# A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of American Restaurant Chains Instagram Post during Pandemic

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**ABSTRACT**

During this pandemic situation, food companies are using their Instagram account not only to promote their products and services to stay in business but also to tell the consumer of their products to keep minimalize physical contact to help in this horrible situation. In this study, there were 3 (three) Instagram post from 3 (three) different companies which are in food business that were analyse through multimodal analysis. The purpose of this study was to found out what visual and verbal were being used in those companies Instagram post during this pandemic period and what message they brought through their Instagram post. This study was implemented descriptive qualitative method and interactive metafunction by Kress and van Leeuwen and interpersonal metafunction by Halliday. The writer concluded that in this study those companies not only trying to sell and advertise their products and services but also to suggest their consumer to minimalize physical contact during this pandemic situation.

**Keywords**: Instagram, Restaurant, Interactive Metafunction, Interpersonal Metafunction, Pandemic

## INTRODUCTION

The present study entitled "A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of American Restaurant Chains Instagram Post during Pandemic" uses multimodal discourse analysis to understand the meaning and message behind some of American restaurant chains Instagram post during the pandemic period. Multimodal or multimodality is a theory which concern with the connection of semiotic modes on meaning making in a particular medium. The theory itself started because the urge which Kress and van Leeuwen have to highlight the importance of other semiotic modes beside language, such as images, sounds and gestures. Moreover, this connection between semiotic modes can be found in some of American restaurant chains Instagram post which consist of image and text.

Furthermore, in this pandemic situation, there are a lot of businesses trying to survive. One of which is food businesses like some restaurant chains. They are using different kind of methods and ways to stay in business while following the health protocol. A lot of these businesses use social media such as Instagram as a medium of advertisement to stay in business. Like Kotler (2000) said, promotion tool such as advertisement is used to inform the market about the products. Moreover, some

companies in food business that use Instagram as the medium of advertisement are Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut.

Related to the present study, there is another study conducted by previous researcher. It was entitled "Multimodal Analysis of Photos in @Sandiuno Instagram Account Before and After the 2019 Presidential Election" by Susetya and Nurhayati (2020). In that study, the writers used the 3 (three) visual metafunctions (representational, interactive and compositional) which initiated by Kress and van Leeuwen to analyse the visual mode and identification analysis to analyse the verbal mode or caption of the photo. The writers also used communication style by Tubbs and Moss in their study. Moreover, there is also another study conducted by previous researcher that used verbal metafunction (interpersonal). The study was entitled "A Discourse Analysis of Interpersonal Metafunction in Donald Trump's Speech Recognizing Jerusalem as Capital of Israel" by Bustam (2019). In that study, the writer used interpersonal metafunction by Halliday to analyse the data which is Trump's speech. In the study the writer focus on the way Trump interacts with his audience through the language he used in his speech.

Therefore, in this present study the writer sets the objectives to find out the visual metafunction, particularly interactive metafunction and verbal metafunction, particularly interpersonal metafunction that those companies use in their Instagram post during pandemic. Those companies Instagram post were chosen as the data because they are some big companies chain that have big influence in social media and also always related with current situation. In addition, the writer applies qualitative and descriptive method to present the analysis.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Multimodality is a theory that concerns on the relation between two semiotic modes in making meaning. This theory was started from Kress and van Leeuwen eagerness to understand the importance of other semiotic modes (especially visual mode) in making meaning beside verbal mode. In term of visual mode, Kress and van Leeuwen proposed 3 (three) functions in order to understand the meaning making of visual mode, namely representational metafunction, interactive metafunction and compositional metafunction. Those metafunction were adapted by Kress and van Leeuwen from 3 (three) language metafunction by Halliday. Those language metafunctions are ideational metafunction, interpersonal metafunction and textual metafunction. The present study is only discussing interactive metafunction of visual mode and interpersonal metafunction of verbal mode.

Interactive Metafunction

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stated that interactive metafunction refers to the interaction between participant or object on the image (represented participant) and participant outside of the image which can be the viewer of the image or the maker of the image (interactive participant). The interaction can be relation between the participants or attitude of a participant towards another participant. There are 4 (four) elements in interactive metafunction namely, contact, social distance, perspective and modality.

Contact is a relation which is formed by the eye line vector between the participants. In addition, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) said if the participant formed that vector then the image is considered as a "demand". The represented participant demands something from the interactive participant. If the participants do not formed vector, the image is considered as a "offer". The image considers the represented participant as an offer to the interactive participant.

Moreover, social distance refers to the relation between participants through how the represented participant is depicted in the image. Social distance is divided into 3 (three) types: 1) close shot, 2) medium shot and 3) long shot. Close shot gives interactive participant an impression that they have a close or intimate relation with the represented participant. Medium shot gives an impression that the participants have median relation (social) while long shot gives interactive participant a stranger-like relation with the represented participant.

Furthermore, perspective creates relation between the participants from angle. Perspective is divided into 2 (two) types: 1) horizontal angle and 2) vertical angle. Horizontal angle is divided into frontal and oblique angle. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) said, "The difference between the oblique and the frontal angle is the difference between detachment and involvement." Frontal angle gives a sentiment of involvement from the represented participant to the interactive participant while the oblique angle does not. Vertical angle is a relation between participants in term of power. When represented participant is seen from high angle that gives interactive participant a sentiment of superiority while represented participant is seen from low angle gives interactive participant a sentiment of inferiority. If both of the participants have the same angle level that means both the participants are equal (no one is superior or inferior).

Interpersonal Metafunction

Halliday in Bustam (2019) said that interpersonal metafunction concerns on the roles of participants in the communication. In term of modal element, those roles are divided into 2 (two) basic roles: 1) giving and 2) demanding. The participant is whether giving something (commodity) to or demanding something (commodity) for the other participant. The commodity can be "goods and services" or "information". When the roles and commodities are combined they create 4 (four) basic communication roles: 1) offer, 2) command, 3) statement and 4) question. Like as shown in the table below.

**Tabel 1. Basic Communication Roles**

|  | Commodity exchanged |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role in exchanged | Goods and Services | Information |
| Giving | Offer "Would you like this tea pot?" | Statement "He's giving her the tea pot" |
| Demanding | Command "Give me that tea pot!" | Question "What is he giving her?" |

Moreover, statement is implemented as declarative clause, offer as exclamative, question as interrogative and command as imperative.

Furthermore, Halliday in Bustam (2019) stated, "Modality refers to the areas of meaning that lie between yes and no—the intermediate ground between positive and negative polarity." Based on the types, modality can be divided into 2 (two): 1) modulation and 2) modalization. Modulation occurs when language is acted as a proposition to exchange information while modalization occurs when language is acted as a proposal to exchange goods and services. Both modulation and modalization are divided into 2 (two) degrees. Modulation is divided into "degrees of obligation" and "degrees of inclination" while modalization is divided into "degrees of probability" and "degrees of usuality".

In addition, Halliday (2014) stated there are 3 (three) values implemented in modality and modal operators: 1) low, 2) median and 3) high. Like as shown in the table below.

**Tabel 2. Modality Values**

|  | Probability | Usuality | Inclination | Obligation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| High | Certainly | Always | Determined to | Required to |
| Median | Probably | Usually | Anxious to | Supposed to |
| Low | Possibly | Sometimes | Willing to | Allowed to |

**Tabel 3. Modal Operators Values**

| High | must, ought to, has to, is to |
|---|---|
| Median | will, would, shall, should |
| Low | may, might, can, could |

## RESEARCH METHOD

The present study uses qualitative method. Flick said in Bustam (2018), "Qualitative research is centrally concerned with the production and analysis of text." With that explanation, it can be implied that the present study is focusing on the production and analysis of text which can be in a form of verbal and visual mode in image. In addition, descriptive method is used to present the analysis of the data. Furthermore, visual mode of the data will be analysed through interactive metafunction elements namely, contact, social distance and perspective while the verbal data will be analysed through interpersonal metafunction elements which are mood and modality.

In visual grammar, interactive metafunction is referring to the interaction between the object on the image, named represented participant, and the maker or viewer of the image, named interactive participant, in making meaning. That meaning can be conveyed through the relation between the participants and attitude towards each participants. While in language, interpersonal metafunction concerns on the participants' role in communication. The participants' role can be determined through the choice of words which the participants use when they communicate. And the role can determine what message or meaning the participants intended to when they communicate.

The data which were collected are from United States Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut Instagram account (@burgerking, @kfc and @pizzahut). There are 1 (one) data from each Instagram account. The data which were chosen have criteria: 1) at least have one participant in term of visual mode on its image and 2) at least have one verbal mode in form of clause on its image.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Tabel 4. Interactive and Interpersonal Metafunction on Instagram Post**

| Instagram Post | Interactive Metafunction | Interpersonal Metafunction |
|---|---|---|
| Burger King | Contact: Demand<br>Social Distance: Medium<br>Perspective: Horizontal Frontal Angle | Mood: Imperative<br>Modality: Obligation (omitted) |
| KFC | Contact: Offer<br>Social Distance: Medium<br>Perspective: Horizontal Frontal Angle | Mood: Declarative<br>Modality: None |

| Pizza Hut | Contact: Offer<br>Social Distance: Medium<br>Perspective: Horizontal<br>Frontal Angle | Mood: Declarative<br>Modality: Usuality |
|---|---|---|

Above is the result of the interactive and interpersonal metafunction elements that are found in the Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut Instagram post.



**Figure 1. Burger King Instagram Post**

Interactive Metafunction

In the image, the represented participant is shown lying on his bed with his phone on his side while looking to the interactive participant and making a salute gesture with his right hand. It makes the image has demanding something from the interactive participant. The social distance in the image is a medium shot. It is shown through the depiction of the upper half the represented participant body. The perspective of the image is horizontal frontal angle. It means that the image wants the interactive participant has a sentiment of involvement with the image.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The mood in the image is imperative clause. However, the subject and finite of the clause is omitted. It can be assumed that the subject of the clause is pronoun "you" and the finite is modal operator "should". With the assumed modal operator "should", it makes more the clause in the image have a sentiment of command or obligate for the interactive participant.

Through that Instagram post, Burger King seems wanted to tell the interactive participant that they can be helpful just like medical personnel in pandemic period. It is shown through interpersonal metafunction element "be a patriot." Which is supported by the represented participant that is making salute gesture while looking at the interactive participant as if he wants the interactive participant be a "patriot" just like him by staying at home and order Burger King through its app.

**Figure 2. KFC Instagram Post**

Interactive Metafunction

The image has "offer" quality because there is no represented participant that makes eye line vector with the interactive participant. It means that the image wants to give something to the interactive participant. With the "full body" depiction of the represented participant makes the image has medium shot social distance. The perspective of the image is shown as horizontal frontal angle. It means the image wants the interactive participant to be involved with the message that the image brings.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The mood element of the image is declarative clause. That means the image is giving information to the interactive participant through the clause in the image. The image is giving information to the interactive participant that the drive through service in KFC is open. With that information, KFC is telling the interactive participant that wants to eat KFC products can buy it through the drive through service. There is no modality element found in the image.

Through the image, KFC is giving information that its drive through service is open so that the interactive participant who wants to buy or eat KFC products that they can buy it through that service. It is done to minimalize physical contact in the pandemic period.

**Figure 3. Pizza Hut Instagram Post**

Interactive Metafunction

The image above gives "offer" quality by no represented participant that looking to interactive participant found in the image. The social distance of the image is medium (social). It is seen by the medium shot depiction of the represented participant. It makes interactive participant who is looking the image to have a sentiment of social relation with the represented participant, not intimate but also not stranger-like relation. The perspective which is shown by the image is horizontal frontal image. With that kind of perspective, the image wants the interactive participant to have a sentiment of involvement towards the represented participant of image.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The mood element of the verbal mode is declarative clause. It means the image giving information through the clause which is "the home team always wins". In that image, the clause refers to American football team in the NFL because the image is part of advertisement that sponsored NFL (American Football Leagua). However, apart from the home team of NFL the clause refers to represented participant to women that can be assumed mother and daughter. It is gives sentiment that people that stay at home is a winner. With that clause Pizza Hut wants to tell that not only NFL home team but also people that stay at home during pandemic is the winner. In addition, with the modality "always" which is has high value modality of usuality gives a sentiment that the people that stay at home is in fact a winner.

Besides advertising NFL, Pizza Hut in its Instagram post suggests that people which is staying at home during the pandemic situation is the winner through the visual and verbal mode in the image. It is because the people can still order Pizza Hut while staying at home and help with the condition during pandemic through minimalize physical contact.

**CONCLUSION**

In those image, the companies not only advertising their products and services to stay in business to the interactive participant but also inform that they can be a "hero" during this pandemic situation. It is shown through the Instagram post which has a

"command" or "information" quality. It is gives the interactive participant a sentiment that they can be a "hero" by helping those companies through ordering their products also with using their services they offer which is minimalize physical contact during this pandemic situation.

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