

# A Visual Grammar Design Analysis of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures in the Pandemic Era

Siti Hafifah<sup>1</sup> T. Silvana Sinar<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Cultural Sciences Universitas Sumatra Utara

\*Corresponding author. Email: [tengkusilvana@usu.ac.id](mailto:tengkusilvana@usu.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

This article is entitled "A Visual Grammar Design Analysis of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures in the Pandemic Era". The objectives of this article are to identify the visual elements of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures which has just launched at the beginning of October 2020, which is during the pandemic spread period, as well as to describe the representation of visual elements. It is analyzed by using qualitative descriptive method. The sources of data that are being analyzed are twelve pictures; a set of teasers of the looks, obtained from Chanel's official website, and the data are the visual elements of each visual figure. The results of the analysis showed that the most common visual elements used in the figures are frequently represented by the elements of 'represented participant' and 'high modality' of pictorial portrayal. It is concluded that the photographers' ideas along with the designer in expressing fashion are to visualize the timelessness and sophistication of vintage fashion which can fit today, especially in pandemic issues.

**Keywords:** Multimodal Analysis, Visual Grammar Design Analysis, Chanel Representation, pandemic era

## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic era, many various business lines are endangered. When the pandemic hit, the fashion industry was impacted immediately. The closure of non-essential retail, including fashion was demanded by governments around the world due to public health concerns and social distancing measures [1]. The urgency of promoting products, especially fashion industry creatively, is no longer to be debated; it is a must, moreover sided with the fact that the priority of society is to stay dominantly at home and mostly works can be done online at home too. Photography is a visual language that shares some important characteristics - communicative and structural [2]. Photographs are usually accompanied by writing and/or added with a caption or a title. However, today, language's influence goes beyond mere writing [3]. Today, photographs are usually taken into account for commercial purposes, one of which is product promotion. There are many types of promotions that people often encounter, usually found in electronic and printed media, such as picture teasers.

Chanel, during pandemic era, has just launched its latest collection; Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Ready-to-Wear collection teaser, designed by Virginie Viard and photographed by photography duo Inez & Vinoodh, and was presented on Tuesday, October 6th, 2020.

The teaser pictures of the collection are the opening of the whole presentation of the collection on Chanel's website.

The opening consists of twelve total of pictures displayed on a page. The pictures have no verbal texts at all, only visual elements can be seen there.

The researcher analyzes twelve pictures of the Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign teaser pictures with Grammar of Visual Design theory of Kress and van Leeuwen [4]. Based on the explanation above, the title taken through this research is A Visual Grammar Design Analysis of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures in the Pandemic Era

Concerning relevant studies, there are some previous researches have been done focusing on the mingling of verbal and visual texts from various sources of data. However, there hasn't been found any research on visual grammar design analysis of photograph collection Chanel teaser pictures as their means of advertising or promotion with no verbal elements within as the source of data using only Grammar of Visual Design theory of Kress and van Leeuwen.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 1. Visual Grammar Analysis

Multimodal analysis refers to studying social interaction by analyzing all the modes in which people act [5]. A multimodal analysis examines written as well as spoken text, e.g. gesture, shifting of posture, shifting of gaze, head movements, sounds and so forth, also valid for wider

environment, e.g. furniture placement, a certain spatial layout, and other present people [6].

Kress and Van Leeuwen [4] set out a systematic map to bridge the territory from Systemic Functional Grammar of Halliday [7] to multimodal visual-based communicative artifacts and providing possibilities of meaning-making grammar available that can be applied to all forms of visual presentation. In visual communication, the metafunctions are namely

a. Representational

It is parallel to Ideational. It functions to show how an image conveys aspects of the real world;

a. Interactional

It is parallel to Interpersonal. It functions to show how an image engages with the viewer;

b. Compositional

It is parallel to Textual. It functions to show how the elements of an image are arranged or reproduced to achieve its intentions and effects.

For constituting and maintaining the interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image, visual communication has some resources. There are factors which shall be taken into careful consideration when examining the interaction, namely:

a. Participant

Image as well as other visual text kinds consists two kinds of participants:

- Represented participant; the participants who are the people, the setting and properties depicted in images,
- Interactive participant; the participants who communicate with each other through images, the producers (e.g. the editors of newspaper), and viewers of images (e.g. the readers of a newspaper).

These representational choices shaped the social relations between transcribers, and/or to the participants represented in the transcript, the represented participants to the readers, and the represented participants to themselves [8].

b. Using gaze

In everyday life, we are constantly aware of where other people are looking, particularly if they are looking at us. The concept of gaze in art history is often used to describe the way the viewer is positioned in front of a painting. The direction in which participants in an image are looking is fundamental in establishing a relationship among the participants in the visual text to the viewer. The types relationships consists of two, namely ‘demands’ and ‘offers’ [9].

- Demands; the participant demands the viewer to enter into an imaginary relationship with them when a participant looks out at the viewer
- Offers; the image offers the participants items of information to the viewer or objects of contemplation impersonally where the participant possess no direct eye contact with the viewer.

c. Social distance

Social distance is the process of suggesting a relationship from the participant to the viewer through the visualization of size of the participant or amount the participant

occupies in the image. Ideas of social distance are influenced by proxemics developed by the anthropologist Hall in Joyce and Gaudin [10] such as

- Intimate distance  
It deals with smell, touch, as well as sight,
- Personal distance  
It maintains a clear awareness of the participant’s facial expressions and/or gestures and the viewers can reach out to touch them. The participant as if is able to talk with the viewers without encouraging a closer interaction,
- Public distance  
It separates the viewrs from the participants they are not acquainted or related to.

d. Perspective

Royce [11] divided angles into three, namely

- high angle forces the viewers to look down on the represented participants, which is suggestive of superiority to them, or of their significance.
- low angle forces the viewers to look up to them, which is suggestive of the viewer’s inferior position, or the importance of the portrayed participant(s).
- eye-level angle is suggestive of a sense of equality between the viewer and the represented participants.

The way the subject matter and purpose of an image may determine the type and degree of modality used to create it are described by the coding orientation of an image. Coding orientation with modality marking work together to give clues to the viewers about the kind of information the visual text is trying to share or convey. Artists may depart from an agreed standard of modality to suggest a different or higher truth than can be obtained by photographic accuracy. For other purposes, they may also be less concerned about approximate conventional reality, for example, to explain a concept or theory or communicate an important message as economically as possible. For example, objects may look smaller the further away they are but other cultures use size to mark the social or religious importance of particular participants. Kress and van Leeuwen [4] also suggested that the degree of social distance and intimacy between the participants and the viewers determined the amount of participant's body shown in the visual frame [12].

e. Modality

Not all images are intended to be read as straightforward representations of the real world. Matthiessen [7] states that multimodality is an inherent feature as any condition in terms of the strata organization of semiotic systems can be interpreted by reference to the context of culture in which different semiotic systems operate. When we view an image we should be prepared to ask whether the image’s purpose is to persuade viewers or what it exactly represents. Modality refers to the degree of standards of reality to which images adhere to or depart from. It is seen as part of the interpersonal function because image-makers use modality markers to give the viewer an impression of the truth or credibility of the image. There are variables in

the modality that shall be accounted for in the analysis; color saturation, color differentiation, color modulation, contextualization, representation, depth, illumination, brightness.

#### f. Chanel

Chanel is one of the most famous fashion brands in the world. It was a French fashion house that focuses on high fashion and ready-to-wear clothes, luxury goods, and accessories. Nonetheless, starting from the lower class, middle class, to socialites, all of them make Chanel a fashion statement or inspiration in style. Chanel product brands have been personified by fashion models, idols, and actors, all over the world [13]

#### g. Teaser Picture

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, a teaser is an advertising or promotional device which is intended for arousing interest or curiosity or to create buzz that renders the product even more exciting to an increasing number of consumers. It can be in the form of pictures of photographs as well as videos [14].

#### Problems of the Study

The present study attempts to provide an answer to the following questions:

1. What are the visual elements of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures?
2. How are visual elements represented in Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures?

#### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this article are

1. To identify the visual elements of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures
2. To describe the representation of visual elements of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures

#### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study applies qualitative method. The data sources are the twelve pictures of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures and the data are the visual elements in the pictures.

In terms of data collection, the twelve pictures will be analyzed and analysis of a sample is taken to be displayed in this article.

The data analysis is composed of the elements of Visual Grammar, namely, participant, social distance, gaze, perspective, and modality.

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

These pictures (in fig. 1) are how they are displayed. The twelve pictures are displayed on a page, which is put before the link which shows the whole items of collections. Nonetheless, the viewers can still click and download each picture.



**Figure 1.** How the pictures are displayed in the webpage

#### Findings

##### 1. The participant

A female model sitting on a king-size bed in a vintage decorated room. She wears a glittery dazzling suede/jacket with matching uniform trousers and a silver watch and her look is somewhat formal. To add a comfy mood, she wears simply designed slippers. Her hair is a styled vintage volumed natural blonde with a slicked-back ponytail – the look accentuates her strong facial features, making her look a fierce and firm person. By her manner in the picture, as she holds the pen with some files put underneath her hand with her other hand gripping her waist, we can tell that the participant represented is a wealthy, high-fashioned career woman working at home.

##### 2. The image and the gaze

The represented participant does not look at the viewer. The female model stares to what we can assume as a window (by the vast natural lighting facing her) and in that time she was as if looking for some inspiration to the other side for a while. This picture offers the represented participants to the viewer fashion items the model is wearing as the participant was a specimen in a display case.

##### 3. Social distance

The social distance in this picture is medium long shot – showing the full figure. The represented participant portrayed in a medium long shot is shown impersonally, like strangers with whom we do not need to become acquainted.

##### 4. Perspective

Objective image; this image has no central perspective as well as no built-in point of view within the visual text. The picture disregards the viewer and show what the viewer would see if s/he was looking at them in reality.

##### 5. Angle

The represented participant is at eye level; then the point of view, which shows equality and no power difference involved.

#### 6. Modality Markers

- Color saturation: low modality, as the picture is black and white
- Color differentiation: low modality, minimum diversified range of colors
- Color modulation: low modality, as the shades are ranging from black to white
- Contextualization: high modality, as the picture is fully articulated and detailed background
- Representation: high modality, as the picture has maximum representation of pictorial detail and shows every detail of the represented participants.
- Depth: high modality, maximally deep perspective.
- Illumination: medium modality, as the source of the lighting comes from the large window
- Brightness: low modality, as the picture is set in black and white, it has not much of different degrees of brightness.



**Figure 2.** Picture analysis sample

All of the pictures (result in table 1) are analyzed as:

- The participant: represented participants are wealthy, high-fashioned career women.
- The image and the gaze: offer images as the represented participants do not look at the viewer, and the pictures offer the represented participants to the viewer fashion items. The activities are acted by the models in uniform or same poses as if they are model mannequins; function to display the items.
- Social distance, the pictures are shot medium long shot, showing the full figure of the participants.
- The perspective of the pictures is objective image, as the pictures have no central perspective as well as built-in point of view.

- The angle of the represented participant in the pictures is at eye level.
- Modality Markers of all of the pictures have low modality color saturation, as the picture is black and white, low modality in color differentiation due to minimum diversified range of colors, low modality in color modulation, as the shades are ranging from black to white, high modality in contextualization, as the pictures have fully articulated and detailed background, high modality of representation, as the pictures show maximum representation of pictorial detail, as the picture shows every detail of the represented participants, high modality in depth, as the pictures have maximally deep perspective, medium modality of Illumination, as the source of the lighting comes from the large window, and low modality of brightness, as the picture is set in black and white and it has not much of different degrees of brightness.

**Table 1.** The whole results of the analysis

fig.	the participant	the participant			modality						
		the image and the gaze	size of frame and social distance	perspective	color saturation	color differentiation	color modulation	contextualization	representation	depth	illumination
1	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
2	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
3	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
4	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
5	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
6	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
7	represented participant	no eye contact	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	modality	modality	modality	modality	modality	modality	modality
8	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
9	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
10	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
11	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality
12	represented participant	offer images	Medium long shot	objective image, eye level	low modality	low modality	low modality	high modality	high modality	high modality	medium modality

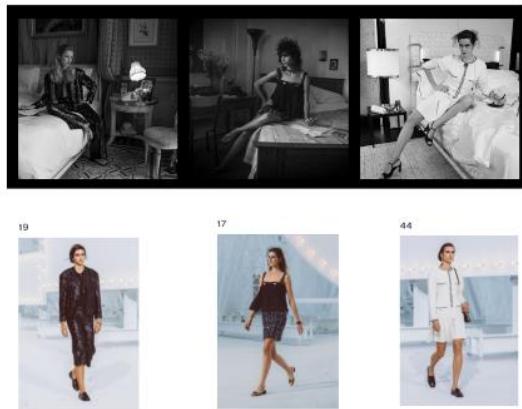
## Discussion

In the pictures (fig. 3), the represented participants, the wealthy, high-fashioned career women who are represented by the three different female models, acted in four different settings represent various characters and preferences of women, supported by various properties and choices of outfits and house design, as well as the way they walk in the public space.

Playing on the idea of repetition of the poses in the pictures is the idea of Inez & Vinoodh, reported from runwaymagazine.com [15], the women all enact the same gestures, they are each clearly in their world but together represent what they feel is Chanel's way of fitting into the lives of every woman with a cool and easy allure.

Nonetheless, due to its type of gaze and social distance, the fashion items are addressed to anyone, not only to

specific viewers or narrowing to a particular party, as of career women. The function of the pictures visualizing the models in the pictures are to display and offer the fashion items collection of the designers to the viewers in general. Another thing is that by means of the samples above (fig.1), it can be seen that the fashion items that are displayed in the teaser pictures are realized in black and white settings,. Meanwhile, comparing the samples of the teasers to the presentation page of the whole collections (fig. 3), it can be seen that they are in full-color photography settings.



**Figure 3:** The color modality of the teaser pictures and the collection showcase

Therefore, the reason for the low modality of the colors, based on the analysis, not only can be a trigger for high curiosity of how the products will be realized, and it is then in line with the goal of teaser pictures, but also to fit the fashion style to the pandemic era in 2020. As the creative director of Chanel, Virginie Viard imagined the theme of their collection which is inspired by the heyday of Hollywood in the 1950s, the reason for choosing the vintage experience functions to display the timelessness and sophistication and high-class-ness of the fashion collection items which are shown in the picture's portrayal and still can fit today, especially during this pandemic era. Vintage fashion can be seen as a means of stability against the rapidly changing environment, particularly this era, which helps consumers to reconnect with a time where things were simpler and has gone by. Due to fashion trends come from vintage styles, thus designers in producing current collections take inspiration through vintage clothing [16]. After the teaser pictures is being released, the whole collection presentation which are being madly waited by the consumers are set in the full-color photographs settings to reveal their visualization in the real world setting away the low modalities which are found in the teaser pictures.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous analysis of Chanel's Spring-Summer 2021 Campaign Teaser Pictures, all of them the eleven pictures are, represented participant, offer images,

medium-long shot, objective image, the angle at eye level, and mostly high in modality. The represented participants are representing career women acted in four different settings that represent various characters and preferences of women.

Nonetheless, the fashion items displayed in the pictures are addressed to anyone, not only narrowing to a particular party.

The reason for the low modality of the colors is to trigger high curiosity of how the products will be realized as well as to display the timelessness and sophistication and high-classness of the fashion collection items which can fit today, especially during this pandemic era.

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