



Ain Shams University
Faculty of Women for Arts, Science, and Education
Department of English Language and Literature

Breaking Boundaries between Language and Images:

A Socio-Semiotic Approach to Facebook Images

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Submitted by

Nouran Ehab Fakhr Eldin Ibrahim

Under the supervision of

Dr. Mohammed Tohamy

Associate Professor of Linguistics

Faculty of Arts and Humanities,

Suez Canal University

Dr. Heba Zaytoon

Assistant Professor of Linguistics

Faculty of Women,

Ain Shams University

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Abstract

People use various semiotic resources to make meaning. Among semiotic modes, language has been considered as the dominant mode of communication; however, visuals offer broad range of potentials and resources for meaning making. In order to have full understanding of meaning, readers need to enlighten themselves with new different ways to interpret visual images. The guiding impetus for this thesis is to present Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework of interpretive strategies to analyze and comprehend the visuals as a significant mode of non verbal communication; in order to extend the readers' interpretive techniques and enhance their ability in constructing and interpreting images. The notion of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) takes up different visual representations, ranging from children's drawings, school textbooks, traditional art works, photos and advertisements for the analysis of sign systems from a syntactical prespective. The power of their work lies in the fact that their framework is based on Halliday's three Meta functions which can be applied to various visual images. Kress and van Leeuwen 'visual grammar' enables the readers to look at visuals in a systematic way. The purpose is to introduce a shift from the conventional study of visuals in consonance with the semantic indicators to a study of visuals in isolation. The study brought to the conclusion that the visual images with its elements such as gesture, posture, signs, color, distance and symbols go a long way to convey meaning in social media especially when it is used in political platform.

Keywords: Semiotics - Visual Semiotics – Metafunctions - Facebook Images - Verbal and Nonverbal Signs - Kress and Van Leeuwen

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Chapter

(One)

(Introduction)