

# *Verbo-pictorial metaphor in French advertising*

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## ABSTRACT

In the last thirty years the development of the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (e.g. Lakoff, 1987, 2006; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999) has led to vast research into metaphor. The study of linguistic metaphor was followed by a body of work into pictorial metaphor (Forceville, 1994, 1996) and multimodal metaphor (Forceville, 2007, 2008, 2009). In the present contribution we explore the use of verbo-pictorial metaphors in advertising through a corpus of French print ads. Starting from the claim that adverts serve a persuasive purpose, it will be argued that multimodal metaphor contributes to that purpose. The paper addresses three issues: a) how multimodal metaphors are manifested in the French advertisements; b) how image and text interact in a concrete type of multimodal metaphor in French print advertisements, namely verbo-pictorial metaphor; c) how verbo-pictorial metaphor performs a pragmatic function in advertising.

## I INTRODUCTION

The last decades have witnessed a growing interest in metaphor from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. The Cognitive Metaphor Theory developed by Lakoff and other scholars (e.g. Lakoff, 1987, 2006; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Kövecses, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2005; Gibbs, 1994; Gibbs, Bogdanovich, Sykes and Barr, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Dirven and Ruiz de Mendoza, 2010; cf. Gibbs, 2011, and Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez, 2011 for assessment on the later versions) was a landmark in metaphor investigation and led to corpus linguistic studies of conceptual metaphor (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2004; Deignan, 2006) and research into metaphor in specialised language, including economics (Rojo and Orts, 2010) and winespeak (Amararitei, 2002; Caballero, 2009; Caballero and Suárez-Toste, 2010).

Although the majority of publications have focused on linguistic manifestations of conceptual metaphor, other types of metaphor such as visual and multimodal metaphor have attracted much attention in the last years. This is in keeping with the idea that if metaphors pervade human thought, conceptual metaphors should be encoded not just in language but also in other forms of communication like pictures, music, sounds, and gestures. In other words, conceptual metaphors do not only manifest themselves in language, but also occur non-verbally and multi-modally.

Several studies (Carroll, 1994; Forceville, 1994, 1996, 2002) have addressed the subject of visual, or pictorial, metaphor (i.e. metaphor occurring in pictures). Multimodal metaphor (i.e. metaphor occurring in diverse modes) has been the subject of research in recent years. Forceville (2009: 24) defines multimodal metaphors in the following terms: 'metaphors whose target and source are rendered in two different modes/modalities [. . .] and in many cases the verbal is one of these'. Koller (2009: 46) claims that 'multimodal metaphor is constituted by a mapping, or blending, of domains from different modes'.

Forceville (2009) postulates the following modes in the investigation of multimodal metaphor:

- pictorial signs
- written signs
- spoken signs
- gestures
- sounds
- music
- smells
- tastes
- touch

Whereas some scholars (e.g. Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, 2006 (1996); Baldry and Thibault, 2006; Forceville, 2008a, 2009; O'Toole 2011 (1994) provide a theoretical account of multimodal metaphor, others have focused on the presence of multimodal metaphor in specialized language (Kennedy, 2008; Forceville, 2008; Cienki and Müller, 2008a,b; Zbikowski, 2008; Ventola and Guijarro, 2009), including political cartoons (El Refaie, 2001, 2009; Yus, 2009; Teng, 2009; Shiperoord and Maes, 2009), film (Forceville, 2005; Rohdin, 2009; Eggerstsson and Forceville, 2009), oral speech accompanied by gestures (McNeill, 1992, 2005; Cienki, 1998; Müller and Cienki, 2009), comics, manga and animation (Forceville, 2008b; Eerde, 2009; Shinohara and Matsunaka, 2009), music and sound (Zbikowski, 2009; Forceville, 2009), and advertising (Forceville, 1996, 2007, 2008, 2009; Messaris, 1997; Philips, 2003; Wiggin and Miller, 2003; Ventola *et al.*, 2004; Velasco and Fuertes, 2004, 2006a,b; McQuarrie and Philips, 2008; Koller, 2009; Caballero, 2009; Velasco, 2009; Ning Yu, 2009; Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Advertising is a type of multimodal discourse, where overall meaning is construed through five modes: written language, spoken language, visuals, sound and smells.

Within the cognitive framework and taking multimodal studies into consideration, we intend to develop research in the field of French advertising, a field which has been explored by a number of scholars (Adam and Bonhomme, 2000, 2003; López Díaz, 2006; Lugin, 2006; Bariety and Gicquel, 2008; Bonhomme and Lugin, 2008).

The structure of the paper is as follows. In the first section we discuss a number of theoretical issues that are relevant to our empirical study of multimodal figuration in print advertising. The second section is concerned with the corpus and the methodology used. This will be followed by the detailed analysis of ten print

advertisements in French which instantiate multimodal metaphors. The last section presents some concluding remarks.

## 2 THEORETICAL ISSUES

### 2.1 *Metaphor and metonymy*

In the cognitive view, metaphor and metonymy occupy a central role in our conceptual structure. Rather than being a simply aesthetic literary phenomenon, they are conceived as primarily cognitive devices structuring human thought and action. The Cognitive Metaphor Theory is based on the following principles (Lakoff, 2006):

- Metaphor is primarily a cognitive mechanism.
- Metaphor involves understanding a domain of experience (the target domain) in terms of a more concrete domain (the source domain).
- A metaphor is to be regarded as a mapping (e.g. a fixed set of conceptual correspondences) between a source domain and a target domain, where one or more features of the source are projected upon the target. As Lakoff (2006: 192) remarks, a metaphor is ‘an ontological mapping across conceptual domains’ so that ‘the essence of meaning is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another’ (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 5).
- Any linguistic metaphor, or metaphoric expression, is an instantiation of a conceptual metaphor.

While a metaphor is a mapping (i.e. a set of correspondences) between two different conceptual domains, a metonymy is a domain-internal conceptual mapping.

Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal (2002: 58) suggest two types of metonymy based on the domain-internal nature of metonymic mappings:

- a) Source-in-target metonymies are those in which the source domain is a subdomain of the target domain. They involve domain expansion.
- b) Target-in-source metonymies are those in which the target is a subdomain of the source, for example the metonymies based on Kövecses and Radden’s (1998) part-for-part relationship and those based on other frames like the product and the location frames. They involve domain reduction and the consequent highlighting of part of a domain.

An important point to be mentioned is that metaphor and metonymy often interplay. Some authors (Ruiz de Mendoza, 1999a, 2000; Radden, 2000; Barcelona, 2000b; Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal, 2002; Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez, 2003; Geeraerts, 2003; Panther, Thornburg and Barcelona, 2006; Benczes, Barcelona and Ruiz de Mendoza, 2011; González, Peña and Pérez, 2011) have examined the conceptual interaction between metaphor and metonymy.<sup>2</sup> We follow Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal’s (2002) view that, whenever metaphor and metonymy interact, it is the latter that is subsidiary to the former. This claim results from the nature of the two mappings. While a metaphor involves two conceptual domains, a metonymy

involves just one. Therefore, the two domains of metaphor cannot operate within the single domain of a metonymy. In the light of this, Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal (2007: 77), argue for the existence of conceptual chains where a metonymy is subsumed within a metaphor. It must be noted that the interaction between metaphor and metonymy is of great relevance in advertising (Cortés de los Ríos, 2001; Díez, 2003; Geeraerts, 2003; Rocamora, 2004b).

## *2.2 Image schemas*

Numerous metaphors and metonymies used in advertising are grounded in image schemas (Cortés de los Ríos, 2001; Velasco and Cortés de los Ríos, 2009). Image schemas are schematic mental patterns derived from sensory and perceptual experience that structure our thinking and reasoning about the world (Evans and Green, 2006: 178). Evans and Green (2006: 190) propose the following image schemas:

- Space: up-down, front-back, left-right, near-far, centre-periphery, path, straight-curved, scale
- Containment: in-out
- Multiplicity: part-whole, count-mass
- Balance: axis balance, point balance equilibrium
- Force: compulsion, blockage, counterforce, diversion, enablement, attraction, resistance
- Cycle
- Attribute: heavy-light, dark-bright, big-small, warm-cold, strong-weak

## *2.3 Metaphor, metonymy and image schema-based metaphor and metonymy in print advertising*

Velasco and Fuertes (2004: 866–872) suggest the following traits of metaphor in advertising:

- a) It has a cognitive value in that it is employed to describe the product or service advertised by means of a number of features associated with it, such as its price, origin, size, shape, colour, use, effect or the target audience.
- b) The metaphors used in advertising fall under three categories: (i) conventional metaphors, i.e. metaphors which have completely lost their metaphorical character; (ii) metaphors based on the similarity between the target and the source; (iii) metaphors based on the creation of a similarity link between the target and the source. In advertising discourse resemblance is a powerful conceptual link for metaphor motivation. This is in accordance with Semino's (2008: 7) claim that 'some metaphors [...] have their basis in the perceived similarities or resemblances, i.e. in the perception of common characteristics or structures between entities or areas of experience'.

- c) Metaphor is a conceptual device, whereas the metaphorical expressions occurring in advertising may be verbal, non-verbal or hybrid.
- d) Metaphor has a pragmatic role and contributes to the communicative function of the advertising discourse. In this light, an important aspect of the analysis of multimodal metaphor in advertising is its communicative potential. If we turn to the communicative impact of multimodal metaphor in advertising discourse, it must be emphasized that the primary intention behind advertising is to make people buy. In this context, metaphor plays a persuasive role, which is closely related to the rhetoric of advertising<sup>1</sup>. Metaphor thus works as an advertising strategy (e.g. Forceville, 1996, 2006; Ungerer, 2000; Rocamora, 2004a; Velasco and Fuertes, 2004; McQuarrie and Philips, 2005; van Mulken, van Enshot and Hocken, 2005; van Enshot, 2006; Ma, 2008; Lim, Ang, Lee and Leong, 2009). As Koller (2009: 49) remarks, 'multimodal metaphor is a tool to meet the persuasive function of advertising in that it requires the addressee to construct a meaningful reading by processing verbal and visual elements together'. In other words, dual encoding reinforces the persuasive intention of advertising by highlighting the product features via language and image. Koller (2009: 62) emphasizes the persuasive character of the image.

While Koller focuses on the cognitive effect of adverts, Forceville and Urios-Aparisi (2009) hold a broader view of the persuasive purpose of ads. Thus, adverts are persuasive 'in the sense of aiming for some sort of cognitive, emotional or aesthetic effect, or all three together, in its envisaged audience' (2009: 3).

Along with its role as a persuasion technique, metaphor fulfills other functions. At a basic level, it is aimed to attract and retain the attention of readers. Concomitantly, it helps to get the message across. Very often, metaphor is a heuristic tool, allowing abstract concepts to be transmitted visually.

It is worth noting that the communicative import of metaphor is heavily influenced by its conventional or innovative nature. Whereas some ads play on the conventional similarity between two domains, others are grounded on a new metaphor. An example of conventional metaphor is the conceptualisation of the product as a human being. On the other hand, in our corpus new metaphors are illustrated by the expressions *A WINE IS A RING* and *A WINE IS A WORK OF ART* (cf. below). Joannis (1988: 59–61) considers new metaphors as instances of a process ('symbolizing bisection') whereby a link is forged between two seemingly unrelated domains. Such a link triggers a semantic clash. The bigger the clash, the more advertisers rely on the audience for message construction and the stronger the textual impact.

<sup>1</sup> In this sense metaphor is one of the vast array of rhetorical devices that advertisers use to persuade. Durand (1978: 25–34) classifies rhetorical figures according to two dimensions: the nature of the operation involved (repetition, suppression, substitution or exchange), and the nature of the relation between the figurative use and the ordinary use of language (identity, similarity, difference, opposition or false similarity). Following this classification, metaphor involves the substitution of similar elements.

Table 1. *Analysis of French print advertisements*

Cognitive analysis	Metaphor
	Metonymy
	Image schemas
Modality	Monomodal / Multimodal
	Representation of the source and target
Pragmatic effect	Intended message

As regards image schemas, Velasco and Cortés de los Ríos (2009) argue that image schemas and image-schema based figures play an important role in persuasion.

### 3 DATA SELECTION AND METHODOLOGY

To illustrate how multimodal metaphor is employed in advertising, we have selected a sample corpus of French print advertisements retrieved from two popular magazines, *Marie-Claire* and *L'Express*, published between January and May 2011, and we have analysed ten instances. While *Marie-Claire* is a women's magazine filled with style tips, beauty secrets, relationship and career advice and entertainment guides, *L'Express* is a news magazine. Our choice is justified on the following grounds:

- a) Print adverts bring into play the modes of language and visuals and are particularly good examples of interaction between the two modes. They usually combine and establish an interaction between written and visual signs in such a way that the print and the image are dependent upon each other to convey the message. Rocamora (2004a: 845) explains the text-picture interaction in terms of *anchoring*, a notion drawing on Barthes' (1977: 38–41) concept of anchoring, according to which the advert would hardly be understood without the correct combination of both. This is particularly true in some of the ads under study here.
- b) The magazines selected are widely read.
- c) The magazines differ in the amount and type of advertising they carry, thus enriching our study. *Marie-Claire* includes many ads for cosmetics and food products, whereas *L'Express* contains ads for cars and drinks.
- d) The selection of ads has been determined by their figurative potential.

We use a cognitive approach to analyse the various types of metaphor and metonymy encoded and their interaction, the image schemas used, the modality, and the intended message of the ad, as shown in Table 1:

As regards modality, the adverts that we have selected fall into Forceville's (1996, 2009) *verbo-pictorial* variety of multimodal metaphor. Forceville's notion of verbo-pictorial metaphor considers the mode in which a conceptual metaphor is manifested and the representation of the source and the target domains. In his first scheme (1996), Forceville defines a verbo-pictorial metaphor as a metaphor whose source is visually represented and the target is verbally represented or vice versa; in a

subsequent study (2009), a verbo-pictorial metaphor is a metaphor always encoded visually and occasionally in additional verbal form. The metaphors instantiated in the adverts here collected draw on the modes of written language and visuals in one of the following ways:

- a) Both the source and the target are visually and verbally cued.
- b) The source is rendered visually and verbally and the target is rendered visually.
- c) The source is visually and verbally cued and the target is rendered verbally.
- d) The source is verbally rendered and the target is visually and verbally cued.
- e) The source is represented via language and the target is represented via image.
- f) The source is pictorially represented and the target is verbally represented.

Last but not least, our analysis will reveal the message that the advertiser seeks to convey to the reader. Since the message rests on a metaphor, we argue that metaphor has a pragmatic value which is linked to the promotion of a product (or service) and to its role as a grabbing-attention device. Indeed, on the one hand, metaphor contributes to promote a product in one of three ways: (i) by enhancing its qualities (see ads 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8); (ii) by making the product stand for a desired attribute acquired through it (see ad 9); (iii) by presenting the product as a necessity (see ad 10);

On the other hand, metaphor retains the audience's attention for a longer period of time by involving it in the process of interpreting the ad. In this sense, the audience has to establish a resemblance between the product and the object or property featured in the metaphor.

#### 4 DATA ANALYSIS

As advanced above, the metaphorical link with a domain representing the product features may serve to enhance its qualities, as illustrated in ads 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

The identification of wines with jewels and paintings shown in ads 1 and 2, respectively, suggests that a wine is a crafted work. These ads provide an illustration of the way in which a creative metaphor is used in advertising.

**AD 1** (Figure 1): *Pineau des Charentes* (*L'Express*, April 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphors: A WINE IS A RING, A WINE IS A WORK OF ART - Source: Jewellery, art - Target: Wines
Modality	Multimodal - Visual/verbal representation of the source - Visual/verbal representation of the target
Intended message	<i>Pineau des Charentes</i> perfectly combines natural components with fine craftsmanship.

The ad depicts a wooden ring with a grape-like pearl. Although the ring is to be considered as metaphoric on its own, it could not be correctly interpreted without

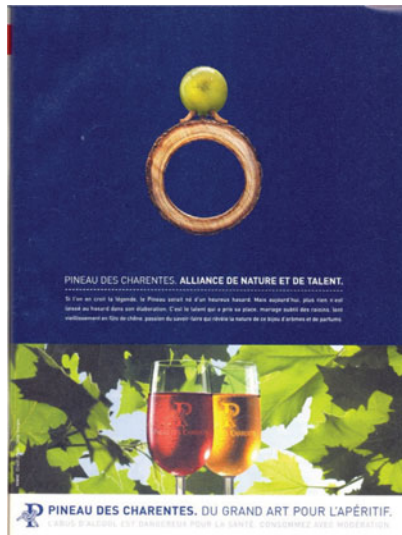


Figure 1. (Colour online) Ad for the Pineau des Charentes wine brand.

the text. The caption (*Pineau des Charentes. Alliance de nature et de talent*) reveals the meaning of the illustration. The product advertised is a wine – *Pineau des Charentes* – which is identified with the ring. The two glasses of wine below the copy stand for the bottles of red and white *Pineau*. The choice of the ring as the source is meaningful in two ways. First, the ring symbolises unity. The symbolic meaning of the ring is activated by the cultural model of marriage. In the ad it represents the union (*alliance*) of nature (*nature*) and skill (*talent*), as the headline reads. The polysemy of the word *alliance* meaning both ‘wedding ring’ and ‘union’ reinforces this reading.

The copy, strategically placed between the illustrations of the ring and the glasses, provides a full explanation of the image of the ring and links it to the image of the glasses. It does not contain any information of a technical nature. Instead, it focuses on the wine making process, proclaiming its positive aspects: ‘Si l’on en croit la légende, le Pineau serait né d’un heureux hasard. Mais aujourd’hui, plus rien n’est laissé au hasard dans son élaboration. C’est le talent qui a pris sa place, mariage subtil des raisins, lent vieillissement en fûts de chêne, passion du savoir faire qui révèle la nature de ce bijou d’arômes et de parfums’. As it stands, the text introduces a weak view on the *Pineau* making process – it might be a matter of chance – and then queries it by suggesting that wine production is a natural process (*lent vieillissement en fûts de chêne, bijou d’arômes et de parfums*) involving a great deal of skill (*talent, savoir faire*). It contains a specific reference to the source (*bijou* ‘jewel’) and accounts for the elements of the ring. The ring symbolizes the oak barrels where the *Pineau des Charentes* wines age (*lent vieillissement en fûts de chêne*) and the pearl signifies the diverse stocks (*raisins*) used in wine making. Both the source and the target are thus cued visually and verbally.



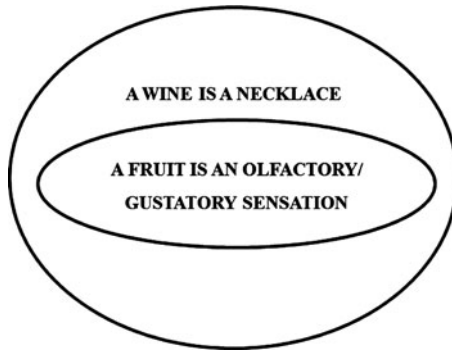


Figure 2. Metaphorical complex underlying the Pineau des Charentes ad.

The view of wine making as a task requiring talent is reinforced by the WINE IS A WORK OF ART metaphor encoded in the caption *Du grand art pour l'apéritif* 'Fine art before lunch/dinner'.

**AD 2** (Figure 3): *Pineau des Charentes* (*L'Express*, April 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphors: A WINE IS A NECKLACE, A FRUIT IS AN OLFACTORY/GUSTATORY SENSATION - Source: Jewellery, food - Target: Wines Image schema: balance (axis balance)
Modality	Multimodal - Visual/verbal representation of the source - Visual/verbal representation of the target
Intended message	<i>Pineau des Charentes</i> perfectly combines different smell and taste sensations.

The ad in Figure 3 promotes the same wine brand by attempting to render a view of the *Pineau des Charentes* wines as jewels through visual and verbal signs. The ad conveys the metaphor A WINE IS A NECKLACE, which is based on the balance image schema. The source and the target are cued by language and image simultaneously. The advert seeks to promote two specific traits of these wines: their nose (*nez puissant, parfums de figue et de vanille*) and mouth (*saveurs de miel et d'épices, notes de cassis et de cerise*). This metaphor relies upon another metaphor, A FRUIT IS AN OLFACTORY/GUSTATORY SENSATION. Thus, the *figue* 'fig', the *cassis* 'blackcurrant' and the *cerise* 'cherry' metaphorically represent the smell and taste sensations associated with the tasting of a *Pineau des Charentes* wine. The fruits are in turn metaphorically shown as the pearls of a matching set of jewelry (*parure*). What we have here is the incorporation of one metaphor into another metaphor, as shown in Figure 2:



Figure 3. (Colour online) Ad for the Pineau des Charentes wine brand.

The mapped feature is ‘harmonious combination’, the various sensations produced by a *Pineau de Charentes* wine matching like the pearls of a necklace. Thus, the metaphorical configuration of the wine is based on the balance image schema.

**AD 3** (Figure 4): *Besserat de Bellefon* (*L’Express*, March 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphor A CHAMPAGNE IS A PAINTING - Source: Painting - Target: Wines
Modality	Image schema: space (front-back) Multimodal - Visual/verbal representation of the source - Visual representation of the target
Intended message	<i>Besserat</i> is a skillfully made champagne.

In this ad for a champagne brand the wine is made synonymous with a painting, thus suggesting that wine making involves a great deal of skill. This is another version of the wine as a work of art metaphor. The ad shows a bottle of champagne as an element of a still life. The metaphor is construed upon the image schema of space (front-back), the champagne standing in the foreground of the painting. We face another multimodal metaphor in which the source (painting) is encoded visually and verbally, while the target is rendered visually. The slogan, *La seule oeuvre d’art qui disparaît au vernissage* (‘The only work of art which disappears on the opening of the exhibition’) includes two metaphoric expressions (*oeuvre d’art* and *vernissage*), which are the verbal instantiations of the metaphor. It is clear that the metaphor enhances the product value through the view of the champagne as an artistic manifestation.



Figure 4. (Colour online) Ad for the Besserat de Bellefont champagne (*L'Express*, April 2011).

**AD 4** (Figure 5): *Délice* yoghurt (*Marie-Claire*, January 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Oriental metaphors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HIGH STATUS IS UP</li> <li>● GOOD IS UP</li> </ul> Image schema: space (up-down)
Modality	Multimodal
Intended message	<i>Délice</i> is an excellent yoghurt aimed at the best people.

Let us now consider the advert for the Swiss yoghurt *Délice* shown in Figure 5. This ad differs from the rest in that it does not reflect a conceptual metaphor (i.e. a metaphor which describes an entity in terms of another entity), but two orientational metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), which structure an abstract concept in terms of a spatial concept, e.g. HAPPY IS UP / SAD IS DOWN; MORE IS UP / LESS IS DOWN, GOOD IS UP / BAD IS DOWN. Forceville and Urios-Aparisi (2009: 13) have noted that the role of spatial dimensions in source domains is more noticeable in visual discourses than in verbal ones. The ad draws on the orientational metaphors HIGH STATUS IS UP and GOOD IS UP (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The former is represented visually and verbally. The top right-hand image shows a couple in a zeppelin. The choice of a zeppelin is determined by two factors: (i) it allows you to be up in the air, thus cueing the spatial element of the metaphor; (ii) it has a round shape, which evokes the shape of the strawberries the yoghurt is made from. Besides, the cross on the zeppelin represents the cross on the Swiss flag, thus reminding the reader of the product



Figure 5. (Colour online) Ad for the Délice yoghurt.

origin. The metaphor HIGH STATUS IS UP is also instantiated in the idiom in the clincher: *Nous sommes au-dessus du panier* 'We are the cream', where the preposition *au-dessus* 'above' metaphorically represents high status.

It is striking that the picture triggers off the literal meaning of the constituent *panier* 'basket' in the idiom. The illustration therefore fulfils a double function. On the one hand, it encodes the metaphor STATUS IS UP visually; on the other hand, it activates the literal reading of the idiom *être au-dessus du panier* 'be over the basket'.

The exclusiveness feature of the product is at stake in the advert. The couple eating the yoghurt has a high social status, as evidenced in their language. They address each other using the polite *vous* (*Regardez*), they use formal direct addresses (*ma chère* rather than the more common *chérie*) and they regard themselves as being part of an elite.

The slogan instantiates a further orientational metaphor, GOOD IS UP: *Naturellement au-dessus* 'Naturally above'. The message is intentionally ambiguous, the adverb *naturellement* meaning both 'indeed' and 'made from natural ingredients'. Such ambiguity is an eye-catching device that highlights the quality of the yoghurt.

It is worth noting that the brand name – *Excellence* is of pragmatic salience in so far as it enhances the brand quality.

The red colour works as a coherent device. The red of the zeppelin matches the red touch of the brand name and the red letters of the product name. Colour thus associates the product with the feature depicted in the image.

In much the same way, ads manifesting the conventionalised metaphor ITEMS TO SELL ARE PEOPLE (Kövecses 2002: 59) highlight the product qualities. Advertisers use this metaphor to develop the 'commoditization process' (Borchers



Figure 6. (Colour online) Ad for the Opel Tigris TwinTop.

2005: 27), in which a commodity is understood in terms of a person, thus adding value to the product by transferring to it human features and behavioural actions. The metaphor pertains to the structure of the Great Chain of Being proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989: 170). This is a cultural model that defines the attributes and properties of natural beings. In this model, natural beings are arranged in the following hierarchy: humans, animals, plants and complex and natural objects. The metaphors in our sample involve downward mapping, in which the source domain occupies a higher position in the Great Chain of Being than the target domain. In this light, the metaphorical configuration of products in terms of human entities can be considered as a promotional tool. Indeed by presenting a product as a person, advertisers incite consumers to buy it. This is in consonance with Forceville and Urios-Aparisi's claim (2009: 13) that personification is an essential variety of multimodal metaphor.

The ads expressing this metaphor are discussed below.

**AD 5 (Figure 6): Opel Tigris Twin Top** (*L'Express*, February 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphor A CAR IS A WOMAN - Source: Women - Target: Cars
Modality	Image schema: space (path) Multimodal - Verbal representation of the source - Visual/verbal representation of the target
Intended message	The Opel Tigris TwinTop is an appealing and unique car model.

The ad shown in Figure 6 highlights the features of the product through personification. The Opel Tigra TwinTop car is identified with a woman. At first sight there is nothing figurative here. We see the picture of a woman driving a blue car with the roof open. Yet a closer look at the text (*C'est tout un art de déployer ses charmes* 'It is a craft to use one's charms') and the illustration reveals that the focus is on a car feature which differentiates it from other car models – a retractable rigid roof. The roof signifies openness and this reading is confirmed by the verb *déployer* 'spread' in the clincher. In addition, the figurative meaning of the collocation *déployer ses charmes* 'use one's charms' activates the metaphor. The source is rendered verbally and the target domain is conveyed pictorially and verbally.

The persuasive potential of the anthropomorphic metaphor is reinforced by the appeal to the notion of happiness that driving this car model brings to the addressee, as illustrated in the copy. The key word 'happiness' appears in bold letters as a headline. Strikingly, the advertiser uses the English word and then provides the French translation (*Happiness: Bonheur*). The use of English has a totalising effect, thus conveying the idea that all women will enjoy driving this car. The copy includes further references to this notion (*vous rendra heureuse, vous verrez à quel point conduire peut être amusant*) combined with technical details (*toit retractable rigide, appuyez sur le bouton, ouvrez le toit*) and information about where it can be bought (*à découvrir chez votre Distributeur Opel le plus proche*).

It is important to mention that this ad substantially differs from other ads for cars in several ways. First, unlike many car ads, which feature a beautiful woman as a persuasive technique, the ad under study presents the car as a woman. More interestingly, the ad is aimed at women. Traditionally car advertising has been aimed primarily at men and a car is commonly perceived as the expression of the male self and of male sexuality: a man is his car. In this sense, the ad reflects to some extent changed social attitudes and the roles of men and women.

**AD 6** (Figure 7): **Barilla tomato sauce** (*Marie-Claire*, January 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphors: TOMATO SAUCE AND PASTA ARE A COUPLE - Source: People - Target: Food Image schema: force (attraction)
Modality	Multimodal - Verbal representation of the source - Visual representation of the target
Intended message	<i>Barilla</i> tomato sauce is a key ingredient of a pasta dish.

The advert for the Barilla tomato sauce (Figure 7) exploits another instantiation of the Great Chain Metaphor, that is, TOMATO SAUCE AND PASTA ARE A COUPLE. The source domain is cued verbally and the target domain is represented pictorially. The clincher reads: *Roméo sans Juliette n'aurait jamais été une histoire d'amour* ('Romeo without Juliet would have never been a love story'). The image-text integration is noticeable here, directing the audience to the right interpretation



Figure 7. (Colour online) Ad for the Barilla tomato sauce.

of the verbal message. The ravioli and Barilla sauce are so closely related that they are equated with a couple. An inter-generic textuality element underlies the metaphor inasmuch as the couple concerned – Romeo (the pasta) and Juliet (the tomato sauce) – pertain to a play by Shakespeare. The relationship between the pasta and the sauce is therefore a love relationship, and the metaphor is grounded in the image schema of force (attraction).

This multimodal metaphor is particularly playful, since it maps the domain of love onto the domain of food. What is striking is the directionality of the metaphorical mapping, since it is usually food that acts as a conventional domain for love (Kövecses, 1986).

It is worth mentioning that the blue colour is used as an ‘objective correlative’ (Dyer 1982: 120), where the colours of the product are echoed by its surroundings or by the background. Thus, the blue background matches the blue label and the blue lid of the jar of tomato sauce.

**AD 7** (Figure 8): **showroomprive.com** (*Marie-Claire*, May 2011).

Cognitive analysis	Metaphor: A FEMALE RAINCOAT IS A MAN - Source: People (men) - Target: Clothes
Modality	Image schema: attribute (dark-bright) Multimodal - Verbal representation of the source - Visual representation of the target
Intended message	Women are crazy about clothes sold on showroomprive.com.



Figure 8. (Colour online) Ad for showroomprive.com

The advert for an online clothes brand (Figure 7) depicts a woman in black carrying a trench. Apparently there is nothing figurative here. There is something peculiar, though: the woman's body language shows she has a feeling of affection about the trench, since it looks as if she was caressing it. The right interpretation of the advertising message is triggered off by the caption: *On s'est rencontré sur internet* ('We have met on the Internet'). The verbal element invites the reader to understand and perceive an item of clothing in terms of a person defined by his sex, the metaphor reflected being A FEMALE RAINCOAT IS A MAN. The target is rendered visually, while the source is represented verbally. The source is implicitly inferred from the verb *rencontrer* 'meet somebody', which activates the metaphor A FEMALE RAINCOAT IS A MAN.

The colour pattern is also of relevance here. On the one hand, black is associated with elegance. On the other hand, the contrast between the woman's black clothes and the white raincoat introduces the image schema dark-bright.

**AD 8** (Figure 9): *Président butter* (Marie-Claire, June 2011)

Cognitive analysis	Target-in-source metonymy: EYES FOR PERSON Metonymy-based metaphor: TWO EGGS ARE TWO EYES - Source: Food - Target: People
Modality	Image schema: multiplicity (part-whole) Multimodal - Visual representation of the source - Verbal representation of the target
Intended message	Unlike other butter brands, <i>Président butter</i> does not stick.





Figure 9. (Colour online) Ad for the Président butter.

The last anthropomorphic metaphor, TWO EGGS ARE TWO EYES, is encoded in Figure 9. It is an ad for butter. The advert plays up a specific product feature: the butter does not blacken when used in cooking (*ne noircit pas à la cuisson*). The picture wouldn't be regarded as metaphorical without the co-text: *Plus besoin de garder les yeux rivés sur votre beurre* (You don't need to keep an eye on the butter any more). The possessive form *votre*, used to address the reader directly, is a persuasive technique. The text acts as a linguistic representation of the source (people). Apparently the only connection between the text and the picture is provided by the butter, which appears in both. Nonetheless, the main quality of the butter is that it does not stick, which accounts for the caption. In this context, the image has a metaphorical reading: the two eggs on the plate with the butter are the metaphorical representation of the cook's eyes.

The metaphor is based a metonymy of the target-in-source type, which in turn is based on the image schema of multiplicity (part-whole), the eyes standing for the person, as suggested by the clincher.

The persuasive effect of a metaphor may rest on the link it creates between the product advertised and a desired attribute. This is a very important indirect persuasion strategy (Ungerer 2000: 325). The ad for *Marionnaud* cosmetics (Figure 10) is a clear instance of this metaphor use.



Figure 10. (Colour online) Ad for Marionnaud brand.

**AD 9** (Figure 10): **Marionnaud** (*Marie-Claire*, April 2011)

Cognitive analysis	Target-in-source metonymy: FEMALE HANDS FOR A WOMAN Metonymy-based metaphor: BEAUTY IS A FLOWER - Source: Flowers - Target: Women
Modality	Image schema: multiplicity (part-whole) Multimodal - Visual/verbal representation of the source - Visual/verbal representation of the target
Intended message	<i>Marionnaud</i> products help women to look after their body.

The ad shows a woman's hands caressing a gladiolus. The image can be interpreted as a visual representation of the source in the metaphor BEAUTY IS A FLOWER and supports the message: *Cultiver la beauté de son corps*. The metaphor rests upon the feature of softness. The source is implicitly inferred in the text from the verb *cultiver*, one of whose meanings is 'grow', and explicitly referred to in the slogan *parce que votre beauté mérite autant d'attention qu'une fleur*, where the last word, *fleur* 'flower', points to the source. The target is represented though the visual and verbal codes. On the one hand, it is visually rendered by a woman's hands, which manifest a target-in-source metonymy based on the multiplicity image schema (part-whole). On the other hand, the target is implicit in the direct address to the reader in the slogan (*votre* 'your') and in the clincher (*corps*).



Figure 11. (Colour online) Ad for Les Bijoux Précieux.

Metaphor can contribute to product promotion by proposing a view of the product as a necessity rather than as a luxury. Such use of metaphor is exemplified in ad 10.

**AD 10** (Figure 11): *Les Bijoux Précieux* (Marie-Claire, March 2011)

Cognitive analysis	Metaphor: JEWELS ARE CLOTHES - Source: Clothes - Target: Jewellery Target-in-source metonymy Image schemas: space (up-down, straight-curved, scale)
Modality	Multimodal - Visual/verbal representation of the source - Visual/verbal representation of the target
Intended message	Jewellery is part of female identity.

The advert in Figure 11 portrays an attractive woman wearing jewellery as clothes. The ad uses a visual element and a verbal element (*bijoux* 'jewellery') to represent the source of the metaphor JEWELS ARE CLOTHES. The noun compound *bleu de travail* 'overalls', which points to the target, supports the metaphor. The choice of this lexical item is purposeful in two further ways. First, the clincher gives rise to the metaphor SEDUCTION IS A JOB. This metaphor reflects a view of gender roles involving reductionism and is based on the consideration of sexiness as a female attribute. Second, the colour term *bleu* 'blue' provides a further conceptual link between the source and the target, since the woman is wearing blue tights and blue jewellery. Apart from reinforcing the

connection between the visual and the verbal elements, blue is again used as an objective correlative.

Interestingly, the image is blurred to draw the reader's attention to the jewellery. On the other hand, both the image and the noun phrase *la femme* 'women' in the caption reflect a target-in-source metonymy.

The advertiser uses the image schema of space (up-down, straight-curved, scale) to enhance the female figure. The woman, as portrayed in the image schema of scale, is seen as physically appealing. Her upright position with her hip curved makes her more powerful: she is a seductress '*séductrice*'.

It is interesting to mention that the ad includes an inter-generic textuality element<sup>2</sup> (Cook 2001:194) in the caption: *Dieu créa la femme et tout de suite après les bijoux*. An intertext points to other texts belonging to other genres.<sup>3</sup> The ad is a case of citation,<sup>4</sup> i.e. explicit intertextuality, since the first part of the caption (*Dieu créa la femme*) evokes the title of a famous French film directed by Roger Vadim in 1956 and starring Brigitte Bardot. Readers play a major role inasmuch as their cultural knowledge must be activated in order to understand the advertising message. This cultural element is used to highlight the relevance of the jewellery: it was the second entity created by God after the woman.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The present article has attempted to show the widespread use of metaphor in advertising and its significant role. Advertising metaphors has different discursive instantiations, multimodal metaphor being our research focus. We have provided empirical evidence of the heavy presence of a specific type of multimodal metaphor, namely verbo-pictorial metaphor, in French print advertising. The corpus-based analysis highlights the following facts:

- a) Numerous metaphors have an image-schematic basis. The most recurrently used image schemas are those of space and attribute.
- b) The communicative effect of many ads is to be found in the combination of the visual and verbal modes.
- c) The image-text integration makes it possible to construe the metaphors and metonymies underpinning the adverts, inasmuch as the source and target are not always represented in both the written and visual modes. Additionally, there is a high degree of variation in the representation of the source and the target domains of the metaphors.

<sup>2</sup> The issue of intertextuality has been addressed by several French scholars (e.g. Genette, 1982; López Díaz, 2004; Lugrin, 2006). Lugrin elaborates on the concepts of intertextuality and hypertextuality developed by Genette.

<sup>3</sup> As López Díaz (2004: 165) remarks, "*l'intertexte fait référence aux échos d'autres textes, appartenant à d'autres genres, dans le texte publicitaire.*"

<sup>4</sup> Allusion, plagiarism and pastiche are further instances of intertextuality.

- d) Advertising metaphor is multifunctional. In the first place, it helps to transmit the message. Secondly, metaphor is exploited to attract attention. In this sense, it is particularly helpful in retaining the addressee's attention for longer by involving him in the interpretation of the ad. Crucially, the overall function of metaphor use is broadly rhetorical, being decisive in engineering persuasion through emphasis or evaluation. In this light, metaphor contributes to the primary goal of advertising by promoting the product in different ways. Thus, the metaphors found involve a positive valuation of the product on offer by enhancing its features, by associating it with a desired attribute or by presenting it as a necessity or as a source of an pleasurable experience.

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