The Three Meta-function Levels of Meaning-making in Multimodal Discourse Analysis

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Abstract
This paper x-rays multimodal discourse analysis (MMDA) as a discourse approach, by exploring the process of meaning-making across the three metafunctional levels – representational, interactional and compositional – in visual texts. It demonstrates how the basic concepts of each of these metafunctions such as narrative/conceptual images, contact, social distance, salience, focus, information value etc., are operationalized in sample texts to evince the process of meaning-making in a multimodal ensemble. The findings show that social semiotics plays a significant role in scientifically analyzing texts as the context of the texts signals the intended meaning of the text producer. Thus, like language, visual texts also have the potentials to constructively convey meaning at the three meta-function levels without any ambiguity. The study was done to show a road map to meaning-making at the three meta-function doing multimodal discourse analysis of texts in our contemporary time.

Key words: multimodality, visual texts, ensemble, metafunctions, meaning-making

1. Introduction
The New media technology has foregrounded the multimodal nature of human communication such that the art of meaning-making is being construed multimodally through the use of semiotic resources such as language, gestures, colours, images, postures and other corporeal resources. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) submit that advances in technology, especially with regard to data visualisation resources, have contributed immensely to the growth of multimodal semiotics in which there is now a shift from monomodality to multimodality in semiotic research. This shift to multimodality is confirmed by Lirola (2006, p. 1) who asserts that "our society is influenced by the presence of new texts which are clearly characterised by the increasing dominance of the visual mode." Norris (2004, p. 2) observes that "all movements, all noises, and all material objects carry interactional meanings as soon as

they are perceived by a person." This means all interaction is multimodal. Our communication is more than what is said and heard but by what we perceive through expressions, gazes, gestures and movements; hence the emergence of multimodality.

As Bezemer and Jewitt (2010, p. 182) opine, "Multimodality provides complex fine-grained analysis to get at the details of texts and interactions in which meaning is understood as being realised in the iterative connection between the meaning potential of a material semiotic artefact/text, the meaning potential of the social/cultural environment it is encountered in, and the resources and knowledge that people bring to these." It is a move from the constellation of one mode of communication – language – to the constellation of different modes that coexist in the realisation of text. The shift from the monomodal semiotic landscape of the print era to the multimodal semiotic landscape of the digital era is noted to have made drastic changes to our existence as social human beings (Cope & Kalantzis, 2006). The thrust of multimodality therefore, is that people communicate in a variety of ways using different semiotic systems (modes) and that in order to completely understand them, the many modes they use to communicate must be observed and recognised.

The theory of multimodality can be found in writings and discussions related to communication theory, linguistics, media literacy, visual literacy, anthropological studies, and design studies which emphasises the position that human communication is never monomodal. This position is further confirmed by Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001, p. 124) submission that, "multimodality is not a new phenomenon … it is a feature of social semiosis always." This has been recognised today in Discourse Studies and Applied Linguistics such that it has been integrated as a framework to analyse and process meaning in human interactions. Its adoption into the scope of discourse analysis brought about the concept of "multimodal discourse analysis" (MMDA) as one of the frameworks/ approaches to doing discourse analysis. While much work (Oyebode & Unuabonah, 2013; Ademilokun & Olateju, 2015; Ademilokun, 2018; Aragbuwa & Adejumo, 2021) has been carried out using MMDA as a theoretical framework in discourse studies in Nigeria, literature shows that there is paucity of research in studying MMDA as a discourse approach with specific focus on its metafuntional levels of meaning-making in texts. Thus, this paper explores the basic concepts of MMDA with a view to depicting how meanings are made across the three metafunctional

levels, representational, interactional and compositional to arrive at a comprehensive description and interpretation of texts.

2. What is Multimodal Discourse Analysis?

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MMDA) indicates a new direction in discourse research and application. According to Mathiessen (2007), MMDA is concerned with how different semiotic systems (language inclusive) complement one another in the creation of meaning. Even though language is important and unique in the expression of meanings, depending solely on it cannot enhance a comprehensive description and interpretation of texts, hence the need for a more inclusive approach for analysing texts in discourse studies. Following O'Halloran's (2008) view, MMDA is an approach to analysing meaning arising from the use of multiple semiotic resources in discourses which range from written, printed and electronic texts to material lived-in reality. It is an integrative approach developed to capture the expansion of meaning which occurs when linguistic and visual forms combine. According to Connolly and Phillips (2002, p. 1), "multimodal discourse analysis in itself involves the investigation of texts constructed through diverse modes of communication", i.e., multimodal discourses or texts.

As O'Halloran, (2008) opines, multimodal discourse is "a form of communication involving multiple semiotic resources such as language (spoken and written), gesture, dress, architecture, [...] gaze, camera angle, etc." (p. 444). The meanings arising from these semiotic systems cannot be adequately described using language alone. Hence, meaning is made in many different ways, always, in the many different modes and media which are co-present in communicational ensemble (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). This means that the past general view that meaning resides in language alone – or other versions of this, that language is the central means of representing and communicating even though there are extra-linguistic and paralinguistic things going on as well – is simply no longer tenable in discourse scholarship. Focusing solely on the linguistic resources employed in texts for the interpretation of texts will no longer suffice in arriving at the intended meaning of the messages of the texts. The basic notion in MMDA as a theory is that meaning is made everywhere, in every layer. This means in every mode of the multimodal ensemble there is always work; with all the available representational forms, and such work is always meaningful (Kress & van Leeuwen, ibid).

MMDA takes a departure from Halliday's assumption that language has evolved to fulfil three major functions vis-à-vis to represent the world (the ideational metafunction); to interact with other people (the interpersonal metafunction); and to weave our meanings into coherent messages (the textual metafunction). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 20), "the metafunctional approach has been extended to other semiotic systems beyond language, not because the model works well for language (which it does, to an extent), but because it works well as a source for thinking about all modes of representation." Social semioticians believe that in every multimodal ensemble (visual text), there is always "work" with all the available representational forms and such work is always meaningful (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). To them, the visual text also has its own grammar like language; however, this grammar is not universal as Halliday argues about the grammar of language. Visual language is not transparent and universally understood; it is culture specific. Thus, the notion of visual grammar shows a relation to Hallidayan three meta-functions whereby the ideational metafunction represents representational strand; interpersonal metafunction represents interactive strand and textual represents compositional strand. All these are different layers through which meaning is negotiated in the process of meaning-making in MMDA and they form the fulcrum of the paper.

2.1 Modes and Media of Communication: The Fundamental Concepts of MMDA

There are four fundamental concepts of MMDA through which texts are composed to convey specific meanings. These are: modes, semiotic resources, media and multimodal ensemble. The theoretical orientations of each of them is discussed below:

Modes: The concept of modes in contemporary communication is wider in scope than it used to be. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) posit, a mode is a set of socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning: a "channel" of representation or communication. Modes can be regarded as systems of meaning within a particular culture. For something to be recognised as a mode, it has to be a recognised/usable system of communication within a community (see Jewitt, 2013). Although what constitutes a mode is a subject of debate among scholars, some have been accepted and systematically used as systems of meaning-making in multimodal scholarship. These include

writing, image, moving image, colour, sound, speech, gesture, gaze and posture in embodied interaction (Bezemer & Kress, 2008). The general understanding of modes is that, they are created through social processes, fluid and subject to change. Therefore, modes are neither autonomous nor fixed; they are particular, rather than universal, to a community or culture where there is a shared understanding of their semiotic characteristics (Jewitt, 2013).

Semiotic Resources: Semiotic resources are the actions, materials and artifacts we use for communicative purposes. They have a meaning potential, based on their past uses, and a set of affordances based on their possible uses, and these will be actualised in concrete social contexts where their use is subject to some form of semiotic regime (van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 285). In the social semiotic approach to MMDA, the term "semiotic resource" is preferred to "resource". This is because it is used to refer to a means for meaning-making that is simultaneously a material, social, and cultural resource (Jewitt, 2013). It presents the connection between representational resources and what people do with them. Thus, almost everything we do or make can be done or made in different ways and therefore, allows, at least in principle, the articulation of different social and cultural meanings. For instance, the item "walking" may be taken as a non-semiotic behaviour, basic locomotion, something we have in common with other species, yet there are many various ways of walking. Men and women walk differently. People from different parts of the world do. Social institutions – the army, the church, the fashion industry etc – have developed their own special, ceremonial ways of walking. Hence, people can express who they are, what they do, as well as how they want to be related to through the way they walk. In view of this, it is possible to seduce, threaten, impress (and much more) people through different ways of walking. This means that human beings are agentive sign-makers who shape and combine semiotic resources to reflect their interests (see van Leeuwen, 2005; Jewitt, 2013). Arguably, there are so many things that can be used as semiotic resources for meaning-making in contemporary communication depending on the social context in which they are used and the interest of the sign-maker.

Media: Media are the material resources used in the production of semiotic products and events; for instance, musical instrument and air for production of music and sounds; vocal apparatus, papers or gloss

papers, etc. (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). They can be regarded as the channels through which modes are used to convey messages. The notion of media in contemporary communication is concerned with the materiality through which modes are constituted. All the media of contemporary communication have specific modes appropriate for them. For instance, the appropriate modes for a TV broadcast is different from that of radio or still images and so on. Human experience is inherently multisensory and every representation of experience is subject to the constraints and affordances of the medium involved (Chandler, 2000). This means the modes in which texts can appear are diverse and that the combination of these modes for texts is dependent upon the medium of communication. Hence, the form or medium in which a text appears goes a long way in determining the selection and combination of modes that will be employed. Thus, different media and genres provide different frameworks for presenting experience, facilitating some forms of expression and inhibiting others (Chandler, ibid).

Multimodal Ensembles: A multimodal ensemble is concerned with any representation or interaction that has more than one mode used for its realization. The term is built on the premise that "there is always work with all the available representational forms and such work is always meaningful" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p.112). According to Jewitt (2013), the term draws attention to the agency of the sign maker – who pulls together the ensemble within the social and material constraints of a specific context of meaning-making. All the modes that combine to realise a communicative event (e.g. a text, a website, a spoken interchange etc.) contribute partly to the overall meaning of its message (e.g. Kress et al., 2001; Kress et al., 2005). Therefore, the meaning of the message in a multimodal ensemble is distributed across all of the modes strung together to realise it. Although the distribution does not necessarily have to be even across the modes, the different aspects of meaning are carried in different ways by each of the modes in the ensemble. Any one mode in that ensemble is carrying a part of the message only: each mode is, therefore, partial in relation to the totality of meaning (Jewitt & Kress, 2003).

Jewitt (2013) observes that, the major concern of MMDA is to investigate the relationship between modes and confirm the specific work of each mode and how each mode interacts with and contributes to the others in the multimodal ensemble. As a result analytical

questions such as which modes have been included or excluded, the function of each mode, how meanings have been distributed across modes, and what the communicative effect of a different choice would be are germane to any multimodal research. Examining the semiotic import of modes combined in multimodal ensembles therefore enables discourse analysts to unpack how meanings are brought together. This is done by investigating the process of meaning-making through the three metafunctions of MMDA.

2.2 Making Meaning in Every Layer: The Metafunctions of Semiotic Resources

Proponents of MMDA are of the view that other modes of communication like language can articulate all three of Halliday's meaning functions known as meta-functions. According to Jewitt (2013), one of the "tests" for whether a set of resources can count as a mode is whether it is possible for it to articulate all three of Halliday's meaning functions: that is, can a set of resources be used to articulate "content" matter (ideational meaning), construct social relations (interpersonal meaning) and create coherence (textual meaning?) (Halliday, 1978). By this argument, scholars are able to establish the notion of 'visual grammar' which means that visual text, just like language has its own grammar. The notion of "visual grammar" first emerged in Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) seminal work, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Designs.* Visual grammar stipulates that a visual text can operate on the three metafunctions of language. It essentially recognises that an image performs simultaneously, three kinds of meta-semiotic tasks to create meaning (Harrison, 2003, p. 50).

3. Data and methods

The data for this study include five purposively selected billboard adverts from a pool ofarchived data the author used for their doctoral research. They were collected across different locations and from products/services in Nigeria to explicate the process of meaning-making across the three strands of meaning in visual grammar which are representational, interpersonal and compositional. Each of these metafunctions, represents different levels at which meaning can be made in the multimodal discourse analysis of a text. The selected data samples are therefore deployed to exemplify how each of these metafunctions operationalizes to tease out specific meanings in

multimodal texts. They were labelled using the English alphabet (A – E).

4. Analysis and discussion
The analysis indicates that the adverts designers employ verbal and non-verbal elements to project different concepts that are germane to meaning-making process across the three metafunctions. Through the use of multimodal concepts such as action process, reactional process, speech and mental process, vectors, offer and salience, among others, the adverts designers are able to create important narratives in the adverts that indicate how each of these concepts operationalises in visual grammar. The analysis indicates that there are specific images apt for each of the three metafunctions to convey meaning.

4.1 Meaning-making at the Representational Metafunction Level
This is concerned with the people, places and objects within a visual text. According to Ramakrishnan (2012, p. 183) cited by Harrison (2003) "the representational strand reflects a functional description of the state-of-affairs depicted by represented participants in the visual text. Represented participants (RPs) are visual images used as configurations of visual messages within the visual text by virtue of their actions and inactions in the text layout. There are two kinds of images (structures, see Harrison, 2003) for representational meaning which are narrative images and conceptual images.

Narrative Images (Structures)
Narrative images allow viewers to create a story about the RPs because the images include vector of motion. Vectors, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 59), are the "visual replica of process verbs and they may be formed by 'bodies, limbs or tools in action'." It is depicted in a visual text as a situation whereby a vector emanates from one participant (actor) to another participant (goal) indicating some form of narration. There are four processes under narrative images: action process, reactional process, speech and mental process, and conversation process. Two of them are explained here. While an action image is created by vectors that can be bodies, limbs, tools, weapons, roads etc., a reactional image is created by eyelines, acting as vectors between RPs. In action images, participants are connected by a vector(s) and they are represented as doing something to or for each other. These vectors are formed by depicted elements that form an

oblique line, often a quite strong diagonal line (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 56 & 57; Harrison, 2003, p. 52).

Action Process: Narrative is created in this process by vectors that can be bodies, limbs, tools, weapons, roads, etc. The text below demonstrates the effective use of a vector to create action and depicts a form of narration.

TEXT A

Text A is an action image that shows that the represented participants (RPs) in the text are connected by two vectors. These vectors are created diagonally by the outstretched heads and hands of the represented participants (RPs) in the visual text. The vectors begin from the corner of the visual text and stop at the centre (middle) of the text to create a powerful interaction among the major RPs – business partners. The vectors place emphasis on the central message of the text which is "connection/ collaboration"; and create action and narration in the text. Through the vectors, we can understand the narrative of the text: that the RPs are business partners who work together to achieve their desired goal by being able to stay connected successfully through

the IT firm – Netcom. The vectors indicate that all hands are on deck among the RPs, the business partners and Internet provider (Netcom) to attain success together. This is affirmed by the linguistic resource in the text, a declarative sentence, 'when the success of your business rides on a successful connection.' Therefore, an action image is projected by two prominent vectors to indicate a particular kind of narrative in the visual text. This is the way the action process of narrative image is done at the representational level of meaning-making.

It is important to note however, that there are different types of vectors in visual texts. Usually some vectors will be bold, strong and more prominent than others in texts. It is the prominent one that usually gives direction to the kind of message/action that is taking place within the text.

Reactional Process: Narrative is created in this process through eyelines. Eyelines serve as the vector between the RPs. The text below shows the effective use of eyelines to create a narrative.

TEXT B

Text B is a reactional image that shows that the represented participants (RPs) a couple and the advertised drink – Kronenbourg larger beer – in the text are connected through eyelines. The couple raised their eyes a bit and focuses on the bottle of the larger beer in order to express certain attitude. The eyelines serve as a vector that indicates the interaction that exists between the RPs. The eyelines begin from the couple at the corner of the text and focus on the larger beer to indicate a kind of attitude the beer incites in the couple when taking the beer. Through the eyelines, we can understand the narrative of the text: that the couple finds excitement and pleasure each time they drink the Kronenbourg larger beer. This means that the larger beer creates a world of excitement around them and makes them stay connected. This meaning is reiterated by the linguistic resource (a declarative minor sentence), "a world of pleasure!" used in the text. Thus, the eyelines create a reactional action in the text to depict the mood of the couple. This is the way the reactional process of narrative image is done at the representational level of meaning-making.

Conceptual Images (Structures)
Conceptual images do not involve action or reaction from the RPs, therefore, there are no vectors. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), they are non-transactional processes. They submit

> …when images or diagrams have only one participant, the
> resulting structure we call non-transactional. The action in
> a non-transactional process has no 'goal', is not 'done to'
> or 'aimed at anyone or anything.' The non-transactional
> action process is therefore analogous to intransitive verb
> in language (p. 63).

Corroborating the above explanation, Harrison (2203, p. 51) asserts that "the RPs in conceptual images tend to be grouped together to present viewers with the 'concept' of who or what they represent". There are three main processes under conceptual images, which are classificatory, analytical and symbolic. Two of these processes are discussed in this chapter.

Classificatory Process: This process presents RPs as "a kind of" something or some group of people/something which means, they are members of the same class (Harrison, 2003). This is common in

advertisements for beauty products (where classificatory images are deployed as a group of models) and political campaigns. Text C below is an example of a classificatory process of conceptual images:

TEXT C

Text C above presents an array of different types of fragrance (non-human RPs) available for the perfume advertised. The systematic arrangement of the products is an example of a classificatory process of conceptual images as they are shown to be a kind of perfume. Although there is a human RP, a fresh and succulent looking lady, in the text, there is no vector to indicate any interaction between her and the product. Therefore, there is no action or reaction in the visual text. It is a non-transactional process. Text C is an example of classificatory process used for conceptual structure at the representational level of meaning-making.

Symbolic Process: In this process RPs are important for what they "mean" (Harrison, 2003). Abstract items and objects like shapes, as well as other communicative materials are used symbolically to

communicate meaning. Text D below is an instance of a symbolic process used for conceptual images.

TEXT D

The RP in Text D is non-human. It is a Yoruba traditional cap which is the symbolic representation of the former governor of Ogun State – Otunba Gbenga Daniel 2007/2011; 2011/2015. Since his emergence as the governor of Ogun state, people within this socio-political context have known Governor Gbenga Daniel with this particular style of representing himself in the political sphere. He uses the cap as his personal logo of self-personality coding to the point that anywhere this is found, people already know who the representation symbolises. This is commonplace in the Nigerian political space. Thus, the traditional cap is an example of a symbolic process used for conceptual structure at the representational level of meaning-making.

4.2 Meaning-Making at the Interactive Metafunction Level
This is concerned with the actions among all the participants involved in the production and viewing of a visual text. These involve the creator of the text (text producer), the RPs and the viewers. This metafunction answers the question "How does the picture (that is, the image in the visual text) engage the viewer(s)? Three ways are however proposed for examining interactive meaning of images. These are: contact

(demand or offer), social distance (intimate, social, or impersonal), and attitude (involvement, detachment, viewer power, equality, and representation power). These willbe briefly explained one after the other after which a visual text will be used to illustrate some processes at this level of meaning-making.

(a) Contact: The features of contact are image acts and gaze. It is concerned with the way the eyeline/gaze of the RPs is used in relation to the interactive participants, that is, viewers. Two major processes are germane under "contact" which are: demand and offer. Through image act or gaze, an RP can place a demand on the viewer to do something or offer some kind of information. The process of "demand" requires that the RP looks directly at the viewer to cause them to have a strong feeling of engagement with the RP. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 117), demand has two functions, which are: to create a visual form of direct address, that is, acknowledging the viewer explicitly by addressing them with a visual "you"; and through gazes (and gestures, if present) demands something from the viewer, therefore, demanding that the viewer enter into some kind of imaginary relation with them. In the "offer" process, however, the RP looks outside the visual text or at someone or something within the text. The RP in the "offer" process is an object of contemplation for the viewer because they create less engagement for the viewer than that of the "demand" process.

(b) Social Distance: This is about different camera shot possibilities. It is concerned with how close RPs in the visual text appear to the viewer, thereby resulting in the feelings of intimacy or distance. There are different ways from which viewer can see the RP. These are:

- Intimate distance: the head and the face only
- Close personal distance: the head and shoulders
- Far personal distance: from the waist up
- Close social distance: the whole body figure
- Far social distance: the whole figure with space around it
- Public distance: torsos of several people

The above are different ways in which the system of social distance can be construed in visual texts. van Leeuwen (2008, p.41) describes these

camera shot possibilities as frame choices that can construct particular interpersonal relationships involving relative power, engagement or appeal. Thus, in the system of "social distance", the viewer is invited to negotiate interpersonal relationship with the represented participant in an intimate, detached or removed social distance (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

(c) Attitude/Perspective: This system exists as two-subsystems which are: horizontal and vertical angles respectively. The horizontal angle is concerned with the relationship between the position of the RP(s) and the viewer. This angle creates viewers involvement in visual texts through the following:

- The frontal angle: This happens when an RP is presented frontally to the viewer. This angle creates stronger involvement on the part of the viewer as it implies that the RP is "one of us".
- The oblique angle: This is when an RP is presented obliquely to the viewer. The angle creates greater detachment since it implies that the RP is "one of them".

The vertical angle, on the other hand, creates a relationship of power negotiation in visual texts. There are two possible vertical-angle relationships which are: that of the RP(s) and the viewer; and that between RPs within the visual text. The three processes under vertical angle are: high angle, medium angle and low angle. They are used to project the following:

- High angle: the RP looking up (high power);
- Medium angle: equality
- Low angle: the RP looking down (less power/ equality)

Text E presents how some of these processes work in a multimodal ensemble.

(d) Model Analysis

TEXT E

Visual Demand: Text E is an example of a "demand" type of image act. Through the use of eyelines, gaze and gesture, the prominent represented participant in the text (a girl child presented as a celebrity) establishes direct contact with the interactive participants (viewers). This RP enters into an imaginary relationship with the viewers (parents/guardians) through her gaze and the use of a vector – the outstretched arm of the girl with her pointed finger – to directly address the viewer, strongly engage them and place a demand on them. That this RP is a female is interesting and ideological. It suggests that the text producer intends to add gender meanings to the text.

Far Personal Distance: The type of social distance between the RP and the viewer is that of far personal distance. This is because the RP (the girl) appears from below her waist up. This indicates that the RP is inviting the viewer into her world by placing a demand on them as regards what they need to do. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006[1996]), the relation between the human participants represented

in images and the viewers is once again an imaginary relation. People are portrayed as though they are friendly or as strangers. The RP, though a star who is in her own world, strategically creates a strong sense of affinity with the viewers (probably parents/guardians) by moving to the front of the stage to address them. By doing this she closes up the social distance and demands that parents/guardians should feed their children nutritious food like the product advertised – "Indomie" – so that their children also can become stars. This message can be retrieved from the linguistic resource in the text, an imperative sentence: "Feed your hero".

Frontal and Medium Vertical Angles: the choice of frontal angle in Text E shows that there is a level of involvement with the viewer as the RP sends a message to them as if they are in any close relationship. Through the use of frontal angle the RP gives her viewers access to her personal world and presents to them what is obtainable in her world which could also be a reality if they do what she is demanding them to do with their own children. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p. 143) submits that "the frontal angle says as it were, what you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with." The choice of the medium vertical angle on the other hand indicates equality. Conventionally, adults (parents) should be in position to advise children on what to do but as indicated in Text E, a child is put in a position to advise parents on what to do with their children by feeding them properly so as to bring them to stardom just as she has become a star. Therefore, through the medium vertical angle, the text producer indicates a sense of equality between the RP and the interactive participants (viewers). The choice of these two angles promotes involvement with the RP (the girl child). It suggests that children are also equal to adults in terms of needs and that their proper feeding is equally important. This is the way meaning-making process is done at the interactive level of meaning.

3.3 Meaning-making at the Compositional Metafunction Level
This metafunction corresponds to the textual metafunction in SFL. It is used to create cohesive ties between verbal and visual elements in visual texts. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 176), "it is the way in which the representational and interactive meanings are made to relate to each other, and the way they are integrated into a meaningful whole." Hence, the compositional metafunction answers

the question "How do the representational and interactive meanings relate to each other and integrate into a meaningful whole?" There are three basic interrelated systems used as a means of doing compositional (also known as functional meaning) meaning of images: information value (given or new, ideal or real, important or less), salience (achieved through size, colour, tone, focus, perspective, overlap, and repetition), and framing. These will be briefly explained one after the other after which a visual text will be used to illustrate some of the processes at this level of meaning-making.

(a) Information Value: This is concerned with how the placement of RPs allows them to take on different information roles. The elements under this system of meaning-making are:

- Given: This refers to familiar, common-sense knowledge. The RPs on the left side of the visual text have the value of being "given".
- New: This is concerned with issues, problems and solutions discovered in a visual text. The RPs on the right side are "new". (It should be noted however, that the notion of value as presented here is based on how texts are read in Western cultures which is from left to right. This may differ in cultures where reading occurs from right to left).
- Ideal: This is concerned with emotive, imaginary or what might be. RPs at the top of the visual text have the value of being "ideal" information.
- Real: This is concerned with factual, informative, down to earth, practical, often textual elements in a visual text. RPs below the visual text represent the "real" information.
- Centre/Margin: RPs at the centre of the visual text provides the nucleus of information to which surrounding elements are subservient.

(b) Salience: This system is concerned with the ability of an RP to capture the attention of the viewer. Below are elements under this system of meaning-making:

- Size: The larger the size of the RP, the greater the salience.
- Sharpness of Focus: Out-of-focus RPs have less salience.
- Tonal Contrast: Areas of high tonal have greater salience.

- Colour Contrast: Strongly saturated colours have greater salience than "soft" colours.
- Foreground/Background: An RP in the foreground has greater salience than an RP in the background.

(c) Framing: This is a system of meaning-making concerned with the way in which RPs are framed within the visual text to show whether they are connected of separated. The elements under this system are:

- Frame lines: These are lines within the visual text that divide RPs or hold them together.
- Pictorial framing devices: These are lines around the visual text. The stronger they are, the greater the connection.

Above are the basic systems and elements of compositional metafunction. Let us consider how some of these processes work in Text E as we have examined the basic processes under Interactive metafunction in the text.

(d) Model Analysis: An Integrated Analysis

Considering the representational metafunction of the visual texts, there are both human and non-human RPs in the text. The human RPs are the guitarist (a man), a drummer (a boy) and a singer (a girl). The non-human RPs include: the musical instruments (a guitar and a drum set), a plate of indomie, a box, a micro-phone, lightings, and a linguistic statement. Although there are no vectors that serve as the connecting lines among the RPs, two things serve as the connecting line among them. These are the gaze of the instrumentalists and the musical notes that the girl dances to. Through these, the text producer creates a power interaction among the major RPs and we could understand the narration and action in the text. These create a strong narrative structure that the girl at the foreground of the text is a star/celebrity representing children and instructing parents to feed their children with nutritious meal like the product advertised – indomie – so that they can be a star like her. This can be deduced from the linguistic resource, the declarative statement – "Feed you hero". The Interactive metafunction of the visual text is realised, as explained above, through the use of the "demand" image act, the far personal distance, the horizontal frontal angle and the medium vertical angle. These are used to heighten viewers' sense of personal involvement and identification with the RPs. The effectiveness of these two metafunctions is further integrated by compositional metafunction through a variety of elements.

Information Value: the visual text deploys the three types of information value systems to convey the intended message to the viewers. The representations of an adult male guitarist, a male drummer and the declarative statement "feed your hero" at the left side of the text represent "given" information. This means the knowledge presented on the side of the text is familiar to the viewers as it is commonplace within the socio-cultural context in which the text is produced to have the kind of people to engage in the kind of activity presented. Also, it is a common knowledge to supply the necessary food nutrient to a person whether they are hero or not. However, the representation of the girl as a star/celebrity presents some kind of "new" information as her choice in the text suggests a different ideology from what is obtainable in a patriarchal culture like Nigeria where a male child would rather be referred to as a hero than a female child. Therefore, the text producers seem to be offering a new idea to parents "viewers" that a female child is as important as a male child and that if properly taken care of, they

also can become heroes and rise to stardom just as the female RP in the visual text is.

The visual text also has a centre system whereby the outstretched arm of the female RP hangs at the centre of the text with her finger directly pointed at something or people outside the visual text. Through this we can understand the narrative of the text: that the girl is addressing some people outside the visual text who probably are parents and guardians. The gesture of the female RP indicates that she is sending a particular message to this category of people as regards proper feeding of their children which the product advertised – "Indomie" – can provide. This serves as the nucleus of the message of the text.

Salience: Size, focus, colour contrast and foreground/ background are the elements of salience system that contribute to the message of the visual text. The girl is the largest RP emphasising the import of a girl child. The declarative statement, "feed your hero" and the female RP with an outstretched arm are in focus and in the foreground. This gives credence to the overall message of the text that the proper feeding of female children is important because they also can make their parents proud and become their hero. This is further reiterated in the choice of colour used to distinguish them from the other RPs. The guitarist, drummer and the rest of the background are out of focus. Therefore, viewers are compelled to pay attention to the action and message inherent in the visual text.

Framing: Although there are no actual lines deployed as a frame in the text, the beam of lights on the female RP, the slanting style used to write the statement "feed your hero", and the placement of the female RP on the right side of the text work together to frame the female RP as the main represented participant in the text. The outstretched arm of the female RP also frames that there are other participants outside the text to which the female RP directs her message. Furthermore, the guitarist, the drummer as well as their gazes all indicate some kind of connection they have with female RP. All these interlace to present the visual text as a whole, a multimodal ensemble. They create some form of dynamism to the visual text and lay emphasis on the central message of the text. Thus, each of the modes deployed in the text has a role to play.

In summary the systems of the compositional metafunction play a significant role in integrating representational and interactive metafunctions so that the message of the visual text can combine seamlessly and come across clearly to the viewer.

5. Conclusion Revise your conclusion to reflect your objectives and findings…

This paper has discussed what multimodality is all about, its relationship with social semiotics its fundamental concepts and most specifically the functional elements that are operationalized at the three metafunction levels of analysis to arrive at a comprehensive description and interpretation of texts. The paper reveals how different elements such as gazes, gestures, colour, vector, distance, camera angle, size among others, with which a text is realised complement one another; how they are coordinated in the process of meaning-making and how their complementary contributions are integrated with one another. This was achieved by taking account of both the semiotic systems and the context in which they operate. MMDA pays attention to the way language combines with other semiotic resources to express meaning. Thus, the study serves as a road map to the functional elements/ meta-language of MMDA scholars must pay attention to and deploy as their tools for analysis when carrying out a research in MMDA. In MMDA, every layer of meaning plays a significant role to the overall meaning of text; hence, the need to understand the nitty-gritty of each of the three metafunctions.

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