MIGRACIONES
Y CULTURA DE PAZ:
Educando y comunicando solidaridad

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(editores)
10. TOWARDS A DECONSTRUCTION OF THE IDEOLOGY ON IMMIGRATION IN THE FREE PRESS THROUGH WORDS AND IMAGES

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, immigration is regarded in Europe as one of the main social problems, a view spread by the media because they support the power of the white majority that can be considered the elite of Europe, as van Dijk (2007: 26) points out:

Si el racismo se aprende y se reproduce, en gran medida, a través del discurso dominante, y si ese discurso es accesible solo a las elites simbólicas, como políticos, periodistas, escritores, profesores, académicos (blancos), debemos concluir que la fuente más importante del racismo contemporáneo son las elites simbólicas blancas (van Dijk, 2007: 26).

Discourse constructs and reproduces the social realities of the world we live in because it has a social and a cognitive dimension. Moreover, discourse reproduces ideology and power relations in society. Consequently, discourse can contribute to the creation of hope and peace and allow different ethnic groups to live in a peaceful way in society. The fact that the white elites control discourse means that their words and ideas create important differences in how both minorities and the main group are represented. In this way, a dichotomy between We-They is established, which contributes to the racism of the elite (van Dijk, 2006; van Dijk, 2008; van Dijk, 2009). In this sense, I

1 Translation of the author: «If racism is learned and reproduced, to a great extent, through the dominant discourse, and if that discourse is accessible only to symbolic elites, such as politicians, journalists, writers, teachers, and (white) academics, we must conclude that the most important source of contemporary racism are white symbolic elites» (van Dijk, 2007: 26).
agree with Bañón (2007: 45) in that: «La valoración no positiva de los inmi-
grantes se ha convertido en el marco axiológico fundamental para todos los que,
desde las élites políticas o socioeconómicas españolas, participan en el debate
social sobre los procesos migratorios».

Although discursive racism in the Spanish media tends to be moderate,
especially if we focus on the progressive press (van Dijk, 2003: 39), the media
contribute to the construction of racism in our society through the creation
and transmission of a determined ideology in the texts on immigration they
offer (Bañón, 1996 and 2002). That ideology is characterized by presenting
immigrants as a section of the population which is very different to the ma-
jority group, normally with negative characteristics, and this presentation
favours attitudes of rejection and marginalization, which is far from promo-
ting discourses of peace (see Martínez Lirola, 2006).

Mass media have the power to give credibility to a specific image of
immigrants and to persuade readers to believe that the image created is real.
Teun van Dijk (1999) explains that when talking about immigration, the
following ideological square is found: (1) intensify the positive representation
of ourselves; (2) intensify the negative information about them; (3) mitigate
the positive information about them and (4) mitigate the negative infor-
mation about us.

I shall understand ideologies to be significations/constructions of reality
(the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built
into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices,
and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation
of relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992: 87).
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dealing with this social reality with negative characteristics. In this sense, van Dijk's definition of ideology is quite clear (2005: 17): «una ideología es el fundamento de las representaciones sociales compartidas por un grupo social».

When referring to the racism that appears in the media, it is necessary to make reference to the texts in which that racism is shown, whose main characteristic is usually the combination of written text and image. Baldry (2000), Kress (2003), Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) and Unsworth (2008) highlight the multimodal character of societies nowadays where meanings are expressed through a combination of different semiotic resources, i.e., what predominates are images, gestures, and sounds accompanying language. For this reason, it is necessary to investigate how meanings and power are joined together in these texts. Therefore, this article has as a main aim to go more deeply into the relationship between power, ideology and the main cultural issues in multimodal texts (Martínez Lirola, 2010). This type of texts places the emphasis on modes of representation that are not written, and in particular there is a supremacy of the visual mode, in order to attract the readers' attention (Crespo and Martínez Lirola, 2010; Martínez Lirola, 2008; Martínez Lirola, 2009; Martínez Lirola and Crespo, in press).

There is always a relationship between the language used in texts, the images that sometimes accompany written texts, and the power that appears behind each text. Each text is produced with a view to achieving certain ends, and these are connected with the social context in which each text is produced, in Kress' words:

Because of the constant unity of language and other social matters, language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: it indexes power, expresses power, and language is involved wherever there is contention over and challenge to power. Power does not derive from language, but language may be used to challenge power, to subvert it, and to alter distribution of power in the short or in the longer term (Kress, 1989: 52).

This study intends to go more deeply into the ideology on immigration that is transmitted by the free press. For this reason, the study will describe the main verbal and visual characteristics that appear in these texts, and the effect that they have on readers. The description will concentrate on two multimodal texts that deal with immigration from Metro and Qué, two free newspapers published in Alicante in June 2008. The framework of this paper is socio-semiotic, in which there is a clear relationship between the texts analysed and the context in which they are framed. In this way, it is possible to understand the social context and the ideology that frames these texts when examining them precisely.

1 Translation of the author: «An ideology is the foundation of the social representations shared by a social group» (van Dijk, 2005: 17).
There is a close relationship between the different choices that create each text and the ideology they want to transmit (Alonso, 2010; Crespo, 2008; Chovanec, 2007; Martínez Lirola, 2006; Martínez Lirola, 2010). In other words, each choice tries to highlight a certain attitude, which is related to the social role of the newspaper, with its political position and with the purpose of building a certain type of readership (Economou, 2006: 212-213). In order to study the relationships enumerated in the previous paragraph, the theoretical frameworks used in this article will be Kress and van Leeuwen’s Visual Grammar (2006) and Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (sFG) (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). Both frameworks will be useful in terms of establishing a relationship between each visual and each grammatical choice in the texts and of revealing the ideology that is hidden behind them.

Following Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 177), there are three main types of composition in multimodal texts: «Information value» the place in which elements are located, for example, from left to right, from the top to the bottom or from the centre to the margins, can add a determined value.
— ‘Salience’: the different elements of a composition try to catch the readers’ attention, for example, appearing in the first or in the second place, the size of an element, the colour contrast or sharpness. «Framing»: the presence or absence of frames that connect or disconnect elements meaning that they go or do not go together.

Paying attention to these three types of composition, the main elements in the analysis of a multimodal text are the following: the page layout, the headings, the salience or the main characteristic, the frames that the page has, and the photograph or image.

SFG is a lexical-grammatical theory in which language is understood as a resource for expressing meanings. For this reason, the concept of choice is fundamental in this theoretical framework, because language or any semiotic system is created as a ‘network of interlocking options’ (Halliday 1994: xiv). Following Halliday (1978: 27), language is understood as «meaning potential». The speakers of a language can choose from the system of options those choices that they consider appropriate according to the meaning they want to transmit and according to the communicative situation. The meaning expressed is therefore totally dependent on the option that has been chosen in the system of language. Systemic linguists do not separate language and society. Language is expressed through texts; this implies that those texts do not have an intrinsic meaning, because meaning is created depending on how texts are used in different social contexts.

SFG is therefore a grammar of meanings that are expressed through the different functions that language has. According to Halliday (1978), there are three functions: the textual function pays attention to how information is organised in a certain text; the interpersonal function concentrates on the use of language in interactions in order to express attitudes, judgements or
feelings; the ideational function deals with the expression of the experience of the world, the perceptions and the levels of consciousness.

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LANGUAGE, CONTEXT AND THE PARTICIPANTS IN COMMUNICATION

Following the principles of SFG, language cannot be separated from society, i.e., the use made of language goes together with the situation in which it is used. In consequence, language is essential both for the creation of discourses of peace and hope, and for that of discourses of rejection and marginalization. Malinowski was convinced that language should be studied in connection with the situations in which it was used, as he pointed out in *Coral Gardens* (1935: vii):

> [T]o study language outside the framework of its cultural realities —the beliefs of the people, their social organization, their legal ideas and economic activities— must remain entirely futile. Language therefore must be linked up with all the other aspects of human culture. Language is not something which can be studied independently of cultural reality (Malinowski, 1935: vii).

Malinowski came to the conclusion that there was a close relationship between ethnography and linguistics because language must always be studied in relation to its context. Consequently, there is a relationship between texts, society and culture. Texts are sociologically framed and they contribute to the constitution of society and culture. In Hewings and Hewings' words (2005: 23): «context is constantly being changed by the act of communication itself. [...] the participants use language to construct social contexts».

In this sense, the texts that will be analysed in the following section do not have intrinsic meanings due to the fact that meaning emerges depending on how those texts are used in social contexts. As Fairclough (1995: 55) explains: «Language use —any text— is always simultaneously constitutive of (1) social identities, (2) social relations and (3) systems of knowledge and belief». The language used to express a particular meaning determines the way in which that meaning is perceived. In Johnstone's words (2002: 42): «Each instance of discourse is another instance of the laying out of a grammatical pattern or the expression of a belief, so each instance of discourse reinforces the patterns of language and the beliefs associated with culture. Furthermore, people do things in discourse in new ways, which suggest new patterns, new ways of thinking about the world».

To establish relationships between text (written and visual), contexts and the different participants in communication, the analysis should observe how
the relationships between the visual aspect and whoever perceives this visual aspect are represented. It is important to consider the ways in which the producer (of the images) and the viewer of the image are placed socially, because this can affect the topic of the visual and the way in which the text is read and interpreted.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXTS ANALYSED: UNMASKING IDEOLOGY

The research was started by collecting all the pieces of news related to immigration that appeared between 1 and 30 June 2008 in the free newspapers Metro and Qué, which were published every day in Alicante. Out of all the collected pieces of news, this paper will offer a detailed analysis of two of them with the purpose of exploring how the image of immigrants that appear in these newspapers is constructed through the visual and linguistic characteristics presented in tables 1 and 2.

The analysis that follows (vid. table 1 and 2) demonstrates that any text carries a particular ideology due to the different choices that make up the text and the meanings that those choices express.
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Cuadro 2: Main visual characteristics of the texts analysed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>Light background, blurred. There is a contrast with the colour of the image.</td>
<td>Light background, blurred. There is a contrast with the colour of the image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Layout</td>
<td>The piece of news appears in the centre of the newspaper's page.</td>
<td>The piece of news appears in the bottom left-hand part of the page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image Size</td>
<td>Big with respect to the page.</td>
<td>Medium size with respect to the page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frames</td>
<td>Marked.</td>
<td>Marked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information value</td>
<td>New and known information: new information appears in the three immigrants that are in the foreground.</td>
<td>New and known information: new information appears in the immigrant in the foreground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position of the</td>
<td>Immigrants are seated.</td>
<td>It seems that the immigrants are standing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protagonists' body</td>
<td>There is only one immigrant looking at the reader. It seems that another immigrant is smiling.</td>
<td>The immigrant that appears in the foreground is not looking at the reader, i.e., he does not interact with the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial expression</td>
<td>There is a clear contrast between the black of the protagonists' skin and the trousers and the white of the T-shirts and trainers.</td>
<td>There is a clear contrast between the black of the protagonist's skin and his dark jacket with the light shirt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Cuadro 3: Main verbal characteristics of the texts analysed.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heading</strong></td>
<td>«Oleada de ‘sin papeles’ a las costas canaria y murciana». (Wave of ‘without papers’ [illegal immigrants] on the coasts of the Canary Islands and Murcia).</td>
<td>«Llegan a Motril dos pateras con 111 ‘sin papeles’». (Two small boats arrive at Motril with 111 ‘without papers’ [illegal immigrants]).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written text that is not the heading</strong></td>
<td>Small size, only three lines behind the heading.</td>
<td>Medium size, the written text is as big as the image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collocations and emphatic expressions</strong></td>
<td>«Oleada de ‘sin papeles’». (Wave of ‘without papers’).</td>
<td>«Segunda patera que llegaba a Motril en 24 horas». (Second small boat that arrives at Motril in 24 hours).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>«Más de 150 inmigrantes indocumentados». (More than 150 immigrants without papers).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of the passive voice</strong></td>
<td>«fueron interceptados cuando intentaban llegar a España». (were intercepted when they tried to arrive in Spain).</td>
<td>«Una patera interceptada por Salvamento Maritimo» (A small boat intercepted by the Coast Guard).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>«otro cayuco con 13 argentinos a bordo fue interceptado en la costa de Cartagena». (another small boat with 13 Algerians on board was intercepted off the coast of Cartagena).</td>
<td>«El sábado por la noche fue interceptada otra en la que viajaban 76 inmigrantes» (On Saturday night another one was intercepted with 76 immigrants).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>«Los inmigrantes fueron asistidos y están bien» (aparece en color rojo, se destaca información positiva, se omite el agente) (The immigrants were assisted and they are fine— this appears in red, positive information is highlighted, the agent is omitted).</td>
<td>«Los inmigrantes de la segunda patera, todos varones, [...] fueron asistidos por la Cruz Roja». (The immigrants of the second small boat, all men, [...] were assisted by the Red Cross).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Verbal characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text 1. Date: 17 June, 2008. Newspaper Metro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Está provocando, fueron interceptados (x 2), intentaban, se encontraban, arribaron. (is provoking, were intercepted (x 2), tried, were arrived).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text 2. Date: 23 June, 2008. Newspaper Qué</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interceptan, llegó, informó, se trataba, llegaba, fue interceptada, fueron asistidos, están. (Intercept, arrived, informed, it was, arrived, was intercepted, were assisted, are).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the analysis of the texts presented in the previous tables, it can be observed that there is a relationship between the different linguistic and visual choices in those texts and the ideology that they want to transmit. Journalists, as representatives of the main group in society, influence and manipulate the way in which immigrants are represented in the multimodal texts analysed, in such a way that they affect the readers' values, attitudes and ideology, as the analysis presented in the following paragraphs will illustrate. In other words, on the one hand, they can portray immigration as something positive, and reinforce the fact that it is possible for people from different cultures to live in peace. On the other hand, the information transmitted by journalists can reinforce stereotypes and negative ideas that make the general public reject immigration.

The two previous tables show that there is a clear contrast between text 1 and text 2 because the photograph of the first text is quite big and it appears right in the middle of the page, which is not common in the texts on immigration that appear in the free press. The image of this multimodal text is big, it appears just on top of the written text and it contrasts with it because it consists of only three lines. On the contrary, text 2 appears on the left and almost at the end of the page, in such a way that the image is not given so much importance as in the previous text. Moreover, the image has the same size as the written text and it appears on the right of it, which is different from text 1.

New information is found in the image in both texts because it appears on top of the written text on text 1 and on the right of the written text in text 2. The use of colours is similar in both texts because the immigrants represented appear in colour. In both cases there is a clear contrast between the background of the photograph and the immigrants represented because the background appears blurred and clear colours are highlighted. In text 1, the majority of the immigrants represented appear in the middle distance, facing away from the camera, in such a way that none of them interacts with the reader. In the same text there are three immigrants in the foreground but they are gazing into the distance or looking down. In text 2 there are only two immigrants represented, one appears in the foreground and another immigrant's head appears behind him; both immigrants are looking into the
distance. Since there is no contact between the immigrants' eyes and the person reading the image, it is suggested that the readers are active in relation to the immigrants.

As regards the written text, it is obvious that it is very short in both the texts analysed. Both headings are also short. They avoid the use of the word immigrant but use the expression «without papers» [illegal immigrants] with a persuasive function for two main reasons: 1) they try to catch the reader's attention and make him or her be interested in the piece of news; 2) they serve to highlight the fact that both texts deal with immigrants that do not have legal documents to be in the country, and therefore their situation in Spain is unlawful. Both headings use telegraphic language. There is an ellipsis of the verb «arrive» (llega) in the first one, which is explicit in the heading of text 2. This shows that both pieces of news concentrate on the moment of arrival of immigrants, which is quite common in the pieces of news on immigration offered by the free press. This press tends to concentrate their information on the first moment of arrival of immigrants (access, control, regulation, etc.) and it does not pay attention to the immigrants' subsequent incorporation to the social life of the country.

The nationalities of the immigrants that arrived in the two boats are not specified in the short written text that appears in the first multimodal text, but it is stated that it was 13 Algerians who arrived in a small boat. The nationality is again not specified in the written text of the second multimodal text, the text just points out that the immigrants were from sub-Saharan Africa. Both texts specify that there were children among those arriving: five minors (text 1) and five of them under a year (text 2). Moreover, text 2 specifies the gender of immigrants when saying that in one of the small boats there were 15 women and they were all men in another one.

Emphatic expressions and the use of figures are predominant in both texts, even though they are quite short. Both resources are used in order to create a negative image of immigrants in the readers' mind. In this way, readers can even feel fear when interpreting the information that both texts offer on immigration.

The expression «without papers» appears nominalized and substituting the word immigrants in text 1: 59 and 79 «without papers». In this text, the word immigrants appear only once and it is postmodified by the adjective «without identification». In text 2, the word «immigrants» appears twice and it is postmodified once again with the adjective «without identification».

Moreover, the analysis points out that the majority of the verbs have negative connotations (is provoking, intercepted, etc.), they are verbs of action and they show movement. The majority of the circumstantial complements indicate place and time in order to specify where and when the action took place: yesterday, on the Spanish coasts, off the coast of Cartagena, etc. (text 1); near the coast of Granada, yesterday in Motril harbour, in 24 hours, etc. (text 2).
The use of the passive voice is common in the texts on immigration in the free press, as can be observed in both texts under analysis. Using the passive voice allows the writer to avoid mentioning who does the action, i.e., in these texts it is the police who are normally avoided. The choice of the passive voice is justified due to the tendency to place longer elements or ones with more semantic burden at the end of the structure. In examples of the passive voice such as « [...] were intercepted when they tried to arrive in Spain» (« [...] fueron interceptados cuando intentaban llegar a España») (text 1), « [...] were intercepted when they tried to arrive in Spain» (« [...] fueron interceptados cuando intentaban llegar a España […]») (text 2), the police are not mentioned, which means that the text speaks only about the action. In the second text there are two examples of the passive voice with agent complement, which means that it is specified who does the action and it is not the security forces of the country in either case: «A small boat intercepted by the Coast Guard [...]» («Una patera interceptada por Salvamento Marítimo […]»); «The immigrants of the second small boat, all men, [...] were assisted by the Red Cross» («Los inmigrantes de la segunda patera, todos varones, [...] fueron asistidos por la Cruz Roja»).

The examples of the passive voice analysed make it clear that it is normally preferable to start the sentence with information that is known or that has been previously mentioned, and new information appears at the end of the message. Using the passive voice shows that the immigrants mentioned in the texts are the objects of the actions, they are not the actors performing the actions, and when using the passive voice they appear in thematic position.

The images analysed evoke the construction of «illegal immigrants», which goes together with the representation of certain stereotypes in the images: it seems that immigrants do not work because they always appear idle, they are dirty, they look very serious, the images generally have unnatural colours, and so on. These choices give a great amount of information about the reality and the motivation that surrounds these texts, whose end seems to be to establish a very clear difference between We (the main group) and They (immigrants), paying special attention to the representation of immigrants as «illegal».

The previous paragraph shows that the texts analysed try to point out that the people represented are not like us (the majority group) and that they cannot be like us, which perpetuates unfounded stereotypes. The texts analysed do not point out that people cannot be illegal or irregular, it is only their situations that can be so.

The analysis of the texts so far makes it clear that immigrants are different to us in their physical aspect sometimes or mainly because they belong to a different culture. From this general statement, it is necessary to construct a certain ideological structure for them, which is normally characterised by some of these ideas (van Dijk, 1996: 17-18): they do not want to be integrated in society, they have different habits, they have a different mentality, their
culture is intolerable, they threaten our culture and our country, they take our jobs, they make us feel insecure, etc. The previous ideas can be summarized into three main ones: they are different, they do not follow the rules, and they are a threat.

The hidden ideology in these texts is that there is a superior world (that of the majority) and an inferior world (that of immigrants), and it is the ideology of the superior world which transmits the image of immigrants. That is the reason why they are represented as subordinate and inferior, which evokes prejudice in the population.

In this sense, there is a clear ethnocentric exposition behind the linguistic and the visual choices of journalists, which implies an intrinsic superiority of the nation to which immigrants arrive (Spain, in this case) and some feelings of rejection towards immigrants, instead of highlighting their importance for the economy of Spain, which would favour a discourse of peace. The different choices seem to have been selected with the desire of being socially understood or with the desire of being accepted as the correct way of thinking, in van Leeuwen's words (2005: 83) «the interpretation of texts is structured not only by 'what the text says', but also by contextually specific rules of interpretation».

Power is a fundamental issue in the texts that are the object of study in this article, because immigrants appear represented as stereotyped, which is usual in groups having power and fighting to keep their hegemony. The stereotyped representation plays a fundamental role in hegemony for the following reason: «by endlessly reiterating what amount to caricatures of subordinate groups» (Talbot, 2003: 30). Stereotyping implies reducing and simplifying the main characteristics of immigrants in such a way that they are deprived of a normal representation, as active citizens in society. This is done by the majority group in society, the group having power. By normal, it is understood to mean 'natural and inevitable', what is expected according to the ideology and the system of values of the majority group, as Thompson states (1990: 108): «Discourses that are supportive of dominant ideology do so through legitimating unequal relationships of power».

The language used, the different grammatical structures used to express meaning (the use of the passive voice stands out in the texts analysed) and the visual characteristics of the images can alter or influence the way in which meaning is perceived or interpreted. This implies that with the analysis done texts are seen as «consisting of multiple, interacting textual levels that make their meaning through the constant interplay of smaller and larger textual units» (Baldry and Thibault, 2006: 54).

There are many linguistic and visual choices available, because each choice belongs to a network of interrelated choices inside the linguistic system, which is at the same time integrated in context. The different linguistic and visual choices contribute to the creation of a particular vision of the world and to a particular vision of a social reality or of a social group, immi-
grants in this case. The different decisions taken by the authors show who communicates with whom, because the creator of the multimodal text, who belongs to the majority group, has authority. For this reason, the following questions were taken into consideration in the analysis: why does communication take place in this way? And what social answer is expected from the readers of these texts?

When paying attention to the way in which language and images are organized in the multimodal texts analysed, it is obvious that these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which those meanings are interchanged due to the fact that they want to transmit a certain image of immigrants, which is mainly characterized by presenting them as inferior to the main group of the population, instead of promoting universal citizenship. These meanings are created when choosing from among the different possibilities that language offers, because it is necessary to bear in mind that using language is always a semiotic process (Halliday, 1978).

By analysing in detail the main linguistic and visual characteristics of these texts, we become more aware of the power of the media to influence our knowledge, our values and our social relationships. This shows that language and image coexist with the power that the creators of texts have. In this sense, images are crucial in the process of persuading readers to accept a determined image of immigrants, in Borchers' words (2002: 165): «Like words, images are symbols that are building blocks of persuasive messages. Images communicate in ways that words cannot».

**CONCLUSIONS**

The function of the media as transmitters of the discourse on immigration is essential because it contributes to how immigration is perceived by the majority of the population due to the treatment given to this social phenomenon. The media have the power to shape or to modify our attitudes, because each image and each linguistic component is not chosen at random, but, on the contrary, it is clearly motivated and created as a result of a complex symbolic phenomenon, which is capable of influencing meanings.

Due to the influence of the media, it is essential that readers assume an active role and that they are capable of deconstructing the image of immigrants created by the media and also capable of interpreting the ideas and values associated with immigrants and to be aware of to what extent it is possible to talk about levels of truthfulness in those ideas and values. The way in which the meaning of these texts is decoded depends not only on what readers contribute to the reading of those texts but also on what readers prepare for their creation.

This paper has shown how the frequency of the lexical characteristics and the visual characteristics is crucial for the construction of meaning in the
two texts under analysis. In this sense, the analysis provided in this paper is grammatical, visual and semantic because it establishes a relationship between the different meanings and their context of use.

Multimodal texts that are well created and related to immigration give the following benefits to readers: (1) they expand the readers' world view; (2) they favour attitudes of comprehension and respect towards other people's ways of thinking and acting; (3) they show the reality of immigration and help to avoid stereotypes, etc. It is obvious that if these texts are not well created, they produce in the reader the opposite effect, in other words, they promote confusion, stereotypes and prejudice, lack of interest in immigration, and so on.

After what has been said in the previous paragraphs, it is possible to establish a relationship between the characteristics of the texts analysed and the ideology they show, because ideologies give identity and cohesion to social groups, as happens in both texts because the representation of immigrants is determined by the power of the dominant group, who are presented as being positive and tolerant.

In general, racist ideology has specific social functions, which are spread with the help of the media in many countries. One of the main functions of that ideology consists of defining clearly the racial and ethnic identity of the main group, which is far removed from pointing out the similarities between different ethnic groups and the promotion of a discourse of peace.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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