

# DECODING MULTIMODAL METAPHORS: ANALYZING INDONESIAN DOCUMENTARY FILM POSTERS THROUGH CONCEPTUAL BLENDING AND RELEVANCE THEORY

Irma Rachminingsih<sup>1</sup>, Yupi Sundari<sup>2</sup>, dan Qisthi Nuralifta<sup>3</sup>

<sup>123</sup>Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia (ISBI) Bandung

[irma@isbi.ac.id](mailto:irma@isbi.ac.id); [yupi\\_sundari@isbi.ac.id](mailto:yupi_sundari@isbi.ac.id); [nuralifta.qissthi@gmail.com](mailto:nuralifta.qissthi@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

*This study investigates how audiences interpret multimodal metaphors in Indonesian film posters, using *Aroma of Heaven*, *SEMES7A*, and *The Act of Killing* as case studies. By applying conceptual blending and relevance theory, the research examines how visual elements like images, colors, and text communicate complex messages. Audience responses, gathered through questionnaires and interviews, show that most viewers understood the metaphors, though their interpretations were shaped by their level of visual literacy and familiarity with the themes presented. The findings suggest that while posters effectively engage viewers through visual and verbal metaphors, the success of these metaphors depends on the audience's cognitive background. This study highlights the importance of making metaphors clear and relatable to ensure effective communication, showing how visual design plays a crucial role in sparking audience interest and understanding. The research offers valuable insights into how film posters act as both artistic and marketing tools.*

*Keywords: documentary film poster, multimodal metaphors, conceptual blending, relevance theory*

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini meneliti bagaimana audiens menginterpretasikan metafora multimodal dalam poster film Indonesia, dengan menggunakan *Aroma of Heaven*, *SEMES7A*, dan *The Act of Killing* sebagai studi kasus. Dengan menerapkan teori pencampuran konseptual dan relevansi, penelitian ini meneliti bagaimana elemen visual seperti gambar, warna, dan teks mengkomunikasikan pesan yang kompleks. Tanggapan penonton, yang dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara, menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar penonton memahami metafora, meskipun interpretasi mereka dibentuk oleh tingkat literasi visual dan keakraban mereka dengan tema yang disajikan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun poster secara efektif melibatkan pemirsa melalui metafora visual dan verbal, keberhasilan metafora ini bergantung pada latar belakang kognitif pemirsa. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya membuat metafora yang jelas dan mudah dipahami untuk memastikan komunikasi yang

efektif, menunjukkan bagaimana desain visual memainkan peran penting dalam memicu minat dan pemahaman audiens. Penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan yang berharga tentang bagaimana poster film berperan sebagai alat artistik dan pemasaran.

Kata kunci: poster film dokumenter, metafora multimodal, perpaduan konseptual, teori relevansi

## INTRODUCTION

Documentary films often deal with social, political, and cultural issues. They raise people's awareness and shed lights on the nation's social, cultural, and political landscapes. In Indonesia, particularly, documentaries tend to engage with substantial narratives that resonate both within Indonesia and international audiences. They are usually rich in metaphors that draw from Indonesia's history, culture, and contemporary struggles. Their essence and layered narratives are reflected in the way their posters are designed.

Film posters contain images, typography and colors. They play a significant role not only in informing potential viewers, but also in persuading and stirring emotions in them. To achieve these aims, film posters use multimodal metaphors that combine different elements like images and text to create deeper and intricate meaning. Visuals serve as a medium for communication between the sender and the audience. They contain embedded messages, and thus viewers recognize that these visuals can be influenced by personal experiences, beliefs and cultural myths (Soikun & Ibrahim, 2021).

At the core of metaphor theory, as defined by Lakoff and Johnson (2003), is the idea that one concept (the source domain) is employed to comprehend a different concept (the target domain). The source domain, generally something concrete or familiar, help people grasp the target domain, a more abstract concept. Multimodal metaphors in film posters combine visual and verbal elements and encourage viewers to make connections between these diverse elements by activating their cognitive abilities (Abdurrahman & Hadi, 2022).

The study of multimodal metaphors has been a significant focus in semiotics, where metaphors are understood as connections drawn between different conceptual domains (Herzal & Reiss, 2023). It offers ground for exploring how viewers interpret layers of meaning. Decoding film posters requires dynamic engagement rooted in theories like conceptual blending and relevance theory. Conceptual blending, as introduced by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), illustrates how individuals combine different mental spaces to create new, unified meanings. This theory becomes especially valuable when examining how film posters merge visual and textual cues to evoke emotional, cultural, and intellectual responses.

In parallel, relevance theory, formulated by Sperber and Wilson (1995), provides a cognitive framework for analyzing communication, including visual and multimodal forms (Forceville, 2020). This theory explains human communication as a process of achieving optimal relevance, balancing cognitive effects and processing effort (Dipper, 2019). Originally focused on verbal communication, RT has been expanded to include visual and multimodal discourses (Forceville, 2020; Lai, 2023). It is argued that viewers process multimodal texts like film posters by identifying key contextual signals and making inferences with minimal cognitive effort.

Relevance Theory also posits that inputs are relevant when they resonate with the audience's knowledge and expectations (Fareed Al-Hindawi & Abdulmajeed, 2017). The

context of a situation, including its physical, social, cultural elements, and personal backgrounds, can influence how metaphors are interpreted (Bonilla, 2018; Nguyen, 2022). Factors like the setting, subject matter, intended audience, and mode of communication all play a role in metaphorical understanding. The selection of a metaphor in a particular context depends not only on the available universal metaphors for the target concept but also on the specific circumstances in which the metaphor is used (Kövecses, 2018).

In the construction of complex metaphorical meanings, Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) provides a robust perspective of the blending of visual and verbal elements. CBT offers insights into how new concepts are formed through the integration of multiple conceptual spaces, explaining the cognitive mechanisms behind human creativity and innovative metaphors (Dalieva, 2024; Ghani, 2021). The theory has been applied to various domains, including discourse analysis, poetry, and rituals (Ghani, 2021). When combined with Metaphor Theory, CBT offers a comprehensive approach to analyzing complex metaphorical expressions, such as proverbs, demonstrating how their meanings emerge from multiple integration networks and metaphorical inputs (Lemghari, 2021). Despite some criticism from structural linguists, CBT's holistic nature and wide applicability make it a valuable tool for understanding the dynamic processes of meaning construction in both linguistic and non-linguistic domains (Ghani, 2021).

Furthermore, multimodal analysis of posters reveals how they convey complex meanings through blended spaces and conceptual integration. Posters use visual and verbal elements to create persuasive communication (Bünzli & Dillard, 2022), often incorporating interdiscursive resources from various domains to generate creative patterns and emotional impact (Pavlina, 2023). The interaction between physical and digital spaces in mixed-reality environments can be analyzed through embodied semiotics, highlighting the ontology, topology, volatility, and agency within these blended spaces (O'Neill & Benyon, 2015). Multimodal elements can also be utilized to raise awareness, such as in environmental protection posters in order to activate viewers' contemplation on ecological issues (Dallyono & Sukyadi, 2019).

Research on visual metaphors in ads posters reveals a complex interplay between cognitive processing and viewer response. Studies indicate that metaphorical ads generally evoke more positive reactions than non-metaphorical ones (Garcia-Madariaga et al., 2020). The relationship between metaphor complexity and viewer appreciation follows an inverted U-curve pattern, where moderate complexity yields optimal results (García-Madariaga et al., 2020). Metaphors of moderate complexity are also found to be more appreciated than simpler or more complex ones, despite being less easily comprehended (van Mulken et al., 2014).

Additionally, research suggests that the success of visual metaphors in communicating complex or abstract ideas depends on several factors, such as visual literacy and the level of concreteness (Birdsell et al., 2022). While engaging and often perceived as creative, visual metaphors may not be equally effective for all audiences, as individuals with lower visual literacy may struggle to decode more abstract representations. In contexts like climate change communication, concrete images tend to evoke stronger emotional responses, especially negative emotions, which can reduce the perceived distance of the issue and encourage concern and action (Duan & Bombara, 2021). For less visually literate individuals, these concrete visuals are particularly impactful, helping to bridge the gap between abstract global issues and personal relevance.

This research delves into how audiences interpret multimodal metaphors in three Indonesian film posters: *Aroma of Heaven* (2014), *SEMES7A* (2019), and *The Act of Killing* (2012). Using conceptual blending and relevance theory, this study explores how various semiotic elements in the posters work together to express complex socio-cultural and thematic messages. It also focuses on how audiences perceive multimodal metaphors in film posters. By focusing on these Indonesian films, the study adds to the growing body of work on visual metaphors in global cinema and their cognitive effects on diverse audiences.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative research method. It focuses on understanding human perception through textual and observational data. The research combines content analysis and participant feedback to assess the effectiveness of multimodal metaphors in documentary film posters. The content analysis examines the interplay of visual and textual components, such as titles, taglines, imagery and color to uncover and interpret the metaphors presented (van Leeuwen, 2005). The objects of this study are three posters of Indonesian documentary film. The selected posters are from the documentary films *Aroma of Heaven*, *SEMES7A*, *The Act of Killing*.

In addition to content analysis, 30 participants were surveyed and interviewed to collect qualitative data on how viewers interpret the metaphors. Their feedback provided valuable insights into the clarity and impact of the metaphors in the posters (Flick, 2014). The participants' responses were analyzed to explore how these metaphors are understood and decoded by the audience (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

This approach is particularly relevant for understanding how documentary posters communicate complex ideas through multimodal metaphors (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). The combination of visual imagery and textual cues layered meanings that can shape audience expectations about the film. By analyzing the specific metaphors within each poster, the study seeks to reveal how these elements engage viewers and convey underlying themes of the documentaries.

Furthermore, participant feedback plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between the intended message of the poster and the audience's interpretation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Interviews provided deeper insights into how different viewers with varied backgrounds perceive the same metaphorical content. Finally, integrating both content analysis and participant feedback give a comprehensive understanding of how documentary film posters use metaphors to communicate film message and also of how audiences interpret the message.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis of these film posters reveals how visual and verbal elements work together to convey meaning and shape audience perceptions. Each poster employs multimodal metaphors to communicate its film themes and engage viewers.

Designers can draw practical insights from this study. To create effective film posters, they should balance aesthetic appeal with cognitive accessibility by using culturally familiar symbols, aligning visual elements with thematic tones, and blending abstract and concrete metaphors. This approach ensures that the posters are engaging while remaining accessible to diverse audiences.

Future research could further explore the use of multimodal metaphors in various genres and cultural contexts. Investigating their impact on narrative coherence, emotional engagement, and audience understanding would provide a deeper understanding of their effectiveness. Additionally, examining the relationship between visual literacy and cognitive accessibility could offer strategies to enhance audience interaction with visual media.

## Aroma of Heaven

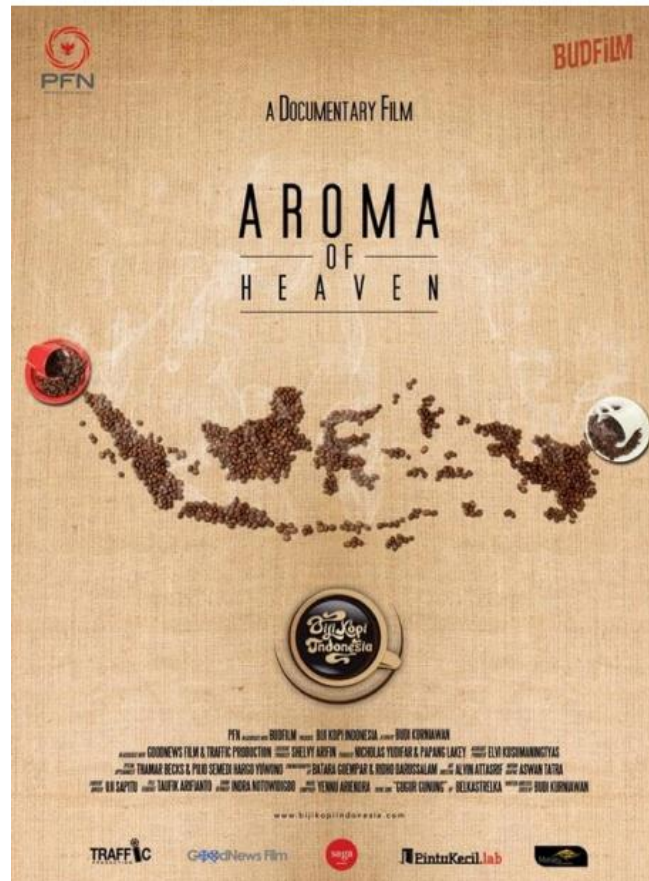


Figure 1. The Film Poster 'Aroma of Heaven'

The *Aroma of Heaven* poster features several striking elements that effectively convey its theme. The title stands out prominently, accompanied by the taglines "A Documentary Film" and "Biji Kopi Indonesia," emphasizing the focus on Indonesian coffee. The central image is a creative depiction of the Indonesian archipelago, crafted entirely from coffee beans, with a red cup placed at the farthest end of Sumatra Island and a white cup at the farthest end of Papua Island. The design is brought together with a palette of earthy tones, enhancing the natural and organic feel of the poster while aligning with the theme of coffee.

Respondent analysis showed that 90% of respondents recognized the title as an effective metaphor for coffee's cultural and sensory significance; 60% interpreted the coffee beans as representing more than just a beverage, tying them to national identity; 40% indicated some level of difficulty in fully grasping the metaphors, likely influenced by varying levels of familiarity with Indonesian coffee culture.

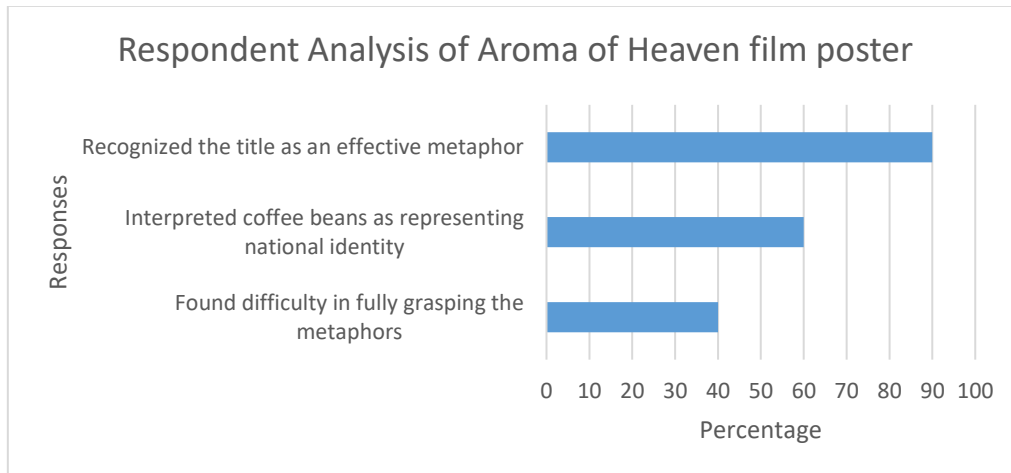


Chart 1. Respondent Analysis of Aroma of Heaven film poster

## SEMES7A

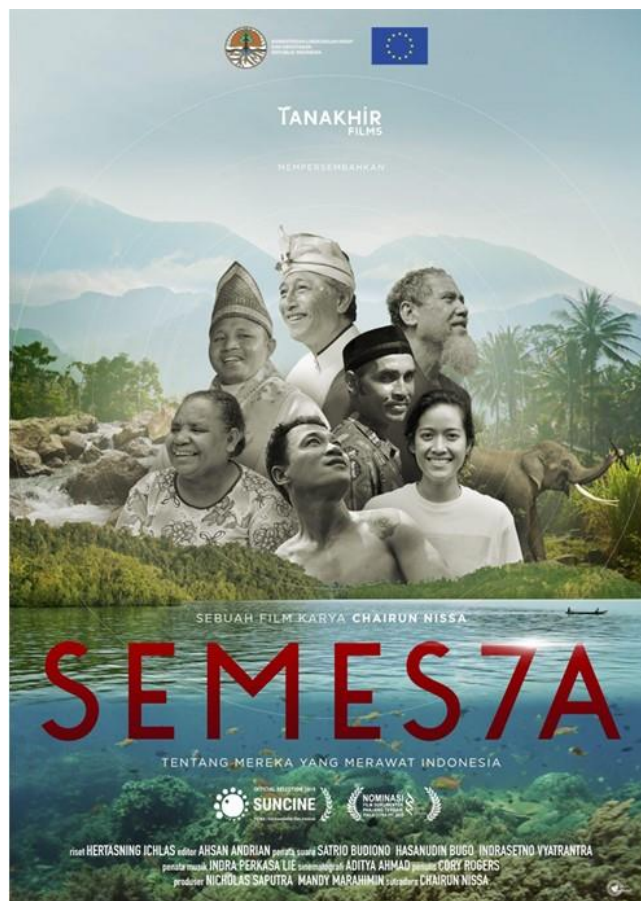


Figure 2. The Film Poster 'SEMES7A'

The *SEMES7A* poster presents a visually compelling composition that reflects its environmental and cultural theme. The title *SEMES7A* is prominently displayed, supported by the taglines "*Sebuah Film Karya Chairun Nissa*" and "*Tentang Mereka Yang Merawat Indonesia*," which highlight the film's focus on individuals caring for Indonesia. The central visual features seven Indonesian people depicted in harmony with nature, surrounded by

elements of air, land, and water, symbolizing their connection to the environment. The poster is unified by a blue earth color schema, reinforcing the ecological message and evoking a sense of balance and serenity.

In terms of questionnaire, respondent analysis showed that 100% identified the connection between humanity and nature depicted in the poster; 70% found the use of colors effective in conveying the environmental focus, and 60% found the message easy to comprehend.

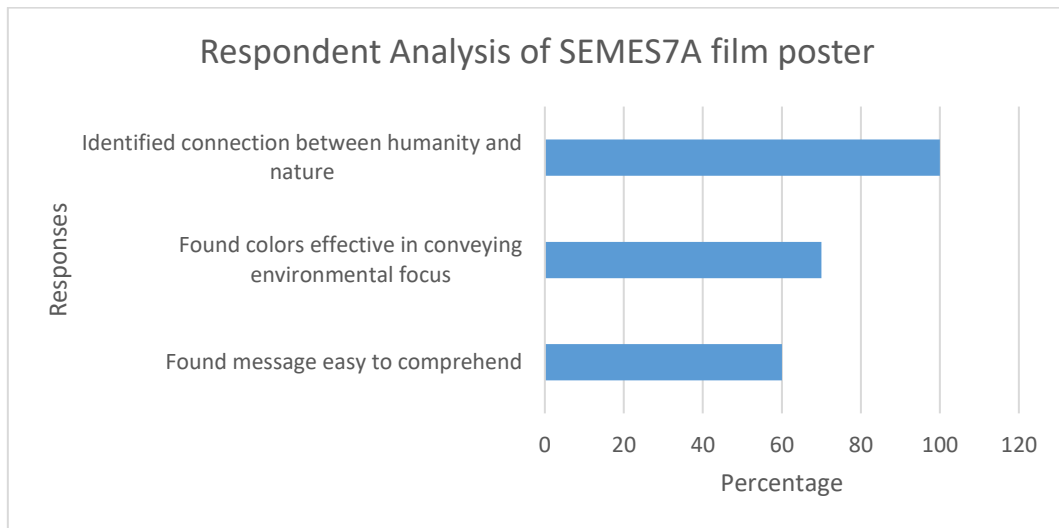


Chart 2. Respondent Analysis of SEMES7A film poster

## The Act of Killing

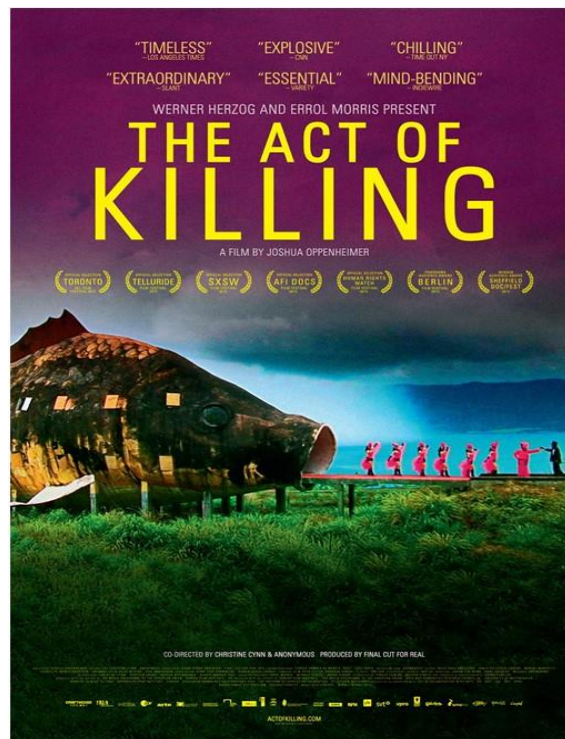


Figure 3. The Film Poster 'The Act of Killing'

The Act of Killing film poster is dark and evocative, capturing the unsettling themes of the film. The title is boldly highlighted in yellow, creating a stark contrast against the predominantly dark color scheme of purples and blacks. The tagline, "A Film by Joshua Oppenheimer," establishes the filmmaker's authorship. The central image is a large, grotesque fish-like structure, serving as a haunting visual metaphor that reflects the film's disturbing subject matter. This interplay of ominous colors and striking contrasts adds to the poster's eerie and thought-provoking atmosphere.

In terms of questionnaire, respondent analysis showed that 90% interpreted the fish as a metaphor for authority; 60% found the poster visually appealing; 40% found the overall message difficult to understand, reflecting the abstract nature of the metaphors; and 90% associated the color scheme with the intended mysterious and ominous tone.

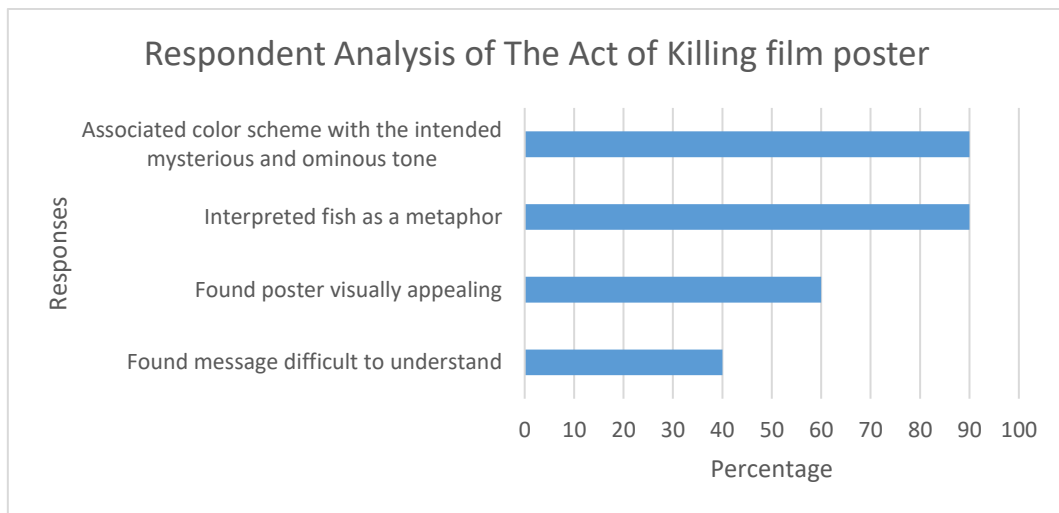


Chart 3. Respondent Analysis of The Act of Killing film poster

The posters for *Aroma of Heaven* and *SEMES7A* effectively use culturally resonant metaphors to communicate their themes. The familiarity of coffee culture in *Aroma of Heaven* and the environmental themes in *SEMES7A* enabled easier comprehension for respondents. However, the abstract and unsettling imagery in *The Act of Killing* required more cognitive effort, demonstrating how abstract metaphors may limit accessibility, especially for viewers lacking specific cultural or thematic knowledge.

The principle of cognitive relevance explains why some metaphors resonated more strongly with respondents. The metaphors in *SEMES7A* and *Aroma of Heaven* aligned well with audience expectations and prior knowledge, offering high cognitive benefits with minimal effort. In contrast, the abstract imagery in *The Act of Killing* required greater effort, leading to varied interpretations.

The blending of sensory, cultural, and environmental elements in the posters of *Aroma of Heaven* and *SEMES7A* created coherent narratives that were easily decoded. The fish in *The Act of Killing* blended concepts of power and menace, but its abstractness posed challenges for some viewers.

Across all three posters, the interplay of colors, imagery, and text serves as a powerful tool for communicating the films' themes. The earthy tones in *Aroma of Heaven* align with the natural and comforting feel of the film, while the blues and greens in *SEMES7A* emphasize the environmental and cultural richness of Indonesia. In contrast, the dark, moody colors in *The*

Act of Killing create a tense, foreboding atmosphere that prepares the viewer for the disturbing content of the film. These posters leverage visual metaphors to guide the audience's interpretation, subtly suggesting the central themes of each film through symbolic use of color, imagery, and titles.

The effectiveness of these posters lies in their ability to create a visual narrative that resonates with the audience's cognitive and emotional expectations. Through conceptual metaphors, familiar cultural symbols, and abstract representations, the posters manage to bridge the gap between the viewer's existing knowledge and the film's subject matter. This connection fosters engagement and encourages the audience to explore the films further. These visual elements not only pique interest but also enhance the overall understanding of the films' deeper themes, making them essential tools for marketing and audience engagement.

The results of content analysis demonstrate the effectiveness of multimodal metaphors in the posters for SEMES7A, Aroma of Heaven, and The Act of Killing. Through the lens of relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995) and conceptual blending theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), we can better understand how audiences decode the visual and verbal elements in these posters, and how their comprehension is influenced by cognitive factors such as background knowledge and visual literacy.

Relevance theory, which is built on the idea that human cognition is naturally geared toward maximizing relevance, provides a useful framework for interpreting the responses to these posters. According to Sperber and Wilson (1995), individuals prioritize information that offers the most cognitive benefits with minimal effort, while communicators—such as film posters—aim to present messages that are easy for the audience to process and worth their attention. This principle of relevance can explain why some metaphors in the posters resonated more strongly with certain respondents than others.

In the documentary's poster of SEMES7A, for example, various natural elements like sunlight, lands, waters, plants, and animals, were interpreted by most respondents as symbols of the relationship between humanity and nature. The combination of these elements with human figures created a metaphorical blend that highlighted humanity's responsibility for environmental stewardship. This idea is supported by conceptual blending theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), which suggests that successful metaphors combine elements from different conceptual spaces—in this case, the natural world and human actions—into a coherent narrative. Importantly, 100% of respondents recognized this metaphorical connection, suggesting that the blend worked effectively in this instance. However, 30-40% of respondents remained neutral about certain elements of the poster, indicating that while the general message was clear, some viewers might have struggled with specific metaphors that required more environmental knowledge or visual literacy (Forceville, 2006).

Visual appeal was another critical factor in how respondents engaged with the SEMES7A poster. Forty percent found the design visually attractive, while 50% were neutral, highlighting the subjective nature of visual aesthetics. This division suggests that while the poster resonated with some, others may not have been as captivated by its design, which could have influenced their overall comprehension of the message. The comprehensibility of the poster's main message was another point of interest. While 60% of respondents found the message easy to understand, 40% were unsure, pointing to the role of visual literacy in interpreting complex visual messages. On the other hand, the use of colors like green, blue, and brown was highly effective in reinforcing the environmental theme, with 70% of respondents finding these colors relevant to the film's subject matter. This illustrates how

certain visual cues, like color, can play a significant role in enhancing the audience's understanding of the film's central theme (van Leeuwen, 2011).

In the case of film poster *Aroma of Heaven*, the metaphors used in the poster were similarly well-received, particularly the title itself. With 90% of respondents agreeing that the title successfully conveyed the abstract idea of coffee as a metaphor for heaven, it is clear that verbal metaphors can be highly effective when paired with culturally resonant symbols (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The visual metaphor of coffee beans forming a map of Indonesia was another strong element, reflecting the richness of Indonesia's natural resources and culture. Conceptual blending theory explains this metaphor as a blend of the sensory experience of coffee and the spiritual or cultural connotations of heaven, creating a powerful narrative about national identity (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). This metaphor was particularly effective, with 60% of respondents interpreting the coffee elements as representing more than just a beverage, while 40% strongly agreed, demonstrating a high level of metaphorical comprehension among the audience.

However, not all respondents found the poster equally easy to understand. While 60% found the message clear, 40% remained neutral or disagreed. This variation in responses can be explained by relevance theory, which posits that the effectiveness of communication depends on the audience's cognitive environment (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). In this case, familiarity with Indonesian coffee culture likely played a role in how easily viewers grasped the metaphors. Additionally, 100% of respondents indicated that the use of multimodal metaphors increased their interest in the film, highlighting the persuasive power of these metaphors as marketing tools.

The poster for *\*The Act of Killing\** presented more abstract and complex metaphors, which led to a wider range of audience interpretations. The poster's most prominent visual element, a giant fish, was interpreted by 90% of respondents as a metaphor for a powerful ruler, but only 60% found the poster visually appealing. The abstract nature of this metaphor, as well as the paradoxical imagery of people standing before the fish, required greater cognitive effort to decode (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Conceptual blending theory helps explain this: the fish symbolizes authority and the people symbolize vulnerability, creating a paradoxical image that reflects the film's themes of power and violence. However, 40% of respondents found the message difficult to understand, suggesting that the metaphors might have been too abstract for some viewers, further illustrating the need for visual literacy.

Relevance theory also sheds light on why some respondents struggled with *The Act of Killing* poster. Since the success of a metaphor relies on the viewer's ability to connect the abstract imagery to relevant cognitive frameworks, the visual metaphors in this poster may have required specific cultural or thematic knowledge that not all respondents possessed (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Nevertheless, the use of color was highly effective, with 90% of respondents associating the purple, blue, and green tones with a mysterious atmosphere, demonstrating that certain visual elements were universally understood.

Overall, the findings from this study underscore the importance of multimodal metaphors in film posters, particularly in terms of engaging audiences and conveying complex themes. Both relevance theory and conceptual blending theory provide valuable insights into how different visual and verbal elements combine to create meaningful messages. However, the effectiveness of these metaphors depends largely on the audience's cognitive environment, prior knowledge, and visual literacy. While the metaphors in *SEMES7A* and *Aroma of Heaven* were generally well-understood, the more abstract metaphors in *The Act of Killing* posed

greater challenges, highlighting the role of cultural and cognitive factors in metaphor interpretation. As such, designers of film posters should consider the diverse backgrounds and cognitive abilities of their audiences when creating visual metaphors, especially for films that deal with abstract or complex themes. Visual literacy remains a key factor in the audience's ability to decode these messages, and ensuring that metaphors are accessible to a broader audience can enhance both engagement and comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

This research highlights the essential role of multimodal metaphors in film posters. It indicates that successful film posters strike a balance between aesthetic appeal and cognitive accessibility, ensuring that visual metaphors are understandable and relatable to a diverse audience.

Furthermore, the study underscores the role of visual literacy in interpreting complex visual messages. Audiences with higher levels of visual literacy are better equipped to decode abstract metaphors, while those with lower levels may struggle. This suggests that promoting visual literacy education can enhance critical engagement with visual media and improve metaphor comprehension.

This study contributes to the fields of visual literacy and cultural communication by showing how multimodal metaphors in film posters can foster deeper cognitive and emotional connections. It provides a foundation for future studies and practical applications in visual media design.

## References

- Abdurrahman, I. B., & Hadi, R. N. (2022). Multi-modal metaphor: A cognitive survey. *Journal of STEPS for Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(3), article 42.
- Anh Dao, N. T. (2022). Multimodal metaphor in advertising: Cultural perspectives. *European Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics Studies*, 6(1), 89–94.
- Birdsell, B. J., Tatsuta, N., & Nakamura, H. (2022). Effects of visual metaphors on enhancing the power of advertisements. *IAFOR Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences*, 8(1), 6–22. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ijpbs.8.1.01>
- Bonilla, J. F. (2018). Multimodal metaphors and advertising: A cross-cultural comparison of the use of behavioural multimodal metaphors. *Sustainable Multilingualism*, 13(1), 113–91. <https://doi.org/10.2478/sm-2018-0013>
- Bünzli, F., & Dillard, J. P. (2022). The persuasive effects of verbal anchoring and visual complexity. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, 41(1), 46–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1051144X.2022.2053817>
- Dalieva, M. (2024). The role of blending theory in polysemy and metaphor. *Science Problems*, 4(2), Page-Page. <https://doi.org/10.47390/SPR1342V4SI2Y2024N24>
- Dallyono, R., & Sukyadi, D. (2019). An analysis of multimodal resources in environmental protection posters. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 472–479. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v9i2.20245>
- Dipper, L. (2019). Relevance theory. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Human Communication Sciences and Disorders* (Vol. 4, pp. 1596–1596). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483380810>
- Duan, R., & Bombara, C. (2021). Visualizing climate change: The role of construal level, emotional valence, and visual literacy. *Climatic Change*, 170, 1–22.

- Džanić, N. D., & Žerić, A. (2017). What is advertising without blending? Advertisements in women's magazines. *Explorations in English Language and Linguistics*, 4(1), 1–14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/exell-2017-0004>
- Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (2002). *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities*. New York: Basic Books.
- Forceville, C. (2006). Non-verbal and multimodal metaphor in a cognitivist framework: Agendas for research. In G. Kristiansen, M. Achard, R. Dirven, & F. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (Eds.), *Cognitive linguistics* (pp. 379–402). Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110197761.5.379>
- Forceville, C. (2007). Multimodal metaphor in ten Dutch TV commercials. *Public Journal of Semiotics*, 1(1), 15–34. <https://doi.org/10.37693/pjos.2007.1.8812>
- Forceville, C. (2020). *Visual and multimodal communication: Applying the relevance principle*. New York: Oxford Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190845230.001.0001>
- Fareed, H. A., & Abdulmajeed, R. K. (2017). The cognitive principle of relevance and its application to anti-Iraq war posters. *Kufa Journal of Arts*. <https://doi.org/10.36317/0826-009-030-021>
- García-Madariaga, J., Moya, I., Recuero, N., & Blasco, M. F. (2020). Revealing unconscious consumer reactions to advertisements that include visual metaphors: A neurophysiological experiment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, article 1.
- Ghani, K. A. (2021). Comparative semantics: An introduction to conceptual blending theory. *International Journal of Humanities Philosophy and Language*, 4(14), 28–51. <http://dx.doi.org/10.35631/IJHPL.414003>
- Herzal, A., & Reiss, G. (2023). Metaphors – Bridges between conceptual domains. *Annals of the University of Craiova. Series Philology. Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.52846/aucssflingv.v45i1-2.107>
- Kövecses, Z. (2018). Metaphor, cognition, culture. In M. J. Gelfand, C. Chiu, & Y. Hong (Eds.), *Handbook of Advances in Culture and Psychology* (Vol. 7). New York: Oxford Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190879228.003.0002>
- Lai, F. (2023). A relevance-theoretic approach to multimodal discourse analysis: A case study of emoji advertising. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 6(4), 115–120.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lemghari, E. M. (2021). Metaphorical blending in complex proverbs: A case study. *Metaphor and the Social World*, 11(1), 71–97. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/msw.19004.lem>
- O'Neill, S. J., & Benyon, D. (2015). Extending the semiotics of embodied interaction to blended spaces. *Human Technology*, 11, 30–56.
- Pavlina, S. Y. (2023). Making political posters expressive: Interdiscursive and intrasemiotic resources of multimodal creativity. *NSU Vestnik. Series: Linguistics and Intercultural Communication*, 21(3), 31–44. <https://doi.org/10.25205/1818-7935-2023-21-3-31-44>
- Soikun, T. M., & Ibrahim, A. A. A. (2021). Finding “appeal” factors in local animation character design: Formalistic and visual semiotic analysis. *Jurnal Pangung*, 3, 263–275.
- Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance: Communication and cognition* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Van Mulken, M., Van Hooft, A., & Nederstigt, U. (2014). Finding the tipping point: Visual metaphor and conceptual complexity in advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 43, 333–343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2014.920283>
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*. New York: Routledge.
- Wilson, D. (2019). Relevance theory. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.201>