

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Iraq War Documentary Movie advertisements (Posters)

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Abstract

The article addresses the issue of war in Iraq which raised the interest of many authors, politicians and filmmakers, each, tackling the war from a different standpoint. The paper seeks to investigate the specific style in which eight documentary movie posters about the war in Iraq mould people's perceptions about the war. To fulfill this aim, Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) framework of visual design is employed to probe the posters' contents. The results show that each poster has displayed the reality about the war in Iraq in conformity with political standpoints and ideologies of their authors.

Keywords: Documentary Movie Posters, multimodal discourse analysis, construction of reality, the war in Iraq.

تحليل الخطاب المتعدد الوسائط لإعلانات الأفلام الوثائقية الخاصة بحرب العراق (ملصقات)

ملخص

يتناول المقال قضية الحرب في العراق التي أثارت اهتمام العديد من المؤلفين والسياسيين والمخرجين، كل منهم ، يتناول الحرب من وجهة نظر مختلفة. تسعى الورقة إلى استكشاف الأسلوب المحدد الذي تشكل به ثماني ملصقات أفلام وثائقية مؤلفة من خطاب مكتوب ومرئي عن الحرب في العراق وتشكيل تصورات الناس حول الحرب. لتحقيق هذا الهدف ، تم استخدام نظرية التصميم البصري لـ Kress و Leeuwen لاستكشاف محتويات الملصقات من حيث أنماط التمثيل والتفاعل والتكوين. أظهرت النتائج أن مؤلفي كل ملصق حاولوا الكشف عن الواقع الخفي فيما يتعلق بالحرب في العراق. لقد أظهر كل ملصق حقيقة الحرب في العراق بما يتوافق مع المواقف والأيديولوجيات السياسية لمؤلفيها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: حرب في العراق، ملصقات الأفلام الوثائقية، بناء الواقع، تحليل الخطاب المتعدد الوسائط.

Analyse du discours multimodal des Publicités de Films documentaires sur la Guerre en Irak (affiches)

Résumé

L'article aborde la question de la guerre en Irak qui a suscité l'intérêt de nombreux auteurs, politiciens et cinéastes, chacun a abordé la guerre sous un angle différent. L'article cherche à étudier le style spécifique dans lequel huit affiches de films documentaires sur la guerre en Irak façonnent la perception que les gens ont de la guerre. Pour atteindre cet objectif, le cadre de conception visuelle de Kress et Leeuwen (2006) est utilisé pour explorer le contenu des affiches. Les résultats montrent que chaque affiche a montré la réalité de la guerre en Irak en conformité avec les points de vue politiques et les idéologies de leurs auteurs.

Mots-clés: Affiches de films documentaires, analyse du discours multimodal, la construction de la réalité, la guerre en Irak.

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1- Introduction:

On September 11 (9/11) 2003, terrorist attacks targeted the United States of America and destroyed the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York and damaged the Pentagon in Virginia. These attacks did not only engender material damages, but they also meant the casualty of about 3000 people. These attacks shocked the Americans who feared further attacks. Whether justified or not, the 9/11 catastrophe led to overseas military actions against Iraq. The war in Iraq knew media hype and raised the interest of many authors, politicians and filmmakers, each tackling the issue from a particular standpoint. Indeed, a considerable number of documentary movies about the war were released. Filmmakers in documentary movies offered their own views about the events and people, etc. seeking to persuade the masses about the reliability of their advanced information.

Filmmakers are very meticulous in the construction of the content of their movies. They make sure that the advertisements of the movies (posters) used to promote the release of the movie to attract audiences are well designed as well. Advertisements are part of everyday life; they are present in different means of communication (TV, newspapers, internet) and posted in advertising boards displaying different products concerning different fields; beauty, technology, cinema, etc. Advertisements are obviously produced for the sake of fostering the sale of products, including, to name a few, a movie, a TV channel, or a trip. Nevertheless, advertisements also present a form of reality tightly connected with the beliefs and ideology of the advertisers, who thus, participate in shaping how the people perceive the products being sold. In this respect, Williamson⁽¹⁾ argues: "Obviously (advertising) has a function, which is to sell things to us. But, it has another function, which I believe in many ways replaces that traditionally fulfilled by art or religion. It creates structures of meaning". In other words, advertising serves in constructing people's thoughts, as religion does, by providing them with a reality dependent on the makers of the advertisement.

The war in Iraq has been explored in several research studies analyzing written and visual discourse, counting: *A Critical Discourse Analysis of the debates between Republicans and Democrats over the Continuation of War in Iraq*, written by Rashidi and Souzandehfar⁽²⁾ from Shiraz University in Iran. The two researchers analyzed the transcripts of the Democrats and Republicans speeches of the US presidential primaries of 2008 as an attempt to sort out the ideologies regarding the war in Iraq. Their analysis showed that Republicans were for the maintenance of the US troops in Iraq, contrary to the Democrats who stood for the withdrawal of the US troops. *Embedded Online: Iraq War Documentaries in the Online Public Sphere* written by Eileen Culloty⁽³⁾, is also related to the war in Iraq. The author evaluated the democratic and the pedagogical roles that online Iraq war documentary movies have on the public sphere. The study demonstrated that the war against Iraq was tackled differently by filmmakers depending on their political positions and ideologies. As an illustration, the activists who were against the war denounced the manipulation of the American citizens by the Bush administration which legitimized the war. Another study to be considered is *A Critical Discourse Analysis of a BBC Feature Article on Saddam and Bush II* written by Al-Shaibani and Kadhim⁽⁴⁾. The two authors scrutinized the mentioned article to sort out the ideological representations it contains. The outcomes of the analysis show that the BBC writer Matt Frei of the analyzed article had a neutral position in criticizing Bush and Saddam in relation to the war in Iraq. As far the current article is concerned, it aims at analyzing eight documentary movie posters (advertisements) employing a multimodal analysis to sort out the way reality is constructed via various semiotic modes.

1-1- Aim and Significance of the Study:

The current study attempts to scrutinize eight documentary movie posters (in the form of advertisements) in relation to the war in Iraq. The aim is to decode the meaning conveyed by the poster designers in presenting the issue, as well as to show the way they construct reality and shape people's beliefs about the war. The present research similarly endeavors to strengthen the idea that the reality displayed by media is moulded to create a convenient one

responding to the advertisers' particular interests. The research seeks to encourage the readers to question critically the information provided by different means of communication. Accordingly, it seeks at answering the following research question: How do the poster designers present the reality of the war in Iraq?

1-2- The Construction of Reality and Media:

Reality is "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition" Burger and Luckmann⁽⁵⁾. To word it differently, reality is simply a quality featuring the phenomena which are independent from our volition. It is precisely this/these qualities that are subject to manipulation so as to present phenomena as if they were strictly natural or supernatural. This control shows that reality is socially shaped. This makes reference to the term the social construction of reality that was developed by the sociologists Berger and Luckmann in their book entitled *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*⁽⁶⁾. In the book, it is argued that reality is human made and constructed. Reality is primarily shaped by the incessant human interactions used to produce, preserve, and transmit a particular conception of reality to future generations. This conception is not uniform but it varies from one society to another and even from one person to another depending on one's culture, background knowledge, religion, etc.

The scholars also contend that a practical vehicle used to construct reality is the multiple media devices that exist in today's technologically advanced world. Actually, media (newspapers, TV, radio, internet) are not only used for the sake of spreading information about what occurs all over the world, or entertaining audiences, but they are employed to construct people's beliefs and worldviews. In this regard, Jean Baudrillard⁽⁷⁾ highlights the role of media in replacing reality with hyper-reality by loading information meant to construct people's worldview and make reality constrained to the one presented in media. Chomsky stresses the role of media in shaping reality according to particular interests as well. Indeed, Chomsky⁽⁸⁾ claims that media have a propagandistic role advocating the interests of the government they support and particularly a restricted group of elites who take advantage of media in shaping people's perceptions. Media control of people's conception of reality is achieved via multiple techniques. For instance, Chomsky⁽⁹⁾ demonstrates how media divert audiences through tackling international issues and accentuating others' problems to hide the domestic ones, presenting issues then rapidly present solutions, along with keeping audiences frightened by an eventual attack or problem.

2- Research Design

2-1- Corpus of the Study:

The corpus of the current study comprises a set of multimodal discourses consisting of eight movie posters (advertisements) that embody written and visual discourse. These posters feature Iraq war documentary movies gathered randomly from the Internet Movie Database⁽¹⁰⁾ (IMDb). They consist in the following:

Fahrenheit 9/11: released in 2004, is a documentary movie directed by Michael Moore _author and filmmaker_ dealing with George Bush presidency, the tragic events of September 11, and the decision of Bush's administration to invade Afghanistan and Iraq. The documentary movie received the Palme d'Or award in the Cannes festival in 2004.

The Unknown Known: is a documentary movie directed by Errol Morris; diffused in 2013. It covers the career of Donald Rumsfeld _the former US secretary of defence and congressman_ by interviewing him mainly about terrorism and the truth lying behind waging the war on Iraq.

We Are Many: is a documentary film released in 2014 and directed by Amir Amirani reporting the biggest protestation involving over 600 cities where people expressed their opposition against the war on Iraq.

No End in Sight: is a documentary movie directed by Charles Ferguson and diffused in 2007. The film consists in a collection of interviews of soldiers and people who were involved in the

invasion of Iraq. It considers critically the motives that led the Bush administration to engage in a war on Iraq.

The War You don't See: is a documentary movie directed by Alan Lowery and John Pilger and diffused in 2010. It addresses the propagandistic role of media regarding the war on Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and other places.

Occupation: Dreamland: is a 2005 documentary film directed by Ian Olds and Garrett Scott. It exposes the daily military missions accomplished by a group of soldiers of the US Army in Fallujah (Iraq).

Uncovered: The War on Iraq: this is a documentary movie directed by Roberts Greenwald and diffused in 2004. It exposes the reasons that led the US government to occupy and declare war on Iraq.

The War Tapes: is a documentary movie released in 2006 and directed by Deborah Scranton exposing the conflicts between the US Army and Iraqi Army as filmed by US soldiers.

2-2- Data Analysis Procedure

Kress and Leeuwen's Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽¹¹⁾ are concerned with the way various modes of expression are assembled to form a meaningful whole in visuals and how these visuals are interpreted and understood by the viewers. In this respect, Kress and Leeuwen⁽¹²⁾ determine three distinct though complementary parameters to consider for the sake of understanding the meaning conveyed by the visual constituents. They are patterns of representation, interaction, and composition which correlate respectively with the ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions of language identified by Halliday⁽¹³⁾. The ideational function is "the content function of language, language as about something" Halliday⁽¹⁴⁾. That is to say, language is employed in conceptualizing the world we live in. The interpersonal function represents "the participatory function of language, language as doing something"⁽¹⁵⁾ which stands for the use of language to communicate with people, to establish and to maintain relationships. The textual function formulates "the relation of the language to its environment"⁽¹⁶⁾. In other words, it represents language in use that exteriorizes the ideational function and realizes the interpersonal one.

2-2-1- Patterns of Representation:

Patterns of representation refer to the participants (people, things, and places) that constitute the visual composition and the way the represented participants interact with each other and the viewers as well. Kress and Leeuwen identify two kinds of representation: narrative and conceptual.

Narrative Representation:

Images involve an active interaction between the represented participants. The interaction is specified by the presence of a vector (a diagonal or oblique line with (an) arrow(s)). The latter is the key feature of the narrative representation that point out a direction and designates participants in action. The vector relates between an 'Actor' and a 'Goal'. The former is the participant from whom the vector is emitted, as Kress and Leeuwen⁽¹⁷⁾ argue: "The active participant in an action process is the participant from which the vector emanates or which is fused with the vector". The latter refers to the participant to whom the vector is forwarded. Kress and Leeuwen specify: "the passive participant in an action process is the participant at which the vector is directed"⁽¹⁸⁾.

Conceptual Representation:

Unlike the narrative representation, the conceptual representation is not dynamic. Indeed, the vector is absent in the visual and the participants are not active. The conceptual representation fits into three processes: classificational, analytical, and symbolic. Kress and Leeuwen⁽¹⁹⁾ consider that the classificational process is about categorizing the participants into groups they belong to: 'superordinate' and 'subordinates'. The analytical process, according to Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁰⁾, involves one 'Carrier' representing the whole along with 'possessive attributes' referring to the parts constituting the whole, such as the USA as a

whole and Arkansas, California, Colorado as constituents of the whole. Kress and Leeuwen⁽²¹⁾ explain that the symbolic process may take two forms: 'Symbolic Attributive' and 'Symbolic Suggestive'. The former process comprises the 'Carrier' and the 'Symbolic Attributes' defined as accentuated elements in a visual by exaggerating their size or emphasizing their colours. In this process, the 'Carrier' and 'Symbolic Attributes' are static and they are only posing for the viewers. The latter consists of the process in which only the 'Carrier' is involved.

2-2-2- Patterns of Interaction:

Patterns of interaction cover the way relationships between the represented participants (people, things, and places depicted in the visual) along with the interactive ones (the image designer and the viewers) are made. These relationships, according to Kress and Leeuwen, are achieved thanks to three semiotic resources consisting in gaze, social distance, and angle of interaction.

Gaze:

Two types of images: demand images in which the represented participants have eye contact with the viewers along with offer images in which the represented participants do not direct their gaze into the viewers. Kress and Leeuwen⁽²²⁾ claim that the demanding image "constitutes an image-act" and the offer image "offers the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case". To word it differently, demanding images create direct contact with the viewers through a specific stare or a facial expression asking them to react to the image content. On the other hand, offering images does not incite people to react, they are only exposing information.

Social Distance:

The visuals create a social distance between the viewers and the represented participants that may be portrayed close or far depending on the image-maker's intention. The social distance is transcribed, according to Kress and Leeuwen⁽²³⁾, in terms of 'the size of the frame' which can be close-up, medium, and long shots, etc. along with the field of vision which consists in the way the represented participants are captured in the visuals. Table 1 as suggested by Torres⁽²⁴⁾ is inserted in appendices, shows Hall' social distance adopted by Kress and Leeuwen, field of vision and size of the frame.

Angle of Interaction:

The Angle of interaction consists in the position from which the represented participants are portrayed in the visuals. Kress and Leeuwen point out to two types of angles: horizontal and vertical.

Horizontal Angle:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁵⁾ indicate that the participants may be captured from a "frontal or oblique point of view" referring to the attachment or detachment of the viewers and the image producer regarding the visual participants. In this respect, Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁶⁾ state: "The frontal angle says, as it were, 'What you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with.' The oblique angle says, 'What you see here is not part of our world; it is their world, something we are not involved with'".

Vertical Angle:

The vertical angle involves the relation of power between the participants and the viewers which refers to the angle from which the viewers view the represented participants of the visual. Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁷⁾ specify that when the viewers observe the represented participants from a high vertical angle; the viewers have power over the participants. When the participants are viewed from a low vertical angle by the viewers, the participants have power over the viewers. When the represented participants are at an 'eye-level' with the viewers; equality between them is established.

2-2-3- Patterns of Composition:

The patterns of composition in a visual representation refer to the way the representational and interactive patterns of the image are connected and compose a meaningful visual. These

patterns of composition are realized thanks to three interrelated systems: information value, salience, and framing.

Information Value:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁸⁾ assert that the visual components may be positioned in different spots in the image determining its information value: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin.

Information Value of Left and Right:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽²⁹⁾ inform that the elements positioned in the left are presented as 'given' and the elements placed on the right as 'New'. In other words, the left side portrays information that is supposed to be publicly known. Whereas, the right side presents the main information which aims at attracting the viewers' attention. The left and right positions of the represented elements depend on cultures. As Kress and Leeuwen mention, in cultures that start writing from the right, the Given is on the right, and the New on the left.

Information Value of Top and Bottom:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽³⁰⁾ argue that the components placed on the top of a visual are 'ideal', which designates the main units of the visual having the 'lead role'. On the other hand, the elements positioned at the bottom are 'real', representing the details or practical information having a 'subservient role'.

Information Value of Centre and Margin:

Kress and Leeuwen⁽³¹⁾ specify that when elements are put around a central component in a visual; the one positioned in the middle is called a 'centre' which is the principal element conveying the main information and the surrounding ones are called 'margins'. The centre is bigger than the margin in size, which highlights its prominence.

Salience:

Salience is putting a focus on some elements composing a visual and making them catchy in order to attract the viewers' attention. This emphasis is achieved through size, foregrounding, etc. As indicated in Kress and Leeuwen's⁽³²⁾ terms, salience is regarded as "The elements (participants as well as representational and interactive syntagms) are made to attract the viewer's attention to different degrees, as realized by such factors as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, contrasts in tonal value (or colour), differences in sharpness, etc."

Framing:

Framing represents the way the compositional elements of a visual are linked or detached from each other. Kress and Leeuwen⁽³³⁾ mention that the components of an image may be separated by "actual frame lines, by white space between elements, by discontinuities of colour, and so on" which stands for 'individuality and differentiation'. Whilst, the absence of the framing show that the elements belong together which refers to 'group identity'.

3- Results and Discussion:

Results:

Image (1):

At the representational level: image (1) depicts a man (Michael Moore) holding a sealed envelope on which the word 'confidential' is written in uppercase letters. The setting is not portrayed, there is instead, black background in which the phrase 'controversy...What controversy?' is written in red and in uppercase letters, to highlight its prominence in the visual, and point out that the film maker is going to tackle the controversy that exists about the war in Iraq, and clarify it to the viewers. The film poster also portrays the movie name 'Fahrenheit 9/11' written in bold, red, and uppercase letters, indicating that the movie concern is related to the terrorist attack of September 11. The visual represents the filmmaker's name that is written in bold uppercase letters, along with some detailed information about the movie, such as the movie's award as well. These information serve to attribute a value to the movie.

At the interactional level: it is a demand image because an eye contact is established with the viewers inciting them to react and be interested in discovering what the movie is about. The participant is presented at an intimate distance from the viewers. This intimate distance is represented via the size of the frame which is a very close shot of a part of Moore's face (field of vision). This very close shot indicates that Moore has some secrets in relation the 9/11 events to reveal to the viewers. The participants are captured from a frontal angle which indicates the involvement of the image producer and the viewers with the represented participants. Actually, Moore is about to disclose a reality that is everyone's concern and aims to get rid of the prior ideas.

At the compositional level: salience is attributed to the envelope which is foregrounded and whose size is exaggerated. In terms of information value, the envelope is placed at the center of the poster and this also reinforces its importance and weight in the conveyed message. All the linguistic details are placed on this envelope which occupies approximately the whole space of the image. These linguistic elements are positioned at the bottom of the poster as they offer only additional information. The image constituents are connected with each other in a hierarchical order (from the most important to the least) except for the title of the movie which is separated from the other components by red frame lines illustrating the concern of the movie.

Image (2):

At the representational level: image (2) portrays on a yellow background a man smiling; Donald Rumsfeld (former US Secretary of Defense and Congressman). This capture suggests that Rumsfeld is going to expose information kept confidential by the US government. The movie poster also depicts different writings occupying different spots on the poster. The question 'Why is this man smiling?' is written in white on the top of the poster indicating that the movie is going to elucidate the reasons lying behind Rumsfeld smile. The name of the movie 'THE UNKNOWN KNOWN' is written in bold, white, uppercase letters, and with a big size font emphasizing its importance, and indicating again that the secret information about the war in Iraq awaits to be unveiled. There is also a sentence written in yellow at the bottom of the poster 'What you didn't know you didn't know' that accentuates the exclusivity of the information to be delivered.

At the interactional level: it is a demanding image because the eyes of the man in the picture are in direct contact with the viewers. The eye contact and the smile of the participant attract the viewers' attention and stimulate their curiosity about the movie content. The participant is portrayed with a close shot showing the head and shoulder of the man, which involves a close personal distance from the viewers, thus, hinting the intention of the man to reveal the untold information. The frontal angle from which the participant is captured indicates that both of the image designer and the viewers are concerned with the represented participant and the information he will expose about the war in Iraq.

At the compositional level: salience is given to Donald Rumsfeld who is foregrounded and practically occupies the entire poster space. The title of the movie is also a salient component as it is written in a big font size. In terms of information value, the linguistic details are placed on the left of the poster to suggest given information, whereas the image of Donald Rumsfeld is placed on the right side to suggest that he is going to provide the viewers with new and unknown information. All the elements in this poster (visual and linguistic) are connected to each other. This is shown through the overlap between the two semiotic modes (words and image) in the sense that the words invade the space of the image (i.e. words are placed on the image of the participant). A sentence is placed at the top of the poster indicating its leading role in contrast with the sentence written at the bottom with a small police font.

Image (3):

At the representational level: image (3) presents uppercase letters written in black and bold constituting the phrase 'WE ARE MANY' situated at the center of the poster and referring to the movie title. The letters in the background depict men's and women's faces, among them

Lindsey German, Noam Chomsky, Ken Loach, Tariq Ali, to name a few, along with their names written in white (this connotes peace; i.e. these people are preaching peace) and in a small size. The poster also portrays people marching with their hands up in the air and holding banners on which is written 'Stop the War'. All of these elements are represented on an orange (the dirty orange) and yellow background. The orange color connotes the smoke of guns and fires of the war, whereas yellow color refers to sunrise which implicates, in this context, the hope to put an end to the war.

At the interactional level: it is a demand image since the gaze of the represented participants portrayed is in direct contact with the viewers asking them for action (protesting against the invasion of Iraq). By using a very close shot and a frontal angle, the represented participants are captured at an intimate distance portraying the participants' faces. This type of angles designates the implication of the image maker and the viewers with the represented participants' concern that consists in supporting Iraq.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the phrase 'WE ARE MANY' which constitutes roughly the poster. The phrase is centered to accentuate its importance in the image. The people marching, and the names of the represented participants are margins. They are all connected to each other in the sense that each element invades the space of the other in a structured way, as they all serve the same purpose (showing that a huge number of people all around the world are protesting against the war in Iraq, etc.).

Image (4):

At the representational level: image (4) captures a black background which suggests that confidential information may be disclosed, the white house and the American flag symbolizing the USA government and country. The image portrays various writings positioned in different places: At the top, 'A COOL-HEADED DEVASTATING EXPOSE' and just below 'ENRAGING, APOCALYPTIC, MASTERFUL' and the award given to the movie written in uppercase white letters, 'NO END IN SIGHT' is centered in the poster written here in uppercase letters, indicating the movie title. The poster depicts a colored map of Iraq at the bottom of the visual with Syria and Iran on the left and right sides respectively.

At the interactional level: it is an offer image since there is no direct contact with the viewers. The represented participants are captured from a frontal angle which implicates the concern of the image maker and the viewers for the information to be exposed.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the imposing white house, and to the colored which attracts the viewers' attention and the movie name. The constituents making up the image are disconnected by the touch of color brought by the image designer at the level of the map. As for information value, Iraq map which is at the bottom of the poster is under the white house which is placed on the top. This implies that Iraq is at the mercy and under the control of the USA.

Image (5):

At the representational level: image (5) represents a man whose eyes are blindfolded with a piece of fabric on which writings are keyboarded looking like passages from a newspaper about the Iraq and Afghan wars. The visual representation portrays sentences placed in different spots as well: the top (description of the movie in a small size) and bottom (the film maker's name, and the movie title written in capital letters in two distinct colors: THE WAR (in red) YOU DON'T SEE (in white). The elements are depicted on a black background (no reference to a particular setting) standing for the obscure facet of media in veiling the information.

At the interactional level: it is an offer image because there is not any interaction between the represented participant and the viewers. The image is taken from a frontal angle which indicates the involvement of the image producer and the viewers with the participants in knowing the untold and uncovered information concerning the Iraq war.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the man whose face and shoulders are captured in the image that indicates a close personal distance from the viewers. This distance

is achieved via the close shot pointing out that the blindfolded man will open his eyes and see the dissimulated truth. The man is positioned in the center to emphasize his salience, whereas the writings constitute the margins. In addition, the word 'THE WAR' colored in red is emphasized as well which indicates that the term is somehow separated from the other elements indicating that the movie will report information about the real events and motives of the Iraq war hidden by media.

Image (6):

At the representational level: image (6) depicts a man captured in profile, wearing a helmet to which a camera is fixed. The facial features are not identifiable; it is his face silhouette that is delineated. The man and camera are represented in black on a green background symbolizing the US soldiers occupying Falluja. The image portrays phrases written in black and in a small size. They are placed at the very top of the image: 'Timeless and tragic' along with 'Unnervingly intimate'. The title of the movie: 'Occupation: Dreamland' is written in a large size and in white shaded, by its Arabic translation 'احتلال أرض الأحلام'.

At the interactional level: it is an offer image because of the absence of eye contact and interaction between the viewers and the represented participants exposing information about the war in Falluja, Iraq, as lived by the soldiers. The participants are captured from an oblique angle pointing out that the image designer and the viewers are detached from the represented participants' world that is proper to their day-to-day life.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the man who occupies the whole space showing that he is the most important element to consider in the visual because the whole documentary movie is based on what the soldier(s) is (are) capturing in their daily patrols and military missions in Falluja. The represented elements are connected to each other, as the writings invade the space attributed to the soldier (there is no frame separating them). They are written in white only to be visible more on a black background.

Image (7):

At the representational level: image (7) portrays the USA flag drawn like a curtain by a hand on which the sentence 'Do You Really Know The Truth?' is written. The image depicts the white house representing the US government in the background (behind the drawn flag) and a vast space consisting of a turned soil with a huge number of debris and bullets on the surface. This is a visual metaphor in which the viewers of the poster (and the movie) put aside their prior conceptions of the reality of war in Iraq to discover what is hidden behind this political/ideological event in the same way the curtain is removed to see through the window. The title of the movie is also represented in the poster 'UNCOVERED/ THE WAR ON IRAQ' written in capital letters with three distinct colors: red, white, and blue symbolizing the American flag colors. A sentence in a smaller font is also placed above the movie title 'A must see for every American who cares about their country' written in white and tiny words at the very bottom of the poster.

At the interactional level: it is an offer image since the represented participants do not have a direct eye contact or interaction with the viewers. The image provides the viewers information about the hidden 'truth'. The image is captured from a frontal angle which involves the implication of the viewers and the image producer with the represented participants. This suggests that the image serves as an indication of the image designer's intention to involve the viewers in such a way as to lead them to question their prior constructed beliefs about the Iraq war.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the US flag, the turned soil, and the movie name highlighting their prominence. In terms of information value, the white house and the leftovers of the war are 'given' information since they are placed on the left of the poster, whereas the hand on which is written 'do you really know the truth?' is a 'new' information as it is placed on the right side. This entails that the war in Iraq is an issue known by everybody, but the hidden aims and implications of this war are not known, and they will be revealed in the movie. Moreover, the fact that the white house is placed on the top and the

turned soil full of bullets at the bottom, suggests that the US builds its glory on the ruins of other nations. The represented elements are connected to each other in two main ways: through the rhyming of colors; i.e. the words have the same colors as the visual elements such as the flag; and through integration and overlap; i.e. the writings are integrated with the image of the hand, and the linguistic details invade the space of the visual elements in the sense that they are not separated by clear borders or frames.

Image (8):

At the representational level: image (8) depicts a soldier (from the back) in a vehicle wearing a helmet and carrying gun. It also portrays some cars, fire, and a lot of smoke that are visible from the windscreen. All these elements, along with the title 'the war tapes' written in red (like blood rush implying war crimes/victims) are positioned at the center of the image. On top of the image, a sentence describing the movie is written in white lowercase letters: A film of rare honesty and power that exposes, from the eyes of those who fight the war, the revolting and soul-numbing world of combat. A set of small images about soldiers in action and explosion are put at the bottom of the image as well.

At the interactional level: it is an offer image because there is no interaction between the represented elements and the viewers offering information about the Iraq war as lived by the soldiers. The represented participants are at intimate distance from the viewers; the shot is very close. The soldiers are also captured from a frontal angle suggesting the involvement of the viewers; i.e. it is as if the viewers are siding those soldiers inside that vehicle experiencing the same feelings.

At the compositional level: salience is given to the fire and explosion visible from the windscreen which is achieved through two semiotic resources: color and focus. Through color, because the fire scene is in full colors unlike the other elements of the representation which are in black; and through focus, because the direction of the soldier's gaze and the camera lens are shed on that particular scene, inviting the viewers to look at it. The elements are disconnected from each other in terms of color differentiation; the fire scene and the war cliché are in full colors; the title of the movie is in red, and the vehicle with the soldiers is in black.

Discussion:

Relying on the different outcomes reached after the analysis of the eight documentary movie advertisements, it is clear that the examined visuals are designed for the purpose of attracting the viewers' attention towards the movies content, and encouraging them to watch the upcoming documentary movies. This promotion is achieved via the meticulous selection of colors, angle, size of the represented constituents, gaze, catchphrases, etc. The posters testify to the filmmakers' perception and worldview regarding the issue of the war in Iraq, aiming at convincing people about the reliability and validity of their movie contents. In fact, the posters serve the filmmakers to reveal confidential and undisclosed information related to the war in Iraq which are totally unknown from the masses. In this respect, the following words and sentences are used: 'confidential'; 'controversy... what controversy'; 'what you didn't know you didn't know'; 'the war you don't see'; 'do you really know the truth'; 'a film of rare honesty' for the sake of persuading the viewers about the exclusivity of the presented information which are about exposing the truth regarding the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the decision of invading Iraq, the presence of mass destruction weapons in Iraq, and so on.

Actually, Michael Moore holding a big envelope and staring in the direction of the viewers in image (1) makes us believe that he will divulge worthy information about the invasion of Iraq which are kept secret and concealed from the masses. Image (2) is going to report unacquainted information about Donald Rumsfeld _the former US congressman_ and the war in Iraq. The information are so private that people are not even aware about their existence, contrary to other information that people may hear or read about, although they do not figure out the right from wrong. Image (5) spotlights the role of media in war propaganda and the way they misinformed and manipulated people's thoughts regarding the war in Iraq and

others and render these conflicts legitimate vis-à-vis the public opinion. Image (7) illustrates the poster title: *Uncovered: The War on Iraq* movie, as its name denotes, is supposed to uncover 'the real' reasons that lie behind the invasion of Iraq. This is illustrated by the drawing of the US flag over a turned soil that is supposed to be a garden hiding a lot of debris. Image (4) represents the 'No End in Sight' movie poster which aims at unveiling information about the war in Iraq as delivered by 'the ultimate insiders'. The latter are meant to certify the veracity of information. Images (6) and (8) are designed to persuade people about the validity of the reported information as well because they offer to the viewers an immersion in the war through the soldiers' eyes. Last but not least, image (3) covers the marching and demonstration of people against the war on Iraq revealing that a huge number of people of different ethnicities, some famous and some not, are all rebelled against the war, intending to induce people to stand against the war as well, and make their voices heard. Image (3) is also to be seen as an appeal to the possibility of changing events if people around the world ally in opposition to war.

The results of the analysis of documentary movies reveal that the production of the eight posters are an attempt to unveil the 'truth' veiled by the American media. The posters designers' aim is to uncover the propagandistic role of media in supporting the government waging war, and the way they display wrong and 'untrue' information to mislead people, and orient beliefs and opinions regarding the war in Iraq. In fact, the designers of the visuals endeavor to express what Chomsky denounces regarding the role of media in societies. Indeed, Chomsky⁽³⁴⁾ considers that small groups of elites control and take advantage of media coverage to further their personal interests and use media to mould people's beliefs and construct a reality proper to them and make it tangible. This manipulation, according to Chomsky⁽³⁵⁾, is achieved mainly by distracting people by creating problems then findings solutions to them, such as the appearance of a contagious illness then providing citizens with vaccine against the disease. Directing their views to what is happening around the world for the sake of keeping them 'passive spectators' who are only receiving information is another strategy of media manipulation. In other words, people are diverted to prevent the rise of opposition and rebellion. Chomsky⁽³⁶⁾ notes as well that media control of the masses is executed by terrifying the population about potential attacks and frightening them to turn people blind regarding domestic issues. The posters designers representing the documentary movies content aim at awakening the Americans to consider the other side of the coin concerning the role of media which is not only to inform and entertain. They encourage people to question the war in Iraq and realize that they were manipulated in such an extent as a way to tolerate the war that was presented as a way of eradicating terrorists and all kind of threat against the USA. Thus perceived, movies and advertisements (posters) are types of media which, according to Baudrillard⁽³⁷⁾ have the capacity to construct a hyper-reality which leads to the loss of reality. In other words, media create a reality called a 'hyper-reality' which replaces the 'actual' one serving the interests of those who control them. Thus, the posters present a reality conforming to the filmmakers' political beliefs, ideologies, religion, culture, etc. and seek to convince people of the reality they expose but which is not necessary the 'truth'.

4- Conclusion and Suggestions:

This study was concerned with the scrutiny of eight documentary movie posters about the war in Iraq with the view to figure out the way the advertisements designers combined various modes of expression to construct a meaningful whole. Interpreting the meaning of visuals through which a conception of reality about the war in Iraq is constructed and presented to the viewers was the objective of the study as well. For achieving this purpose, Kress and Leeuwen's framework of reading images was adopted to analyze the posters in terms of representation, interaction, and compositional patterns.

The findings of the analysis revealed that the objective of the designers was to design catchy advertisements to attract people's attention towards the content of the movies via a

careful choice of technical devices such as colors, size of elements, angle of capture, etc. The outcomes of the posters interpretation have also shown that the advertisements presented the reality about the war in Iraq in conformity to the filmmakers' perceptions. The results demonstrated that the film producers intended to disclose confidential information about the war in Iraq along with revealing what they supposed to be the truth that was veiled by media as well. Actually, the interpretation of the posters corresponded to the results of the previous empirical studies mentioned in the introduction in as far as the way the filmmakers or politicians presented the war in Iraq depended on their worldviews, their political positions, and their ideologies. The conclusion to be drawn from this study is that there are multiple ways to dress reality and the 'truth' cannot be totally known since all media devices control information in accordance with the interests of particular people who have enough power to make their perceptions mediately imposed on people.

The current study is limited in terms of the corpus which embodies only eight documentary movie posters. Thus, the obtained results are valid only as concerns the study of the eight advertisements; this shows the difficulty to generalize the outcomes to all the movie posters dealing with the same issue (the war in Iraq). Hence, a larger corpus in relation to the war in Iraq would bring more insights about the way the reality of the war is constructed through multimodal discourse.

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Appendices:

Hall' Social Distance	Field of Vision Kress and Leeuwen	Size of Frame Kress and Leeuwen
Intimate distance	Face or head only	Very close shot
Close personal distance	Head and shoulders	Close shot
Far personal distance	Waist up	Medium close shot
Close social distance	Whole figure	Medium long shot
Far social distance	Whole figure with space around it	Long shot
Public distance	Torso of at least four or five people	Very long shot

Table 1: Framing and Social Distance

Image (1)



Image (2)

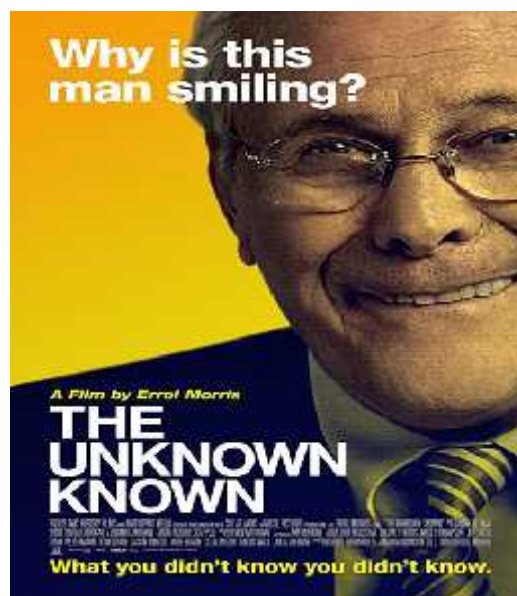


Image (3)



Image (4)



Image (5)

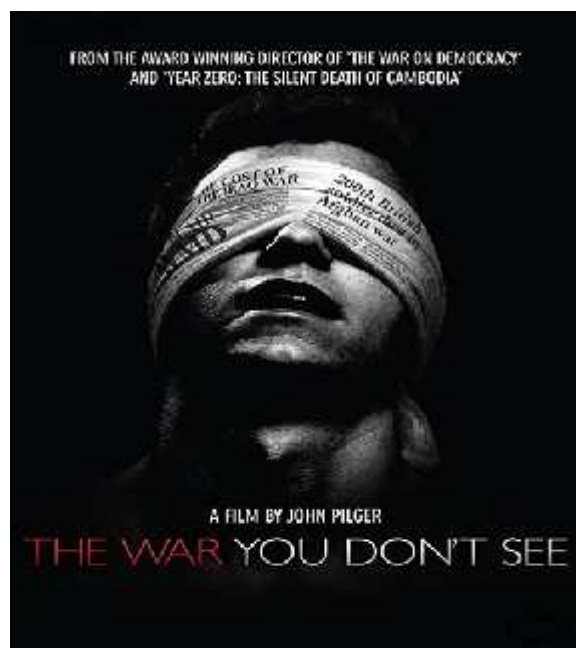


Image (6)

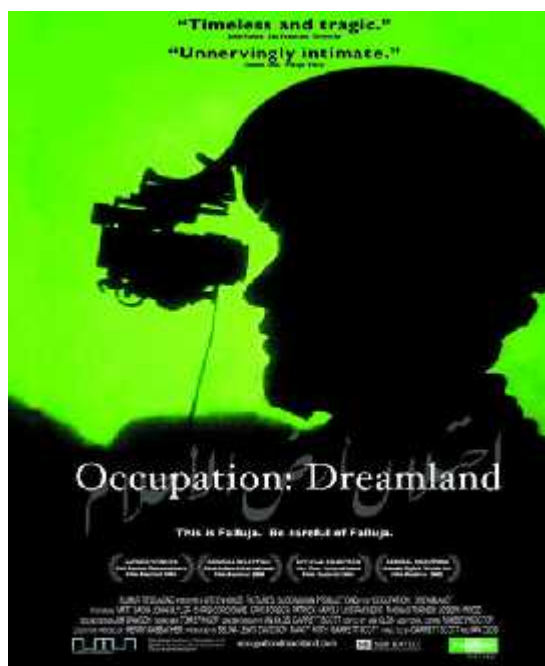


Image (7)



Image (8)

