

# A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS TOWARDS *IN-GAME ADVERTISING*

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of multimodality is examined within the fields of linguistics and semiotics. The term refers to the combination of many semiotic modes, such as language and music, within a communication. In this study investigates the modes and functions of interactive functions in in-game advertising using a multimodal discourse analysis approach. The data consists of screen captures from the Cat and Soup game's in-game advertising. The multimodality of in-game advertising consists of linguistic, visual, and gestural modalities, as well as an interactive function in terms of contact, social distance, and point of view, which establishes connections between the character and the viewer.

**Keywords:** *Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Semiotic, In-Game Advertising*

## INTRODUCTION

The social and cognitive process of expressing and debating our perspectives, experiences, feelings, and desires via the use of language and other symbolic tools is referred to as discourse. It analyzes, forms, shapes, re-creates, and redefines meaning in the lifeworld through gestures, eye gaze, vocal intonation, color, shape, and imagery [1]. Within the framework of the semiotic approach, these modes are referred to as semiotic resources. Semiotic resources help to structure our comprehension of the world, give meaning to communication, and produce meaning for ourselves [2]. The primary focus of multimodal discourse analysis is on various modes or modalities of communication, rather than analyzing speech and writing alone. It attempts to comprehend how a variety of forms, such as verbal and written communication, interact in discourse, rather than studying a specific type of discourse [3].

Recent multimodal research, using the ludonarrative model, analyzes video game narratives using a multimodal discourse analysis approach. The study explores players' cognitive interpretation, instrumental and strategic activities, and ludonarrative relationship categories. The research highlights the importance of

viewing games as "ludonarrative" and recognizing the relationships between narrative and gameplay. This framework helps researchers, game creators, industry professionals, and gamers understand their subjective gaming experiences [4]. Another multimodal discourse analysis study has been conducted a study on multimodal discourse analysis of religious posters in Ghana, focusing on their role in Christianity, Islam, and Traditional Religion. The research found that multimodal posters explicitly displayed faith and performed symbolic functions, influencing the lives of the general population[5].

Successful advertising should incorporate multiple modes of communication, such as multimodal texts, to convey meaning coherently. Understanding the semiotic systems within these texts is crucial for effective communication. Both readers and authors must understand the signs and symbols within each text and how to integrate them effectively. Text creators must understand the connections between different semiotic systems and determine the most efficient ones for conveying meaning. Readers should use their knowledge of these systems to determine the primary conveyor of meaning and focus their attention accordingly [6]. In addition, Anstey and Bull presented five multimodal semiotic systems that are searchable

within a text. These systems can be found in a variety of contexts. There are five types of communication systems: verbal, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial.

- a. Linguistics: This field studies the vocabulary, general organization, and grammar of both spoken and written languages. Linguistics also includes aspects of language usage. This encompasses both verbal and written communication.
- b. Visual: Relies on elements such as color, vector, line, foreground, and point of view to convey information about things that are either still or in motion.
- c. Audio: This category includes the volume, tone, and rhythm of the music and sound effects.
- d. Gestures: These include aspects of facial emotions and body language such as speed, silence, and movement in the hands and arms.
- e. Spatial: This category includes elements such as the proximity of the object to the layout, the placement of the layout, and the space that is established by the layout.

In the 4.0 era, advertising can be promoted through various platforms, including print, television, social media, motion pictures, and in-game advertising. In-game advertising (IGA) involves brand and product placement in computer and video games, aiming to entertain players. The integration of a company's trademark or product into a video game is referred to as "product placement," and similar arrangements are made by game developers and publishers [7][8]. Game producers usually sell in-game advertising, which can take the form of banners, audio ads, or video commercials. This type of advertising can be found within offline or online games. It combines visual and verbal modes to encourage potential clients to install the game or application on their devices. Multimodal Discourse Analysis helps analyze these modes, utilizing diverse semiotic resources like language, pictures, sound, and color to achieve the best advertising results. [9]

Non-verbal communication, or "writing," is the interactive dimension of images, involving both represented and interactive participants. It incorporates three distinct kinds of relationship building: relations between represented participants, attitudes between interactive and represented participants, and relations between represented and other participants. Contact, social distance, attitude, and modality are the four

components that bring interactive meaning to life [10][11].

Personal pronouns and visual positioning in images establish interpersonal meaning, linking the sender, addressee, and message, enhancing viewer engagement and attention.

This study aims to examine the multimode contained in *in-game advertising* and to discover the roles of the interactive function contained in *in-game advertising*.

## METHOD

The descriptive qualitative research methodology was utilized during the process of this study. Qualitative research studies an object's idea, meaning, definition, and description, using philosophical perspectives and methodologies. Originating in anthropology, sociology, and applied fields like journalism, education, social work, medicine, and law, it aims to define entities or phenomena through detailed descriptions [12].

This research examines in-game video advertising from Cat & Soup online games during June and July 2023, focusing on linguistic modes. The data includes screen-captured images, linguistics, visual data, and gestural data, including words, sentences, utterances, captions, pictures, and character movement. Library research was used to gather data on multimodal discourse analysis theories, using search and classifying techniques.

The collected data was analyzed descriptively and qualitatively, based on Anstey and Bull's and Kress and Leeuwen's theories. This study collects data on in-game advertising in mobile games, including Cat and Soup, by recording screen recordings, collecting video ads with linguistic modes, and analyzing the linguistic modes in each scene. The researcher used the multimodal discourse analysis theory of semiotic modes and the interactive function theory of multimodal discourse analysis to identify multimode and interactive functions in in-game advertising images. They then examined how these functions were used in the video and used the analysis to conclude.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Linguistic Modes

Table 1. Linguistic modes

No	Linguistic Modes	Types
1	Lucas: "I will be responsible for you"	Information
2	Elise: "you just said you will be responsible to me!"	Demand
3	Lucas: "It's just the past...Let's divorce."	Declarative
4	Install	Offer
5	Elise: "I will make them regret!"	Declarative
6	Help Her	Persuasive
7	Lucas: "You're so ugly! Get away from me!"	Command
8	FAIL	Information
9	TRY AGAIN?	Offer



Figure.1 Project Makeover in-game video advertising

In-game advertising features dialogue involving the male character Lucas who promises to be responsible for his wife Elise. The dialogue is represented by bold fonts inside a speech balloon and is placed at the center of the video. The male character's responsibility indicates he wants to take care of her and make decisions. The exclamation mark at the end conveys seriousness and emotion. Elise seeks out the promises made by Lucas at the beginning of the video, and the word "you just said" indicates the exact time the situation happened. The infidelity theme is further supported by the utterances in the data. Lucas's promise to Elise, made a long time ago, is now no longer considered, leading to a conflict in the ad video. The climax sentence, "Let's divorce," signifies the end of Lucas and Elise's marital status. The word "Install"

in the system connects users to the Project Makeover video game, highlighting the ongoing conflict between the two. The picture features the announcement "FAIL" and "TRY AGAIN?", indicating the audience's unsuccessful attempt to change Elise's appearance. The word "FAIL" indicates failure in achieving a goal, while "TRY AGAIN?" encourages the audience to reconsider their previous attempts. In-game advertising video dialogue captures viewer attention, piqued by the storyline and conflict between characters, inviting the viewers to follow the plot.

### Visual Modes

Effective visual modes for video advertising include setting, characters, dress, makeup, and setting, capturing readers' attention.

Table 2. Visual modes

No	Elements	Visual modes
1	The characters	Two female characters and one male character
2	Clothes	Messy outfit, sleeveless shirt, bathrobe, red dress, suit
3	The choice of color	Pink, cyan,
4	Appearance	Messy makeup, beautiful makeup
5	Background setting	Wallpaper, couch, lamp, bedroom, bar, bar stools
6	Additional icons	Purple and pink icons, exclamation mark, angry emoji

Project Makeover's visual scene features the main characters, Elise and the male character, both playing crucial roles in welcoming viewers and describing the narrative of the story. Elise, a messy woman with a pink dress, represents love and intimacy, while the male character is a strong man with bicep muscles and a sleeveless shirt. The setting, consisting of pink wallpaper, a pink lamp, and a cyan couch, symbolizes relaxation and the main theme of the story, which is about dramatic romance and infidelity. The pink color conveys a sense of sweetness and romance, often associated with women, and is also present in the video advertising settings, indicating that the main character's room is the focus of the visual scene.



Figure.2 Project Makeover in-game video advertising

In the video advertising, the bedroom setting creates an intimate situation, allowing the viewer to become emotionally involved in the narrative. The clothes worn by the characters in the video, including the women's and men's clothes, indicate sexual activity between the two characters. The purple and pink heart symbol represent romantic love and affair. Elise, the main female character, looks shocked by the scene and expresses surprise using an exclamation mark. The conflict begins between Elise and Lucas, with Elise appearing angry and a blaze behind her. The Monstera flower, associated with beauty, represents renewal, growth, and rebirth. A skip icon in the top left corner allows viewers to skip the in-game video advertising. Elise wears a sexy red dress with diamond necklaces and earrings, representing deep passion and revenge. The other characters look attractive in pink dresses and black suits. An angry emoji surrounds the male character, indicating his irritability at seeing Elise's appearance.

### Gestural Modes

Another thing that is no less important in this mode is gesture and facial expression which in this video ad helps explain the narrative.

Table 3. Gestural modes

No	Gestural modes	Elements
	Facial expression	Happy, shocked, anger, sad, disgust
:	Hand gesture	Holding each other, folded arms
:	Body position	Stand, fall

In-game video advertising depicts a male character holding a female character, expressing care and

protection. The female character's facial expression changes, showing surprise and shock at the male character's cheating behavior. The male character's expression is angry, as he lifts his eyebrow to stop the male character from leaving. The main female character is sad, clenching her fist and expressing anger, which can be interpreted as a plan of revenge. The male character is shocked by the female character's appearance and hairdo, and her tears are displayed as a failure of her revenge plan. The in-game video advertising uses linguistic, visual, and gesture modes to create meaning about the relationship conflicts and infidelity that occur in the Project Makeover storyline.

The Project Makeover video advertising uses linguistic and visual modes to convey the conflict between two characters. Linguistic mode, such as written language, may not fully convey the intended message, as the viewer may only understand the fight between the characters without understanding the main conflict. Visual mode, such as the presence of a female character, strengthens the conflict and emphasizes the main conflict. Gestural mode, including facial expressions, hand gestures, and body positions, also plays a crucial role in making meaning. These modes help the viewer understand the character's mood, situation, and emotions, making it easier to illustrate the situation.

### Interactive Function

Project Makeover's in-game video advertising utilizes direct gaze and indirect gaze to convey the storyline of infidelity. Kress & Van Leeuwen emphasize the importance of social distance in analyzing the relationship between the object and the viewer. The distance between closely-positioned photos creates an intimate and interpersonal relationship between the object and the viewer, delivering a feeling of psychological closeness and physical closeness. The angle or point of view technique is focused on the character in the center of the picture, emphasizing the storyline through the actions and activities of the characters. The setting and backdrop, such as an intimate room and bar, further support the theme of infidelity. Overall, the in-game video advertising effectively conveys the infidelity theme through the use of gaze and social distance in the advertising.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In-game advertising utilizes multimode techniques to attract viewers, using attractive characters, meaningful colors, helpful items, and gestures to create an attractive game image. The developer builds interactive functions, such as contact, social distance, and point of view, to create a bond with the viewer, ultimately influencing their decision to install the game.

Further research is suggested to examine advertising representation in social media advertisements, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of viewer perspectives. Utilizing viewers' vision can help gather people's thoughts on the portrayal. Future scholars should explore visual modes in discourse analyses across multiple modalities.

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