

A Social Semiotic Analysis of Air France's Print Advertisements

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Received: May 31, 2016 Accepted: June 21, 2016 Online Published: July 13, 2016

doi:10.5539/ijel.v6n4p30 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v6n4p30>

Abstract

The past decade has witnessed the rising popularity of the airline industry, along with prosperity and ever increasing competition. It has become important for airline companies to outshine their rivals for a favorable market share. As a major means of promotion, advertising campaign is of crucial importance in building the corporate image and exerting brand influence. This study conducts a semiotic discourse analysis on the advertising campaign launched by Air France in 2014, and hope to be of interest to researchers, producers of advertising metaphors, as well as consumers in general. The results indicate that the highlighted visual and textual components are arranged as such to form a sense of superiority and great comfort that is perceivable to the viewers. Through the construction of an elegant, glamorous and superior atmosphere, it is palpable that Air France tends to broadcast their brand toward viewers who pay attention to quality of and enjoyment in life, and welcome prosperous cultural peculiarities.

Keywords: social semiotic analysis, visual grammar, Air France, airline advertisement

1. Introduction

The recent years have witnessed the increasing popularity of air travelling. According to the statistics from Civil Aviation Administration of China, in 2014, the whole industry accomplished a transport turnover of 74.812 billion ton-km in total, up by 11.4% from a year ago (CAAC, 2015). With the rising prosperity comes fierce market competition, both domestically and internationally. Under the circumstances, airline advertisement has become an indispensable part in the competition.

Advertising images, brand images, corporate images, and Web sites are all dependent upon compelling visual rhetoric. Various referred to as the attention economy, the aesthetic economy, and the experience economy, this visual turn in marketing may call for new perspectives and research approaches (Schroeder, 2008, p. 227). The current trend raises a number of questions worth considering not only for corporations, but also for the academia: How do images communicate? In what ways do images create value? How does the handling of images in the allied fields of visual studies, art history, and photography shed light on the relationship between visual processes and consumption (Schroeder, 2008, pp. 277-278).

According to a survey aiming at 87 airline advertisements, in terms of slogan, 44.8% of the advertising slogan focused on promoting corporate branding, 41.4% emphasized the travelling experience and 37.9% highlighted the attractiveness of the destination, apart from that, 6.9% resorted to the enchantment of travel itself. In terms of the choice of image, up to 64% of the airline advertisements presented pictures of travelling destination, 50% employed images of airplane, besides, images of flight crew, route map and customer portrait are also used in the commercials (Li, Wang, & Xiao, 2004).

Air France, as a prestigious brand, was born in October 7, 1919, and has a legacy of over a hundred years. In a tough and competitive market where smiling stewardess and planes are favored images presented to the customers, Air France chooses to present its unique spirit through commercials. Known for its "French touch" experience, Air France combines class and modernization not only in its service, but also in its stylish advertisement campaign.

This study chooses four representative images from the advertising campaign launched by Air France in 2014 as the subject of study, and strives to answer the following two research questions:

- a. What visual and verbal components are highlighted to in the print advertisement to influence the viewers?
- b. How does Air France reflect its brand positioning in the advertisement through multimodal construction?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies on Discourse of Advertising

Visual expression is playing a vital role in various aspects of our daily life. Unlike in the past where language used to be in the central position, now the interplay of text, image, gesture or even music is becoming the mainstream. To cope with the current trend, advertisement has also evolved from the mere presentation of product or service to the inextricably display of the commodity and the lifestyle it represents and corporate ideology it stands for.

The past few decades have witnessed the emergence of research on advertising discourse analysis. Cook (1992) studied the interaction amongst music, picture, text and people, analyzed the social functions and aesthetic effects of advertisements with explanation from semiotics, poetics and linguistics. As Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Grammar became widely known, many begin to apply the theory in the analysis of advertising discourse. For example, Huang (2001) made detailed analysis on advertising discourse based on Halliday's theoretical framework, and Ding (2012) discussed the applicability of visual grammar to English print public service advertisements following the framework of systemic functional grammar.

In terms of research approach, semiotic approach is the most popular approach in multimodal study. Cheong (2004, p. 164) discussed "the multi-semiotic interaction between visual images and linguistic text in print advertisements" following Hasan's (1996) model. Baldry & Thibault (2006) made an introduction to multimodal texts and genres, and categorized the discourse into the printed page, the scientific printed page in particular, the web page and film texts and genres. Pennock-Speck & Saz-Rubio (2013) carried out a qualitative multimodal analysis of charity commercials aired on British television from the perspective of politeness strategy by Brown & Levinson (1987). Al-Momani, Migdadi, & Badarneh (2016) presented a semiotic analysis of Arabic print commercials in Jordan borrowing Chandler's (1994) model. Metaphor in advertisement is also studied. Hou & Zhao (2010) made a classification of multimodal metaphor with reference to Forceville's (1996) framework.

The interplay of visual and verbal components is also one of the hot topics. Selfe & Selfe (2008) discussed the roles that different composing modality play in contemporary communication and focused on the creation of public service announcement, emphasizing the importance for teachers to adopt a broader understanding of multimodal composition. Feng & Wignell (2011) made multimodal analysis on TV advertisements to show the exploitation of intertextual voices in advertising discourse for persuasion. Tseronis (2015) made analysis on the interaction of verbal and visual modes of news magazine covers.

Interdisciplinary study is also practiced. Schroeder (2008) analyzed how representational conventions work alongside rhetorical processes in advertising combining theories including snapshot aesthetics and the transformational mirror of consumption.

2.2 Previous Studies on Airline Advertisement

Being an important subject in marketing studies, advertisement has been known for inducing emotional response which consequently triggers change in consuming behavior. While studies about advertisement is gradually getting more attention, less attention has been paid to airline commercial analysis, let alone relative multimodal analysis. Cobb-Walgren et al. (1995, p. 27) studied advertising's influence on brand equity through affecting the perceived quality of a brand and usage experience. Chan (1980) made a case study on Singapore Airlines in regard to marketing strategies conducted through advertising. Li, Wang, & Xiao (2004) took 87 airline commercials and made semiotic analysis on advertising headline, slogan, pictures for better comprehension of airline industry. Su & Lan (2006) employed systemic functional linguistics and made analysis on two airline advertisements from four aspects, namely mood, modality, person and appraisal system. Shi (2012) studies advertising contribution in terms of profit to American airline industry.

To sum up, as research on advertisement builds up, it becomes clear that the general research inclination is imbalanced. Perspective of social semiotics is the most frequently used theoretical framework, and lexical, grammatical, rhetorical features are more frequently studied compared to other modalities. Under the circumstances, interdisciplinary multimodal analysis of this kind becomes a new research direction for it offers insights that not only expand perspectives on multimodal discourse analysis, but also offer guidance for future advertisement design.

3. Theoretical Framework

Multimodal analysis is a relatively new subject for social semiotic research. Feng, Zhang, & O'Halloran (2014) summarized five perspectives of multimodal analysis. The first three were categorized by Jewitt (2009): social semiotic analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; van Leeuwen, 2005), systemic functional analysis (Baldry & Thibault, 2006; O'Toole, 1994; O'Halloran, 2005) and social interaction (Norris, 2004), and the other two perspectives Jewitt did not conclude are multimodal metaphor analysis (El Refaie, 2003; Forceville, 1996; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009) based on cognitive metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and multimodal text analysis from the perspective of corpus linguistics (Gu, 2006) (cited in Feng, Zhang & O'Halloran, 2014, p. 89).

Kress & van Leeuwen (1996), who constructed a systematic framework based on theories of their predecessors, consolidated the theoretic foundation of multimodal discourse analysis with visual grammar. The meaning of images can be divided into three categories: representational meaning, interactive meaning and compositional meaning.

The representational meaning, derived from the "ideational metafunction" in SFL, discusses internal relations between the depicted participants, and can be divided into narrative process and conceptual process, in representational meaning, two contrasting patterns are discussed, including narrative and conceptual process. Derived from the "interpersonal metafunction", which deals with the relations between sender and receiver of the sign (Forceville, 1999, p. 165), the interactive meaning discusses the relationship between pictures and the viewers. Based on the "textual metafunction", the compositional meaning relates the representational and interactive meanings of the image to each other through three interrelated systems (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). Detailed introduction of the three categories will be presented and discussed along with case analysis in the next section.

This approach is widely applied by scholars for discourse analysis of various kinds including advertisements, comics, news, literary texts, paintings, etc. But domestic study is still in the primary stage focusing on theoretical introduction (Zhu, 2007; Hu, 2007), there are also case studies of different genre types such as film (Li, 2007), advertisement (Wang, 2007) and poetry (Hu, 2007).

4. A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Air France's Commercial Images

Air France is known for its romantic, stylish and cordial brand image, which, to some extent, is constructed by its commercials. Upon official launch, Air France's 2014 advertising campaign "France is in the air" received gratifying response for its elegance and freshness. The four advertising posters chosen for analysis are the embodiment of the spirit Air France broadcasts. In order to go beyond sensual instinct and have a detailed and systematic comprehension, analysis based on the structure of visual grammar proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen is presented in this section.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

4.1 Representational Meaning

Representational meaning discusses the internal relations between the depicted participants, and can be divided into narrative process and conceptual process. The hall mark of a narrative visual “proposition” is the presence of a vector: narrative structures always have one, conceptual structures never do (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59).

4.1.1 Narrative Process

Narrative patterns serve to present unfolding actions and events, processes of change, transitory spatial arrangements (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). The process is classified into three sub-processes which are action process, reaction process, and verbal and mental process. As speech process and mental process are determined as an observation in comic strips, the process will not be included in the discussion.

In action process, the actor is the participant from which the vector emanates, or which itself, in whole or in part, forms the *vector*. In images they are often also the most salient participants, through size, place in the composition, contrast against background, color saturation or conspicuousness, sharpness of focus, and through the “psychological salience” which certain participants (e.g., the human figure and, even more so, the human face) have for viewers (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 63).

In Figure 1, the woman in red is the only participant in the image, as the Actor does not aim at a specific object, it constructs a non-transactional process, featured by the absence of a *Goal* at whom or which the vector is directed (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 64). Take Figure 1 as an example, it is obvious that the Actor, being the most salient participant in the image, attracts the viewer’s attention with the graceful young lady in the bright red dress. With the woman running down the straight path in the maze, the movement of the Actor forms a vector, leaving the viewer wondering where she is heading for and leading the viewer to put more concentration on the sole participant. In Figure 2, 3 and 4, the Vectors are all formed by the arms, with the represented participants’ hands on the shoulder, holding desserts, or gently placed on the headrest. The gestures are not aimed at anyone particular at present, but they all send out a sense of comfort and enjoyment.

In reactional process, the vector is formed by an eye-line or the direction of the glance. *The Reactor*, either a human or human-like animal with visible eyes, is the looker who does the facial expression. *The Phenomenon*, which appears in non-transactional reaction, is the participant who is looked at by the Reactor, or by a visual proposition. The posters of Air France all contain a represented participant being the most salient part in each picture wearing a clear joyous facial expression. The only difference in these visual propositions is that in Figure 2, 3 and 4, the three ladies are facing toward the viewer while the woman in Figure 1 looks at something or someone out of the frame. The direct glance along with the setting shows a sense of gratification of the human figure, which suggests the service provided for passengers of Air France would be just as distinctive and

satisfactory, making the viewers long for an experience like this. The indirect glance, on the other hand, creates a sense of empathy in the viewer's mind, which leaves much for imagination and brings the viewer closer to the represented participant as well as the experience.

4.1.2 Conceptual Process

Conceptual patterns represent participants in terms of their class, structure or meaning, in other words, in terms of their generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). The process is comprised of classificational process, analytical process and symbolic process.

In classificational process, at least one set of participants plays the role of *Surbordinates*, being the overarching category, with respect to at least one other participant, the *Superordinate*. In Figure 1, the woman in red is the Superordinate occupying an overarching position in a Covert Taxonomy, a taxonomy in which the Superordinate is inferred from such similarities as the viewer may perceive to exist between the Surbordinates, or only indicated in the accompanying text (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 79).

In analytical process, participants are related in terms of a part-whole structure. There are two types of participants, including one *Carrier* (the whole) and unrestricted number of *Possessive Attributes* (the parts). Figure 1 presents a clear-cut image in which a woman is running in a maze without other distractive objects, but it also shows the overall impression of a relatively abundance of parts, including the texture of the plants and the labyrinth, displaying the alluring priority of Air France, which is clarified and enhanced by the slogan "skypriority" under the picture. Figure 2 shows rich details in the suite, including the curtain, dessert on the table, chandelier, etc. However, it is worth noticing that except for the eye-catching lady in a pink dress, the parts in the picture are of similar tone, which highlight the human figure in the image. Figure 3 shows a lady holding forks with desserts on them while the background is simplified, the pictorial setting guides the viewer to put more concentration on the displayed dessert, which highlights the refined cuisine provided by Air France, differentiating itself from ordinary airline meals. And since France is famous for its cuisine, the supplementing slogan affirming that the refined menus are prepared by French chefs effectively adds up the attraction. Similarly, Fig 4 shows a costumed woman in an aircraft seat, which is unusual not only because it is equipped with two golden carrying poles, but also because it is placed on a path. The path stretches afar, blurring into the clear blue sky, setting a background with few distractions. The seemingly exaggerated seat and the costume, as the slogan below suggests, are the visualized revolutionary comfort provided by Air France.

Symbolic process is about what a participant *means* or *is*. It is categorized into two types of processes: *Symbolic Attributive* and *Symbolic Suggestive*. The former entails two participants including the Carrier and the Symbolic Attribute, and the latter contains only one participant, the Carrier. In Symbolic Attributive process, the meaning of the Carrier is constructed in the relation while the Symbolic Attribute represents the meaning itself. In Symbolic Suggestive process, the Carrier, being the only one participant, represents meaning and identity come from within itself.

In the Air France ad, the four human participants' identities are established through the Symbolic Attributes in the image. If seen solely without considering the setting, other components in the pictures and slogans around the images, it would be hard to determine who they are and what do their gestures mean, but if we were to interpret the images as a whole, the message the posters try to send out would be much clearer. In Figure 1, part of the red dress which spreads out on the path behind the woman bears a strong resemblance to the red carpet, which reminds us of the preferential treatment usually designed for VIP. To interpret the image with the slogan which says "enjoy priority at the airport", it is possible to conclude that the ad tries to send the message that passenger of Air France enjoys prior service which starts before stepping onto their aircraft. Figure 2 depicts a woman lying comfortably in a chaise lounge, which, at the first sight, might not seem to have anything in common with airline company. However, it is noticeable that the color of the lounge resembles aircraft seat, and the slogan here serves as the most important indication for explaining the relation—this is an artistic depiction of the first-class cabin. Similarly, In Figure 4, the identity of the woman is clarified through the aircraft chair and the wordage below the image. In Figure 3, the meaning of the woman's presence is hard to tell solely, but to take the slogan into consideration, it can be deduced that she is enjoying the tasty French desserts and drink served by Air France. Through the indication gathered from the Symbolic Attributes, the Carriers embody deeper connotations beyond a pretty image, and their function of attracting and relating to the viewer is fulfilled through the interplay of different components in the posters.

4.2 Interactive Meaning

Interactive meaning discusses the way images represent the relations between the people, places and things they depict, and the complex set of relations that can exist between images and their viewers (Kress & van Leeuwen,

2006, p. 175). It encompasses four major systems: contact, social distance, attitude and modality.

4.2.1 Contact

There are two kinds of images, the “demand” and the “offer”. When the participant’s gaze demands something from the viewer, demands that the viewer enter into some kind of imaginary relation with him or her, we call this kind of image a “demand”. Following Halliday’s (1985) theory, Kress & van Leeuwen defined the “offer” as the kind of image in which no contact is made. In this case, it “offers” the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 118-119). The posters address the viewer both directly and indirectly. In Figure 1, no direct contact is established directly between the represented participant and the viewer, instead, the lady running in between the maze acts as if she does not know that she is being looked at. Her joyous facial expression along with the surroundings suggest the “offer” of enjoyable and prominent services provided by Air France. In Figure 2, 3 and 4, direct eye contact is made by the represented participants in the images, addressing the viewer explicitly. The glance is not random, and it has something to do with the ideas the ad wish to send out through the campaign. While Figure 1 offers a satisfactory image to the viewer, the other three images build an emotional connection with the viewer through the direct address. The difference lies in the fact that Figure 1 mainly serves to display the priority Air France can offer to its passengers, but Figure 2, 3 and 4 tries to enhance the experience by inviting the viewer to feel the atmosphere built by the settings, in this way, a sense of resonance is built to further trigger the longing.

4.2.2 Social Distance

The choice of distance can suggest different relations between represented participants and viewers (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 124), in other words, different size of frame conveys different feelings to the viewer. At close distance, the object is shown as if the viewer is engaged with it, as if he or she is using the machine, reading the book or the map, preparing or eating the food. At middle distance, the object is shown in full, but without much space around it. It is represented within the viewer’s reach, but not as actually used. At long distance there is an invisible barrier between the viewer and the object. The object is there for our contemplation only, out of reach, as if on display in a shop window or museum exhibit.

In Figure 1, a long distance is used to create a delicate distance between the viewer and the represented participant. By presenting a fantasy-like image that is easy on the eyes and associate the image with air travelling experience provided by Air France, a sense of longing is triggered. In Figure 2 and 4, long shots are used showing human figures with space around them. The distance is commonly used in advertisement which wish to display a scene to the viewer, but not too far as to be deemed as “out of reach”. Through the exhibition of satisfaction and enjoyment, the posters grasp the viewer’s attention and relate to them so as to reach their advertising purpose. Apart from that, since Figure 2 and 3 emphasize the outstanding service Air France provides, it is wise to externalize the concept with visual aids beside the human figure to let the information sink in. Figure 3, unlike the other three images, uses the medium close shot which exemplifies personal distance, and the different use of social distance can be explained through examining the nature of the image. Unlike service, which is intangible and need artistic visualization for the viewer to “feel” and “see” it, the focus of Figure 3 is on a specific product of distinguishing feature—French cuisine. In order to deliver the message effectively, a personal distance is used so that the viewer can have a closer look at the haute dessert.

4.2.3 Attitude

Attitude implies the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes towards represented participants, human or otherwise. In images, attitude is usually realized by the position of camera. Horizontal angle entails the front angle, oblique angle and back angle, representing different degree of involvement or detachment. Vertical angle, on the other hand, is realized by high angle, eye-level angle and low angle, featuring different degrees of power.

In Figure 1, the picture is taken from a high angle, which guides the viewers to look down on the represented participant. It might seem insensible at the first glance to allow the audience to look down on the embodiment of the corporate spirit—outstanding customer service, but considering that Air France belongs to the service industry, it is actually a crafted gesture to give the viewer a sense of superiority upon seeing the image. Besides, the picture constructs a perfect atmosphere with a gorgeous lady in it, which is by no means a common occurrence to most people, by using the high camera positioning for balance, it seems less sacred, allowing the viewers to have a greater sense of accessibility. In Figure 2, 3 and 4, an eye-level angle is used. The difference lies in the fact that Figure 2 and 4 show an oblique angle of the represented participants while Figure 3 shows a nearly frontal angle with the human body faces toward one side while the head faces the viewer directly. Figure 2 and 4 both aim to create a scene in which the passengers enjoy the service and facilities provided by Air France,

thus the oblique angle is used to show the immersion brought by satisfaction while the eye-line builds up the connection between the represented participant and the viewer for attraction. Figure 3 is slightly different in that the main purpose of using the oblique angle is to highlight the product for selling and avoid the possibility of having the model steal the limelight of the real main character in the image.

4.2.4 Modality

The term “modality” comes from linguistics and refers to the truth value or credibility of (linguistic realized) statements about the world (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 155). Color is one important marker of naturalistic modality in terms of three scales, namely color saturation, color differentiation and color modulation. Other key markers of visual modality including: contextualization, representation, depth, illumination and brightness.

There are two significant markers appearing in the commercial that are worth discussing. A) Color. The images deploy full color saturation, with differentiated colors featured by green, red and golden brown. The color modulation is also noticeable. With different shades of red, green and golden, the pictures look coordinated yet present multiple layers, which take on a vivid atmosphere. B) Representation. Representation discusses the degree of abstraction, and in the images, the details are carefully portrayed. For example, the happy facial expression of the represented participant, the labyrinth in the maze, the dessert and wine on the table and the different types of dessert are clearly presented to the viewers.

4.3 Compositional Meaning

Compositional meaning discusses the way in which the representational and interactive elements are made to relate to each other, the way they are integrated into a meaningful whole. It relates the representational and interactive meanings of the image to each other through three interrelated systems: information value, salience and framing (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 176-177).

4.3.1 Information Value

Information value studies how the placement of elements endows them with the specific informational values attached to the various “zones” of the image: left and right (given and new information), top and bottom (ideal and real information), and centre and margin (nucleus and subservient information) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177).

In top and bottom structure, the upper section is usually emotive appeal which shows what is “ideal”, and the lower section tends to provide practical information. The general arrangement of the four posters are similar. The upper section shows the concept, which includes the name of the company and its campaign slogan “France is in the Air”, and at the bottom, specific slogan designed for each image is presented, serving as supplementary information. The pictures also follow the Centre-Margin structure. Figure 1 shows the red-dressed lady in the centre of the image, visualizing the status of glamour it can bestow on its passengers, in other words, the priority they can offer. In Figure 2 and 4, by putting the ladies at the centre, highlight Air France’s superior service and facilities. And Figure 3 explicitly displays the exquisite dessert Air France can offer to the customer.

4.3.2 Salience

The composition of a picture involves different degrees of salience to its elements. Regardless of where they are placed, salience can create a hierarchy of importance among the elements, selecting some as more important, more worthy of attention than others. (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 201). Salience studies factors as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, contrasts in total value (or color), differences in sharpness and how these factors are made to attract the viewer’s attention (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177).

In Figure 1, the woman in red dress, also the only represented participant in the picture, is the most salient element. Though not the biggest in size, the tonal contrast—saturated green maze and bright red dress, forms a striking contrast that draws the viewer’s attention immediately. In Figure 2 and 4, the most salient represented participants are also the human figures. The two ladies stand out for the tonal contrast posed by the color of their dresses and the lustering texture, making them the centre of focus in the images. The emphasis of Figure 3, however, is not the woman, but the dessert she presents. In order to highlight the cuisine, it is placed in the foreground with eye-catching metallic luster and hue of dessert. Meanwhile, the lady blends into the background due to the similar tonal value.

4.3.3 Framing

Framing discusses how the presence or absence of framing devices disconnects or connects elements of the image (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). There are many ways in which framing can be achieved—by actual frame lines, by white space between elements, by discontinuities of color, and so on. The stronger the framing of

an element, the more it is presented as a separate unit of information which signifies individuality and differentiation whereas the absence of framing stresses group identity.

Figure 1 features the discontinuity of the color. In the image, a distinctive frame line is formed by the unobstructed path in between the maze, which further highlights the lady and the carpet. In Figure 2,3 and 4, no clear dividing lines appear, which exemplify integration and the fact that the image is shown as a single unit of information. The integration shows the overall harmony, comfort and exquisite experience provided by Air France.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Having conducted a multimodal discourse analysis of four images from the advertising campaign launched by Air France, it is valuable to go one step further to discover the feature of the advertising campaign and brand value of Air France based on the analysis presented in Section 4.

The feature of human figures in the posters is one of the most valuable subject for discussion. As the most salient component in the campaign, the ladies attract the viewer's attention with their cheerfulness, youthfulness and elegance, and the qualities go beyond being personal characteristics, but also signifies the feature of the company. The elegance represents the company's rich legacy, the youthfulness brought by the young ladies serves as a balance and adds a sense of vitality to the corporate image, and the cheerfulness is brought by Air France's outstanding service and facilities.

Unlike many other airline advertisements in which the travelling destination or image of steward are presented for attraction, Air France makes full use of its national image by combining it with its own brand positioning and presentation. According to Goffman (1987, p. 84), both in advertisement and life we are interested in colorful poses, in externalization. When pictured in a euphoric state, the female is likely to be exhibiting a more expansive expression than is the male, which in turn fits with the argument already made and illustrated that in our society women smile more than men—both in real scenes and in commercially contrived ones (Goffman, 1987, p. 69). Also, women in ads seem to have a different relationship to their clothing and to the gestures worn with it, for example, women are usually less seriously present in social situations than men (Goffman, 1987, p. 51). By adding the feminine touch in the ad campaign, Air France effectively distinguishes itself from its competitors.

Apart from the human figure, several other features constructed by visual components are also worth discussing. a) the sense of priority established through the ad. For example, the path in Figure 1 highlights the priority of Air France in contrast to the complicated labyrinth. The color also helps in creating the sense of superiority. One of the most noticeable color is golden. For example, in Figure 2 and 4, and the wide use of differentiated tone of golden resembles the high-quality experience. b) eco-friendly idea suggested in the advertisement. The appearance of plants is one of the most noticeable factors in the campaign. For example, the plant maze in Figure 1 with articulated detail and the lines of trees in Figure 4 creates a harmonious and eco-friendly atmosphere, and the setting cancel out the high energy-consuming impression that airline industry tends to leave with the public. c) light-heartedness prevails in the commercial. The most obvious trait lies in Figure 1 in which the experience at the airport is turned into an enjoyable stroll, and more importantly, the women in the images seem totally relaxed and comfortable, which potentially triggers the viewer's longing. The harmonious and light-hearted atmosphere in general helps build up the friendly and cordial brand image of Air France.

The textual components also matter in the establishment of the brand value. The corporate title and its main slogan of the campaign, placed on top of the print advertisement, builds up a sense of authority and adds up the credibility. The specific information designed for each of the images, for example, "Skypriority", "soaring palace", "haute cuisine" and "revolutionary comfort" encourage the viewers to choose the very brand and its outstanding services compared to its rivals. The interplay of visual and verbal components highlights the main features of Air France, and constructs an outstanding brand image that is both positive and glamorous.

Advertisements influence us in one way or another with the thoughts and opinions built in the choice of represented participants, scene setting, use of color, pictorial design, etc. This study indicates that the highlighted visual and textual components are arranged as such to form a sense of superiority and great comfort that is perceivable to the viewers. Through the construction of an elegant, glamorous and superior atmosphere, it is palpable that Air France tends to broadcast their brand toward viewers who pay attention to quality of and enjoyment in life, and welcome prosperous cultural peculiarities. In a market featured by toughness, fierce competition and the common tendency of showing smiling steward or dazzling travelling destination for attraction, Air France made itself unique both in brand image and spirit, echoing its legacy as a renowned poster specialist, with visual and textual components presenting a harmoniously mixed touch of modernity and national

heritage, hence stood out in the airline industry.

Acknowledgment

This study was supported by the Key Research Project of Philosophy and Social Science of Ministry of Education of China (15JZD048).

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