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Stylistic Analysis of Lebanese Food Paper Tablemats

Ibrahim Srour*

Abstract

This paper will analyse selected sous plat or paper tablemats of Lebanese food restaurants serving Lebanese food. These sous plats have been used as advertising means. They are placed at restaurant tables to advertise for the food of the specific restaurant. Accordingly, when the consumer or the customer comes to dine in, the attention will be directed towards what is “in” the sous plat. These paper tablemats contain puzzles, games, pictures, and of course, slogans. All are put into play for attracting the consumer to eat the advertised food. Moreover, these are effective means to make the customer pass the time while waiting for the dish to be served. The material selected are sous plats/paper tablemats from Lebanese restaurants whose menu offers Lebanese food. These are: Malak al Tawouk, Kabab-Ji Grill, Zaatar w Zeit, MED Mediterranean Cuisine (Med Leb), and Ahwak. These form the data in hand for stylistic analysis. The researcher will adopt Crystal and Davy’s model for stylistic analysis, and in particular, the five levels: graphological/graphetics, phonological/phonetics, grammatical, lexical, and the semantic level. This model is of essence for this study because it helps the analyst to extract stylistic and other (linguistic) features from the text and show a certain author's or writer’s way with words. The researcher will conduct a stylistic and a structural analysis to exhibit how the features of context function through underlying meanings of the text, into attracting the consumers to buy/consume what the sous plat is advertising.

Keywords: Stylistic Analysis, Linguistic Features, Advertising, Paper Tablemats, Persuasion.

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Introduction

The use of language determines how the writer/speaker chooses the lexical items, arranges them syntactically, and expresses the lexis figuratively. This reveals that language has a powerful effect over people, their actions, thoughts, opinions, as well as choices. This is exhibited in the way language is used in various discourse types, where advertisements are considered one of these types. Advertisers, therefore, utilize this property of language in order to make their advertisements positive and stress the superiority of what they advertise, be it a product or food. Language is vivid and dynamic and as such it is ever-changing. It is used in different situations to express various needs. So, different discourse types go hand in hand with different purposes. Halliday (1978) believes that language plays a crucial role in that its system is inseparable from the social context. That is, what is said is determined by linguistic rules, and what is implied is determined by social and other contextual factors. Here comes the importance of implicature in Pragmatics. It refers to what is suggested in an utterance even though it is not overtly expressed. Through this, it brings to the surface the hidden meaning/ideology in a text, with some illocutional goal, which makes pragmatic meaning important. Such meaning describes the elements contributing to the interpretation of a given utterance.

Furthermore, one of the purposes of language use is to persuade the consumer or customer. By using persuasive language the writer of the advertisement convinces the consumer to carry out an action or buy a product. To achieve this, advertisers take into consideration the emotive power of the lexical and syntactic structures of the language used. Building on Halliday's (1978) words, the advertiser structures the utterance together with other contextual factors in order to attract the consumers' attention. This is accomplished through the implied meaning of the ad. As such, the consumer must infer the meaning of the utterance together with contextual features so that he/she gets the advertiser's intended meaning. In line with Halliday, Fairclough (1992) states that 'language use reflects culture and it is impossible to disassociate the two in any real sense...the way a culture sees the world is reflected in its language.'(p.15)

By definition, advertising is the tool used by many companies in order to inform the customer about their products and services. Many elements interplay to captivate the customers into purchasing a product. What attracts the consumer's attention in the first place is the visual stimulation such as pictures and colors. In the second place come the letters, words, and the messages written. In the third place comes the intended message of the advertisement. Moreover, the messages used in advertising must be short, informative, clear, and unique so as to be remembered. Advertising is defined by Wright (2000) as a form of communication which is intended to persuade an audience,

i.e. readers, listeners, or viewers into taking some actions such as buying a product. Advertising includes the brand name of a product or a service and how the advertised product or service can benefit the consumer. This is done in order to persuade possible customers or consumers to purchase or consume that particular brand.

The researcher will adopt Crystal and Davy's (1970) model for stylistic analysis, and in particular, the five levels: graphological/graphetics, phonological/phonetics, grammatical, lexical, and the semantic level. This model is of essence for this study because it helps the analyst to extract stylistic and other (linguistic) features from the text and show a certain author's or writer's way with words. The researcher will conduct a stylistic and a structural analysis of sous plats/ paper tablemats of five Lebanese restaurants whose menu offers Lebanese food. The purpose of the stylistic analysis is to convey how the writer of the sous plat ensnares the consumer/s into buying what the restaurant has to offer.

Theoretical Background and Methodological Framework

Stylistics is a discipline that allows the analyst, through applying certain stylistic techniques, to assess an author's specific use of linguistic features in order to reveal the author's uniqueness. Stylistics aims at analyzing language habits with the main purpose of identifying those linguistic features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context, in order to explain why such features have been used and classify them into categories based upon a view of their function in the social context. According to Clark (2007) Stylistics focuses in its analysis on

“...stretches of text, thereby emphasizing language as discourse, and practice in stylistics as a practice in the analysis of written discourse. Secondly, stylistics takes account of the points of contact between a text ...and readers, including consideration of the function of a text; that is, its purpose.... Thirdly, stylistics is concerned not only with the interaction between the text and its readers, but also the socio-cultural contexts within which reading and writing take place.” (p.60)

Clark continues to elaborate on the function of stylistics by viewing that it “...takes us beyond the formal features of a text to the point of contact between a text... and readers”. Because stylistics has benefitted from research in pragmatics,

“...linguists and stylisticians alike have come to realize that meaning is not stable and absolute, but depends as much upon the processes of interpretation undertaken by a reader or listener, as upon the actual linguistic structures that are used.” (p.61)

Moreover, Turner (1973) posits that

“Stylistics has the same divisions as linguistics and that there are phonological, lexical and syntactic levels in the study of style..... Stylistics is that part of linguistics which concentrates on variation in the use of language....Stylistics means the study of style...” (pp. 30-31).

In line with Turner, Leech and Short (1981) believe that stylistic study is the application of linguistic knowledge to the study of style. In addition, Simpson (2004) believes that ‘stylistics as a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language.’ (p.2). As such, Simpson language is a prime component to the stylistic analysts because its diverse forms, patterns and levels that constitute the linguistic structure of the text are of essence in the function of the text. For Simpson, whereas linguistic features do not in *themselves* constitute a text’s meaning, the description of linguistic features has the purpose of grounding stylistic interpretation and explaining why the stylistician considers particular types of meaning are possible.

Furthermore, linguists such as Bhatia (1998), Shank and Abelson (1977), Crystal and Davy (1970), and Halliday in (Halliday and Hasan (1990)) introduce specific basic rules for the description and analysis of certain stylistic/linguistic features not only in literature, but in any text to show for example, a certain author's way with words or reveal the functions of any text such as the interpersonal and the experiential functions. Crystal and Davy (1970) present a model for stylistic analysis of a text which helps the analyst extract stylistic and other (linguistic) features from the text. Crystal and Davy's (1970) theory categorizes language and presents certain levels of analysis that display certain features which allow the analyst to point out what is distinctive about a specific language.

Crystal and Davy (1970) distinguish five levels of stylistic analysis which are: the phonetic/graphetic, phonological/graphological, grammatical, lexical, and the semantic level. The first level is the phonetic/graphetic level. The expression of language at this level is of two kinds: spoken and/or written, i.e. the phonetics and graphetics. The phonetic studies the utility and the characteristics of human voice whereas the graphetic examines the written or printed shapes of the words. Thus, at this first level particular facts appear that might aid in the comprehension of the stylistic effect for example, the shapes and sounds might have a specific aesthetic appeal which is interpreted as reflecting certain aspects of reality, or revealing a meaning contained in the spoken or written physical event (symbolism). In addition, the choice of type-size or colour in a text is essentially non-linguistic, but such elements may contain clear linguistic implications, for example implications that refer to the semantic structure of the utterance, as in newspapers or advertisements. Also, there is the graphetic flexibility of informal letters such as the use of irregular spacing or line direction, in comparison with the regular font-type of formal letters, as well as the organization of

utterances into symbolic visual shape (slanted, bold letters). Hence, phonetics and graphetics study the basic phonic and graphic substance of language.

The second level is the phonemic/graphemic level or phonology/graphology. This level examines the organization of phonic and graphic substances of language inside the framework of a specific language or language group. Phonology studies the sound system of a given language whereas graphology is the study of a language's writing system or orthography as revealed in the different kinds of handwriting and typography. At this level, stylistics describes "patterns of sound or writing that distinguish, or assist in distinguishing, varieties of English" (Crystal and Davy 1970, p.18), for example, the distinctive and particular use of capitalization, punctuation, repetition of segmental sounds and utterance, or even spacing between the letters and words. The researcher studies the result of the phonological and graphological organization of the text at the third level.

At this third level there is grammar and vocabulary. In terms of grammar, the central aim is to analyse the internal structure of the sentences in a given language and the way these sentences function in sequences. Thus, to make a grammatical study, the researcher must study elements such as words, nouns, verbs, clauses etc. The study of vocabulary involves examining the way in which individual words and idioms pattern in various linguistic contexts. Crystal and Davy (1970) advise that it is more useful to study the attributes of single 'lexical items' separately; by 'lexical items' they mean idiomatic word-sequences and single words. This study of the attributes is done regardless of the 'lexical items' grammatical function and form; Crystal notes that 'lexical' study is a term given to the study of vocabulary. The last level is the semantic. This level studies the meaning of stretches longer than one single individual lexical item. The analyst examines at this level the following: the distribution of concepts in a text as a whole, the patterns of thematic development, and the use of figures of speech.

Therefore, by adopting such an approach, the analyst is able to quantify the use of language in a text, grade the stylistic features in terms of their being a characteristic of a variety as a whole, and present descriptive and explanatory statements of his findings. Dividing the analysis into levels helps in organizing one's material and focuses the attention on specific ways of language organization. Hence, "Stylistic analysis, when done properly, has as its end the classification of the full meaning and potential of language in use" (Crystal and Davy 1970, p.90).

Stylistic Analysis and Interpretation

Malak al Tawouk

Malak al Tawouk is a Lebanese restaurant specialized in tender marinated boneless chicken called "Tawouk". Its paper tablemats have always attracted the attention of the customers.

Graphology/Phonology/Semantics

- A. In one of its tablemats, there is the food brand name written in Arabic and in English letters. The word is “Malak” which means “king”. What is significant about the name is its shape. The letters are written in the shape of a crown; and this is what a king actually wears. This signifies that the restaurant is the ‘king’ of what it is offering: a king of ‘tawouk’ among other restaurants serving the same food type. Another meaning is that this restaurant is the dominant one among others.
- In addition, the word is the restaurant itself. It is “Malak al Tawouk”, i.e. the king of tawouk. What is distinctive is that the word ‘Malak’, shaped like a crown, is coloured in red, where red connotes royalty. Under the word there is the picture of a chicken in the shape of a rising sun. Its colour is gold, which also refers to royalty. Hence, Red+ Gold= Royalty, and King=Crown. All these interact harmoniously to reveal the message: this restaurant is the king in what it serves. This means that if you are a customer, prepare yourself to have a royal meal, from a king.
- B. In another tablemat, the restaurant displays a picture of a golden I-phone and on its cover is the restaurant’s name and logo. The picture and the logo are to the right whereas to the left there are five words written in bold-type black font. One of the words is in Arabic, “Serna”, which in English means “We have become”. Under this word there is the word “Djeijital”. It means “digital chicken”. These words inform the customer that the restaurant has become digital, i.e. it has its own internet application. Underneath these two words, there are the words “DOWNLOAD OUR APP”. These words are all written in captions, black bold type, and in the form of a verb phrase. This graphological shape is important as it captures the consumers’ attention into informing them that this restaurant has moved into being digital. As such, they can use its application to order food online.
- C. Moreover, in a third tablemat there is a picture of a hand holding a phone and displaying a screenshot of the menu of the restaurant as it appears in the application. The picture includes a variety of “tawouk” meals the restaurant offers. Above the phone picture, there is one long sentence written in a pyramid shape informing the consumers that the restaurant is pleased to introduce to its customers the ‘mobile ordering app’. All of this is written in uppercase bold letters which functions as a prime eye-catching tool and a clarification of what the screenshot includes. Also, under the phone picture there is the sentence “Browse through our diverse menu”. The purpose is to encourage the customers to surf through the variety of food in the menu to order from.

In the tablemat that presents a picture of a golden phone there is the word ‘*Djejjital*’. This is phonetically distinctive because it is a homophone of the word *digital*. There is a play on sound as well as on meaning. The word gains an extra semantic meaning in addition to its original meaning. In terms of morphology, it has been invented by the *blending* word formation process. It’s a blending of an Arabic word ‘*djejj*’ meaning ‘chicken’ and the English word ‘digital’. The original word is ‘*djejj*’ in Arabic, which means chicken, i.e. what the restaurant serves. Morphologically, there is also the addition of the suffix *-al* so as to change the word from a noun to an adjective in order to achieve the second meaning: digital. Accordingly, the lexical item which is a noun, meaning chicken, has gained an extra semantic meaning: it is chicken to be digitally ordered. Hence, the use of the *blending* word formation process stresses the notion that the restaurant is having its own online application for ordering food. Under this word there is the expression “DOWNLOAD OUR APP”. Syntactically, this sentence is a verb phrase. Its form is imperative through the command verb ‘download’. The use of the pronoun ‘our’ denotes that the application is strictly that of the restaurant and not any other. Therefore, the restaurant is issuing a direct command for the costumers to download the restaurant’s application.

In addition, there is a continuation of this in another tablemat by this restaurant. In this other tablemat, the restaurant introduces the application: a screenshot of the application and above it there is the following sentence: *We are pleased to introduce you to the Malak al Tawouk mobile ordering app*. This sentence is in the polite form. It is a statement that informs the consumers of the application that is specially made for this particular restaurant. In this sentence, there is the use of the word “pleased” which means that the restaurant is happy to “introduce” the application. Moreover, the expression “pleased to introduce” gives the meaning of a “friendly” atmosphere. This is coupled with the pronoun “you”. The use of it is a very effective advertising means in that it plays on the ego of the costumer. Its use means *you*, the individual consumer, and not any other. Accordingly, playing on the personal individual aspect is an effective strategy for attracting the consumer/s. Also, the verb “ordering” explains what this application is about. It is for ordering meals and not just for checking information about the restaurant. Furthermore, under the phone picture there is the expression “Browse through our diverse menu”. This expression is written in bold-type font, coloured in black, and all of it is in block letters. At the grammatical level, it is composed of a verb phrase. It begins with the verb “browse” in the imperative form, ordering the consumers to enter and search through the menu in the application. There is as well, the use of the adjective “diverse”. This use is distinctive when combines with the menu picture. It functions as a tool to inform the consumer of the various *tawouk* meals AND other meals offered by the restaurant. On the lexical and morphological levels, there is the use of the *-ing* form in “ordering”. It means that the consumers can keep ordering on and on and on. It denotes a continuity of the action. Semantically, collocation of computer terminology is

revealed in examples such as ‘mobile’, ‘ordering’, ‘app.’, and ‘Browse’. This means that the restaurant is going hand in hand with the technological advancement of the age. It also ‘indirectly’ informs the consumer how to use the application when ordering a meal. As such, the consumer is to ‘Browse’ and then ‘order’ meals from the ‘diverse menu’. Moreover, the ways these words are ordered gives them the function of *instructions* that lead to a desirable result of both parties. First, the consumer’s eating and second, the restaurant in having made the customers to order food from the menu by using the application.

On the interpretative level, the restaurant has succeeded in revealing its technological aspect/development and attracting the consumers’ into buying its various meals. This was done through language manipulation and word choice, in addition to the visual effects such as pictures, colours, and the ads design.

Kababji Grill

This is a Lebanese restaurant that offers Lebanese dishes and grill. In one of its tablemats there are the following:

1. Red bricks in the shape of a flat cone hat.
2. The name of the restaurant: Kababji GRILL
3. A Slogan: COMMITTED TO QUALITY
4. A picture of a shish kabab
5. Under the picture there is another slogan: Authentic Lebanese Restaurant.
6. At the bottom of the tablemat there are the following:
 6. a. Pictures of the kinds of food the restaurant offers, i.e. beef, lamb, chicken, wheat, bread, vegetables, cheese, and milk. Below each picture there is a description of the specific food presented.
 - 6.b. A certificate form the EU Food Association: ISO and the year acquired.
 - 6.c. The restaurant’s online application on the social media: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Also, under their logo there is the restaurant’s online site.

All of these reveal EVERYTHING RELATED to the restaurant and, of course, keeps the customer busy reading it while waiting for the meal to be served. These will be analysed so as to shed light on the hidden messages used to attract the consumers to buy this kind of food.

Since it is a Lebanese cuisine, it makes use of the Lebanese tradition: mainly folklore. At the graphetic/graphological level, this is seen in the red bricks piled in the shape of a flat cone hat. In Lebanese folklore, the flat cone hat is worn along with a loose sleeves white shirt, a red cloth belt firmly wrapped around the waist, and a loose black trousers. The aim is twofold. First, the bricks

portray the grill that the restaurant uses in order to cook the food. Second, they symbolically preserve the Lebanese folklore by reminding the Lebanese people of the traditional costume that the old people used to wear in the past. Moreover, under the picture of the flat cone hat there is the restaurant's name in bold type letters. In a small font under the name there is the way the restaurant cooks the food offered: grill. Accordingly, the word 'grill' collocates with the picture of the piled red bricks to mean: grilled food.

In addition, to the right of the restaurant's name there is the slogan "COMMITTED TO QUALITY". At the graphetic/graphological level, it is written in block letters all through and its colour is bold type black font. Its size is larger than the restaurant's name. This acts as an attention seeking device, urging the consumers to get the message: the restaurant is dedicated to food quality. It is 'committed' to such quality. At the semantic level, the word 'quality' is significant because it reveals that there is no deviation from the path of quality. Pragmatically, it means that the restaurant offers its customers a high quality grilled food. Also, under this slogan there is a picture of a shish kabab. Its position is facing the word 'GRILL'.

Moreover, under the picture of the shish kabab there is the expression: "Authentic Lebanese Restaurant". It is a slogan informing the customers about the type of restaurant Kababji is: *an 'Authentic' and a 'Lebanese' restaurant* and not any restaurant with any other nationality. Lexically, the use of the adjective 'authentic' reveals that the restaurant is genuine and not new to the food industry. Semantically, it means that the restaurant is expert in such a type of food. Also, the word 'Lebanese' asserts the identity of the restaurant. These words are written in medium font type: black Times New Roman. However, it is smaller in font size than that of the restaurant's name *Kababji*. Lexically, the word is not of English origin. Morphologically, it is composed of two lexical items: *kabab* and *Ji*. The first word *kabab* means a type of grilled food, and its origin is Arabic. The second lexical item is the suffix *ji* which is added to the root word *kabab* to form the restaurant's name. The suffix *ji* is a Turkish suffix which means 'doer' or 'maker of'. Thus, semantically, the meaning of the name becomes clear: the one who makes *kabab*. Pragmatically, it stresses the notion of expertise of the restaurant in terms of Kabab making. Furthermore, under the slogan there are drawings of the types of food offered by the restaurant. The drawings are in black and red. They are six and each one has under it a short description of the type of food it displays, as follows:

1. Chicken: Hormone free, Anti-biotic free chicken
2. Imported baby veal fillet from New Zealand
3. Oat bread available
4. Farm-raised lamb
5. Farm-grown, hand-picked and freshly served vegetables

6. Dairy rBGH free products

These types are important and the restaurant implies via these that its food is extremely healthy, of quality, and hygienic. This is shown through the following linguistic choices: there is collocation in Hormone *free*, Antibiotic *free*, rBGH *free*, farm-raised, oat bread, farm-grown, hand-picked, and freshly served. All are written as compound words. Semantically they stress the notion of hygiene, freshness and by extension, well-being. Grammatically, this is also seen in the use of the adjective *free* which is repeated thrice. This repetition is coupled with the adverb ‘freshly’ functioning as an adjective to give the image of vividness and health. Accordingly, the chicken is healthy and well cared for. The veal is tender as it is a ‘baby’ filet. So, it is moist, easily cooked, and healthy. Moreover, the lamb is farm-raised, which means it is well taken care of and nourished. So, it is also healthy. As for the bread, it is available in oat type, i.e. it is healthy. Although the vegetables are grown in green houses, they are farm grown. This means they are not machine-picked but hand-picked, i.e. delicately and with care. They are served afresh on daily basis. Pragmatically, this means they are cared for, clean, healthy, and fresh. They are not chemically grown. This implies they are good for the consumers’ health. In addition to these, there are the dairy products. They are chemical-free, hygienic, and healthy. Therefore, all of these products target any consumer who demands healthy food.

At the interpretation level, with respect to Kabab-Ji paper tablemat, the use of such linguistic features focuses the idea of ‘leading a healthy lifestyle’ and targets those people who live or want to live in such a way. These features contradict the meaning usually associated with the word ‘grill’. It is not ‘greasy’. So, this use has given the word ‘grill’ a new semantic dimension which is “health and freshness”. As such, this restaurant is unlike other restaurants that offer grilled food. *Kababji Grill* is hygienic, fresh, and healthy. Accordingly, and in order to gain the consumers’ trust, the restaurant has included a picture of the EU ISO Certificate of Food Quality along with the date it was awarded. This fortifies the idea about the type of food presented and the way it is cooked. This gives the restaurant more credibility and as a consequence enables customers to eat safely at this restaurant, never worrying about hygiene and health issues. Moreover, if someone is to see the menu while being at home, he/she can log in to the restaurant’s site or use the restaurant’s pages on social media. Hence, the interpretation level reveals that although the restaurant is culture-preserving, and offers healthy nutritious food, it is also up-to-date and knowledgeable of the technological and digital developments of the age.

Zaatar w Zeit

This is a typical Lebanese restaurant that offers Lebanese pastry and sweets. It is famous for its thyme ‘mankousha’ or in Lebanese colloquial a ‘man’oushe’. It is a special kind of round bread loaf on top of which there is thyme and sometimes it can only include cheese, or both: thyme and cheese. It is manually made and baked in the traditional brick oven. In the restaurant’s paper tablemat analysed by the researcher, this restaurant advertises a traditional type of Lebanese sweets that are new in the menu’s restaurant. It is a new addition to the sweets served at this restaurant. It is called ‘Knefeh’. It is a round sweets made of semolina and cheese, where melted sugar is poured on top of it. It is new in the menu and consumers usually tend not to accept anything new in terms of food, especially if they are accustomed to a specific kind of food being offered at a particular restaurant. Hence, *Zaatar w Zeit* is specialised in Lebanese pastry but is relatively new to sweets.

Graphology/Graphetics, Syntax, and Semantics

In the sous plat is a picture of the ‘Knefeh’ dish, where there are seven loaves of special small round bread surrounding the dish. Usually, Knefeh is served in bread loaf or as a piece in a plate. However, the restaurant has changed the concept of Knefeh serving. In the picture, Knefeh is served in a pan. This is novelty in its presentation because the restaurant serves everything ‘in a pan’. So, it is now offering its customers the Knefeh ‘in a pan’. Next to the picture of the pan there is the sentence ‘IN case you haven’t, **TRY OUR KNEFEH IN THE PAN**’. Graphologically, this sentence is written in two different font sizes. It starts with one block word (a preposition), then continues in ordinary font type, and concludes in bold block-type words. It is of two colours: White and green. The first part is white and the second one is green. The contrast of white and green captivates the consumers’ attention into focusing on the kind of sweets the restaurant is advertising and offering. Syntactically, this sentence is composed of a prepositional phrase *in case you haven’t* and a verb phrase *try our Knefeh in the pan*. In this sentence, the restaurant presupposes that the customers haven’t yet tried the restaurant’s sweets, and in particular this type of sweets, although one might order a cheesecake. Also, there is another presupposition: in case you haven’t ordered sweets YET, try our Knefeh. Moreover, the verb *try* is in the imperative form. This means that the restaurant is ordering the customers to have a go at this new type of sweets it is offering. In addition, there is the use of the pronoun *our* in the sentence. This use is significant. Pragmatically, it reveals the notion that this restaurant, although offering a traditional sweets dish, such a dish is special. It is *in a pan*, from this famous restaurant, and is different from the same type of sweets offered elsewhere, because it has the touch of *Zaatar w Zeit* restaurant. In addition, to the bottom left side of the tablemat there is a picture of the ISO Certificate of Quality as well as the restaurant’s social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram applications. However, what is different is that the restaurant has an account

on a famous Lebanese music site. It advertises on a music site and not only on social media. Furthermore, the bottom right side on the tablemat includes the restaurant's logo: Two green leaves in the shape of the letter Z, which is the initial letter and sound of the name of the restaurant: *Zaatar w Zeit*. Phonetically, there is an alliteration of the /z/ sound. The leaves are those of pesto leaves, as pesto is the main ingredient in the vegetables offered along with the "man'oushe".

At the interpretation level, the green color of the restaurant's initial letters Z is distinctive. It reveals that the restaurant is advertising greenness, i.e. freshness, and is environment friendly. It's a restaurant suitable for vegetarians. Also, through using graphological, graphetic, phonological, and syntactic features the restaurant has succeeded in attracting the consumer into knowing what is new at the restaurant and buying or eating what is being advertised.

Ahwak

Ahwak is a Lebanese restaurant that offers Lebanese food. In addition to its being famous for its exquisite cuisine, this restaurant is up-to-date and follows up on social health issues. This is especially revealed when it comes to its tablemats or sous plat. In one of its tablemats, the sign of breast cancer awareness is included in the restaurant's name. In terms of graphology/graphetics, the colour of the tablemat is pink. In the sous plat there is the phrase "*Keep flowering: The month of Cancer Awareness*". The first part of the expression is written in white colour, bold-type font i.e. *keep flowering*. Under it there is the other half of the expression: *The month of Cancer Awareness*. It is written in white colour but in ordinary font type. The graphology of this tablemat acts as a very important eye-catcher. Actually it is very effective as it makes people who are passing by the restaurant to enter and eat in the restaurant. Grammatically, the expression is in the imperative form. It orders women to keep flowering. Semantically, it asks women to keep healthy and thus 'flowering' and as such, blossoming. Lexically, this word carries the connotation of 'being alive and vivid'. Pragmatically, it shows that the restaurant cares about social health issues that are of essence to women. What is interesting is that during this month all the table utensils were put in pink boxes. In addition, the restaurant made pink buttons of the same colour and expression for the waiters to wear.

In another tablemat, the restaurant includes the following slogan: *Ramadan Kareem*. This was during the Holy month of fasting, Ramadan. The slogan is printed on a brown paper. It consists of two words. The first, which is *Ramadan* is written in red medium bold font type. Under the word, there is the word *Kareem*, which means 'generous'. This word is printed in yellow colour of medium bold font type. These two words are positioned in the centre of the paper. The graphetics and their colour are significant in that there is a colour interplay of the following colours: brown, red, and yellow. These are attractive in a very direct way. All the customer will see are these colours.

Pragmatically, this tablemat reveals that the restaurant offers the oriental meals served specifically during this Holy month; and as the month is generous, the restaurant is as such too.

In a third tablemat, the restaurant used a brown paper with the restaurant's name in the middle, coloured in green bold type large font and written in Arabic and English. Under the name there are the branches of the restaurant, printed in captions, green coloured, and in bold type medium font. This tablemat was printed on the occasion of inaugurating the restaurant's fifth branch. Graphologically, the name of the restaurant included in it a drawing of a bird, which is the main logo of the restaurant. It signifies that in its main branch there are birds placed in cages all around the place.

At the interpretation level, the restaurant indirectly wants to inform its customers that the ambiance there is joviality, relaxation, and glee. Semantically, the name of the restaurant itself which is *Ahwak*, in Arabic, but written in English alphabets, means 'I adore you'. The significant aspect is that at this restaurant many romantic celebrations are held. In addition, it is as if the customer is uttering these words to whomever he/she invites to dine there. Moreover, it is a direct intimate address on the part of the restaurant to its customers, as if the restaurant is telling its customers: 'I adore you', so come in and eat here. What is worth noting about the name of the restaurant is that it is taken from the first line of a famous Arabic song titled: '*Ahwak*' or *I adore you*. Pragmatically, it means that the restaurant adores its customers and does everything to please them. Thus, it is a restaurant that cares for its customers to the degree of adoration.

MED

Med restaurant is specialised in Mediterranean cuisine and hence its name. It has a branch in the Lebanon. In one of its tablemats there are the following:

Believe YOU CAN *Do you believe you can read the below?*

TEH FRIST SEPT OT OVRECMONIG

OBTSCAELS SI BELIVEIGN THAT OUY ACN!

In terms of graphology/graphetics, this sous plat includes ordinary English words that are readable because of it being written in the proper syntactic order. The sous plat also includes ordinary English words but written in a scrambled way, i.e. in an agrammatical order. Moreover, what is written in the tablemat consists of three different font types of two colours: pink and black. The fonts are: a handwritten type (coloured in pink), block letters, and an ordinary font type of bold and ordinary font size. However, the longest sentence is written in black block font type, ending in an exclamation mark. This sous plat is significant in that it directly relates to language and the brain. It includes a long sentence whose letters are scrambled, but upon focusing on it, one is able to read this sentence

and comprehend its meaning well. This shows the relationship of language to the brain. This sentence only includes the initial letters of each word in its proper place, but the rest of the letters are misplaced. Linguistically and morphologically, if the brain is able to know the first letter of a word, then it is able to know the rest of it. This is because our vocabulary repertoire has in store the correct words together with their morphological proper order.

Grammatically, the paper tablemat includes a direct question to the customers, asking them if they believe they can read the scrambled sentence. Semantically, the restaurant is telling the customers that their brain is special. Pragmatically, there is an indirect command for them to rewrite the scrambled sentence so they can read it properly. Also, since their brain is special then they are themselves special. The restaurant entails to tell its customers that their brain can do amazing things. Moreover, the slogan *believe in you can* is itself significant because it raises the customers' self-esteem. Thus, the sous plat uses the strategy of self-esteem to attract the customers to eat at the restaurant. What intensifies this is the use of the first person pronoun 'you' which plays on the 'individuality' of the consumers and hence, their ego. Pragmatically, it makes them more involved.

At the interpretation level, the sous plat indirectly reveals that the brain of the consumers can read the long sentence. Also, the restaurant shows that it is going hand in hand with technology and digitization. This is revealed by including in the tablemat the restaurant's accounts on Instagram and Facebook, which means that the restaurant is on social media as well.

Discussion and Conclusion

Advertisements are a discourse type in themselves. How advertisers manipulate customers into buying what is advertised is pinpointed in the following strategies. These include lexical choices, the way language is used, e.g. figuratively, pragmatically, stressing the positive quality of the product, playing on the customers' ego and individuality, and portraying the product as a necessity.

According to Halliday (1978), the language used in advertisements is socially constructed. That is, it is part and parcel of the society that it appears in. As such, advertisements make use of contextual and social aspects. The portrayal of social elements, through language in advertisements plays a significant role in attracting the customers. This is achieved through Pragmatics, and in particular, implicature or hidden meaning. As for Fairclough (1992), language and culture are interchangeable. Meaning between them is a two-way street. So, they can't be dissociated. Thus language reflects culture, and culture mirrors how society sees the world. Consequently, society projects its worldview through discursive formation, order of discourse, and social structure and hierarchy. These are amalgamated under implicatures to be inferred by the customer through language

use in advertisements. Advertising, hence, communicates social ideologies and ideals through language use so that advertisers persuade customers to consume a product.

Accordingly, the advertising means stylistically analysed in this paper, i.e. the tablemats of five Lebanese restaurants reveal the afore-mentioned elements of customer manipulation as follows. In *Malak al Tawouk* paper tablemat there was a play on the customer's ego and individuality. This is seen when the restaurant used the idea of royalty in serving its customers. The use of gold and red colours signifies a 'regal' aspect which is magnified by the picture of a crown. Figuratively, the restaurant's message to its customers is as such: we treat you with a royal meal, like a king. Pragmatically, it intended to transmit to them the following: be prepared to be served like a king, by a king in what is being served. Socially, the restaurant informs its customers that it is up to date and following the technological development. This is exhibited in the presentation of the restaurant's application where the customer can order meals online. Therefore, visual effects, pictures, and colours had a decisive role in attracting the customers.

Kabab-Ji Grill has used different advertising strategy which is the cultural aspect. This is revealed in the social construct of identity through the Lebanese folklore. The paper tablemat uses the flat cone hat in the form of a red brick grill. On the one hand, the restaurant shows its customers its traditional way of cooking, i.e. the brick grill. On the other hand, it sheds light on the traditional clothing that was used in the Lebanese culture in the past. The brick colour, which is red, signifies high social status. Pragmatically, the colour together with the folklore (the flat cone hat) symbolize authenticity and generosity. In addition, social issues such as health nutrition, and hygiene are stressed via the restaurant's slogans such as '*committed to quality*', '*hormone free, anti-biotic*', '*farm raised*', and '*freshly grown*'. All of these together with the picture of the ISO Food Quality Certificate enabled the restaurant to make the most out of the customer's attention into ordering its meals.

Zaatar w Zeit has benefitted from the graphological, graphetic, and semantic devices to attract its customers. The restaurant stressed the idea of greenness and environment. This was seen in the green colour of its name and slogan. The restaurant made use of freshness and quality when it intended a picture of the ISO Food Quality Certificate. Hence, health, quality, and freshness enabled the restaurant, successful, to advertise a new item and convince the consumers of its quality and taste. This couldn't have been achieved without the play on the social aspect and the individual's ego and health interest.

Ahwak restaurant in its paper tablemat utilized a social issue (breast disease), the idea of generosity, and the play on the psyche of the social member, i.e. the customer through the element of serenity. These were fused in the tablemat as follows. First, the restaurant raised the public

awareness to the issue of breast disease, urging women to take care of their health so as to keep forever *blossoming*. Second, the restaurant included the Holy month of fasting, as it symbolizes generosity. Pragmatically, the restaurant entails to inform its customers that generosity is a welcoming and central quality of the place where they come to dine in. Third, relaxation and calmness are another mood triggered in the customers by the ambiance of the restaurant when they eat at there. Thus, individuality and stressing the personal as well as the social aspect played a crucial role in manipulating the customers.

Last but not least is MED restaurant. It uses the idea of language and the brain as well as digitization. The restaurant makes use of graphology to its limits. It plays on the visual aspect of the customer and the issue of language and brain coordination. This is clearly revealed in the variety of font types, shapes and the scrambling of letters in a sentence. Such a use lures the customers into trying to read the scrambled letters, challenge their abilities, and comprehend its meaning. Thus, the advertisement has used the strategy of self-esteem and ability. By doing this, the restaurant entails to tell its customers the following: “your brain can do amazing things. Your brain is special and so are you”. Hence, the element of ego comes into play to make the customers more involved and tempted to eat at the restaurant. Also, the restaurant includes in the paper tablemat its accounts on online media applications. This is another strategy (digitization and being up to date) used to make its customers more interested in what is being offered.

In conclusion, many characteristics and strategies intertwine in the paper tablemats used by the five Lebanese Restaurants. All shared the strategy of individualism, ego, and self-image. They utilized health issues such as freshness, nutrition, and hygiene. The restaurants also played on cultural aspects by including some specific culture-oriented elements such as folklore. Finally, all the restaurants revealed their aspect of modernization which was seen in their inclusion of technology and digitization, as in their social media accounts on famous social online applications. Hence, by adopting Crystal and Davy’s (1970) model of stylistic analysis the researcher in this paper was able to shed light on the way language was used, by the advertisers, in these paper tablemats so they manipulate the customers into eating/buying what these restaurants are offering.

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