A Comparative Study of Two Approaches to Metaphor Identification in Video Ads

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Identifying metaphor with a reliable and replicable procedure is a methodological issue in Multimodal Metaphor Theory (Forceville, 2016; Pérez-Sobrino, 2017). This issue is particularly challenging when it comes to metaphor in video advertisements, where the manifestation of metaphor can be flexibly created by multi-sensory elements within a short timespan. Attempts to address this issue have been made from divergent approaches. Understanding the differences between these approaches is important for developing applicative methodology and laying the ground for further related analyses.

There are two major current approaches. One is to identify metaphor based on thorough interpretation of the multimodal data, considering the brand information and culture background. Principles and possibilities proposed from Pictorial and Multimodal Metaphor Theory by Forceville (2016) lay the foundation for this approach. The other approach is to identify a metaphor with a procedure that is adapted from the methodology developed from linguistic studies (Pan & Tay, accepted; Šorm & Steen, 2018). This approach highlights the role of incongruity in metaphor recognition. Creative Metaphor Identification Procedure in Video Ads (CMIPVA) (Pan & Tay, accepted) is such a procedure that particularly deals with video ads. This procedure advances the idea that metaphor should be recognised prior to analysing the mapping features and reasons for selections. This paper will discuss the extent to which results from these two major approaches differ, and how the differences contribute to the investigation of metaphor in video Ads.

This study compares the results of metaphor identification by applying both the framework of Forceville (2016) and CMIPVA into two Chinese video ads (one for a tangible product, the other for an intangible product). Results show that CMIPVA generates more metaphors, including the central metaphor that includes the product, which grasps the majority of attention when the other approach was applied. Results also show that thorough interpretation considering the culture and brand background does not influence the identification of metaphor's two terms, but stimulates insights into the relation between the chosen metaphor and the product, which implies that these two approaches are complementary regarding metaphor analyses in video ads. Implications of sustainable practice for stakeholders are discussed further.

References

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