Constructing Integrated Meaning under the Perspective of Intersemiotic Complementarity in Multimodal Discourse: A Case Study of Tourism Promotional Film *The World of Ding Zhen*

Xie Chaojie

Abstract—With the development of technology, more and more places are using tourism promotional films to show their local characteristics as a new means of promotion, and those promotional films have largely increased local awareness and promoted the development of tourism. As the typical multimodal discourses, the modes in tourism promotional videos deserve study to find out the construction of meaning and the transmission of the theme. Guided by the theories of intersemiotic complementary, the study explores the construction of integrated meaning in multimodal discourse analysis based on a case study of promotional film The World of Ding Zhen, aiming to reveal the collective effect between visual image and verbal text and find out how the city image is formed through intersemiotic complementary.

Index Terms—Multimodal discourse analysis, intersemiotic complimentary, tourism, promotional film.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the 20th century, American linguist Harris began to conduct discourse analysis research. Since then, this new field of language study has attracted many researchers. But for a long time, they only focused on the analysis of language itself. Actually, modern communication involves not only language communication, but also contains diverse semiotics simultaneously, such as dynamic images, facial expressions, intonation of voice, etc. According to Jewitt [1], this phenomenon can be called "multimode". Multimodal discourse is the combination of sense of hearing, sight, touch and so on, and the combination of several semiotic modes like language, image, sound, and so on in an event or a text [2].

It was until the last decade of the 20th century that researches on multimodal discourse started to emerge. Foreign scholars Kress G. and van Leeuwen [3] have studied the relationship between mode and media. After Li Zhanzi [4] introduced multimodal discourse analysis in China, many scholars began to focus on multimodal discourse analysis. Hu Zhuanglin [5], Zhu Yongsheng [6] and Gu Yueguo [7] have conducted in-depth discussions and studies to delve into the theory. However, previous scholars of multimodal discourse analysis mainly focus on statistic images, such as posters, newspapers and illustrations, there has been little work that specifically targets the nature of the intersemiotic semantic

relationships between the visual and verbal modes. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct the multimodal discourse analysis study involving auditory mode discourse and the relationship between different modes.

As one of the most populated promotional films posted recently, *Ding Zhen' World* has arisen great interest in the internet. It is released by the people's government of Ganzi Tibetan autonomous prefecture, showing the attractive scenery and the life of local people. Thus, *Ding Zhen' World* is a representative government tourism promotional film and typical dynamic discourse, which has not been sufficiently and comprehensively probed into in the multimodal discourse analysis field.

The purpose of the study is to explore the integrated meaning construction reflected by promotional film under the framework of intersemiotic complementarity theory, in hope to reveal how verbal and visual modal semiotics interrelate and jointly construct meaning. It also wants to explores how the city image is formed with the help of the all the semiotics. Thus, it attempts to address the following questions:

1) How do the verbal mode semiotics and visual mode semiotics complement each other to construct an integrated meaning in the promotional film?

2) How the city image is formed through the promotional film?

II. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, Royce provided his intersemiotic complementarity theory. This theory is proposed in the framework of social semiotics and systematic functional linguistics and is mainly used to analyze the complementary relationship between visual modal and verbal modal at the semantic level. Royce [8] holds the view that verbal and visual modes always worked together in multimodal discourse in order to make a complete and coherent meaning. He also believes that "both the visual and verbal modes complement each other in the ways that they project meaning which can be referred as intersemiotic complementary" [9]. He finds out that the relations of visual and verbal semiotics can be effectively explained by intersemiotic complementarity theory. Royce holds [10] that in a multi-modal text, the two modes are not simply juxtaposed, but can use their modal resources and expressions to complement each other on the semantic level and build a joint unified, coherent text. Inter-semiotic

Complementarity includes: Ideational intersemiotic complementarity, interpersonal intersemiotic complementarity, and compositional intersemiotic complementarity. When the conceptual, interpersonal, and compositional meanings of the two modes are connected in a specific way. the text acquires complementarity.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data Collection

This study will take the promotional film *The World of Ding Zhen* released by Bureau of Culture and Tourism of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture as data. It is collected from the official Weibo of the Bureau of Culture and Tourism of Ganzi (website: https://www.weibo.com/ganzilvyou). The film is 3 minutes and 18 seconds in length, with bilingual subtitles.

The study begins with a transcription of the corpus, followed by an analysis of the video discourse from three perspectives: ideational intersemiotic complementarity, interpersonal intersemiotic complementarity, and compositional intersemiotic complementarity, to investigate the mechanisms by which images and texts in the discourse work together to convey meaning.

B. Transcription Methods

Baldry and Thibault [11] argue that there are two approaches to the transcription of multimodal video discourse, the macro-analytical approach and the micro-analytical approach, depending on the goal of the research analysis. The macro-analytic approach explains the meaning-making process of the entire discourse through the connections between the sub-units that make up the discourse, focusing on the interactions between the phases of the discourse. The micro-analytical approach, on the other hand, focuses on the detailed description of the symbolic resources used in the meaning-making process.
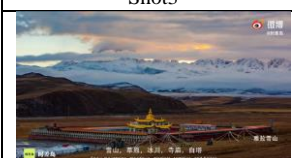
This study uses the macro-analysis approach of transcriptions, and divides the entire film is divided into seven stages based on contents. They are showed in Table I.

TABLE I: SIX PHASES OF *THE WORLD OF DING ZHEN*

Phase	Content
1	Location: at the foot of the Genye Snow Mountain
2	Daily life: Cattle herding
3	Folklore: Horse racing
4	Simple dream: riding the pony across the mountain
5	Local scenery: snow mountains, meadows, glaciers, temples and baitas
6	Topic: the world of Ding Zhen
7	Do something for hometown: welcome all to come

Only some representative shots are selected from each phase, and one shot from each phase is used as a sample for the analysis of the collaborative relationship between text and image. Based on the content of each phase of the discourse, a total of 7 shots are selected in Table II.

TABLE II: THE REPRESENTATIVE SHOTS OF THE WORLD OF DING ZHEN

Shot1   Shot2
Shot3   Shot4
Shot5   Shot6
Shot7

IV. MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON *THE WORLD OF DING ZHEN*

A. Ideational Intersemiotic Complementarity

In the analysis of the ways the verbal mode and visual mode interact intersemiotically in ideational terms, the Visual Message Elements (VMEs) are firstly found out, then the author identified the words associated with Visual Message Elements and finds out the relationship between them. The elements in every shot of the promotional film are noted and compared with the subtitle text. It is found out that all shots except shot 6 and shot 7 have an ideational intersemiotic complementarity.

Shot 1 shows the scene that a clear stream (participant) is flowing (process). The elements of Mount Gen yen and other mountains are the environment of the shot. The visual element "Mount Genyen" and the text subtitle "Mount Genyen" are related in the way of repetition. The process of the stream flowing from the foot of Mount Genyen has the collocation relationship with the text subtitle "one door-opening away". The flowing stream is just like a connection between the local people and Mount Genyen, making viewers feel that Mount Genyen and local people are connected tightly with each other. The first phase of the video introduces the geographical location of Ganzi. The text at this point shows the viewers that you can see Mount Genyen as soon as you push the door, reflecting its geographical location, right at the foot of the snow-capped mountains.The sky, white clouds, distant Mount Genyen and clear streams create a magnificent yet tranquil natural scene, setting the tone for the content that follows. The ideational complementarity relationship of image and text makes the main message presented in the scene clearer.

B. Interpersonal Intersemiotic Complementarity

The discussion of the interpersonal meaning of multimodal

discourse in the context of intertemporal complementarity theory involves two main frameworks: systemic functional linguistics and visual grammar.

1) Mode

In terms of verbal mode, the system fulfills four major speech roles, namely offer, command, statement and question, which in turn convey the interpersonal meaning of the text. The subtitle texts of the 7 shots of the promotional film The World of Ding Zhen are shown in Table 3. It can be found out that the texts of the intercepted shots and even the entire video discourse is declarative in tone, fulfilling the speech function of "statement", that is, textual information is exchanged in a "declarative" manner, offering information to the viewers. The tourism promotional films are the videos relating to promote the tourism resources and the primary purpose is to persuade the audience to learn about and take a tour to the place.

In terms of visual mode, there are offer act and demand act in the shots. In shot 6, the main participant is Ding Zhen and the main action is to look at the audience with a smile. This is a demand act. Through this behavior, the distance between the audience and the contents of the promotional film is narrowed and makes the audiences feel that they have a face-to-face contact with Ding Zhen. The eyeline imply that the audience can also experience and feel his world. The intersemiotic relations are attitudinal dissonance, for there is no element of demanding in the verbal parts as exchange which relate to visual meaning. The two modes are different, complementing the composition of meaning and facilitating communication with the audiences.

2) Power relation

As for the power relation, there are three relationships between the viewers and the participants of the shot: high angle, eye-eye angle and low angle. Shot 1 is presented from a low angle and shows the beauty of the local snow-capped mountains, streams and meadows, reflecting the sacredness of the mountains and the magnificence of the scenery. Shot 3 and shot 5 are presented from a high angle, showing the customs of local horse racing and snow mountains, temples and other scenery respectively, showing a more comprehensive view of the local human character and landscape. Shot2, shot 4, shot 6 and shot 7 are presented from an eye-eye angle, which places the viewer and the image participant on an equal situation, with both being seen as having equal power. Compared to the high angle, the flat view illustrates that the viewer and the video participant equal to each other, making it easy for them to connect. This also brings the viewers closer to the scenery and allows them to experience the splendor of Ganzi, thus creating the urge to experience it on the ground.

3) Social distance

As for social distance, it also represents the relation between the represented participant and the interactive participant. It is realized by size of frame which can be classified into close shot, medium shot, shot and long shot. In shot 6 and shot 7, where the character Ding Zhen is the representational participant, the video producer uses a close frame to indicate the social proximity of Ding Zhen to the audiences and to bring them closer to each other. He is looking at the audiences with a smile in shot 6 and praying in shot 7, conveys a sense of sincerity and hospitality. The proximity between the audiences and Ding Zhen makes it easy for this sense of hospitality to infect the audiences and make them empathize. The message of "welcome you all to come here" is thus better conveyed. The video producer's message of sincerity and hospitality is reflected. The video is a reflection of the image of hospitality in Ganzi.

C. Compositional Intersemiotic Complementarity

The compositional intersemiotic complementarity is relational coordination represented by the two modes in information value, salience, visual framing, visual synonymy, potential reading paths, etc. [6].

1) Information value

Information values are expressed through the placement of the elements. The information value of the element is attached to the specific position of the shot, i.e., left and right, top and bottom, and middle and edge positions.

Horizontally, the visual elements placed on the left represent known information and the elements placed on the right present new information. For example, in Shot 4, the element placed on the left is Ding Zhen and his pony, which is familiar to the viewer. On the right side of the scene there is a column of text "Mount Genyen", which is new and unknown information that the viewer needs to pay special attention to. The whole shot means that Ding Zhen is leading his pony walking across Mount Genyen, implying the people here living a simple life and having a simple heart.

Vertically, the elements above are considered to present ideal, broad information, while the elements below present realistic, concrete information. As in shot 1, the elements above the image contain white clouds, a blue sky and rolling snow-capped mountains, while below are visual elements such as land, meadow and streams. The blue sky, white clouds and snow-capped mountains represent an idealized view of high air quality, good weather conditions and beautiful scenery, which is the desirable landscapes. The elements below the shot are more concrete and closer to people's real lives. The top-down structure of the shot shows the respect and desire for the blue sky, white clouds and other beautiful scenery.

2) Salience

Salience means certain elements of a shot is more important and attractive than others. It is achieved by the interactions between a variety of factors, such as the shape, size, colour saturation, foregrounding and overlap of the visual elements of the shot. As in shot 6, the image of Ding Zhen is at the centre of the shot, which is the present of its salience. In addition, the image of Ding Zhen is much bigger than the background, filling most of the shot. The saturation of Ding Zhen's image is much higher than the background color, thus making his image more prominent. Through the way of salience, the visual modes complement the verbal world of "this is my world", which is the summary of the previous text, highlighting the idea of putting people first.

3) Degrees of framing

If there is no separation of the elements in a shot, it means the elements are in some sense part of a whole. Framing can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as distinct physical lines, blank spaces between elements, colour or shape of elements, etc. The stronger the frame of an element in an image, the more it indicates that the element appears as a

separate unit of information, while the presence of a weaker frame emphasises the whole. The message conveyed in phase 5 is the Local scenery in Ganzi, that is snow mountains, meadows, glaciers, temples and baitas. Shot 5 shows part of phase 5, snow mountains and temples. In terms of spatial distribution, the visual elements in shot 5 occupy more space than the text, but there is no clear frame dividing the two, so the visual elements and the text elements are treated as whole The entire scene includes the visual elements of snow mountains, temples, meadow, sky, clouds and sunlight, as well as the text "snow mountains, meadows, glaciers, temples, and baitas", which shows they are related in the way of metonymy.Accordingly, shot 5 reflects that there is an endless amount of beauty to be found here.

V. Conclusion

This study adopts Royce's intersemiotic complementarity theory to the analysis of the ideational, interpersonal and compositional intersemiotic relations between the visual mode and verbal mode in 7 shots from The World of Ding Zhen, and further discuss the city image of Ganzi presented in the promotional film. Some major findings are as follows:

Firstly, the promotional film involves a combination of language, image, color, and other forms of usage. All the forms exist together to express the theme and meaning of a promotional film. Different forms are used to supplement the information. Complementarity of ideational meaning between visual image and verbal text is realized through the semantic relations of repetition and meronymy. The verbal text in The World of Ding Zhen plays the role of depicting the local customs, specialties and landscapes; while through visual form the landscape can be presented to the viewer. There appears semantic equality and complementary between these two modes. Secondly, in terms of interpersonal complementarity, it is through "reinforcement of address" and "attitudinal dissonance". This is relevant to the features and aims of the promotional film, which provide information of the beauty of the landscape and its traditional Tibetan customs in Ganzi to to the viewers. Thirdly, the visual image and verbal text complement each other to make a unified discourse through an intentional placement of elements or features. Specifically, they are information valuation, salience, degrees of framing. Within a single shot, the producer can maximize the benefit of the limited space to promote the landscapes in Ganzi and urge tourists to visit it. The placement of these elements or features complements the texts to make the promotional film coherent and integrated, so that utility of the limited space on a page can be maximized. Finally, in a promotional film with both visual image and verbal text, the complementary effect between these two modes is vital to make the discourse integrated in

meaning: complete, coordinated and coherent. The visual mode and verbal mode synergistically complement each other in three ways: ideational, interpersonal and compositional, to construct an image of Ganzi. With the complementarity of different modes, it creates an image of a city with magnificent scenery, simple and hospitable inhabitants and unique human customs, thereby attracting more tourists and promoting the development of local tourism. The good combination of image and text can better attract tourists' attention and intrigue their interest which the single mode of words cannot realize. By joining the verbal and visual parts into a coherent text, the promotional film could also leave deep impression in tourists' mind, enhancing their memory of Ganzi and thus improving the popularity of the city.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict or interest.

Author Contributions

Xie Chaojie composed the original paper, conducted the research, analyzed the film *The World of Ding Zhen,* and made a final conclusion.

References

[1] C. Jewitt, *The Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis (Rev. ed.),* New York: Routledge, 2011.
[2] D. L. Zhang, "On a synthetic theoretical framework for multimodal discourse analysis," *Foreign Languages in China,* vol 6, pp. 24-30, 2009.
[3] G. Kress and T. van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design,* New York: Routledge,1996.
[4] Z. Z. Li, "Social semiotic approach to multimodal discourse," *Foreign Language Research,* vol. 5, pp. 1-8, 2003.
[5] Z. L. Hu, "Multimodalism in social semiotics research," *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies,* vol. 1, pp. 1-10, 2007.
[6] Y. S. Zhu, "Theoretical foundations and research methods of multimodal discourse analysis," *Foreign Language Research,* vol. 5, pp. 82-86, 2007.
[7] Y. G. Gu, "Multimedia, multimodal learning profiling," *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language,* vol. 2, pp. 3-12, 2007.
[8] T. D. Royce, "Synergy on the page: Exploring Intersemiotic complementarity in page-based multimodal text," *JASFL Occasional Papers,* vol. 1, pp. 25-49, 1998.
[9] T. D. Royce, *Visual-Verbal Intersemiotic Complementarity in the Economist Magazine,* University of Reading, United Kingdom, 1998.
[10] T. D. Royce, "Intersemiotic complementarity: A framework for multimodal discourse analysis," in *New Directions in the Analysis of Multimodal Discourse*, T. D. Royce and W. L. Bowcher, Eds. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2007.
[11] A. P. Baldry and P. J. Thibault, *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis,* London: Equinox, 2006.