

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Image-Biblical Verses

Prof. Riyadh Tariq Kadhim Al-Ameedi .(PhD.) and Hayder Hameed Ghitheeth

Article History: Received: 10 January 2021; Revised: 12 February 2021; Accepted: 27 March 2021; Published online: 4 June 2021

Abstract

The study is about a text and an image that are combined together. These two parts work hand in hand to form a number of messages . The separation between them seems almost inextricable when it comes to the matter of making more effective messages . Therefore , the study focuses on this point to shed light on the linguistic relations between these parts. The texts to be analyzed are some biblical verses that are put in images . The study arrived at the results that multimodal discourse analysis plays a key role in a combination of verbal and non-verbal parts . These two parts have been represented by language and the components of the image like colours , the movement of certain things , the way the image is designed and so on . The study adopts the model of Kress (2010) ,Paltridge (2012), and Van Leeuwen(2005).

Key words : Multimodal , Discourse , Discourse analysis , Image-biblical Verses , The Holy Bible

1. Discourse

The meaning of discourse still varies among linguists and linguistic studies . However , there are attempts to determine the main concept of discourse . Johnstone (2008:2) observes that discourse is meant the real examples of communicative action in the means of language . Discourse, generally , is a meaningful symbolic behavior (Bloommaert , 2005 :2) . Johnstone (2008:3) also claims that discourse is both as conceptions and ways of talking that affect and are affected by other ideas.

Widdowson(2011:5-7) notes the connection between the text and discourse in which all kinds of text are used to refer to something for some purposes . Accordingly , any stretch of language is a text . Still , we can label a notice or instruction as a text but we do not determine here the meaning of the text . Hence , it is common that the purpose of the text is to get message across or to express ideas or to get other people do certain things or to think in a certain way . Therefore , discourse underlies and motivates the production and the complexity of these communicative purposes mentioned like to make people do or think and so forth . As a result , discourse is considered as what any text producer means by a text and what a text meant to the receiver .Stubbs (1983:9) shows another way of distinguish between a text and discourse , a text is not interactive , whereas discourse is interactive . The definition that study adopts is that discourse is employed to refer to the specific type of context of language use . Therefore , it is like a genre or a kind of text . Accordingly , biblical verses are discourses in this way of use . Better put , biblical verse is a kind of discourse that is functioned to do a number of activities and events for religious and moral purposes.

2. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is one of the linguistic fields that focuses on the way language works to convey a number of social functions . It goes beyond the sentence and grasp the meaning of the message . Gee (2011:8) states that it deals with how language is used in different ways. This definition gives the main function of language which is used in different contexts in daily life . Paltridge (2012 :2) adds that discourse analysis explains the parts of any language in different kinds of texts and at the same time shows the association between language and cultural contexts that exist in society . Discourse analysis also takes into account the way of using language displaying different sights about life and the various interpretations . It even shows the way of how using language is influenced by the relationship between people . Furthermore , it shows how the views and identities are formed by the use of discourse(ibid) .

Stubbs (1983:1) touches on the main functions of discourse analysis saying that ,firstly it is concerned with the use of language beyond the sentence and utterance , secondly it is concerned with the relationship between language and society and thirdly it is concerned with conversational characteristics of everyday communication . Paltridge (2012:2) refers to the main interest of discourse analysis is that what the meanings and how these meanings are functioned in the language and this is the central area of discourse analysis . As a result , biblical verses are used in websites and in different areas of life giving various functions .

3. Image-Biblical Verses as A Genre

Paltridge (2012: 171-2) refers to the importance of images in relation to the multimodal discourse analysis . Images might consist of photographs , cartoons , maps or diagrams . Images could have grammar of their own . In other words , the relation between the image and viewer can be determined by the subject that initiates with viewer or not. As a result, eye contact may suggest a request , if there is no eye contact , there may suggest a kind offer.

Martin (1984:12) speaks of genre as " a staged , goal-oriented , purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture " . Paltridge (2012:62-3) delves deeper in defining genre in which genre is an activity that people participate through different occasions of using language . The academic lectures and casual everyday conversations are examples of spoken genres , whereas newspapers, reports and different academic essays are implementations of written genres . These genres have a number of common functions and purpose and are performed by people according to the type of context or the situation of the event . However , Biber et al (2007 : 8) say that genre refers to the cultural planned message kind that has the conventional deep structure like , the affidavit , a business memo or any biology research article. Genre studies focus on conventional discourse structure or the expected socio-cultural actions of a discourse community .The paper is about the written genre in different contexts for the purpose of communicating with people through using religious texts in images . Therefore , these image-biblical verses are wide spread in web pages that hold many verses from the Holy Bible .

4. Speech Acts

Austin(1962:91) maintains that the concept of speech acts that refer to the functions being implemented through utterances as a way of making communication . In addition, Austin states that speech acts are not only as things that carry information to people , they are used to do a number of actions. Riemer (2010:109) mentions that Austin's investigation of the force of linguistic expressions , has distinguished speech acts in any utterance into three kinds as follows :

- locutionary act: the act of saying something;
- Illocutionary act: the act performed in saying something; and
- perlocutionary act: the act performed by saying something.

Akmajian et al. (2010 : 396) show the four categories of speech acts : utterance act like shouting , illocutionary acts like promising , perlocutionary acts like persuading , and propositional acts predicting .

This classification will be used to know how the image is functioned to convey the message because the study concentrates on how these things work together with language effectively .

5. The Concept of Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Multimodality is a kind of analysis that reveals more than one mode used in making or producing a certain message . Kress (2010: 1) verifies multimodal discourse analysis as follows :

Using three modes in one sign - writing and image and colour as well - has real benefits. Each mode does a specific thing: image shows what takes too long to read, and writing names what would be difficult to show. Color is used to highlight specific aspects of the overall message.

The definition is about how these three modes are used to show the function of the message . They interact with one another as a means of communication . Multimodal is mainly built on Halliday's(1978-1989) " social semiotic approach to language " . Halliday 's concept states that language is one of the ways of semiotic applications for example gestures ,an image or the music that people use to communicate .

Multimodal use of discourse can be in print genres or in television ones (Paltridge ,2012 :169). Paltridge (ibid :170) goes further in defining multimodal discourse analysis show how these modes of commemoration like pictures , film , video and sound are put together with words to give meaning . It explains print genres and also web pages , film and television programs . Multimodal discourse analysis shows how texts are made and how semiotic tools such as colour , framing , focus and the place of elements that work hand in hand in producing meanings in these texts. Consequently , image-biblical verses are texts that are posted on web pages being distributed to the people with different modes (Ibid).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:24) refer to the image of Michelle Obama , who is the first American lady . Her photo is posted in the center of the page to be the most eye-catching . The photo takes the whole front page of the magazine to make the image more prominent and the photo is framed by the borders of the magazine cover , then it is followed by the text (The Meaning of Michelle) . This shows how these two elements provide the intermodal complementarity that attracts reader's attention and encourage them to read it .



This photo shows the three aspects of the image , information value , salience and framing that establish the message . Accordingly , the photo builds a strong bridge with readers through narrowing social distance between Michelle and the readers by being close , appearing on the front page , and finally and her eyes with direct looking on the readers (Paltridge , 2012 : 172)

Van Leeuwen(2005 : 117) speaks of speech acts and genre how they relate to multimodality through the concept of how and what multimodal communication and this represented by advertisement . The point is discussed in the form of speech act theory which is both illocutionary act (what the speech act aims at) and perlocutionary act(the effect it has on thoughts and actions of people) . Therefore , the study will find how the image-biblical verses as a religious written genre used with language and other modes of communication to persuade people to avoid wrong doings and doing the right thing or other purposes instead . Hence , multimodal discourse analysis plays a key role in this way of building such messages with other modes .

Advertisement: Illocutionary act



Advertisement: perlocutionary act



Data of

The data
fives samples about the verses of the Holy Bible .The
based on using the multimodal analysis of the text and picture.

6. The
the Study

will be
analysis is

7. The Model of the Study

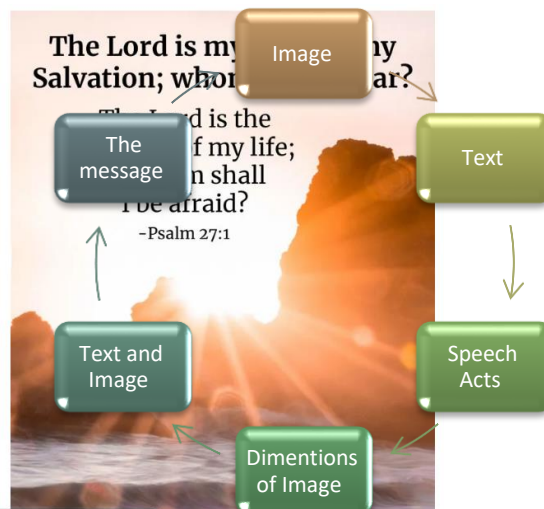
Throughout the theoretical part of the study , the model of analysis is the following :

The model will be based on Kress (2010) and Paltridge (2012) regarding the features of the image that include the principles of frame , salience , colors and so on and then , and Van Leeuwen(2005) who introduces the speech acts with the ways of presenting photos .

8. The Analysis of Data

The analysis is about five pictures with verses in (www.bibleverseimages.com) as follows :

8.1. Happiness



This image is about worry and anxiety . It holds the verse number 27:1 Psalm in the Holy Bible. The verbal part of the image is : The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . The verse gives all aspects of strength trough the way of being confident in God . You do not need to be afraid of anything ,simply because God is with you. God is the light that weakens the darkness that anyone encounters in their lives . God helps his sons and supports them to get over their problems. This part refers to what is said , in other words, it represents the illuccionary act that aims to help people to be confident in themselves . When they read these words they will be different , this is the result , it is perluctionary act. When the image relieves people's injuries , it means that message has made the result.

The image has two parts. The first part is represented by the verse and the second part is represented by the components of the image . The components are color , light , mountains, beach , lines of the light .The color shows the side of life which comes with light from the mountains. These lines of the light prove how life is

coming back in a new day. The parts work together to form an image that corporates with words to make the message more effective . It enhances the desire of reading the verse and pours the spirit of strength inside the readers. These two parts , language and image components , build the message in the way that people receive the verse differently. It seems that if the verse is alone , the message will not be more effective . Accordingly , the parts of the image and the verse urge people on web pages to read them and live with them for the sake of happiness .

8.2 Purpose



The second verse is about life : to everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven, Ecclesiastes 3:1 . The verse shows that there is always a time for everything . It does not happen randomly . God made the purposes for the existence . The time here is functioned to refer to the season. The illucotinary act is represented by the verse and how people react to it , this is the perluctionary act. This is the verbal part of the image .

The second part of the image is the components. The components are color and leaves of the tree. The bright blue is the color of the image that attracts people's attention . This color is suited to the leaves of the tree , to make them salient. The leaves are with different colors. These colors give us the idea of different times or different seasons that lead our life. As a corollary, the two parts of discourse of this image-biblical verse work hand in hand to convey the message deeply to the people with the image .

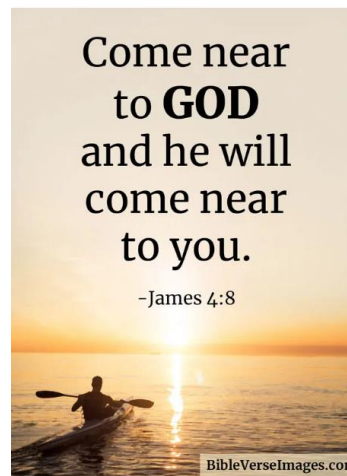
8.3.love



This image is about love . The text is : most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. It tells people to keep love whatever it takes. This part is a verbal one , it has the illocutionary act which aims at keeping love and the perlocutionary one is the result that when people love each other and enhance their life through love .

The second part of the image is the components that are brown color and two persons are on bicycles , those persons appear in a clear way by fronting them in the image . The color is brown to show the persons better for the viewers . This color is so impressive in relation to the showing of the verse. The way they catch their hands reflects the love of people to one another , and they must help themselves to maintain love . This part is the second part of the image . These two parts form messages of the verse both the linguistic one and the parts of image.

8.4 Relation with God



The image holds the verse that urges people to be close to God. It says : Come near to God and he will come near to you, James 4:8. The verbal aspect of the image has been implemented by this verse. It refers to the illocutionary act which aims at being near God , the result is when people believe in this verse and go to God , perlocutionary . This discourse of building good relations between God and His people , it is very important and it takes this way of image .

The second part is related to the components of the image . The bright yellow shows the time of sunset and in this time the sun is going behind the scene . It reveals the idea of chasing it by the person who is rowing . The person is moving towards the sunset , the people should go to God trough different stages of life . The components of the image fit the verse of the Holy Bible to convey the message to the viewers .

8.5 Strength



The image is about trust in God. It is represented by the verse : It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure in Samuel 22:33. It is clear how you have to believe in God. The discourse of the image holds that concept in these words . This refers to the illocutionary act and the way people change after reading the text in image. This is perlocutionary act. So the message needs the components of the image . The components are the gray color which shows the person's legs , who walks on yellow line , it is salient . The walking has a connection with strength and secure of the way of life . The one who leads you is God . God's existence gives that feeling of trust in God. So , these two parts work together to form the message of trust in God.

Conclusion

Through the analysis of five samples , the study has found that the discourse of image-biblical verse uses two parts to convey the message. These two parts have been represented by language and the components of the image .They work hand in hand to make the message more influential . Namely , they fit each other and this is what makes the message impressive. Language refers to the illocutionary act , what the message it , and perlocutionary act is how people interact with it , it is the result . Furthermore , the biblical image is one of the tools that is used to attract people's attention in religious matters . When one of these parts works individually , the message will not be affective. The study goes deeply in how the designer makes the movement and colors build that message . From the view of discourse analysis , multimodal discourse analysis plays a key role in such a combination of verbal and non-verbal parts . As a result , multimodality can be applied to written genres like biblical ones and even spoken ones to show how the combination of two parts build and establish the ideas.

References

1. Akmajian , A. , Demers , R., Farmer , A. and Harnish , R. (2010) . *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication (6ed)* . Cambridge : The MIT Press.
2. Austin, J. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*. 2ed ed. by J.O. Urmson. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
3. Biber , D , Connor , U , and Upton , A, Thomas . (2007) **Discourse on the Move : Using Corpus Analysis to Describe Discourse Structure**.Philadelphia : Johns Benjamins .
4. Bloommaert , J . (2005). **Discourse** . Cambridge : Cambridge University Press .
5. Gee, James .P . (2011) . **An Introduction to Discourse Analysis : Theory and Method** . New york : Routledge .
6. Johnstone , B. (2008) . **Discourse Analysis** . Blackwell : Oxford .
7. Kress, G. (2010). **Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication**. London: Routledge
8. Kress, G., and Van Leeuwen, T. (2006) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (2nd edn)*. London: Routledge.
1. Martin , J .R.(1984) . ' **Language , register and genre** ' in F. Christli(ed) , **Language Studies : children's writing** : reader Geology , Victoria : Deakin University Press ,pp, 21-9.Paltridge , B . (2012) . **Discourse Analysis** .London : Bloomsbury
- Riemer , N. (2010). **Introducing Semantics**. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. .2
3. Stubbs , M.(1983). **Discourse Analysis: The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Natural Language**. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Van Leeuwen , T.(2005). **Introducing Social Semiotics**. London: Routledge .4
5. Widdowson , H.G. (2011) . **Discourse Analysis** . Oxford : Oxford University Press .

Website sources : .6

[/https://www.bibleverseimages.com](https://www.bibleverseimages.com) .7