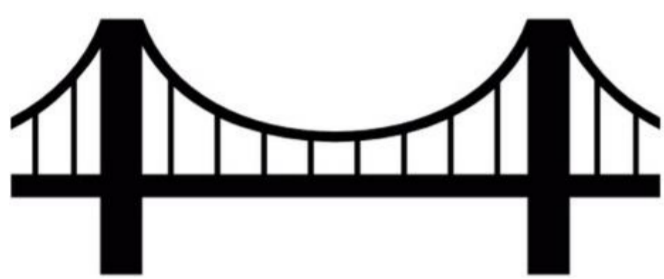


## 1. Introduction

The UK is now a “**smartphone society**”, with an increased demand for mobile phone devices and contracts facilitating a rise in digital marketing<sup>1</sup>. Advertisers frequently use figurative phenomena metaphor and metonymy to **package and convey desirable features** about a product to consumers<sup>2</sup>. Verbal and visual metaphor have been extensively researched, while metonymy has received comparatively less scholarly attention as well as multimodal (verbo-visual) manifestations of these phenomena<sup>3</sup>.



### Metaphor is a bridge:

Metaphor transfers features from one (usually concrete) domain to another unrelated domain (usually abstract)<sup>4</sup>.

### Metonymy stands for the tip of the iceberg:

Metonymy serves as “shorthand” for something that is closely related within the same domain<sup>5</sup>.

E.g. The university will change its mind next week. The *university* is the whole entity that standing for part of the institution, specifically the people on the committee, who will be changing their minds on an institutional matter.



Source: Bank of English (BoE), in: Littlemore (2015: 22)<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Research Questions

### To what extent does multimodal metaphor and metonymy play a role in the mobile phone advertising?

Mobile phones are a part of our everyday lives and how mobile marketing uses different types of figurative phenomena metaphor and metonymy may reveal how we conceptualise mobile phones and networks.

### Do the product domains of mobile phone handsets and networks differ in their use of metaphor and metonymy?

The duality of the mobile world – handsets and contracts – is theoretically interesting as these product domains differ quite starkly in concreteness; the former being more concrete and the latter more abstract. It was expected that the mobile phone networks would use more metaphor and metonymy in its advertisements than mobile manufacturers to aid the construal of its abstract services (e.g. network, data, calls, etc.).

## 3. Methodology

60 multimodal advertisements of across 16 telecommunication brands were analysed; 31 were mobile network advertisements and 29 mobile manufacturer advertisements.

Advertisements were analysed for multimodal metaphor and metonymy using a modified protocol<sup>6</sup>:

1. Identify possible targets
2. Identify possible sources
3. Is the relationship metaphoric or metonymic?
4. Identify the pattern of interaction; metaphor and metonymy can operate in isolation and with each other.

## 4. Results and Discussion

When compared, the two different mobile product domains did not differ in their amount of figurative phenomena used.

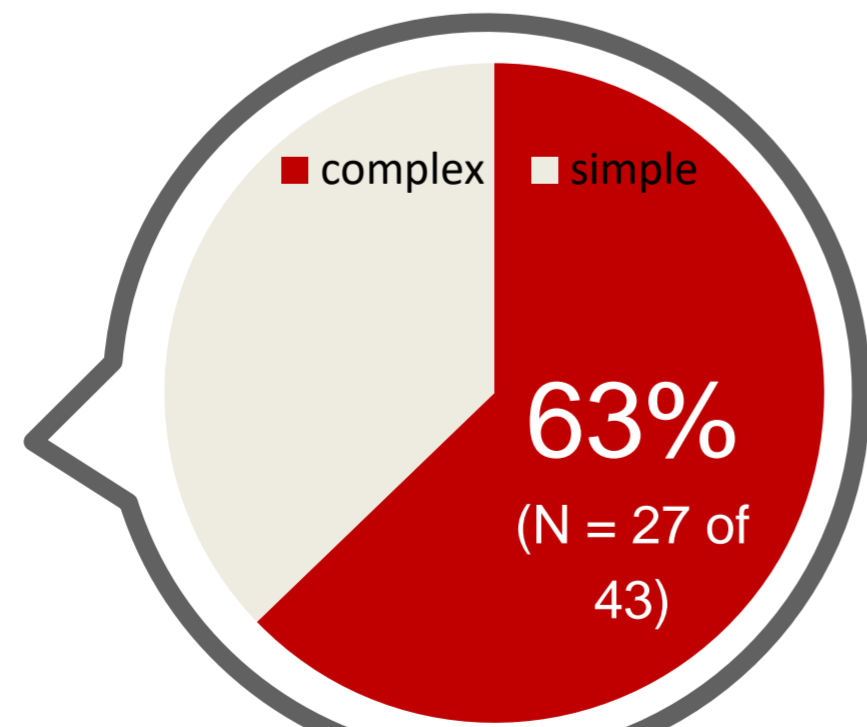
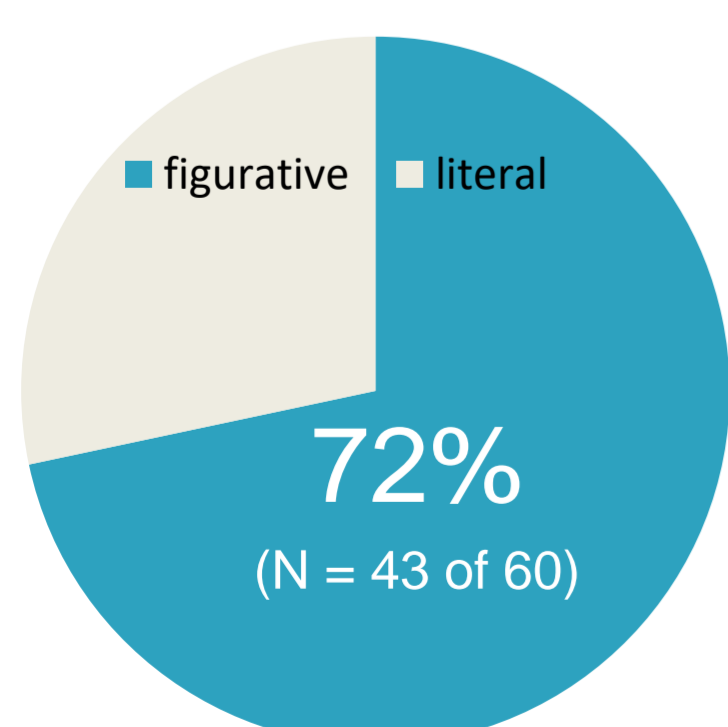
### Number of ads using figurative operations



Container metaphor and metonymies were particularly prevalent and were considered a product of the mobile phone marketing discourse.

83% (N = 24 of 29) manufacturer ads figuratively represented a mobile device | 32% (N = 10 of 31) network ads figuratively represented a mobile device OR sim card

Metaphor and metonymy abundant in mobile phone advertising, with 72% of ads analysed containing either of the figurative phenomena, and 63% of these ads were complex (i.e. they had multiple metaphors, multiple metonymies, or an interaction of both at play).



## 5. Example of Metaphor-Metonymy Interaction

Metaphor and metonymy manifested independently but also interacted. E.g. LG 3G speed is so fast that you can surf stilettos!

**Metaphor:**  
Four-inch stilettos are browsing the internet  
Metaphor is motivated by metonymy to bring together the communicate the complete message

**Metonymy:**  
Yahoo for internet for browsing ('surfing') the internet

“Surf and browse the web at 3G speed”

## References

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<sup>4</sup> Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980/2003) *Metaphors We Live By*. Old/New Edition. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Littlemore, J. (2015) *Metonymy: Hidden Shortcuts in Language, Thought and Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Littlemore, J. & Pérez-Sobrino, P. (2017) Eyelashes, speedometers or breasts? An experimental cross-cultural approach to multimodal metaphor and metonymy in advertising. In: Bacchi, A. & Bagasheva, A. (eds.) *Figurative Language We Live By: The cognitive underpinnings and mechanisms of figurativity in language*. Special Edition of Textus.