

## **A Methodological Framework For Conducting Multimodal Rhetorical Analyses Of Advertising Films With ATLAS.ti**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to present a novel methodological framework for analyzing the multimodal rhetorical structure of advertising films. By drawing on a corpus of 87 TV commercials from the world's most valuable brands according to the BrandZ 2012 report and a resulting pool of 561 ad filmic segments, it will be shown how (i) TV ads may be segmented (ii) how individual segments may be coded with one or more verbo-visual rhetorical figures in the light of three distinctive levels of analysis (iii) how statistical output pertaining to the rhetorical structure of TV ads may be produced and interpreted. The filmic syntagms are segmented and coded by applying a rhetorical taxonomy of four operations and thirty-nine verbo-visual figures with the aid of ATLAS.ti 7 as content analytical tool. The exposition of the adopted rhetorical approach covers conceptual, methodological and interpretive areas, with view to yielding a coherent and holistic view of the technical issues involved in conducting multimodal rhetorical analyses of ad films with ATLAS.ti, while highlighting how 'figurative competitive advantages' may be yielded for brand discourses.

### **Keywords**

*multimodal rhetoric, advertising films, content analysis, film semiotics, ATLAS.ti.*

### **Introduction**

In the context of a highly visio-centric culture and the by now consolidated 'pictorial' or 'iconic turn' (Mitchell, 2005; Moxey, 2008), as the successor of the time-hallowed linguistic turn, argumentation techniques in TV advertising have been progressively shifting focus from the verbal to the visual mode. "Documentary evidence suggests that [...] emphasis on pictures over words has steadily increased throughout the last century" (McQuarrie & Philips, 2004, p.113). "Television commercials to-day show between one and four dozen different moving visual images in a 30-second spot [...] it would be impossible to express 30 different propositions verbally in 30 seconds" (Blair, 2004, p.51).

Scholars from various research streams concerned with analyzing the rhetoric of ad texts have been making repeated pleas for either coining new rhetorical figures or adapting existing ones (e.g., Forceville, 1996) to this visio-centric predicament, as well as inviting further research into how such adaptations may occur beyond print ads (e.g., McQuarrie and Philips, 2004). Furthermore, the bulk of research in multimodal rhetorical analyses of advertising texts, and particularly ad filmic texts, has focused largely on the four master tropes (metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony). By extending the scope of multimodal rhetorical analysis, an attempt is made in this paper at demonstrating that traditional rhetorical operations and figures, over and above the four master tropes, may be applied effectively to ad filmic texts. Moreover, as a response to the suggestion for coining new figures that may encapsulate salient facets of the bespoke configuration modes of ad filmic texts, three new figures are put forward, viz. accolorance, pareikonopoeia and reshaption, as defined and illustrated in the Methodology and How rhetorical figures

operate on three levels of analysis Sections. The analytical/interpretive route that is pursued in this paper emphasizes the applicability of traditional figures to verbal, visual and music modes, with a focus on verbo-visual interactions, thus yielding a 'rhetorical perspective' (Foss, 2005, p.145) on the configuration modes of the rhetorical landscape of the most valuable brands, as reported in BrandZ 2012<sup>1</sup> (WPP Report 2012). In addition, concrete, step-by-step guidelines are offered across the segmentation, coding, statistical analysis continuum as to how this rhetorical perspective was applied to the selected corpus with the aid of ATLAS.ti.

## Background Literature

Various perspectives, typologies and taxonomies spanning different disciplines have been offered in order to account for the modes of rhetorical configuration of both static and moving images (see Rossolatos 2012a), such as Foss's visual rhetoric (2005), Groupe  $\mu$ 's *Traité du Signe Visuel* (1992; from a rhetorical semiotic point of view), Kostelnick's & Roberts' (2010; from a visual design point of view), Mick's & McQuarrie's and McQuarrie's & Philips's (1996, 2004, 2008; from a consumer research point of view), but also, less concerned with rhetorical analysis, sociosemiotic readings of the grammar of visual design and filmic texts (e.g., Van Leeuwen & Kress, 1996; Almeida 2009; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2011) and the list may be expanded. Groupe  $\mu$ , in their Visual Rhetoric (1992), provided an updated account of the rhetorical operations (adjunction, suppression, substitution, permutation<sup>2</sup>) that were featured in their first rhetorical treatise (1970), while applying them to visual signs (mainly artistic images) that had been introduced in the first treatise (1970), with further qualifications (see Rossolatos, 2014a, 2012b)<sup>3</sup>.

The rhetorical perspective that is offered in this paper has been edified on the operational taxonomy of Groupe  $\mu$ 's first rhetoric (see Appendix A), while taking into account for analytical (and not taxonomic) purposes how operations function in general in the province of visual signs, as the primary focus rests with adapting figures to multimodal rhetorical discourse and not operations at large - even though operations have also been coded, as hyper-variable groupings of individual figures, as will be shown in the Methodology Section. Furthermore, the definitional and operational scope of the involved operations and figures was expanded in order to address the syntactical and semantic particularities of ad filmic texts as indispensable aspects of commercial branding discourse, rather than purely artistic texts. This extended application of rhetorical operations and their respective figures aims to unearth

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<sup>1</sup> BrandZ is an annual report published by the WPP group of companies that lists the top 100 corporate and/or product brands, ranked according to their brand equity standing on a global basis. High equity brands are characterized by particularly strong emotional ties with their target audiences, over and above the recognition of superior functional attributes stemming from product use. Hence, the brands featured in the BrandZ study constitute a pertinent pool for understanding how highly valued brands shape their advertising texts from a rhetorical point of view.

<sup>2</sup> These key operations stem from a long tradition, starting with Quintilian (see Sloane, 2006 and Nöth, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> A similar strategy of retaining operations, but dropping figures was pursued by McQuarrie & Philips (2004) in their taxonomy of operations in print ads.

identifiable patterns in configuration modes of representative ad filmic texts from the most valued brands, as analyzed in the section: *How rhetorical figures operate on three levels of analysis*.

Groupe  $\mu$  (1992) recognized that it is difficult to apply directly classical rhetorical figures to moving images, with the exception of the master tropes (see Rossolatos 2012a). Efforts have been undertaken at extending the application of traditional figures mostly to static images (e.g., visual metonymy; Willerton 2005) and print advertisements (e.g., Durand, 1970, 1987; McQuarrie and Philips, 2004). The extension of figures to moving images and advertising filmic texts has been mostly limited to visual metaphors and visual metonymies (e.g., Forceville, 2007, Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2008).<sup>4</sup> By adopting a common classification framework for visual and verbal elements, both purely verbal, purely visual, but also verbo-visual figures and operations may be discerned as being operative in ad filmic texts, while taking into account the evocative powers of the visual mode, viz. “immediacy, verisimilitude, and concreteness that help influence acceptance in ways not available to the verbal” (Foss, 2004, p.314). To this end, the rhetorical figures were redefined in order to encapsulate visual components, but also modes of interaction between visual and verbal modes in ad filmic texts, as laid out in Appendix A. By taking on board Forceville’s (1996) recommendation for coining new figures in the light of the particularities of the visual mode in the context of the ad filmic text, three new figures are put forward in this paper, viz. accolorance, reshaption and pareikonopoeia (see Appendix A). These figures aim to encapsulate salient and frequently recurring modes of rhetorical configuration of ad filmic texts.

## Methodological Framework

The exposition of the suggested method neither lays claim to being an exhaustive description of the program’s analytical capabilities, nor of its embedded functionalities, in which case the reader may refer to standard textbooks, such as the ATLAS.ti 7 manual and S.Friese’s *Qualitative data analysis with ATLAS.ti* (2012). Instead, it focuses on three major areas of data analysis and synthesis, viz. (i) how to delineate minimal units of analysis in the form of ad filmic segments (ii) how to code minimal units of analysis with rhetorical figures (iii) how to produce descriptive statistics by using ATLAS.ti’s embedded functionalities.

“A visual rhetorical approach acknowledges that where pictures and language are combined, visual communication affects linguistic communication and may have rhetorical consequences” (Bulmer and Buchanan-Oliver, 2006, p.55). However, as the authors (ibid.: 58) remark, “there are few standardized methodologies, if any”. This paper contributes to scholarly research on verbo-visual rhetoric in ad films by drawing on the capabilities of ATLAS.ti 7 and by pursuing a descriptive content analytic route, which is concerned with the identification of structural components of a studied phenomenon (Neuendorf, 2002, p.52-55), such as the incidence of rhetorical figures in TV ads.

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<sup>4</sup> The boundaries between metaphor and metonymy are not always clear-cut. In any case, as noted and analyzed by various scholars (Eco, 1972, Groupe  $\mu$ , 1970, Ducrot & Todorov, 1972) metaphors emerge through a process of double metonymy.

A representative commercial from each of the key brands making up the BrandZ 2012 list was selected, yielding a sample of 87 effective TV commercials<sup>5</sup>, after an initial screening phase of at least five commercials per brand. The majority of the selected commercials are corporate and non product-centric<sup>6</sup>, thus focusing on key messages that reflect a company overall (or a specific umbrella brand, in cases of brands involving more than one variants). The vast majority of the featured ad filmic texts were selected from the US/UK markets, with the exception of films from brands that operate solely in their native countries (i.e., Movistar/Spain, MTN/Uganda) and spanned the period between 2010-2012, in order to ensure as greater temporal proximity as possible.

### ***Segmenting Ad Filmic Texts***

Prior to proceeding with the purely technical aspect of segmentation with the employment of ATLAS.ti, it is mandatory to begin this section by considering what is to be segmented. This fundamental, yet crucial question, points to the need for determining the minimum units that will constitute our basic filmic segments or units of analysis. Furthermore, given that in order to be capable of recognizing that a rhetorical figure is operative in a text we must posit a 'semantic ground' wherefrom a figure as 'artful deviation' (McQuarrie & Mick 1996, 2009) may be gauged, complementary to delineating uniform criteria for audio-visual textual segmentation, we must determine a priori the textual levels on which such deviations are likely to emerge, as well as the criteria for determining the incidence of rhetorical deviations. In short, prior to proceeding with verbo-visual textual segmentation we must determine three salient facets of the analysis, viz. (i) criteria for gauging rhetorical deviations and hence the fact that verbo-visual figures are operative in a text (ii) uniform criteria for segmenting an ad filmic text (iii) the textual levels on which such deviations are likely to occur.

As regards the first facet, and this point is particularly important as it urges us to distance ourselves from a standard language grammar towards a filmic grammar, the key differences between textual linguistic and lexical semantic approaches and the propounded one consist in the latter's (i) adopting principles of film grammar (see Bordwell & Thompson, 2008 and Rossolatos, 2012a) as its point of departure and methodological toolbox, as against standard lexical grammar (even though it does take into account lexicogrammatical rules), and hence adopting a textual segmentation rationale by drawing on verbo-visual filmic syntagms, rather than verbal syntagms<sup>7</sup> (ii) by implication adopting a multimodal approach to semantic and syntactic markers, that is visual in complementarity to lexical items (iii) focusing not only on general grammatical rules for tapping semantic deviations and rhetorical transformations, but, even more importantly, on local textual rules that pertain to brands' local degrees zero of signification (see Rossolatos, 2012a) and are definitive of brands' idiolects and product categories' sociolects (Rossolatos, 2014a).

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5 With the exclusion of non-English speaking ads, which were not featured in the analysis due to the author's non-mastery of the language involved.

6 With exceptions that are reflective of the wider advertising strategy of different product/service categories, e.g., cars, where ad texts tend to focus on specific models, yet featuring a corporate brand promise as payoff line (first or second credentials card).

7 "Syntagms are not given. They are constructed by their interpreters" (Lemke, 2005, p.5).

What are the differences between a lexicogrammatical approach to textual segmentation and a multimodal one? Minimal units are not just lexemes (or words) but, in Gunning's (2003; also see Stam et al., 1992) terms, *profilmic units*. Moreover, even at a purely lexical level, the quantification of the relative incidence of certain lexemes (or lexical categories) does not pay heed to the highly contextual and situational contours of meaning production (irrespective of the ability of CAQDAS programs to incorporate bespoke lexical inventories), which is the province of rhetoric. As noted by Pan et al. (2008, p.339) "simply counting keywords can miss some important information because the same words may have different meanings depending on the context, and other parts of the speech or text will also alter the meanings of the words".

From a multimodal point of view, the local context of an enunciation is compounded by the inevitable interactions between verbal and visual modalities, based on which a verbal statement may be either wholly re-semanticized or its illocutionary force augmented/diminished by the sheer incidence of visual expressive units. From a film semiotic perspective, Gunning furnished a conceptual approach to the configuration of filmic discourse that bears considerable resemblance to Eco's triple articulation (Rossolatos, 2014a). "In film, text discourse is especially complex in that it functions at three distinct levels simultaneously. These three levels, which Gunning describes as *profilmic*—the physical material of the scene prior to the act of filming—the enframed image, and the process of editing, each communicate text information, but it is through their combination, their working in concert, that storytelling in film is accomplished" (Stam et al., 1992, p.116).

The designation of *profilmic units* is essential for determining which surface discursive elements of ad texts are salient in the composition of a manifest plot, and furthermore for employing these elements as markers of an ad text's local structure. A unit can be a "word, sentence, paragraph, image, article, television program, or any other description of content based on a definable physical or temporal boundary or symbolic meaning" (Riffe et al., 2005, p.69). In this sense, the following verbo-visual *profilmic elements* must be taken into account prior to proceeding with an ad film's segmentation:

1. Actors/characters, where involved (in which case, following Chatman [1980] a character is deemed salient for the discourse insofar as s/he affects the main actions involved in the deployment of the text).
2. Setting: The spatiotemporal configuration (e.g., landscapes, historical period) in which the deployment of a manifest plot is embedded. Settings are as important as actors for the demarcation of ad filmic segments insofar as change of setting occasionally signals a change in the meaning orientation of a manifest plot.
3. Slogans (cf. Armstrong, 2010, pp.222-224) or 'pay-off lines', insofar as in the majority of ad films payoff lines appear at the end of the film and constitute single filmic segments.
4. Typographical features (see Goddard, 1998, pp.18-19), as they allow us for recognizing the incidence of a rhetorical figure (e.g. the immediate repetition of a word in a super, albeit in different fonts, which alerts us to its employment in a different meaning to the one that was initially posited).
5. Colors (either of actors' clothes or settings), as they affect the semantic content of a verbo-visual scene, while even pointing to the incidence of a single rhetorical figure (such as *accolorance*, as put forth in Rossolatos 2012b).
6. Kinematic elements: gestures, facial expressions and proxemics.

7. Intra-diegetic dialogues, monologues, voice-overs, external narration.
8. Tone of voice, with regard to either particular utterances or the overall 'feel' of an ad filmic text. Especially where extra-diegetic narration is involved (i.e., in the incidence of a voice-over that guides semantically the transition among visual sequences/shots- as against intra-diegetic narration, i.e., actors' dialogues), properties such as timbre and pitch are crucial both for conditioning emotionally an audience's receptiveness to messages, but also in terms of adding tropical twists to the propositional content of utterances (e.g., an ironic tone that subverts the truth value of an assertoric proposition). As Barthes noted in his essay *The grain of the voice* (1977), the mode of utterance overdetermines semantic content. From a rhetorical grammar point of view, tone of voice is referred to as intonation patterns, that is "the rhythmic pattern of spoken sentences, affected by its stress, pitch and pauses" (Kolln, 1999, p.273).

Certainly profilmic elements may, but do not always, occur in isolation in the course of an ad filmic text, as actors appear in settings, while settings may change without any change in actorial figures. In the same fashion, a setting may remain the same, while the content of an extra-diegetic narration that guides viewers to ascribe specific semantic elements to profilmic units and their combinations may change.

Pursuant to this preliminary exposition of the importance of starting an ad filmic segmentation procedure with the determination of key profilmic elements, let us now proceed with the delineation of criteria for segmentation. The key principle for segmenting ad films into salient segments (or syntagms, in Metz's [1974] terms) consists in the possibility of making sense of a segment as a standalone semantic unit. For example, if a sunrise setting is portrayed in a visual segment in the beginning of an ad film, this setting may be translated into the proposition "This is a sunrise scene" or S1 (segment number 1): "The sun is rising". Let it be noted that this preliminary verbal description of a visual setting is a step in the analytical process that is often overlooked in the interpretation of ad messages, which jump straight into transcribing both what is portrayed (at a denotative, one might say, level) and what is meant by the portrayal (at a connotative level). As an example, Scott's (1994) transcription of a Clinique ad that portrays a lipstick submerged in a soda glass as "the product, Clinique lipstick, is a refreshing glass of soda water" may be cited. In this case, a visual metaphorical relationship that is established by the conjunction of two visual expressive units (lipstick and glass of soda) has been infused to the verbal transcription. This mode of transcription essentially concerns the interpretative phase of an ad textual reconstruction. Clearly differentiating between an original transcription stage that seeks to describe as objectively as possible the multimodal expressive units (profilmic elements) that make up a syntagm and a later interpretive phase that seeks to reconstruct the meaning of a syntagm is crucial, especially in the context of the moving image, where a rhetorical figure may be operative not only in the same segment (by analogy to the 'same page' setting of a print ad), but, and more likely than not, across and through the interaction of profilmic units from various segments.

The filmic segment/syntagm, then, must be described/transcribed as objectively as possible with regard to its contents, against the background of its relative autonomy<sup>8</sup>, that is irrespective of its actual 'mean-

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<sup>8</sup> This was also Metz's point of departure in the segmentation of filmic texts: "The starting unit for Metz's classification of alternatives is what he terms the autonomous sequence. This is the filmic realization of what, on the

ing' in the context of the film's 'global semantic context' (Van Dijk 1980). The delineation of filmic syntagms is usually easier when the semantic orientation of alternating scenes is yielded by an impersonal narrator, in which case it is just a matter of matching scenes/actors with distinctive propositions, uttered by a narrator, in line with discrete thematic units. For example, in the case of a classical problem/solution plot line in advertising discourse, the description of the consumer problem that is posited as ground for the legitimization of the ability of an advertised brand to resolve it may constitute one single filmic segment, which is not mandatory, as the description of the problem may have various facets. In this case, each facet will constitute one single filmic syntagm. In general, the more nuanced the analysis in a study that is geared towards determining the rhetorical structure of an ad text, the more detailed the levels of the analysis will be, which may enable a more in-depth understanding of the modes of ad texts' rhetorical configuration, as against a macroscopic view that rests either with a complete lack of segmentation or with unclear segmentation criteria. What matters in an analysis is to adopt uniform criteria and apply them consistently in the course of the analysis. In terms of criteria for delimiting filmic syntagms or sequences, as Metz (1974, pp.162-165) has shown, there is no such thing in the moving image as a priori clear-cut boundaries for their determination.

The filmic "sequence," which is one of the types of syntagms to play an important role in the cinema; as a semiotic notion, as an element of a code, it is not 'present' in any part of any film, and there is no textual place where it can be attested. Films simply offer us - even if this is in profusion - particular sequences, individual tokens of the sequence-type: the 'observation' of the text reduced to itself, the discovery of these occurrences (no matter how minute), will never tell us which are the distinctive features which make a sequence a sequence". (Metz, 1974, pp.165)

The same tentative criticism towards ostentatious a priori (valid and not a priori posited in the course of an analytical project) criteria for the delimitation of filmic syntagms also holds in the case of positing the individual shot (as against sequence or scene) as an a priori minimal unit of analysis (or even the individual frame, which was Bellour's [2000] minimal analytical unit in his seminal psychoanalytic reading of Hitchcock's *Birds*): "It is impossible to determine to what extent and in what exact sense the 'shot' in the cinema is a minimal (or even simply distinctive) unit if one does not take into account the plurality of cinematic codes, and thus of the cinematic 'grammar' as a whole" (Metz, 1974, p.192). "The minimal unit is not a given in the text; it is a tool of analysis. There are as many types of minimal units as there are types of analysis" (ibid., p.194). This standpoint that resonates a constructivist epistemological approach is not only pertinent in the case of analyzing structurally TV ads, but also, from a decoding point of view, in making sense of how consumers interpret advertisements. As amply argued by scholars in the constructivist vein (cf. Hackley, 1998, 2001) there is no such thing as disinterested and construct-neutral understanding of consumers' interpretations. Scholarly interpretation is so much a reflection of the ob-

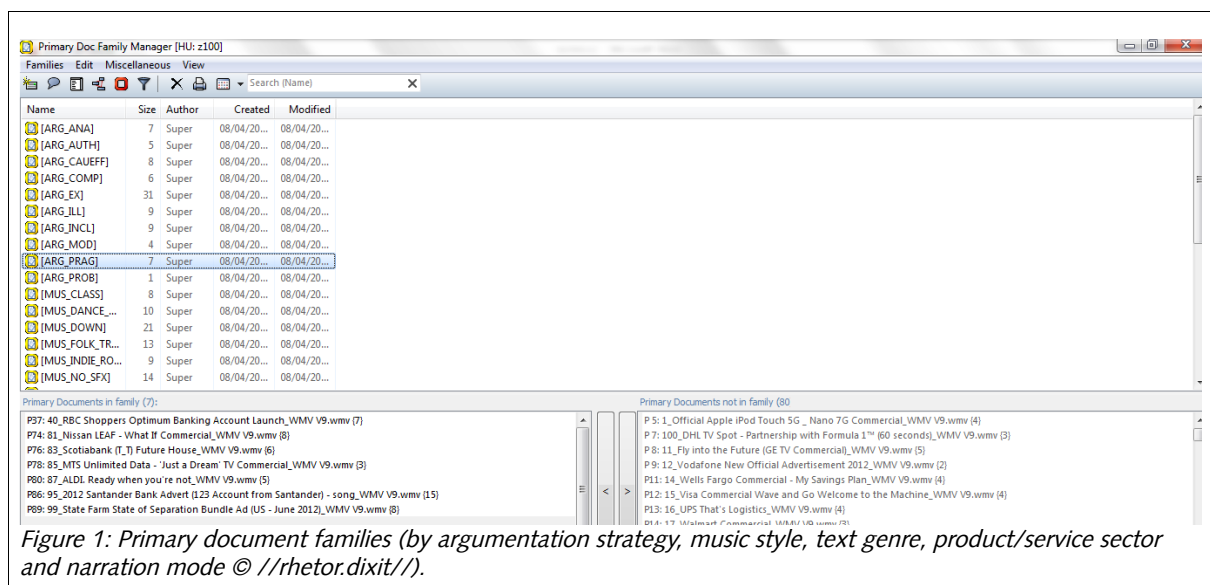
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text level mentioned above, can be described or is being constructed as a single 'episode' with some 'unity of "action"' (Bateman, 2007, p. 20).

served phenomena as of the constructs that have been recruited for making sense of consumer behavior phenomena. This fundamental tenet is echoed in the fact that any endeavor that seeks to unearth the rhetorical structure of advertising films is the outcome of interpretive reconstruction, predicated against *bona fide* uniform and maximally consistent criteria. The inherently interpretivist nature of such reconstructive undertakings has also been tacitly recognized by scholars in the advertising rhetoric research literature, such as McQuarrie, Mick and Philips. “By their very nature, rhetorical figures are open to many different interpretations, called weak implicatures... These interpretations are primarily intended to suggest how consumers might have received these ads. We do not intend to imply that these interpretations are the only possible or correct ones” (Philips & McQuarrie, 2002, p.4; also see Philips, 1997, p.78, with reference to Sperber & Wilson’s notion of implicature, also applied in pragmatics and conversation analysis, e.g. Grice’s conversation principles). The notion of implicature is particularly important for making sense of what possible meanings are inscribed in an ad filmic segment and reflects what assumptions are made by the analyst about the ad’s target audience’s cultural stock or relevant stored knowledge, in the sense of “cultural, product and advertising information” (Philips, 1997, p.78).

Having, thus, determined the criteria of an ad film’s segmentation, we are ready to start working on a new project with ATLAS.ti 7. The main components of a content analytic workbench with ATLAS.ti consist of primary documents, codes, quotations and memos. A primary document is any form of document (cf. Hwang 2008: 525), either created with the program or uploaded on it, such as text documents, but also audiovisual documents (such as ad films). ATLAS.ti 7 supports various formats, among which I selected mp4.

The first step consists in the creation of a primary document for each of the involved ad films in the analysis in the context of a project’s sampling frame, that is “the actual list of units from which a sample is selected” (Riffe et al., 2005, p.96).





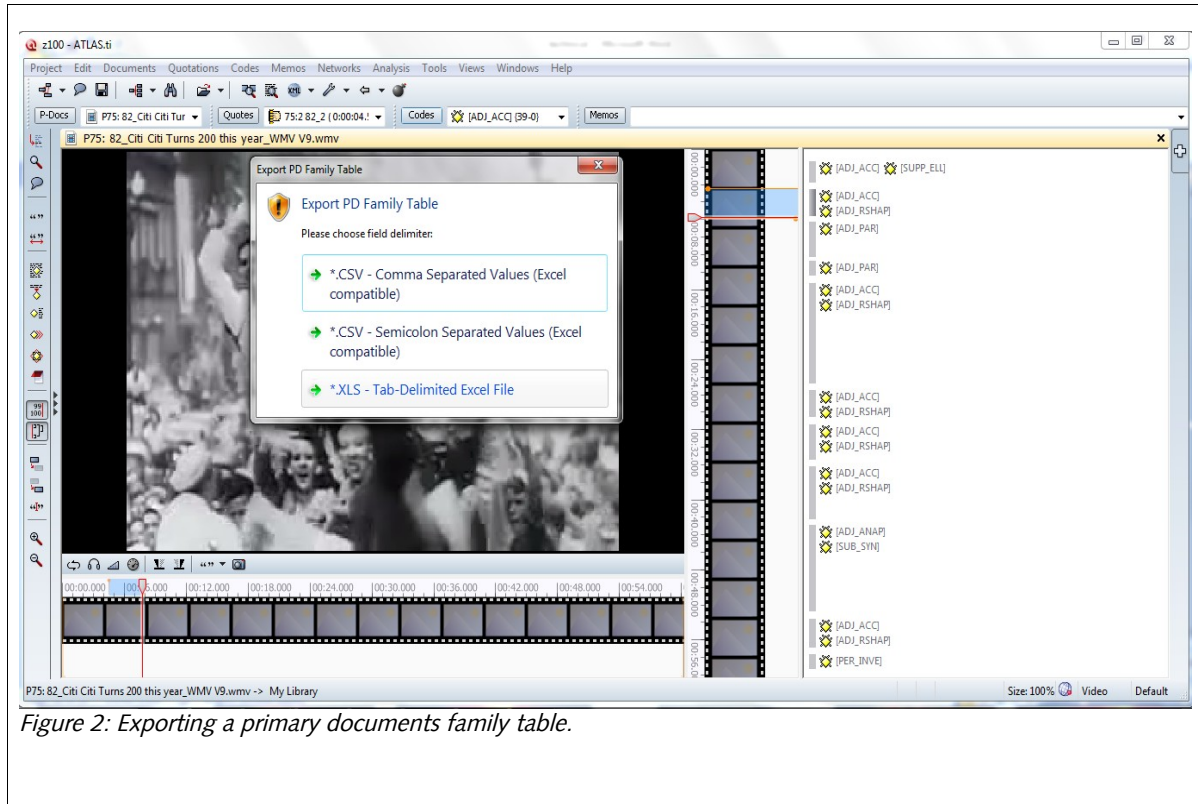


Figure 2: Exporting a primary documents family table.

As soon as all ad films that make up the analytical corpus have been loaded as PDs under a single HU, each ad film is then played back, at least five times, in order to get a primary feel for the plot, as well as for the film's profilmic units that will be posited as the basis for the ensuing analysis. This preparatory viewing is part of the requisite 'content assessment' process that must precede the proper content analytic study. "A key advantage of content assessment is that it allows an integrated perspective, based on all of the elements of an ad to emerge as a result of an extended period of immersion" (Philips & McQuarrie, 2002, p.3). Once having completed the preparatory content assessment phase, the analyst may begin the transcription work. Additionally, PDs may be grouped into document families by argumentation strategy, music style, text genre, product/service sector and narration mode (see Figure 1).

Even though transcription is not among the focal points of this paper, it should be noted, even at such a sketchy level, that the transcription of an ad film should ideally feature the following: (1) Transcription, at an initial stage, of all verbal elements involved (that is actors' or narrators' dialogues, monologues, voice-overs) in separate lines (where the beginning and the end of each transcribed line should match the respective beginning and end points of the corresponding verbal components), while marking the end of

each copy-line, based on the respective markers in the film. In this manner, a direct transcription of the surface discourse of the ad filmic text is accomplished. (2) Description of the visual components involved in each sequence, in terms of the sequence's pro-filmic elements, while ensuring matching of action, in descriptive terms, that takes place in the visual mode, under each verbally delimited unit of analysis.

There are plenty of issues related to the process of transcription, especially as regards which visual elements will be selected for recording and analysis and which will be dropped, which lie beyond the focus of this paper<sup>9</sup>.

I chose to use an Excel file for transcription where ad films are placed in columns and quotation in the rows. The quotation ID , e.g. 5\_1, denotes ad film number five, coded segment number 1, as per the following example:

Microso Microsoft		Cocal Cola	
5_1	Inversion - featuring disordered portrayal of the human anatomy (hands and hyerbolic plasticity effected through postproduction effects (NOTE THAT SUCH TWISTS WERE POPULARIZED BY LEVIS)	6_1	pers
	surface	6_2	personification/anthropomo The bear cannot open the bottle with its claws, but it can appreciate the happiness represented by the bottle
		6_3	
AT&T		Verizon	
8_1	ur/pun as instead of grown up consumers, children are portrayed	9_1	repetition of getting in a bifurcated senses, i.e. as to purchase the service and to....
8_2	rethinkk possible	9_2	there is no full fledged employment of anta, there is epiphora, that is repetition
8_3		9_3	

Table 1: Excel file with film segments and transcriptions (© //rhetor.dixit//).

An alternative is to transcribe the audiovisual data of ad films directly onto an ATLAS.ti blank template and then associate it with the concerned ad film (see Friesen, 2012, pp.56-60). Then, segments may be allocated to the transcribed text as you playback each film, while the beginning and ending markers for each segment will appear on the assigned transcription document. I found the Excel option particularly easier, in terms of quick access and inter-filmic, inter-segment comparisons. But this depends on your preferred mode of working with audiovisual data and the analytical task at hand.

It is advisable to keep all analysis files as sheets in a single Excel file, including all concerned ad films, numbered in exactly the same order as imported in ATLAS.ti, for the sake of consistent cross-referencing.

<sup>9</sup> Also note that transcription issues concern the recording of paralinguistic elements, that lie in the realm of kinesics and proxemics (see Bezemer and Mavers, 2011).

The list of ad films should include as fields at least the concerned brand, execution name (if any), year of launch, duration and online source, for easy and quick future reference, but also in the context of a host of 'trustworthiness' or internal validity criteria that are mandated in every qualitative research project (Denzin & Guba, 1998, p.213-214).

effect out	COMPANY	PRODUCT	DURA	COUNT	YEAR	LINK	sector	narration mode	comment	argumentati on strateg	comment	music genre
1	APPLE	APPLE IPOD	32	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TELE	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG INCL	playng	Dance or
2	IBM	IBM	1:01	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TECH	[NM_INTR_DIEG]		[ARG EX]		Downbea
3	GOOGLE	new dad	1:01	US	2012		[SEC TECH	[NM_INTR_DIEG]		[ARG CAUEF	loss of	Downbea
4	MCDONALD	CORPO	0:45	us	2012		[SEC RET	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG EX]	puts	Indie/Ro
5	MICROSOFT	SURFACE	1:07	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TECH	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG EX]		Dance or
6	COCA COLA	CATCH	1:03	US	2012	http://w	[SEC_SD_B	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG ill]		Classical
7	MARLBORO	NA					na					
8	AT&T	IT'S NOT	0:31	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TELE	[NM_EXT_DIEG]		[ARG EX]		No
9	VERIZON	FIOS	1:02	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TECH	[NM_MIX]		[ARG INCL]		Folk/eth
10	CHINA	WIRELESS					na					
11	GE	CORPORATE	1:01	US	2012	http://w	[SEC TECH	[NM_EXT_DIEG]		[ARG CAUEF	good for	Folk/eth
12	VODAFONE	CORPO		US	2012		[SEC TELE	[NM_ONLYWRIT]		[ARG EX]		Downbea
13	ICBC		0:33	US	2011	http://w	na					
14	WELLS	SAVINGS	0:31	US	2012	http://w	[SEC FIN	[NM_EXT_DIEG]		[ARG EX]		Downbea
15	VISA	Visa	0:45	US	2012	http://w	[SEC FIN	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG EX]		Dance or
16	UPS	WE LOVE	0:32	US	2011	http://w	[SEC OTH	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG CAUEF		Dance or
17	WALMART	CORPO	0:30	US	2012	http://w	[SEC RET	[NM_ONLYVISMU		[ARG CAUEF		Dance or
18	AMAZON	CORPO	0:31	US	2012	http://w	[SEC RET	[NM_INTR_DIEG]		[ARG CAUEF		Downbea
19	FACEBOOK	CORPO	1:31	US	2012	http://w	[SEC OTH	[NM_EXT_DIEG]		[ARG ANA]		Downbea

Figure 3: Indicative excel file with some of the ad films that were included in the corpus and additional coding by argumentation strategy, narration mode and music style

As regards cross-referencing between different primary documents (ad films) in the same ATLAS.ti project file it should be noted that the latest version (7) has the added benefit of allowing for multiple simultaneous views of different primary documents, thus enabling the researcher to refer to how other films were segmented, while segmenting a new one. This functionality is particularly useful when segmenting ad films, insofar as it allows for closer and constant scrutiny over the uniformity of the posited segmentation criteria. It should also be noted that this is an iterative procedure and that it is characterized by a learning curve, meaning that the more films have been segmented, the more effective and streamlined the process becomes. This is why, especially for first timers, it is important to conduct a pilot study, prior to embarking on a large-scale project (which holds for every aspect of the proposed methodology).

Once the transcription phase has been completed, the following step consists in assigning quotations either to entire textual segments or to individual components of the transcribed text for each primary document (in either case the transcribed segments should match exactly the way quotations will be assigned to filmic syntagms). Once all filmic segments have been properly assigned their corresponding quotations, we are ready to proceed with the coding phase.

### ***Coding Ad Filmic Texts With Rhetorical Figures***

The third step consists in assigning codes to the selected data segments (filmic syntagms/sequences), based on the code-list as put forward in the code-book.

“An operative coding scheme is not a catalogue of disjointed descriptors or a set of logically related units and subunits, but rather a conceptual web, including larger meanings and their constitutive characteristics. Some software is especially helpful in displaying the structure of coding schemes, either in hierarchical form (NUDIST) or in a network (ATLAS.ti)” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.63).

“Although it is not hard to do this by hand, mapping by computer has some powerful advantages. ATLAS.ti does this well” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.70).

“Code names are (or should be) succinct, dense descriptors for concepts emerging during the stage of closely studying the data. They often reduce complex findings to crisp placeholders and/or theoretically relevant concepts” (ATLAS.ti manual, p.254). In our case, codes are rhetorical figures (see Appendix A for the list of figures that were used in this project). The program allows for the assignment of more than one codes to each textual segment, which may be portrayed separately in the graphical output, but also in the ensuing analyses that will be conducted for data reduction purposes.

The coding of the selected ad filmic texts with rhetorical operations/figures took place by drawing on a new methodology<sup>10</sup>, focusing on rhetorical analysis, not currently on offer by popular multimodal analysis programs (e.g., O'Halloran et al., 2010, Tan et al., 2012) and was enacted in two phases. During the first phase an a priori list of 50 figures was used, while each individual filmic syntagm<sup>11</sup>/sequence out of the total of 561 that resulted from the segmentation of the 87 commercials was inspected in the light of the definitional components of each figure. After completing the first phase, the list was reduced to 39 figures, by rendering redundant and/or merging figures that were minimally differentiating (e.g., omitting synaesthesia, given that the majority of films employ visuals in tandem with verbal/narrated segments).

The 561 filmic segments were coded with one or more figures, based on whether the corresponding figure occurred in the syntagm itself as relatively autonomous thematic unit (e.g., an alliteration that occurs

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<sup>10</sup> The methodology called //rhetor.dixit// is offered by the author's semiotic consulting agency //disruptiVesemiOtics// and features an extended suite of multimodal rhetorical analytics, customized for distinctive categories of advertising filmic texts.

<sup>11</sup> Note that the offered rhetorical perspective is embedded in a filmic grammatical framework (see Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, Rossolatos, 2012a), which derives from a rich structuralist semiotic tradition in film analysis (e.g., Metz); it considers methodological principles and methods of analysis that are established in textual linguistics, inasmuch as semantics, syntactics, pragmatics (e.g., conversation analysis), but is not constrained by them. In this framework, the filmic syntagm, rather than sentence, has been posited as the minimal unit/segment of analysis (which engulfs oral sentences, e.g., voice -overs or written sentences, e.g., supers). The filmic syntagm is equivalent to a sequence that may include one or more different shots, in line with filmic analysis (where, certainly, methods tend to vary, such as Bellour's frame-by-frame analysis- see Rossolatos, 2014a). This framework prioritizes relations and interactions among modes and figures that occur in distinctive syntagms and contribute to the structuration of an ad filmic text, rather than resting at the level of pinpointing individual figures (an analytical task that is included in the analytical suite, while not being exhaustive of its integral and/or ad hoc applications).

within an individual segment) or by reference to the directly preceding sequence (e.g., an anaphora or an antanaclasis) or retrospectively, by taking into account the global semantic/thematic context of the film (e.g., a visual sequence acting as a visual metonymy for a key product attribute or product benefit in a mid-filmic syntagm, which may be coded as such retrospectively in the light of the pay-off line in the ending sequence of the film). Primarily and predominantly visual and verbal filmic expressive elements were taken into account while coding sequences with rhetorical figures. However, in instances where musical expressive elements were dominant in streamlining the semantic orientation of a film, they were also taken into account, as will be shown in the section '*How rhetorical figures operate on three levels of analysis*'.

Rhetorical figures were defined by allusion to various rhetorical treatises, such as Groupe  $\mu$ 's (1970, 1992), Fontanier's (1977), Aristotle's, Quintilian's, Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca's (1971), but also to entries in collective works, such as Sloane's Encyclopedia of Rhetoric (2006), as well as to taxonomies that were coined by scholars in the advertising rhetoric literature (e.g., McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, McQuarrie & Philips, 2004, Huhmann, 2008, Durand, 1970, 1997). The employed figures, their definitions and the rhetorical operations of which they partake are portrayed in Table 10 in Appendix A.

It is advisable to create a list of codes in ATLAS.ti at the outset of a project, based on the code list that has been recorded in the code book, in order to facilitate the coding procedure of the textual segments. By virtue of the program's ability to store code lists and all memos/notes pertaining to the coding procedure, it does away with the need to create code forms, along with the code book, which is the case with traditional coding. In addition, the program allows for the generation of groups of codes, in line with Miles & Huberman's (1994) suggested guideline concerning the generation of pattern codes from individual codes or the creation of families, thus analyzing data on an aggregate level. "A quotation can be associated with more than one code or code families" (Pan et al., 2008. p.341).

There are various ways to code quotations (or ad filmic segments) in ATLAS.ti 7, the most popular ones being coding in vivo (or coding as you go) and coding by list (cf. Friese, 2012, pp.63-69). The former is prevalent if you are using a grounded theoretical approach, which involves an emergent patterns generation procedure (see, for example, Figueroa, 2008), whereas the latter is recommended if you are using an a priori code list. In the context of mapping out the rhetorical structure of ad films it is preferable to employ the second route, as it is more efficient. Certainly this does not preclude that along the (usually long and strenuous) coding way a mix of these coding routes may not be followed.. As mentioned above, in the context of mapping out the rhetorical structure of ad films it is preferable to employ an a priori coding list, which you import into ATLAS.ti prior to embarking on the coding process. Hence, each time you need to code a filmic segment with one or more rhetorical figures you simply click on the code button and drag and drop onto the concerned segment (quotation) the required code.

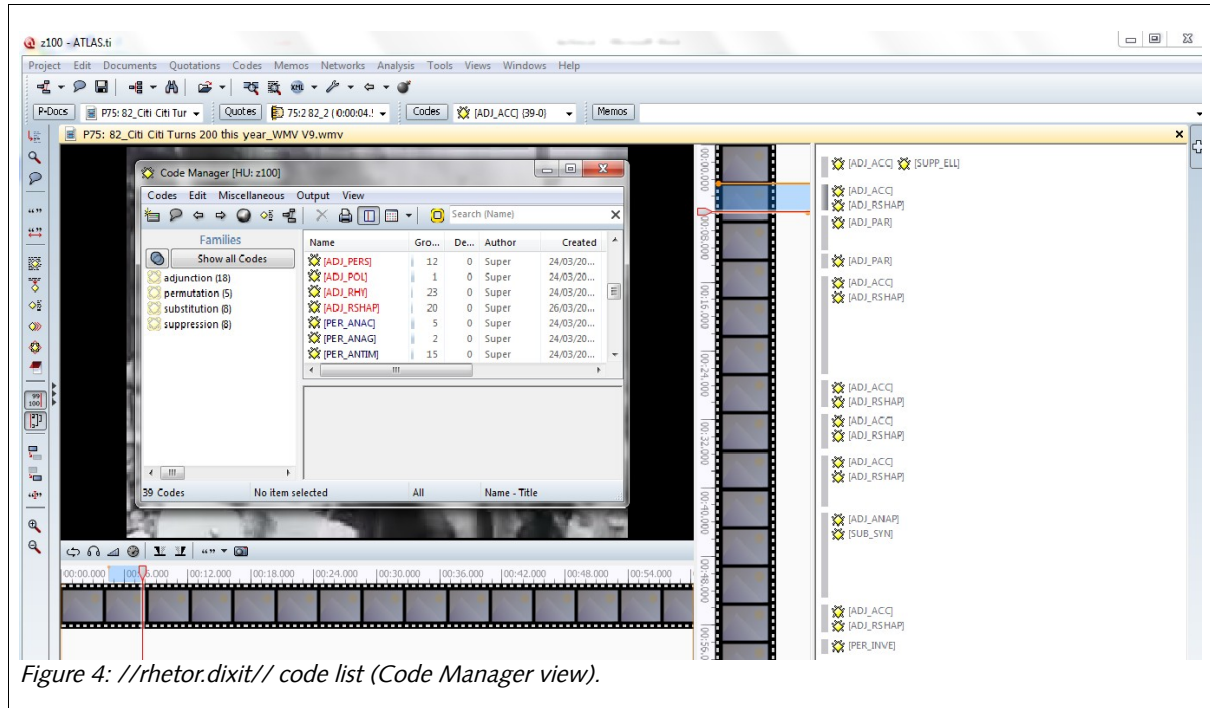


Figure 4: //rhetor.dixit// code list (Code Manager view).

Note that it is preferable (especially if you intend to conduct further analyses with SPSS) to assign acronyms to each code, rather than the full code name. Ideally, if you also intend to create families of figures based on the rhetorical operations of which they partake, the acronyms should also feature a descriptor that refers to the rhetorical operation to which each code belongs.

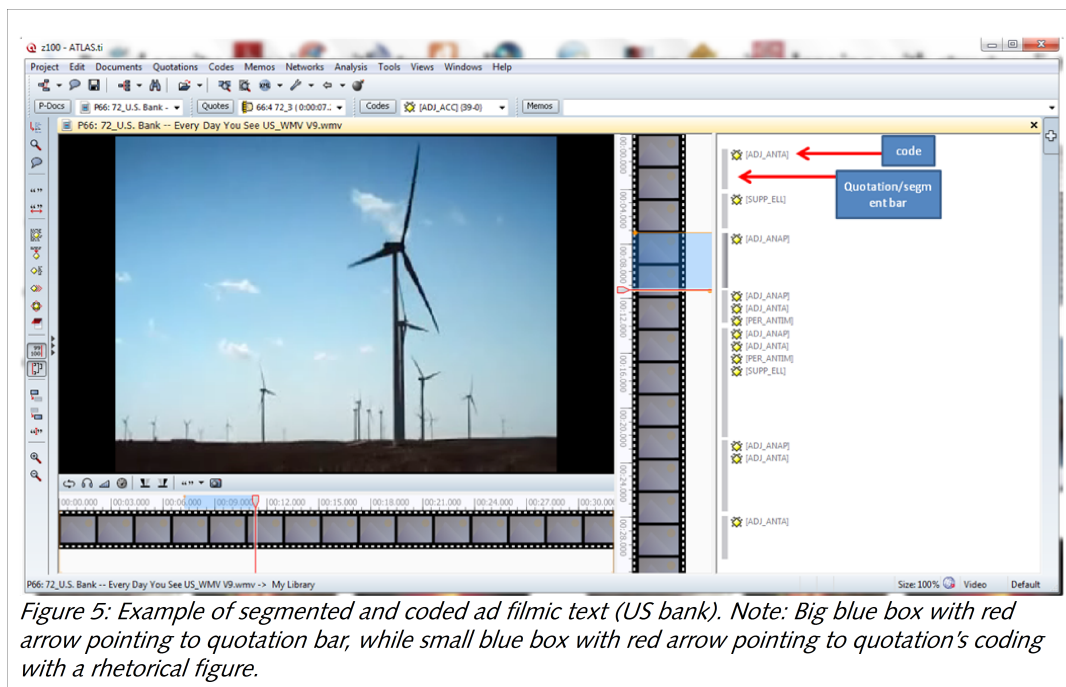


Figure 5: Example of segmented and coded ad filmic text (US bank). Note: Big blue box with red arrow pointing to quotation bar, while small blue box with red arrow pointing to quotation's coding with a rhetorical figure.



Note that codes from different categories are marked by a different color. The choice of color is up to the researcher, while color differentiation is highly recommended for ease of category identification. This analysis focuses on a coding procedure involving only one coder. For further information on the process involved in inter-coder coding see Housley & Smith 2011. There is no maximum or minimum number of codes that may be included in a codebook or in a coding form. Below you see two examples of coded ads. Examples of coded ads are featured in Figure 6 and (add Citibank).

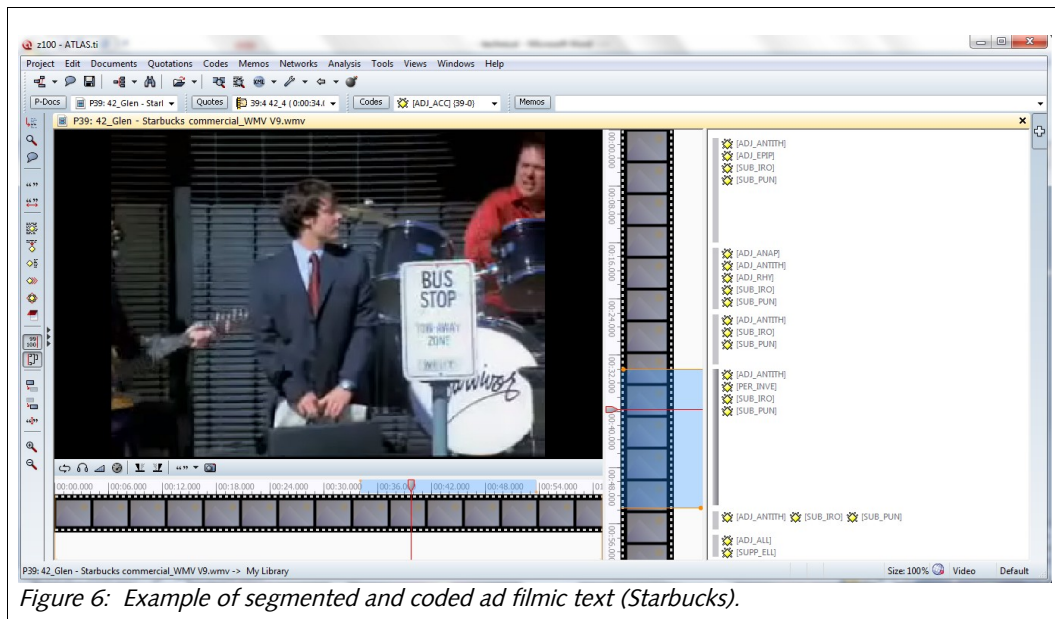


Figure 6: Example of segmented and coded ad filmic text (Starbucks).

It is also important to further segment the incidence of rhetorical figures in terms of whether they occur (i) on a purely verbal level (ii) on a purely visual level (iii) through verbo-visual interactions, against the background of the previously mentioned three levels of filmic analysis. This nuanced distinction of rhetorical figures / codes and the key dimensions against which they must be addressed may be summarized as follows:

Dimensions Units of analysis	Filmic syntagm	Between two filmic syntagms	In a 'global semantic' filmic context
Figures/operations occurring only in verbal modality			
Figures/operations occurring only in visual modality			
Figures/operations occurring in verbo / visual modality			

Table 2: Dimensions and units of analysis within individual ad filmic texts.

The final stage of the content analytic part featured the production of descriptive statistics pertaining to (i) the relative incidence of rhetorical operations in the selected corpus (ii) the relative incidence of individual figures (iii) the relative co-occurrence of figures, but also a whole host of cross-tabulations between salient variables, as displayed in the ensuing Section.

### *Producing Descriptive Statistics Pertaining To The Rhetorical Structure Of Ad Filmic Texts*

In total 545 incidences of rhetorical figures were found to be operative in the 561 segments that make up the selected corpus of 87 advertising films from the most valuable brands. As per Table 3, the majority of figures partake of the operation of adjunction(67%), followed by substitution (17%), permutation (11%) and suppression (6%).

	Count	%
adjunction	364	67 %
permutation	60	11 %
substitution	91	17 %
suppression	30	6 %
Ttl	545	100 %

Table 3: Incidence of rhetorical operations in the selected corpus.

An above average incidence of adjunction was noted in the financial services/insurance, oil/gas, soft drinks/beer and technology sectors (Table 4), while permutation figures prominently in the cars, fashion/apparel, personal care and telecoms sectors. An above average incidence of substitution figures was noted in the cars, fashion/apparel and retail/fast food sectors, while suppression was encountered most frequently in the financial/insurance, soft drinks/beer and telecoms sectors.

	Cars	Fashion_A pparel	Financial_I nsurance	Oil_ Gas	Ot her	Personal Care	Retail _Fast Food	Soft drinks _Beer	Techn ology	Teleco mms
Adjunc tion	61	54	106	134	60	87	98	112	123	96
Permut ation	123	330	59	23	161	227	91	0	93	185
Substit ution	259	163	86	31	200	100	126	60	38	51
Suppre ssion	49	0	153	47	161	0	61	273	23	123

Table 4: Indexed incidence of rhetorical operations by sector (above average incidence highlighted in green).

ATLAS.ti 7 allows for the production of basic descriptive statistics, such as frequency tables, with an added functionality that allows for the production of a co-occurrence matrix (akin, but not the same to a correlation matrix). Let us briefly go through the process of producing useful descriptive statistics through ATLAS.ti 7 in the light of our analytical corpus. Let us assume that you have by now completed the coding stage and you wish to produce aggregate tables that consolidate individual rhetorical figures under rhetorical operations. To this end you need to create hyper-variables or code-families. Remember that these code-families, if chosen to be stored in the program, will also appear in the file that will be input in SPSS, hence it saves you time (and energy) from grouping individual variables at a later stage.

The most basic analysis you will probably wish to produce once having gone through the coding process is a summary frequency table that displays how many times each rhetorical figure/operation occurs in



each ad film (PD) as per Table 2. A table featuring rhetorical figures/operations and ad films may be produced by clicking on Analysis > Codes-Primary Documents Table. (Figure 7)

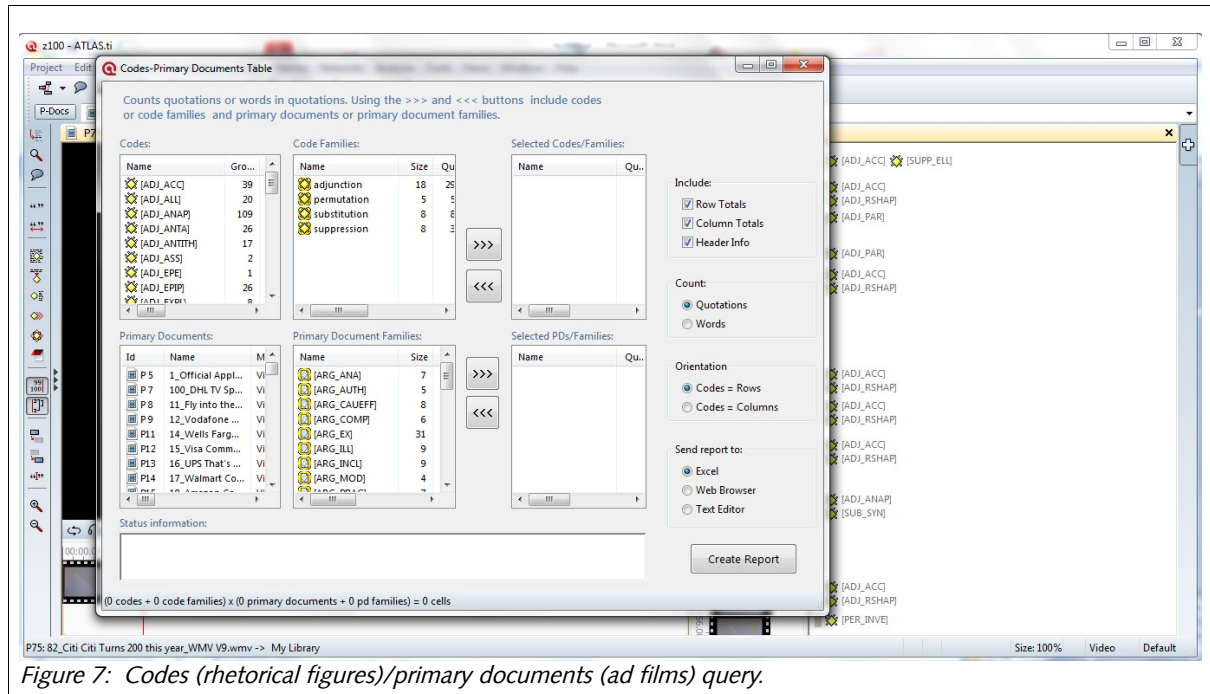


Figure 7: Codes (rhetorical figures)/primary documents (ad films) query.

In greater detail, the most often recurring figures in the 'Most valuable brands' corpus ( see Appendix B) were anaphora, pareikonopoeia, accolorance, metaphor, inversion, antanaclasis, epiphora, rhyme, metonymy, alliteration and reshaption. Contrary to expectations about the incidence of the four master tropes (metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony), it was found that they accounted en masse for 13% of the entire figurative landscape of the selected corpus.

Some of the complementary analytics that I produced with the aid of ATLAS.ti 7 concern the relative incidence of different narration modes by rhetorical figure/operation (Table 5, Table 6), by music genre (Table 7) and by product/service sector (Table 8).

NARRATION MODE	
Extra-diegetic: featuring voice-over by impersonal narrator that confers semantic closure to the deployment of visual sequences	[NM_EXT_DIEG]
Intra-diegetic: featuring verbal statements and/or dialogues by actors who are part of the ad film's manifest text	[NM_INTR_DIEG]
Extra/intra-diegetic mix: featuring both voice-over by impersonal narrator verbal statements and/or dialogues by actors who are part of the ad film's manifest text	[NM_MIX]
Only written text: featuring supers that are super-imposed on visual sequences and that guide their semantic closure in the absence of both extra and intra-diegetic narration	[NM_ONLYWRIT]
Only visual/music driven text: featuring neither supers that are super-imposed on visual sequences, nor extra and intra-diegetic narration	[NM_ONLYVISMUS]

Table 5: Code list of narration modes (© //rhetor.dixit//).

Code-Filter: All [39]																				
PD-Filter: All [87]																				
Quotation-Filter: All [561]																				

Table 6: Codes-PD Table: Incidence of rhetorical figure by narration mode employed in each ad film (© //rhetor.dixit//).

	[ADJ_ACC]	[ADJ_ALL]	[ADJ_ANA]	[ADJ_ANT]	[ADJ_ANT]	[ADJ_ASS]	[ADJ_EPE]	[ADJ_EPIF]	[ADJ_EXP]	[ADJ_HYP]
[MUS_CLASS]	2	1	9	0	4	0	0	0	0	1
[MUS_DANCE_OTHEELEC]	7	1	3	8	1	0	0	3	1	0
[MUS_DOWN]	8	7	27	5	5	0	0	12	1	0
[MUS_FOLK_TRO_ETHN]	0	4	31	4	0	0	0	7	3	1
[MUS_INDIE_ROCK]	12	1	20	3	5	1	0	1	1	1
[MUS_NO_SFX]	0	4	8	6	1	1	1	3	2	3
[MUS_POP]	10	2	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS:	39	20	109	26	17	2	1	26	8	6

Table 7: Codes-PD Table: Incidence of rhetorical figure by music genre employed in each ad film (© //rhetor.dixit//).

Code-Filter: All [39]												
PD-Filter: All [87]												
Quotation-Filter: All [561]												
	[ADJ_ACC]	[ADJ_ALL]	[ADJ_ANA]	[ADJ_ANT]	[ADJ_ANT]	[ADJ_ASS]	[ADJ_EPE]	[ADJ_EPIF]	[ADJ_EXP]	[ADJ_HYP]	[ADJ_NEC]	
[SEC_CAR]	1	1	7	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
[SEC_FASHAPP]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
[SEC_FIN_BAN_INS]	11	6	26	9	4	0	0	11	1	1	0	
[SEC_OIL_GAS]	8	3	16	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
[SEC_OTHER]	0	2	3	0	1	0	0	3	1	1	0	
[SEC_PER_CAR]	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
[SEC_RET_FF]	4	1	15	3	10	1	0	2	0	0	0	
[SEC_SD_BEER]	1	2	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	
[SEC_TECH]	7	1	17	12	1	0	0	6	2	1	0	
[SEC_TELECOMS]	7	3	16	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	
TOTALS:	39	20	109	26	17	2	1	26	8	6	0	

Table 8: Codes-PD Table: Incidence of rhetorical figure by advertised brand's product / service sector (© //rhetor.dixit//).

A different, yet equally insightful portrayal of the relative incidence of figures and operations was yielded by examining the co-occurrence of different codes. In this case it was found that particular figures that may not be occurring as frequently as others, yet when they occur, they tend to co-occur largely with others within the same segments. For example, as suggested by Table 9, which ranks figures according to their strength of co-occurrence, figures which do not occur as frequently in the total sample, such as epenthesis, apocope, rhyme, antithesis, rhetorical question, when they occur they tend to co-occur

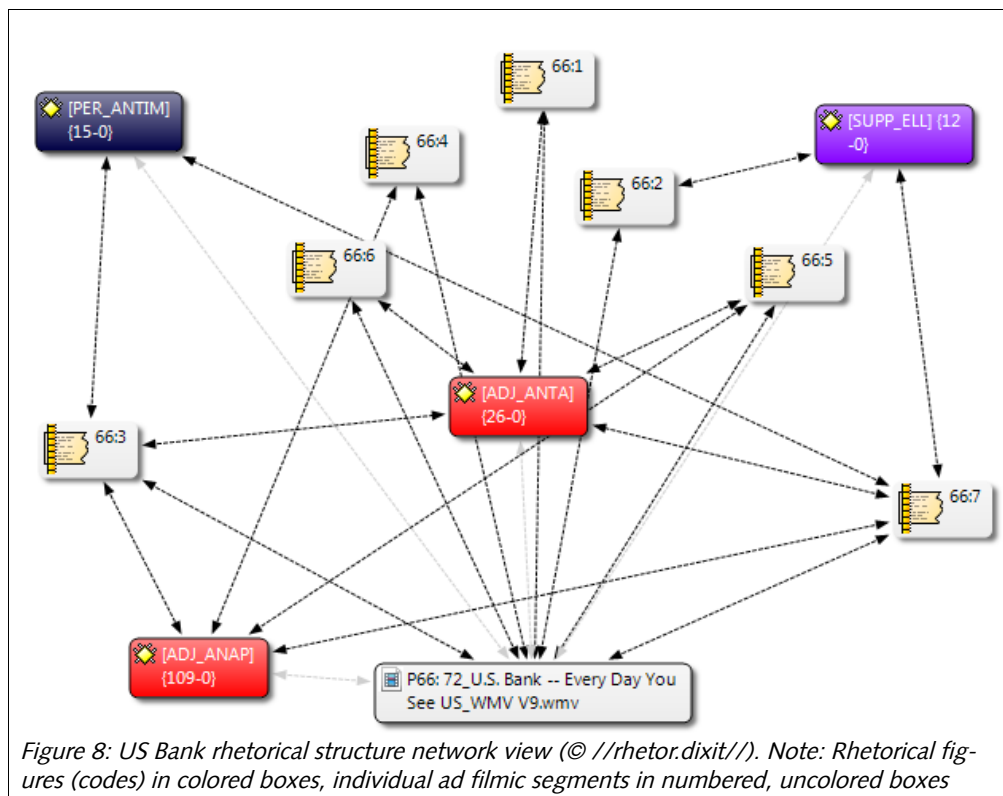
highly with other figures. This comparative analysis is particularly useful, as it points to directions for gauging which figures occur as master tropes and which ones as supplementary figures that aid in adding further directionality to the intended brand signification.

	% of ttl sample	Co-occurrence strength index
epenthesis	0%	265
apocope	0%	265
rhyme	4%	239
metonymy	4%	226
epiphora	5%	198
pun	2%	198
irony	2%	181
antithesis	3%	165
accolorance	7%	137
rhetorical question	1%	132
reshapton	4%	114

Table 9: Ranking of figures by co-occurrence strength index. Note: 0 percentages are attributed to rounding.

### Portraying Filmic Segments With The Help Of The Network View Function

Finally, a most useful functionality of ATLAS.ti 7 is the production of network views (maps) that incorporate either all or some of the key aspects of a coded ad film (that is codes, memos, even comments)- with the added functionality of also portraying each filmic segment on a map in visual mode, rather than just verbal/numerical- either for a designated number of ad films or for the entire corpus as per Figure 8.



This network view tells you in a snapshot that antanaclasis (of the adjunction operation) is the dominant rhetorical figure in this ad film, as it links to the majority of ad filmic segments. Complementary to individual film network views, entire corpus networks may be produced, by including and excluding components (e.g. including or excluding memos or quotations from a network view) according to the analytical objective at hand.

## How Rhetorical Figures Operate On Three Levels Of Analysis

*EDITORS' NOTE: This section features the results of the further analysis and does not cover ATLAS.ti features in particular. However, we decided to include it as some readers might be interested in reading how ads can be interpreted within the multi-modal framework.*

In this section, the research findings are further elaborated with view to addressing the modes of verbo-visual (and occasionally musical) rhetorical configuration of the most valuable brands. A detailed account of how the ad filmic texts that make up the selected corpus are configured is furnished alongside the incidence of either verbal or visual rhetorical figures. Moreover, emphasis is laid on how the interactions among verbo-visual figures take place, by drawing on indicative patterns of examples.

While addressing the mode of verbo-visual rhetorical configuration of each filmic text, three levels were selected for gauging the incidence of each figure, viz. (i) within individual filmic segments (ii) through interaction between succeeding segments and (iii) by recourse to the wider (or 'global') semantic context (Van Dijk, 1980) of the ad filmic text.

### *Incidence Of Rhetorical Figures Within Individual Filmic Segments*

**Anaphoras** within the same filmic syntagms occurred largely in verbal mode, such as the immediate repetition of the possessive verb 'have' (Wells Fargo), the repetition of adjectives/adverbs such as 'faraway' (General Electric), the repetition of entire phrases, such as 'I came to IBM...' (IBM). Mixed verbo-visual modes were noted in cross- segment anaphoras (see ensuing sub-section).

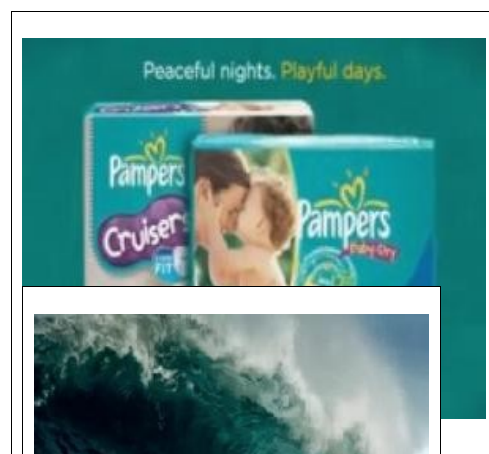


Figure 10: Opening sequence of Red Bull commercial

**Alliterations** abound within the same syntagms, as in the repetition of the morpheme 'ma-' in the payoff line of the HP ad filmic text ('make it matter'), of the consonant 'p' in the Pampers payoff line ('Peaceful nights, playful days'), which also alliterates with the visual of the brand's logo, with exactly the same pattern repeated in the Toyota Prius commercial ('More Prius, more possibilities').

Likewise, alliterations occurred in the corpus through the repetition of consonants 'b' and 'd' in the Starbucks double espresso payoff line ('Starbucks double espresso premium

drink- Bring on the day'), of the consonant 'h' in the Disneyland commercial ('happiest homecoming'), of the consonant 'b' in the mid-filmic syntagm of the State Farm text ('bungling, bustling, bundle benders') and the alliteration list can continue.

Interesting cases of **reshaption** occurred as a triangular vector formed by two succeeding visuals (giant wave and eye) in the opening sequence of the Red Bull commercial, while in the case of the O2 commercial the brand name's vowel 'O' is immediately redoubled in the form of a bubble in the closing sequence of the text.



Figure 12: Red Bull reshaption



Figure 11: O2 reshaption

**Expletion** is regularly employed with view to embellishing the claims raised in the course of the texts with nouns and adjectives (often in the superlative) of grandeur and gravitas, such as 'incredible', 'other-worldly' (General Electric), 'the best a man can get' (Gillette), the world's 'toughest' energy challenges (Exxon), 'amazing' (Cisco, Pepsi, Disney), 'the best or nothing' (Mercedes).

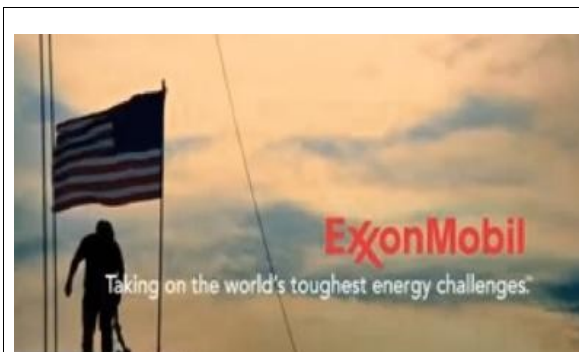


Figure 13: Exxon expletion

**Hyperbolically** accentuated verbal statements are noted in incidences such as the Orange text, where the key semic component of proximity in the modal proposition 'you can stay close to those

that matter to you' is hyperbolically enhanced with the employment of visuals portraying significant others literally emerging from within oneself.



Figure 14: Orange hyperbole

**Personification** is evinced verbally by referring to nouns such as energy by 'her' rather than 'it' (Shell), as well as by inviting consumers to make their walls talk (Home Depot). Traditional figures, such as **inversion**, are also evinced visually on an intra-filmic segment level, as in the case of the Visa text, where an actor's attempt to pay by cash, rather than by Visa, inverts the harmoniously structured syntactical order of production schedules/consumption patterns in a café.



Figure 15: Paying by Visa caters for perfect synch/harmony





*Figure 16: Paying by cash instead of Visa*

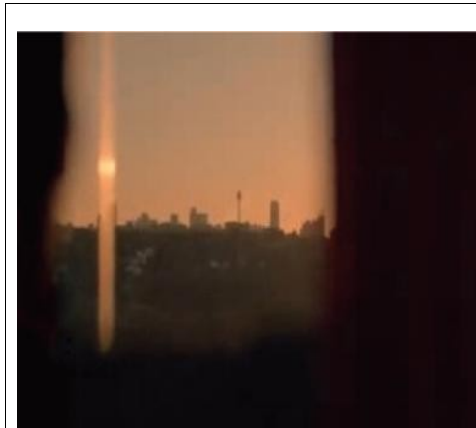


*Figure 17: Clients bumping onto each other in the café cue*

Furthermore, the syntactical structure of ordinary activities, such as preparing a coffee, are inverted in favor of a dancing scene, with view to emphasizing brand benefits (i.e., buying from Walmart) or where bodily movements are totally inverted (as in the Microsoft commercial) or in the case of the opening sequence of the Nissan text, where the closed curtain of what appears to be a theatrical stage is succeeded by an actor's drawing a window curtain sideward.



*Figure 18: Walmart inversion*



*Figure 20: Nisan inversion*

**Visual metaphors** are employed within specific segments, as in the incidence of a woman punching a boxing-sack in the L'Oreal text (in tandem with the voice-over 'hair won't feel wrecked or ravaged') or in the incidence of a DNA structure's gigantic visual that enhances the illocutionary force of the accompanying utterance concerning 'solving challenging problems' in the IBM text or in the incidence of candies as visual metaphor for savings (ICICI).



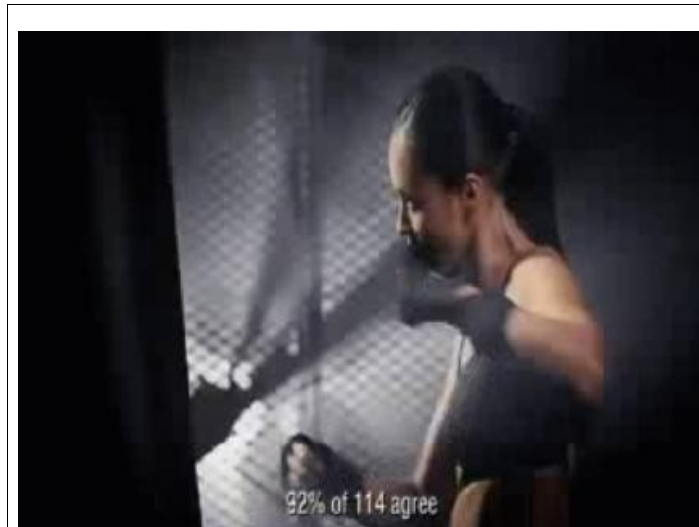


Figure 21: L'Oreal Visual Metaphor



Figure 23: ICICI Visual Metaphor

**Visual paradoxes** occur in individual syntagms, such as the appearance of rain in the middle of the desert (Hermes); in the case of Goofy's being intentionally featured in a syntagm that portrays a gift-box with the inscription 'do not open' (as everyone knows that Goofy is intent on doing exactly the opposite things; Disney); in the case of the JP Morgan Chase text, where the voice-over 'Isn't technology supposed to make life easier' is coupled with a technological dysfunction visual.



Figure 24: *Hermes visual paradox*



Figure 25: *Disney visual paradox*

**Litotic schemes** are encountered in individual syntagms either as enhancers of the value of one of two propositions that are raised in the same syntagm (e.g., 'simply by doing good, can a bank in fact be great?' - Standard Chartered- where 'doing good' is underplayed in order to enhance the argumentative force of being great) or with view to underplaying the universal validity of a maxim, as in the second filmic syntagm of the featured Red Bull text, which stresses 'I think it's human nature to want to explore', thus appropriating a maxim by diminution of its universal appeal within the axiological framework propounded by the brand (as against stressing impersonally 'It is human nature to want to explore').



Figure 26: McDonald's Visual antanaclasis

Most notably, **antanaclasis** occurs in instances of immediate repetition of a preceding verbal proposition in the same syntagm in a different mode and different sense, as in the case of the syntagm from the featured McDonald's text, where the imperative proposition 'do the twins' refers both to double cheeseburgers, but also, as suggested by the visual anchoring of the proposition in the .concerned syntagm, to human look-alikes. A similar verbo-visual antanaclasis is encountered in the Intel commercial, where the adverb 'well' in the verbal super featured in the opening filmic syntagm is immediately succeeded by the visual of a natural well, thus intensifying the argumentative impact of a moral maxim ('travel your life well') by associating explicitly wellness with a 'well-of-life'.



Figure 27: Intel visual antanaclasis

An exceptional, infrequently occurring case, yet interesting by virtue of its scarcity in the selected corpus, is the incidence of visual puns, which create a sort of optical illusion, as in the case of the featured Pepsi commercial where a flashing banner with the word 'gas' reads 'can' from a distance, thus also giving rise to a paronomasia (in the context of intra- diegetic dialogues featuring recurrent allusion to 'can').



It should be noted that it is precisely the less often recurring figures that should be attended to in a more detailed fashion, as they confer to an ad filmic text what may be called a **rhetorical first mover** advantage. Let us recall Rifatterre's dictum that a hyperbole in a hyperbolic context is not a hyperbole (see Rossolatos 2014a), which clearly indicates the truism that the more often a figure is employed (either by the same brand or across brands), the less effective it is likely to be, as it violates the very *raison d'être* of a rhetorical figure, which rests with imbuing recipients with an element of surprise, thus giving rise to a deviation from expectations<sup>12</sup>.

#### *Incidence Of Rhetorical Figures Through Interaction Between Filmic Segments*

The newly coined figures of **accolorance** and **reshaption** are particularly useful for capturing salient aspects of how nuanced anaphorical relationships are structured in the visual rhetoric of ad filmic texts. Accolorance (which occurred in 7% of cases in the entire corpus) surfaces either as repetition of the same colors across filmic syntagms (e.g., recurrence of light blue and pink in the Apple commercial), or as corporate colors inscribed in actors' clothing, but also in background setting, peripheral filmic elements (e.g., cars), as in the cases of the Target and the McDonald's commercials; by superimposing a geometrical shape with corporate colors (e.g., line) on top of the featured visuals (Citibank), but also by color filtering the natural settings of visual sequences with corporate colors (MTN).

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<sup>12</sup> See Rossolatos, 2014a for a discussion on variable contextualizations of the notion of rhetorical deviation.



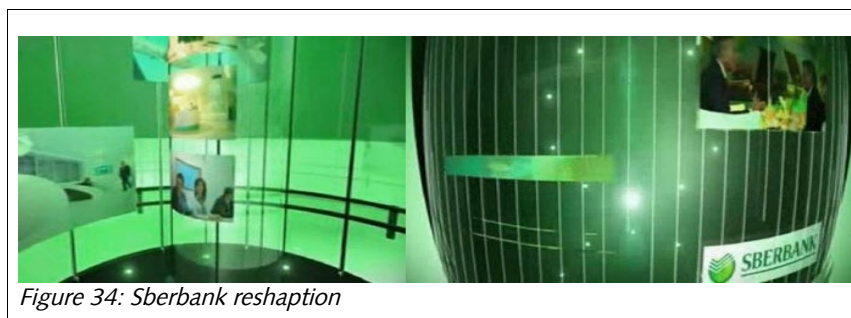
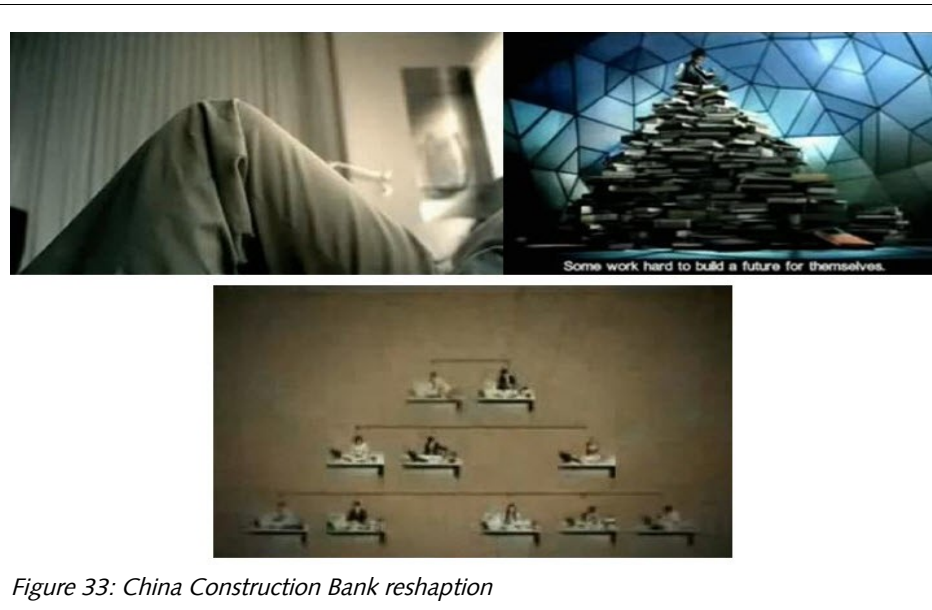
Figure 29: Target accolorance



Figure 30: McDonald's accolorance



Figure 32: MTN accolorance



In terms of reshaping (that is repetition of the same shape functioning as figurative connector among succeeding syntagms), a knee-shaping pyramid in the opening sequence of the featured China Construction Bank is repeated uniformly in all subsequent filmic syntagms, while spherical shapes are repeated across the Sberbank text.

**Antanaclasses** are no longer merely the province of verbal statements. As attested by a significant portion of ad texts from the selected corpus, the alternating verbo-visual repetition of the same visuals/words with different meaning, affords to invest brand discourses with ever ramifying semantic twists and turns. For example, the SAP text repeats the word 'run' in two predominant senses both within and between filmic segments, in the sense of speeding up, as well as in the sense of executing or operating a program. A most remarkable example of how an entire ad filmic text is configured around antanaclasses that are operative both within individual segments and across segments, but also in constant interaction between verbal and visual modes, is the ad film of U.S. bank. The text oscillates constantly between the logo, the brand name and the very meaning of the personal pronoun 'us', thus creating a verbo-visual



osmosis that attests to how a first mover figurative rhetorical advantage may be yielded not only by the employment of less frequently recurring figures, but, moreover, by different combinations of highly recurring figures in dynamic verbo-visual interactions.



Figure 35: U.S. Bank antanaclases

sharing with others and being recognized for having got it, rather than simply having obtained the service. This is a remarkable example of how the standout employment of a common figure attains to institute a silent/salient topos.

As regards traditional verbal figures, **anti-metaboles** occur predominantly in payoff lines (e.g., Wells Fargo: 'Together we'll go far'; Visa: 'more people go with Visa, Visa pay wave'; Standard Chartered: 'what profit a bank makes, but how it makes that profit'). However, such traditional figures also apply in a visual rhetorical

A similar figurative strategy that revolves around antanaclases across filmic segments is pursued by Verizon Fios, that repeats the bifurcated meaning of the verb 'to get' throughout its text, in the sense of 'obtaining the service' and 'becoming enlightened by the benefits that stem from its usage', facilitated by a change in voice-over tonality in each of the two incidences. Especially the latter use of the verb rises above a simple exemplification with slice-of-life visuals in a contextually forceful manner (and hence not amenable to explicit argumentation) that is suggestive of an underlying proposition (macro-proposition, in Van Dijk's terms) that unless the product is obtained, then one does not have access to a topos that is over and above the simple possession of the service. In this sense, 'getting it' is about



Figure 36: Verizon frame from text featuring antanaclases

context, as in the case of the KFC commercial, where the beginning of the second filmic segment that portrays an opening door constitutes an inversely structured visual sequence of the end of the preceding syntagm that featured a closing door.



Figure 37: Wells Fargo antimetabole

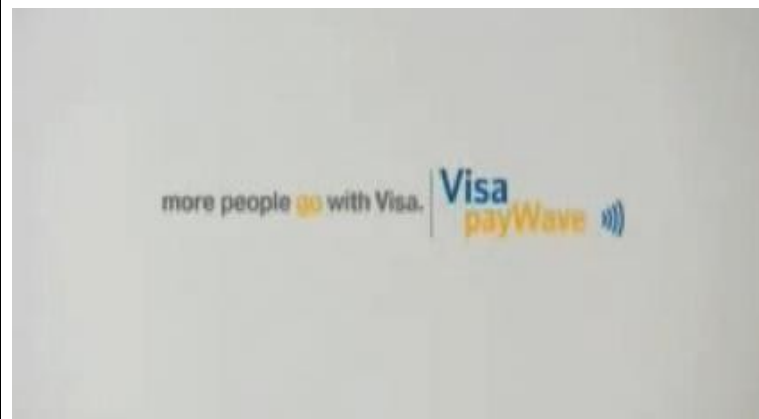


Figure 38: Visa antimetabole

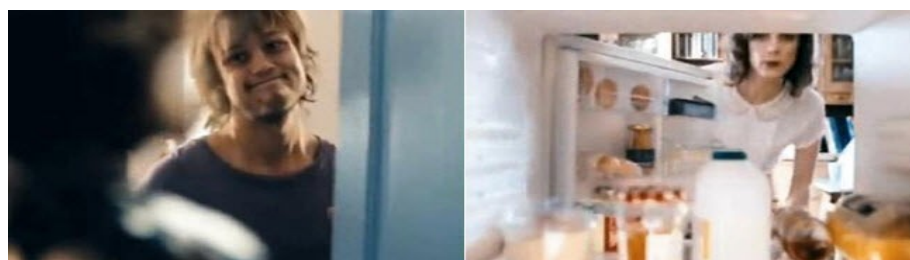


Figure 39: KFC antimetabole



FedEx employs **verbo-visual irony** throughout its entire text, where visuals subvert ironically the statements that are put forward 'bona fide' by two actors (opponents in a political rally), a direct competition strategy that is also employed in the Mastercard text, where direct allusion in the voice-over to American Express's (key competitor) commitment to the 'craft' is ironically subverted in the same syntagm by portraying a restaurant concierge who politely ('gladly') fends off prospective clients from making reservations.

**Verbal metonymies** are encountered throughout the Santander text, where each syntagm features a variety of actions (e.g., playing, sowing, inviting), which are all displaced metonymically to a saving action, even if no saving seems inherent customarily in these actions.

On the level of inter-segment figurative relationships that are instituted in the text through a figure of **visual-sonic inversion**, we notice in the Telcel ad text that whereas in the initial three segments the selected musical theme functions on the background of a deploying visual text, it suddenly shifts to the foreground, as a band is portrayed to be performing the same theme live (first on the street and then in a gig venue). Such a verbo-visual stratagem still abides by the definitional tenets of the inversion figure, that is an alteration of the expected syntactical construction of a syntagm, yet (i) it displaces the notion of syntax from its traditional grammatical contours to the expected grammar of ad filmic texts within a larger semiotic economy of advertising (ii) in the context of ad filmic grammar it inverts the function of music from conditioning background mechanism that enhances rhetorical appeals to foreground actor.

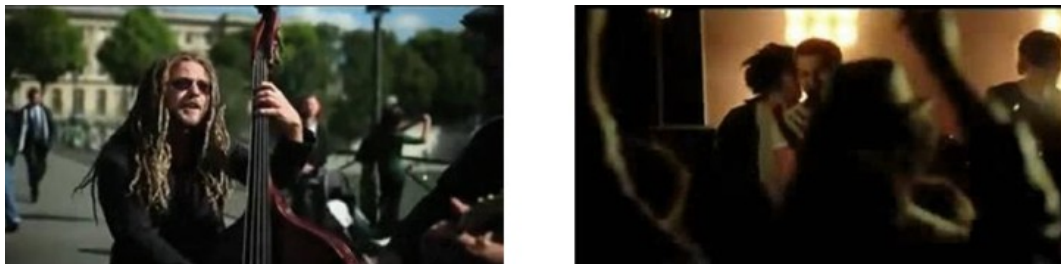


Figure 40: Telcel visual-sonic inversion (background music shifting to live band performance)

**Epiphoras** also furnish the semantic glue between succeeding filmic segments, as in the repetition of the attitudinal descriptor 'positive' at the end of the two closing sequences of the Carrefour text. Interesting examples of **anaphorical figures** occurring as a result of multimodal sonic/visual interactions in two succeeding filmic syntagms were noted in texts that featured a medium-shot of a store's front with a giant sticker featuring the message 'Click and collect', which was succeeded in the ensuing filmic syntagm by the clicking sound of a passing-by bicycle (Tesco). The repetition of the same verbal statement (e.g., product claim '60% less sugar') also attains to create anaphorical coherence between two succeeding filmic segments.



Figure 41: Tesco visual/sonic epiphora

**Ellipsis** is particularly demanding, given that advertising discourse is elliptical throughout. Ellipsis, inasmuch as other traditional figures, such as anacolouthon, asyndeton, polysyndeton, silence/suspension are part and parcel of the general advertising semiotic economy (where standard grammar rules do not furnish the requisite benchmark for gauging the incidence of a rhetorical deviation), hence one must be particularly selective when coding filmic syntagms with this figure. In the selected corpus syntagms were coded with ellipsis only in the incidence where this figure was intentionally employed as enhancer of the manifest plot and not as part of expected deviations that are notable in advertising language (such as the omission of pronouns, connectors, etc.). Examples of such intentional uses of ellipsis, and particularly of visual ellipsis, may be encountered in the case of the featured ICICI text. In this example, the emphasis on the visual of an empty pocket (close-up by camera movement) in a filmic segment that features a little girl (key actress) who is unable to complete a candies purchase act, yet who is handed the intended purchase item free-of-charge by the merchant, is rendered comprehensible once we are exposed to the payoff line of the text, which promises unexpected rewards by following a savings plan. Hence, what is required in order to close off semantically this segment and at the same time what is



Figure 42: Airtel verbo-visual/ellipsis

omitted in this syntagm, functions as an ellipsis. In order to account for this ellipsis a viewer must wait until the semantic gap has been filled in by the brand promise. A similar elliptical configuration is encountered in the case of Scotia Bank, where a mid filmic syntagm omits mentioning how much one would have to pay for a particular type of home in 2020, while inviting viewers to fill in the missing information by taking into

account the exponentially increasing home purchase prices that were exposed in the previous syntagms. In a similar vein, the Airtel text features a syntagm where W.Churchill is portrayed to be raising his right hand and forming the peace symbol while addressing a crowd. The super 'Two can win a war' runs in parallel. In this case, the subject to which the count noun is ascribed is intentionally omitted, not only for textual economic reasons, as it may be inferred from the previous syntagm (which explicitly posits 'finger' as the subject of the sentence), but due to the fact that the intentionally elliptical sentence constitutes at the same time a pun that plays on the polysemy of the subject of the ellipsis (given that, literally, two figures cannot win a war, hence another subject must be evoked for closing off the sentence's semantic structure, such as two persons, two armies or, generally speaking, a structural coupling).

Silence/suspension demands equally prudent coding as ellipsis, given that it is part and parcel of the general advertising semiotic economy. However, there are cases where it is intentionally used and where it is more proper to code the respective segments with this figure rather than ellipsis (of which it stands in an analogically hypotactic relationship, in the same fashion that accolorance, for example, is a special case of anaphora, both being part of repetition



Figure 43: ScotiaBank verbo-visual/ellipsis

figures; see Groppe 1984). An indicative example of a powerful use of silence/suspension in our corpus is the closing syntagm of the Facebook text, which intentionally ends in silence, while omitting the repetition of the predicate 'alone' from the previous sentence ('The universe is fast and dark and makes us wonder if we are alone. So maybe the reason why we make up all of these things is to remind ourselves that we are not...'). In this case, the predicate is suspended verbally, while the sentence is completed by the appearance of the brand name 'Facebook'. Hence, it is not a case where the predicate is omitted, as the sentence is filled in with 'Facebook', but of substituting 'not alone' with Facebook, to which end the employment of the suspension/silence figure is conducive.

The newly coined figure of **pareikonopoeia**, which recurs in 9% of all filmic segments and features different actors and/or settings that converge semantically on the univocally implied message behind manifest variations, uniformly facilitated by the employment of recurrent production techniques (e.g., alternation between medium-shots and close-ups, same on-screen placement), was found to be particularly prevalent in slice-of-life ad texts, but also in cases where the same message was repeated with thematic variations (e.g., IBM's plea for building a smarter planet, featuring rotating employee texts of why IBM

solutions are smart, Subway's 'Eat Fresh' single minded proposition underlying - see Johnson and Mandler, 1980 - various menu choices, in-home slice-of-life visuals revolving around consumers' interaction with Sony Bravia, people making ironically promises they can't keep in the Commonwealth Bank commercial, aspects of not being treated as expected in the KFC commercial, oxymoronic incidents of technology malfunction in the Chase commercial).





***Incidence Of Rhetorical Figures By Recourse To The 'Global' Semantic And Syntactic Context Of The Ad Filmic Text***

Verbo-visual anaphoras, which constitute the most often recurring rhetorical figure (of the adjunction operation) function as syntactic markers of the multimodal rhetoric pursued by the majority of the most valued brands. Indicative examples of visual anaphora as syntactic markers that confer a unique semantic structure to the ad filmic text, by analogy to the syntactic markers as customarily employed in textual linguistics (e.g., Swanson 2003, Gonzalez 2012), consist of (i) recurrent product shots, embedded in slice-of-life, experiential moments featuring the advertised brand, in a considerable portion of the filmic segments (e.g., Budweiser bottle and/or logo) (ii) recurrent same visuals (under different camera angles) with a color coding that is indicative of the featured brand's color codes (e.g., Telcel giant balloon).



Figure 46: Budweiser anaphora



Figure 47: Telcel anaphora

A **visual metonymy** is formed hyperbolically in the DHL commercial between the corporate yellow color and the yellow flash that is indicative of the speed at which DHL delivers its orders. Making sense of why the yellow flash functions as a visual metonymy presupposes that the audience has been exposed to the wider semantic context, featuring the brand's corporate colors and its brand promise as engraved in the



Figure 48: DHL visual metonymy

text's payoff line ('Excellence simply delivered'). By the same token, the prior incidence of the 'flash' is a necessary condition for understanding why the qualification of the delivery mode with the addition of 'simply' in the payoff line functions as a litotic scheme that adds a tone of modesty to the hyperbolic visual statements that precede it.

An analogon of verbo-visual figurative

interaction, but on a same segment level, is encountered in the American Express text, where the hyperbolic incidence of the main actor's appearing on the scene like deus-ex-machina in a fly-in mode, equipped with all the paraphernalia he bought with American Express (featuring a canoe) is coupled oxymoronically with the co-actresse's statement 'It's too much'.

An example of **verbo-visual antithesis** is as the outcome of interaction between visual and verbal modes by recourse to a wider semantic context occurs in a mid-filmic segment from the T-Mobile text. In this instance, whereas the super that appears on-



Figure 49: American Express visual hyperbole

screen states 'Time to set the record straight', the appeal to straighten one's record is in marked contrast to the portrayal of a business-woman turned into night-time vigilante. Hence, not only a verbo-visual antithesis attains to accentuate a cultural value about 'straightness', but a new semic dimension is added to 'straightness' in the brand's discourse, which liquidates oppositions and refreezes them in a novel manner.



Figure 50: T-Mobile verbo-visual antithesis

A striking example of verbo-visual antithesis also emerges in the context of the Starbucks text, where a rock-band is employed as the voice of the featured actor's conscience (or superego), Glen, a low-to-mid level manager in a corporate environment. The antithesis that emerges by the juxtaposition of two divergent lifestyles is further reduced to an oxymoron, as the two lifestyles that are coupled with antonymical semes ('abundantly expressive' for rock band versus 'reserved' for employee, among other potentially antonymical semes) converge in the manifest plot under a novel hybrid semantic synthesis. This hybrid verbo-visual oxymoron is tropically enhanced by the co-occurrence of rhyme, irony, epiphora.



Figure 51: Starbucks verbo-visual antithesis

The Aldi text also plays repeatedly throughout the various filmic segments with antithesis, in the light of the payoff line 'ready when you're not', which makes sense retrospectively, once the antithetical images



of babies who are ready to fulfill a 'basic corporeal need', when parents are not, have been referred back to the payoff line.



Figure 52: Aldi visual antithesis

Certain figures, such as verbal **hyperbole**, also function as the holistic figurative backdrop of ad texts. This is the case with the Louis Vuitton commercial, where the hyperbolic verses (brought about by oxymorons, such as 'I make medicine sick', personifications, such as 'hospitalized a brick') of poet/boxer Mohammed Ali are leveraged with view to augmenting the dreamy atmosphere that is fleshed out through the employment of the visual metaphor of the boxing ring as oneiric scaffold. This co- occurrence of personification-cum-hyperbole is reminiscent of the by definition excessive content of a repressed wish fulfillment in a dream's unconscious that 'fights' to make itself manifest in the hyperbolic content of conscious speech ( yet only attaining to surface as oxymoronic excess that invokes the impossibility of this surfacing; see Rossolatos 2012c) .



Figure 53: Louis Vuitton oneiric scaffold

**Visual personifications** bring brands to life, as in the case of dancing Apple ipods, humanized bears (Coca-Cola), anthropomorphized colors (who express their personality through kinesics) or with stadiums

that 'get it' (Verizon) (see Rossolatos 2012c for further analysis of anthropomorphism strategies). **Visual inversions** are also noted as syntactic markers that confer cohesion to separately placed segments within a filmic text's temporal structure, as in the case of ebay, where sequential inversions of movement in physical space are employed in order to enhance the impact of the argument about convenience and flexibility of navigation in the online commercial environment of ebay.



Figures that function as syntactic markers that solidify textual cohesion are encountered in cases of **epiphora**, such as in the case of UPS, where each verse of the sung text ends with the phrase 'That's logistics', but also in the case of epiphoras in the text of Santander, where the majority of the featured verses end with the phrase 'you save', thus enhancing mnemotechnically the key brand promise about savings.

Regarding the visual incidence of tmesis in the context of the rhetorical strategy employed in the text for Toyota Prius, an interpolated filmic syntagm disrupts correlated syntagms that are edified on the transition amongst the four seasons, by portraying an a-seasonal visual, against the background of the drawing of an ancient edifice with classical architectural rhythm. In this manner, the diachronic value of the brand is highlighted in the course of the transition amongst synchronically salient stages (such as seasons), while adding a twist of modern/classic by portraying an ancient building (symbolic of heritage) in drawn free-form. Again, the operational value of the employed figure, in this incidence, makes sense against the background of the wider semantic contours of the entire text.



Figure 55: Toyota visual tmesis

In the case of Nike, the entire film plays around tmeses that interrupt correlated sequences of action. Shots related to different product categories on offer by the brand freeze action in distinctive 'nows' (thus replicating the payoff line 'Now') across the entire text (1st freeze on shoes on a display, 2nd on a ball, 3rd on a t-shirt), thus urging consumers to purchase now in order to continue being part of the ongoing game.

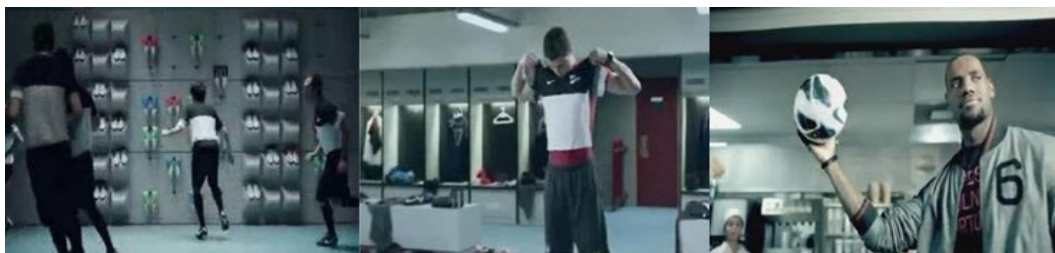


Figure 56: Nike visual tmeses

Occasionally, figures function by recourse to the wider semantic context of an ad filmic text as entire sequences. This is particularly the case with visual metaphors, as in the incidence of an entire sequence featuring a young boy and a girl who form an instant connection via the gaze and then by the former hand-



Figure 57: Vodafone visual metaphor

ing over to the latter a scarf that had been removed from her neck by a strong wind. This 'long metaphor' (of parabolic nature, where a micro-text states how instant connections may be formed in mundane circumstances) and at the same time visual synecdoche, stands metaphorically for the core brand promise of instant connections that is made in the text's payoff line.



Figure 58: Facebook visual metaphor

In the Facebook text, the explicit verbo-visual metaphor of chairs is employed by transferring the attribute of the recipient of a chair's functionality (e.g., 'chairs are for people') to Facebook in a rarely explicit manner (i.e., by not suppressing similes). The entire text deploys against the background of equally binding least common denominators, which, yet, function as verbo-visual synecdoches

that display aspects of means whereby people are connected (e.g., bridges) for the whole, that is Facebook. In this instance, the brand is posited in the text's rhetorical topography as the universal least common denominator by analogy to its synecdochic parts.

In a similar manner, that is where visual metaphors make sense as such *ex post facto*, that is once semantic closure has been effected in a text's payoff line, the Accenture text effects a metaphorical transfer of the attributes convention and invention qua 'rules of the game' from a golf-course game to business practice.



Figure 59: Facebook visual synecdoches



Figure 60: Accenture visual metaphor



By the same token, the individual filmic syntagms in the Volkswagen text that range from a beetle's helping pull a school-bus to a beetle's chasing a villain function retrospectively, that is once the statement 'They say if you are good in one life, you are rewarded in the next' has been established, as visual metaphors for 'goodness' or doing 'good deeds'.



Figure 61: Volkswagen visual metaphor

Even though in the majority of cases in this analysis segments were coded, for methodological consistency, with figures in a manner that resonates primarily the local context of the ad texts, opening up interpretation to a wider cultural milieu essentially affords to widen the interpretive horizon, while allowing the connotative aspects of ad texts' configuration to seethe even more forcefully into the interpretive canvass. For example, the shadow projected from the McDonald's logo banner that stands on top of the store's roof in the featured text also functions as a visual metaphor insofar as it sanctions the brand within the filmic discourse to act as the social space wherein all aspects of summer-related activities (given that all featured visual sequences are related to the 'Do Summer' payoff line) may be enacted, while natural protection from the sun opens up to a cultural milieu qua security, safety and protection.



Figure 62: McDonalds visual metaphor

Such an interpretive opening up to a wider cultural context also attains to elucidate why the most valued brands afford to invest their texts with a cultural capital that catapults them to arche-signifiers or gatekeepers of a cultural order, while pointing to how a value system or plenum of rhetorical topoi is instituted in ad filmic texts (Rossolatos 2014b).

## Conclusions And Areas For Further Research

ATLAS.ti 7 is particularly suited to multimodal discourse analyses. This paper sought to provide basic guidelines for determining the rhetorical structure of ad films, by drawing on some of the program's main functionalities. By combining traditional rhetorical analysis of multimodal ad texts with a quantified view in the context of a selected corpus, we are capable of determining not only individual films' rhetorical structures, but, even more importantly, dominant modes of rhetorical configuration. In this manner, we are capable of discerning directions whereby 'differential figurative advantages' may be furnished to brand discourses, by comparing and contrasting the relative incidence of individual figures and operations among brands. To this end, ATLAS.ti 7 is an indispensable facilitator for strategic, but also tactical brand communications planning, as well as for keeping detailed track of brands' figurative discourse, on a micro-level, that is segment-by-segment, rather than on an entire filmic one.

It is hoped that the interpretive and operational applicability of the majority of traditional rhetorical operations and figures to a visio-centric predicament, wherein ad texts are embedded, has been substantiated through the arguments put forward in the preceding analyses. The world's most valuable brands were found to be making ample and intensive use of a wide roster of verbo-visual rhetorical techniques that are instrumental in shaping their ad filmic texts. The propounded rhetorical perspective provided partial answers to the call for coining new figures that may encapsulate how distinctive modes of visual rhetorical configuration are brought about, while paving the way for a bespoke and expanded taxonomy, in the context of a still vibrant and thriving rhetorical tradition that posited *inventio* as an indispensable complement of *elocutio*.

On a methodological level, the adopted coding and analytical route that favors individual filmic segments' analysis, rather than treating ad films as standalone analytical units, turned out to be a viable option for capturing the multiplicity of and the interaction among the rhetorical figures that are operative in various parts of individual ad filmic texts. The output of this analysis points to a clear need for attending closely to how the configuration of an advertising text may be molded with reference to the relative incidence of figures, operations and moreover co-occurring figures in a multimodal rhetorical landscape, with view to obtaining a first mover rhetorical advantage.

The implications for practitioners are tremendous. For example, an account planning team may keep track in a minutely detailed manner of how competitive brand communications strategies were fleshed out throughout time by producing aggregate reports about the relative incidence of distinctive profilmic elements and/or rhetorical figures/operations, thus being capable of making informed decisions about which elements to avoid repeating, as well as about which profilmic elements may be used for truly standout/disruptive communications. Furthermore, a brand management team may be capable of monitoring through statistical analyses the relative impact of the employment of different creative elements and rhetorical strategies on market share and soft metrics, such as brand image, brand familiarity and brand involvement.

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## Appendix A

	Rhetorical figures (name-definition)	Corresponding rhetorical operation
1	Aphesis: Omission of one or more sounds or syllables from the beginning of a word.	Suppression*
2	Apocope: Omission of one or more sounds or syllables from the end of a word.	Suppression
3	Ellipsis: Suppression of one or two elements that are necessary for a complete verbo-visual syntactic arrangement, without impacting necessarily on the semantic closure of the message	Suppression
4	Zeugma: Grammatical coordination of two words or visuals that possess opposing semes <sup>13</sup> .	Suppression
5	Asyndeton: Loosely constructed sentences that occur in filmic syntagms, such as the juxtaposition of words separated by commas.	Suppression
6	Litotes: Quantitative diminution of a property of an object, the significance of an event or a state-of-affairs.	Suppression
7	Suspension/Silence (or aposiopesis): Intentional omission of a word/phrase that would complete the meaning of a message (contrary to expectations).	Suppression
8	Rhetorical question: A question that includes its answer.	Suppression
9	Neologism: Formed by the addition of at least two words or visuals.	Adjunction**
10	Paronomasia: Employment of consonant words with a different sense. In visual terms, a paronomasia may take place through an optical illusion, where similarly sounding words may appear differently as a result of the employment of blurred fonts.	Adjunction
11	Pareikonopoeia: Employment of similar images with different senses; similarity is conferred by the employment of different actors in different filmic sequences/ syntagms with similar postures, usually enhanced by the employment of the same production techniques (e.g., all syntagms featuring close-ups or medium shots or alternating close-ups/medium shots), who repeat the same underlying theme under different manifest texts.	Adjunction
	Epanthesis: The insertion of an extra sound into a word.	Adjunction

13 Semes constitute the minimal units of multimodal semantic content (Rossolatos 2014a)

	Rhetorical figures (name-definition)	Corresponding rhetorical operation
13	Alliteration: Repeats the same consonant sound in three or more subsequent words or the majority of words in a filmic syntagm	Adjunction
14	Assonance: Repeats vowel sounds within the majority of words in a phrase or sentence.	Adjunction
15	Accolorance: Repetition of the same color in the majority of visuals in a filmic syntagm or across syntagms. Usually employed with view to highlighting either a color that is part of a brand's visual identity or of an ad film's aesthetic orientation.	Adjunction
16	Rhyme: Repetition of sounds at the end of words and/or phrases.	Adjunction
17	Reshaption: Repetition of the same shape in the majority of visuals in a syntagm or across syntagms.	Adjunction
18	Antanacsis: Repetition of a single word, but with different meanings each time. Repetition may involve visuals or verbo-visual schemes.	Adjunction
19	Anaphora: Repeats the same first or middle word or phrase or sound (in the case of sonic markers) or visual marker (e.g., balloon) or setting (in the case of background settings) or object (e.g., beer bottle) in the same or in various filmic syntagms.	Adjunction
20	Epiphora: Repeats the last word(s) or visuals in a syntagm.	Adjunction
21	Parenthesis: (VERBAL-voice-over) The insertion in a syntagm of a distinct thought not totally unrelated to the subject at hand (VISUAL) The insertion of an extra shot in a syntagm that relates contextually to the text, but is not strictly speaking part of it.	Adjunction
22	Expletion: Enrichment with adjectives that make explicit in axiological terms why an object should be valued <sup>14</sup> .	Adjunction
23	Personification: Attributes human qualities to an inanimate object.	Adjunction
24	Polysyndeton: The opposite of asyndeton, i.e., the use of many particles.	Adjunction
25	Hyperbole: Quantitative augmentation of one of the properties of an object, state-of-affairs; may be encountered purely verbally or visually or as the employment of a visual that augments the importance or the argumentative force of a voice-over.	Adjunction
26	Antithesis: Correspondence of two antonyms, which comprise opposing semes; may be encountered purely verbally or visually or as an antithesis between what is uttered in a voice-over and what is portrayed in a visual in the same or in succeeding filmic syntagms.	Adjunction
27	Metaphor: Substitution of an abstract concept with a concrete word or visual. Employment of a word or visual in a different sense to its habitual one, in order to effect a contrived similarity between them <sup>15</sup> .	Substitution***
28	Metonymy: Employment / displacement of the semantic nucleus of words and / or visuals to designate/highlight a property that is shared between them.	Substitution
29	Synecdoche: Employment of a word or visual in a sense that designates a relationship of part-to-whole (e.g., sail-for-ship; a special case of metonymy).	Substitution
30	Oxymoron: Co-occurrence in the same syntagm of two antonyms, without implying the incidence of a truism or a topos (may be evinced either purely verbally or visually or verbo-visually) and without the necessary incidence of coordination markers.	Substitution

14 See Kolln, 1999, p. 31: "the use of expletives delays the subject".

15 Note that parables were not included in the list, as they constitute long metaphors, based on traditional rhetorical definitions. A case of a microtext that is deployed in an entire long-take sequence functioning as a parable (as in the case of the featured Vodafone filmic text) essentially constitutes a long visual metaphor.

	Rhetorical figures (name-definition)	Corresponding rhetorical operation
31	Irony: Intentional employment of a word or visual in an antonymical sense.	Substitution
32	Paradox: The syntactical co-occurrence in the same syntagm of two words or phrases or visuals that appear to be contradictory, but contains a truism or topos.	Substitution
33	Pun: (VERBAL PUN) The transference of semic attributes through wordplay (e.g., Why weight for success? <sup>16</sup> ) (VISUAL PUN) A setting and/or the actors involved in a setting and/or other filmic elements (e.g., colors, movements) that emit one or more intended senses through visual play.	Substitution
34	Onomatopoeia: Substitution of naturally occurring sounds with descriptive words (e.g., Mazda's 'Zoom- Zoom').	Substitution

Table 10: List of rhetorical figures/operations

## Appendix B

Rhetorical figure	% of each operation	% of ttl sample
Anaphora	30%	20%
Pereikonopoeia	13%	9%
Accolorance	11%	7%
Antanaclasis	7%	5%
Epiphora	7%	5%
Alliteration	5%	4%
Rhyme	6%	4%
Reshaption	5%	4%
Antithesis	5%	3%
Personification	3%	2%
Expletion	2%	1%
Hyperbole	2%	1%
Parenthesis	1%	1%
Assonance	1%	0%
Epenthesis	0%	0%
Neologism	0%	0%
Paronomasia	0%	0%
Polysyndeton	0%	0%
adjunction total	100%	67%
Inversion	50%	6%
Antimetabole	25%	3%
Anacolouthon	8%	1%
Tmesis	13%	1%
Anagram	3%	0%
permutation total	100.00%	11.00%
Metaphor	36%	6%
Metonymy	23%	4%
Irony	11%	2%
Oxymoron	12%	2%
Pun	12%	2%
Synecdoche	4%	1%
Onomatopoeia	0%	0%
Paradox	1%	0%
substitution total	100.00%	17.00%
Ellipsis	40%	2%
Asyndeton	13%	1%
Litotes	13%	1%

16 Cited in McQuarrie & Philips, 2004.

Rhetorical figure	% of each operation	% of ttl sample
Rhetorical Question	17 %	1 %
Apheresis	0 %	0 %
Apocope	3 %	0 %
Suspension/silence	7 %	0 %
Zeugma	7 %	0 %
suppression total	100.00 %	6.00 %
Grand total:	100 %	100 %

Table 11: Contribution of each figure to each operation and to the total sample. - Note: 0 percentages denote either the non-incidence of the concerned figures in the selected corpus or are attributed to rounding.

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