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# Beyond Taste: Multimodal Construction of Sensory Experience in *Cadbury* Brand Discourse

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Статтю присвячено дослідженню кросмодальності крізь призму вербальних та невербальних модусів бренду Cadbury, сукупність яких конструює значення.

*Мета* роботи полягає у визначенні модусів, якими послуговуються, як у друкованій, так і у відеорекламі шоколаду *Cadbury*; виявленні механізмів трансформації значення, зокрема ресемантизації та реконтекстуалізації, актуалізованих в обраному ілюстративному матеріалі; окресленні специфіки використання стилістичних ресурсів (метафори та метонімії), характерних досліджуваним зразкам.

Залучення мультимодального дискурс-аналізу сприяло ідентифікації взаємозв’язку та взаємозалежності вербальних, візуальних, аудіальних та тілесних модусів у корпусі Cadbury, а також актуалізації модальностей, множина яких формує значення. Парадигми соціальної семіотики застосовано з метою обґрунтування диференційних ознак модусів, які різняться структурою, семантикою, прагматикою та змістом, що породжені та функціюють в соціумі і значення яких змінюється залежно від низки чинників, притаманних тому чи іншому часовому періоду. Такі підвалини уможливлюють розгляд трансформованих первинних значень в контексті ресемантизації та реконтекстуалізації. Засадничі принципи когнітивної лінгвістики уможливили виокремлення метафор та метонімій. На підставі критичного дискурс-аналізу охарактеризовано бренд *Cadbury* з урахуванням ідеологічних та культурних аспектів формування значення.

Резюмовано, що всі модуси, залучені до репрезентації продукції *Cadbury*, актуалізують кросмодальність, яка формується завдяки значенням, закодованим у різних модусах. Установлено, що вони ефективно корелюють між собою, однак їхні смисли трансформуються залежно від соціального контексту та викликів певного періоду. Наголошено, що попри первинну місію *Cadbury* – продукувати та реалізовувати шоколад, цінність і функція цього продукту зазнали суттєвого переосмислення задля формування сенсорного та емоційного досвіду, релевантного для аудиторії. У процесі аналізу враховано матеріальний вимір шоколаду, його варіативність, кольорову гаму, а також акустичні, просторові та темпоральні параметри, специфіку репрезентації продукту, візуальні й соціальні чинники.

*Ключові слова: мультимодальний дискурс, бренд, модальність, модус, реклама, значення.*

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## Introduction

Contemporary brands, as pivotal components of the intercultural market, are becoming increasingly complex. This complexity is reflected in the multifaceted composition of their constituent modes and the wide range of meanings they can convey. Within the linguistic dimension, such modes function as complex marketing artifacts-stimuli that activate emotional responses and implicit patterns of interaction. They contribute to the conceptual modeling of meaning through semantically loaded verbal and non-verbal modes employed in the construction of brand identity. The evolution of brand modes enables the tracing of the development of the product and its responsiveness to changing societal needs, tastes, preferences, and values over time. Despite the substantial body of research on brand communication, the process of integrated meaning-making—emerging from the interaction between a product's materiality, sensory experience, and multimodal resources—remains insufficiently studied. Particular attention should be paid to the mechanism of resemantisation, through which a product transitions from a static consumer object to a dynamic experiential phenomenon. The process of constructing meaning requires careful consideration of both verbal and non-verbal modes, due to the inherently multimodal nature of brand communication. In this domain, meaning is actualized through embodied modalities, which are directly relevant to the present analysis. The implicit and explicit nuances of meaning are often revealed through metaphors and metonymies when they are processed through physical, sensory, and emotional experiences.

Contemporary Cadbury brand discourse [Cadbury, 2026] can be conceptualized as a complex multimodal system in which meaning is constructed not solely through verbal means but through the integration of diverse semiotic resources, including visual, auditory, bodily, and material means. A fundamental tenet of multimodal linguistics is the principle of multisensory integration, which refers to the interaction between different perceptual channels (e.g., sight, hearing, touch, and taste) to form a unified cognitive experience. Within this paradigm, mechanisms of sound symbolism and phonosemantics play a significant role, linking acoustic features with sensory and emotional meanings. In combination with crossmodal correspondence, in which sounds are associated with colors, textures, or tastes, brand discourse generates a synesthetic effect, enabling the transfer of features across modalities. In addition, contemporary brand discourse actively engages with the principles of embodied cognition, which postulate that meaning is grounded in bodily experience. This is reflected in the emphasis on reactions, gestures, and tactility. Simultaneously, products are no longer represented as static objects, but as dynamic ones. From a social semiotics perspective, products are regarded as dynamic entities that interact with both space and the body.

Therefore, Cadbury's brand discourse may be viewed as a system in which meaning emerges at the intersection of materiality, corporeality, acoustics, and temporality, producing an intense sensory and emotional impact on the recipient. The selection of the Cadbury brand is predicated on its distinctive multimodal identity and its consistent utilization of sensory and experiential strategies in brand discourse.

The analysis is based on a representative corpus of Cadbury video and print advertisements, enabling a generalized reconstruction of recurring multimodal patterns. Given the specific nature of print advertising, it does not employ all the strategies and tools characteristic of video advertising. However, in both cases, modes that are connected to one another can be found, allowing for a detailed study of how the meaning of Cadbury's products has changed over time.

The objective of this study is to define the multimodal mechanisms of meaning construction in Cadbury's brand discourse, with particular attention to the processes of resemantisation, recontextualization, and the sensory conceptualization of the product.

## Theoretical and methodological background of the research

The theoretical framework of this study draws on research in multimodal linguistics, cognitive and social semiotics, critical discourse analysis, which conceptualise communication as an integrated system of interacting semiotic resources. The works of K. O'Halloran and B. Smith [2011], C. Jewitt [2014], and S. Tan, K. O'Halloran, and P. Wignell [2020] provide an overview of contemporary multimodal analysis. The study of visual means is based on the works of G. Kress and T. van Leeuwen [2006], J. Bateman [2014]. They argue that communication occurs through the interaction of different modes within a shared space, with these modes influencing each other and shaping the way in which

communication is conducted. They also claim that the arrangement of forms in media and the integration of verbal and non-verbal elements result in a collective impact. J. Bateman and J. Wildfeuer [2014] emphasise that visual narratives are formed through various modes of expression, such as text, images, movement, and spatial arrangement within the frame. This emphasises how diverse multimodal elements contribute to the narrative's structure and impact its interpretation. These theoretical insights are particularly relevant for the study of advertising as a multimodal communicative practice which, as a linguistic phenomenon, has long been a central object of scholarly inquiry.

The seminal works that have shaped modern understanding of advertising as a multifaceted art form encompassing more than just verbal expression, regardless of stylistic sophistication, can be found in the works of many scholars. Thus, G. Cook [2001] views advertising as a multi-layered system in which text, images, music, and context collaborate to generate associations, cultural codes, and subtle implications. Similarly, J. Williamson's [1978] focuses on the semiotic dimensions of advertising and reveals the social and ideological aspects of the medium through which cultural codes are conveyed and must be interpreted by the audience. In a related perspective, P. Messaris [1997] puts forward the role of visual means of persuasive nature in advertising which evoke emotions and associations and influence perception. Expanding this line of inquiry, L. Scott [1994] advances the idea that visual structures function as independent carriers that influence the interpretation of meaning, providing the foundation of visual rhetoric in advertising.

Building upon these approaches to visual communication and persuasion, B. Phillips and E. McQuarrie [2004] propose a typology of visual rhetoric means—explaining how different visual techniques influence brand perception. From a rhetorical perspective, E. McQuarrie and D. Mick [1996] provide an in-depth analysis of rhetorical devices in advertising. More recently, P. Pérez-Sobrino, J. Littlemore, and S. Ford [2021] examine creativity in advertising through the use of metaphor, metonymy, and symbolic thinking, demonstrating how figurative language can be employed to create compelling advertising messages.

A smaller body of studies has been conducted that focus specifically on Cadbury, from different perspectives. For example, K. Ramya [2016] describes different modes employed in chocolate advertising, comparing Cadbury with Nestlé. The idea that chocolate is represented not merely as food but as an emotional experience that shapes consumption behaviour is explored in an in-depth analysis of semiotics and cultural background by P. Prathas and K. Sreena [2019] which study different signs, with an emphasis on Western cultural influence.

Closer paradigms to the present research have been developed by C. Agrawal and S. Dey [2023], who compare two Cadbury advertising campaigns from 1994 and 2021 through Roland Barthes' theory, thereby demonstrating how advertising creates myths and hidden cultural associations that reflect social change over time. A related perspective is proposed by F. Aqeel and M. Ali [2024], whose work examines cultural myths associated with food, cosmetics and health through emotionally charged images representing ordinary life.

However, while these earlier studies focused on ideological representation, cultural symbolism, and myth construction, the present research shifts the analytical focus toward the material and multimodal transformation of chocolate itself as a semiotic entity. In this context, the concepts of resemantisation (a transition from a product's initial denotative status to a sensory, metaphorical, and experiential level of construction) and recontextualisation are particularly relevant. According to T. van Leeuwen's socio-semiotic perspective [2005], recontextualisation can be defined as the process of transferring and transforming semiotic content across different communicative contexts.

D. Machin and A. Mayr [2012] contributed to the critical discourse analysis, focusing on multimodal perspective. Within this paradigm [Fairclough, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2009], discourse is conceptualised as dynamic and socially conditioned. This theoretical framework enables brand discourse to be interpreted as a process of continuous transformation. The cross-modal dimension of the study builds on the work of C. Spence [2011], who explores cross-modal correspondence as a mechanism underlying synesthetic connections between sensory channels. This perspective allows brand discourse to be interpreted as a space in which features are transferred across modes (sound, colour, texture, and taste). Studies on the role of sound in communication [van Leeuwen, 1994] provide further support for this view, explaining the relationship between acoustic form and sensory perception.

The cognitive dimension of the analysis draws on the theory of embodied cognition and the concept of the conceptual metaphor [Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010]. The multimodal metaphor approach [Forceville, 1996; 2008] is also used to explain how metaphors can be used across different modes of communication and to show how resemantisation is a cognitive process that causes transformation. C. Forceville and E. Urios-Aparisi [2009] demonstrate how metaphors function across modalities. The product can finally be interpreted not as a static object, but as a dynamic material entity that interacts with the body, space, and sensory experience. This is made possible by combining the socio-semiotic approach [van Leeuwen, 2005] with the principles of material semiotics [Law, 2009]. Approaches to visual communication [Bergström, 2008; Lester, 2006] and multimodal stylistics [Nørgaard, 2018] are also incorporated, allowing image, colour, and composition to be treated as key semiotic resources.

When considered as a whole, these perspectives form an integrated theoretical framework that allows for *conceptualizing* brand discourse as a multi-level system in which meaning emerges from the interaction of modalities, cognitive mechanisms, and the processes of resemantisation and recontextualization.

This article adopts a comprehensive qualitative *methodology* grounded in multimodal discourse analysis, as well as socio-semiotic and cognitive-linguistic approaches. The primary method employed is multimodal discourse analysis, which examines the interaction among verbal, visual, auditory, and bodily means in Cadbury's brand discourse. This approach is predicated on the premise that divergent modes (e.g., images, sounds, colors, bodily responses) collectively contribute to the construction of meaning, thereby shaping a sensory-rich experience of product perception.

A socio-semiotic perspective is also employed, allowing brand messages to be interpreted as systems of signs embedded in a social context, where meaning is formed through processes of resemantisation and recontextualization. A cognitive-linguistic approach is applied to account for the mechanisms of metaphor, metonymy and the conceptual integration of sensory experience. The present study employs elements of critical discourse analysis, a methodological framework that enables the interpretation of brand texts as carriers of ideologically and culturally shaped meanings. When considered as a whole, these approaches provide a framework for interpreting brand discourse as a dynamic multimodal system.

## Results and discussion

### *Chocolate as Materiality and "Immersion"*

The successive patterns of self-representation and advertising that have been used through the years by the Cadbury company provide us with a vivid example of a company rethinking its brand, in terms of its mission and its social impact, in this era of globalization. It is possible to assert that because of this, Cadbury's consumer product known as *chocolate* was transformed from a physical substance into a 'materiality', such that it lost its original identity as a mere tangible material. Cadbury's adoption of a communicative strategy has resulted in a process of resemantisation, whereby the primary denotative meaning of the product shifts from that of a ready-made object to that of a dynamic materiality capable of transformation.

From this perspective, chocolate is conceptualised as a substance that drips—initially in a fluid state—and can be modified to exist as a liquid, a coating, an enrobing layer or an immersive medium. This reconfiguration suggests that chocolate is perceived not merely as a product, but as a material and semiotic resource with the potential to transform an environment or create an experiential space. The medium's physical characteristics, namely its capacity for both pouring and dripping, function as semiotic resources which actualize meanings of tenderness, smoothness, and luxurious texture. These processes contribute to a coating effect and sensory appeal. In relation to multimodality, such materiality is manifested through haptic (visually perceived texture—smooth, creamy surfaces that evoke an imagined sense of touch); visual (shine, fluidity, and density as markers of "living" matter); and kinesthetic (the movement of chocolate understood as a dynamic process) modalities. This enhancement of cross-modal integration produces an embodied simulation effect, whereby the receiver experiences the texture through different modalities.

In terms of materiality, chocolate can be understood metaphorically through the process of *enrobing*, whereby it covers objects (Fig. 1) and functions as a form of interaction. The verb "*to*

*enrobe*" is pivotal to the conceptualization of chocolate, as it reveals its active rather than passive nature. Chocolate is not a static substance. It interacts with other materials, forming protective or luxurious layers. This phenomenon is exemplified by *chocolate-covered nuts*, *smooth coatings*, and *fully enrobed objects* [The Best Cadbury, 2025; Delicious Chocolate, 2021]. Semantically, the act of *enrobing* chocolate is associated with concepts of comfort, fullness, and completion. In this case, there is an interplay between metaphor and metonymy, in which chocolate operates both as a figurative representation of protection and luxury and as a material element that stands for the entire sensory product.




**Fig. 1.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Cadbury Dairy Milk, 2021]

A furher significant aspect concerns the use of chocolate as an immersive medium. In this context, meaning undergoes recontextualization, as chocolate serves as the environment in which characters are "immersed." The visual field is dominated by the material, which fills the entire frame and creates a spatial framework for the action. Scenes in which characters are visually surrounded by flowing chocolate fills the frame evoke a strong sense of sensory "immersion" and embodied experience of texture. Semantically, it involves suggesting a form of immersive spatial integration between the body and the product.

Advertising by Cadbury often involves creating spaces where consumers can experience the brand in a way that is both immersive and experiential. This is achieved through two main techniques: the first is the depiction of products in a state of abstraction, for example, through the use of Gorilla and Eyebrows branding [The Best Cadbury, 2025]; the second is the use of imagery to represent environments composed of flowing chocolate.

In the context of the image, the distinctive features of metaphorisation are evident. Specifically, the association of chocolate with the environment and experience is noteworthy. Concurrently, a metonymic broadening occurs, whereby a specific product property, namely its texture, becomes representative of the entire sensory experience.

The three models under consideration (chocolate as liquid; chocolate as enrobing; chocolate as immersion) ([The Best Cadbury, 2025]; Fig. 2) demonstrate a semiotic dynamics forming a gradual progression of meaning change (the liquid in question is chocolate, which is capable of movement; the object is yet to be clearly defined; the process of enrobing involves applying a layer of chocolate to a substrate, thereby establishing an interaction between the two; "immersion" chocolate surrounds and constitutes an environment—environment/world).



**Fig. 2.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Cadbury World, 2026]

It is evident that a profound semiotic transformation of chocolate is observed through resemiotisation and recontextualization. This is characterized by the representation of chocolate as a dynamic laterality capable of enrobing, transforming, and even "immersing."

***Temporal Distortion in Cadbury Branding***

As previously stated, the meaning of chocolate is subject to temporal distortion, in which it evolves from a material substance into a process developing over time and becomes embodied as a lived experience. Through a gradual progression of semantic change, the product is transformed from a material form into an experience that unfolds over time and in perception. In Cadbury, the phenomenon of intended temporal manipulation is observable, characterized by the deliberate distortion of time, which is not perceived as a neutral, linear entity but rather as a variable to be managed.

In this specific context, chocolate has been identified as a catalyst for a change in temporal perception, effectively transforming the experience of consumption into a meticulously regulated process. In the context of Cadbury advertising, the concept of time is manipulated through the utilization of cinematic and semiotic models. These models include slow motion, which intensifies the experience of the moment; time stretching, which artificially prolongs the experience of tasting; and rapid transitions, [The Best Cadbury, 2025] which represent unexpected changes in the states of consumption before and after.

Consequently, the suspended moment is created, and the viewer is psychologically held within one and the same sensory state. The decelerated movement of the chocolate, as it melts and drips, creates an illusion of an extended present, thereby artificially prolonging the period of pleasure.

In terms of multimodality, this temporal manipulation [The Best Cadbury*, 2*025] is actualized through chronemic (slowing down, pauses, and the stretching of time as a perceptual category) and kinesthetic (slowed bodily movements, smooth gestures, and controlled dynamics of action) modalities, as well as paralinguistic modes (soft intonation, reduced speech tempo, and rhythmic "elongation" of the verbal flow).

In consideration of the aforementioned points, the effect of embodied temporality is apparent. In this context, time is not merely observed but experienced through the body. The chocolate itself becomes a tool for managing time perception, creating an illusion of an intensified, decelerated, and experientially "lived" moment of pleasure.

***Purple as a Cognitive Anchor in Brand Semiosis***

Throughout its history, Cadbury has consistently employed the color purple as a distinctive element of its brand identity. This transformation has led to the adoption of purple as a semiotic marker, significantly shaping the brand's perception. The color thus exceeds its conventional visual function and operates as a key medium through which brand meaning is constructed.

The color purple is conventionally associated with premium quality and luxury, which closely aligns with Cadbury's positioning and its emphasis on status and indulgence. Through repeated use in branding and packaging, this association has undergone resemantisation: purple not only signals quality but also functions as a stable, recognizable visual code for the brand. Cadbury advertising frequently uses minimal narrative alongside a dominant, saturated color scheme (Fig. 3). The use of purple packaging and backgrounds fosters strong visual cohesion, enabling color to assume a predominant role in the communication process.




**Fig. 3.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Blair, 2024]

This process engenders a visual reduction effect, whereby color partially substitutes for verbal or narrative elaboration. From a multimodal perspective, purple operates across several levels: first, as a visual stimulus; second, as an attention-directing mode that guides the viewer's gaze; and third, as an element of perceptual salience that distinguishes the brand within a competitive visual field. As a result, the color purple in Cadbury's branding functions not merely as a marker, but as an integral semiotic resource that structures meaning within the brand identity.

***Embodied Micro-Pleasure Performance***

In Cadbury's marketing strategy, the emphasis has shifted from the product itself to the embodied experience it engenders, which serves as the catalyst for emotions. It is evident that the chocolate does not function as the primary agent in this context; rather, the body serves as the medium through which taste is represented. The creation of meaning, however, is derived from non-verbal behavior. The interpretation of messages depends on the comprehension of non-verbal

cues, including facial expressions, gestures, and bodily responses. The statements mentioned above are corroborated by the following common patterns: *closed eyes, indicating pleasure and immersion; slow chewing, suggesting prolonged enjoyment; slight head tilt, denoting sensory concentration* [The Best Cadbury, 2025]. The combination of pauses and minimal movements creates a sense of "suspension" in the moment of perception, prompting the viewer to contemplate the nature of being and the passage of time.

The scenes in which characters close their eyes while eating chocolate, or slowly bite and pause, facilitate the viewer's "immersion" in the sensory experience, thereby creating the illusion of bodily "dissolution." From a theoretical standpoint, this corresponds to the non-verbal semiotics perspective, in which the body is regarded as the primary medium of communication. Conversely, this phenomenon is depicted metaphorically, in which the bodily response represents taste, and metonymically, in which individual physiological manifestations (e.g., gestures, facial expressions) substitute for the complete sensory experience. Multimodal analysis is a framework within which this strategy is realized through kinesics (bodily movements, slowed dynamics), oculesics (closed eyes, gaze focus or gaze withdrawal), and paralinguistics (intonational signals, pauses). The phenomenon of embodied simulation, in which the viewer not only observes but also embodies the experience through bodily projection, is of significant importance. However, it is also crucial to recognize microemotions as a pivotal mechanism in the construction of meaning.

***Acoustic Texture as Sensory Signification***

It is of paramount importance to consider sound as a branding medium, given its capacity to evoke a sensory experience that reflects a product's texture. This auditory aspect can be used to convey a product's qualities in an immersive and engaging way, offering a novel approach to product promotion. The sound itself is subject to a process of resemantisation, whereby it evolves from a mere component of the background to a carrier of tactile and taste-related meaning. This transformation is instrumental in recontextualizing the product as a sensory experience. The auditory characteristics of chocolate [The Best Cadbury, 2025] are fundamental elements of signification and ultimately correlate with its physical properties. The auditory phenomena of snap correspond to the hardness of the chocolate. By contrast, the auditory qualities of melt are defined by the chocolate's softness and smoothness. Such phenomena can be elucidated through the theoretical frameworks of sound symbolism and acoustic iconicity, wherein acoustic form emulates or reproduces the characteristics of chocolate.

Crossmodality is realized through the conceptualization of sound as a form of tactile sensation. An alternative technique that is employed is the opposition of "soft" and "clear" sounds to generate a gradation of sensory qualities. The absence of noise is also significant in this regard, as it engenders a sense of intimacy and facilitates heightened awareness of acoustic detail. This is achieved through amplification and isolation, where sound is separated from the background and gains heightened perceptual significance.

In terms of multimodality, acoustic texture is represented through auditory (e.g., sounds associated with breaking or melting chocolate as meaning-bearing units) modality, paralinguistic means (e.g., soft vocal quality, subtle intonation), and crossmodal correspondences (mapping between auditory cues and tactile perception). Consequently, a "responsive" texture effect is observed, in which sound accompanies the image, not only as an auditory stimulus but also as a constituent element of the product's sensory perception. It is apparent that Cadbury's discourse is characterized by the utilization of metaphorical language and metonymic extension, within which sound functions as a representation of taste and texture rather than directly representing them.

***Paradox Marketing and Narrative Distortion***

It is clear that Cadbury's brand strategy sometimes employs unconventional, absurd scenes as a communicative strategy, effectively undermining logic and expectations. According to the Cadbury plot, routine situations undergo a process of resemantization. Familiar scenarios are transformed through the use of hyperbole and illogical scenes [The Best Cadbury, 2025], which convey emotional rather than rational meaning, thereby creating recontextualization.

As a fundamental component of this strategy, generating additional narratives is essential, with the deliberate disruption of narrative logic a key element. The characters' illogical reactions, as well as the absurd events that ensue, do not detract from the message's effectiveness; rather, they serve to amplify its impact. For instance, characters may exhibit disproportionately emotional responses to seemingly minor occurrences, such as the consumption of chocolate, thereby creating the impression of an exaggerated or amplified experience [The Best Cadbury, 2025].

The disruption of expected logic is known to induce cognitive tension, which is often compensated for through humor or emotional engagement. In the context of multimodality, the concept of absurdity is manifested through kinesthetic resources (unnatural, exaggerated movements of characters), proxemics (disruption of spatial actions) modality, and chronemics (abrupt temporal breaks, unexpected transitions). It is indisputable that Cadbury employs absurdity and hyperbole as powerful tools to establish trust through emotional plausibility. Within this paradigm, illogical scenes and actions do not contradict the message but enhance its impact.

***Chocolate as a Social Connector***

In Cadbury's brand discourse, chocolate is presented not as an individual consumer product, but as a social act within which it is resemantised and recontextualized as a mediator of interaction. Consequently, the product's significance evolves from a mere physical entity to a medium for fostering and sustaining social connections. The practices of *sharing* and *gifting* are pivotal, with chocolate serving as a symbol of exchange and emotional connection. The act of breaking and sharing chocolate, the practice of gifting (Fig. 4, 5) [The Best Cadbury, 2025], and the consumption of the product collectively have a significant impact on the perception of chocolate as a medium for shared experience.

The notion of transitioning from individual enjoyment to a collective experience is articulated by the slogan "*Share the joy with Cadbury*," which underscores this paradigm shift. From a theoretical standpoint, this phenomenon aligns with the principles of social semiotics, which posits that the exchange of material objects functions as a form of social communication. In this context, chocolate can be regarded as a symbolic resource that facilitates social interaction scenarios.







**Fig. 4.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Armstrongagencies, 2025]
**Fig. 5.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Rawlings, 2023]

In terms of multimodality, this strategy is realized through proxemics (physical proximity between participants in the interaction), kinesthetic modality (gestures of sharing (breaking, sharing) as indices of social action), and oculesics (mutual gaze as a marker of emotional connection) [The Best Cadbury, 2025]. In Cadbury's discourse, chocolate functions as a mediator of social connection, with the model of "shared pleasure" serving as the basis for a collective experience.

***Spatial Organization of Chocolate Experience***

In Cadbury's advertising discourse, spatial organization plays a significant structural role, shaping the perception of the product through visual means. Backgrounds that may initially appear neutral often function as active carriers of meaning, contributing to the construction of a sensory environment. Visual techniques such as close-ups, full-frame compositions, and macro representations of texture enhance the perception of materiality and may evoke a sense of immersion.

From a multimodal perspective, this effect can be interpreted as an interaction between visual and spatial modes, as well as proxemic relations that reduce the perceived distance between the viewer and the product. As a result, the boundaries between the product, the body, and the surrounding space may blur, directing attention to the experience as a whole. In this context, space does not merely present the product; it also shapes its sensory perception.

The strategy under discussion in this paper corresponds to the organization of the subject under investigation. The explanation for this correspondence is provided through the concepts of spatial semiotics and multimodal framing, in which space functions as a mechanism for constructing experience (Fig. 6).




**Fig. 6.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Idirigbe, 2015]

Consequently, cross-modality is realised, whereby space is interpreted as bodily 'immersion.' Furthermore, the contrast between 'distance' and 'immersion' creates a gradation of perceptual proximity. The effect of blurring boundaries is also significant in this context, as it ensures there is no clear boundary between the body, the product, and the environment, thereby focusing attention on the experience as a whole. In advertising, this tendency is further compounded by visual elements such as invitations to 'step into chocolate-like' "immersive" spaces, alongside depictions of individuals or environments surrounded by flowing chocolate-like material. These visual representations elicit a direct sensory experience, thereby reinforcing the product's 'immersive' nature. In terms of multimodality, spatial organisation is achieved through visual modes (e.g., close-ups, full-frame shots, and macro texture shots, which increase visual intensity), spatial modes (e.g., the construction of an environment in which the boundaries between the object and the viewer become blurred), and proxemic modes (e.g., reducing distance to create a sense of physical closeness). Consequently, the concept of 'spatial immersion' emerges, in which space visualises the product and shapes the experience of perceiving it. In Cadbury's discourse, metaphorisation and metonymic expansion occur, with space functioning as a representation of experience.

***Visual Lightscape and Emotional Atmosphere***

As demonstrated in the illustrative material analyzed, light plays a structural role, shaping an emotional experience and thereby the atmosphere of consumption. As a constituent element of this strategy, light undergoes resemantization. In other words, it transforms from a technical

means of illumination into a carrier of affective and value-laden meaning. This, in turn, contributes to the recontextualization of chocolate as a premium sensory experience. The correlation between lighting schemes and the construction of emotional intensity is direct: soft lighting evokes intimacy and comfort, glossy highlights emphasise the product's material appeal, and high-contrast compositions create a sense of visual dynamics. The phenomenon can be elucidated through the theoretical frameworks of visual semiotics and affective aesthetics. Consequently, a cross-modality is formed, in which light is interpreted as an emotional quality of the experience.

A further development of this concept is the opposition of "warm" and "cold" lighting, which is employed to generate a gradation of affective states. This notion is further reinforced by the incorporation of visual elements such as the "golden glow of chocolate," as well as scenes of soft light melting into texture or chocolate illuminated like a luxury object, which directly evoke the product's emotional and value-driven atmosphere. From a multimodal perspective, light is utilized through visual elements such as soft light, glossy reflections, and contrast lighting, which carry visual intensity [The Best Cadbury, 2025]. It is also used effectively to convey an emotional tone and a sense of comfort or luxury, and to orient the gaze through dominant lighting.

It can thus be concluded that the function of light is twofold: it serves to both visualise the product and construct its perceived value. As in previous cases, metaphorisation and metonymic expression are likewise observable, with light serving as a representation of emotion, as demonstrated by the equation: light = emotion = value.

***Interactive Participation and Consumer Engagement***

In Cadbury's brand discourse, interactivity serves a structural function, engaging viewers in meaning-making and fostering a sense of participation in consumption. The strategy under discussion entails a process of resemantisation, in which the viewer is no longer regarded as a passive observer but becomes an active participant in a sensory and social experience. This recontextualization of chocolate as an event-based act of interaction is a significant contribution to the field. The imperative forms "*Break…*" (Fig. 7), "*Share…*" (Fig. 8), and "*Try…*" (Fig. 9) are designed to encourage action, while the inclusive forms "we" and "together" are intended to foster a sense of collectivity.










**Fig. 7.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Cadbury Store, 2020]
**Fig. 8.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Cadbury Dairy Milk, 2026]
**Fig. 9.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Medina Foodservice, 2026]

The staged representations of chocolate transfer simulate participation in consumption. In this paradigm, communication is conceptualized as a shared action. Crossmodality is realized through interactivity as a social experience. The opposition of "*observation*" and "*participation*" serves to delineate a gradation of the addressee's involvement. The utilization of gestures as a medium for interaction facilitates the physical modeling of social engagement through the actions of exchange, sharing, and product transfer. In addition, the following verbal means are employed to reinforce the concept: the concept of "*Sharing the joy with Cadbury*" (Fig. 4), "*There's a glass and a half in everyone*," (Fig. 10) is emphasized, as are scenes of individuals exchanging chocolate or breaking and sharing a bar, which directly simulate consumption as a social activity.




**Fig. 10.** *Cadbury advertisement* [Taylor, 2020]

Therefore, such advertising not only represents the product, but also constructs a situation of interaction. It has been demonstrated that metaphorisation and metonymic elaboration occur within interactivity, which functions as a representation of social connection. This can be expressed as follows: interaction = participation = shared experience.

***Verbal Branding Layer and Slogan Semiosis***

Since its inception, Cadbury has consistently employed verbal means as its primary medium for brand discourse, which has undergone transformation to align with the challenges characteristic of each decade. Historically, advertising was chiefly confined to printed matter. However, contemporary advertising strategies have evolved to encompass a multitude of modes, thereby signifying a substantial augmentation in their scope and complexity. The verbal aspect has undergone a process of resemantisation, whereby slogans have become carriers of sensory, emotional, and bodily meaning. This approach contributes to recontextualizing the product as a holistic consumer experience. It is apparent that slogans and short verbal formulas (*"A glass and a half full of joy," "There's a glass and a half in everyone," "Free the joy" etc*.) are among the most recurrent verbal elements and correspond to the visual scenes depicted in video advertisements and printed campaigns.

These linguistic means serve not only to describe but also to model experience. The opposition between "literal" and "metaphorical" meanings is employed, thereby creating a gradation between the denotative and experiential levels of meaning. The intensification of imperativeness also plays an important role, as slogans take on the character of an action rather than merely a message, thereby engaging the addressee in the experience of consumption. In general, evaluative lexical units and minimal language structures have been observed, which enhance memorability and perceptual effectiveness.

Thus, the effect of verbal reinforcement on sensory experience is formed, whereby language not only describes chocolate but also programs its perception. It is evident that a metaphorical and metonymic expansion of the verbal means is also observed in this context.

**Conclusions**

The analysis has revealed that Cadbury's brand discourse functions as a coherent multimodal system, within which meaning is constructed through the integrated interaction of verbal and non-verbal resources. The process of meaning-making is centered on the resemantisation of the product, in which chocolate is transformed from a material object into a dynamic sensory experience. A gradational model of meaning transformation has been identified, realized through a sequential transition from materiality to complete immersion: chocolate is represented as a liquid (a dynamic substance), as a coating (enrobing), and as an environment ("immersion") in which the boundaries between the object and perception disappear.

This process is accompanied by metaphorical and metonymic mechanisms, in which the product's individual physical characteristics (texture, fluidity, shine) substitute for the holistic sensory experience. The temporal aspect of the discourse is realized through the manipulation of the perception of time (e.g., slow motion, time stretching, rapid transitions), thereby creating an 'extended present' effect. This effect artificially prolongs the moment of enjoyment. The utilization of color, notably the brand's hallmark purple, functions as a cognitive anchor and the structural crux of visual discourse, ensuring instant recognisability and directing attention to its preeminence.

The bodily dimension is pivotal to the construction of meaning: gestures and facial expressions (e.g., closed eyes, slow chewing) foster sensory concentration and create the illusion of the body 'dissolving' into sensation. The acoustic level (snap, melt sounds) establishes a cross-modal correspondence, in which sound serves as a representation of texture and taste. In this manner, sound is endowed with the status of sensory meaning. The social dimension of the discourse is evident in the conceptualization of chocolate as a medium for social interaction, encompassing practices such as sharing, gifting, and bonding. This transformation of the product into a catalyst for emotional and social connections is a salient feature of the discourse.

The use of elements of absurdity and hyperbole intensifies cognitive dissonance, thereby enhancing the emotional engagement and memorability of advertising messages. Despite the absence of physical interaction, a sense of mental participation emerges, in which the consumer becomes a co-constructor of the experience through the imagined 'experiencing' of taste, texture, and movement. The interaction between different modalities contributes to the construction of a coherent multisensory experience.

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## Beyond Taste: Multimodal Construction of Sensory Experience in *Cadbury* Brand Discourse

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This article deals with a *cross-modal approach*, examining the verbal and non-verbal modes used by the *Cadbury brand* and how they combine to construct meaning. *The objective* of the present study is to define the modes employed in both print and video advertising of Cadbury chocolate. In addition, *the aim* of the study is to identify the mechanisms of meaning transformation, in particular resemantisation and recontextualization; to outline the specific use of stylistic resources (metaphors and metonymies) as demonstrated in the selected illustrative material.

The study focuses on identifying the mechanisms through which the product functions as a material, sensory and symbolic entity within brand discourse, shaped by the interaction of multiple modalities and realised through processes of metaphorisation and metonymic extension.

The employment of multimodal discourse analysis enabled the identification of the interrelationships and interdependencies among verbal, visual, auditory, and bodily modes in the Cadbury corpus, as well as the actualization of modalities, which, when combined, form meaning. A range of social semiotics paradigms was applied to provide a theoretical basis for distinguishing the features of modes that differ in structure, semantics, pragmatics, and content. These modes are generated and function within society, and their meanings vary depending on a range of factors characteristic of a particular time period. The examination of transformed primary meanings in the context of resemantisation and recontextualization is enabled by such foundations. The theoretical frameworks of cognitive linguistics have facilitated the identification of metaphors and metonymies. Drawing on critical discourse analysis, this study explores the conceptualization of the Cadbury brand, with a particular focus on the ideological and cultural dimensions that shape its meaning construction.

The findings of this study demonstrate that Cadbury's brand discourse is based on a multi-layered system of multimodal transformations, in which the product ceases to be an object of consumption and instead becomes a dynamic environment of experience. This forms a model of 'total sensory immersion,' in which meaning emerges at the intersection of materiality, corporeality, temporality, sociality, and modal interaction.

It is concluded that all the modes involved in the representation of Cadbury products give rise to cross-modality, which is shaped by the meanings encoded within the various modes. It has been demonstrated that these modes exhibit a high degree of correlation with one another; however, their meanings are subject to transformation in accordance with the prevailing social context and the challenges of the period in question.

It is important to note that, despite Cadbury's primary mission being the production and sale of chocolate, the value and function of this product have undergone significant rethinking to create a sensory and emotional experience that resonates with the audience. The analysis encompasses the material dimension of chocolate, its variability, color palette, as well as acoustic, spatial, and temporal parameters, the specifics of the product's representation, and visual and social factors.

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