A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Kurdish Political Billboards in Iraqi Central Election

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Abstract

Multimodal discourse analysis is the analysis of language besides other modalities (pictures, gestures, video images, films, etc.). To use this approach for investigating political billboards is thought to be influential as it will show how linguistic and visual elements cooperate to make meaning. The current study seeks to examine how Kurdish political billboards are designed and what ideologies such a design may carry. To this end, four Kurdish billboards were selected from different candidates of the Kurdistan Coalition designed for the Iraqi central election campaigns of 2020-2021. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model is used to demystify how the visual and linguistic elements cooperate to serve the purpose of the billboard as a whole. The results obtained show that the electoral billboards appeal and persuade the voters to vote for the represented candidates. Candidates are portrayed in Kurdish campaign billboards in a confident and satisfying manner that spreads positive and promising views. Such views try to create good concepts in the minds of the viewers.

1. Introduction

The term *multimodality* was developed and popularized in the last two decades to account for the various resources in communication to convey meaning. Multimodal discourse analysis combines language and other semiotic resources in which the analysis of verbal codes takes into account the existence of other resources like pictures, graphs, gestures, and music. The combination of these several modalities makes it easier to interpret electoral billboards' messages and meanings. This study hypothesizes that positive views are to be represented such as help, confidence, peace, comfort and trust in order to attract the viewers for choosing the candidates. The study is carried out to answer the following questions:

1. How Kurdish billboards are represented?
2. How are the candidates portrayed in the billboards during the elections campaign?
3. How meaning is enacted, how graphic and visual information is organized in billboards and what ideologies they depict?

For this purpose, four Kurdish billboards of the Kurdistan Coalition list of (2020-2021) central election in Iraq-Kurdistan are selected randomly by the researchers to be analyzed in the light of Kress and van leeuwen's (2006) model.

2. Election Billboards: An Overview

Elrod and Fortenberry (2017: 24) define billboards, as a sort of advertising or propaganda that use large, fixed structures to show messages to passer-by along roadsides and other public transportation routes. As part of the outdoor or out-of-home advertising, billboard aims to engage audiences as they move about their neighborhoods. Hence, it is the message of a medium used by the manufacturer with behavioral expectations that is designed in accordance with the purpose of the message (Suprayinto, 2016: 169). Such kind

of message is delivered in the shortest amount of time and with the fewest words possible through the environmental space assigned to it (Dianat and Allahdadi, 2016: 3). Panagopoulos and Ha (2015:393) state that in order to motivate and persuade people in elections and to connect candidates with the electorate, political campaigns use a variety of methods. One of those methods is *mass media* such as television, radio, newspapers, billboards, signs, and posters. Hence, offline media such as television, radio, and print advertising continue to dominate political campaigns (Uribe et al ,2017:78). Panagopoulos and Ha (2015: 394) add that relative to other media, outdoor advertising has the capacity to reach a large number of people and to swiftly raise awareness. It is also a high-visibility media that can provide targeted audiences with a high frequency of exposure and it has a low cost-per-exposure because of its minimal production expenses and wide reach (economic efficiency). Thus, an election billboard or a poster is defined as "a static or moving image that announces the existence of a candidate and promotes his or her image" (Monica and Madalina, 2013: 2-3).

Space and time are both important factors in the billboards' effectiveness. Furthermore, uniqueness, attractiveness, optimism, artistic value, or emotional effects are all required qualities for a poster that stands out at first glance. Moreso; diverse types of posters or billboards can be used for different purposes in political communication. Each one reflects a different style and functions under a separate regulatory system, yet they all represent a method of expressing a thought (Uribe et al, 2017:79).

It is worth noting that, designers of political billboards should attempt to create distinct styles and compelling visuals, selectively using text, and arranging elements to draw attention.

They must be made for a long-term impact. People strolling or driving by have only a few seconds, as a result, the visuals should be clear, and the writing should be large and concise enough to be read quickly. Visuals are especially useful because they are processed more quickly than verbal information. Furthermore, visuals are remembered more easily than sentences (Bacha and Johansson, 2017: 8-9). Concerning the size and colors of an advertisement, in various countries, the size of posters is restricted, and varied traditions exist, such as the usage of enormous billboards or little wooden boards placed exclusively during election campaigns. Colors have emotional content; it is a crucial indication for recognizing objects. Furthermore, color can elicit emotion and feelings in the viewer. Colors' emotional connotations are important because items must exhibit colors, and the emotions generated by colors have an impact on daily life but it is important to remember that they also have a symbolic significance that varies depending on one's cultural background (ibid). To put in a nutshell, political discourse, in its broadest sense, can be defined as "a language used by the media or other institutions in the social and political domains of communication" (Kirvalidze and Samnidze, 2016:164). Advertisers prefer billboards as their preferred advertising medium since they serve as a visual communication tool by providing new and consistent messages to the target audience through a variety of visuals (Çiftçi, and Karabulutlu, 2020: 432-435). Accordingly, this type of outdoor advertising is the best medium used in political campaigns.

3. Multimodal Discourse Analysis: An Overview

As shown by Rahimi and Riasati (2011,107-108) discourse is a form of language use, and discourse analysis is an analytical framework for examining actual text and talk in a communicative context**.** In the discipline of discourse analysis, Bo (2018:132) asserts that, multimodal discourse analysis is a new and fast emerging research hot spot. Since the 1990s, it has become incredibly popular in the Western world. However; multimodality, multimodal analysis, multimodal semiotics, and multimodal studies are all terms used to describe Multimodal Discourse Analysis. As an emerging paradigm in discourse studies, it extends the study of language per se to the study of language in combination with other resources, such as images, scientific symbolism, gesture, action, music and sound (O'Halloran ,2011:120). According to Lui (2013:1260) multimodal discourse analysis can be studied from several perspectives, such as layout, modality, typography, color, genre, discourse, style, and so on.

Paltridge (2012:170) asserts that much of the work in multimodal discourse analysis is based on Halliday's social semiotic approach to language, which views language as one of many semiotic resources (such as gesture, images, and music) that people use to communicate or construct meaning with one another, hence, language operates to describe the social situations that contribute in creating meanings and also it reflects the beginnings of a shift in linguistic inquiry in which language use is no longer theorized as an isolated phenomenon (O'Halloran, 2004:1).

The works of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) and Michael O'Toole (1994, 2010) were recognized as the foundation for multimodal studies in the 1980s and 1990s. The approach claims that discourse is usually multimodal in the sense that different semiotic modes (for example, language and image) are merged and integrated in a given instance of

discourse or sort of discourse, as denoted by the word 'multimodal' which means language + other modalities (Kuswandini and Airlangga, 2018:349). For example, written discourse incorporates text with typographic expression, as well as illustration, layout, and color and that these elements, especially in relation to one another, transfer and generate meaning (ibid). One might say that, multimodality is seen as an interdisciplinary field, that aims to go beyond approaches in which mode was inextricably linked to theory and discipline, often in mutually defining ways. Writing was handled by linguistics in such approaches, while images were handled by art history, and so on. As a result, a complete analysis of a text would be impossible without the inclusion of other modes. That is, in order to understand the construction of meaning when cooperating with language, one needs a multimodal analysis (Kress, 2011: 38)

4. Metafunctions of Visual Grammar as Analytical Lens

In their *Grammar of Visual Design* developed for the analysis of images, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) followed Halliday's theory of metafunctions which proposes that language is realized simultaneously through three metafunctions, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual. They distinguished between three different types of meaning (also called metafunctions) namely, representational, interactive and compositional (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:41-59). Each metafunction has a specific indication and processes as follows:

A) *Representational Metafunction*: This dimension is derived from Halliday's ideational metafunction. It is based on the idea of how semiotic modes represent objects and how these modes are experienced by humans. Two major processes are recognized within this metafunction, which are narrative and conceptual processes. Narrative processes represent patterns of phenomena and experiences in terms of participants, circumstances, actions, and events, as well as processes of change, whereas conceptual processes in contrast to narrative processes, are static (no vectors) in this process, Participants are represented in terms of their class, structure, or meaning. These are divided into three main categories: classificational, analytical, and symbolical (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 59).

B) *Interactive Metafunction*: This is represented by the patterns of interactions between participants. Several types of participants are involved in visual communication, namely represented (depicted) and interactive (real). They can lead to various relations within the same types and between the different types (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 114). This dimension, on the other hand, is based on Halliday's interpersonal function; it deals with social relations between the producer, the viewer, and the represented object. It includes contact, social distance, and attitude, whereas modality refers to the degree to which a mode represents something to be taken as "true" or "real"

C) *Compositional Metafunction:* The framework's third dimension is related to Halliday's textual metafunction."The composition of the whole, the way the representational and interactive components are created to connect to one another, the way they are combined into a meaningful whole" is the focus here (Kress and Van Leewuen , 2006:176). Composition, then, connects the image's representational and interactive meanings through three interlinked systems**:** *information value,*

salience, and *framing*. Furthermore, these systems do not apply only to single images; they also apply to composite visuals, which are visuals that mix text, image, and/or other graphic elements, as well as their layouts (Kress and Van Leewuen , 2006:177-178). *Information value* is given by the placement of the elements in relation to one another. *Salience* is the specific way in which elements are arranged to attract attention. *Framing* then implies marking or delimiting a specific space to establish interest in that space.

It is worth noting that, these three metafunctions operate simultaneously in texts to make meaning. Furthermore, these systems do not apply only to single images; they also apply to composite visuals, which are visuals that mix text, image, and/or other graphic elements, as well as their layouts. The current study adopts this model with its three metafunctions and their selected subcategories since it is thought to be influential for investigating political billboards as it will reveal how the interaction of both verbal and visual components creates meaning. The model is also a social semiotic approach to Multimodality and it is used for the analysis of the visual devices and various semiotic resources that are needed to comprehend the electoral billboards, besides; it provides a thorough framework for analyzing semiotic resources, with the internal organization of meaning-making resources acting as a representation of their respective functions.

5. Methodology

In an attempt to answer the aforementioned research questions, a total of four Kurdish billboards from the Iraqi central election of 2020-2021 have been selected to form the data for the current study. The billboards were chosen from candidates of one political list, the Kurdistan Coalition, which is the coalition of two Kurdish political parties " 'PUK' and 'Goran' Movement" to exhibit the way such a list tries to represent its figures and what perspectives it wants its viewers to obtain from their billboards' design. The study is qualitative in nature as it seeks to explore and describe the political design of each billboard and what concepts (ideologies) such a design may carry.

5.1 Method of Analysis

The analysis of each billboard will begin with an overview and description of the billboard. Then the purpose of the billboard and its intended impact on the addressee will be taken into consideration. The final step of the analysis will focus on how the billboard designer uses linguistic and visual cues to produce the meaning that is conveyed by the message.

5.2 Data Analysis

A scrutinized qualitative analysis was conducted for each billboard using Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) model with its three metafunctions and their selected subcategories. Each billboard is explained separately.

Billboard No.1

Figure (1) Election Billboard of the candidate Narmin M. Ghafoor.

On the Billboard: This electoral billboard representing (نەرمین معروف غفور) Narmin M. hafoor, the parliamentary candidate of

Kurdistan Coalition was shot for the 2020-2021 central election in Iraq. As for the purpose of this billboard, it is clear that the designer wants to convince Kurdish people to vote for Ghafoor by providing these details in the billboard and portraying the candidate in such a way that attracts the attention of the viewers.

The Analysis: Using the categories and subcategories of the adopted model shows that:

a) **The representational structure:** Ghafoor is mainly represented on a visual level in terms of representational structure. A transactional reaction process is applied in this billboard, where the candidate is shown as the reactor who builds a vector connecting her to the viewer, making the viewer the phenomenon. Another vector emanating from her face makes it clear to the audience that she is pivoting to look at them. The symbolic process used in this image is one of the conceptual processes. The participant's symbolism is important in this process. The candidate is positioned on the billboard's right side, while the Coalition's logo and her number are on the left. In reference to the Symbolic Attributes (the logo, her number, the way she stands, etc.) that characterize her as a positive frame of mind, she is the Carrier in this image.

b) This billboard represents a "demand" in terms of **interactive meanings** since the depicted participant's gaze is directed towards the viewer. The participant being represented wants to develop an imaginary relationship with the people viewing the billboard. The billboard implores people to look at her. As a consequence, the viewer is urged to interact with her in a friendly and encouraging way as she is looking at the viewers with a smiling face. The choice of a medium shot, in which her body is seen from the waist up, represents a far intimate distance between the audience and

the participant being represented. The participant in the billboard is captured at a frontal angle from a horizontal angle perspective. The viewer is thereby drawn into the participant's environment. The viewer and the represented participant are on an equal level since the viewer can see the participant at eye level.

c) The **compositional dimension** and the information of the billboard exhibits that Ghafoor's figure appears on the right of the billboard ("New" according to Kress and van Leeuwen's 2006 model). That is; she requires special attention so as to be known by the viewers. Another type of compositional organization in this billboard is salience. It is accomplished by placement in the foreground or background, contrasts in color, and relative size. She occupies a significant portion of this billboard, according to its salience characteristic (maximum). According to the framing feature, the background color of this billboard is white; her suit is black which is in harmony with the written text ((نەرمین معروف غفور)) Narmin M. Ghafoor, at bottom of the billboard, and the ((1) بازنەی) circle (1) ثاریزطاي) (سلیمانی)(sulaimania Governate) on one hand and part of Coalition list's logo on the other. Her smiling face, the way she stands, and her hand position are all in harmony with the name and logo of the Coalition list she is representing. Partly, the candidate's list's color is the green which is again in harmony with the candidate's number (31). It is worth noting that color harmony helps to establish textual clarity in the billboard. White background, green, blue and black in this billboard, are four attention-grabbing colors that, attract the attention of viewers to view the billboard when they pass by. As for the written text, her number (31) is written in green against the white background so as to be noticed by the viewers, while her

name which is written in a bold font size to be highlighted and (ثاریزطاي) circle (1) ((بازنةی (1)) (سليماني)(sulaimania Governate)) "written in black colors to be contrasted with the white background.Concerning the color of the logo of coalition, on the left side it is green and on the right side it blue which are the symbolic colors of the two parties composing the list, that is to say; "PUK" and *Goran* " change" Movement.

Billboard No.2

Figure (2) Election Billboard of the candidate, Dr.Aso Faraidoon

On the Billboard: For the Iraqi central election (2020- 2021), this campaign billboard for Aso Faraidoon, (د ئاسۆ فةرةيدوون) the Kurdistan Coalition's parliamentary candidate, was designed. Regarding the intention behind this billboard, it is clear that the designer wants to persuade the Kurdish people to support Dr. Aso Faraidoon by demonstrating that he is with them and that they will work together to improve people's life. The slogan **(** تۆ بریاردةر بة) **you decide**) also plays a part; as the billboard designer wants to convey that Faraidoon was once the region's governor and that he has done many good things for the residents, so the

judgment is theirs (the people) whether they want to choose him or not.

The Analysis: Using the categories and subcategories of the adopted model shows that:

a) Faraidoon is the primary participant who is visually portrayed in terms of a **representational structure**. As the transactional reaction process used in this billboard, Faraidoon is portrayed as the reactor who develops a vector connecting him to the viewer, therefore makes the viewer the phenomenon. The viewers may observe that he is looking at them because of another vector emanating from his face. This billboard thus appears to be an illustration of a conceptual, or more precisely, a symbolic process. He is a Carrier based on his Symbolic Attributes, which include (his number, slogan, logo of the coalition, etc., as well as his gaze, posture, hand position, satisfied expression on his face, etc. that identifies him as a hopeful and self-confidence person).

b) This billboard implies a "demand" in terms of **interactive meanings** because the Faraidoon's eyes are pointed in the direction of the viewers. He seeks to develop an imaginative connection with the people viewing the billboard. Due to the billboard, people are encouraged to notice him and to interact with him in a constructive and encouraging way. The medium shot, in which his body is only partially visible above the waist, signifies a great deal of intimacy between the viewers and the participant being represented. The participant in the billboard is shown from a horizontal angle perspective, frontally. As a result, the audience is lured into the participant's setting. Given that the viewer

can see the participant being portrayed at eye level, they are on an equal footing.

c) As **for compositional dimension** Faraidoon's figure appears on the left side of the billboard (which is "Given" in terms of Kress and Van Leewuen), According to salience feature, his figure occupies a small size in the billboard (minimum). While according to the framing feature, the background color of the billboard is green harmonizing the color of one of the parties of the list, i.e "PUK", and his suit is black, his shirt is white which is in harmony with his number, name and other written texts in the billboard. More so; Faraodoon appears to be hopeful which reflects his self-confidence; his hand position is in harmony with the slogan of the Coalition list he is representing symbolically indicating (cooperation and being together). With regard to the written text and the slogan of the billboard, the texts are written in bold colors. The colors chosen for the written text, including his name, dr. Aso Faraidoon, the slogan, **(بة بریاردةر تۆ)((د ئاسۆ فةرةیدوون)** **you decide)** , his number(29) are all white to be compatible with his shirt and to be observed by the viewers' when viewing the billboard. The background is green and black while for his number (29) and the circle (2) ((2) بازنةی) is red so as to be highlighted.

Billboard No.3

Figure (3) Election Billboard of the candidate: Srwa M. Rasheed

On the Billboard: This billboard was designed to advertise Srwa M. Rasheed, سروة مجد رشید the Kurdistan Coalition's parliamentary candidate, for the Iraqi central election (2020–2021). As for the aim behind this billboard, it is clear that the designer wants to persuade the Kurdish people to support Rasheed by showing visually on one hand, that she is with the people and linguistically on the other hand, by the use of the slogan (ثێکةوة بةهیزترین) **(we are more powerful together)** which serves ideologically the aim of the Coalition list she is representing.

The Analysis: Using the categories and subcategories of the adopted model shows that:

a) In terms **of representational structure**, Rasheed is primarily portrayed visually. In this billboard, a transactional reactions process is used, and the woman is shown as the reactor who creates a vector linking her to the viewers, turning them into the phenomena. The viewer may see that she is turning to gaze at them due to another vector emanating from her face. One of the conceptual processes is the symbolic process employed in this billboard. In this process, the participant's symbolism is crucial. The Coalition logo is on the left and the candidate is positioned on the right side of the billboard. She is the Carrier in this billboard with regard to the Symbolic Attributes (the logo of Coalition list, her number (20), the way she stands, the position of her hands, etc.) that depict her as having a pleasant attitude, being self-assured, wanting peace, etc..

b) In terms of **interactive meanings**, this billboard conveys a "demand" since the participant in the image is looking directly at the viewer. The participant being

portrayed hopes to establish a kind of relationship with those who see the billboard. The billboard invites viewers to focus on her and engage with her. She is staring at the viewers with a confident look, thus the viewer is encouraged to engage with her in a kind and supportive manner. The medium shot, in which her body is only partially visible above the waist, implies a far intimate distance between the viewer and the participant being portrayed. The participant on the billboard is seen from a horizontal angle perspective, frontally. As a result, the viewer is drawn into the participant's scene. Since the viewer can see the represented participant at eye level, they are both on an equal ground.

c) Rasheed's figure is displayed on the right side of the billboard ("New" in Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model), according to the **compositional dimension** and information of the billboard. Salience is another sort of compositional organization used in this billboard. She takes up a small size of this billboard, according to this feature's salient characteristic (minimum). According to the framing feature, the background color of this billboard is white; her suit is black which is in harmony with the written text (her name, Srwa M. Rasheed, سروة محمد رشيد and some information about her private live that she is the daughter of a martyr Muhammad, سروةى شةهيد محمد, known as a district manager, ناسراو بة سروةى مدير ناحية and a humanitarian, مافناس and the circle (5) sulaimania) سليماني (5) بازنةى at the bottom of the billboard. However' her face, the way she stands and her hands position are all in harmony with the name and logo of Kurdistan Coalition list. It is important to note that the billboard's content is relevant

due to color harmony. This billboard's white backdrop, green, and black are three attention-grabbing shades that draw viewers' attention when they pass by and are also connected symbolically and ideologically to express peace, confidence, energy, and a bright lifestyle. As for the written text, her number (20) is written in green against the white background and it is written in a bold font size to be highlighted and noticed by the viewers, while her name and some information about her is located at the bottom of the billboard with and the circle (5) "sulaimania "written in black colors to be contrasted with the white background. As far as the slogan is of concern, it is located at the very top of the billboard in a bold size so as to be seen by the viewer's directly when viewing the billboard. The slogan also symbolically connects to the whole billboard (ئێکةوة) بةهیزترین) **(we are more powerful together)** which serves ideologically the aim of the Coalition list she is representing.

Billboard No.4

Figure (4) Election Billboard of the candidate Hoshyar O.Ali

On the Billboard: This campaign billboard for Hoshyar Omar. Ali, (هؤشيار عمر علي) the Kurdistan Coalition's parliamentary candidate, was created for the Iraqi central election (2020–2021). Regarding the intention of this billboard, it is clear that the billboard designer wants to persuade Kurdish people to support this politician by depicting him in this way, just like it is the case with other election billboards.

The Analysis: Using the categories and subcategories of the adopted model shows that:

a) Ali is predominantly expressed in terms of a visual **representational structure**. Ali is portrayed as the reactor in the transactional reaction process of this billboard, forging a vector connecting him to the observer and transforming them into the phenomenon. Another vector coming from his face may make it appear to the viewers that he is staring at them. Thus, it appears that this billboard is an example of a conceptual, or more specifically, a symbolic process. He is a Carrier based on his Symbolic Attributes (his number, the slogan, the logo, etc.), gaze, stance, hand position, satisfied expression on his face, etc. that characterize him as an optimistic, self-assured person.

b) In terms of **interactive meanings**, this billboard implies a "demand" because the candidate's eyes are focused on the viewers. Ali seeks to develop an emotional relationship with the audience. The billboard exhorts people to look at him. As a result, he encourages the audience to interact with him in a helpful and cooperative way. The medium shot, in which his body is only partially visible above the waist, signifies a great deal of intimacy between the viewers and the participant being represented. The participant in the billboard is seen from a frontal angle while being viewed from a horizontal angle. As a result, the viewers are drawn into the participant's setting. Ali and the viewer are on an equal footing because viewers can see him at an eye level.

c) As for **compositional dimension,** Ali's figure is displayed on the right side of the billboard ("New" in terms of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model). Another type of compositional arrangement employed in this billboard is salience. The notable part of this is that his figure occupies a huge proportion of this billboard (maximum). In contrast to the other candidates, he is wearing a traditional black Kurdish outfit, which is in harmony with the color of his number 33, name, Hoshyar Omar. Ali, هؤشيار عمر علي and other written texts in the billboard. The white background of the billboard, according to the framing feature, shows the candidate's energy and willingness to serve. Additionally, Ali shows confidence and seems energetic, reflecting this confidence via his manner; there is a contented smile on his face, which is another sign of confidence; and his hand position is in line with the Kurdistan Coalition's slogan, symbolically conveying this confidence (*cooperation and being together*). Regarding the written text, the number (33) is highlighted and easily seen by viewers because it is printed in bold letters in black against a white backdrop in the center of the billboard. Above his number, there is the Kurdistan Coalition's logo at the very top of the billboard on the left side. The circle (5) sulaimania (5) بازنةى سليماني which contrasts with the white backdrop, is printed in black below name Hoshyar Omar. Ali, هؤشيار عمر علي at the bottom of the billboard. All in all, the

elements in the billboard are connected symbolically and ideologically.

5.3 Results of the Analysis

The findings from analyzing the four selected billboards of the Kurdish candidates are shown in table no. (1) According to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model:

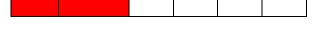| metafunctions		Billboard no.1	Billboard no.2	Billboard no.3	Billboard no.4
representation	Narrative	Transactional Reaction Process	Transactional Reaction Process	Transactional Reaction Process	Transactional Reaction Process
	Conceptual	Symbolic	Symbolic	Symbolic	Symbolic
Interactive	Contact	Demand	Demand	Demand	Demand
	Social distance	Medium shot	Medium shot	Medium shot	Medium shot
	Attitude – Horizontal	Frontal angle	Frontal angle	Frontal angle	Frontal angle
	Vertical	Eye level	Eye level	Eye level	Eye level
Composition	Information	Polarized (New)	Polarized (Given)	Polarized (New)	Polarized (New)
	Sailence	Maximum	Minimum	Minimum	Maximum
	Framing	Connection	Connection	Connection	Connection

Table (1)

Image Analysis of the Four Billboards

It is clear that the four candidates are the main represented participant on a visual level in terms of a representational structure with the application of a transactional reaction process in terms of narrative structure while as for conceptual dimension, the symbolic process is used. However' in terms of interaction metafuction, the billboards represent a "demand" in that, the main represented participants attempt to build an imaginative contact with the viewers since they address them directly with their eyes pointing in their direction. In the four billboards, a medium shot is used to portray a far intimate distance between the viewer and the participant being represented. The participants in the billboards are shown from a horizontal angle perspective at a frontal angle. As a result, the viewers are lured into the participant's environment. Since the viewer can see the participants at eye level, they are on an equal level with the viewer. More so; in terms of composition metafunction, it is clear that in billboards number (1, 3 and 4), the candidates' photos appear in the right side of the billboard (New, according to Kress and Van Leewuen's model) while the candidate's figure in the billboard number (2) is in the left side which is (Given). The salience feature is defined as "the degree to which an element draws attention to itself, due to its size, its place in the foreground or its overlapping of other elements, its color, its tonal values, its sharpness or definition, and other features" (Kress and van Leeuwen's ,2006: 210). In the billboards number (1 and 4) the candidates occupy big size (Maximum), while in the billboards number (2 and 3), the photo of the candidate occupies a small size (Minimum). The

colors used in each billboard change considerably, according to the (Framing: connection/ disconnection) feature; however within each billboard, the colors appear to be consistent with the other billboard's elements. So, there are connections between the elements of the same billboard.

5. 4 Discussion of the Results

It is clear from the analysis above that the billboards under investigation have similar characteristics in that most of them represent their candidates as being serious, active, strong and confident. These features were clear from the candidates' way of looking (looking directly into the viewer's eyes), their posture (the candidates' bodies are seen from the waist up) and their position in the billboard (occupying the whole right or whole left side of the billboard).The billboards have been designed to influence the public and change their minds to achieve the candidates' political aim, that is, persuading the electorates to vote for them. With or without slogans, each candidate represents his/ her party by involving numbers, circles, and government entities. The billboards' designers try to prevail specific perspectives about the candidates by spreading positive views which utilize linguistic and visual features to fulfill their aim. When viewers look at the billboards, they feel comfort, peace, protection, cooperation, etc. which are all positive views. This is an indication that the hypothesis is verified which states "*positive views are to be represented when viewers see the billboards*". To put in a nutshell, Kurdish political billboards have been designed in a way that tries to familiarize the candidates to the electorates and entice them to vote for them. Candidates have been portrayed with positive concepts; and the linguistic and visual information involved have been organized in a way that serves the purpose of the billboards' design.

6. Conclusions

Billboards as a sort of propaganda play an important role in the political campaign election. The main aim behind Kurdish Political billboards is to attract and persuade the voters to vote for the represented candidates. The billboard as a whole and the main participants in the billboards are designed and represented in a positive way that produces an effective and motivating image for Kurdish people. Positive views are among the views that the billboards attempt to spread. Besides, visual and linguistic elements in Kurdish Political billboards integrate so as to serve the purpose of the billboard as a whole and to construct its meaning.

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