



"Semiotic and Pragmatic Dimensions in Gaza Advocacy Posters: A Multimodal Perspective"

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"الابعاد السيميانية والبراغماتية في ملصقات مناصرة لغزة: منظور متعدد الوسائل"

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المستخلص

تشكل ملصقات المناصرة وسيلةً متعددة الوسائط ف غالة لنقل الرسائل الاجتماعية والسياسية والإنسانية إلى جماهير متعددة. إلا أن تفسير تلك الملصقات ليس ثابتاً، إذ ينبع المعنى من تفاعل موارد سيميائية متعددة تتشكل بفعل عوامل ثقافية وسياسية. تبحث هذه الدراسة الأبعاد السيميائية والبراغماتية لملصقات مناصرة لغزة من منظور متعدد الوسائط، مع التركيز على كيفية تفاعل العناصر البصرية واللغوية لتوليد المعنى والأهمية. وبالاستناد إلى إطار تحليلي انتقائي مقتبس من عواد (٢٠٢٤)، تُدمج الدراسة نموذج مارتينيك وسالواي (٢٠٠٥) لعلاقات الصورة بالنص، ومنهج فورسيفيل (٢٠٢٠) القائم على نظرية الأهمية في تعدد الوسائط، وتمييز ويلسون (٢٠١٨) بين الأهمية الداخلية والخارجية. ومنهجياً، يتبنى البحث منهجاً مشتركاً يجمع بين الأساليب النوعية والكمية. تم اختيار ملصقين داعيين نُشرَا عام ٢٠٢٤ بشكل مقصود بناءً على أهميتها الموضوعية، وكثافة الوسائط المتعددة فيهما، وتمثيلهما للخطاب البصري المعاصر المتعلق بغزة. يتناول التحليل النوعي العلاقة بين الصورة والنص، والدلائل الإشارية، والعمليات الاستدلالية، بينما يحدد التحليل الكمي مدى شيوع أنواع الاستعارات، وال العلاقات المكانية، وبروز النص. تكشف النتائج أن المجاز المرسل هو الاستعارة السائدة في كلا الملصقين، وأن المعنى يتحقق في المقام الأول من خلال التفاعل التكاملي بين الوسائط البصرية واللغوية. تلعب الألوان والطباعة والصور الرمزية دوراً حاسماً في تعزيز الافتراضات السيميائية والتأثيرات غير المباشرة، مما يعزز التفاعل العاطفي وقوة الإقناع. تُثْبِت الدراسة أن الملصقات الداعية متعددة الوسائط تعتمد على استراتيجيات سيميائية مهيكلة بعناية لتوسيع الرسائل الإنسانية ودعوات العمل، مما يُسهم في البحث الجاري حول البراغماتية متعددة الوسائط والتواصل البصري في سياقات الصراع والمقاومة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السيميائية، الوسائط المتعددة، البراغماتية، الملصقات المناصرة.

Abstract

Advocacy posters constitute a powerful multimodal medium through which social, political, and humanitarian messages are communicated to diverse audiences. Their interpretation, however, is not fixed, as meaning emerges from the interaction of multiple semiotic resources shaped by cultural and contextual factors. This study investigates the semiotic and pragmatic dimensions of Gaza advocacy posters from a multimodal perspective, focusing on how visual and verbal elements interact to generate meaning and relevance. Drawing on an eclectic analytical framework adapted from Awad (2024), the study integrates Martinec and Salway's (2005) model of image-text relations, Forceville's (2020) relevance-theoretic approach to multimodality, and Wilson's (2018) distinction between internal and external relevance. Methodologically, the research adopts a mixed qualitative-quantitative approach. Two advocacy posters published in 2024 were purposively selected based on their thematic relevance, multimodal density, and representativeness of contemporary Gaza-related visual discourse. The qualitative analysis examines image-text relations, ostensive acts, and inferential processes, while the quantitative component identifies the frequency of trope types, status relations, and textual prominence. The findings reveal that metonymy constitutes the dominant trope in both posters and that meaning is primarily achieved through the complementary interaction of visual and verbal modes. Colors, typography, and symbolic imagery play a crucial role in activating contextual assumptions and non-propositional effects, thereby enhancing emotional engagement and persuasive force. The study demonstrates that multimodal advocacy posters rely on carefully structured semiotic strategies to communicate humanitarian messages and calls for action, contributing to ongoing research on multimodal pragmatics and visual communication in contexts of conflict and resistance.

Keywords: Semiotics, Multimodality, Pragmatics, advocacy posters.

1. Introduction

Advocacy posters constitute a significant multimodal genre through which social, political, and humanitarian issues are publicly articulated and contested. By combining visual and verbal resources, such posters aim to raise awareness, influence attitudes, and mobilize audiences toward specific causes. In contexts marked by conflict and humanitarian crises, advocacy posters often function as surrogate voices for marginalized groups who are unable to articulate their suffering directly. As a result, their communicative force lies not only in what is explicitly represented but also in how meaning is constructed through semiotic choices and pragmatic inferences.

With the rapid expansion of digital media and visual platforms, communication has become increasingly multimodal, integrating language with images, color, typography, posture, and spatial design. As Forceville (2020) observes, contemporary meaning-making rarely relies on a single mode; rather, it emerges from the interaction of multiple semiotic resources. Advocacy posters exemplify this interaction particularly clearly, as they rely on visual salience and symbolic density to convey complex messages within limited textual space.

This study focuses on Gaza advocacy posters, which represent a distinctive form of political and humanitarian visual discourse. Such posters seek to expose violence, injustice, and deprivation while simultaneously appealing to shared moral values and collective responsibility. Despite their prominence and circulation, Gaza advocacy posters have received limited systematic attention from a multimodal pragmatic perspective,

particularly with regard to how semiotic resources interact to generate relevance and guide interpretation.

Accordingly, the present study aims to examine the semiotic and pragmatic dimensions of selected Gaza advocacy posters by addressing the following research questions: How are semiotic resources employed multimodally to communicate humanitarian and political meanings in Gaza advocacy posters? Which ostensive acts (visual or verbal) play a more salient role in guiding interpretation and achieving relevance? To what extent do the selected posters demonstrate creative and effective multimodal design?

To answer these questions, the study adopts an eclectic analytical framework integrating image–text relations and relevance-theoretic insights. The analysis is limited to two purposively selected posters, allowing for an in-depth and systematic examination of multimodal meaning construction. While the dataset is necessarily small, the focused qualitative and quantitative analysis aims to provide analytically grounded insights into the mechanisms through which advocacy posters communicate urgency, suffering, and resistance.

2. Background

2.1 Semiotics and Meaning-Making

Semiotics is broadly concerned with the study of signs and the processes through which meaning is produced and interpreted. Rather than limiting signs to linguistic forms, semiotic theory encompasses any entity that stands for something else within a system of interpretation. As Eco (1976) argues, semiotics investigates everything that can be taken as a sign, including objects, images, gestures, sounds, and visual symbols. Chandler (2007) further emphasizes that signs operate within systems and

acquire meaning through social and cultural conventions rather than in isolation.

A foundational distinction in semiotics is introduced by Saussure (1995), who conceptualizes the sign as a relationship between the signifier (the material form of the sign) and the signified (the concept it evokes). Meaning, from this perspective, is relational rather than inherent. This relational understanding of meaning is particularly relevant to visual communication, where images function as signifiers whose interpretation depends on culturally shared knowledge and contextual cues (Lazić et al., 2020).

Peirce's triadic model further expands semiotic analysis by distinguishing between the sign, its object, and the interpretant, emphasizing the role of interpretation in meaning-making. Within this framework, signs are classified as icons, indices, or symbols depending on the nature of their relationship to the object they represent (Peirce, 1958; Danesi, 2004). This taxonomy is especially useful for analyzing advocacy posters, which frequently rely on iconic resemblance, indexical association, and symbolic convention to convey layered meanings.

In addition to sign types, semiotic analysis also accounts for levels of meaning. Denotation refers to the relatively stable, literal meaning of a sign, whereas connotation involves culturally and emotionally charged associations that extend beyond literal reference (Barthes, 1977; Saeed, 2016). In visual discourse, connotation often plays a dominant role, as images are inherently polysemous and invite multiple interpretations shaped by viewers' cultural and ideological backgrounds.

2.2 Pragmatics and Multimodal Interpretation

While semiotics addresses how signs signify, pragmatics focuses on how meaning is inferred in context. From a pragmatic perspective, meaning is not fully encoded in signs themselves but emerges through interaction between the communicative stimulus and the interpreter's cognitive environment. Morris's (1938) tripartite model situates pragmatics as the study of the relation between signs and their users, highlighting interpretation as a central concern.

Contemporary pragmatics emphasizes the interplay between form, context, and communicative intention (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014). Within relevance theory, meaning is understood as inferential, guided by ostensive stimuli designed to attract attention and yield contextual effects (Sperber & Wilson, 1995; Wilson, 2018). This approach is particularly suitable for multimodal texts, where meaning arises from the interaction of visual and verbal cues rather than from linguistic encoding alone.

In multimodal advocacy posters, pragmatic interpretation depends on both explicit content and implicit assumptions activated by semiotic resources such as color, imagery, and spatial arrangement. These resources generate non-propositional effects, including emotional responses and evaluative judgments, which play a crucial role in persuasive communication.

2.3 Multimodality and Visual Communication

Multimodality refers to the use of multiple semiotic modes in communication, including language, images, sound, gesture, and layout. As Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) and Jewitt (2013) argue, multimodality has become the norm rather than the exception in contemporary communication. Meaning is

increasingly constructed through the coordinated use of different modes, each contributing distinct affordances.

Within social semiotics, modes are understood as culturally shaped resources for meaning-making (Kress, 2010). Visual modes, in particular, have gained prominence due to their immediacy, emotional impact, and capacity for symbolic condensation. Advocacy posters exploit these affordances by combining visual salience with minimal but strategically placed verbal elements.

Scholars such as Forceville (2006, 2020) have demonstrated that multimodal texts often rely on metaphor and metonymy distributed across modes. These tropes enable complex meanings to be communicated efficiently and persuasively. In conflict-related advocacy, such strategies are especially salient, as they allow designers to represent suffering, resistance, and injustice without explicit verbalization.

2.4 Previous Studies and Research Gap

Previous research on multimodal discourse has extensively examined advertising, political cartoons, and public campaigns, highlighting the role of image–text relations and visual rhetoric (Bateman, 2014; Machin, 2016; O'Halloran et al., 2013). Studies grounded in Martinec and Salway's (2005) framework have demonstrated how visual and verbal elements interact through relations of status and logico-semantic organization.

More recent work has incorporated relevance-theoretic perspectives to account for inferential meaning-making in multimodal texts (Forceville, 2020; Wilson, 2018). Notably, Awad (2024) proposes an eclectic model that integrates image–text relations with pragmatic relevance, offering a comprehensive framework for analyzing advocacy campaign posters, particularly those related to children's rights.

However, despite these advances, there remains a noticeable gap in the literature concerning the multimodal pragmatic analysis of Gaza advocacy posters. Existing studies tend to focus either on visual symbolism or on political messaging without systematically examining how semiotic resources interact to guide interpretation and achieve relevance. Moreover, few studies combine qualitative multimodal analysis with quantitative measures of trope frequency, status relations, and textual prominence.

The present study addresses this gap by applying an integrated semiotic–pragmatic framework to Gaza advocacy posters, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how multimodal meaning is constructed in contexts of conflict and resistance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Method

The present study adopts a mixed-method research design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to provide a systematic and comprehensive analysis of multimodal advocacy posters. The qualitative component is central to the investigation, as it allows for an in-depth examination of semiotic resources, image–text relations, ostensive acts, and inferential processes through which meaning is constructed. As Miles and Huberman (1984) argue, qualitative research is particularly suited to the analysis of meaning expressed in words, images, and symbols, especially when addressing questions of interpretation and context.

At the same time, a limited quantitative component is incorporated to enhance analytical rigor and objectivity. Following Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009), the integration of

qualitative and quantitative methods enables triangulation and strengthens the explanatory power of the analysis. In this study, quantitative measures are employed to identify the frequency of trope types, the distribution of status relations between visual and verbal modes, and the relative prominence of textual elements measured in word count. This mixed-method design ensures that interpretive insights are supported by systematic observation rather than impressionistic description.

3.2 Data Selection and Criteria

The dataset consists of two Gaza advocacy posters published in 2024 and retrieved from publicly accessible online platforms. The selection of only two posters is deliberate and theoretically motivated rather than arbitrary. Given the analytical depth required by a multimodal pragmatic approach, a small and focused dataset allows for detailed examination of semiotic and pragmatic mechanisms without compromising analytical clarity.

The posters were selected based on the following criteria:

- Thematic relevance: Both posters explicitly address humanitarian and political issues related to Gaza and Palestine, aligning with the study's focus on advocacy discourse in contexts of conflict.
- Multimodal density: The selected posters exhibit a rich combination of visual and verbal resources, including imagery, color, typography, and symbolic elements, making them suitable for multimodal analysis.
- Representativeness: The posters reflect widely circulated visual motifs and symbolic conventions commonly found in contemporary Gaza advocacy discourse.
- Comparability: Despite thematic overlap, the posters differ in design strategies and semiotic emphasis,

allowing for comparative analysis of multimodal meaning construction.

By restricting the dataset to two carefully selected posters, the study prioritizes analytical depth over breadth, enabling a fine-grained investigation of image–text relations and pragmatic relevance.

3.3 Data Sources

The first poster, titled Safe Gaza Children's Banner, was retrieved from the Shutterstock platform, where it was published in February 2024. The second poster, titled From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free, was obtained from the Palestine Poster Project and published in June 2024. Both platforms are recognized repositories for visual materials related to political and humanitarian advocacy, ensuring the authenticity and public relevance of the data.

Safe Gaza Children's Banner and Safe Children's Banner Design			
No.	Poster	Links	Year
1		https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/safe-gaza-childrens-banner-design-2428937239	2024
FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE			

2		https://www.palestineposterproject.org/posters/river-alieninkart	2024
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Table 1. Analyzed posters

3.4 Analytical Framework

In her work '*inferences Across Modes: A multimodal Pragmatic Analysis of Children's Rights Advocacy Campaign Posters*', Awad (2024) used an eclectic model to investigate creative multimodal texts based on Martenitc and Salway (2005) and Forceville (2022-2023). The model has been supplemented by Wilson's (2018) insights for the distinction between internal and external relevance. The same model will be utilized to be consistent with the analysis of the selected posters. This framework draws on three complementary theoretical components:

Image–Text Relations: Martinec and Salway's (2005) model is employed to examine the status relations (equal vs. unequal) and logico-semantic relations (projection and expansion) between visual and verbal modes. This model provides a

systematic account of how images and texts interact structurally within multimodal compositions.

Relevance-Theoretic Multimodality: Forceville's (2020) relevance-based approach to multimodal communication is used to analyze how visual and verbal elements function as ostensive stimuli designed to attract attention and generate contextual effects.

Internal and External Relevance: Wilson's (2018) distinction between internal relevance (arising from relations within the multimodal text) and external relevance (arising from broader contextual and socio-political assumptions) is applied to distinguish different levels of interpretation.

The integration of these components allows the study to move beyond purely descriptive analysis and to account for both encoded and inferred meaning in multimodal advocacy posters.

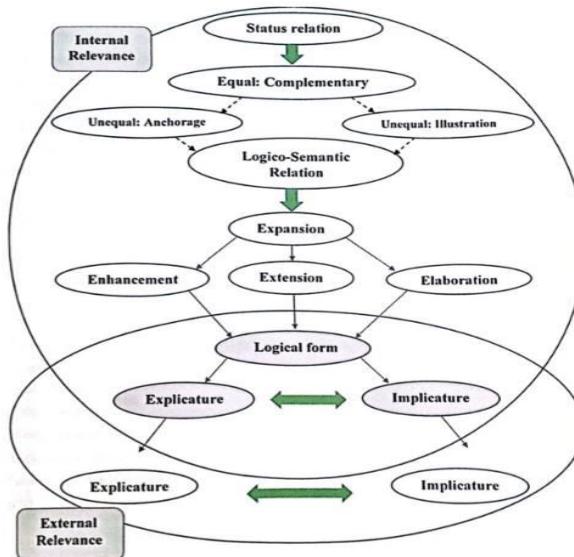


Fig 1. An Eclectic Model Adapted by Awad (2024)

3.5 Procedure of Analysis

The analytical procedure follows a systematic sequence aligned with the adopted framework. First, each poster is examined qualitatively to identify salient visual and verbal elements, including imagery, color schemes, typography, and linguistic content. Second, image–text relations are analyzed in terms of status and logico-semantic structure. Third, ostensive acts and inferential processes are identified to determine how relevance is achieved at both internal and external levels.

In the quantitative phase, trope types (e.g., metonymy, irony) are identified and counted, status relations are categorized, and textual prominence is measured through word count. The results of this phase are used to support and refine the qualitative findings rather than to replace interpretive analysis.

4. Data Analysis

This section presents a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the selected Gaza advocacy posters based on the eclectic multimodal pragmatic framework outlined in the methodology. Each poster is examined with reference to image–text relations, ostensive acts, inferential processes, and relevance at both internal and external levels.

4.1 Analysis of Poster 1: Safe Gaza Children's Banner

The first poster, published in February 2024 on the Shutterstock platform, addresses the humanitarian consequences of the Gaza conflict on children. The poster is structured around a striking visual metaphor in which a child's jump rope is represented as barbed wire, foregrounding the deprivation of childhood and basic human rights.

4.1.1 Internal Relevance: Image–Text Relations



At the internal level, relevance emerges from the interaction between the visual and verbal modes. According to Martinec and Salway's (2005) framework, the status relation between image and text in this poster is equal and complementary. Although the visual mode is more salient, the verbal element anchors and disambiguates the image by specifying the referent Gaza children.

The visual mode depicts a silhouetted child playing with barbed wire, a representation that is inherently polysemous. As Barthes (1977) argues, images are open to multiple interpretations unless constrained by verbal cues. Without the accompanying text "GAZA CHILDREN PLAYING WITH BARBED WIRE", the image could be interpreted as an abstract or symbolic scene lacking a clear geopolitical reference. The verbal mode therefore functions as an anchoring mechanism that directs interpretation toward a specific humanitarian context.

In logico-semantic terms, the relation between image and text corresponds primarily to elaboration, as the verbal component restates and specifies the situation depicted visually. The visual

mode presents the experiential content, while the verbal mode clarifies its scope and referential focus.

4.1.2 Ostensive Acts and Inferential Processes

From a relevance-theoretic perspective, the poster employs two ostensive acts: showing (visual) and telling (verbal). The visual act attracts attention through an unexpected and emotionally charged representation, while the verbal act guides inference by explicitly naming the affected group.

The silhouette of the child, characterized by the absence of facial features, contributes to a low degree of visual modality. This abstraction universalizes the figure, allowing it to stand metonymically for Gaza's children as a collective rather than an individual. The barbed wire, functioning metonymically, indexes restriction, violence, and loss of innocence. The juxtaposition of "play" and "barbed wire" introduces an element of irony, reinforcing the severity of the depicted situation.

Typography and color further contribute to inferential meaning. The capitalization of the verbal text and the enlarged font size of the word Gaza foreground the geographical locus of suffering. The red stains on the child's clothing and the red background activate culturally shared associations with blood, danger, and death, thereby intensifying emotional engagement.

4.1.3 Multimodal Explicature and Implicature

At the level of explicature, the poster communicates the proposition that Gaza's children are deprived of their basic right to a safe and joyful childhood. This explicature arises from the integration of visual and verbal cues rather than from either mode independently.

Implicatures emerge through culturally grounded inferences. Internally, the barbed wire implies confinement and systemic violence, while the faceless silhouette suggests voicelessness

and invisibility. Externally, the poster implicates a call for humanitarian intervention and moral responsibility, positioning the viewer as a witness to injustice and as a potential agent of response.

4.2 Analysis of Poster 2: From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free

The second poster, published in June 2024 by the Palestine Poster Project, adopts a symbolic and politically charged visual style. It integrates national symbols, resistance imagery, and a declarative verbal slogan to convey a message of resilience and liberation.



4.2.1 Internal Relevance: Image–Text Relations

In this poster, the visual and verbal modes also exhibit an equal and complementary status relation. The visual mode presents a dense network of symbolic elements, including a watermelon representing the Palestinian flag, olive branches symbolizing rootedness and continuity, and a figure wearing a keffiyeh holding a slingshot. The verbal slogan "FROM THE RIVER TO

THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE” reinforces and consolidates these visual meanings.

Unlike the first poster, the verbal mode here functions primarily as illustration, reinforcing a message already strongly encoded in the visual composition. The logico-semantic relation is predominantly expansion, as the visual elements add layers of cultural, historical, and political meaning that extend beyond the propositional content of the text.

4.2.2 Ostensive Acts and Inferential Processes

The primary ostensive stimulus in this poster is visual. The use of nationally and culturally salient symbols immediately signals a political stance and invites viewers to activate background knowledge about Palestinian history and resistance. The watermelon functions metonymically as a substitute for the Palestinian flag, a strategy commonly employed in contexts where explicit national symbols are restricted.

The verbal slogan performs a strong assertive and commissive speech act (Searle, 1979), expressing both a declaration of belief and a promise of future liberation. The use of the modal verb will encodes determination and certainty, guiding viewers toward an interpretation of inevitability rather than aspiration. Color symbolism plays a crucial role in inferential meaning-making. The red, green, white, and black elements correspond to the Palestinian flag and evoke associations with sacrifice, land, peace, and mourning. The slingshot and stones, depicted metonymically, represent asymmetrical resistance and collective struggle, reinforcing the poster’s persuasive force.

4.2.3 Multimodal Explicature and Implicature

The explicature conveyed by this poster centers on collective determination, resistance, and hope. Meaning arises through the

convergence of symbolic imagery and declarative language, which together assert the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause.

At the implicature level, the poster suggests unwavering attachment to land, refusal of displacement, and moral resistance against occupation. Externally, it functions as a political call to solidarity, urging viewers to recognize the struggle as ongoing and just. The imagery of olive branches and the slingshot simultaneously evokes continuity and resistance, positioning the Palestinian people as both rooted and resilient.

Across both posters, meaning is achieved through carefully orchestrated multimodal strategies that integrate visual salience with pragmatic guidance. While the first poster foregrounds humanitarian suffering through irony and emotional appeal, the second emphasizes resistance and collective identity through symbolism and declarative language. In both cases, relevance emerges from the interaction of visual and verbal ostensive acts, supported by culturally grounded inferences and contextual assumptions.

5. Quantitative Analysis

In order to complement the qualitative findings and enhance analytical objectivity, a quantitative analysis was conducted focusing on three parameters: (1) the frequency and distribution of trope types, (2) the status relations between visual and verbal modes, and (3) the prominence of textual elements measured by word count. These parameters provide empirical support for the interpretive claims advanced in the qualitative analysis.

5. Quantitative Analysis

5.1 Frequency of Trope Types

The identification and classification of tropes in the selected posters were guided by the visual and verbal configurations observed in each multimodal text. Table 2 presents the frequency and functional description of trope types identified in Safe Gaza Children's Banner.

Trope Type	Frequency	Percentage	Functional Description
Metonymy	3	75%	Barbed wire, stained clothing, and cropped hair function as metonymic signs of restriction, injury, and deprivation.
Irony	1	25%	The contrast between “play” and barbed wire foregrounds the loss of childhood through ironic juxtaposition.

Table 2. Frequency and Description of Trope Types in Safe Gaza Children's Banner

The data indicate that metonymy is the dominant trope in the first poster. This predominance supports the qualitative observation that meaning is constructed through associative links rather than direct representation, enabling viewers to infer complex humanitarian realities from minimal visual cues.

Trope Type	Frequency	Percentage	Functional Description
Metonymy	4	100%	The keffiyeh, slingshot, watermelon, and olive branches function as metonymic representations of resistance, identity, land, and continuity.

Table 3. Frequency and Description of Trope Types in From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free

The exclusive use of metonymy in the second poster reflects a design strategy that relies on culturally shared symbols to convey political meanings efficiently and persuasively. Unlike irony, which creates tension, metonymy here reinforces coherence and ideological alignment.

5.2 Status Relations between Visual and Verbal Modes

The status relations between visual and verbal modes were examined using Martinec and Salway's (2005) framework, with particular attention to sub-status relations (anchorage vs. illustration).

Poster Title	Status Relation	Sub-Status	Interpretive Function
Safe Gaza Children's Banner	Equal	Anchorage	The verbal text anchors the polysemous visual image by specifying the referent "Gaza children."
From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free	Equal	Illustration	The verbal slogan reinforces and illustrates meanings already encoded visually.

Table 4. Status Relations in the Selected Posters

The findings show that both posters employ equal status relations, indicating a complementary interaction between modes. However, the function of the verbal component differs: in the first poster, anchorage constrains interpretation, while in the second, illustration amplifies an already salient visual message.

5.3 Textual Prominence: Word Count

Textual prominence was assessed by counting the number of words in the verbal component of each poster, as shown in Table 5.

Poster Title	Number of Words	Verbal Text
Safe Gaza Children's Banner	6	“GAZA CHILDREN PLAYING WITH BARBED WIRE”
From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free	10	“FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE”

Table 5. Text Length in Words in the Selected Posters

The relatively short length of the verbal texts in both posters confirms the primacy of the visual mode in multimodal advocacy discourse. The limited verbal input functions strategically to guide interpretation rather than to convey exhaustive information, thereby increasing the cognitive and emotional impact of visual elements.

The quantitative analysis corroborates the qualitative results in several respects. First, the dominance of metonymy across both posters highlights its effectiveness as a multimodal trope for conveying complex social and political meanings. Second, the consistent use of equal status relations underscores the interdependence of visual and verbal modes in achieving relevance. Finally, the brevity of the verbal texts reinforces the central role of visual salience in advocacy posters, where meaning is largely inferred rather than explicitly stated.

6. Results

The findings of the present study demonstrate that Gaza advocacy posters rely on systematically organized multimodal strategies to communicate humanitarian and political meanings. Across both posters, metonymy emerges as the dominant trope, functioning as a key mechanism for condensing complex

realities of suffering, resistance, and identity into visually salient signs. This result indicates that advocacy posters favor associative meaning-making over explicit representation, allowing viewers to infer broader contexts from minimal semiotic cues.

The analysis of image–text relations reveals that both posters employ equal status relations between visual and verbal modes, though with distinct sub-status functions. In Safe Gaza Children's Banner, the verbal mode performs an anchoring role by constraining the interpretation of a highly polysemous visual image. In contrast, From the River to the Sea Palestine Will Be Free utilizes illustration, whereby the verbal slogan reinforces meanings already strongly encoded in the visual composition. These findings confirm that the communicative function of text in advocacy posters is not uniform but strategically adapted to the semiotic load of the visual mode.

In terms of ostensive acts, the results show that visual elements constitute the primary attention-attracting stimuli in both posters, while verbal elements guide inferential processes. Colors, typography, and symbolic imagery activate contextual assumptions and generate non-propositional effects, particularly emotional responses such as empathy, indignation, and solidarity. The limited length of verbal texts further supports the conclusion that visual salience plays a central role in achieving relevance.

Overall, the results indicate that the effectiveness of Gaza advocacy posters lies in their ability to integrate semiotic resources in a way that maximizes relevance while minimizing explicit verbal explanation. This integration enables the posters to function simultaneously as humanitarian appeals and political statements.

7. Conclusion

This study has examined the semiotic and pragmatic dimensions of Gaza advocacy posters through an integrated multimodal framework combining image–text relations and relevance theory. By analyzing two purposively selected posters, the research has demonstrated how visual and verbal modes interact to construct meaning, guide interpretation, and elicit emotional and cognitive engagement.

The findings show that visual ostension is the most salient communicative strategy in both posters, with verbal elements serving primarily to anchor or reinforce interpretation rather than to convey independent meaning. Semiotic resources such as color, symbolism, typography, and spatial arrangement play a crucial role in activating contextual assumptions and non-propositional effects, thereby enhancing persuasive force. These results provide a clear answer to the research questions, confirming that multimodal creativity and semiotic precision are central to the effectiveness of advocacy posters.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to research on multimodal pragmatics by demonstrating the applicability of relevance-theoretic concepts to visual advocacy discourse. Methodologically, it highlights the value of combining qualitative multimodal analysis with targeted quantitative measures to support interpretive claims. Substantively, the study addresses a gap in the literature by offering a systematic analysis of Gaza advocacy posters, a genre that has been underexplored despite its global visibility and socio-political significance.

While the study is limited by its small dataset, this limitation is offset by the depth of analysis and the analytical transparency

of the adopted framework. Future research may extend the dataset to include a broader range of advocacy materials or explore cross-cultural reception of multimodal political discourse. Nonetheless, the present study underscores the importance of multimodal semiotic strategies in articulating humanitarian appeals and mobilizing public awareness in contexts of conflict and resistance.

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