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## Creativity in pictorial and multimodal advertising metaphors

### 1. Introduction

'The logical pattern of the creative process', declares Arthur Koestler in his classic study, 'consists in the discovery of hidden similarities' (1969: 27). Discussing numerous examples he demonstrates how this creative act of unveiling similarities functions in the realms of humour, scientific discovery, and art. Koestler coins the term 'bisociation' for the unexpected fusion of two elements: 'The bisociative act connects previously unconnected matrices of experience' (1969: 45). The fusion of the two objects, phenomena, or perspectives, then, results in the production of something new. But this in itself is not yet sufficient to merit the qualification 'creative'. Human beings' behaviour is fundamentally goal-driven. Consequently, creativity must always be assessed and evaluated within a more or less specific situation in which a 'maker' (of a sentence, a building, a poem, a song, an argument, a painting, an advertisement, a software program ...) searches for, or hits upon, a solution to a more or less clearly delineated problem she encounters – or has formulated herself. The joke must be funny, the scientific explanation correct or insightful, the artistic object felicitous or striking. Moreover, the result must reflect a principle of 'economy' (Koestler, 1969: 263): it must be as concise and elegant as possible.

Due to the highly contextualized nature of creativity it is virtually impossible to come up with non-trivial generalizations about it. But perhaps the difficulty is even more fundamental: generalizing about creativity entails finding pertinent patterns in pattern-breaking. This is a tall order. The best I can do here is examine and analyse a number of clearly goal-driven situations within a specific genre (see Forceville, 1995) that result from

bisociation in roughly the same manner, and evaluate and discuss the solutions found.

Finding their inspiration in Koestler's work, Fauconnier and Turner have developed a theory, Blending Theory, which among other things can model 'emergent structure' (2002: 383), and hence potentially 'creativity'. Although Blending Theory suffers from certain shortcomings (Forceville, 2004, Câmara Pereira, 2007: 53), I agree with Câmara Pereira that it can help formalize creative processes. In the following sections I will first briefly explain Blending Theory, and then specify, in terms defined by Veale *et al.* (in prep.), how the Blending Theory model needs to be enhanced in order to be truly capable of handling creativity. Finally, some supposedly creative metaphors in advertisements and commercials will be discussed in terms of this enhanced Blending Theory model.

It is to be acknowledged at the outset that the attribution of creativity is *post hoc*, a kind of 'reverse engineering', which will not yield any spectacular predictions about future creativity. Nonetheless, I believe it is useful to analyse specimens of pictorial and multimodal metaphor in a specific genre from the perspective of their creativity. Such case studies alert us to how the choice for specific modalities (here: spoken and written language, visuals, sound, and music) affects a metaphorical bisociation's successfulness. Indeed, the case studies examined here will show that often the creativity of the solutions chosen resides not so much in the *content* of pertinent information (which in advertising is often predictable or even banal), but in conveying this information in unexpected *form* – which in the present cases means in non-verbal or multimodal ways. This issue should be of interest both to analysts and producers of advertising metaphors.

## **2. Blending Theory, Interaction Theory and Creativity**

Fauconnier and Turner's Blending Theory (Turner and Fauconnier, 1995; Fauconnier and Turner, 1998, 2000, 2002; see also Grady *et al.*, 1999), is rooted in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (see Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999; Gibbs, 2008), which in turn is a prominent branch of a brand of linguistics usually labelled 'cognitive linguistics'. Over the past two decades, the cognitive linguistic model has begun to be used for the analysis of non-verbal modes of discourse, such as gestures, visuals, sound and music (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Cognitive linguistics thus contributes to the theorization of the quickly developing discipline of multimodal discourse along lines that differ from those proposed by another prominent model, the Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics paradigm, as for instance

exemplified in Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) and Jewitt (2009). Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the two linguistics models as instruments for analysing multimodal discourse will require sustained research and will be outside the scope of this chapter (for some thoughts, see Forceville, *forthc.*).

Blending Theory provides a model claiming to describe 'the way we think'. While assessing the import of this ambitious claim will have to await both more theoretical discussion and empirical research, Blending Theory at the very least offers a plausible template for modelling how human beings constantly combine relatively simple concepts in order to arrive at more complex ones. One of the phenomena Blending Theory can model is metaphor. Inasmuch as it is capable of modelling creative metaphor, it can be seen as fleshing out Max Black's (1979) interaction theory (also known as the 'creativity theory') of metaphor, which in many ways anticipates Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

Let me first briefly recapitulate Black's theory. Black distinguishes between a metaphor's primary subject (for which I will here adopt the label 'target') and a secondary subject (here: 'source'). In the metaphor 'a good manager is a conductor', 'manager' is the target, and 'conductor' is the source. Each metaphor functions by inviting the processing, or spelling out, of one or more features that are to be projected, or 'mapped', from source to target. That is, the addressee of a metaphor selects one or more features metonymically connected with, or associatively evoked by, the source. Since the source (just as the target) is not a monolithic concept but part of a semantic domain, the addressee will look for features in the source domain that, in the given context, can be sensibly mapped onto the target domain. In our example metaphor such mappings may include for instance that it is the conductor who leads the orchestra without himself playing an instrument and that it is he who indicates the moment when an instrument or group of instruments begins to play, as well as the tempo in which this is to be done. In the absence of context that may further steer and constrain interpretation, we may decide on other mappings: the conductor's artistry, for instance, and his 'star' status. Of course the mapping involves a degree of 'translation': the musicians in the source become employees in the target; 'playing an instrument' becomes 'doing your job', 'deciding on the moment the violins need to start playing' corresponds to, say, 'deciding on the moment the marketing department is asked to launch a product'.

A few insights transpire from this example: In the first place, if the textual or discursive context does not specify what elements from the source domain are to be mapped, and how they end up

after their translation in the target domain, addressees have a degree of freedom to interpret the metaphor. This means that – again: in the absence of constraining contextual information – there may be divergent interpretations of the metaphor that are all correct, but may nonetheless lead to disagreements between interpreters who may not realize that they have simply mapped different features from source to target. In the second place, not only factual properties can be mapped, but also emotions, connotations, and valuations, such as, in our example, ‘artistry’. Thirdly, it is also clear that not every feature can be mapped; in that case target and source would have to be identical, and the result would be a tautology rather than a metaphor. For instance, the fact that the conductor uses a baton, does not have an equivalent in the target domain – unless one were to label the chairman’s gavel as such.

Black’s metaphor theory can be conveniently modelled using the Blending Theory template given in figure 1. Here is an explanation of a simplified version of that diagram, the understanding of which will be aided with reference to Fauconnier and Turner’s own example of the blend ‘land-yacht’ for a very big, imposing car. Two ‘mental spaces’ (‘small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action’, Fauconnier and Turner, 2002: 40) each contribute salient factual, emotive, and/or associated information to the blend. In our example the mental spaces of ‘yacht’ and ‘car’ (the two ‘input spaces’) help build the blend ‘land-yacht’. They can do so because the input spaces on the one hand have certain *shared* salient features, or structured aggregates of features (what Gentner calls ‘relational alignment’, e.g., Holyoak *et al.*, 2001: 8); and on the other hand they have certain *unshared* salient features or structured aggregates of features. Both the shared and the unshared features are necessary for the blend. Only on the scaffold of a partial commonality between the contributing input spaces (Koestler’s ‘matrices’) can a creative pertinent fusion arise. The shared salient features here include ‘constituting a vehicle for the transportation of people’, ‘being equipped with a motor’, ‘costing a robust amount of money’, etc. Features that the yacht space does *not* share with the car space are ‘being typically propelled by wind’, ‘having a mast’ and, importantly, ‘*being luxuriously big and stately*’. Conversely, the car space does *not* share with the yacht space features like ‘moving forward on four tires’ and, importantly, ‘using *roads* as its trajectory’. The features the two input spaces have in common are represented in the so-called ‘generic space’ – and it is these (aligned) features that enable the two input spaces to be experienced as similar. In the land-yacht example this could be summed up as ‘being a vehicle for the transportation of people’. But

since the input spaces are non-identical in at least some respects, they can also impart features to the blended space that are not shared by the other input space. Indeed, they *must* do so: each contributing space will at the very least impart one feature to the blend that it does not share with the other input space(s) – or else the rationale to deploy that input space for contributing to the blend has disappeared. The resulting whole, if it is to count as ‘creative’, is more than the sum of the parts or, as Fauconnier and Turner succinctly phrase it, ‘the blend develops emergent structure that is not in the inputs’ (2002: 42). In the land-yacht example, the car space imparts the feature ‘travels by road’, while the yacht space imparts ‘being luxuriously big and stately’. The emergent structure in the blend saliently includes, I propose, unsuitably and intimidatingly large size (as said, for instance, of a Hummer).

In figure 1, a simplified version of the original diagram, these processes are formally represented as follows. The circles are mental spaces. The left and the right space are the input spaces, while the space at the top is the generic space, representing what the input spaces have in common. At the bottom is the blended space, which symbolizes the *ad hoc* combining of pertinent properties from the two input spaces into a new whole. The black dots represent properties. The uninterrupted lines between dots represent a property shared across input spaces. Since this property is shared, it naturally also occurs in the generic space, which is why there are uninterrupted lines connecting the dots in the input spaces with a dot in the generic space. The same property is also retained in the blend, which is again represented by uninterrupted lines running from the input spaces to the dot in the blend. The interrupted lines, those between dots in the input spaces and dots in the blend, indicate properties uniquely imparted to the blend by each of the input spaces. The square in the blended space contains the pertinent properties in the blend. Since not all properties from the input spaces are imparted to the blend – if that were the case, the input spaces would have to be completely identical – there are some isolated, unconnected dots in the two input spaces: these are properties not relevant for the blend. The open, as opposed to the black, dots in the blend signify properties that are born thanks to the combining of the input spaces: these, then, symbolize the new, ‘emergent’ properties.

Rephrased in terms of Black’s metaphor theory, input space 1 is the original, ‘unadapted’ target domain (‘car’, ‘manager’); input space 2 is the source domain (‘yacht’, ‘conductor’); and the blend is the ‘transformed’ target domain (‘land-yacht’, ‘manager-as-conductor’). The generic space labels the pre-existing similarity between target and source, which is retained in the blended space

(e.g., manager and conductor are both human; they are both in charge of a group of people who are to carry out a task together, etc.).

[INSERT FIGURE 1 APPROXIMATELY HERE]

Inasmuch as the transformed target/blend provides properties (and the structure binding those properties) that were present in neither the unadapted target domain nor the source domain, it is correct to talk about 'emergent structure' (see Gineste *et al.*, 2000). In principle, that is, the Blending Theory is capable of modelling what happens in creativity. As argued in Veale *et al.* (in prep.), however, this requires some further specification. Briefly, in a creative act (whether of the radically innovative variety of the 'never done before in history' called 'H-creativity' (where the 'H' stands for 'historical') or of the more local variety of 'I hit upon this, to me, completely new discovery or solution for the first time' called 'P-creativity' – P = 'personal' – by Boden (2004: 2), the unadapted target (input space 1) is given, and so is the more or less vaguely formulated outcome of the 'transformed target/blended space'. What in our first example is given as input space 1 is: 'car' and 'manager'; what is to end up in the blend is, say: 'a felicitous description of an inappropriately big type of car' and 'a felicitous description of a manager emphasizing his "artistic" qualities'. But what makes the blend creative is precisely what is in input space 2 or source domain: the yacht, the conductor – and this is *not* given in advance. Finding an appropriate source domain whose properties can merge with those of the target in order to create a felicitous metaphorical blend – that is the big challenge for any would-be creator. In Veale *et al.*, this problem was formulated as follows: 'The mechanism by which the contents of a second input space [in metaphor: the 'source domain'] are inferred to complement the contents of the first [in metaphor: the 'unadapted target domain'] is the mechanism that will make blending theory a true theory of creativity' (Veale *et al.*, in prep.). Note that the fact that the transformed target/blend contains a description (necessarily vague because it still lacks the crucial information from the source) already indicates that the producer of the blend has a sense of purpose or goal. This is a reminder that a semantic analysis of a blend must always be complemented by pragmatic considerations.

### 3. Creativity in Advertising Metaphors: Case Studies

Advertisers' self-imposed task for creative pictorial/multimodal metaphor use, I propose, can be formulated as follows: 'Develop a creative representation of a semantic domain (source domain) that succinctly and surprisingly, perhaps humorously or beautifully, cues pertinent features and/or structures that can be mapped onto the product promoted (target domain) so as to present the product as exemplifying the feature(s) that is/are to be communicated to the audience'. This task, which in the last resort of course banally boils down to 'make 'em buy!', can be, somewhat artificially, divided into the following subtasks:

1. Decide on the attributes and/or connotations of the product/service to be emphasized;
2. Find a source domain in which those attributes are saliently present;
3. Create a motivation or scenario for the co-presence of target (usually: the product, Forceville, 1996: 126) and source, and emphasize dimensions of similarity between them;
4. Choose in what modes/modalities the metaphorically pertinent information (including the to-be-mapped properties/attributes) is to be cued.

In the following I will discuss a number of Dutch examples with these questions in mind.

Artis Zoo (billboard, figure 2, Forceville, 1996: 158.; original in colour). The goal of this billboard is to attract visitors to the Amsterdam zoo 'Artis'. The source domain chosen to emphasize Artis' visitability is Leonardo's world-famous painting 'Mona Lisa'. This portrait of a woman displaying an enigmatic smile, of which many people are supposed to have a mental picture, is used to suggest a similarity with the photographic portrait of an orang-utan that also appears to be faintly smiling. This 'portrait' framing, combined with the faint smiling, creates the pertinent similarity between target and source. This newly created similarity between two phenomena (orang-utan and Mona Lisa), giving rise to the metaphor `ORANG UTAN IS MONA LISA` spawns further similarities, namely between the two institutes that they metonymically represent (Artis zoo and the Louvre). Thus, the Louvre's property 'famous attraction that people want/should/need to visit' is mapped onto the Amsterdam zoo. As to the choice of mode (see Forceville, 2006, 2008; Bateman, 2008, Kress, 2009 for more discussion on the concept of 'mode') for each of the two domains, this is restricted to visuals and language. The decision to render the source domain 'Mona Lisa' verbally rather than juxtaposing it visually to the orang-utan works out well; presumably, once viewers realize what metaphor they are to construe, they will adapt their mental picture



of the Mona Lisa to optimize the similarity with the monkey, whereas if one were to see a picture of the Mona Lisa next to the monkey (which for copyright reasons may not have been an option for the advertisers in the first place) would have resulted in a less convincing similarity. A final remark: this particular orang-utan was one of many possible target domains that could have been chosen (although another billboard in the same Artis series showed a lovely baby chimpanzee with the text 'King Kong?' which might suggest that the designers of the campaign opted for a 'monkey' theme). The *formal* similarity between the orang-utan and Mona Lisa that resides in both being portraits of faintly smiling primates – even if the similarity did not exist before this billboard was conceived – is an important factor in the metaphor's success.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 APPROXIMATELY HERE]

Nespresso (print ads, figures 3 and 4, originals in colour). From the (barely readable) tag line 'Citiz: high design by *Nespresso*' we can deduce that the design of the coffee machine, rather than for instance its price or the taste of the coffee it produces is the attribute to be promoted in this advertising campaign. In figure 3, the body copy reinforces this impression: 'with their retro-modern design that is inspired by urban architecture, the three machines of the Citiz line are suitable for each lifestyle' [my translation, here and in the other ads, ChF], the three types being represented in the right-hand bottom corner. The machines are seen against the background of metropolitan, skyscrapers, reminiscent of the Parisian La Défense or the Twin Towers. In figure 4, the similarity between the robust, metallic machine and the accompanying coffee canister on the one hand, and the skyscraper cue a more specific resemblance to New York. Clearly, then, it is the design attribute itself that is to be mapped. The realistic motivation of the co-presence of target and source is presumably the scenario that the machine stands on the edge of a skyscraper balcony, or on a ledge before a big glass window. Note that the notion of 'glamour' may be co-mapped together with 'state-of-the-art design' from cityscape to coffee machine; this notion also comes to mind when one considers the endorsement by actor George Clooney in the campaign promoting Nespresso coffee during this same period.

In my terminology (Forceville, 1996, 2006, 2008), this is a pictorial metaphor (more specifically of the MP2 or hybrid type). That is, although the advertisements' texts and the machine's name ('Citiz') help cue the source domain, the visuals alone suffice to construe the metaphor COFFEE MACHINE IS SKYSCRAPER. It makes sense

that the visual modality is dominant: attesting to excellent design after all is something to be shown rather than verbalized.

[INSERT FIGURES 3 AND 4 APPROXIMATELY HERE]

Senseo coffee machine (commercial). Presumably the goal of this commercial was to reinforce the popularity of the brand, a Philips coffee machine that had already been enormously successful in the first years of its existence. The source domain to be found thus had to connote, at the very least, 'popularity', more specifically the kind of popularity that has achieved cult-status. The source domain chosen to cue this 'legendary status' is that of *Easy Rider*-type motorbikes. This is done as follows: the motorbike domain is triggered by a number of close-ups of elements that are metonymically related to this domain: metallic parts (Figure 5a, original in colour), a finger pushing an on/off button (Figure 5b), a drop of oil – or so it seems – (Figure 5c), accompanied by a vroom-and-kick-starting sound. At this stage, first-time viewers would be unaware that what is triggered is in fact a source domain that will predicate something about a target domain (i.e., coffee machine), rather than the product (motorbikes) itself. The motorbike domain is further enriched by the song audible on the soundtrack: Steppenwolf's 'Born to be Wild', the opening song of the cult-film *Easy Rider*. This 1969 film, the characteristic motorbikes that Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda ride on, and the whole atmosphere of this very loosely structured film, is a 'legend'. The following texts are superimposed over the images in the course of the 30-second commercial: 'Designed with a vision ... developed with passion ... turns each moment into a sensation ... that strokes all senses ....' – all descriptions that would fit the *Easy Rider* motorbikes. Not until the end of the commercial (embedded in Forceville, 2007) do we realize we have been tricked: the metal parts and the on/off button were actually part of the coffee machine we now get to see ('three years old, and already a legend ... at least for the kitchen'), while the 'drop of oil' was in fact a drop of coffee. The formal similarity is thus cued by visual means, while the desired, mappable 'legendary' attributes – something like 'the freedom, sixties anti-conformism, youth-culture, etc. associated with *Easy Rider*' – are cued by the Steppenwolf song.

[INSERT FIGURES 5A, 5B, AND 5C APPROXIMATELY HERE]

The similarity between target and source is thus completely commensurate with Max Black's interaction theory: it is *created* rather than pre-existent. Outside of the context of this commercial, nobody would have thought of the similarity between the Senseo coffee machine and hip motorbikes, let alone the motorbikes of *Easy Rider*. The choice of modalities to capture the similarity between target and source is well-chosen. The pay-off 'already a legend' captures this similarity verbally, but up till that moment, the 'legendary' aspect was for the audience to construe. Showing footage from the film would not, I submit, have worked: simply juxtaposing the machine and the *Easy Rider* bikes to convey the former's 'legendary' status would have been a ludicrous overstatement. By contrast, the clever close-ups combined with the song cue the metaphor SENSEO COFFEE MACHINE IS *EASY RIDER* MOTORBIKE implicitly rather than explicitly. The audience (at least the elderly part that is aware of the song and the association with the film – undoubtedly the target audience of the commercial) has to *infer* the connection. It is to be noted that viewers' interest and their sense of surprise is enhanced by being presented with the source *before* the target; a choice that appears to be a standard procedure for metaphors in commercials (see Forceville 2007). Finally, the metaphor is presented in a tongue-in-cheek spirit by the addition 'at least in the kitchen' in the pay-off.

[INSERT FIGURES 6A, 6B, AND 6C APPROXIMATELY HERE]

Zendium toothpaste (commercial). After a shot of bubbling water in this commercial, we see beautiful white coral (figure 6a, original in colour), then the same white coral affected by black spots (figure 6b, original in black and white!). Zendium toothpaste containers swim with fish-like movements in an underwater seascape (figure 6c, original in colour). The voice-over text runs, in translation, 'Saliva, it is the natural protection of your mouth and teeth. If the condition of your saliva deteriorates, mouth and teeth problems may arise. Zendium is the only toothpaste that strengthens your saliva so as not only to protect your teeth, but your entire mouth'. The last phrase sums up the product's unique selling proposition and thus the attribute to be emphasized. In order to achieve this, a metaphor is construed that could be labelled SEASCAPE IS MOUTH. Thanks to the voice-over, we associate the white coral with teeth, and the black spots on it with caries. We do not need the voice-over to understand that the Zendium containers are fish; that can be inferred from the containers' fishlike movements. What matters is that just as fish' natural habitat is water, so Zendium's natural habitat is saliva, and this is the salient mappable feature.

Note that the verbal modality is crucial to activate the concept 'saliva' – surely viewers would not associate bubbling water, or an underwater seascape generally, with saliva, or a mouth. This would thus be an example of what Barthes (1986) calls text 'relaying' visual information: the verbal modality provides salient information not present in the visual modality and vice versa; hence they complement each other (for more detailed suggestions of how verbal and visual information may be related see Unsworth and Clérigh, 2009; Bateman, 2008). The soundtrack suggests bubbling water, and perhaps swallowing, while the music is of the high-tone and eerie kind regularly used to accompany underwater footage in fiction and documentaries – except for the brief scene in which the affected coral is shown (figure 6b), when the tones are lower and there is an ominous 'whoosh' sound.

[INSERT FIGURES 7A AND 7B APPROXIMATELY HERE]

Shell V-Power gasoline (commercial). Beautifully coloured fish (reminiscent of the co-temporary Disney success *Finding Nemo*, Andrew Stanton, USA 2003) are seen swimming in the sea in this commercial. A school of fish all of a sudden mechanically stops swimming at exactly the same time (figure 7a, original in colour). A small fish narrowly escapes from a swordfish. On the sound track we hear traffic sounds – revving motors, screeching tires, claxons, a siren. The voice-over reinforces the references to the traffic domain, and promotes Shell's *V-Power* as guaranteeing cars' optimal performance (the commercial can be accessed via Forceville, 2007). The traffic domain is thus cued by both non-verbal sound and spoken language. In turn, these steer interpretations on the visual level, such as that the suddenly motionless fish 'stop for a traffic light' and the small fish tries to escape the 'police car' swordfish. Clearly, then, the two input spaces are CARS and FISH. While first-time viewers are bound to be puzzled by the opening, once they realize that this is a commercial for gasoline they will realize that the metaphor is CARS ARE FISH, not FISH ARE CARS, since gasoline is metonymically related to cars rather than to fish. In the final part, we see a number of shells lying on the bottom of the sea (figure 7b, original in colour) transform into Shell logos. The similarity between the two domains is thus created via the brand name 'Shell'. Shells trigger the sea domain, which subsequently make the presence of fish a 'normal' matter.

We can infer from the voice-over – which nowhere refers to the FISH domain – that the promotable attribute is that gasoline enables better performance. But the visual realm of a paradise-like

underwater seascape strongly connotes 'unpolluted nature', and undoubtedly Shell hopes that viewers map the attribute of 'contributing to an unpolluted environment' onto the product. The showing of 'shells' constitutes the 'naturalization' (Barthes, 1986) of the scenario of CARS-AS-FISH. The explicit performance claim of the product is thus made explicitly via the verbal realm, while the suggestion that Shell contributes to a cleaner environment is weakly implicated. And the more weakly implicated a message is, the more its derivation is the responsibility of the message's receiver rather than of its sender (see Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 199; Forceville, 1996: 93, 2005, 2009). The choice of modalities to help create similarity between the two domains and to trigger relevant mappings is thus well-considered, and is a crucial aspect of *form* that helps make the bisociation creative.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

Summarizing, on the basis of the five case studies discussed, the procedure in which pertinent product attributes are saliently communicated using metaphors, the following picture arises. From a production perspective, first of all these attributes are to be decided on. In marketing terminology, this used to be called the Unique Selling Proposition (USP), the dimension in which the product advertised supposedly differs markedly from its competitors (Brierley, 1997: 140-41). But nowadays, this USP may be the creation of a specific 'brand personality' (see Koller, 2009), or a specific emotion or atmosphere as much as an attribute of the product itself. Subsequently, the advertising agency's creative team needs to find a semantic domain/mental space that can serve as the source domain from which the desired attributes can be generated, ready to be mapped in a metaphor of which the product is the target. The next step is to create similarity between the (domain of the) product and the source domain. In Blending Theory terms, this means emphasizing the generic space. This similarity may be latent-but-pre-existent similarity, but often is *created* similarity – since this similarity usually is no more than the excuse, or quasi-motivation, for presenting the metaphor. Thus there is no pre-existent salient similarity between this particular orang-utan's and Mona Lisa's smile, between the coffee machine and a motorbike, between toothpaste containers and fish, or between car and fish. The Nespresso coffee machines are somewhat exceptional: inasmuch as the cityscapes have been the inspiration for the design of the machines, the similarity is not coincidental: the metaphor is deployed to *reinforce* a pre-existent similarity.

Finally, the choice of mode/modality is crucial for the successfulness of the metaphorical bisociation. The chosen

modality/modalities may (help) (a) identify the source domain; (b) create similarity between target (usually: the product) and source; and (c) cue the features to be mapped from source to target. It is thus not only the conceptual *content* of the feature(s) to be mapped onto the product that co-determine success, but also *how* this is done. The fact that the similarity is to a considerable extent *created* is an important reminder that although it may be correct to claim that many (most?) creative metaphors can be reformulated as manifestations of conceptual ones (Lakoff and Turner, 1989: 26), this approach underestimates the importance that *formal* resemblance between target and source (the catalogue of opportunities differs per medium, but can exemplify similarity of sound, form, colour, texture, pitch, framing, movement ...) can play to make a metaphor successful). The question of the manner in which the different tasks (identifying the source, creating similarity between target and source, and cueing mappable features) are distributed over the various modalities can only be answered by systematic corpus research. Such corpus research needs to take into account factors including medium (static versus moving images), product category, target audience, and possibly (sub)cultural variation. Ideally, the findings are subsequently tested in experiments in which the salient factors are manipulated. In the cases discussed above it can be noted that the commercials do anchor visually or sonically cued mappable features verbally, whether in superimposed text, voice-over, or both. In the Artis billboard, whereas the verbal modality is crucial for the identification of a metaphor in the first place, only the word 'live' can be seen as hinting at a mappable feature ('come to Artist to see a *living* Mona Lisa rather than go to the Louvre to see a mere painting of a long dead one!'). In the Nespresso ads, the mappable feature is admittedly presented verbally ('high design for Nespresso') but, due to its small print, with little salience. Presumably many readers flipping through the magazine will not read this line, nor need to do so in order to get the message.

I speculate that favouring non-verbal modes in the creation of multimodal advertising metaphors has the following advantages over a restriction to the verbal mode alone: sound, music, and visuals (i) communicate on a more directly emotional level than words do; (ii) require the addressee to construe the metaphor and/or its mappable features him/herself. This results in more cognitive effort on the part of the addressee, and hence more attention to the commercial message; (iii) lack the metaphorical 'is' of language, enabling the creation of metaphors that would have been improbable or ridiculous if rendered in purely verbal terms; (iv) steer addressees into making inferences at their own responsibility and discretion, allowing for a degree of 'personalization' of a mass-medium message.

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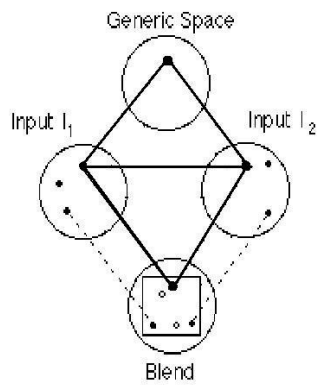
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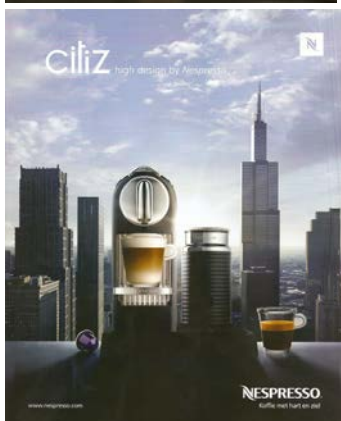
[Figure 1]



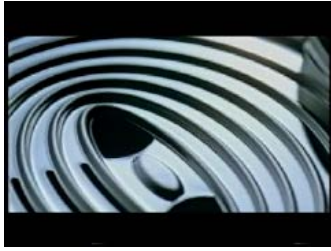
[Figure 2]



[Figure 3]



[Figure 4]



[Figures 5a, 5b, 5c]



[Figures 6a, 6b, 6c]



[Figures 7a, 7b]