in the billboard's center to profile Trump's strong character as a leader capable of changing the American state. Similarly, the second profiled linguistic expression is *Pence* which is displayed in a large, bold font with a red color. The slogan "Their Future is in your Hand" is a third instance of profiling due to its placement at the top billboard. This slogan implies that America's future is in Trump's hand and Trump is responsible for their future lives. In the same fashion, the fourth example could be the linguistic expression "keep America great" which is given more emphasis due to its central placement, it profiles Trump's campaign slogan and spreads the ideology that voting for Trump is a vote for the restore of America's greatness. It's worth mentioning that when analyzing the content of the linguistic expressions in this billboard there are instances of linguistic elements profile either a thing or a relation. Relations are profiled by verbs and adjectives, whereas things are profiled by nouns. Hence, *Trump* and *Pence's* name, *America*, along with numerical expression *2020 profile* a thing in the world of American election as their base. However, the verb "keep" in the slogan of the Republican Party Trump representing "Keep America Great", the verb to be "is" in the slogan "Their Future is in your Hands", The preposition "in" in the latter slogan shows a relation between the *future and the hands all profile relations*.

In terms of **interactive meanings**, this billboard on the **visual level**, symbolizes an "offer" because the participant's gaze is turned away from the observer's gaze. The observer is encouraged to observe Trump in this image rather than to interact with him. As a result, the audience is encouraged to relate to him in an approachable and helpful manner. The body of Trump is displayed from knee up in a medium shot, which is believed to have a close *social distance* between the observer and the represented participant. The viewer is engaged with the represented participants and their surroundings in this frontal horizontal aspect image. Since the participants are seen at high level from a vertical perspective, the

observer and the participants have dominant relationship of symbolic power. In terms cognitive, however; the viewer's perspective is evoked by the viewing arrangement in which he engages, as well as the vantage point and point of view he occupies. The viewer has a vertical vantage point from which he can interpret the image of Trump vertically from bottom to top. This vantage point influences the viewer's perception, leading him to view Trump as a faithful, responsible, and true leader who protects the rights of the American people. Inhabiting a low angle vantage point also lets the viewer to see other visual elements such as the American flag and the infant in the American flag that Trump holds. Additionally, the subjective and objective perception of the objects of conceptualization is an essential component of the vantage point. The viewer's passive involvement in the ground is evoked via objective construal. As a result, objective construal is included in the factual depiction of Trump and how he carries an infant in the American flag in terms of size, orientation and position. Interpreting the implied meaning of the American flag, the infant in it and its relevance to Trump, on the other hand, necessitates subjective construal.

As for the **linguistic level** in this billboard, several forms of fictive vantage points are discovered within this viewing arrangement. The verbs (is and keep) along with the numerical expression 2020 tie the depicted situation to a temporal vantage point. The linguistic expressions *Trump* and *Pence* elicit a compositional vantage point. In the same fashion, the pronouns “*their*” and “*Your*” in “their future is in your hands” are compositional deixes that lead back to their indicated referent, i.e. Trump and the American people. Regarding subjectivity and objectivity of the linguistic expressions in this billboard, it can be stated that, the linguistic elements in this billboard elicit subjective and objective interpretations. Consequently, the pronouns "their" and "Your" in "their future is in your hands" denote nominal basis, resulting in a subjective construal of the billboard. The linguistic statement "Keep America great" is also subjectively interpreted; the verb Keep refers to Trump's participation in the process of Keeping America great. Trump and Pence are objectively construed since they do not indicate the viewers' engagement in the ground.

Billboard No.3



Figure (3)

Political Billboard of the candidate of the Republican Party, Donald Trump

On the billboard: Donald Trump, the presidential candidate for the Republican Party in the 2020 U.S. general election, is shown on this political billboard. By expressing his ideas

to viewers through visual and textual structures, the designer aims to persuade people to support Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

The Analysis: In terms of a **representational structure**, on the **visual level**, the participant (Trump) on the billboard is portrayed as the Main Actor through a transactional action process, making the viewer the Goal because his eye contact makes contact between him and them. Following Langacker's profiling as a dimension of prominence operation of construal theory, as a consequence, the overall billboard can serve as the conceptual base for the substructure's profiled entities, such as the image of Trump that acts as the primary visual element in this billboard which occupies the left side of the billboard through its placement the designer wants to attract viewers attention and pass the message to them that Trump is their best choice. As far as the techniques of form and format of this billboard is of concern, beside Trump's image the second profiled visual element could be in this billboard can be seen in Trump's facial expressions and gaze, which is oriented towards something outside the billboard, indicating that he is concerned about the future of the American people and considers himself to be responsible for it. Taking the **linguistic level** into consideration, the first profiled linguistic expression is the noun Trump which is written in capital, large font size with red colors so as to draw viewers' attention and to convince the electorates to vote for Trump and to imply that Trump is a member of the Republican Party. The second profiled instance is the linguistic expressions "PROMISES KEPT" is the linguistic component of the construction with the most prominence. It is situated on the right side of the billboard along the viewer's line of sight. Also, it is presented with a bold, large font size and a white, vivid color that contrasts with the red of the background. The subsequent components, which make up the base, are less prominent in the constructions which are *record job growth and stronger borders*. It is worth indicating that, the linguistic components in this billboard profile either a thing or relation. Likewise, the nouns Trump, border, growth, job, along with numerical expression 2020 profile a thing while the verbs, vote, Kept, and record profile relations between Trump and his followers. In the same fashion, the adjective *stronger* profiles relation the same way verbs do.

On the **visual level**, in terms of **interactive meaning** the above billboard is considered an "offer." because the participant being portrayed on this billboard is not directly looking at the viewer. In this billboard, the viewer is urged to simply observe Trump rather than interacting with him. As a result, he encourages the audience to react to him in a kind and supportive way. In a medium shot, which is thought to have a close social distance between the viewer and the represented participant, Trump's body is shown from the knee up. In this frontal horizontal aspect photograph, the viewer is detached from Trump and his surroundings. The observer and Trump have a dominant relationship of symbolic power since he is perceived at a high level in a vertical perspective. Incorporating the cognitive dimension this billboard's viewing arrangement and assumed vantage point evoke the dimension of perspective. The viewer is positioned vertically, adopting a low angle, and is processing Trump's image vertically from bottom to top leading him to regard Trump as a great, loyal, and excellent leader who keeps his word and strives to improve America. However; taking subjective and objective construal as aspects of vantage point into consideration, it can be claimed that this billboard on the visual level invokes both subjective and objective construal. Construal can be described as a relationship between the conceptualization of the subject and the conceptualization of the object. The viewer

does not enter the domain of the billboard and sees it as a stationary image when the distance between the viewer and the billboard is maximized. Here, the visual components are interpreted with the greatest degree of objectivity. The conceived visual elements are only given an actual description of their structure, color, placement, and quantity by the viewer. On the other hand, when the viewer enters their world and expresses his opinions, the visual aspects are interpreted subjectively. Thus, the description of Trump's figure in terms of size, colors and location, how it's located on the left side and occupies a sizable piece of the billboard to attract attentions how he is depicted etc. require objective construal while the designer's ultimate goal to show Trump as a loyal, faithful and excellent president who keeps his words and will improve America economically, and defend America from outside forces require subjective construal.

However, on the **level of linguistics**, this billboard indicates various types of fictive vantage points within this viewing arrangement. The year 2020 and the verb *Kept* are included to give the scenario being described a temporal viewpoint. The linguistic expression "record job growth and strong borders" alludes to a metaphorical spatial vantage point and denotes developments in the economic and international relations of the U.s. The noun Trump in "vote Trump 2020" is a compositional deixis which depicts the identity of the image of the man standing on the left side of this billboard. Regarding subjectivity and objectivity, it can be indicated that, subjective construal is represented by the linguistic excretions like For instance, the imperative construction "Vote Trump 2020" which requires the involvement of the subjects of the conceptualization in the ground. The viewers are demanded to vote for Trump. In a similar way the verb *kept* in the linguistic expression "Promises kept" refers to Trump's participation in the process of fulfilling the promises he made to Americans. The phrases like *record job growth* and *stronger borders* are the further two more examples of subjective construal in this billboard as they involve Trump in the process of making borders of America strong and fulfill economic growth. While, the name Trump along with the numerical expression 2020 are objectively construed because they do not mark viewer's involvement in the ground.

9. Results of Analysis

The findings from analyzing the three selected election billboards of Trump based on the variation between the visual and linguistic elements of the selected billboards in terms of the eclectic model can be stated as follows:

1. **Representational structure:** The visual category of representation in terms of multimodality has only one sub-category in this study, namely, narrative processes. It is clear that Trump as a representative candidate in the three selected billboards is the main represented participant on a visual level in terms of a representational structure with the application of a transactional action process in terms of narrative structure. This means that there is a relative focus on unfolding actions or events more than on what the participants represent.
- **Prominence \ Profiling:** profiling is observed at both visual and linguistic levels in Trump's billboards with a little bit differences. At linguistic level, profiling shows a little bit higher. This is due to the fact that the Trump's billboard designer depends on profiling both visual and linguistic elements to show the intended message of the billboard, with focusing more on profiling the linguistic components to display them than they do with the visual ones.

2. **Interactive meaning:** As for the interactional meanings, this is applicable on the visual level only, that the dimension of ‘offer’ and “demand” can be observed. Two of the selected billboards represent an "offer" which means that there is a lack of eye contact between Trump as the main represented participant in the billboard and the viewers. However; in one of the billboards the main represented participants (Trump) attempts to build an imaginative contact with the viewers since he address them directly with his eyes pointing in their direction. For a social distance, a medium shot is used to portray a far intimate distance between the viewer and Trump as the represented participants in the three billboards. Trump in two of the selected billboards is shown from a horizontal angle perspective at a frontal angle. As a result, the viewers are lured into his world. While in billboard number three Trump is seen at an oblique angle from a frontal horizontal aspect perspective, which means that the viewer in this billboard unlike the other two billboard is detached from Trump and his surroundings. The observer and Trump in billboards number two and three have a dominant relationship of symbolic power since the he is perceived at a high level in a vertical perspective. While in billboard number one since the participants (Trump and Pence) both are seen at an eye level by the viewer, this shows equality relationship between the viewer and the represented participants.
- **Perspective\ viewing arrangement:** based on the analysis of the selected election billboards Trump, the results show that perspective can be seen at both visual and linguistic levels in the billboards with a little bit differences. As it is shown through the analysis, the observance of linguistic elements is a little bit higher than that of visual elements, but despite these, they complement each other to give the overall meaning of the billboard.

10. Conclusion

The findings of the present paper lead to the following conclusions:

1. The language and visual aids that should be used in a way that they may be incorporated into the billboards' designs are taken into consideration by the designers of Trump's billboards in order to present the American people with an effective and inspiring message. They are used as an effective technique to emphasize the potential political strength of Trump and the party he is representing.
2. The multimodal aspect of Langacker's construal dimensions is noticeable. They can be used to analyze visual texts as well, even though they were intended to take into account the analysis of linguistic elements only.
3. There is agreement on how to use language effectively to encourage the audience to vote for Donald Trump despite the fact that the text of the three billboards exhibits various linguistic tactics to transmit a political discourse. The language is characterized by its use of short phrases and positive words. To draw attention to what is important in the billboard; some of the words are put in capital letters.
4. In the process of constructing meaning, the visual and textual components of election billboards complement one another to some degree, as it is the case for the selected Trump's election billboards, the results show that meaning construction in these billboards are dependent on both visual and linguistic elements even though the focus on the linguistic elements is observed to be higher to some extent rather than that of the visual elements.

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