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**A Case Study of a Private Higher Education
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A Multimodal Analysis**

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**A Case Study of a Private Higher Education Institution's Promotional Discourse in Puebla:
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother who has unconditionally supported me in all of my projects. She has always been my mentor and confident. It is also dedicated to my second mother who sadly passed away while I was studying this M.A degree. I wish you could see this achievement but I you still be remembered with love and gratitude.

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A Case Study of a Private Higher Education Institution's Promotional Discourse in Puebla:

A Multimodal Analysis

1.1 Introduction to the problem

Higher education institutions are in charge of forming professional people to contribute to the growth of society. They offer a wide variety of educational options from which students can choose according to their future ambitions. In order to create an ideology and identity and to disseminate their messages to attract the public and potential students' attention they make use of different media resources. In the post-modern world, technology has become the main means of communication. The fact that we are constantly surrounded by multimodal and multisemiotic texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), has led higher educational institutions to use media as one of the main sources to disseminate their discourses. In addition, universities like any other organization are constantly constructing a distinctive image and marketing themselves through different media (Yen Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015). Taking these factors into consideration, universities in Mexico produce different propaganda to disseminate their promotional discourses. As Mayr (2008) states institutions are shaped by discourse and they in turn have the capacity to create and impose discourses. Therefore, they have the power to foster different identities to suit their own purposes.

Among the vast number of universities in Puebla, one of the most prestigious is constantly distributing their propaganda through different media. This university is the Universidad de las Americas Puebla (a private university) located in the city of Puebla, Mexico. With the above issues in mind, the current research analyzes how this institution constructs

ideologies and transmit their educational identities through the use of billboards within a multimodal framework Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006; Jewitt 2009; Baldry & Thibault 2006.

Much research has been conducted regarding multimodality and multimodal analysis. For instance, Iedema (2003) provides an overview on how discourse analysis developed to the inclusion of semiotic elements such as images, colors and gestures to analyze texts in a more holistic way. This evolution on the approach is referred to as the study of “multimodality” (Iedema, 2003; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Kress and Ogborn, 1998; Van Leeuwen, 1999). Yen Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015, conducted a study on how two Australian universities’ used their web pages to disseminate their promotional discourses and persuade students to choose their educational offers. In the same way, Castineira, Witten and Flores, (2013) conducted a critical analysis of the 2006 presidential billboards in Mexico using a multimodal systemic functional approach to analyze how the presidential candidates constructed their ideologies and created a relation with the consumers of their propaganda. However, there is little research on how higher education institutions in Puebla utilize multimodal texts to construct ideologies and transmit their educational identities. Hence, this study attempts to analyze this issue from a critical approach in which multimodal texts and their semiotic elements (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006; Jewitt 2008; Baldry & Thibault 2006) are intertextually connected (Bazerman, 2004) to disseminate promotional discourses.

1.2 Rationale

With the constant development of technology and communicational media, the focus on multimodal texts has grown significantly in the last two decades. Educational institutions are constantly promoting their services to potential students using billboards. In my context, one of the most prestigious universities in Mexico make constant use of media such as billboards and

radio and TV commercials to disseminate various messages. As a consumer of this propaganda, I notice the constant distribution of these billboards and commercials. Every year the university produces propaganda using different discourses and semiotic elements, trying to construct a relationship with consumers. Therefore, and in the light of the previous discussion, it is important to investigate this aspect in order to explore how higher education institutions use billboards to disseminate promotional discourses. In the same way, exploring this issue will give an insight into how they convey and construct their educational ideologies in order to express an educational identity through the use of media.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the promotional discourse of the multimodal texts that a private higher educational institution distributes through the use of billboards. Similarly, the study investigates how these institutions disseminate these discourses as they construct and convey their ideologies to express an institutional identity. The study is also interested in the manner in which this higher education institution attempts to build relationships with their potential clients through the employment of these discourses. The study intends to examine the manner in which higher education institutions utilize discourses within promotional propaganda and provide a discussion of how social actors make use of these multimodal texts.

1.4 Research setting

The present study is focused on a private university in the city of Puebla, Mexico. The Universidad de las Americas Puebla is a private university founded in 1940 with the name of Mexico City College. It is located in Cholula, Puebla and offers approximately 49 undergraduate majors and 29 postgraduate programs in different educational areas. Moreover, the objects of the

study are the various discourses this institution massively distributes through the use of billboards.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study attempts to contribute to the field of multimodal analysis and critical studies within the Mexican context. As previously mentioned, higher education institutions are responsible for forming students. Therefore, they are in a constant competition to convince potential students to study their institutions. By distributing their propaganda, universities intend to attract the attention of consumers. They try to project an image that differentiate them from other universities and convince the consumers that they can offer them the best educational programs to suit their professional aspirations.

Therefore, it is important to study how these institutions construct and transmit their educational ideologies in order to position themselves in the educational market. By exploring this aspect we will be able to understand the manner in which institutions position themselves within the field of higher education. By exploring this issue we aim to contribute to the gap in research about promotional discourse and the construction of educational identities.

1.6 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What media does the higher education institution employ to disseminate promotional discourses?
2. How does the higher education institution construct and convey ideology through their promotional discourses?
3. How does the higher education institution establish an institutional identity through their promotional discourses?

1.7 Conclusion

As stated above, the purpose of the following project is to explore how a private higher educational institution constructs and disseminates multimodal promotional discourses through the use of billboards and how these discourses convey institutional identity and ideology. In chapter two the theoretical considerations of the present research are to be presented. In the third chapter the methodology used to conduct this research is explained. The instruments used to gather data, the participants and the data procedure will be explained in detail. In chapter four the most relevant results will be discussed in detail. Finally, the conclusions and proposals are mentioned in chapter five with the intention of having further research on this topic as well as the limitation to conduct the present paper and the implications of the study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a discussion of the most relevant theoretical issues within the literature that are necessary to understand in order to underpin of the current study. The chapter outlines the foundations of issues such as discourse, multimodality, intertextuality, identity and marketing. It is meant to provide the reader with the necessary knowledge to understand the current investigation as well as justify and support the results presented in chapter four.

Discourse

In our daily life, we are constantly surrounded by different messages. We are constantly communicating, which changes our world and lives. Communication is indisputably part of our evolution and of our survival. For communication to take place, language has long been considered as the main tool for this activity. Many years ago, the study of language was mainly devoted to sentences (Cook, 1989); however, communication does not only happen when a person is able to articulate single sentences nor does the use of single sentences ensure communication. Recently, as Bathia, Flowerdew and Jones (2008, p.1) state, “the social sciences have undergone a discursive turn to study the role played by language in the creation of the reality that surround us. In other words, today discourse has become the center for the analysis of communication.”

Discourse has several definitions and several scholars have provided different lenses for its analysis. The first definitions of discourse considered it as the “study of language” and nothing more (Tannen, 1989, p.6). As the term expanded, and the interest in discourse grew,

researchers such as Halliday, (1978); Kress & Van Leeuwen, (1996) and Scollon & Scollon, (2003) considered discourse to be more than just language by itself. For instance, Fairclough, (1989) deems that discourse is language in use as a form of social practice determined by social structures. Since discourse can not be separated from the social context in which it occurs, it has particular effects upon social structures of society. Furthermore, it contributes to social changes (Fairclough, 1989; Brown & Yule, 1983).

So far, we have considered the link between language and discourse, where historically, language was considered as the principle means for constructing discourses and nothing more (Tannen, 1989, p.6). As the term expanded, and the interest in discourse grew, many researchers such as Halliday, (1978); Kress & Van Leeuwen, (1996) and Scollon & Scollon, (2003) considered discourse to be more than just language by itself. For instance, Fairclough, (1989) deems that discourse is language in use as a form of social practice determined by social structures. Since discourse can not be separated from the social context in which it occurs, it has particular effects upon social structures of society. Furthermore, it contributes to social changes (Fairclough, 1989; Brown & Yule, 1983).

So far, we have considered the link between language and discourse, where historically, language was considered as the principle means for constructing discourses. Recently, a wave of researchers interested in multimodal communication propose that while language is, indeed, an important tool in the construction of discourses, many other modes exist which also contribute to this construction (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). As Ortiz (2012) states, discourse can be a written text, an oral conversation, a painting, a video or a piece of music. Taking the aforementioned into consideration, discourse can be considered as any kind of expression that sends a message with a specific purpose to fulfill in a given situational context.

2.2 Intertextuality

Every time we use language we make reference to previous words or texts we either read or listened to. Similarly, every time we produce texts, we make reference to other texts. This phenomenon is referred to as intertextuality (Short, 1992). Intertextuality, however, involves more than relating one text to another. Since its first use in Kristeva's work in the mid 1960's, intertextuality has been widely studied, yet the concept was actually being examined before that in educational and literary research (Bloom, 1992).

Many scholars have defined intertextuality. The definitions vary in order to accomplish a particular purpose (Bloom, 1992). For instance, for Kristeva a text was not a self-contained system, but rather a historically created system (Martinez Alfaro, 1996). Intertextuality, therefore, implies the insertion of history into a text, since it is shaped by the transformation and repetition of other texts. In the same way, the text is incorporated into history, contributing to past texts and to processes of change in subsequent texts (Martinez Alfaro, 1996; Kristeva, 1996 cited in Fairclough, 1996).

From this perspective, Short (1992) defines intertextuality as the process of making connections between current and past texts and interpreting one text by means of previously composed texts. Similarly, Bazerman (2004) defines intertextuality as the relation each text has to the texts surrounding it (p. 84). He states that we create our texts from other texts that surround us and the language we use, see and hear in our everyday life. He also claims that the words and phrases that we use are the product of our social interaction. So far, we have mentioned texts as the main source of intertextual analysis. Text is, as discourse, any sign that intends to communicate. For Short (1986, cited in Short, 1992, p.) a text is any chunk of meaning that has unity and can be shared with others. It can include both linguistic and non-linguistic

features (Hart, 1992). Therefore, a text can be an utterance, a gesture, a thought, a piece of art, music or even drama (Rowe, 1987; Short, 1986; Siegel, 1984 cited in Hart, 1992).

Texts are socially constructed and interpreted. As a matter of fact, the interpretation and construction of texts are social activities. Hartman, (1992) identifies four characters in intertextuality: the text, the reader, the author and the context. For instance, a text is seen as beholder of an interior and exterior dialogue where different discourses, images, utterances and motifs are internally woven and related to other texts spatially and temporarily (Hartman, 1992). The reader, while interpreting a text, generates intertextual connections among other texts to fit a particular context (Hartman, 1992). In order to generate what Hartman, (1992) calls the “inner text” the reader is able to borrow, adapt and make use of past experiences with texts, make interconnections between those texts and being able to use these texts to revise and make meaning of the future evolving text (Hartman, 1992). In this manner, the reader is able to construct his/her own voice on the basis of others’ voices (Hartman, 1992; Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). Similarly, the author emerges as the one who constructs “textual worlds” by speaking the social voice of others (Hartmann, 1992). Finally, the context is seen through two different lens. The endogenous contexts is related to the syntagmatic intra and intertextual relations that a text has with other texts. On the other hand exogenous context includes the sociocultural and sociolinguistic relation of texts.

As previously mentioned, we interpret texts on the basis of previous texts. Lemke (1992) provides three basic principals in order to find intertextual connections on the basis of Halliday’s work. The first principle regards the thematic relations that exist between texts. This includes topical relations, relations of the stance and attitude of the rhetor towards the audience and relation on the resources for structuring and organizing texts. The second principle links texts

that have the same point of view towards the audience. Finally, the third principle links texts that have the same genre structure (Lemke, 1992). According to Lemke, when texts are the same in all of the three principals are considered to have a strong intertextual relation. If texts have no relation on any of these principals we need to look for other patterns to find intertextuality. If there are no connection, then texts are considered not relevant each other. Therefore, in Lemke's (1992) words:

“Intertextual connections are thus matters of degree as well as of kind (p. 260)”

Kamberelis and Scott, (1992) identify three constructs of intertextuality: subjectivity, text and voice. According to these constructs texts are produced in specific social situations and for specific purposes utilizing different discourses and discursive practices that allow us to know, act and being (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). Discourses are central to the formation and re-formation of subjectivity. They give shape to our reality and the manner in which we see the world, behave, and construct our ideologies or “voices” (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). Deriving from this notion, texts are the product of borrowing and adapting the language of others. As a result, we have a mere social and cultural process characterized by the shaping, re-shaping and adaptation of voices to create our own.

Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986 cited in Kamberelis & Scott, 1992) provided five ways in which intertextuality can be analyzed: *direct quotation, imitation (or adoption), stylization, parody, and hidden polemic*. *Direct quotation* takes place when the rhetor appropriates and explicitly uses someone else's discourse primarily because he/she believes it is indispensable and authoritative for his/her own work and purposes. In *imitation or adoption* someone's voice is adopted by the rhetor. By doing so, there is a near merge of two voices and an abolishment of the distance between the self's and another's discourse (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). According to Kamberelis and Scott (1992) this type of voice appropriation is the result of the social exposure

and interaction with specific social groups. *Stylization*, in contrast to imitation, maintains a distance between the self's voice the voice being borrowed. Here the rhetor appropriates an utterance to express the same point of view or to create the same effect that the other might have. Stylization, therefore, does not imply a complete and conscious appropriation of an ideology. Rather it is an "as if" or tentative mode of being (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992). *Parody* as in the case of imitation and stylization involves the presence of two voices. However, they represent two opposing stances within the same utterance. This ambiguity gives the comedic effect to the utterance in use. In addition, this effect is accomplished when the audience is able to recognize "the original meaning, the new meaning and the difference between the two" Kamberelis & Scott (1992, p. 372). Finally, *hidden polemic* is a form of voice appropriation that relies on the influence of the appropriator's words into the original discourse. To construct a hidden polemic the rhetor recontextualizes the borrowed discourse in such a way that the meanings of that discourse is transformed by the new context.

There is another form of intertextuality called idealization. Through idealization the rhetor appropriates and transforms another's discourse to create a new ideal discourse. Idealization is considered as a form of discursive analog to wish fulfillment (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992) in which ideological contexts are created through discourse.

As previously stated texts are represented by several different modes. Lemke (1992) highlights the importance of semiotic intertextuality arguing that this phenomenon does not only occur within linguistic aspects. Intertextuality exist on the various semiotic modes that constitute a text. As a matter of fact, the rapid technological advances predict what Lemke (1992) called a full "virtual reality".

2.3 Multimodality

As multimodal forms of communication in the current technological era are still developing, the need for a framework to analyze communication is evident. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2005) stress “it is essential that we develop modes of text analysis which can adequately describe the interplay between the verbal and the visual, and adequately analyze visually expressed meanings” (p. 187). Several frameworks within the linguistics field have attempted to analyze communication. However, during the last decades there has been a shift towards a multimodal social-semiotic approach of communication analysis (Xerri, 2012; Iedema, 2003). Kress and van Leeuwen (2005) state that “language always has to be realized through, and comes in the company of, other semiotic modes.” (p. 187). From this perspective communication is evidently multimodal semiotic work. As Kress, (2010) state, communication is a response to a prompt or framed understandable message that has been interpreted and that leads to an action. This semiotic work, as any kind of work, produce changes over the tools, the worker and that which is worked on.

In a multimodal social semiotic theory signs are of paramount importance and the focus for analysis. Kress (2010) defines signs as a fusion of form and meaning. In addition, signs exist in all semiotic modes, shaped by the cultural and social environments in which the individual interacts and made from the several cultural and social semiotic resources available. In social interaction, signs are continuously newly made, motivated by the rhetor’s interest to create the most apt conjunction of forms to bring meaning (Kress, 2010; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996).

All texts are multimodal (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2005). According to Iedema and Stenglin (2001), a multimodal text is “one in which a number of different modes (words in headings and headlines; images and the written texts themselves) are integrated to form a composite whole” (p. 195). However, other researchers such as Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn and

Tsatsarelis (2001) state that “meaning is made in all modes separately, and at the same time, that meaning is an effect of all the modes acting jointly” (p. 1). In other words, multimodal discourse takes place when different semiotic modes are used and joined together to give place to a semiotic product or event. In this process each utilized mode represents a particular meaning that when joined together with the other modes create a whole (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Bloor & Bloor, 2007; Liu, 2013). Moreover, for Dressman (2010) multimodality is “the crafted integration of two or more ways, or modes, of communication, so that their combined meaning as a whole is greater than either mode separately or their simple combination” (p. 71).

Modes are semiotic resources for making meaning used in a given culture and socially shaped (Kress, 2010). Examples of modes used in communication and representation are image, writing, music, gestures, speech, moving images and 3D objects. They also provide different potential for meaning making (Kress, 2010). According to Kress (2010), modes are constituted of different resources which can be similar to and different from each other within one society. Similarity results from the fact that they are shaped in a specific society and in order to target the characteristics, needs and demand of the members of that society, yet they are different in that the materiality of different modes offers different resources and potentials for social shaping. Therefore, image in one culture is not identical to image in another (Kress, 2010). Modes are used differently depending on the communicative situation and the culture in which they are used. In some cultures, image may have a more prominent role than writing in meaning making and vice versa.

Societies are selective in the use of modes. They have modal preference and this preference makes modes to have a specialized use for a specific social domain. However, modes

can only be considered as such only if they serve for the communicative purpose they are intended to address the needs of the communicative situation.

As an analytic tool, multimodal analysis attempt to analyze how different semiotic resources and modes are used in discourse within a particular social setting in order to convey meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Moreover, within this multimodal framework three processes are of importance to understand how multimodal discourses or texts are designed, produced and distributed. In the same way, the visual ‘input’ and how readers proceed to interact with both verbal and visual elements is also important in multimodal studies (Bateman, 2008 cited in Liang, 2014). In order to construct discourse design is the beginning of the process. In words of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, p.5) “designs are means to realize discourses in the context of a given communication situation”. They project an individual’s interest in participating as an active member of his/her social setting as well as his/her views and beliefs about the world. However, designs do not imply the actual material production of the semiotic product or event. It is an organization of what is intended to be represented. In order for this to happen “production” is involved. While in design the semiotic resources thought to be part of the semiotic product are still abstract, production implies the use of media and of material resources in order to produce as faithful representation as possible of the design of the message.

2.3.1 Visual Semiotics

In the creation and interpretation of images and signs there is always interaction between the different agents involved in these processes. Visual semiotics is a useful framework to analyze these interactions. Visual semiotics refers to the representations of Goffman’s (1983) interaction order in images and signs.

According to Scollon and Scollon (2003) in visual images we can find relationships among the participants within the picture frame, relationships among those who make the picture and further between those who make the picture and the participants within the picture. In addition, there are also relationships between those who are in the picture and those who view it.

Interaction is in the nature of communication. All texts represent a relationship between rhetor, designers, consumers and the texts. For this study we will use Scollon and Scollon's (2003) adaptation of Kress and van Leeuwen's framework (2006) which includes participants (represented and interactive), modality, and composition. The interest of this framework is how images represent the social world, how images mean what they mean because of where we see them and in how we use images to do things in the world (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p.84). It is important to mention that we will consider the local cultural considerations since, as Iedema and Stenglin (2001) rightly point out, these signifying systems are culturally sensitive.

2.3.1.1 Participants

Images and any visual agent involves two types of participants. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) there are two types of participants: represented and interactive participants. Represented participants stand for any construction element used in a picture. They might be an image of a person, a thing or place or a block of text, a chart, a logo, a graph or any other meaning making resources (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). According to Scollon & Scollon, these representational structures can be narrative or conceptual. The former presents actions, events or progresses of change. The latter show abstract comparative or generalized categories.

The relationships among the participants in a sign depends on what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) call "vectors". In narrative structures a participant's gaze or direction towards

the other defines the relationship between both since. In conceptual structures such vectors are absent. There is no eyes gaze inclination or movement. On the other hand, interactive participants are real people who communicate with each other through images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). According to Scollon and Scollon (2003) there are three types of participant interactions. The first type of interaction are those between the producer of the image and the participants represented in the text or image; the second are those among the participants represented in the image, and the third type are the interactions between the represented participants and the consumers or receptive participants of the image. In addition, we can also identify relationships between those who produced images and the consumers (my stress).

Within the third type of interaction, the gaze of a person represented in an image can construct two types of relationship with the reader/viewer. When the subject of an image enters into direct eye-contact with the viewer, it makes a *demand*, requiring the viewer to enter into a kind of imaginary relation with the represented participant (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 116-124). On the contrary, when the subjects direct their gaze elsewhere we can consider that an *offer* (ibid.). In this case, the viewer(s) are not object, but subject of the look, and the represented participant(s) are the object of the viewer's observation. In other words, "no contact is made" (Kress & van Leeuwen 1999, p.383). The choice between 'offer' and 'demand' must be made whenever people are depicted, and it suggests different relations between image and viewers, making viewers engage with certain images and remain detached from others (ibid, p. 384; Witten, 2013).

2.3.1.2 Modality

The reliability of a message is of paramount importance in communication. It gives relevance to what is communicated and from it depends our understanding of the message.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), modality “refers to the truth value or credibility of statements about the world” (p. 155). In other words, the representation of reality. However, the notion of reality is different from one culture to another or as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 158) state “reality is in the eye of the beholder; or rather, what is regarded as real depends on how reality is defined by a particular social group”. They maintain that “a social semiotic theory of truth cannot claim to establish the absolute truth or untruth of representations. It can only show whether a given ‘proposition’ (visual, verbal or otherwise) is represented as true or not” (p. 154). In every statement speakers/writers express beliefs and ideologies. Modality is reveals interpersonal aspects of what the speaker says. It constructs an imaginary “we” and shows when we consider something as true or when we decide to distance ourselves from it.

Modality does not only refer to modal verbs and their related adjectives and adverbs. Modality accounts also for visual images since they can also represent people, places and things. According to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) modality markers can be color (saturation, differentiation and modulation), contextualization, representation, depth, illumination and brightness. Table 1 gives a description of each modality marker.

Color saturation	A scale running from full color saturation to the absence of color e.g. from black to white.
Color differentiation	A scale running from a maximally diversified range of colours to monochrome.
Color modulation	A scale running from fully modulated color, with, for example, the use of many different shades of red, to plain, unmodulated color.
Contextualization	A scale running from the absence of background to the most fully articulated and detailed background
Representation	A scale running from maximum abstraction to maximum representation of details in the picture.
Depth	A scale running from the absence of depth to maximally deep perspective
Illumination	A scale running from the fullest representation of the play of light and shade to its absence.

Brightness	A scale running from a maximum number of different degrees of brightness to just two degrees: black and white, or dark grey and lighter grey, or two brightness values of the same color..
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Table 1. Modality markers. Kress and van Leeuwen, (2006, p. 160-163).

Any of these markers can be used in to produce a lesser or greater degree of modality in a visual image (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Therefore, an image which is closest to *naturalistic representation* is considered to have the highest modality. As texts are made less naturalistic in regards to color, contextualization, representation, and brightness, their modality is lowered.

2.3.1.3 Composition

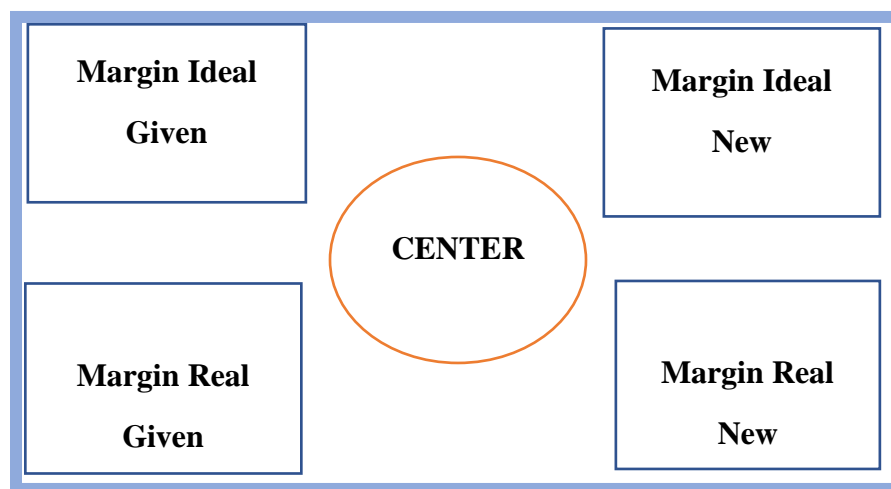
The final element of this framework is the composition of the visual image. With this we refer to the way in which the elements (visuals, verbal text and other semiotic elements) of an image are integrated and related to each other to compose a meaningful whole. This in turn contributes to the potential meanings that viewers/readers might assign to these texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In order for this to take place, composition involves three signifying systems to structure multimodal texts: *information value*, *salience* and *framing*.

For instance, *information value* refers to the notion that the zones of visual space within a multimodal text endow textual features that represent different kinds of meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Witten, 2013). The zones in a visual image contain specific information that allow the analysis of the whole meaning of any given multimodal text. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) the horizontal axis of the visual image is often used to present opposite elements on the right and left section of the text. The elements on the left are presented as *the Given* and the elements on the right are presented as *the New*. The former means that the information presented is familiar for the viewer. The latter represents information which is not yet known by the viewer, hence it is something to which the viewer must pay special attention (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In addition, while the *Given* means “common-sense and self-

evident information”, the *New* can be problematic, contestable and it is the information at issue (ibid., p. 189).

On the other hand, the vertical axis is used to oppose information using the top and bottom sections of the image. Here, the elements that have been placed at the top are presented as *the Ideal* and elements positioned at the bottom are presented as *the Real* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). *The Ideal*, is information that represents idealized or generalized information. It is frequently the most salient part of the image. In contrast, *the Real* presents the more specific, detailed and practical information.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) there is another section in visual texts that represent the nucleus of information. *The Center* contains information that is the core of the message and all the other elements serve as the *margins* surrounding *the Center* in a subservient manner. This kind of information value usually results in a lack of polarization, where there is “no sense of division between *the Given* and *the New* and/or *the Ideal* and *the Real*” (ibid., p. 196). The following diagram is an adaptation of Kress and van Leeuwen’s that summarizes the above discussed



Adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), page 197

In addition to the positioning of the elements in a visual image, we must consider the hierarchical importance given to each of these elements. *Saliency* analyzes the way that the composition of a text can draw the readers'/viewers' attention to certain elements. Regardless their placement, some elements in each of the horizontal or vertical axis can be given more emphasis than others. In this system we consider placement, size, contrasts in tone or color, differences in sharpness, framing, and more semiotic sources as important for the analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen 2005; Rose 2005; Witten, 2013). In addition, Kress and van Leeuwen (2005) suggest that the assignment of saliency creates a balance in the text and at the same time it plays a crucial role in the structuring of messages and in setting up reading paths (Witten, 2013).

Finally, the third signifying system is *framing*. It refers to whether the elements of a texts are disconnected or joined together. This is done with the help of framing devices, such as *framelines*, that serve to connect and disconnect certain elements of a text simultaneously (Kress& van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). Connection and disconnection are a matter of degree. The elements of the composition may be strongly or weakly framed, therefore, “the stronger the framing of an element, the more it is presented as a separate unit of information” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 203). Moreover, if the elements in a composition are strongly connected, they are considered as a single unit of information. In words of Iedema and Stenglin (2001) a strong framing suggests the idea of an “ordered world”. On the other hand, if the elements are blended into the textual surroundings the represent a “less ordered and less constrained world” (p. 196).

2.3.2 Text

Along with image, language work together to give meaning in multimodal discourses. Linguistic texts are presented in different ways. Scollon and Scollon (2003) consider four main systems as sources of language in the material world: fonts, material, layering and state changes.

Fonts or letterforms are considered all those ways in which letters or written symbols are produced from handwriting through to various word processing fonts and professional typefaces. These sources produce different meanings for the same linguistic message (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p.130). Material refers to all those physical sources on which the inscription is made e.g. paper, boards, walls and others. The different use of materials is the main factor for the interpretation of the message (ibid. p. 130). Layering, are all those extensions or pieces of discourse on another more permanent inscription that contain information that promotes a reaction on the viewer. Finally, state changes are meanings given through lights as in an “open” sign in which the meaning of the place being opened is represented when the light is on.

2.3.3 Color

In a multimodal text, color plays an important role as a semiotic mod (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Its integration with other meaning makers is crucial to create specific discourses. Apart from the modality markers discussed in section 2.3.1.2, color represents different meanings within different cultures. Lester (2000) deems that color is one of the first semiotic resources that the brain recognizes in an image. Chih Yu (2014) states that color is a fundamental building block of visual symbols and it serves as a means of communication. As a matter of fact, color plays several functions and has different interpretations. Two of the most salient ways in which color can be interpreted are from an iconic and a psychological view. The iconic point of view regards the interpretation of color relating it to a real object in nature. The psychological view, relates color with feelings and emotions. Lester (2000) provides a description of the most common interpretations for colors. The following table summarizes these interpretations.

Black	Usually related to power and authority. Sometimes it means mystery because of its relation with darkness and the night.
-------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

White	Usually associated with meanings such as purity or cleanness
Blue	Associated with calm, serenity and protection.
Red	Associated with passion, love and sometimes protection. Also used to prevent diseases in countries such as England, China and Denmark. In Japan is used to avoid nightmares. In Mexico to protect babies by using a piece of red yarn (Ortiz Barroso, 2012).
Green	Related to versatility, life, peace, fertility and calm. It has a strong relation to nature
Yellow	It means power and energy mainly to its relation to the sun.
Orange	Usually associated to appetite and socialization.
Purple	Usually related to dignity, elegance and sometimes sadness.
Grey	Usually interpreted as an elegant color. In some cultures gray means sadness
Brown	Usually associated to stability and nature

Table 2. Color interpretations, Lester (2000), adapted from Ortiz Barroso (2013).

This interpretation of colors depend on the culture and contexts in which they are used. As Lester (2000) states the eye sees the color but the brain interprets the meaning. While black in some culture means death and mourning, in other those are represented by the color white (Chih Yu, 2014; Lester, 2000).

2.4 Appraisal System

Derived from systemic functional linguistics first proposed by Halliday (1994), the appraisal system is a recent approach to the study of language. According to Castineira (2013 pp. 91) it serves to explore and explain how language is used to evaluate, adopt stances, construct textual personas and to manage interpersonal positioning and relationships. An appraisal analysis aims looks at how relationships are negotiated in texts. As a matter of fact, these relationships are driven by the strategic use of language that allows us to communicate attitudes, feelings and make evaluations.

Important to mention is that SFL establishes three meta functions of language: ideational, interpersonal and textual (Halliday, 1985). Martin and White (2005) deem that the appraisal system can be considered as an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics.

According to Martin and White (2005 pp. 35) appraisal itself is regionalized as three interacting domains: “attitude”, “engagement” and “graduation”. For this study, we will briefly describe what each domain aims to analyze as well as the sub-domains that they contain.

“Attitude” is concerned with how we express feelings including all those emotional reactions, judgments of behaviors and the evaluation of things. “Engagement” deals with sourcing attitudes and the role of voices around opinions in discourse (Martin and White, 2005). When speakers try to position themselves with respect to the value position they use resources such as modality, polarity and adverbials in order to express possibility, to deny or to affirm. “Graduation” is related to the grading of phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred (Martin and White, 2005).

The three domains discussed above are sub-divided into other different systems. “Attitude” contains three sub-domains. The first is called “affect” referring to resources for constructing emotional reactions. The second sub-domain is “judgment” and are all the resources used to assess behavior. Finally, “appreciation” refers to the resources used to construct the value of things.

Engagement is subdivided into “monogloss” and “heterogloss” engagement. According to Martin and White (2005, pp. 99-100), when utterances make no reference to other voices and viewpoints they are recognized as “monoglossic”. On the other hand, when utterances allow or invoke for dialogistic alternatives they are considered as “heteroglossic”. As monogloss voices Martin and White (2005) consider that disclaim and proclaim are two forms setting out

alternative positions. “Disclaim”, that involves denying or countering an argument, is when the textual voice positions itself as at odds with, or rejecting, some contrary position (ibid. pp. 97). “Proclaim” is used to make a proposition highly warrantable, therefore, suppressing the existence of alternative positions.

Similarly, entertain and attribute are “heteroglossic” voices (Martin and White, 2005). By “entertertain” we refer to those propositions that are grounded as but one of possible positions. By doing this we suppress the individuality of the proposition and allow for different dialogic alternatives. Moreover, attributing is a way of grounding a proposition to an external voice. Acknowledging and distancing are examples of “heteroglossic” voices.

Finally, graduation is the domain that allows us to analyze the up-scaling and down-scaling of attitudinal and engagement meanings (Martin & White, 2005). According to Martin and White, (2005, pp. 136) “It might be said that **attitude** and **engagement** are domains of **graduation**” and that they vary according to the nature of the meanings being scaled. This domain operates following two axes of scalability. The first axis, known as **graduation force**, is concerned with the grading of meanings according to intensity or amount. The second axis, **graduation focus**, is concerned with the grading of prototypicality and the preciseness by which category boundaries are drawn (ibid.).

The following chart represents the appraisal system and its domains and sub-domains as proposed by Martin and White (2005, pp. 38).

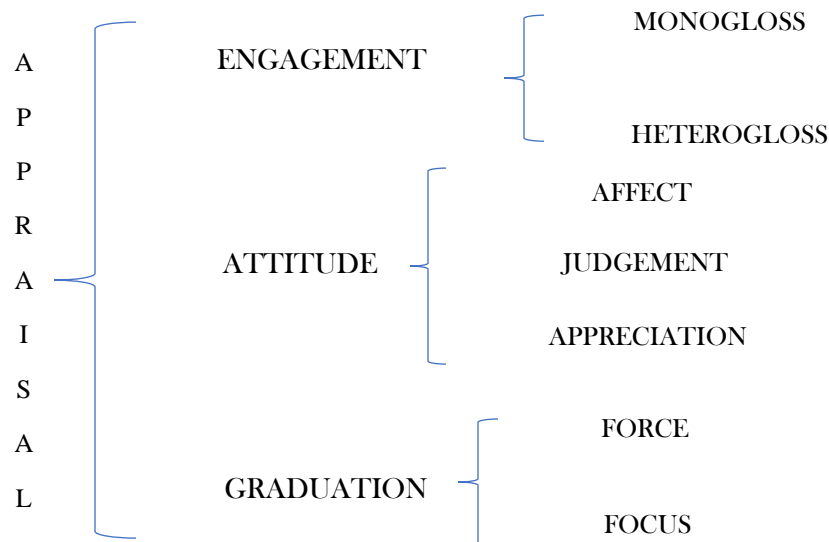


Figure 2. Appraisal system adapted from Martin and White (2005)

2.5 Institutional/educational identity

A term as broad and fuzzy as ideology is naturally hard to define (Van Dijk, 1998). If we approach ideology to education and educational institutions we face a variety of views.

Educational institutions as any other institution whose purpose is to serve a certain group of people reflect and construct their ideologies through discourse (Mayr, 2008). Fairclough (1992) deems that ideologies are significations of reality built into various dimensions of the meanings of discourse practices. Back in the eighteenth century the roots of the term ideology began to be traced. Marx and Engel and the non-Marxist sociologists and philosophers provided the first insights into the definition of ideology. According to Mayr (2008) the definitions of this concept today fall into two broad categories. The first one is a relativist definition, denoting a system of ideas, beliefs and practices. The second one is a critical definition usually allied with a Marxist theory, which considers ideology as working in the interest of a social class and/or cultural

group. Van Dijk (1998) locates ideology into a conceptual and disciplinary triangle that considers ideology as a system of ideas (thoughts and beliefs), socially constructed and associated with groups of people. They may be used to legitimate or oppose power and dominance, or to symbolize social problems and contradictions. Finally all of them are expressed and shared in society by discursive practices. These can be summarized the terms cognition, society and discourse.

Regarding ideologies in education, Kiraz and Ozdemir (2006, p. 154) state educational ideologies are rooted in political ideologies and affect decisions in education. There are six different groups of educational ideologies that fall into two broad categories: the conservative and liberal educational ideologies (O'Neill, 1981 cited in Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006). The latter is divided into educational fundamentalism, educational intellectualism, and educational conservatism, the former are divided into educational liberalism, educational liberationism, and educational anarchism. The core for these ideologies is knowledge, socially constructed and shaped in the daily life. The following lines will briefly summarize each ideology regarding the work of Neill (1990 quoted in Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006).

In *educational fundamentalism*, knowledge is seen as a tool used for the reconstruction of a society that seeks a pattern of moral excellence in which man is a moral agent. Education is considered as moral regeneration and ideology focuses on the original purposes of the existing social traditions and institutions (Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006). For the *educational intellectualism* ideology knowledge is viewed as an end to itself (Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006, p.154). Education is considered an orientation and guide to life and there is a stress on wisdom and reason. Finally, *educational conservatism* considers that knowledge is a social tool and a means of realizing existing social values. Here the human being aims to be an effective member in society, subject

of the rules and orders of that society. Education is considered as socialization to the established system (ibid, p.154).

In respect to the liberal ideologies, in *educational liberalism* knowledge is a tool for problem-solving. Here a person responds to changing conditions and is able to solve personal problems effectively. In addition he/she finds a sense of satisfaction by expressing him or herself. For the *educational liberationism* ideology, knowledge is tool for social reforms. Kiraz and Ozdemir, (2006) state that man is a product of culture and he/she acts according to existing social system, policies and practices. They also state that “education is the fullest realization of each person’s unique potentialities as a distinctive human being” (p, 154). *Educational anarchism* is an ideology that considers knowledge as a natural product of our daily life. Its approach is the freedom of choice and self-determination in a sane and humanistic social interaction. Education is a natural function of life and its ideology focuses on creating an educational society that minimizes or eradicates the need for formal schools to help people be self-regulating moral beings instead of being restrained on the institutional rules and taboos of social behavior (ibid, p. 154).

Unquestionably, following an ideology may change an individual’s perception about education, life and knowledge and may affect the decisions and discourses used by institutions, and teachers.

2.6 Marketing

Marketing and advertising are global phenomena with two different goals that complement in the consumption and offering of products and goods. Advertising is frequently considered a component of marketing processes. However, though both processes work together, each one has a slightly different function. While in marketing you convince potential buyers/

consumers that you have the right product for them, in advertising you communicate to them the existence of that product (Lovering, 2016). The primary goal is to persuade the receiver to take some action either in the present or in the future (Richards & Curran, 2002 cited in McMillan, 2004).

As Skålén, Fougère and Fellesson (2007) state marketing focuses on issues of consumption and the understanding of consumers' choices in the market as well as on how organizations gain knowledge about and affect these choices (p. 1). In order for this to happen, we agree on what Faber, Brittany and Nan (2012:27) and other marketing and advertising scholars state that the primary goal of marketing and advertising is to gain the consumers' attention. For Cook (2001) in the world of marketing and advertising multimodal texts are at a premium to capture the viewers' attention. Contributing and challenging this idea Olshavsky (1994:97 cited in White, 2012) argues that attention cannot be separated out from the cognitive operation of processing information, since attention occurs with and results from information processing in the brain. In addition, in the current "age of information overload" what makes value to information is the amount of attention it can attract (Jones 2005:152). Most importantly, in multimodal texts this notion gains credibility if we consider that "there is demonstrable sequence of individual semiotic modes involved when we read a text: the semiotic sequence can be identified but all modes fuse to achieve a single, multimodal communicative action" (Van Leeuwen 2005 cited in White, 2012, p. 308).

Advertising as any form of communication is considered a kind of discourse. According to Cook (2001) and Coomber (2012) the defining feature of an advertisement as a discourse genre is that it seeks to change viewers' behavior regardless of the type of change it can cause. Moreover, Coomber, (2012) adds that any advertisement may simultaneously target more than one audience

and promote more than only one behavioral change. Similarly, Esposito, (2011) accurately states that any analysis of advertisements and marketing present manifold challenges due to their ability to draw upon various genres usually at the same time, in order to convey their messages through a combination of language and imagery.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The sections in this chapter will describe in detail the methodological framework used to carry out the present study. Similarly, it will describe the setting in which the study was conducted and the objects under study. The criteria for the data selection will be mentioned as well as process of data collection.

3.1 Setting

In the educational setting, educational institutions are constantly advertising their discourse through different media. As mentioned in chapter I, a private university in Puebla is the object of study. Below, we will shortly describe a small part of the history of this institution.

Universidad de las Americas Puebla

Founded in 1940 with the name of Mexico City College, the Universidad de las Americas Puebla aims to provide students with the best educational offer and a bicultural vision. It was founded under a philosophy of a humanistic, scientific and universal education together with academic excellence and academic freedom it is now consolidated as the most important private university in the country.

Their mission is to contribute to the development of society with the training of critical, creative and innovative professionals, trained with the highest technical and educational level as well as generating relevant research in different scientific and humanistic areas. The university promotes values such as freedom, responsibility, tolerance, honesty, integrity, solidarity, transparency and they go against discrimination.

For the Universidad de las Américas Puebla, knowledge is constructed and transmitted by social interaction. They are concern on how students construct their knowledge not only in the teacher-student interaction but rather in a group collaboration either in or outside the school.

UDLAP aims to be nationally and internationally recognized by promoting innovative ideas and equal opportunities to the most restricted social sectors. They do so by providing scholarships, economic resources and infrastructure, and opportunities for professional development and by offering approximately 49 undergraduate majors and 29 postgraduate programs in different educational areas.

3.2 Objects of study

In order to conduct this multimodal study, the objects of study were (7) billboards produced by the Universidad de las Americas Puebla. These billboards were analyzed using the analytical framework described in section 3.5. Most of them were part of the admission campaign that the university advertise approximately twice a year. As the location of the billboards and due to time constraints not all of the billboards produced by the university during the 2015-2016-year period were gathered. However, we consider we have a valid number of billboards to show a small sample of how these media contribute to the construction of an educational ideology and identity of a university.

3.3 Data Collection

The data collected for this study consists of photographs of the billboards produced by the university. Several photographs were taken during a period of six months, however, some of the photos were missed and others were discarded since they had poor visibility of the elements in the billboard.

Therefore, in order to have a complete cycle of these billboards we asked permission to the institutions to have access to the billboards produced during that period of time. After sending different e-mails to the university, they replied sending only the billboards that were prudent to share considering that the researcher was not part of the university. We also believe

that the university was being cautious of the information they shared to protect the face and reputation of the institution. Even though we tried to convince the person in charge of this information, they denied access or simply couldn't find certain billboards, which may have been useful to the present investigation.

3.4 Data Selection

The data selection here was institutionally driven. The university was in charge of sending only those billboards that, to the criteria of the institution, were suitable to represent the institution. It is worth mentioning that all of these billboards were in the public domain, so it is reasonable to believe that the university would be completely transparent about providing the researcher with any billboard that had been published during the cycle in question. However, while most of the billboards that we noticed during the period of the investigation were provided, the institution claimed that some could not be recovered. Nevertheless, sufficient access to billboards was provided in order to conduct a valid investigation.

3.5 Analytical Framework

The analytical framework used to interpret the data will be based on multimodal analysis. Data will be analyzed interpreted and we will draw conclusions about the multimodal meanings on each of the texts by basing our research on the work of researchers such as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), Scollon and Scollon (2003), Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986) and Kamberelis and Scott (1992).

When exploring these types of texts we rely on analytical tools taken from different branches of linguistics such as: Systemic functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994), analysis of intertextuality (Bazerman, 2004; Kamberelis & Scott, 1992), and multimodality and visual semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Figure 1 shows how

the analysis is done within the text and discourse layers considering the different aspect to be analyzed in the study.

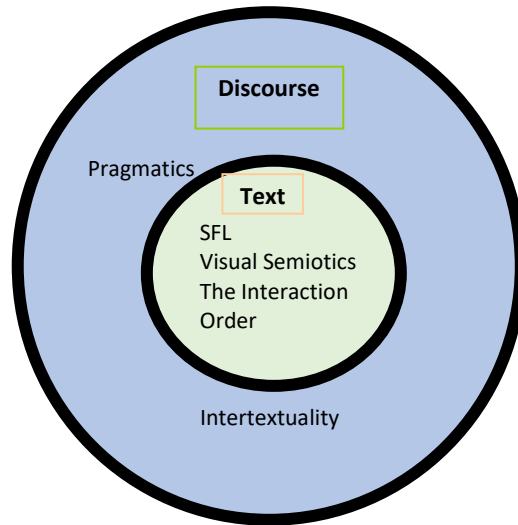


Figure 3: Layers of analysis

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS

Analysis

We previously discussed in chapter three the different lens for a multimodal analysis. Either to analyze each part individually and consider the sum of these parts, or to look at the text in a holistic manner in which each part has an influence over the other to create meaning, we rather incorporate these two ideas. We believe that the analysis should consider a multimodal text as a whole in which the parts are analyzed individually in order to make a systematic analysis and find out how the parts interact in the process of meaning-making. The data analysis for the present study will be divided into three parts. The first element to be analyzed will be the photographic image, the second element will be the linguistic text and finally the third element to be analyzed will be the composition of the multimodal text.

4.1 First wave/ Admission period

The following billboard was produced by the Universidad de las Américas Puebla as part of their admissions period. As a matter of fact, the billboard has an informative purpose, announcing the dates for the registration period. In addition, the billboard aims to persuade students to be part of the institution. Below, we provide a detailed analysis of this multimodal text. This analysis focuses on the interplay between photographic images, linguistic text and composition.

UDLAP
UNIVERSIDAD DE LAS AMÉRICAS PUEBLA

Inscripciones Previas*
Del 2 de abril hasta el 2 de julio
*Sólo alumnos de nuevo ingreso a Otoño 2016

Ex hacienda Santa Catarina Mártir • 72810
San Andrés Cholula, Puebla, México
Tel.: (222) 229 21 12 • WhatsApp (+521) 222 577 38 29
informes.nuevoingreso@udlap.mx
@udiap /universidaddelasamericaspuebla

Descubre **grandes beneficios**

STARS
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2016

LLEGÓ TU MOMENTO.
ELIGE UDLAP

www.udlap.mx

Figure 4.1.1**Photographic image**

At first sight, the attention of the consumer should be drawn to the right side. The photographic image, as the most salient element, presents a peculiar appearance that seems to be in most of the promotional billboards that UDLAP distributes. During the selection of the billboards we noticed that the university tends to use two kinds of overlapped contents to represent only one image. In the case of this billboard we see a young female student carrying some paint brushes. In this case, we have a 'medium close personal distance shot' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 124) noticing the female's torso. The girl here functions as a kind of background for the image that "shows a medium long shot" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.124) of a male student apparently fixing an electronic device. The shape is given by the background image while the male student's image takes the place of the inside content. The background image is considered to have low modality. The faintness of color barely allows the consumer to recognize the face of the girl. In the case of the male student's image we have a more recognizable image in which, even though we are not able to recognize the object the man is manipulating, we can observe the man with clarity, the screen behind him and an artifact holding the manipulated object.

The students on these two images are representative of two different educational areas: Arts and Science. The goal we believe is to show the consumers the different educational offers they provide. In addition to this argument, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) conceptualization of *gaze* state that whenever the subjects' gaze in an image is not direct towards the consumer it is considered an offer rather than a demand. They are offering an educational service for the professionalization of students. As a preliminary sign we can argue that the university, by

showing different educational choices, is projecting the freedom of choice and self-determination in a sane and humanistic social interaction of an anarchist educational ideology (Kiraz and Ozdemir, 2006, pp. 154). However, we will confirm this idea in the next analyses.

Linguistic text

This billboard contains several linguistic messages distributed in different areas of the billboard and using different sizes of font. The first text and most salient one reads “Inscripciones previas del 2 de Abril al 2 de Julio”. Its placement in the upper section of the billboard, offers the reader a logical reading path from image to text (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, p. 204). This is certainly an informative message for the consumers of the billboard containing the exact dates and exact months in which students can register for the admission period. Written in smaller font there is a specification that reads “solo alumnos de nuevo ingreso a Otoño, 2016”. The next linguistic text is a promotional slogan that reads “descubre grandes beneficios” (find out great benefits). This is our first appraisal element to be analysed within the sub-category of *graduation* (Martin & White, 2005). The verb “descubre” (find out) functions as a material process that functions as an invitation to know the benefits of studying in this institution. Next, we can notice that the rest of the message “grandes beneficios” (great benefits) is written in green bold letters. The use of bold letters gives emphasis to the adjective “grandes” (great) and the plural noun “beneficios” (benefits) which is what the costumers should pay attention to. As the noun “beneficios” (benefits) is considered a non-scalable category, an intensifier that fall into *focus graduation* “grandes” (great) is used to make this noun fit into a scale cline of prototypicality (Martin & White, 2005) in which benefit are positive and the university is engaging in a sense to prove that those benefit exist and that the university offers the best education.

The next slogan is at the bottom left side of the billboard. It is inside an irregular, orange square-like shape and has a smaller size. The color of the font is white and reads “LLEGO TU MOMENTO, ELIGE UDLAP” (your moment is here, choose UDLAP). The word “momento” in this sentence functions as a synonym of opportunity. In other words, they talk about the opportunity of choosing UDLAP as the university in which you could have the best preparation to be a professional. This is a direct invitation to the consumer that linked to the previous message resumes to “choose the best option, UDLAP, and discover great benefits for you”.

The last two linguistic elements are two certifications given to the university. The first one reads “RATED FOR EXCELLENCE, 2016. TEACHING”. The second reads “La calidad academica y el prestigio UDLAP están avalados por SACSCOC y FIMPES”. These two messages that are presented in two squares are supporters of what the university preaches, high quality of education and teachers who are professionally prepared. For instance, SACSCOC (**The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges**) and FIMPES (**Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior**) are two recognized Associations, one national and one international, that regulate the communication between universities and accredits universities. In addition, they were given five stars by the QS World University Rankings that ranks over 800 universities in a hierarchical criterion.

Composition

This billboard constitutes what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) call a “polarized text” which combines horizontal and vertical structuring (p. 188). The image representing two different occupations is presented as the *New*. The informative message and slogans as well as the university’s webpage are presented as the *Given*. The *Ideal* section is occupied by the orange fringe with the name UDLAP (Universidad de las Américas) and the informational message. On

the other hand, the image, slogans and webpage are presented as the *Real*. The photographic image is presented as the *Ideal* and *New* sections. Therefore, we can argue that the objective is for the consumers to pay more attention to it as it is more specific and practical information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). It shows the consumer their ideal new future as they are part of the university. However, it also shows the consumers two career paths that allow them to choose which future they associate themselves with.

The name of university, is framed by the long orange fringe that seems to separate it from the rest of the linguistic elements. All the linguistic texts elements are justified to form straight lines and separated by non-visible lines to form well-structured blocks of text. They are presented as the information that is familiar to the consumer. This information is what we expect to find on a billboard whose main purpose is to inform the consumers. Considering what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) state, the informative message in the billboard is most salient element in the multimodal text as it is in the *Ideal* margin. Moreover, it is written in big orange letters that facilitates their visualization. We can notice that there is an asterisk symbol that seems to function as a clue to the consumer to pay attention to this message. Another manner in which the university highlights the importance of the text is by writing the main words in bold letters. Taking into consideration the nature of the message “Inscripciones previas del 2 de Abril al 2 de Julio”, detailed and specific for the costumers to be aware of the dates, we can argue that it could have been situated in the *Real* margin. The squares that contain the different slogans are formed in a straight line in the *Given/Real* section to symbolize the reality of a university that is known for being responsible and with a high quality of educational services.



Figure 4.1.2

This is the second billboard of the first wave that was distributed by UDLAP. It has again an informative and promotional purpose. The billboard shares some characteristics with the first billboard analyzed. However, there are differences that will be discussed in the analysis below.

Photographic image

As the consumer begins to interact with the billboard, his/her attention is drawn to the left hand to the photographic image. This billboard begins with the most salient element and continues in order of salience to the university's web page. This photographic image shares the overlapping characteristic of the first billboard. We are able to see two different actors in the same image. The first, is a "medium close shot" (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid.*) of a young man wearing glasses using a laptop. As a matter of fact, the man gives the shape of the image having a considerable low modality (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). However, the use of a white background allows for the image to not blur to the point it becomes unrecognizable. The color saturation of the image goes from black to white, the color modulation is very plain and there is not enough brightness to allow the costumers to observe much details in the man.

On the other hand, we have the image of two other represented participants (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, pp.48). This image can be considered to be inside the shape of the man and shows a man and woman. Apparently, the man is a mechatronics engineer and seems to be teaching or showing the woman how to do a certain task. Both participants are looking at each other as if a conversation was taking place. In this case, the interaction is between the represented participants and there is no interaction with the consumers as the vectors are towards and between the man and the woman (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). This layer of the image in which the woman and the mechatronics engineer appear is the one with a higher modality. However, we can notice that the woman is the center of attention as we can only observe the head and part of the man's coat and the light relapses on the woman. The side in which the woman appears has higher brightness, a variety of colors and we can recognize more details than in the side in which the man is standing. We can argue that this image represents again the modern teacher- student relation in which students are the center and responsible of their knowledge and the teacher is a facilitator of knowledge and skills.

Linguistic text

One of the most salient element in the billboard is an slogan that called our attention, it read: "Nuestro chip es unico" (our chip is unique). The possessive pronoun "nuestro" (our), acting as the subject; refers to the university that owns the object of the sentence in this case, a "chip". A chip is an electronic circuit that when combined with other components form an integrated and more complex system and makes a specific electronic function. However, we can relate this metaphoric use of the word chip to the knowledge, and preparation that the university brings to their students. This chip is for them unique, which aims to call the attention of the consumers by saying that the quality of education they will receive is better than what other

universities can offer. The epithet “unico” (unique), constructs the value that the university gives to the “chip” falling into the subcategory of *appreciation* (Martin & White, 2005). If we observe the image, we can see that the computer and the device in the image of the mechatronics engineer makes reference to things that contain a chip and that work with this kind of electronic systems. Therefore, this slogan and the image work together as a metaphoric relation, text-image.

The next message informs the students again about the registration period “Inscripciones previas hasta el 2 de Junio”. For second time, we notice that in smaller letter we have an specification that reads “solo alumnos de nuevo ingreso a otoño 2016”. In advertising, it is common to have this kind of small messages. Most of the times this information is an important part of the advertisement and at the same time contains information that can result in a handicap for the consumer specially because it is not visible enough. Even though on this image we can read the message in a billboard can become blurred and not understandable. Next, we have the two traditional slogans of UDLAP. The first slogan reads “Descubre grandes beneficios”. The second one is “Llego tu momento, elige UDLAP”

Composition

The composition of this billboard is also of a polarized text (Kress & van Leeuwen, *ibid.*). However, the position of the elements is different from the last billboard. The text-image metaphor of the unique chip is presented in this case as the *Given*. The information is self-evident for the consumer since he/she already knows the profession and agrees with the relation that exist between computers and devices with chips and electronic systems (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The three other textual messages and the university’s webpage are presented as the *New*. In this case, we consider the message of “inscripciones previas” as the information at

issue. It contains dates new to the consumers and it can be in times problematic for them, especially the small letter message that contains a specification.

In addition, the text-image metaphor of the unique chip is presented as the *Ideal*. This is again a representation of an ideal future as student in UDLAP. The future that only a university with a “unique chip” like UDLAP can offer to the consumers is the most salient element on this billboard and the one that immediately calls the attention. Similarly, the informative message in the billboard announcing the dates of registration is presented as the *Ideal*. In comparison with the other linguistic elements this is considered as the most salient element along with the image. Therefore, the position as *Ideal* agrees with the literature discussed. On the other hand, the two slogans and web page are presented as the *Real*. Both slogans are specific, down-to-earth information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) that say to the consumers in a direct manner that they can discover great benefits in the university (pp, 187.). Therefore, it is an opportunity to choose UDLAP as their university.

4.2 Promoting the University

**CON
CIMIENTOS
SÓLIDOS
SE REMUEVEN
LOS OBSTÁCULOS**

UDLAP®

**#SÉ UN ESTUDIANTE
UDLAP**

www.udlap.mx

UNIVERSIDAD DE LAS AMÉRICAS PUEBLA

Figure 4.2.1

The following billboard was produced by the Universidad de las Américas Puebla as part of their admission period. The semiotic elements of this billboard are representative of the image of UDLAP. Color, and shapes are very common and similar in UDLAP's billboards. This analysis, again, will cover the photographic image, linguistics text and composition.

Image

As we observe this billboard we can notice that the importance is given to both, image and text. However, the photographic image occupies half of the billboard and the other elements seem to go in order of salience. The image shows an architect wearing a helmet, professional glasses and a white coat. Through the architect, we can observe what seems to be a multimedia classroom. Students are in front of computers, which can mean that the university supports the use of the TIC's and technological tools in education. In fact, the use of technology in the classroom is today a trend in education (Alias et. al., 2013; Istenic, 2010; Benigno, Bocconi & Ott, 2007; Amahd, 2015 & Baig, 2013). On the one hand, we have the engineer presented in some ways as the traditional, old-fashioned and iconic image of an engineer. On the other hand, inside the traditional there is the modernization and innovation in education with the use of TIC's and technology. An important aspect in this image is the absence of the teacher in front of this class. As technology takes a more important role in education, we can state that the university believes in student's autonomy in their learning process.

The modality of this billboard can be divided in the two images used. On the one we can argue that the image of the architect has a lower modality than the image of the classroom. The

image of the architect shows low color saturation and modulation using only white and some tones in brown (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The low level of brightness obscures the architect and impedes to see the details in the image. On the other hand, the image of the multimedia classroom can be seen with more ease. The use of black and white stands out over the use of other colors. The consumer is able to distinguish a bit more of details such as the main screen in the classroom, the cellphone of one of the students, a pencil, a notebook, the clothes of the students and the lights of the classroom.

One possible interpretation of the photographic image is that UDLAP tries to make a representation of the acquisition of knowledge by means of technology and students' autonomy. If we observe the image, the multimedia classroom is inside the head of the architect. Knowledge here is the media used to reach a profession, profession that will allow the student to be an active and effective member of a society that follows certain rules and values. With this the university shows signs of an *educational conservative* ideology (Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006, p.154). In addition, the photographic image complements with the textual message that will be analyzed in the next section.

The use of orange in the slogan corresponds with the color of the university. According to Lester (2000) orange is a color associated with socialization. This gives UDLAP the roll of a university committed to society. This can also be related to a message of creating a solid foundation for the development of society and the development of the individual in their social context (ibid, pp.154). On the other hand, the message of invitation is in grey whereas, the web page is written in white inside an orange rectangular frame with irregular shapes on the sides. Grey can be related to elegance, which can be related to the status of a private university where people, mostly with a high socio-economic status, can study.

Linguistic text

Written in this billboard we have two sentences and two other elements. The first sentence reads “con cimientos sólidos se remueven obstáculos” (with solid foundations obstacles are removed). Under this message, we can see the name “UDLAP”. We also read the sentence “# sé un estudiante UDLAP”. Finally, the billboard contains the university’s web page.

For instance, in the first message the word “cimientos” (foundations) has its visual metaphor, in this case the architect. Architects have the responsibility of creating solid foundations in any building they design for the safety of people. In educational institution, teachers have the same responsibility. Educational institutions provide students with support in order for them to create their knowledge and pursue their professional goals. The epithet (Martin & White, 2005) “sólidos” (solid) evaluates the nominal group “cimientos” (foundations). This linguistic element falls into the category of “attitude” and the sub-category of “appretiation” (Martin & White, 2005). With this the university constructs the value of solid knowledge and solid preparation to students in order to succeed.

The passive structure “se remueven obstáculos” (obstacles are removed), functions as the goal with no actor or doer of the action. Actors in this case are those interested in being an UDLAP student. Moreover, UDLAP’s message is that they can provide students with solid foundations of knowledge and skills by means of new technologies and a high quality of education for them to remove any obstacle they might face in their professional lives.

The second slogan can be considered as an invitation to become a student of this university. “# Sé un estudiante UDLAP” invites the student population to be part of the institution. The use of a “#” symbol is an attempt to suit the predominance of social networks

among students as it is used in network such a twitter, facebook, instagram and others. In addition, the use of a hashtag makes reference to something trending, as if they were telling the consumer that being an UDLAP students is trending.

Composition

The billboard constitutes again what Kress and van Leeuwen (ibid.) call a “polarized text” combining horizontal and vertical structuring (p. 188). The architect as possessor of knowledge is presented as the *Given*, whereas the slogan, name, webpage and message of invitation are presented as the *New*. At the same time, the architect is presented as the *Real*. Regarding the textual elements, the slogan and creator of a metaphor with the architect “con cimientos sólidos se remueven obstaculos” and the name of the university are presented as the *Ideal*, while the invitation and webpage are located as the *Real*. The manner in which these elements are arranged provides more details on the overall meaning of the billboard. The textual elements are arranged to be read from *Ideal* to *Real* following a vertical path. The architect situated in the *Given* section is the familiar information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The consumers of this billboard are conscious of the existence of this profession and of the presence of technology not only in education but also in our daily lives. The *New* in this case are the textual elements and those in which the consumer must pay special attention (Kreess & van Leeuwen, 2006). The *Ideal* section contains what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) name as the salient part of the image. It is the first slogan “con cimientos sólidos se remueven obstaculos” that occupies this section. We consider it as the message to be read since the font is of greater size than the other textual element and holds a direct relation with the traditional representation of the engineer. In addition, the message is written in the representative color of the university. The message states the idealized fact of a future with solid foundations for the individua.

Next, the *Real* section contains the down-to-earth reality (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 187) of becoming an UDLAP students. Becoming a student in this university is then, a reality you can live that can benefit you and as a matter of fact is something trending.

4.3 Promoting postgraduate programs



Figure 4.3.1

The billboard presented above is the only one produced that promotes their postgraduate programs. After a period of announcements about the registration dates for newcomers, we were able to find billboards with other purposes. The analysis below will follow the same steps for the last three billboards and will discuss some differences that make this billboard slightly diverse from the other three analyzed before.

Photographic image

The photographic image of this billboard does not share the same characteristic of the images analyzed before. In fact, the low modality of this image makes it hard to identify its

details. Taking a closer look at the image, we can observe that it is composed of four sections in which four different scenarios are presented. From right to left we first observe two men in a meeting hall dressing formal suits in what seems a presentation or demonstration of something. One of the two men is standing, he is the one who is apparently talking or making a presentation, the other one is sitting listening to the talk. We can observe some screens and several desks in the room too. The next snapshot shows one of the university's patios. This patio is apparently part of the campus and it is characterized by having flagstaffs in which flags of different countries are hanging. The next two snapshots show two different buildings. These buildings are extremely difficult to identify but look old, colonial-like-buildings. Both images show few people walking and a person riding a bicycle. Altogether, the images show different elements of society, the places in which they interact and part of the history it has created projected in those old buildings. This is a characteristic of what we mentioned before as *educational conservatism* (Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006, p.154) where humans aim to be effective member of society.

As stated before, the modality of this image is extremely low (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). In fact, it functions as background of a linguistic text that will be analyzed in brief. The four snapshot that constitutes the image are bounded by a rectangle pale orange shape. However, within that rectangle shape the snapshots are separated or divided into small squares. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (ibid.) point out that in "contemporary Western society, squares and rectangles are the elements of the mechanical, technical order, of the world of human construction" (p.54), This claim is reinforced by the snapshots since they show, in a sense, different manners in which society functions and how humans interact in their social milieus. Here we notice signs of an educational fundamentalist ideology (Neill, 1990 quoted in Kiraz & Ozdemir, 2006). Moreover, Kress and van Leeuwen (ibid.), state "the square can connote the

‘technological’ positively, as a source of power and progress” (p. 55). This is reinforced by the first snapshot that shows how technology is part of our daily and professional lives and the inclusion of the webpage inside the rectangle. The use of a pale orange color in the rectangle hinders the colors of each of the four snapshots. Therefore, the color saturation and differentiation go from black to white being those the colors that can be observed from the pale orange rectangle (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

Linguistic text

Text is predominant on this billboard. The billboard’s structure is made for the reader to go from left to right. Starting in the left upper corner we have the university’s logo “UDLAP” characteristic that is present in all of the billboards analyzed. It is inside an orange square and written in white letters. Then, in the right upper section there is the name of the university “Universidad de las Americas Puebla” written in white letters and inside a dark grey fringe. Different from the first two billboards analyzed in which the fringe in the upper side was orange on this billboard they use a dark grey color that as mentioned before grey is the color of elegance. In addition, the informative billboards analyzed above both, name and name and acronym were inside the orange fringe representing the color of socialization. Here, we find a separation of both linguistic elements showing a sense of socialization and elegance.

Following an order from the upper to the lower section, we have the word “posgrados” (post graduate programs) in the upper right side. This word is general, meaning either a master’s program or a doctoral program. However, below in the middle and slightly to the left side they include the next message: “maestrías inovadoras presenciales y por internet” (innovative master’s degrees...). This message specifies the consumer that they refer to master’s degrees in the word “posgrados” using the noun “maestrías”. The pluralized Spanish adjective

“innovadoras” (innovative) tells the consumer that there is something different, better and innovative in these programs that makes them different from other degrees offered by other universities. The M.A programs can be of two modalities “presenciales” (face-to-face) or “por internet” (via internet). Today, more and more universities give people the option of studying with an internet modality giving more opportunities to those people whose time is reduced. Next to this text, they inform the consumers the date in which classes begin. Writing dates is a common element on this kind of billboards in which they announce an academic offer as seen on figure 4.1.1 and figure 4.1.2.

As we continue with the analysis of the linguistic elements of this billboard we find the following slogan: “excelencia academica, elige UDLAP”. The nominalization “excelencia academica” (academic excellence) refers to the different acknowledgements that endorse the university as one of the best universities in Mexico. Therefore, they invite the consumers to choose UDLAP and their academic offers. This is reinforced by the presence of an acknowledgement in the right lower section of the billboard that reads “La calidad academica y el prestigio UDLAP estan avalados por SACSCOC y FIMPES” (the academic quality and prestige from UDLAP is endorsed by SACSCOC and FIMPES). They do not only say it but show evidence that they are, indeed, one of the best universities in the country since they are endorsed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC) and the Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior (FIMPES).

Finally, the last linguistic element invites the consumers to go to their webpage and discover all the academic offers the university provides with the message “conoce nuestra oferta academica” and below they provide the link www.udlap.mx.

Composition

The billboard presents a polarized Ideal/Given, Ideal/New and Real/Given and Real/New structure (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid.*). We can notice that the elements are separated by straight lines and forms that give a sense of organization among the linguistic elements and images different to the other billboards analyzed so far.

Presented as the *Given* there are four linguistic elements and the background of images in the bottom part of the billboard. As already discussed, the information presented as the *Given* is self-evident information that the viewer is familiar with or that the viewer already knows (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). First, the acronym “UDLAP” is for most consumers well-known. People expect to encounter this acronym on the university’s advertising media. Similarly, we can expect the same for the university’s webpage since we have seen that it is included in all of the billboards analyzed and it is, therefore, information that the consumers can easily recognize. As for the other elements, we first have the main message of the billboard “Maestrias innovadoras, presenciales y por internet”. This message could be considered as the *New*, since we consider it is one of the main messages on the billboard and the one the university wants us to pay attention to. However, while in the *New* we have the most salient word “posgrados”, something the consumer must observe and pay attention to, the billboard leads the viewer towards what we can consider a complementary message on the *Given* side where they specify the kind of postgraduate program offered and its modalities. Finally, we have two slogans that the university tends to use on billboards and media. These slogans are information that the consumers already know and can identify.

On the other hand, presented as the *New* we can observe the information that is new to the consumers and at times problematic (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). There are three elements and the complete name of the university. In a descendent order, we first read the name

of the university, followed by the word “posgrados”, the date in which classes commence and finally, the acknowledgment. All these elements are the ones the university wants the consumers to pay attention too. First, the main objective is to announce the postgraduate programs and the date in which classes begin. Information that if not present in the billboard, may misinform the consumers. The last element, the acknowledgements square is probably the main message. The university was trying to promote this new achievement. We write “new achievement” since this square was not present in the first wave of promotional billboards.

Regarding the horizontal sectors, we have as the *Ideal* name and acronym of the university, the postgraduate information and date of classes. With these elements, the university is apparently trying to persuade the consumers projecting ideal manners to study a postgraduate program in this institution. They offer two options to begin a new path of professionalization for people who cannot study an M.A program in a face to face modality. In addition, this sector agrees with the idea that the *Ideal* is the most salient part of the billboard since we notice how the size of the messages and the use of bold letters gives emphasis to these elements. Different from the *Ideal*, the *Real* section contains the slogans and acknowledgments that can be considered as more specific and practical information.

4.4 Second period of inscriptions



Figure 4.4.1

As part of their second period of inscriptions in UDLAP, the university began to publish this new wave of billboards. This is the first billboard announcing inscriptions in June, 2016. The analysis will follow the same order and procedure beginning with the photographic image, followed by the linguistic analysis and finally the composition of the billboard.

Photographic image

On this billboard, we encounter again this peculiar way of presenting an image. This sense of watching an image within another that functions as a shape is used on this billboard. For instance, the image that gives shape and can be considered as a background for its low modality is a “medium close shot” (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid.*) of a young woman. She is closing her eyes with her head slightly up as if she was feeling the breeze or the wind and thinking or imagine something. We can perceive that the modality begins high on the woman’s face and begins to blur as it comes down toward the hair, neck and shoulders. As a matter of fact, this blurriness on the woman’s image opens the way to the content image. It shows the patio of the university’s campus in where different flags are hanging from poles. The modality of this image is high, with a variety of colors on the flags. The contextualization of this image is relatively high as it allows us to look some trees in the background. Moreover, this image shows, we believe, how the university shares an international perspective in education showing that the university promotes mobilization for students and giving opportunities to their students to study abroad and accepting students from other countries. Perhaps, this is the reason for the woman’s expression as she projects a sense proudness and satisfaction for being part of a university that encourages international mobilization.

Linguistic text

The most salient linguistic element is an informative message that announces the date of the admission test. The message is written in orange bolded letters and reads “examen de nuevo ingreso, 8 de junio”. The noun “Examen” is highlighted as well as the nominalization “nuevo ingreso”. These are the most important words and the element that gives topic the billboard. Similarly, the date has the number “8” and the month written in bold letters and in a lighter orange color. As a matter of fact, if the billboard aims to announce a date these are the elements that matter. Below, there is a new message that reads “oficina ciudad de Mexico”. This sentence can be considered as isolated since it has no relation to the preceding sentence. Besides, it has no complementary information that allows us to understand what does the “oficina de Mexico” aims to do. The only relation we can infer is that the test is applied in Mexico city, however, we cannot assure this fact.

The next two elements are the slogan of the university, “llego tu momento, elige UDLAP” written in white bold letters and inside the classic orange, irregular square figure and “# se un estudiante UDLAP” written un dark green letter. As previously mentioned in the analysis of figures 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.2.1. in the first slogan “llego tu momento, elige UDLAP” they refer to an opportunity to become student of this university. Complementing this idea, they tell the consumer “# sé un estudiante UDLAP” (# become an UDLAP student), the use of a hashtag infers that being an UDLAP students is something trending. All in all, the message can be interpreted as, “if you take this and become an UDLAP student, you are being part of a popular university”.

Composition

Following the polarized structure of the previous billboards we continue with the composition analysis of figure 4.4.1. The image representing a future of international

mobilization with the woman thinking of a new future is presented as the *Given* along with the acronym UDLAP. In order to find an explanation to the reason of locating an image in the *Given* sector, we argue the following. If we pay attention most of the billboards analyzed so far (except for figure 4.1.1, although there is was a version with the image on the left), we notice that the photographic image is always located in the left side. Differently from other elements that are sometimes excluded like ““# sé un estudiante UDLAP” or others that are sometimes located in the *Given* and other times in the *Real*, the image is always located in the left side. Therefore, it is an element that the consumer expects to see on the *Given* section, just as you can recognize to this point of the analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). It is also the case of the acronym UDLAP.

Presented as the *Real* are the informative message, the two slogans and the webpage. The informative message is in particular the new feature and the element that the consumer should pay attention to. It is the information that allows the consumer to know when is the date of the test and in this case, as already mentioned, it can be problematic (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) since we are not totally sure what does the “oficina ciudad de mexico” refers to.

In relation to the vertical axis we have, presented as the *Real*; the image, the two slogans and the webpage. These are concrete elements that represent information that the consumer understands as practical and specific. On the other hand, the *Ideal* is occupied by the informative message, the acronym and the name of the university. As already discussed, this information can be problematic since it is generalized information. It also represents the ideal future of any person that enters as student in this university.

4.5 International political issues

The last half of last year, media was invaded by an international issue that caused controversy

and a problematic that was in voice of everyone worldwide. The issue was the 2016 presidential elections. The republican candidate Donald Trump and the democratic candidate Hillary Clinton were the contestants of these elections. This billboard was released as part of a debate program in the university advertised via their webpage and on TV on October, 2016. It is important to mention that the university denied the access to the billboard exposed on streets but sent us the billboard used to advertise a debate in which different scholars from the institution discussed this event on TV transmission. However, we were allowed to produce a billboard similar to the original.



Figure 4.5.1

The analysis will follow the same structure so far trying to give an insight of the peculiarity of this billboard since it is the only billboard of this nature produced by a university in Puebla.

Photographic image

Unlike the images analyzed so far, this photographic element differs on its characteristics from the others analyzed. Both candidates are located in opposite sides as representing the confrontation they were taking part in the elections. On the left side, we have the republican candidate, Donald Trump. We can perceive the candidate's formality as he is wearing a black suit. This is a distinctive look of the candidate since he is well-known for being a successful and rich business man. On the image, it looks like he is pointing to Hillary Clinton as with a challenging attitude holding a slight smile on his face. However, we were able to see that in all of his presidential speeches he used to point to the people supporting him in signal of agreement or empathy. On the right side, we observe the democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. Her body language is less challenging than the one of Donald Trump. She looks relaxed, projecting a sense of calmness as she seems to be talking to the crowd. In the middle section, as if it was separating both candidates there is the flag of the United States of America, analogy of the sense of patriotism that this event represents in this country.

Important to mention are the colors that stand out on this billboard. Donald Trump wears a black suit. In words of Lester (2009), black is associated to power and authority, projection that was clearly manifested by the candidate since the beginning of his campaign. His attitude is that of an imposing man proposing alternatives that were against the human rights especially of immigrant people and against the safe of nature. On the other hand, we have Hillary Clinton with a grey suit, the color of elegance (Lester, 2009). She was, in fact, a candidate whose stance was strong but calm.

This time we observe a clear interaction between the represented participants, Hillary and Donald. The gaze is vertical going from Donald Trump to Hillary Clinton but not from Hillary to Donald. Hillary's gaze is directed to a sort of 45 degrees angle. There is no direct interaction

with the consumers although we understand that the consumer interacts with the billboard inevitably.

The modality is considered high with high color modulation and differentiation that allows the consumers to observe details on both candidates. Although there is no contextualization since there is a lack of background, the illumination and brightness is moderated contributing in a sense to the balance between the colors in the image and the colors used in the linguistic text and the flag.

Linguistic text

Apart from the basic linguistic elements on UDLAP's billboards, we can observe only one message that holds different roles in relation to the images. The slogan reads "Consecuencias para México" (consequences for Mexico). The noun "Consecuencias" followed by a prepositional phrase "para México" relates to both candidates. Mexico shares borders with the United States of America. This implies a strong relationship between both countries in many different aspects. The university here was trying to explain what would be the consequences if either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump won the elections in terms of security, economy, environmental aspects, politics, immigration and trading.

Composition

In the composition of this billboard we notice how the *Ideal/Real*, *New/Given* and Center are perfectly bounded. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, pp. 197-198) define this kind of composition as a *tryptic*. They claim that Kress and van Leeuwen (ibid.) maintain that "[t]he triptychs in modern magazines and newspaper layouts are generally polarized, with a 'Given' left, a 'New' right, and a center which bridges the two and acts as 'Mediator'" (p. 198). Each

element takes its place to give meaning to the billboard. Although there are no framing lines to separate the elements we can perceive a separation that goes from the middle part that locates Donald Trump on the *Given* and Hillary Clinton on the *New*. As centered elements, we consider the textual message “Consecuencias para México” and the United States of America’s flag that serves as the “mediator” (ibid) to both candidates going from the republican candidate to the democratic candidate. Ideally, republicans are considered as a right-wing party meanwhile the democrats are considered as the left-wing party. We might have thought that the university would share that hypothesis, however, this billboard does not share that position, locating both candidates on the contrary side.

The republican candidate is on the *Given* section. Although both candidates are considered as well-known characters for the consumers, Donald Trump is definitely the candidate who caught the attention of several people around the world. On the other hand, Hillary Clinton is on the *Real* section. The goal at issue could be that locating Hillary with a calmed, relaxed attitude on the *Real*, consumers would be more attracted and focused on the democratic candidate. Regarding the linguistic elements, the university’s acronym is considered as information familiar to the consumer, whereas “elecciones presidenciales” is of course the new information and the topic at issue at that moment. After having analyzed the left/right and top/bottom sectors, we encounter ourselves with the centered elements.

These two centered elements are, in fact, the main elements in the billboard. Presidential elections either in Mexico or in the United States are of paramount importance to each of these countries. Since they share borders the decisions made for each president affect the economic future of the countries and the political relations of both countries. Therefore, these elements signify the consequences that will affect not only Mexico but also the United States and their

future. These elements may not be the most salient but they together with the images of both candidates create a well- balanced whole of meaning on this billboard.

This billboard shows stances of intertextuality by using a polemic situation and two polemic personas. This kind of reference to the presidential elections, we believe, can be considered as a *hidden polemic* intertextual connection. The author is in a way, borrowing the image and the idea of the elections to use them in a context in which the consequences are particularly important for a new context, in this case the Mexican context fulfillment (Kamberelis & Scott, 1992).

4.6 Promoting their sport teams

UDLAP is a university characterized for promoting sports. They own teams from different sports such as football soccer, American football and volleyball This billboard is part of the promotional wave of billboards the university releases during the year. This in particular announces the championship won by the football team. The analysis will comprise the image, linguistic text and composition examination of this billboard.



Figure 4.6.1**Photographic image**

This photographic image shows the football team players in what seems to be an after-match picture. The picture shows a diversity of color from orange, white and green in the players uniform to blue and yellow in the stands of the stadium. The background of the picture shows some remaining people or spectators. However, the main element is the team considering the focus of the picture. This gives a high modality to the picture although some details can not be observed since in some instances the details get blurred by the distance of the camera. The interaction here is combined showing interaction between the represented participants and interaction between the players and the consumers of this billboard. As a matter of fact, there is a sense of joy and happiness shared by the players that can be reflected to the consumers as if they were sharing this achievement people.

Linguistic text

The switch on this billboard, announcing a sports team, required a change of the elements and also the composition of the billboard. In the upper section of the billboard we have a white fringe in which we can see the insignia of the team and we can also read “Aztecas UDLAP” which is the name of the team and the slogan “todos somos aztecas, todos somos UDLAP”. By saying this, the university sends a first message of proudness and support for the team and the university. By using the pronoun “Todos” and the verb “somos”, they are generalizing this support and proudness to say “we (the university) are not the only ones supporting our team, but we also have a decent number of fans in the state”. We also point out that the team is using the

name of an important ancient civilization “los aztecas” which gives a stronger sense of patriotism and Mexican proudness.

As part of the photographic image, we observe that behind the team there is a banner that contains the championship designation “Aztecas UDLAP, campeones nacionales 2016”. This message together with the slogan below “campeón de campeones 2016” The university emphasizes that their team is the best of the best and brings a sense of proudness to the name of the university. The linguistic texts here show an overall of the achievements the university has reached in 2016. They have not only reached educational achievements that collocate them as one of the best universities in Mexico but they are have also triumphs in other areas such as sports.

Composition

This billboard has a centered composition with elements in the upper and lower section that play a specific role to support the central element. In this case, the team is the center of attention since they are the achievers of the championship. Certainly, the banner behind the players officially names the team as champion. The slogan “campeón de campeones” is an intensifier that means, we are the best team from the league and we excel in different areas not only in education. Therefore, this is again another indirect invitation to the consumers to be part of this successful university.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

General Overview

This chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of the previous analysis and results found in chapter 4. In addition, it aims to address the research questions proposed for this study. Chapter 5 will also serve to discuss the contributions of the study to the field of linguistics, the implications as well as the limitations we encounter in the realization of the research. Finally, we will provide ideas for further research utilizing a multimodal perspective.

5.1 Findings and Significance

The main issue behind this study was the manner in which this private institution in central Mexico constructed and conveyed its ideologies through promotional discourses. Similarly, it aimed to understand how the university established an institutional identity that distinguished it from other universities.

Therefore, this study was driven by these three research questions

1. What media does the higher education institution employ to disseminate promotional discourses?
2. How does the higher education institution construct and convey ideology through their promotional discourses?
3. How does the higher education institution establish an institutional identity through their promotional discourses?

After conducting the data analysis, we were able to find interesting elements to give answer to these questions

UDLAP makes use of different and interesting resources that are multimodally textualized to express an institutional identity and to convey its ideology. Some of these resources are considered knowledge-based as in figure 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.2.1. On these billboards they use representatives of common professions such as an architect, of different areas of study like Science and Art or they even represent the new technology era by showing the use of multimedia classrooms and technological devices.

The resources also reflect how UDLAP conceptualizes knowledge, its acquisition and transmission and the imminent use of technology inside the classroom today to promote autonomous learning, a different students-teacher relation and at the same time they reflect the social construction of knowledge.

In addition, there is use of cultural resources. For instance, one of their most striking billboard was the one in which candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton appear (Figure 4.5.1). By using this cultural/political token the institution shows a sort of social concern regarding the implications for Mexico either Trump or Hillary won the elections. Some other cultural resources are seen in Figure 4.3.1. Although difficult to recognize, some colonial-like buildings are presented. We believe that they represent part of the history of Puebla.

We also found resources that highlight prestigious achievements that UDLAP has accomplished such as the SACSCOC and FIMPES certifications and the 5 stars given by the QS World University Rankings. Figure 4.6.1 shows an achievement of the football team “Aztecas UDLAP” who were 2015 champions of a local football championship.

Finally Figure 4.4.1 portrays the institutions as committed to the preparation of students to be internationally relevant. The image of the billboard is a metaphor to an international future

offered to students. It makes the perfect and harmonious reference of international opportunities that aims to call the attention of the consumers of the billboard.

The significance of the study lies in the fact that education is considered almost universally as the primary means to social and economic mobility. The manner in which educational institutions creates their identities and then portray them to their clients defines, to a certain degree, define what education means to the institution. For UDLAP, “education” means being a champion. Studying at UDLAP, a university with such a prestige can prepare you to achieve your goals. Education also means having a different chip, a different thinking, a different manner of conceptualizing the acquisition and transmission of knowledge by social interaction. It means giving options, different careers, options to study Bachelor degrees and even postgraduate programs. Education is also seizing opportunities to grow professionally and preparing for international, political and economic challenges. It also means, educational excellence and freedom of choice.

5.2 Contributions of the study

The present study has humbly contributed to the vast amount of research on multimodality. Even though this study’s main idea was a comparative one between different universities and their ideologies and institutional identities, we believe that we provided a solid base to conduct a more detailed and in-depth study of how universities construct their ideologies. We believe that by conducting this study we provided an insight on how a complete cycle of billboards can show several meaningful aspects on how university project an ideology to the consumers of their propaganda. Universities hold within their hierarchies a goal, a vision and a mission, they have different perspectives about knowledge and education as well as about the manner in which society works and affects the life of individuals. Therefore, analyzing their

discourse with a multimodal perspective with a slight incorporation of the appraisal system can be helpful to understand those aspects.

5.3 Implications of the study

This study has implications not only to the multimodal field but also to the field of education in various terms. Multimodal analyses are being used in many different fields. We know that education is linked to social, economical and even political issues and parts and being aware of the identity and ideologies that higher educational institutions project helps us understand how they perceive knowledge, how they convince their potential students to be part of their institution, how they perceive the reality of a country and the consequences of other countries decisions in our context and even how they compete with other institutions.

Education has many different edges and involves several actors that use discursive practices for different purposes. Being aware of the multimodal discourses facilitates and wideness or perspectives of a good education. As we will discuss in section 5.5 a study of the ideologies of higher educational institutions' identities and ideologies implicates a wider range of options for students to choose the one in which they want to continue their professional development, for teachers to understand the context where they work and for directives to find options to develop and provide better educational services.

5.4 Limitation

It is of paramount importance for us to let the readers know the limitations of this study to understand it in-depth. First and foremost, this study aimed to analyze two of the most important universities in Puebla. However, due to time constrains and different limitations to gather the data in a clear, systematic and sequential manner the researcher decided to obtain the

data directly from the institutions. We contacted the department of access to public information of the public institution and the coordinator of the marketing department of the public institution to obtain the data. However, the second limitation emerged in this point when the public institution denied the access to the complete set of data, forcing the researcher to work only with the private university.

The coordinator of this university kindly collaborated to the study by sending some of the data needed to complete the study. Nonetheless, the university was in charge of sending only some of the billboards and denied access to others that could have been helpful to the study.

5.5 Further Research

Considering the limitation this study encountered, further research can be done by exploring how universities use multimodal discourses to construct and convey their ideologies and educational identities. Puebla is the state with the highest number of universities in the country. Moreover, some of these universities are placed in the top-ten of the best universities in the country. Therefore, analyzing the ideologies of these universities is an interesting topic that can have a strong significance in the field of multimodality and education.

Further research can also be done by analyzing the different media that higher education institutions employ to promote their services. We believe that commercials on television and radio along with billboards project a stronger vision of the ideologies and educational identities they behold especially because the ratio of attention that television and radio can reach.

Finally, in a more classroom directed vision, multimodality can be use in several manners. Any communicative act inside the classroom implies the use of several semiotic resources. By utilizing a multimodal approach to analyze communication in the classroom we can raise our students' awareness on how relationships between teachers and students take place.

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Appendices



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