

Visual representation of phraseological image¹

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Abstract

Visual representation of a phraseological image is of stylistic and cognitive interest because it brings out the creative aspects of the verbal and the visual in multimodal discourse. A cognitive approach to the instantial stylistic use of phraseological units² (PUs) focuses on how they are perceived, understood, and interpreted. In a visual representation, the process of creating a mental image relies on close ties between the visual and the verbal, and knowledge of the political, socio-cultural, and semiotic implications. Visual representation performs a semantic and stylistic function; it enhances and interprets the image of a metaphorical PU and creates new meaning. It stretches the imagination and sustains figurative thought. Thus, phraseological metaphor exists not only in thought and language; it also exists in visual representation and its perception.

Keywords: phraseological metaphor; cognitive stylistic approach; visual representation; multimodal discourse; visual allusion.

1. Introduction

Visualisation is involved in metaphor recognition. Aristotle noted that metaphor can bring an image before our very eyes (1991: 247). In other words, metaphor makes an image mentally visible. In cognitive psychology the image is generally viewed as a mental representation, as “a picture in the head”. Perception of an image, whether lexical or phraseological, is a cognitive process that creates a mental picture in the imagination, a kind of visualisation in the mind’s eye, which may be subjective. For instance, we would each visualise the base metaphor³ of the PU *to skate on thin ice*⁴ in our own way. However, an illustration presents a personal angle of vision (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. *To skate on thin ice*

Visual representation of an image serves to create a new guided mode of perception which we are led to accept since seeing is persuasive. A cognitive approach to language use concentrates on meaning and its development (Geeraerts 2006). In this paper I am concerned with visual aspects of metaphorical thought representation and with the creative use of phraseological metaphor in verbal and visual discourse.⁵ The paper explores the benefits of a cognitive approach to visual representation of instantial stylistic use⁶ and focuses on perception and comprehension of the verbal and the visual.

This paper draws on the basic findings of cognitive science, which has established metaphor as a figure of both thought and language. The use of figurative language has been recognised as part of human cognition both in literary texts and everyday speech (Lakoff and Johnson 2003 [1980]; Gibbs 1999 [1994], 1995, 2005; Steen 1994, 2009 [2007]; Katz 1998 et al.). The cognitive approach has served as a basis for the development of cognitive stylistics (Lakoff and Turner 1989; Gibbs 1995, 1999, 2002, 2008; Semino and Culpeper 2002; Steen 2002a, 2002b; Stockwell 2002; Gavins and Steen 2003 et al.).

Metaphors occur not only in thought and language, but also in pictures (Forceville 1991, 1994, 1996, 2008). In visual representation, metaphor forms part of the conceptual metaphor UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING, “what enables you to see is metaphorically what enables you to understand” (Lakoff and

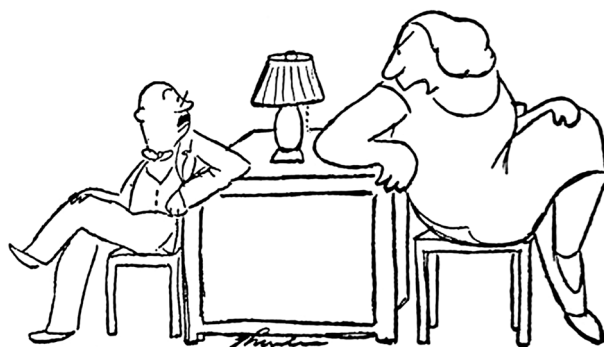
Turner 1989: 94). Cognitive science seeks to understand “the internal mental representations responsible for higher-order mental functions”, among them vision and language (Harrington 2002: 125). Cognitive psychologists argue against the traditional split between vision and thinking, emphasising that the sense of sight is the most efficient organ of human cognition (Arnheim 1997 [1969]: 14).

2. Visual representation of instantial stylistic use

Stylistic changes of PUs in pictures is an issue that has long fascinated researchers (for example, Mieder 1989, 1993; Forceville 1991, 1994, 1996, 2008; Naciscione 2001a, 2005; Lundmark 2003, 2005; Stöckl 2004; Fiedler 2007; Burger 2007, 2008; Kuiper 2009).

Visual instantiation of phraseological meaning is not merely a feature of traditional illustrations. In instantial stylistic use, the visual representation of phraseological units performs a different semantic and stylistic function from core use;⁷ it enhances and interprets the image, bringing the literal meaning to the fore. Illustrations open up the possibility of making human thought visible and creating a visual effect; they provide food for thought or, as Arnheim puts it, they form visual thinking (1997 [1969]). The picture from Thurber's book *The beast in me and other animals* (1973 [1928]: 269) is an apt drawing about the nature of human beings. Stylistically, it is a visual pun (see Figure 2).

The caption, coupled with the visual impact, brings out the literal meaning of the constituents of the PU *to throw one's weight about/around*,⁸ which is metaphorical in its base form. Metaphorical meaning is grounded in bodily



"I'm getting tired of you throwing your weight around."

Figure 2. *Throwing your weight around*

experiences.⁹ Together with the visual impact of physical perception, the textual message creates a more powerful stylistic effect. In visual representation, the cognitive link between thought, language, and sight provides a significant insight as we turn from abstract phraseological meaning to the sense of sight. The shift from figurative to literal or from literal to figurative results in a pun. This pattern demonstrates the function of the sense of sight¹⁰ in mental and visual perception.

In literary discourse, the visual may be involved in meaning change and development, contributing to figurative networks in discourse. The new visualisation becomes part of the mental world.¹¹ In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll and his illustrator Tenniel repeat the PU *to grin like a Cheshire cat* both verbally and visually. The image of the Cheshire Cat appears in three pictures over a stretch of three chapters, sustaining figurative thought. In the first picture, Alice is looking up at the Cat, who is sitting in a tree grinning from ear to ear.



Figure 3. *A grin without the Cat*

The second picture features the famous grin of the Cat (see Figure 3), which lingers after the Cat has vanished. The third picture presents the Cat's head (see Figure 4) above the Queen, who is ready to cut off everybody's head, including the Cat's.

Her order cannot be carried out as the executioner does not know how to cut off a head without a body from which to cut it.

This presentation of an image is a breach of the traditional way of using illustrations in children's books, resulting in "uncommon nonsense" (Carroll

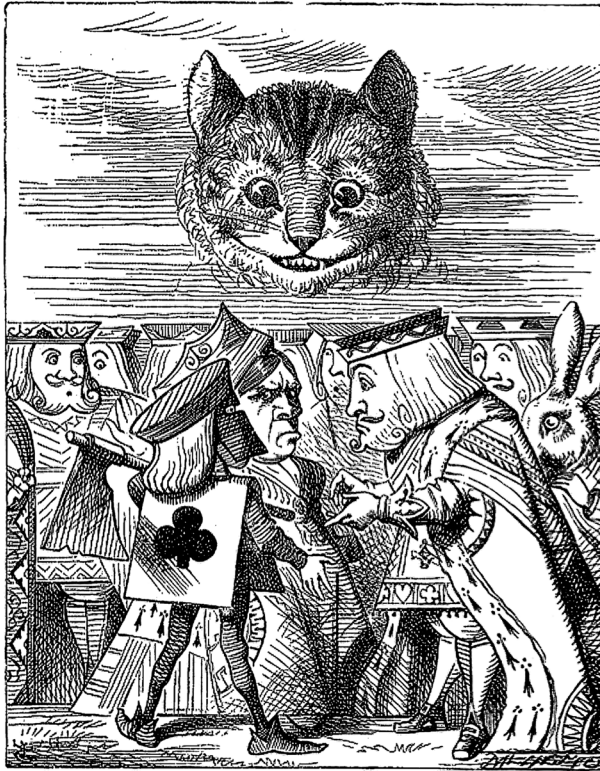


Figure 4. *The Cat's head*

1928: 142) typical of the genre of English Children's Nonsense Literature. Visual representation of instantial use is one of the ways of depicting a world of logical improbability.

The famous grin, metonymically standing for the Cheshire cat, is a verbal and visual extension of a phraseological image (Carroll 1928: 80–116), creating a sustained visual pun.¹² In discourse, a phraseological pun may permeate a stretch of text, creating a visual narrative and contributing to its coherence and cohesion,¹³ as is the case in this text. A dynamic, reiterated visualisation of a phraseological image is a technique of image development in text; it reveals the potential of visual and verbal sustainability of the PU.

Change and development of phraseological meaning is not merely a feature of illustrations in a literary discourse, as we have seen from Thurber and from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Instantial stylistic use is a mode of figuration that also forms part of various types of newspaper and

internet texts, which combine verbal and visual representation in creative thinking. The media exploit semantic, stylistic, semiotic, and psychological elements to achieve an economic, political, or social effect. This especially applies to advertising texts, which frequently resort to stylistic use in visual representation due to its persuasive power.

Many researchers focus on the interface between language and image in printed media, that is, the relationship between linguistic images and material pictures, such as photographs, paintings, cartoons, etc. (for instance, Mieder 1989; Forceville 1994; Stöckl 2004; Goodman 2006; Burger 2007, 2008). Stöckl's article is a study of the language-image link with respect to advertising and journalism. Stöckl comes to the conclusion that "there is a strong pictorial element in language and a linguistic element in images" (2004: 10). Printed material, advertisements included, usually combines and establishes interactions between verbal and pictorial information (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 3).

Burger's research centres around the question whether and, if so, how the linguistic image is influenced by the material picture (*das idiomatische Bild* vs *das materielle Bild*, to use the German terms), especially in advertising (see Burger 2008: 121–135). This leads to another interesting issue: whether the message of the verbal representation of the phraseological image is influenced by the quality and type of visual representation. This aspect receives detailed attention in Burger's article (2008). Whether more or less effective modifications exist from the point of view of the recipient is of great importance for the applied field of advertising and marketing in establishing the best ways to reach the target audience, which is vital for production and distribution. Burger's investigation is based on empirical research. He offers an innovative approach to enable optimization of phraseological resources in the world of advertising. However, investigation of the recipient's viewpoint is not the aim of this current research (see Burger 2008).

Indeed, my aim is to focus on the benefits of a cognitive approach to such phenomena and to explore how the phraseological image is used to construct meaning in visual representation. Each new piece of scholarly research expands the horizon of investigation in multimodal discourse, bringing out the great variety of metaphorical and metonymic conceptualisation in advertising (Forceville 2008, 2009; Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 3–17).

Use of multimodal metaphor is a common feature of the stylistic use of PUs on the internet. The increasing need for new forms of expression has resulted in creative, sophisticated pathways for representing a message. The visual also offers endless opportunities, lending a new dimension by further developing and reinforcing the image which the figurative meaning has evoked. Let me take one PU and examine a number of its virtual representations. Over the last decade the

internet has hosted many images featuring the PU *money laundering*. Though this term is informal as to its stylistic level, it is in standard use in criminal law; for example, the official name of the related US law is the *Money Laundering Statute*. Thus, it is a terminological PU or a terminological phraseologism according to Nikulina (2005).



Figure 5. *Laundered bills*

Although visual discourse is usually coupled with verbal text in close interaction, cases may arise where no verbal text exists. Here the visual narrative constitutes the whole discourse of the representation. The picture of laundered bills¹⁴ (see Figure 5) contains no text or caption. This is a case of creative visualisation of an abstract concept constituted by metaphor.¹⁵ The picture is used to give visual shape to the concept of money laundering, to illustrate a “theory constitutive metaphor”, and to help explicate it (Gibbs 1999 [1994]: 169–179). The visual representation enhances comprehension, which involves parallel perception, the reader being simultaneously aware of the figurative thought in legal language and of the literal meaning.

The globalised practice of using both verbal and nonverbal techniques in the media and on the internet has resulted in multimodal discourse¹⁶ which employs features from more than one semiotic mode of communication simultaneously (Goodman 1996: 69; Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996; Machin 2007; Forceville

2008: 463). This development is also seen in numerous sites dealing with money laundering and conferences dedicated to it (see Figures 6, 7, 8).



Figure 6. *Conference on money laundering*

“How elements in visual and verbal modes interact on the page is a central issue in multimodal texts” (Goodman 1996: 69). Use of symbols is one visualisation technique that helps to depict the abstract in terms of the concrete in multimodal manifestations. In Figure 6 the dollar sign \$ produces a special visual effect that adds a new visual and semantic dimension to the phraseological image that would not be available in a standard text.

A further development of the image of money laundering has resulted in a logo (see Figures 6, 8) featuring a washtub with a currency sign in it. The graphic of the washtub provides a metonymic link to laundering; thus in this instantiation, metonymy is one of the aspects of meaning construction (Gibbs 2003: 27–40, 2007: 20–28; Panther 2005: 353; Barcelona 2007).

Metonymy brings out the role of visual representation in the extension of the image of a metaphorical PU; thus it is a case of metonymy and metaphor working



Figure 7. *Logo of money laundering*

concurrently. This is what I would call concurrent use of several stylistic patterns within the context of one PU, providing semantic and stylistic cohesion.¹⁷ The logo of a washtub with a currency sign in it is frequently used for conferences and specialist websites devoted to money laundering. Numerous conferences have been held on money laundering in the EU; hence the euro € symbol. Graphic properties are generally used to represent the extra-linguistic world in an accurate manner. For identification of instantial graphic implications, it is important to know the socio-cultural background, in this case the use and symbolic meaning of the currency sign.

Visual representation frequently involves the use of semiotic elements due to their clear-cut graphic persuasive power. In Figure 8 the symbolic meaning is incorporated in a modified STOP sign, a command to terminate the activity.¹⁸

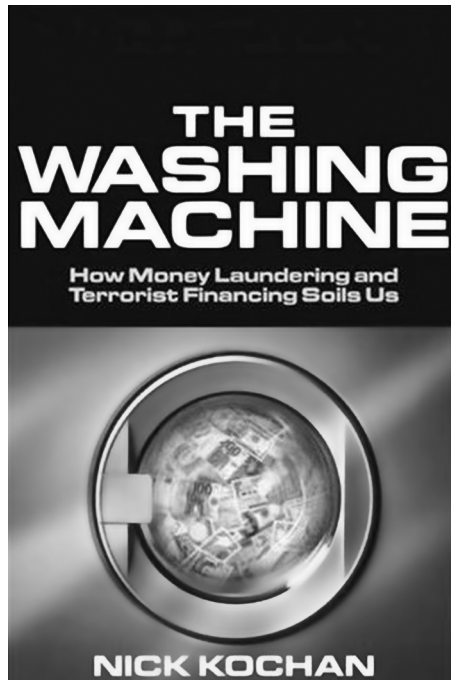


Figure 8. *Stop!*

The graphic also contains the dollar sign \$, which is perceived as a symbol of money. Thus, the multimodal enactment of a phraseological image is another mode of presenting the message and visualising thought. Textual information is supported by pictorial perception. Semiotic elements help to retrieve and visualise the phraseological image. This determines the significance of multimodality in meaning construal and interpretation of a pictorial metaphor (see Forceville 2008). The visual effect merges with the verbal in creating a visual pun; it is a way in which “words, typography and pictures are woven together to form multimodal texts” (Goodman and Graddol 1996: 1). The graphic representation is inextricably linked with the content of the article. The symbol \$ performs a semantic function. The visual creation stretches the usual system of typography and affects the relation between the visual and the verbal.

Multimodal metaphor is frequently used in graphic design of book covers. For instance, the cover of Nick Kochan’s book *The washing machine* (2005) (see Figure 9) featuring a washing machine at work, laundering bills, is sufficient to retrieve the base form of the PU *money laundering* from long-term memory.

The subtitle “How Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Soils Us” reinforces and explains the idea. It is clear that a washing machine presupposes

Figure 9. *The Washing Machine*

laundering. The bills that are being laundered imply that this is *dirty money*; you do not wash clean things. This is another PU with metaphorical links to the PU *money laundering* and an extension of the phraseological image *soils*. Thus, the cover of the book is what I would call a visual allusion¹⁹ to the image of *money laundering*, accompanied by extended phraseological metaphor. Concurrently it also resorts to punning, as both the figurative and direct meanings are clear to vision and understanding. Moreover, instantial use of the PU in the title performs an umbrella function, encompassing the entire text of the book.

Another example; the stylistic pattern of visual pun is used in the book cover of *Reigning cats and dogs* by Katharine Macdonogh (1999), which offers visual representation of pampered royal pets in paintings and photographs since the Renaissance on both front and back covers, hinting implicitly at the existence of an impressive array of them in royal history. The cover employs the pattern of replacement of a constituent of the PU *to rain cats and dogs/raining cats and dogs*, resulting in a homophonic pun: a common technique in book cover design. Thus, skilful instantial visualisation of phraseological image is common in both literary and media discourses.

3. A discourse dimension

Visual representation of stylistic use has not exhausted its potential. The development of media and multimodal possibilities offers new and unexpected turns in visual discourse. An interesting aspect of visual representation is the visual development of figurative meaning, which makes identification and interpretation of stylistic use in multimodal texts more difficult. It is common for magazines to use a PU on their cover and pick it up again in the cover story, which provides further extension of the metaphorical thought, though it may be pages away. Only the interrelation between the two modes of expression provides a full understanding of the multimodal text. Interaction between the visual and its verbal counterpart has “a perceptual immediacy” that is lacking in language alone (Forceville 2008: 463).

Visual comprehension is facilitated by “metaphor networks” (Trim 2007). Understanding the functional load of both visual image and language helps to bridge the cognitive gap between the textual and the visual, as they cannot be viewed separately. For instance, *The Spectator* often uses a phraseological image in the design of its cover. The following visual representation goes back to 10 January 1998 (see Figure 10).

Modern psychological research on perception has revealed the worth of pictures in communicating thought, which is enshrined in the well-known proverb a picture is worth a/ten thousand words (Mieder 1992: 463) as part of current popular wisdom.²⁰ A pictorial representation helps us to draw inferences as the eye is involved in active exploration. It is a visual experience in an attempt to establish the base form, which in this case does not appear anywhere – either on the cover of the magazine or in the text of the article or its title.

Visual perception, backed by semantic and stylistic analysis, allows us to draw the conclusion that the visual representation in Figure 10 is a case of concurrent visual and verbal allusion to the metaphorical PU *to skate on thin ice*, which is based on common metaphorical mapping, that is, in its base form the PU is a conventional phraseological metaphor. The sub-image *spin*, which is graphically presented on the ice, is a term in figure skating, while at the same time it is an extension of the base metaphor of the PU, creating a visual pun. Importantly, sub-images form an essential part of the given extended metaphor while the tie between the sub-images is metonymic. Skating and spinning are linked metonymically, with both constituting a single extended metaphorical image. Concurrently, *spin* is also a direct allusion to another PU, spin doctors, PR professionals who specialise in spin tactics to manipulate public opinion and provide favourable biases. The meaning of the PU *to skate on thin ice* is enhanced by the ominous headline *Heading for trouble*.



Jenny McCartney on the PR industry

Heading for trouble

Figure 10. The Spectator, 10 January 1998

The cover story appears on Page 8. Its headline *Spinning out of Control* (see Figure 11) catches the eye and the mind. It forms part of the extended metaphor, which creates a new meaning and reflects sustained metaphorical thought.

With the images of Alastair Campbell and Peter Mandelson in the foreground, spinning out of control illustrates the idea of the PR profession on course to self-destruct. The metaphorical extension helps to bridge the distance and establish the semantic and stylistic link between cover page and cover story.

The idea of the text-forming potential of PUs is not new in phraseological research (Chernyshova 1974; Zhantlesova 1978; Dobrovol'skij 1980; Moshishvili 1982; Naciscione 1997, 1998; Sabban 2006, 2007; Fiedler 2007; Trim 2007). The text-forming function of metaphorical networks is also manifest in the use of visual representation. As the phraseological image is extended over the whole article, it calls for a sustained mental vision in one's mind's eye. The sub-image, which forms part of the associative metaphorical network, reflects an extended metaphorical thought. Cohesion secures continuity of phraseological ties in discourse, including visual representation. The new visualisation

SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL

PR is the profession of the decade. But, says Jenny McCartney, the industry may be on the point of self-destruction

the one profession to represent the precise Seventies it was the app in woolly knits and g ideologies. In the braying City dealer, tgage-happy. In the ubiquitous 'PR person' do? Most of us, ourselves, have only a between the press office and the pub that does PR. Public Relations, Partial Perception

What not know ans, but like truffle they ke to break e three most es for gradu re to begin re 16 differ- offer across student who other hope-

roaring. The 150 UK con- 21 per cent in 1996, magazine, *PR Week*. year are expected to be. In companies, PR

images, reputations, responses, dreams. Like Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan*, it exists for as long as we believe in it. Yet the prevalence of PR, and the reach of its tentacles into the mechanics of government, have begun to unsettle even some veterans of the trade. If we go on believing in it, what will happen to us — and what will happen to PR if we stop?

Twenty years ago, PR people navigated a smaller, straighter profession, steered by common sense, charm and guile. The basic

money into PR, their dismal performance of the anti-companies the companies. You money: look at Swampy.

Indeed, Swampy, with grin and shamboic kick, journalists, Swampy ferphers tailed his every crutster broadsheets every ance, Swampy was a P by some happy accident was a magnet for

'Good media PR. 'A good thousand adve turned PR is. Perhaps it is. The public stu per articles ad opposed to ac independent of the territory is bility, PR pus quer it. But if ever allowed to news pages, a quickly move c

Thus, PR locked in a lo an embrace h an occasional

a story together. either because they truth, or because the newspapermen



Figure 11. *Spinning out of control*, p. 8

becomes part of the mental world. Spiegel believes that visualisation is an essential structure of narrative as we think and feel through our eyes (1976: 18–25).

Creative expression of a new idea is achieved by an instantiation of extended metaphor, pun, and allusion in a process of meaning extension in one visual context. Thus, it is not only a matter of a metaphor network; I would call it a *figurative network* as it involves an area of figuration and a range of stylistic techniques. The visual implications of the pun help to shift from direct meaning to figurative meaning and back again. A sustained visual image becomes an essential part of the meaning of the PU in the given instantiation. The abstract idea has been translated into visual form to represent a hazardous situation. The textual and the visual representation of a thought process is influenced by

political, social, and cultural contexts that lie behind the specific space and time the image is used.

The process of understanding and interpreting meaning requires “cognitive effort that takes place in real time, starting with the first moments when people move their eyes across the page” (Gibbs 1999: 15). In this case it refers to both the visual representation and the headline, which attract the reader’s attention. “Interpretation involves both conscious and unconscious mental processes” (Gibbs 1999: 331). I follow Arnheim in believing that “visual perception is an active concern of the mind” (1997 [1969]: 37); hence, the importance of stylistic awareness and the training of a discerning eye. In discourse the language becomes alive, new meanings are created and sustained. It is essential to develop an understanding of the discursive dimensions of phraseological metaphor, including those in visual discourse. Extended phraseological metaphor is enhanced and developed by a pictorial illustration of the instantial image to create a visual impact. This is a case of visual sustainability. It works, provided the basic principle remains: cohesion and coherence of the verbal and the visual. The example shows that extended phraseological metaphor is used to reflect extended figurative thought.

4. Implicit visual messages

Visual representation of a phraseological image may convey implicit messages that are not directly expressed in text. This is a creative instantiation of visual allusion in a serious financial text (Figure 12). The allusion is to the base form of the PU *to put all one's eggs in one basket*. Recognition and interpretation of a creative representation may be cognitively challenging, especially in cases of allusion. Importantly, with no textual presence of any of the base constituents, the visual impact becomes the key to comprehension.

Visual allusion is achieved as the PU is retrieved from long-term memory and we establish the base form. *Eggs* and *basket* are the implicit verbal elements of the PU, while at the same time they constitute the explicit visual presence of the phraseological image. Verbal absence turns into a presence due to visual representation. Emergence of the figurative meaning of the PU vis-à-vis visual representation of the literal meaning of *eggs* and *basket* results in a visual pun. The dual perception is enhanced as these constituents have been visually foregrounded²¹ in the article. You cannot miss the eggs and the basket when casting an eye on the page. The implicit presence of the invisible base form is indispensable to secure comprehension. *Eggs* and *basket* have also been psychologically foregrounded, turning into figurative constituents of the PU due to the natural perceptual link between sight and thought.

The art of breaking a sacrosanct rule

Diversification protects against ignorance, so says one investment guru. But, while focused funds can beat the market, they need very careful management, writes Eric Uhlfelder

Few investing rules are deemed more sacrosanct than diversification. But a small corner in the mutual fund world turns this precept on its head, believing that a concentrated portfolio is a better way to outperform the market. Not to be confused with sector or country funds that target specific segments of the market, focused funds are stockpicks: funds governed by much wider mandates. Their underlying logic is simple. Market measures, such as the S&P 500, are diluted averages of many shares. Most are market cap weighted. The S&P's top 25 holdings represent nearly 35 per cent of the index. Sheer size, and therefore past performance rather than earnings, make the difference.

Ten leading focused funds

Current maximum holdings: 20 stocks. Minimum performance history: Five years data to September 30, 2005.

Fund	Equity holdings	One-year returns	Three-year annualized returns	Five-year annualized returns	Net \$ assets m.
FPA Capital	26.00	22.13	25.41	16.96	2,002.17
Yacktman Focused	23.00	10.79	17.42	15.70	99.64
Fairholme	17.00	22.67	21.02	15.06	1,341.55
Mathew 25	17.00	11.40	17.82	12.03	102.72
Eagle Growth	27.00	21.57	13.44	11.31	3.89
Gamman Select	19.00	7.98	16.02	11.09	5,995.42
Longleaf Partners	23.00	10.08	16.41	10.97	8,675.62
Copper Focus MFG	23.00	8.11	12.88	9.67	1,334.56
AG Corporate Leaders Trust II	22.00	20.33	19.72	7.54	257.01
Leip Macon Growth Trust	2.00	12.81	27.29	4.51	628.00
Average for all focused funds within parameters	22.70	10.64	15.95	0.64	1,990.80
S&P 500	500.00	12.25	16.71	-1.49	n.a.
All US Diversified Equity Funds	139.66	15.86	18.24	0.01	n.a.

Source: Morningstar



Figure 12. Financial Times, *fm*, 28 November 2005, p. 13

The headline *The art of breaking a sacrosanct rule* provides an important cue; it acts as a response-producing stimulus. *Breaking* plays a dual role: it is the explicit metaphorical *break* as part of *to break a rule* with insertion of the highly appropriate epithet *sacrosanct*, while at the same time it is also a subtle metaphorical sub-image in an allusion to the implicit PU. *Breaking* is the only textually visible link to the base form, providing associations of contiguity. As the article is devoted to the art of breaking the inviolable investment rule of diversification of equity funds versus focused funds, *breaking* is inevitably part of both *breaking a sacrosanct rule* and the danger of *putting all one's eggs in one basket*. The natural desire to understand leads to the link between the eggs and the basket, and breaking the sacrosanct rule of risk management. The visual representation becomes a genuine part of the concept of risk. The link between the visible and the invisible is a dimension that allows us to gain an insight and draw inferences. The visible spurs our imagination and helps us to conceive the phraseological image, which is sustained throughout the text. It lingers at the back of our mind as the article explores the alternative of focused funds versus the traditional piece of financial wisdom not to put all your eggs in one basket.

This instantiation reveals the interconnection of stylistic techniques in that it shows how a phraseological metaphor turns into a visual pun. "PUs can be visualised without mentioning a single constituent" (Fiedler 2007: 104), as in this case when the base form of the metaphorical PU *to put all one's eggs in one basket* appears neither in the text of the article nor in the headline, nor indeed is a caption present. However, we infer the absent presence of the PU.

Interpretation of the text and of the picture heavily relies on knowledge of the PU and the semantic and stylistic links between the visual and the textual; the PU is implicitly present. Phraseological metaphor, pun, and allusion are intertwined in one phraseological context; they function together, converging in a single stylistic effect, resulting in a saturated figurative network which I have called *phraseological convergence* in earlier work (Naciscione 1976: 168–179).²² “The individual tropes do not work independently but are functionally related to each other” (Gibbs 1999 [1994]: 454).

The pun calls forth mental visualisation and demonstrates the importance of the sense of sight in mental and visual processing. With the help of the sense of vision, perception secures a link between understanding and sight. It is perception that derives mainly from the sense of vision and “provides motivated explanation for certain aspects of language structure” (Popova 2003: 135). In cognitive psychology, sight is viewed as a primary sense in cognition; people rely on sight more than on other senses. The experience of metaphor reveals the importance of mental sight in the perception of abstract notions, while physical sight implies a perceptual awareness which aids comprehension of figurative language. In this case it is the instantial use of a metaphorical PU, in which a visual pun is combined with extended metaphor, resulting in an allusion. Thus, visual representation is a technique for expressing an implicit message and sustaining figurative thought. Cases of multimodal use call for both imagination and a creative approach in their instantiation and for more advanced cognitive skills in inference and interpretation.

5. Visual literacy as a cognitive skill

Stylistic use in multimodal texts is more demanding in identification and interpretation. It is important to understand figurative language and see its connection with visual representation. Although cognitive linguistics has it that, “figurative language does not require special cognitive processes to be produced and understood” (Gibbs 1999 [1994]: 17), in visual representation the process of perception and comprehension is a pursuit of hidden connections and cohesion of the textual and the visual, which is equally important to cognitive stylistics and applied areas, for instance, advertising. Experience has it that understanding of cohesive ties is crucial for comprehension, while failure to recognise cohesion and insightful associative links is “the common cause of misreading” (McRae 1996: 35).

Cognitive psychologists see visual perception as a cognitive activity. “The human mind perceives, shapes and interprets its image of the outer world with all

its conscious and unconscious powers” (Arnheim 1974 [1954]: 461) to establish the message and resolve the subtle complexity of the situation, using available linguistic and background knowledge. A semantic and stylistic tie is established with the base metaphor of the PU, although it does not appear in the text. Visual discourse is an interesting “perceptual experience” (Gibbs 1999 [1994]: 79) as we feel the invisible presence of the PU in the face of the visible absence of its base form.

To understand the case of visual allusion in Figure 13, we need encyclopaedic knowledge of the political discord in the EU over the Lisbon Treaty. The relevant historical fact is the second Irish Referendum (02.10.2009.) reversing the decision of the first (12.06.2008). This is represented visually by the stray Irish sheep returning to its flock (the flock is bodily present, that is, it is visually represented in the picture). The available textual information is scanty: the name “Ireland” on the straying black sheep and “EU Treaty” on the enclosure gate with twelve stars as a symbol of the EU.



Figure 13. P. Pismestrovic, *Kleine Zeitung*, Austria, 20 June 2008
Cartoon by Pismestrovic, *Kleine Zeitung*, Austria © CAI/NYT Syndication

Visual perception supported by this information leads to identification of figurative meaning and the base form: *there is a black sheep in every flock* > *the black sheep of the family* > *a black sheep*. However, as Mieder points out, a decontextualised proverb is meaningless in itself; it is the metaphor of the proverb that enables us to employ it in so many different contexts, including advertisements and cartoons (1989: 20–21). The same applies to all PUs. Innovative stylistic alterations are common in the use of traditional proverbs and their variants, as is also seen from the extensive collection of Wolfgang Mieder's international archive of proverbs in Burlington, Vermont (Mieder and Litovkina 1999: 3). In order to disambiguate a particular stylistic instantiation, it is necessary both to have a good knowledge of the base form and the figurative means employed. Comprehension of the figurative links between the visual and the verbal is a cognitive act, as is creativity; hence the importance of visual literacy²³ as a cognitive skill. Visual literacy is fundamental to understanding the coherence and cohesion of the visual and the textual.

On the other hand, a new instantiation is enabled due to use of the PU as a language unit and a pattern of instantial stylistic use, such as pun, extended metaphor, metonymy, or allusion. To be creative implies going beyond standard form and meaning, and beyond conventional vision. When exploring creativity, Pope shows that creativity emerges every time some existing language material (words, images, sounds) is transformed into something judged to be fresh and valuable. Creativity does not come from nothing or from nowhere; it embraces “radical forms of re-creation and includes actively engaged kinds of re-vision, re-remembering and re-familiarisation” (Pope 2005: xvii). Moreover, visual discourse calls for new ways of both creation and interpretation. “Multimodal texts demonstrate linguistic and artistic creativity, and creative multimodality reveals how language functions” (Goodman 2006: 244).

6. Conclusion

This paper takes a closer look at the creative aspects of verbal and visual representation of phraseological image in multimodal discourse from a cognitive perspective. The image-bearing constituents of phraseological units lend themselves well to creative textual and visual representation, including abstract qualities and implicit messages. The phraseological image is sustained as thought develops, contributing to the creation of a visual narrative. The visual reflects experience beyond the possibilities offered by a text. The cognitive approach elucidates the comprehension and interpretation of phraseological metaphor in verbal and visual discourse and brings out its role in the communication of figurative thought.

Mental visualisation of instantial stylistic use forms part of cognitive performance, enhanced by visual representation of the extended image. Visualisation is a reflection of figurative thought. I would argue that phraseological metaphor occurs not only in thought and language, it also occurs in visual representation and its perception. Visual representation of a phraseological image engages both the eye and the mind.

Comprehension and interpretation rely on cohesive ties between the visual and the verbal. Visual literacy is a cognitive skill which advances sociolinguistic competence; the ability to perceive, comprehend, and interpret the stylistic, social, and cultural message of a visualised phraseological image. Skills of visual literacy have become increasingly important as the nature of pictures has changed. Pictures do not merely illustrate the text or emerge as an afterthought; they frequently provide further development of thought. Training a discerning eye in stylistic awareness enhances our cognitive abilities for mental representation and processing.

In conclusion, visual representation is a non-verbal mode of expression that is perceived by sight. In visual discourse the phraseological image is evoked pictorially with or without a verbal text, and cohesion of phraseological meaning is retained. A number of stylistic patterns may be employed in one visual representation: metaphor, metonymy, pun, allusion and others, forming a subtle network of associations, and figurative and literal meanings. To date, visual representation of PUs is a less examined mode of their stylistic use. Exploration of phraseological metaphor in multimodal discourse opens up new pathways for further research and makes a good case for including studies in this field in general research on phraseology.

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Notes

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1. This article is published as part of Ch. 6 of my book: Naciscione, Anita. 2010. *Stylistic Use of Phraseological Units in Discourse*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
2. *The phraseological unit* is a stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning. For the basic terms in phraseology, see Naciscione 2001b.
3. *The base metaphor* is a metaphor which forms part of the image of the PU in its base form. *The base form* is stored in the long-term memory of the language user as a

language unit. It is accessed when a discourse situation calls for it. It is the dictionary form and meaning, recorded as the head phrase.

4. I have indicated the forms of PUs for emphasis: instantial elements are in italic while base forms are in italic and underlined.
5. *Visual discourse* is a coherent visual representation of instantial use with the aim of creating a visual narrative. In visual discourse, the phraseological image is evoked pictorially with or without a verbal text, and cohesion of phraseological meaning is retained.
6. *Instantial stylistic use* is a particular instance of a unique stylistic application of a PU in discourse, resulting in significant changes in its form and meaning determined by the thought and the context.
7. *Core use* is use of the PU in its most common form and meaning. In core use the PU does not acquire any additional stylistic features in discourse and does not exceed the boundaries of one sentence.
8. *To throw one's weight around* is an American variant of the PU.
9. "Metaphorical thought is grounded in non-metaphorical aspects of recurring bodily experiences or experiential gestalts" (Gibbs 1999 [1994]: 16). For more on people's bodily experiences as part of the fundamental grounding for human cognition and language, see Gibbs 2005.
10. For the importance of a cognitive-linguistic view of the sense of sight in cognition of a literary text, see Popova 2003.
11. According to Spiegel, traditional visualisation in literature starts only in the fiction of the 19th century when the "visual perspective moves to the centre of a coherent and fully articulated literary form" (Spiegel 1976: 33).
12. For more examples of sustained visual puns in thought representation, see Naciscione 2005.
13. For an understanding of cohesion in phraseology, see Naciscione 2002.
14. This picture has been taken from the site of St. Kitts–Nevis. See *St. Kitts – Nevis financial service sector reviewed: Money laundering is a global problem* 2008.
15. For stylistic use of the PU *money laundering*, see Naciscione 2003, 2006.
16. *Multimodal discourse* is a discourse that applies stylistic techniques from more than one semiotic mode of expression. The verbal works together with the non-verbal in construction of new meaning in metaphorical and metonymic conceptualisations which are patterns of both thought and language.
17. For concurrent use of stylistic techniques in phraseological instantiations, see Naciscione (1976: 160–180, 2001b: 136–141). In phraseology, *concurrent use* is the simultaneous occurrence of several instantial changes reinforcing the message and creating a focal point within the framework of one PU. See also Gibbs (1999 [1994]: 449–454) for use of several tropes working together.
18. See *Satcor Report on International Conference "Stop Money Laundering"* 2002.
19. Cognitive research on multimodality has established a number of stylistic techniques in visual discourse: *visual metaphor*, *visual pun*, and *visual metonymy* and of late also *visual simile* or *pictorial simile* as Forceville calls it (2009: 466) as a separate stylistic means. I would argue for *visual allusion* as a distinctive pattern in its own

right. If a PU is involved, it is a case of *phraseological allusion*, which is a mental implicit verbal and/or visual reference to the image of a phraseological unit, which is represented in discourse by one or more explicit image-bearing constituents, and their instantial ties, hinting at the image (see Naciscione 2001b: 99–109).

20. For a discussion of the verbal and visual potential of this proverb, see Mieder (1993: 133–149).
21. For a detailed analysis of the theory of foregrounding and its stylistic and psychological aspects, see van Peer 1986. For features of prominence that differentiate the figure from the ground, making it more salient, see Stockwell (2002: 14–15).
22. The idea of convergence of several stylistic devices for emphasis was first expressed by Riffaterre (1959: 154–174).
23. By *visual literacy* I understand the ability to perceive, comprehend, and interpret visual representation of language. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 3) stress the importance of visual literacy as a matter of survival in visual communication.

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