

Exploring the Combination of Language, Images and Sound in the Metaphors of TV Commercials

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Drawing into research on multimodal metaphor, the first objective of this paper is to provide an analysis of the multimodal metaphors in four commercials selling alcoholic drinks, cars and computers to illustrate ways in which metaphor may be instantiated *via* sound, image and language. The question addressed is whether the metaphorical rendering of these products results from combining several communicative modes or rather relies mainly on one mode on which the others depend. Based on the results of a questionnaire completed by sixty informants after watching the commercials, the second objective is to explore the way viewers react to, and interpret, multimodal metaphors in advertising discourse.

Keywords: advertising; commercials; multimodal metaphor; metaphor interpretation; culture

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Explorando la combinación de lenguaje, imagen y sonido en las metáforas de anuncios televisivos

Partiendo de la investigación realizada sobre la metáfora multimodal, el primer objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer un análisis de las metáforas multimodales presentes en cuatro anuncios televisivos de bebidas alcohólicas, coches y ordenadores, todos ellos ilustrativos de cómo se expresa la metáfora a través de sonidos, imágenes, y lenguaje. La pregunta a la que se intenta dar respuesta es si la presentación metafórica de dichos productos resulta de la combinación de varios modos comunicativos o, por el contrario, viene dada por un modo principal del cual dependen los demás. Haciendo uso de los resultados de un cuestionario completado por sesenta informantes tras ver los anuncios, el segundo objetivo es explorar la forma en la que la audiencia reacciona e interpreta las metáforas multimodales usadas en el discurso publicitario.

Palabras clave: publicidad; anuncios televisivos; metáfora multimodal; interpretación; cultura

1. INTRODUCTION

The well-known adage “A picture is worth a thousand words” became a cliché in the twentieth century, and nowhere has this been more exploited than in advertising. However, this is also the domain where such a cliché may be called into question, particularly when figurative devices (metaphor, simile, etc.) are used as a selling strategy. This is because, although visual metaphors are commonplace in print adverts (e.g., the Nespresso coffee machine rendered as a skyscraper, as discussed in Forceville 2012), images seldom occur alone. Rather, adverts often use language to anchor their message, avoid any confusion as to the product advertised and, in the case of metaphors, cue the source and/or target domains involved (Forceville 2009a, 2009b; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010). This visual-verbal combination is particularly conspicuous in the promotion of certain products such as wine: here the focus is placed on the sensory properties of wine which are difficult to translate in visual form (e.g., their aromatic and flavour profile) and, therefore, language remains paramount to understand the adverts and spot the metaphors involved (Caballero 2009). The situation becomes more complex in commercials where montage (i.e., dynamic images), music and sound are also used to render the products in question in metaphorical terms. Indeed, the sophistication of current advertising requires an exploration of the ways in which modes other than the visual or the verbal (e.g., sound and music) may contribute, on the one hand, to the success of some commercials and, on the other, to their figurative quality.

The present paper deals with the ways in which four commercials exploit metaphors instantiated by diverse modes for promoting wines, (computer) operative systems and cars, as the preliminary step to investigate viewers’ reaction to the metaphors thus used. The first objective is to explore whether the combination of several modes is what “creates” the metaphors in the commercials or, rather, their metaphorical quality is mainly triggered or cued by one mode on which the others depend. The growing combination of modes to cue metaphor is a powerful strategy in contemporary commercials, but also adds to their complexity and, therefore, may hinder their interpretation (Forceville 2008a). In this regard, the second objective is to examine the way people react to and interpret the multimodal metaphors in the commercials under study.

2. METAPHOR IN ADVERTISING

Imagery is a conspicuous component of advertising, and marketing practices in general. Together with contributing to the innovative and, in many cases, highly aesthetic quality of adverts and commercials, it is also a powerful strategy at the service of persuasion and, therefore, selling practices. Indeed, as discussed by marketing scholars (Ward and Gaidis 1990; MacInnis, Moorman and Jaworski 1991; Goodstein 1993; McQuarrie and Phillips 2005), aesthetics and persuasion go hand in hand when figurative devices are used: by imposing a higher cognitive load on understanding what is being advertised, metaphor,

simile and the like increase the potential consumer's motivation, affective response and pleasure, which presumably results in bigger sales.

The critical role of metaphor in advertising has given rise to a vast amount of research, broadly driven by two—often related—types of concern. One line has principally been involved with exploring the metaphors used to promote abstract entities such as brands, both private and corporate (Koller 2009; Trong Tuan 2010) as well as more concrete objects like beauty and hygiene products, underwear, cars or soft drinks (Thornburrow 1998; Piller 1999; Amouzadeh and Tavangar 2004; Chattopadhyay 2005; Velasco-Sacristán 2010), and looks into the ideological implications derived from choosing certain metaphors at the expense of others. The second line of research is more typologically driven, i.e. it is mainly concerned with developing analytical frameworks to explain the diverse figurative devices involved in the rhetoric of visual advertising (Forceville 1996, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b; McQuarrie and Mick 1999, 2003; Phillips and McQuarrie 2004; among others).

Together with offering several, often related, taxonomies, scholars have also explored the audience's reaction to imagery in advertising from a more experimental perspective (e.g., MacInnis, Moorman and Jaworski 1991; McQuarrie and Mick 1999, 2003; McQuarrie and Phillips 2005; Jeong 2008; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010). The general consensus is that, although the use of metaphors in adverts often involves a certain degree of cognitive elaboration or effort on the part of the intended audience, this is ultimately advantageous rather than a strategy to be avoided. Thus, such adverts are more aesthetic and engaging, which makes people more curious as well as receptive to their message and, presumably, more positively predisposed towards the products involved. In other words, and in compliance with Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995; Wilson and Sperber 2004), audiences confronted with advertisements relying on metaphor ultimately get a reward for their cognitive investment in interpreting them (Tendahl 2009; Tendahl and Gibbs 2008).

While most of the research mentioned above has dealt with figurative devices in print adverts, Forceville (2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b, 2012) has moved from print to audio-visual advertising or commercials, reworking his initial model of pictorial metaphor to accommodate figurative schemas cued by dynamic images, music and sound. He distinguishes four main types of pictorial metaphor: (a) metaphors where one of the metaphorical components needs to be “retrieved” from the context (*contextual metaphor*), (b) metaphors whose sources and targets are partially represented in pictorial form (*hybrid metaphor*), (c) metaphors where source and target are pictorially represented in full (*pictorial simile*), and (d) metaphors represented as a unified object or gestalt (*integrated metaphor*). When occurring in print advertising, all four types are monomodal since their sources and targets are partially or exclusively rendered through images, i.e., rely upon a single mode. In contrast, contextual, hybrid and integrated metaphors become multimodal when their “target[s] and source[s] are not, or not exclusively, rendered in the same mode” (Forceville 2012, 16). Interestingly, multimodal metaphors can be simultaneously cued

by several modes (e.g., a combination of language, visuals and sound), a co-activation or multiple cuing which, according to Forceville, often involves a greater cognitive effort on the part of their targeted audience and, hence, enhances the metaphors' communicative, emotional and memorability potential. On a cautionary note, however, Forceville (2007, 2008a, 2012) points to the need for more research which focuses on the way cultural and national factors may also affect people's comprehensibility of and emotional response to this type of metaphor (see also McQuarrie and Mick 1999; Van Mulken 2003; St Clair 2006; van Mulken, le Pair and Forceville 2010).

Two important insights may be drawn from Forceville's work, both relevant for the discussion in this paper. The first is his classification of figurative phenomena and the fact that they may all be linguistically, visually and/or aurally cued in their multimodal dimension. The second is his emphasis on the formal aspects of multimodal metaphor in commercials, i.e. how the choice of one or several modes or channels may determine the way metaphors are created, identified, interpreted and reacted to.

Drawing upon Forceville's work, in this paper I first analyse how different modes combine to create a metaphorical picture of the products sold in four commercials. This is followed by a qualitative study addressing the ways in which this combination may affect their understanding by and impact on their potential viewers.

3. METAPHORIZING WINES, COMPUTERS AND CARS IN COMMERCIALS

For the present study, I chose four commercials dealing with computers, cars and alcoholic beverages (one dealing with wine and one with *cava*). The adverts were chosen due to their heavy reliance on metaphor to promote the products at issue, and their exploitation of the possibilities of several modes in this figurative rendering. Thus, after briefly describing the commercials, I provide an analysis of the metaphors used in them and the modes involved.

My view of metaphor follows the standard CMT definition of metaphor as *mapping* knowledge from one domain of experience (the *source*) onto a different domain (the *target*), which is construed in terms of the former. In line with Forceville's definition of multimodal metaphor, in order to identify the metaphors in the commercials under analysis I considered the modes involved in representing, cuing and/or suggesting the sources and targets in them, i.e. whether the commercials drew upon a combination of images, language, sounds, framing and camera movements, etc. in presenting their respective products as something else (as captured by the customary formula *A IS B* used in metaphor research).

3.1. Commercial 1: Navarra D.O. Navarra Reds, sons of our land

The commercial "Navarra D.O.: Tintos de Navarra, hijos de nuestra tierra" (Navarra D.O.: Navarra Reds, sons of our land) belongs to the 2004 campaign designed by the Spanish advertising company formerly called Bassat Ogilvy (its current name being

Ogilvy & Mather Publicidad). The spot advertises Navarra D.O. (designation of origin or *appellation*) and its red wines, and opens with a man talking to someone—hidden from the audience—in the following terms:

You're leaving tomorrow. The world awaits you and I'm sure that when they know you they'll love you. We're proud of you at home. We know that you'll become one among the great. Some won't appreciate your worth: pay no attention. Mmm... Others will see a winner in you: don't boast. Don't be afraid of time: it will make you mature and, when you grow old, do it with dignity. Always remember the land where you were born. Son, I've given you everything I know. I'll miss you. OK, enough. You have a long trip tomorrow. NAVARRA REDS, SONS OF OUR LAND.¹

The commercial combines camera angles and language in order to convey a kinship metaphor that may be formalised as NAVARRA D.O. IS A FAMILY, whereby the different wineries are presented as (CARING) FATHERS and the region's wines as SONS. Since the purpose in this advert was to advertise the whole region (the D.O.), the emphasis is placed on the father: a middle-aged man mainly shown through close-ups of his head and hands and engaged in a monologue with an unseen son about to leave home. The "son," a bottle of wine on a table bearing the generic label "Tintos de Navarra," is unseen until the very end, when the father caresses it before leaving the room. The commercial ends with a voice-over announcing the product advertised: "Navarra's reds. Sons of our land."

The commercial illustrates a multimodal metaphor where part of the target, i.e., Navarra's red wines rather than the whole region, is rendered visually and the source domain FAMILY (or FATHER-SON) is, strictly speaking, cued verbally. Nevertheless, the commercial's emotional and rhetorical effect largely rests upon the performance of the actor playing the role of the father—a performance which could well be viewed as a visual strategy for cuing the metaphor. The metaphor is finally "disclosed" when the bottle-son is shown at the end of the commercial, a delay strategy often used in advertising for the sake of effect, i.e., to surprise audiences or, in relevance terms, exploited to achieve optimal relevance. Thus, after seeing the bottle-son in the commercials, people presumably revise their previous assumptions, using interpretive strategies in order to achieve optimal relevance, all of which may enhance the impact of the commercial.

3.2. Commercial 2: Mac versus PC. Viruses

This commercial was launched on 2 May 2006, and belongs to the *Get a Mac* series featuring actors John Hodgman and Justin Long in the roles of PC and Mac respectively (www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQb_Q8WRL_g). Like the rest of the campaign, the commercial is crafted in a very simple way: it shows a spare, white background where two characters, PC and Mac, engage in a brief interaction, and finishes with the image of a Mac

¹ Author's translation from Spanish. Reproduced with permission.

computer. In this sketch, PC is feeling terrible due to a bad cold, and warns Mac to stay away from him so that he does not get infected. While doing so, he falls backwards and faints. The dialogue is the following:

- MAC: Hello, I'm a Mac.
 PC: And I'm a PC. Atchoo! Atchoo! Atchoo!
 MAC: Gesundheit! Are you okay?
 PC: No I'm not okay. I have that virus that's going around.
 MAC: Oh yeah.
 PC: In fact, you better stay back. This one's a doozy.
 MAC: That's okay I'll be fine.
 PC: No no, do not be a hero. Last year there were 114,000 known viruses for PCs.
 MAC: PCs. Not Macs.
 PC: Hey I think I'm going to crash.
 MAC: Hey, if you feel ...

The sketch illustrates the metaphor *COMPUTER SYSTEMS ARE PEOPLE*, but here both source and target are cued verbally—unless we regard the brief cut of a Mac computer at the end as instantiating the metaphorical target. However, as in the case of the Navarra commercial, the way the metaphor is “performed” by the very opposite characters impersonating a PC and a Mac is of great interest and enriches what would otherwise be an instance of monomodal metaphor. As such, while PC is a middle-aged, formally suited individual, Mac is casually dressed, young and carefree—a highly connotative presentation presumably at the service of persuasion. This personification of PCs and Macs appears combined with the, also metaphorical, terms *crash* and *viruses* conventionally used to refer to computer problems, and somehow resuscitates their originally metaphorical—anthropomorphic—status and specifies those problems as human problems, e.g., a bad cold or fainting because of it.

3.3. Commercial 3: KIA Sorrento

This spot is from the 2007 campaign featuring tennis player Rafael Nadal (www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GQQIVP5rcI). The commercial is more complex than the previous two discussed, both film- and metaphor-wise. For the sake of description, I have segmented it into five parts, i.e. the opening and end sequences, and three “middle” sequences which are labelled according to the written caption which appears at the end of each (i.e., Powerful Stroke, Technological Edge and Dynamic Leap). The arrows in the table represent shot transitions within each sequence.

The commercial rests upon a clever montage where the car and the tennis player are shown in quasi-simultaneous fashion (represented by the arrows in the table), and which instantiates the simile *THE SORRENTO MODEL IS LIKE A (SUCCESSFUL) TENNIS PLAYER*. However, the transition in the first scene where Nadal hits a ball that quickly cuts into

Table 1. Summary of KIA commercial

Opening Sequence

Shot of car; its image gradually blurs into a white roundish shape which gives way to a close-up of Nadal (focus: white bandana and eyes)

Middle Sequence 1**Images:**

Nadal poised to serve hand grips a steering wheel
 Nadal launches ball upward hand changes gear
 Nadal hits ball car shoots forward on a dust track leaving a dusty trail
 ball appears on screen + Nadal hits it car moves along track + language caption

Sounds: car accelerates + Nadal grunts while serving + sound of bells ringing [race? train?]

Language: Powerful Stroke [caption]

Middle Sequence 2**Images:**

Nadal runs sideways to hit ball car on track
 Nadal's foot slides on line of court car borders edge of track by a cliff
 Nadal hits ball car speeds on track at the edge of cliff

Sounds: sliding sounds + bells ringing [race? train?] + Nadal's grunts when hitting

Language: Technological Edge [caption]

Middle Sequence 3: Dynamic Leap

Nadal jumps to hit ball car jumps in 4x4 fashion
 car lands and traces a dusty white circle before stopping

Language: Dynamic Leap [caption]

End Sequence

Voice-over + caption written within circle: "The quest for perfection continues"

Nadal reties bandana and says "Who's next?"

Sound of an eagle + shot of Nadal standing in front of the car on the edge of a high, steep cliff overlooking the scene below

Voice-over with name of the brand KIA

the car may also be interpreted as instantiating A CAR IS LIKE A TENNIS BALL. In both cases, the simile is visually cued and reinforced (*anchored*) by means of language.

Regardless of the different metaphorical interpretations of the first sequence, the sound effects throughout the commercial equate the car with the player, which enhances the simile's multimodal quality. Particularly interesting in this regard are Nadal's characteristic grunts when serving and hitting the ball, which suggest the car's power and acceleration, and the sounds of both Nadal and the car when sliding on clay and skidding in a sharp bend respectively. A final potentially meaningful sound is the eagle cry at the end of the commercial, which may suggest the heights reached by both car and player as well as the sense of freedom often associated with the type of car advertised (a 4 x 4 model).

3.4. Commercial 4: Freixenet. El Color Reserva

This is the 2009 version of a commercial first launched in 2008 featuring the Spanish Olympic synchronised swimming team accompanied by a *zapateado* (i.e., a particular Spanish kind of tap-dance) by flamenco dancer Flora Albaicín (www.burbujasfreixenet.com/spot_esp.html). The commercial basically relies on images and sound; language is only used at the beginning and at the end to introduce the wine (“Freixenet introduces the Reserva Colour”), to wish the audience Merry Christmas, to recommend drinking in moderation and to show the *cava’s* alcohol content (the latter two in short, written captions). The spot opens with a bottle of *cava* emerging from an ice bucket, followed by a glass full of *cava*. The camera then zooms into the glass taking the audience in among the bubbles of the drink. These dissolve until one of them, personified in a synchronised swimmer, shoots out from the surface of the *cava* to then splash back down into a crown of bubble-synchro swimmers. The rest of the commercial shows a bubble-synchro swimmer routine performed to the tempo of a *zapateado*, a dance that grows in intensity until the grand finale echoing the first scene: a bubble-swimmer launched upwards and splashing back amidst a crown of bubble-swimmers. The commercial ends with a fade out giving way to a cut of a bottle of *cava* in an ice bucket while an off-screen voice wishes the audience Merry Christmas, and a final cut where the team, arranged like a Christmas tree, toasts the viewer with a glass of *cava*.

The main protagonists here are the wine’s golden and stylised bubbles, personified by the swimmers of the successful Spanish Olympic-medal-winning team. The winning character of the *cava* is evoked by the “champion” status of the synchronised swimming team. The metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS also points to one of the key indicators of a *cava’s* quality, i.e., its characteristic crown of froth that quickly dissolves into bubbles which must last as long as possible and travel vertically along the glass until breaking the surface again, a behaviour replicated in the swimmers’ leaps, plunges, and splashes. Indeed, the metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS may be interpreted as metonymically profiling one component of *cava* (BUBBLES FOR *CAVA*) and, by so doing, foreground its quality (BUBBLE PERFORMANCE FOR *CAVA* QUALITY). Interestingly, while both personification and metonymy are suggested by the visual images in the commercial, the soundtrack points to the whole experience of drinking *cava* (the popping noise when uncorking the bottle, the bubbles’ effervescent sound inside the glass, etc.), an aurally cued metonymy which may be formalised as ZAPATEADO FOR *CAVA* (OPENING AND POURING) EXPERIENCE. The *zapateado* also brings to mind the typical noise of fireworks, a typical component of many festivities in Spain, particularly at Christmas. Finally, the iconic quality of the *zapateado* used in the commercial may be mapped onto the *cava* it advertises; however, this requires an audience highly familiarised with this type of dancing both within and outside Spain.

In summary, while the commercial essentially presents the Freixenet *cava* via visual metaphor and metonymy, its combination of image and sound triggers all manner of associations related to the festive occasions when this drink is consumed. However, these are most obvious when the commercial is framed in a cultural context, e.g., awareness of the use of fireworks in many Spanish celebrations may help construe the *zapateado* as metonymic with regards to *cava* versus the more metaphorical, and cross-domain formula

A *ZAPATEADO* IS A *CAVA* EXPERIENCE—more congruent with the definition of metaphor as a cross-domain mapping, yet more neutral or “culture-free,” and hence more relevant for non-Spanish viewers, should they relate that sound with both this dance and drinking *cava*.

3.5. A brief summary of the commercials

The figurative schemas exploited in the four commercials and the modes involved may be summarised as follows:

Table 2. Figurative schemas and modes in commercials

Commercial	Figurative schema	Modes
Navarra D.O.	metaphors NAVARRA IS A CARING FATHER, NAVARRA’S RED WINES ARE SONS	language + images
Mac vs PC	metaphors COMPUTER SYSTEMS ARE PEOPLE, MAC SYSTEMS ARE HEALTHY PEOPLE	language (+ images)
KIA Sorrento	simile(s) THE SORENTO MODEL IS LIKE A SUCCESSFUL TENNIS PLAYER A CAR IS LIKE A TENNIS BALL	images + sound + language
Freixenet	metaphor BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS metonymies BUBBLES FOR <i>CAVA</i> , <i>ZAPATEADO</i> FOR <i>CAVA</i> EXPERIENCE	images images + sound

As shown in Table 2, the four commercials exploit figurative devices of varying degrees of complexity and multimodality: from the classical language-image combination in the Navarra and Mac vs. PC clips to the various modes involved in KIA and Freixenet. While all four are certainly interesting and innovative in their use of metaphor, and despite the already mentioned claims that the cognitive “challenge” involved in metaphor may have an affective and rewarding effect on viewers and guide them towards buying the products thus advertised, the opposite remains a possibility, i.e., viewers not understanding or liking the metaphors. The issue is addressed by Forceville (2008a: 199-201) when outlining an agenda for further research, and may be summarized by the following questions: How do viewers construe the metaphors in commercials? How successful are those metaphors? In order to explore these issues, I conducted a small experimental survey where I gathered the reactions of sixty informants towards the four commercials, which forms the topic of the following section.

4. VIEWER RESPONSE TO METAPHOR IN COMMERCIALS

The four commercials were shown to sixty students all enrolled on courses on either eye-tracking techniques (Lund University) or English Linguistics (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha). Given the topics and metaphorical qualities of the commercials I chose those who might be interested in the products at issue (i.e., who were drivers, consumed alcohol and used computers regularly) and were familiarised with disciplines relating to human

communication (i.e., were able to elaborate on the questions about the commercials). The participants were from diverse nationalities (Swedish, Italian, German, Uruguayan, Ukrainian, Welsh, Spanish and Australian) and all aged between 20 and 30. Finally, in order to avoid any possible bias in their response to the commercials and the related questions, none of the participants were specialists, although all of them knew what a metaphor was in its most basic form.

The participants were asked to watch the four commercials twice and fill in the questionnaire in Appendix 1 where they had to assess the commercials (i.e. rate them for relevance, quality and difficulty of interpretation, and say whether they had liked them or not) as well as identify the metaphor(s) used. The data relating to the informants' evaluations of the commercials is shown below.

Figure 1. Difficulty

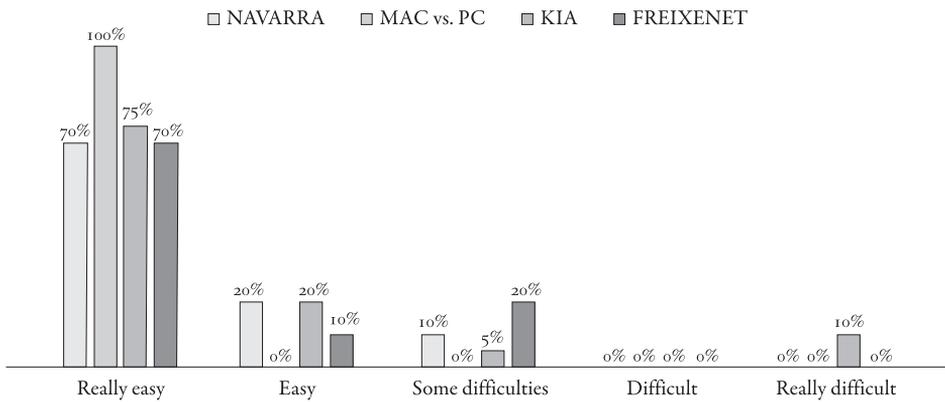


Figure 2. Quality

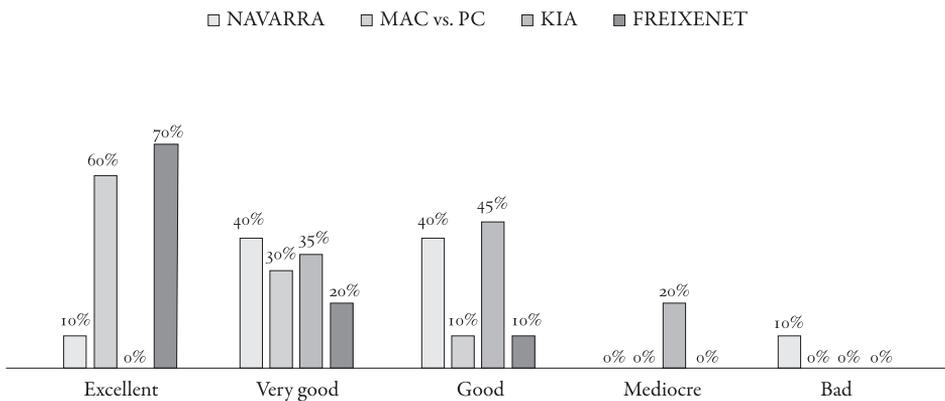
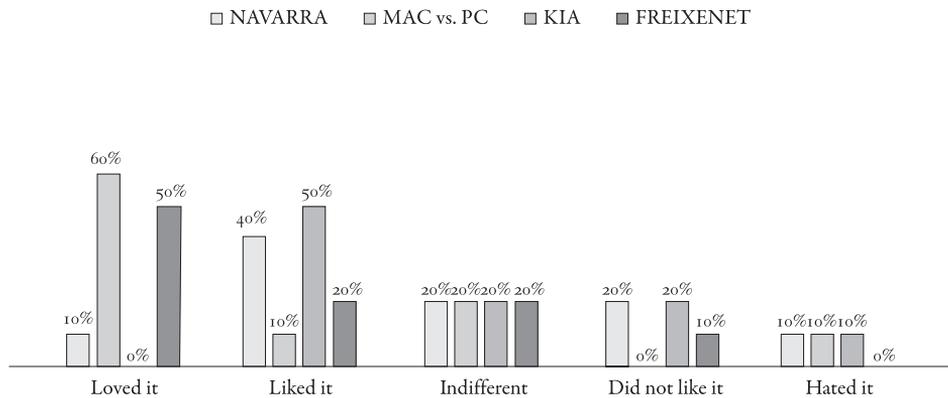


Figure 3. Personal Reaction



The commercials which were rated highest with regard to quality and aesthetic value are Mac vs. PC and Freixenet. Overall, the informants also found these two commercials easy to understand—contrary to what has been said in terms of the correlation between cognitive effort and aesthetic pleasure by some scholars (McQuarrie and Phillips 2005; Jeong 2008; Tendahl and Gibbs 2008; Tendahl 2009). As to the effect of metaphor on the ratings, this is particularly noticeable in the participants' explanation of why they liked or disliked the commercials, especially those for KIA and Freixenet. It would seem that the success of the Freixenet advert is attributed to its clever and/or unexpected use of imagery, as shown in the following comments retrieved from the responses in the questionnaire:

It doesn't try to tell you anything explicitly, but it is clear. The metaphor is that these girls dancing in the water is the spume of a champagne bottle, but more striking is the complex interaction between this metaphor and the information represented through a metonym – opening champagne bottles is part of special and jubilant events. Clever!

Of course, synchronised swimming has nothing much to do with drinking alcoholic beverages, and yet it showed attributes of Freixenet. The movements of the swimmers looked very flowing and explosive, dynamic, just as when you uncork a bottle of Freixenet. The sequences of scenes look like a cork popping and the sparkling wine popping/flowing out, imitating the behaviour of sparkling wine.

By contrast, KIA's relatively low scores may be attributed to what some participants qualified as a "dull" and/or "unclear" metaphor:

The connection between tennis and cars is a little obscure.

If the metaphors were more deep and more unique to the celebrity used they [KIA] could have gotten away with it. In general, I notice that most of the metaphors need text in order to be understood, which I think is a sign that they are a little weak. [*sic*]

I found myself wondering about tennis and about the fact that it must be perceived of differently in some sub cultures. Not afternoon tea and homemade lemonade on a Sunday afternoon – my image of tennis. I don't suppose wondering about tennis is the aim of the ad ☺ Frankly, the metaphor sucks. [*sic*]

From a film point of view it is really well made and has nice pictures and nice editing, but I did not understand it at all: I did not in the least understand the link between tennis and cars.

Another reason that may have influenced the participants' responses was their greater or lesser interest in cars, tennis, synchronised swimming or specific operating systems. For instance, one participant acknowledged that he would have rated the Mac vs. PC commercial higher if he were not a Linux user; another rated the quality of KIA's commercial very high, yet found it too aggressive for his taste and, hence, gave it a low score in terms of personal reaction; finally, one participant reacted negatively towards the swimmers in the Freixenet advert, claiming that, although attractive, they "have clips on their noses, so they look a bit odd for advertising champagne." In contrast, Nadal's aggressive style in the KIA commercial and the presence of the Spanish team in the Freixenet campaign were regarded very positively by many of the Spanish students filling in the questionnaire, who were well aware of the sporting personalities and their achievements and, in general, liked their appearance in the commercials.

A second batch of questions asked the participants about the message of each commercial, the metaphors chosen to convey it and the modes involved in these. The participants not only spotted the metaphors briefly described in section 3, but were particularly vocal about the strategies followed by the advertisers. Table 3 shows a summary of the results (the numbers stand for the number of participants "voting" for the modes involved in the metaphors in question):

Thus, the wine-son in the Navarra commercial was generally seen as a nicely brought-up adolescent from a wealthy, cultured traditional family—a qualification prompted in the most part by the actor's voice and the setting chosen for the commercial, both overlooked in my own analysis. They also paid great attention to the filmic—visual—qualities of the commercial, i.e., the setting and camera movements, and regarded images as a key strategy in the metaphor. The rest of the commercials follow a similar pattern. In the case of the Mac vs. PC sketch, most participants saw the virus metaphor as multimodal, e.g., two people commented that the faint piano music backgrounding the dialogue further contributed to Mac's simple, cool features, and six people related PC's sneezing to its propensity to

Table 3. Imagery in commercials

NAVARRA

Figurative schemas	Traits highlighted	Modes
Metaphor		
WINE IS (ADOLESCENT) SON GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD	Good upbringing/origin = wine's quality and promising	language* (37), image (4),
WINEMAKERS ARE FATHERS ⇒ WINES ARE SONS	future Tradition + experience + care =	language + image (20)
EVERY SINGLE BOTTLE OF WINE IS ONE OF OUR SONS ⇒ MAKING WINE IS BRINGING UP A CHILD	high-quality and expensive wines + producers' pride	* content + father's voice (quality, pitch, etc.)

MAC vs. PC

Figurative schemas	Traits highlighted	Modes
Metaphor		
COMPUTERS ARE PEOPLE	Mac is immune to viruses +	language (21),
COMPUTER PROBLEMS ARE ILLNESSES (contagion metaphor)	dynamic + cool + simple + youthful + modern + friendly	image (29), language + image (4), language + image + music (5), sound/sneeze (6)

KIA

Figurative schemas	Traits highlighted	Modes
Metaphor		
CAR IS A SUCCESSFUL TENNIS PLAYER, A HIGH-PERFORMANCE CAR IS A HIGHLY-TRAINED ATHLETE	Power + speed + control + style + lightness + aggression + emotion Technology + macho image	image* (20), language (19), image + sound (18),
A POWERFUL CAR'S ENGINE IS LIKE A STRONG AND POWERFUL TENNIS STROKE	Responsiveness, endurance + manoeuvrability + stability +	language + image + sound (4)
A HIGH-TECH CAR IS (LIKE) A MOUNTAIN/WILDERNESS/IMPRESSIVE NATURE	quality of performance Cool, sporty, successful "human"	*inc. lighting, colours etc.
A PERFECT CAR/MACHINE IS (LIKE) A HUMAN BODY	car	
DRIVING THIS CAR IS REACHING THE EDGE OF THE WORLD		
DRIVING THIS CAR IS BEING THE BOSS (LIKE NADAL IN TENNIS)		
CAR IS TENNIS MATCH, CAR IS A TENNIS BALL		
No metaphor (1 participant)		

FREIXENET

Figurative schemas	Traits highlighted	Modes
Metaphor		
<i>CAVA</i> IS AN EXPLOSION OF FRESHNESS, CHAMPAGNE'S BUBBLES ARE SWIMMERS	explosiveness + elegance/class + freshness + luxury + traditional/	image (4), image + sound (36),
DRINK HAS A CHARACTER AND CONTROLLED ENERGY	timeless + spark + rhythm + energy	sound (21)
MOVEMENT OF <i>CAVA</i> WHEN OPENING BOTTLE IS DANCE	dynamic + sensual/sexual "bubbling"	
Metonymy		
SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING FOR OPENING AND DRINKING <i>CAVA</i> flamenco from brand origin = Olympics)	happiness/festiveness of drinking cava + unavailability (hard to obtain, only at Christmas)	
Simile		
WINE IS SPARKLING, SUCCESSFUL AND ELEGANT LIKE SWIMMING TEAM		
Synaesthesia		
SENSATIONS OF <i>CAVA</i> INSIDE MOUTH ARE SWIMMERS		
EACH SIP OF <i>CAVA</i> IS THE POUNDING RHYTHM OF FLAMENCO		

viruses, to which MAC computers are not victim. They also identified more metaphors than personification in the KIA and Freixenet commercials, and construed the metaphors in them from several modes.

Indeed, although the participants' comments on metaphor may well have been guided by the questionnaire itself (e.g., they were asked explicitly about the modes cueing the metaphors in the commercials), overall, they understood the metaphors in a holistic way in the sense that all modes appear to have contributed to cueing the metaphors discussed in the questionnaire. The only exception here is the Navarra commercial which, as pointed out by all the participants, has language as the mode instantiating the source in the metaphor (i.e., the FAMILY scenario) and only reveals the metaphorical target (the wine) after the camera shows the bottle on the table. When discussing the metaphors in the remaining commercials, the participants were less specific, and appeared to draw information from several sources or modes at once. This is particularly interesting with regards to the combination of images and sound, mostly because the latter mode remains relatively unexplored in multimodal metaphor (but see Forceville 2008, 2009a, 2012), yet its contribution to the metaphorical quality of the commercials was easily identified and commented upon by some of the participants, as will be discussed below.

As to the interpretation of the metaphors in the four commercials, the participants spotted the basic metaphor in each commercial, even if they differed in their degree of elaboration of some of the metaphors and, above all, in their comments on the modes

involved in their instantiation. Overall, all the participants appeared to be comfortable discussing visual cues, e.g., close ups, colours, light, or explicit images like, for instance, the final tree-like arrangement of the swimmers in the Freixenet commercial, which six people related to Christmas (hence, proposing the metaphor *FREIXENET IS CHRISTMAS*). However, not all of them were so aware of the metaphorical potential of sound or music in advertising. In this regard, familiarisation with the source domain involved in the metaphors seemed to play a major role, and was particularly noticeable in comments—as well as in the lack thereof—about the KIA commercial. Some of the participants' comments are reproduced (verbatim) below:

THE CAR IS RAFA NADAL Nadal's qualities are exploited in order to describe the car. As the Spanish tennis player is a symbol of power and strength, it could be said that THE CAR IS POWER. Besides, Rafa Nadal is well-known for his precision; consequently, THE CAR IS PRECISION. In addition, Rafa Nadal is defined by his resistance and body coordination; THE CAR IS DURABILITY, THE CAR IS STABILITY (easy to be driven). Metaphors are also present in the slogan. "The quest for perfection" Rafa Nadal is perfection like THE CAR IS PERFECTION.

In this case, it is the movements of the player that carry most of the metaphors. For instance, when Nadal is serving, the car is being started, when he is returning the ball, the driver is changing gear (i.e. the more powerful the stroke, the more power the engine gains), he jumps for returning just like the car leaps over a slope. Besides, the audience can hear how Nadal's feet slip when the car is skidding. Furthermore, the astounding advancements in motor industry are represented in relation to the hawk-eye technology in tennis. What is more, "The quest for perfection continues" stands as a clear referent to the constant innovation developed in this industry as well as to the player's continuously training. Nadal's statement "Who's next?" is obviously defying both his and the company's competence. That is why, at the end of the commercial, both player and car are standing on the edge of the precipice.

Nadal (one of the best tennis players of the world) symbolizes the quality of the car. The movements of the tennis ball represent each of the movements of the car. The service represents the moment in which the car starts. The moment in which Nadal stops represents the moment in which the car brakes. Nadal's leap symbolizes the moment in which the car jumps a little. The agility of Nadal's movements represents the efficiency of the movements and power of the car.

This advert compares the movements of a sportsman with the movement of a car, the skidding, accelerating, jumping through the mountain and the low hills is similar to the movement of Nadal running, jumping and changing direction in the court.

These passages suggest that the students were familiarised with tennis in general (e.g., their knowledge of the hawk-eye technology used in tournaments to check whether a given shot is in or out) and with Nadal in particular, which made it easier to identify

the traits of the car foregrounded in the commercial via the tennis metaphor. The role of cultural background and/or knowledge in interpreting the information transferred via metaphor is even more noticeable in the case of the Freixenet commercial. Before taking this point further, I would like to consider the following passages—all of them from Spanish students:

In this commercial the drops of water represent the bubbles of the champagne. The force of the water is the same as the strength of Freixenet and the girls are representing the sensations that the Cava produces in the mouth. Each of their one perfect movement describes the perfection of Freixenet and the swimsuit of the girls is as luxurious as the champagne. Additionally, the music is very representative of Spain and represents the power of each sip.

In this advertisement most of the metaphors are conveyed by means of images and scenes of dances by the synchronised swimmers of the Spanish team. Nevertheless, we can find the first metaphor in the ad when the narrator makes reference to “el color reserva.” The “reserva” colour does not exist but this is a way to show that Freixenet is a sparkling wine and that “reserva” is a type of best wine. The swimmers’ movements simulate first the uncorking of the bottle of Freixenet, and then the bubbles and froth of the drink. The force and power of the product are accomplished by means of the extremely fast dynamic movements and jumps of the girls. To make the audience think that the swimmers are inside the wine glass, their garments, make-up as well as the color of the water is goldish. The music accompanying the spot consists of a very Spanish heel stamping since the company has in mind the target audience to which they want to address the product. Last but not least, the girls are mentioned at the end of the ad as if they were medals instead of people reflecting the success of Freixenet.

Freixenet 2009: the opening and the ending of the dancing when a light rises portrays the cork of a *cava* bottle when opening . . . the music and the contrast between a fast running of the ad with some slow images suggest a good party night where the music is like heartbeats.

At the beginning we can see how the swimmers represent a Freixenet bottle: the way in which it is uncorked, the drops they splash when you open it, and the girls’ movements can be associated to the sensations that people feel when they drink it. Besides, at the end the way the girls are placed simulates the shape of the bottle. Finally, the soundtrack of the ad has to do with the sound that bubbles make when you open a bottle of champagne. There is no Christmas without Freixenet.

Indeed, synaesthetically relating the dynamism of the swimmers to “the sensations that the Cava produces in the mouth,” pointing to the quality implicit in the Reserva label, equating the commercial’s soundtrack to “a good party night” as well as regarding it as a consumer-oriented strategy, and claiming that the whole commercial suggests that “there is no Christmas without Freixenet” points to the students’ familiarity with both the source and target in the metaphor.

The comments above, suggest, therefore, that viewers' reactions to advertising campaigns and the metaphors included in them are very much influenced by the knowledge they have of the domains which provide the sources in the metaphors—regardless of the way those are cued or instantiated. This, in turn, reflects the impact of cultural factors in metaphor interpretation—both those characterising broad cultural milieus as well as those particular to the more “local” cultures which articulate them like, for instance, Castilla-La Mancha, where *flamenco* is as popular as it is in Andalucía and is frequently played at parties. Accordingly, the greatest elaboration of and personal involvement with the metaphors in the KIA and Freixenet commercials came from Spanish participants familiarised with tennis (and, particularly, clay court tennis), Rafael Nadal, flamenco, and *cava*. These were the participants who related Nadal's grunts and clay-sliding noises to some of the car's properties (regardless of the explicit connection between them in the commercial), and recognised the sound in Freixenet as a zapateado, which forcefully cues the sounds of *cava* insides a glass or the celebratory quality of this wine.

In summary, although the advertisers' choices of metaphor did not seem to affect the message conveyed by the different commercials, it did have an impact on the participants' personal reaction towards it—KIA and Navarra wines being a case in point of easy, yet slightly less appealing commercials when compared to the other two. Neither did the number of modes involved seem to influence the intelligibility of the metaphors expressed, despite some participants (particularly, non-Spanish students) missing some of the cues, especially the aural cues. Rather, the participants' reaction appears to be highly motivated by personal factors, i.e. their familiarisation with the entities involved which are closely related to their cultural background as well as personal inclinations, hobbies, consumption practices, etc.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main aim in this paper has been to analyse the ways in which imagery may be instantiated *via* language, images, sounds etc. in commercials, and the contribution of these modes to the metaphors, metonymies and similes used to promote alcoholic drinks, cars and operating systems. The combination of language, sounds and images is seen as enhancing the figurative portrayal of these products, while also underlying the complexity of the metaphors involved. This is particularly the case in the KIA and Freixenet commercials, both of which show various—related—metaphors cued by a combination of images, language and sounds plus montage effects.

Since complexity is generally regarded as having an impact on the way viewers interpret and react towards the metaphors involved, the second objective of this paper was to explore the views of sixty people on the commercials examined. Their answers suggest that, although the cues provided by some modes may go unnoticed, complexity is not an issue with regard to their attitude towards the commercial. Again, the participants'

commentary on the KIA and Freixenet commercials suggest that, overall, the reaction of viewers relies heavily upon their knowledge and preference towards the sources in the metaphors used and, in cases like *cava*, also the targets involved. The research presented here is, however, but a small contribution to what remains a fairly underexplored field within Cognitive Metaphor Theory.

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APPENDIX 1. QUESTIONNAIRE

- (1) Do you think this is a good commercial? Evaluate its quality
1 (excellent) 2 (very good) 3 (good) 4 (mediocre) 5 (bad)
Justify your answer
- (2) Did you find it difficult or easy to understand? Evaluate its difficulty
1 (really easy) 2 (easy) 3 (some difficulties) 4 (difficult) 5 (really difficult)
Justify your answer
- (3) Did you like the commercial?
1 (loved it) 2 (liked it) 3 (indifferent) 4 (did not like it) 5 (hated it)
Justify your answer
- (4) What message(s) is this advertisement giving?
- (5) Which traits of the product are particularly highlighted? How do you know?
- (6) Is there anything that particularly strikes you in the commercial?
- (7) The commercial exploits a metaphor. Can you describe it? Which are the cues for the metaphor in the commercial (language, images, sounds, etc.)?
General comments (if any)

NAME:

AGE:

NATIONALITY:

DO YOU GIVE YOUR CONSENT TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF THIS
QUESTIONNAIRE?

SIGNATURE:

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