

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Textual Metafunction in the Holy Eucharist

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Abstract

The Holy Eucharist is a sacrament in Christian liturgical traditions that commemorates the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Luke 22:19-20). In this paper, the Holy Eucharist is analysed focusing on both verbal and nonverbal elements. This is because language use in this specific context is deeply interwoven with a variety of nonverbal behaviours manifesting meanings from the systems of gesture, space, movement, and gaze, amongst others, which cannot be accounted for by focusing on language alone. The theoretical framework adopted for this paper is systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis (SFMDA). This approach is rooted in Halliday's (2014) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which identifies three main metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. SFMDA is a framework and method for analysing communication that involves multiple modes beyond just text, such as images and gestures. In this paper, the Holy Eucharist is analysed focusing on the textual metafunction. Attention is given to how the ceremony is organised in terms of theme-rheme patterns and thematic development. Central themes include remembrance, peace, celebration and thanksgiving, and sacrifice. Cohesive devices including reference, substitution, repetition and synonyms are also examined to demonstrate how the text achieves coherence of verbal and nonverbal elements. Intertextuality and intersemiosis are incorporated into the analysis to consider how the text integrates scriptures, and how different semiotic resources interact to complement each other, giving rise to a network of meanings extending beyond the immediate text. The paper thus contributes to the growing body of research on SFMDA and its application to religious discourse.

Keywords: Holy Eucharist, SFMDA, Textual Metafunction, Intersemiosis, Peace

Introduction

The Holy Eucharist is one of the most important sacraments observed collectively in Christendom and a celebration of Jesus' vicarious death. The ceremony is an integral part of Christian worship. The Catholic Church refers to it as the Holy Eucharist while most protestant churches, the Pentecostals and the new generation churches refer to it as Holy Communion. The Holy Eucharist means a participation in the body of Christ and Christians become members of one another as they participate in the observance of this ritual which involves the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine, believed to be the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 states that: "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

There is a collective consciousness among the Christian community of what this ceremony represents to them. In a work of this nature with more than one mode of communication and representation, analysing language alone would exclude meanings essential to the core of the ceremony. It is for this reason that the methodological approach, multimodal discourse analysis, is adopted which not only takes into cognisance non-linguistic elements but gives equal attention to the analysis of all modes used in an event. Adopting this approach to analyse this religious ritual reflects both stakeholder and academic perspectives. Multimodal discourse analysis is a framework that is starting to gain recognition in Nigeria, therefore, adopting this framework further extend its viability and increase its visibility. This paper applies Halliday's (2014) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach to Multimodal discourse analysis (SFMDA).

While there are scholarly works on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) being applied to diverse kinds of religious texts, its application specifically to liturgical texts, especially within a multimodal framework and SFMDA is limited. In investigating the textual metafunction of the Eucharist using the SFMDA framework, this paper examines the organisation and the coherence of the ceremony by looking at how different parts of the text are linked together using reference, substitution and lexical cohesion (repetition, relations of familiarity, synonyms). The other textual element explored is the theme-rheme pattern in relation to thematic development. Key themes and how they are developed are explored which include remembrance, peace, sacrifice, celebration and thanksgiving. The paper makes use of intertextuality to refer to or integrate other texts, such as scriptures and intersemiosis of meanings made through the combination, interactions and interplay of semiotic resources and how they semantically complement each other.

The role of non-verbal elements (such as gestures, visual symbol, among others) in constructing and conveying religious meaning are examined with emphasis on how these elements work together in the text to create a cohesive and meaningful religious experience. The analyses give rise to a network of meanings that deepens our understanding of religious rituals and practices beyond the immediate text. Insights from this analysis can be used to enrich educational discourse, develop more effective teaching strategies that incorporate multiple modes of communication, thereby enhancing the educational experience generally and religious education, especially. Liturgical studies will particularly benefit from such insights thus enriching the field of religious semiotics and multimodal discourse analysis.

Literature Review

Multimodality is a term used in social semiotics with different meanings in different settings. Within the field of linguistics study particularly for those who align with Systemic Functional linguistics, it is described as a phenomenon (O'Halloran 2004, vanLeeuwen, 2005), a domain of enquiry or research field (Kress & vanLeeuwen 2006, O'Halloran 2004, Jewitt 2009, Bezemer, 2008) and an analytical approach (Jewitt 2009, O'Halloran, 2009).

Multimodality involves the integration of various forms of interaction simultaneously such as print, image, movement, graphics, animation, sound, music, gesture, digital forms. These modes, as well as language are often referred to as different semiotic resources. Multimodal analysis can be described as a framework that facilitates the understanding of how words,

images, gestures, sounds, combine to make more meanings together than any one of them can make alone. Multimodal analysis explores how diverse semiotic modes are used in the design of a semiotic product or communicative event.

In terms of terminologies, there are also variations in meanings due to the disparate disciplinary fields, but this study aligns with O'Halloran (2008) terms and explanation of "mode" as "the channel (auditory, visual or tactile, for example) through which semiotic activity takes place". Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA) draws its inspiration from Halliday's Systemic Functional Theory which accounts for how language works in a social and cultural setting.

Systemic Functional Theory is not only a theory of language but a theory of meaning that has been extensively applied to language which has a more standard grammatical system, has been adequately researched upon and best understood. Halliday & Hasan (1976) explain lucidly that:

There are many other modes of meaning, in any culture, which are outside the realm of language. These will include both art forms such as painting, sculpture, music, the dance, and so forth, and other modes of cultural behaviour that are not classified under the heading of forms of art, such as modes of exchange, modes of dress, structures of the family, and so forth. These are all bearers of meaning in the culture. Indeed, we can define a culture as a set of semiotic systems, as a set of systems of meaning, all of which interrelate. (4)

Basically, therefore, there remains an existing relationship between language, the context in which it occurs, social function and cultural setting. The major strength of SF-MDA is Halliday's metafunctional principle which provides an integrating platform that can be used to project how semiotic resources interact to create meaning (Kress & vanLeeuwen, 2006). SFL examines the meanings made in language through the systems choices oriented around the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014).

Multimodality, still in its nascent state in Nigeria has been explored in the analysis of political, religious and educational discourse. Ademilokun, and Olateju (2015) utilised Halliday's systemic metafunctional principles and Barthes' (1977) concepts of anchorage and relay in the analysis of some selected political visual artefacts used in political rallies conducted across the six southwestern states in Nigeria. They noted that various political parties adopt colour markers for identification in almost all the visual images "suggestive of the ideology or level of commitment and political leanings of discourse participants". Their findings reveal among others that caps, *Ankara*, and surrogate languages complement the use of vests for visual signification and meaning in the discourse. Their conclusion indicates that, "semiotic resources or artefacts are an important aspect of political rallies because of the inherent political, cultural, and social communication that are revealed through them".

Olateju (2015) adopts the multimodal discourse analysis approach to demonstrate how the distribution of information in the different modes - song, action and paralinguistics, combine in a Yoruba song drama situated in a historical/biblical past. Using Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) framework, the paper reveals that, information, anticipation, request and

insistence are prominent features at the ideational level, while at the interpersonal level, the song-drama is a metaphor for the possibility of a better life for the poor and needy in a society full of oppression and selfishness. At the textual level, there is the distribution of information in the different modes - song, drama, and paralinguistic expressions. The conclusion of the work reveals that pedagogically, storytelling, re-telling, writing and rewriting have the capacity to improve pupils' vocabulary development.

She notes that the ESL teacher could creatively use video watching (which has replaced story telling), storytelling and retelling to launch the present-day ESL learners into 21st century critical thinking and learning activities. Similarly, Dada (2024) explored the interface between multimodal literacy and digital humanities arguing that since multiple modes of communication such as text, images, audio, video and interactive digital contents are utilised in the production of websites, blogs, digital storytelling and other forms of multimedia presentations, multimodal literacy should be integrated into the digital humanities course for arts discipline so that students can navigate these platforms successfully, proficiently, while becoming creators themselves.

Although, there are not many works on religious discourse adopting the multimodal approach as an analytical tool, Dada (2018) combines multimodality and critical discourse analysis to examine Christian ideology in church programme handbills. The paper adopted the systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis framework to argue for the power of religion in citizenship education. She concludes that synergetic effects can be expected in religious discourse when both elements, verbal and visual, are used to convey the ideological power of the discourse.

The reviewed works have all employed the multimodal framework and have one emphasis, which is in tandem with Owyong's (2009) assertion that "it is only in considering the interplay of semiotic systems within a multimodal text that meaning can be accurately extracted, interpreted and studied". In this paper, the multimodal software for video analysis was applied to the analysis of the data which was also adopted in the analysis of some of the papers reviewed. This exposes the diverse opportunities this perspective holds for those wanting to account for the immense complexities of multimodal communication. In what follows, the theoretical framework is explained, followed by the methodology which discusses materials and methods of data collection.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this paper is Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis. (henceforth, SF-MDA). It deals with meaning that is not just additive or supportive but multiplicative. According to Baldry and Thibault 2006; Lemke 1998, when meaning is additive it means "merely adding the meanings of one resource language, say to those of another, such as the visual image" and when meaning is supportive it means a duplication of meaning (Lemke, 1998), but when meaning is multiplicative it means that "Meanings made concisely in one mode can be exported and re-used to enhance meanings made in other modes" (Bateman 2008). In other words, ". . . various semiotics work together to produce something altogether above and beyond any one of its constitutive elements" would do (Ravelli 2008).

The dynamic nature of digital technology in contemporary times is due to constant innovations and advancements in communication and representations. Every year, new applications and tools invented and launched into the world of communication, change the way we work and interact. It is now the norm to engage several semiotic modes in one communicative event, such as the creation of websites, blog, among other. More than ever, technology facilitates the quick dissemination of information in combined modes of the visual, aural, tactile, amongst others, and with it comes the need to engage new ways and means of understanding the meanings made through these various modes of communication individually and collectively.

In multimodal discourse analysis, linguistic descriptions are indispensable but can be limiting when the focus is only on one mode, as in language. O'Halloran (2008) explains that "The meanings arising from choices from the systems of Gaze, Colour, Shape, Movement, Framing, Layout, Lighting and so forth cannot be adequately described using language. She corroborates what others have said that "multimodal analysis includes the analysis of communication in all its forms but is particularly concerned with texts which contain the interaction and integration of two or more semiotic resources. This theoretical framework is adopted for analysis in this paper. The next section explains the methodology.

Methodology

This paper adopts a descriptive qualitative analysis approach. The quantitative analysis involves the use of simple percentages in tabular forms. This helps to reveal patterns that run through the data. Some aspects of the linguistic (verbal) elements in the ceremony are analysed separately from the non-linguistic. Under linguistic analysis, the transcribed text is arranged into constituent clauses in order to apply textual analysis to them. The data for the paper is got from the video recordings of the Roman Catholic Church Mass uploaded on YouTube by the Eternal Word Trinity Network (EWTN) of February 4, 2019. The downloaded video is complimented with locally observed liturgy in Nigeria in St Paul's Catholic Church, Airport Road, Benin City and St Francis Catholic Church, 1, Oremeji Street, Oregun, Ikeja, Lagos, through participatory observation, in order to gather firsthand information. The participant-observation method is necessary to complement what was downloaded from YouTube and participating in these services established the invariant nature of the ceremony within the Catholic denomination. There is a prescribed order for the conduct of the ritual in the Catholic Church (CC). The mass begins with the introductory Rites which can serve as the initiation process under Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) outline for the development of discourse. The Introductory Rites consist of the greeting, the Penitential Act and Kyrie Eleison invocation. The liturgy of the word comes next consisting of the readings, Alleluia, proclamation of the Gospel, Homily, the Symbol or Profession of Faith or Creed, and lastly, the Universal Prayer, that is, the Prayer of the Faithful or Bidding Prayers.

The following stage in the observance of the Holy Eucharist is the liturgy of the Eucharist consisting of the Offertory, the Eucharistic prayer with distinct prefaces. The fourth stage of the Mass is the Communion Rite which begins with the Lord's Prayer, exchange of the sign of peace, the consecration of the host, Lamb of God invocation and presentation of the transformed host which has become "the real body of Christ". The Priest, followed by the

communicants receives the Holy Communion and lastly is the Purification of the paten over the chalice and the chalice itself. The priest concludes the segment with the communion prayer. The fifth and final stage of the Mass is the Concluding Rites consisting of Announcements and the dismissal. All these stages are helpful in the structure of an orderly development of the liturgy. This facilitates the administration of the event in an organised manner.

Data Analysis Procedure

The digital software multimodal analysis video (MMAV) designed especially for multimodal analysis was used to make the job of coding data and analysing the results easier. The video of the Mass was fed into the MMAV software. Repeated viewing, provisional analytical notes and thumbnail depictions of specific excerpts were carried out and scriptural texts from the Holy Bible were drawn for both inter and intra textual information. The use of the MMAV software demonstrates the usefulness of digital media in multimodal discourse analysis, because the software is customised to the requirement of studies in multimodality. It allows for easy annotation, visualisation, analysis, search and retrieval of data. It also allows for the analysis and comparison of the repertoire of multimodal semiotic resources in one single interactive interface within the same programme. The intersemiosis of the semiotic resources effectively realised a unifying textual phenomenon.

In what follows, attention is given to the analysis and discussion of the linguistic and nonlinguistic data and their intersemiosis through the application of the systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis framework.

The Textual Metafunction

Introduction

This section explores the textual metafunction of the Holy Eucharist of the Catholic Church Mass. The textual metafunction is the grammar of the clause as message. It has to do with Thematic structure, cohesion and coherence. This paper analyses reiteration and the theme structure of the ceremony.

Reiteration

Reiteration can be viewed from four different angles: direct repetition, relations of familiarity based on identity and synonyms. The repetition of a lexical item is cohesive in its own right but when a word can be associated with another word in the preceding text, it coheres with that word and so contributes to the texture. Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that "continuity that is provided by cohesion expresses points of contact with what has gone before; the significance of this is that some relevant feature or some thread of argument persists from one moment to another as the meanings unfold".

This helps the speaker to guide the participants along and instill in them the required ideology the speaker wants to project. The reiteration tables show how the argument proceeds and what features the speakers continuously offer that are important from their ideological standpoint. However, reiteration of ideas not just lexical items more openly shows the speaker's standpoint, as is seen next.

(1) Reiteration depicting time of the event

Catholic Mass

Video: Monday February 4th, 2019

Clause:

1. Introductory rite: Welcome to the celebration of the daily televised mass
2. For those in our daily TV mass community
3. Do this in memory of me
4. We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again
5. as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection
6. as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ

(2) Synonyms and relations of familiarity depicting Peace

1. For Pope Francis and for the unity and peace of the church
2. ...graciously grant peace in our days...
3. ...Peace, I leave you, my peace I give you...
4. ...graciously grant her peace and unity...
5. The peace of the Lord be with you always
6. Let us give one another the sign of peace
7. The peace of the Lord be with you
8. ... grant us peace

Reiteration is one way the speaker can keep stating his opinion throughout the whole text. It is a form of amplification of ideas which helps the speaker to gradually paint a picture of his ideological standpoint and encourage the readers/listeners to agree with and finally accept it. In the Catholic Mass, the speaker in the introductory rite welcomes the participants to the daily Mass. He reiterates the fact that the mass is daily in clause 1, Table (1). This happens in all the televised Mass.

This is important as it can be connected to the frequency of time the event is to be observed which is not explicitly stated in the biblical text. However, exophorically and homophorically, in terms of reference to the book of 1st Corinthians 11 from verse 25-26 of the Holy Bible and in terms of Christian culture, this ritual is to be carried out often in commemoration of Jesus Christ' death. The ceremony is therefore carried out at the discretion of each church organisation "often". Their interpretation of "often" can be daily, weekly, monthly, as they so wish.

Peace is another factor that runs through the Catholic text. The Holy Eucharist is a celebration of peace as reflected in Table (2). Peace is one of the essences of observing the Eucharist as there must be continuous peace and unity among the brethren and the body of Christ which is his church. children of God should always remember. Jesus Christ instructed that the ceremony be done in remembrance of him. Remembrance is a relation of familiarity as Christians are directed to carry out the ceremony often "for as often as you do this, you do show the Lord's death till he comes". The word "show" which means to proclaim all that His

death attained continuously. Doing this repetitively will leave a deep and lasting impression on the adherents.

The Mass is celebrated invariantly every day in the same setting, objects, and elements, bringing about familiarity which sustains remembrance. This is a form of referential recall and “doing this in remembrance of Christ” brings about familiarity of referents. The expression “in remembrance” can mean to remember someone’s good or bad deeds and the values they lived for. Christians remember Christ for his vicarious death, for what that death symbolises. Remembrance in linguistic terms can refer to the act of recalling specific details about previous discourse. In this case, Christ death is the previous discourse and like Isaiah pointed out, Jesus Christ paid the price of peace with his death (Isaiah 53:5). Participants in the Holy Eucharist are to remember this price and appropriate its benefits in their lives by dwelling in peace and unity as a church, as one body of Christ and as individuals.

nodal Analysis Video - CATHOLIC MASS

Visualization Analysis Help

CATHOLIC MASS

Player Window



Fig. 1- Sign of Peace

nodal Analysis Video - CATHOLIC MASS

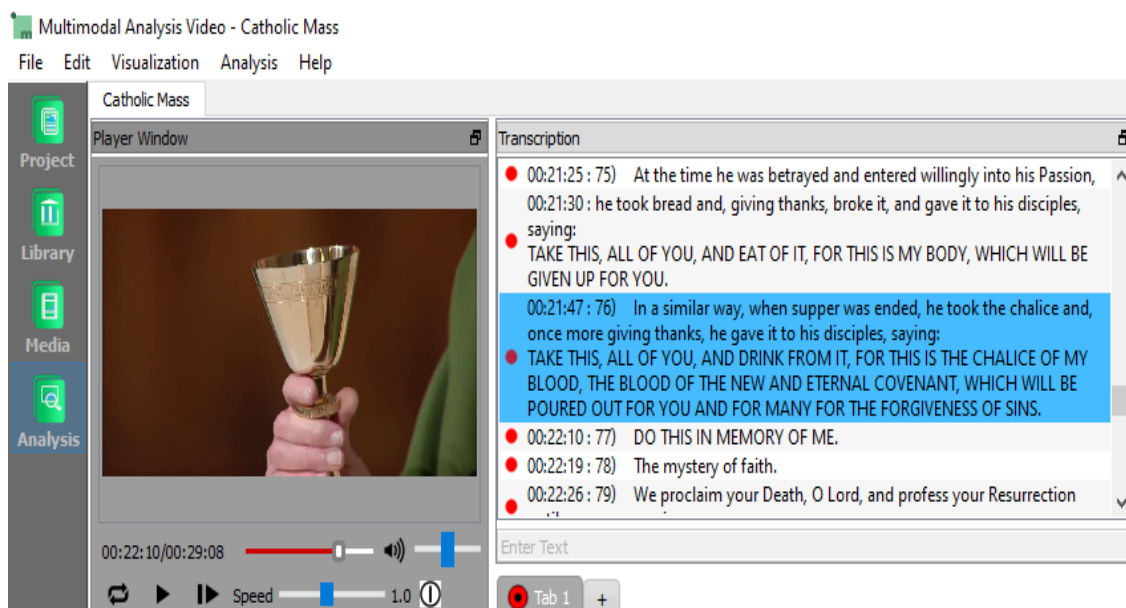
Visualization Analysis Help

CATHOLIC MASS

Player Window



This is my body



This is the chalice of my blood

(Clips from the Multimodal Analysis Video (MMAV))

The Mass is a celebration. The Catholic priest reiterates this in the welcome greeting in the introductory rites of the Mass and in a couple of other clauses “Welcome to the celebration of the daily televised mass”. “Let us acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries”. “His death we celebrate in love...” “Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, ...” The offertory precedes the consecration/communion service. The congregation offers wine and bread for the sacrifice. These are visual elements that add extra layers of meaning to the observance of the event. At this point the priest would request the congregation to “pray that my sacrifice and yours be acceptable to God”. To which they reply - it is right and just, and together the Priest and the people would carry out the offering.

The mass is a celebration of the sacrifice and gifts presented to God Almighty by His children. “O God may all the offerings presented here before you provide for the twofold need of human nature”. The sacrifice nourishes and renews “nourishing us with food and renewing us with your sacrament”. It is offered in memory of the Lord's death which is to be proclaimed and professed by doing it often until he comes again. The sacrifice also, sustains the body and spirit and brings about a sharing in the divinity of Christ as coheirs. The result is oneness, peace and unity. “Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit...as this reception of your communion O Lord foreshadows the union of the faithful in you, so may it bring about unity in your church through Christ our Lord”.

In carry out this oblation specific gestures and movements are performed which add extra layers of meaning to the ceremony. Gestures have been categorised into various types. Ekman & Friesen (1974) categorised gestures into Emblems, Illustrators, Regulators, Adaptors

and Affect Displays. McNeill & Levy (1993) refer not to categories but to dimensions, which include iconicity, metaphoricity, deixis and beat. However, researchers tend to admit that it is often difficult to define clear boundaries between neighbouring categories as they seem to form a continuum on "the axis of linguisticity". This is often referred to as Kendon's continuum. McNeil and Levy's dimension is extended in this paper. They explain that iconic/emblematic gestures are sometimes construed as referential gestures and considered equivalent to linguistic units in meaning. They function or are semantically parallel to sentences. Emblems are considered as speech-independent gestures that can possibly have direct verbal translation. They are Communicative pictorial gestures that represent physical/concrete entities in the world.

The communicative gestures which are language independent in this paper fall under this category. For instance, at certain points in the ceremony, the priest stretches out his hands to the people, observed during greetings (e.g. opening greeting) and when he invites responses from the congregants, in which case the hands are extended with the palms open sideways. Such gestures are symbolic of welcome, invitation and acceptance. In terms of textual metafunctional analysis, these gestures could be represented as falling under synonyms and relations of familiarity as they are synonymous with their linguistic equivalent. At other times, the hands are stretched to the people in prayer or to the communion elements with the palms open facedown. This gesture is symbolic of blessing and invocation.

The textual metafunction is primarily concerned with how information is organised in discourse in order to achieve cohesion and coherence. The relationship between the message and its context in the Mass is seen in how the linguistic and nonlinguistic cohere ensuring that communication among all participants is meaningful, effective, properly structured and organised. The textual metafunction has the Theme-Rheme component which organises the flow of information so that it makes sense within the larger context of the text. The Theme is what the speaker or writer chooses to focus on or present at the beginning. In relation to the verbal and nonverbal, this paper proposes that the linguistic is the theme, which is the starting point of the clause, and in this case, the ceremony. It is what the ceremony is about, which is the observance of the Holy Eucharist. It sets the stage for the Rheme which in this case, we argue, are the nonverbal elements in the ceremony that provide new or additional information. They are speech independent gestures (Martinec 2000, 2001, 2004).

The Rheme usually carries the most relevant content of the clause and in the Holy Eucharist, this paper argues that these nonlinguistic communicative pictorial gestures carry the most relevant content related to the "linguistic theme" because that is where the actions are demonstrated. For instance, the priest performs the consecration by raising up the host and chalice one after the other in the manner of Christ raising heavenward the host and the cup during the Lord's supper to give thanks. At this point, the church is quiet, and all eyes are focused on the sacrifice as they are raised. At this point, the Catholics believe the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ known as transubstantiation. It is these nonverbal communicative gestures that facilitate the transformation which evokes the awe and reverence with which the priest administers the body and blood and with which the congregants also receive these sacred items.

The second component of the textual metafunction is cohesion which refers to the linking of grammatical and lexical devices used in connecting different parts of a text and ideas together so that coherence is achieved. In the case of nonverbal elements, it can be argued that they link with the verbal in their equivalence to the linguistic units. This makes them function as synonyms. For instance, it can be argued that the signs of peace substitute for the word "peace" which congregants are required to exchange in keeping with local customs. This cultural gesture adds an extra layer of meaning to the ceremony. The sign is represented with a stylised "V" hand gesture; giving of high-five; waiving of the palm, among others, all in keeping with the local custom of the people.

This supports McNeil and Levy's referential gestures which are considered equivalent to linguistic units in meaning. They are semantically parallel to sentences because they are speech-independent gestures with possible direct verbal translation. The next section demonstrates the interplay of the various semiotic resources in how they complement one another to result in the network of meanings associated with the Mass.

Intersemiosis

Intersemiosis is how the combination, interactions and interplay of semiotic resources semantically complement each other to effectively realise the Holy Eucharist liturgy. O'Halloran (2011) proposes the term 'intersemiosis' which is the same as intersemiotic complementarity. She notes according to Terry Royce, that "intersemiotic complementarity" is when "visual and verbal modes semantically complement each other to produce a single textual phenomenon" (1998). Michele Lim distinguishes two types of contextualising relations and explains that in the case where the meaning of one modality seems to "reflect" the meaning of the other through some type of convergence, the two resources share co-contextualising relations.

On the other hand, in cases where the meaning of one modality seems to be at odds with or unrelated to the other, their semantic relationship is one that creates divergence or dissonance. In so doing, the resources share re-contextualising relations. Liu & O'Halloran (2009) also proposed the mechanisms of Intersemiotic Parallelism and Intersemiotic Polysemy, which account for the meanings made through Semiotic Cohesion. According to them, Intersemiotic Parallelism refers "to a cohesive relation which interconnects both language and images when the two semiotic components share a similar form" while Intersemiotic Polysemy refers "to the cohesive relation between verbal and visual components, which share multiple related meanings in multisemiotic texts".

The interplay of the semiotic systems in this ceremony shows how the minister uses language and gestures to connect with their audience in such a way that more than one meaning emerges in their co-deployment and engagement with one another thereby resulting in intersemiotic polysemy. According to Ravelli (2008) "Intersemiosis draws together otherwise disparate elements and relates them as a meaningful whole". This is seen in the analysis surrounding "remembrance and time. The intersemiosis of the verbal and nonverbal semiotic elements produced co-contextualising relations that reinforced and enhanced the emergent meaning because the meaning of one modality (language) was said to "reflect" the meaning of the other (gestures) through some type of convergence.

Conclusion

This paper adopts the Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA) approach to investigate the Holy Eucharist focusing on the analysis of the Mass uploaded on YouTube by the Eternal Word Trinity Network (EWTN) satellite channel. The semiotic resources of language and gestures of the priest were discussed in relation to the liturgy. The introduction explained the background to the paper which is the investigation of the Holy Eucharist of the Catholic Church. It also discussed multimodality as an approach that involves the analysis of all modes used in an event in the making of a text-specific meaning. This was followed by the aim and the justification for the research. A brief review of the liturgy of the Catholic Church, the SF-MDA approach adopted, and other related studies were reviewed as well. The methodology is the same as the theoretical framework adopted for this study, using the SFMDA as an analytical toolkit. In terms of materials and methods, the multimodal analysis video software was used to foreground analysis and the approach used in the collection, annotation and analysis of the data was outlined.

The semiotic resources of gesture were investigated as well as considering an integrative perspective on the co-deployment of semiotic resources between language and gesture in terms of contextualising relations and intersemiotic cohesion. The meanings made through the combination, interactions and interplay of semiotic resources and how they semantically complement each other to effectively realise a unifying textual phenomenon (intersemiosis) were also discussed. The analysis and discussion of the data (verbal/nonverbal modes) guided by the textual metafunction was carried out through an investigation of the thematic structure and cohesive devices adopted in the text thus revealing the ideologies of peace, thanksgiving, and remembrance. The findings of this analysis demonstrate the importance of multimodal discourse and SFMDA in examining the way religious texts and rituals are perceived by worshippers. For examining the experience of religious texts and rituals among worshippers. By examining both verbal and non-verbal modes, we gain a deeper insight into how the Holy Eucharist transcends the limitations of spoken language. This analysis, thus, provides a framework for understanding the multimodal nature of religious practices and their significance in constructing meaning.

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