



Partial Formal Variables in Visual Organization

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ABSTRACT

This research does not approach "visual organization" as a neutral formal arrangement, but rather as a cognitive-existential act that deconstructs the traditional relationship between form and meaning. The partial formal variable is presented not as a simple visual modification, but rather as a semantic disruption that overturns the centrality of the whole and grants the partial, that marginal element, a foundational position in the process of perception. This variable, as a philosophical force, reshapes our perception of the world through subtle shifts that reveal the fragility of the apparent visual order and lay bare what is perceived as harmonious. Aesthetics, in this context, is not consistency but creative tension, and form is not a closed presence but a dynamic discourse that disrupts the familiar and calls for interpretation. Hence, graphic design becomes not just a visual practice, but a field for thinking about perception, difference, and meaning as an ever-changing horizon.

Keywords: Partial Formal Variables, Visual Organization, Graphic Design, Shift.

1. MODEL FRAMEWORK

1.1. The Research Problem and It's Need: The concept of visual organization is not reduced to being merely a method for arranging elements within a visual space, but rather a philosophical act of one of the essential mechanisms of perception through which the recipient reconstructs his sensory world according to the cognitive structures that constitute meaning, as a network of tensions and balances that take on a visual form, and are based on cognitive and aesthetic structures at the same time. In the field of graphic design, its concept goes beyond the aesthetics of form to the aesthetics of visual discourse, which often celebrates the whole - as a visual dominant - as a bearer of meaning and a guide to perception that excludes what is partially formed with its latent cognitive energy. The "partial formal variable" is not a subtle visual shift, but rather a kind of structural tension that re-questions the stability of visual organization and awakens in the viewer a sense of attention and creative confusion. Hence the need for this research; to explore how this variable can disrupt our visual certainty and redefine the relationship between form and meaning. The true philosophical question posed by the partial formal variable within its visual organization in graphic design is, "How do we reshape our perception of the world through what that formation reveals?" Rather than how the shapes are arranged within the visual organization, the researcher explored this problem as follows: What is the partial formal variable, and what is the extent of its effects, according to its visual organization, on cognitive tension and the aesthetics of interpretation?

1.2. Importance of The Research: The importance of the research stems from the connection between the philosophy of aesthetics and the theory of perception on the one hand, and graphic design techniques on the other hand, as follows:

- A. from a theoretical perspective, it re-presents the concept of visual organization as a dynamic structure that transcends the stability of form, which imposes itself as a conceptual element that calls for reflection on its boundaries, thus re-formulating the relationship between visual perception and meaning, and proposing a more complex vision of formal identity in design.
- B. from a practical perspective, this research has a direct impact on graphic design techniques, as it encourages designers to develop a new awareness of the levels of

visual impact, not only in terms of overall changes, but also by mobilizing what is partial and emergent within the visual design structure, employing the "partial formal variable" as an indirect tool to direct attention, as well as building intentional visual tension that enriches the reception experience. It also contributes to the development of graphic Publications based on visual discourse without compromising cognitive depth. Therefore, the importance of this research stems not only from its subject matter, but also from its ability to rethink the foundational concepts of graphic design and open a new horizon for understanding the aesthetic and cognitive impact of details, far removed from marginalization and exclusion.

1.3. Research objective: The current research aims to analyze the aesthetic and philosophical effectiveness of the Partial Formal Variable in its visual organization, within cognitive and phenomenological frameworks.

1.4. Research Limits: The research is defined by the following:

- A. Thematic Limit: Studying the partial formal variable in visual organization.
- B. Temporal Limit: 1987-2016, as the researcher observed in the graphic design of that period a clear representation of the partial formal variable.
- C. Spatial Limit: Covers of (TIME) and (The Economist) Magazines.

1.5. Definition of Terms: *Partial Variable Form*

A shift in a part of the design form's structure, within the overall aesthetics of the visual composition, followed by a change in the stability of perception, and a change in connotation and meaning due to internal and external influences.

2.THEORETICAL FRAMWORK

2.1. Introduction

Throughout the ages, scientists and philosophers have attempted to find scientific and logical justifications and explanations for the process of perceiving artistic form—especially the relationship between the part and its whole—through their extensive research and theories. Some of them have failed in their analyses, while others have had their interpretations touch on reality. Perception in its general concept is a means of communication in which the senses are employed to know the external world, including the shapes in design, the aesthetics of which we sense through the unity of relationships of its elements that our senses perceive according to their visual organization. This change is brought about by the creative designer in those shapes due to several factors, to attract the attention of the recipient and bring him to a state of blending between interpretation, explanation, understanding and acceptance, which is called visual reading.

2.2. The concept of partial formal variable in graphic design

"partial formal variable" is a critical concept within the visual organization of graphic design, referring to subtle changes to a visual component within an organized formal system without radically changing its overall structure. Although this change is limited at the formal level, it often has a qualitative impact on the level of perception and meaning, as it leads to a disruption in the semantic structure and a destabilization of formal relationships, which leads to the dismantling of the dialectical relationship between stability and transformation in visual systems (Lupton, 2011; Frascara, 2004). From a philosophical perspective, the partial formal variable represents a point of contact between the concepts of identity and difference. Design, as a visual discourse, is based on a formal structure that expresses a specific visual identity, while any slight deviation from this structure challenges perceptual constants and opens the door to questioning meaning and the disintegration of connotation. In this sense, the partial formal variable can be considered an expression of the conceptual fragility inherent in the visual system. Semantic stability is only achieved through a delicate balance between elements, a balance whose structure may collapse as a result of a single positional change (Hallnäs & Redström, 2006). Furthermore, this variable can be understood through the relationship between the part and the whole,



whereby the part is not a passive subordinate to the whole, but rather an influential actor in producing meaning. Accordingly, any partial change, however slight it may seem, has the potential to reshape the recipient's perception of the entire visual work. From this perspective, formal variability is not merely an aesthetic deficiency, but rather a cognitive shift that confuses stable visual reading and reveals that meaning in design is neither essential nor fixed, but rather a fragile, systematic construction based on repetition, consistency, and interdependent formal relationships (Eco, 1989). Hence, the importance of carefully dealing with partial formal variables becomes clear, especially in closed or rigid visual systems such as visual identity, logos, and visual network design, where maintaining the consistency and accuracy of meaning requires a deep understanding of the impact of these changes on the levels of perception and visual reading of the designed message. These can be summarized as follows:

2.2.1. *The Impact of Subtle Formal Variability on Visual Perception:*

In the context of cognitive and aesthetic philosophy, "subtle formal variable" is a subtle concept that highlights the tension between constancy and change within the structure of form. This concept addresses how a subtle visual shift can make a noticeable difference in the perceptual experience without disrupting the overall structure of the design system. This concept addresses how a subtle visual shift can make a noticeable difference in the perceptual experience without disrupting the overall structure of the design system. This type of change is closely related to what Maurice Merleau-Ponty calls the "metaphorical structure of perception." Perception is not merely a passive act of reception, but rather a vital interpretive act that transforms what is partial and minor into a new signifier within the whole. (Phenomenology of Perception, 2002) Drawing on Symbolic Theory, Nelson Goodman believes, that any slight difference in visual representation can cause a shift in the meaning of the symbol or in its cognitive response, as (a slight variation in form may lead to a radical difference in interpretation) (Goodman, Languages of Art, 1976). This philosophy intersects with Edmund Husserl's "phenomenology," in which every perception is an intentional act embedded in the intention of meaning, making the most subtle formal changes loaded with meaning and part of a reconfigured internal semantic system. At this point, we can say that the effects of the "partial formal variable" in design are phenomenological in interpretation, according to Goodman, while for Husserl they are phenomenological in connection with meaning or significance. With each partial change in form, consciousness captures it with the intention of perception, creating a shift in the way the form appears within consciousness, which in turn leads to a shift in meaning, bringing us to the level of cognitive interpretation. Here, we find Goodman focusing on the external, symbolic aspect of formal change, while Husserl focuses on the internal, intentional, cognitive aspect, and the manner in which meaning is formed within consciousness through form. Ultimately, the partial formal variable, from the perspective of Goodman and Husserl, is the point of convergence between symbol and meaning, and perception and interpretation, to reconfigure meaning, in terms of the external symbolic system, or in the structure of internal intentional consciousness.

2.2.2 *Perception of The Partial Formal Variable According to Gestalt Theory:*

The principles of Gestalt theory explain that visual perception tends to organize elements according to several principles. According to this theory, the partial formal variable often activates the figure-ground distinction mechanism, whereby attention is drawn to a particular element without compromising the overall structure or visual identity of the design. These principles include:

- A. Form Constancy: Through this law, the recipient can recognize the logo, icon, or page layout even if minor changes are made to it, such as changing the size, color, or positioning.
- B. Figure-Ground Law: This law enables the designer to highlight the basic elements of the figure even within a slight change in the background or color gradient, as they are an essential part of shaping visual perception in terms of mentally reconstructing them as two separate but overlapping visual units.



- C. Closure: This allows the recipient to remove or simplify some of the lines or edges of the shape, allowing them to complete the shape mentally and intuitively.
- D. Good Continuation: This allows the recipient to follow the flow of visual elements smoothly, even if the location of a partial element changes, allowing for visual animation without disrupting the overall harmony of the elements. (Kurt Koffka, *Principles of Gestalt Psychology*, 1935)

According to Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of phenomenological perception, the interaction of the recipient and the graphic Publications is a living, embodied experience, not a passive reception of design forms. Each partial formal change represents a "semantic shift" that reshapes the relationship between the recipient and the design. Design is only perceived as an active whole within the structure of visual organization that unfolds with experience.

2.2.3. The "Partial Form Variable" is not Viewed as a Perceptual Disturbance: but rather as an active factor in visual communication, enriching the recipient's experience and enhancing the effectiveness of the visual message. With the insights of Gestalt principles, the recipient's mindset is able to "contain change" within a holistic understanding, which explains why even subtle design adjustments can have a significant aesthetic and moral impact. Impact on meaning and aesthetic reception: From the perspective of contemporary aesthetic philosophy, we find that the aesthetic value of a graphic Publications is not limited to its structural coherence or formal regularity, but rather manifests itself in its ability to be interpreted, which stems from the partial formal variables that create a kind of "cognitive tension" within the visual composition. This tension is not a defect in its visual organization, but rather serves an aesthetic function: it stimulates the recipient's visual awareness, prompting contemplation and mental engagement with the graphic Publications. Accordingly, German philosopher Theodor Adorno argues that the graphic Publications, in essence, is not a coherent, closed entity, but rather a fractured structure whose aesthetics emerge from its visual irregularity and structural tensions. He asserts that genuine aesthetics is not realized through symmetry, but rather through the openness of the structure of the graphic Publications to difference and fragmentation, a condition that allows for multiple readings and interpretations (Adorno, 1997). In this context, the areas of "perceptual margin" that arise from partial changes become sites for generating meaning, not as voids but as spaces susceptible to interpretive activation. This is consistent with Merleau-Ponty's view that sensory perception is not completed in the conscious center alone, but rather is distributed across the latent perceptual field, which allows for a multiplicity of experience and meaning (Merleau-Ponty, 2002).

2.2.4. Applications in Visual Design: Partial formal changes—such as adjusting spacing, a slight deviation in the line, or a slight alteration in the angles of shapes—are not viewed as superficial or decorative transformations, but rather as subtle aesthetic actions that establish a new visual rhythm within the design system, without disrupting the cohesion of the overall structure. These subtle changes constitute what can be called micro-visual shift, a term that can be understood within the framework of the philosophy of dynamic aesthetics, which artwork is not fulfilled through rigid symmetry, but rather through internal movement that creates tension and rhythm within the form. Graphic design, as a visual system, gains its durability from those small deviations that create a subtle perceptual surprise, breaking the monotony without dismantling its overall order. Herein lies the aesthetic paradox: the slightest change can redistribute visual attention and ignite new energy in the perceptual field. This is what can be described as a "soft change strategy" in design, which reflects a deep understanding of how the viewer perceives visual relationships, not as separate elements, but as a dynamic structure that responds to subtle shifts. (Wucius Wong, *Principles of Form and Design* 1993)

2.3. The Partial Formal Variable as a Horizon of Reception

Form, in its totality, is not apprehended as a given to consciousness within the essence of the aesthetic and perceptual experience all at once; rather, it gradually unfolds through a



procession state of reception. At this point, the "partial formal variable" emerges, not as a decorative element or a secondary transformation in design, but rather as a perceptual event existing in time, founded on a dynamic relationship between the whole and the part, the apparent and the potential, and the structure and the transcendence. In this sense, it is a horizon for reception, not a point of arrival, but rather an open field of meaning that grows with each movement of reception. As follows:

2.3.1. *The Concept of Partial Modal Variable as a Cognitive Boundary*

A partial formal variable is defined as a subtle visual change within the overall structure of a design that does not disrupt the perceptual system, but rather stimulates expectation and establishes new layers of interpretation and meaning. In doing so, it reshapes the relationship between the perceiving subject and the perceived world. From the perspective of the philosophy of perception as presented by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, form is not what is given, but what is formed in the act of perception. "Perception is not a passive reception of things, but an active act of formation. Form is seen only through its relationships, through the dynamics of the particular within the whole" (Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 1962). The partial formal variable is not merely a visual modification, but rather a point of condensation at which perceptual intentionality intersects with visual formation.

2.3.2. *The Cognitive Horizon and Open Reception - From Husserl to Gadamer*

The partial formal variable is based on the principle that perception is not accomplished all at once, but rather unfolds across an extended horizon of expectations (Husserl, 1931, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology*). That is, the whole is understood only through its changing parts, which activate the meaning possibilities inherent in the design. According to Hans-Georg Gadamer, aesthetic reception is built on a horizon of integration between the recipient and the design Publication, where every single detail can reorder the meanings of the whole, in what is known as "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*): "Every process of receiving details is nothing but a moment of interpretation and reshaping" (Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2004). From this perspective, the partial formal variable is a factor in reducing formal monotony, which creates a state of hidden visual tension, allowing the recipient to enter into a dialogical relationship with what is presented within the design Publication.

2.3.3. *The Partial Formal Variable as a Rhetorical Horizon - Between Metaphor and Evocation*

The partial formal variable can be viewed in its symbolic dimension as a visual metaphor that refers us to multiple meanings. According to Paul Ricoeur's concept of "the living metaphor," the new partial form does not explain itself, but rather calls for interpretation and creates a semantic gap that must be filled with experience and expertise. "Metaphor does not belong solely to language; it can be a formal metaphor open to multiple interpretations." (Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 1978) From here, the partial formal variable can become a rhetorical horizon open to unfulfilled possibilities of meaning, keeping the recipient in a state of constant cognitive alertness.

3. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This chapter aims to explain the methodological procedures followed in this research, including the research design, sample selection, data collection tools, and analysis methods.

3.1. Research Methodology: A descriptive research methodology was used for the purpose of analysis to achieve the research objective.

3.2. Research Community: The research community was chosen (the cover of the American magazine *Time* and the cover of the British magazine *The Economist*), which

are the most famous political magazines in the world, known for their significant influence on public opinion.

3.3. Research Sample: The research sample was chosen using the intentional method, as follows:

The cover of both Time and The Economist magazines, which deal with political and economic issues and their value variables, which can change the audience's concepts about those issues.

3.4. Quality Assurance Procedures:

3.4.1. Reliability: Systematic measures were taken to ensure the reliability of the information.

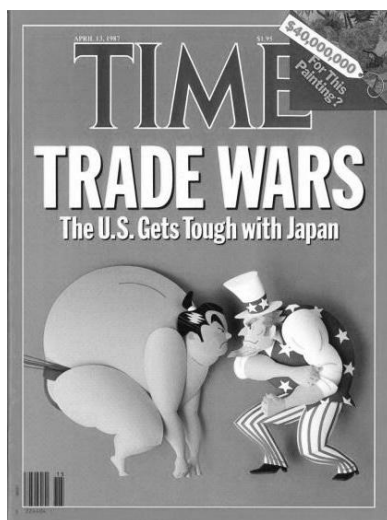
3.4.2. Validity: Analytical description procedures were taken to ensure the validity of the data.

3.5. Description and Analysis:

The analysis of the models is based on the partial changes that occur in the design forms within the magazine cover, as follows:

- A. *Images and Symbols:* Images and symbols can be used in a variety of ways in the layout to capture the attention of the audience receiving a particular aspect of the magazine cover.
- B. *Titles and Fonts:* Contrasting titles and fonts on a magazine cover can influence how the audience perceives general political and economic issues.
- C. *Color Values:* These values, depending on their visual organization, can influence the mood and the impression they create in the recipient.

3.5.1. Analysis of Sample (1)

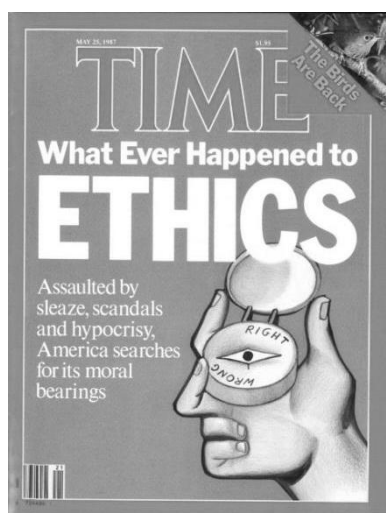


Sample (1): Cover of Time Magazine (13-4-1987).

This cover is a rich example of the dialectical interaction between visual symbolism and political and economic significance. The importance of the "partial formal variable," according to its visual organization, is evident in reshaping the overall meaning through subtle shifts within the design system, which can produce a sharp and charged cognitive effect. In terms of symbols and images, the sumo wrestler—a symbolic image of Japan—is depicted in an exaggerated, caricatured physical form, transforming this cultural symbol into a signifier of "economic magnitude" and "commercial weight." This partial change in the physical form of this cultural symbol shifts its meaning from identity to threat.

Conversely, Uncle Sam—a traditional symbol of the United States—appears here in an aggressive, bowed posture, indicating a state of readiness to pounce, in a manner that contrasts with his classic representation as a wise force. This partial shift in facial expression and body posture produces a new connotation related to "commercial nationalism." Thus, we find that the partial formal change in the symbols appears through the subtle shift in posture and gesture, without canceling the original symbolic identity, but rather reinterpreting it. The main title (TRADE WARS), written in large letters in a white color value in a thick font - as an attractive point - enhances the contrast with the background in a reddish-orange color value - as a non-neutral expressive element - and the state of tension. Despite the interpretive reading provided by the subtitle (The U.S. Gets Tough with Japan), it did not empty the meaning of its overwhelming political charge. Moreover, the typeface used in its formal transformation transcended its being a linguistic medium to become a clear indicator of the mood of the discourse, directing perception toward the conflict. This was supported by the color values employed within the visual space with the national color values of the United States of America. (Blue, red, white), in contrast to the wrestler's bare skin, formed a visual contrast that established a dialectical visual relationship between (institutionalism) and (primitiveness), which led to the semantic shift in color value as a partial formal variable, through linking the political meaning with visual semiotics, and the overall organization versus the local transformations through the symmetry that characterizes the image; - as two opponents facing each other in the center of the composition. The pouncing position of Uncle Sam, contrasted with the wrestler's heavy immobility, creates a cognitive shift from equilibrium to tension. According to Gestalt theory, this local shift within a stable overall structure generates a charged metaphorical perception, a visual strategy that opens the door to multiple philosophical interpretations. From Maurice Merleau-Ponty's perspective, the image embodies what he calls the "metaphorical structure of perception." Where the physical experience of the image precedes its verbal interpretation. Uncle Sam and the Sumo are not abstract symbols, but rather the embodiment of a tangible cognitive tension. From the perspective of deconstruction by Jacques Derrida, the image carries a shift that reveals the contradictions of Western discourse. Uncle Sam, who is supposed to be a symbol of freedom, is reproduced as a symbol of domination, which undermines the constancy of meaning. The partial formal variable here reveals the deconstructive structure of the image. Where each element reproduces itself within a hidden contradiction that destabilizes meaning and reproduces visual discourse within a game of tension and power.

3.5.2. Analysis of Sample (2)



Sample (2): Cover of Time Magazine (25-5-1987).

In this issue of (TIME), we find that the partial formal variable according to the overall visual organization requires in-depth contemplation of its formal elements (symbols,



images, titles, lines, color values), not as separate elements but as interconnected structures that involve subtle cognitive transformations that create a philosophical and aesthetic impact, without causing an apparent upheaval in the overall organization. In terms of philosophical frameworks, we are confronted with a complex visual question (What Ever Happened to ETHICS?). We find it evocative terms of embodiment rather than in terms of presentation, which we find to have "partial formal transformations" that represent a shift in meaning, creating cognitive tension - according to Merleau-Ponty. As for symbols, we find the "moral compass" as a central metaphorical symbol labeled "RIGHT/WRONG." Its needle does not point in a clear direction, but rather appears to be rotating without stability. The partial formal transformation here lies in the deviation of the needle, which may appear at first glance to be a simple visual detail. However, despite its simplicity, we find that it carries a profound cognitive significance about the confusion in the moral compass, which prompts us to read it as a metaphorical structure that indicates "moral awareness." Thus, the shifting of the needle here constitutes a "semantic gap," raising questions about the reference to right and wrong in accordance with what Ricoeur calls "hermeneutical anxiety." The image of "The Hand and the Compass," however, does not depict a human face, but rather a human hand holding a compass, indicating the effectiveness of the subject in confrontation with the confusion of values. The hand here is not a symbol of strength, but rather of individual responsibility for moral guidance. The subtle detail in the angle of the fist and the direction of the thumb suggests a desperate attempt to hold on forcefully, but rather a state of quiet confusion that heralds the birth of a deep, calm cognitive tension, exerting its effective influence on the viewer within the confines of the overall organization of the image. The structural tension is found in the title and font used in (What Ever Happened to ETHICS?). The presence of the word (ETHICS) in large, bold print, juxtaposed with a question in smaller print, suggests a contrasting partial formal variable that exerts control over the course of reception. The title is not read linearly; rather, the reader is first shocked by (ETHICS), then mentally drawn to the introduction of the phrase. This philosophical approach to organizing the title creates a visual tension between appeal and interpretation. The main word calls for a striking presence of a seemingly absent concept, supported by the space around the word (ETHICS), which enhances the state of cognitive tension by revealing "the absence of a thing through its presence." This intersects with Heidegger's philosophy of presence-in-absence. It is not a relationship of contradiction, but rather an integrated structural relationship according to Saussure's problem of presence and absence. This is supported by the color values that embody a state of careful play between neutrality and tension. The gray background here reflects excessive neutrality, despite its philosophical connotation symbolizing morality. However, we find it here not claiming the truth, but rather arousing doubt and suspicion. As for the red color value represented by the frame and the magazine's logo, which expresses its identity, it is in harmony with the symbolism of moral emergency. To form a framework that compresses the intellectual content, as if its language represents the awareness of lost morals and the warning of the "danger" looming over them. The contrast between the color value of the text and the background is not sharp in the true sense, but it was sufficient to form an implicit cognitive reality in a state of dissonance, which generated a cognitive tension (subtle cognitive dissonance) that makes the recipient feel that there is a defect despite the state of formal consistency. Which established an aesthetic state of intentionality through the general tension between text and image, emerging from the indirect overlap between the visual narrative (the image) and the textual narrative (the title). The image does not say, "Where are the morals?" but rather raises an intentional question through small visual signs of confusion. It is a partial formal variable as it bears a metaphorical narrative structure, all of whose elements interact to generate an implicit interpretive effect.

3.5.3. Analysis of Sample (3)



Sample (3): Cover of *The Economist Magazine* (10-10-2016).

This visual sample from the cover of *The Economist* magazine represents a rich design structure in terms of its partial formal variables. It offers fertile philosophical and interpretive material, in terms of its visual organization based on symbols, images, titles, fonts, and color values, within a deep philosophical framework related to the idea of truth, post-truth, and the influence of digital media. In terms of image and symbolism, we find the imaginary silhouette of a human head looking forward, with a red snake tongue protruding from its mouth, with two split ends, in a direct visual reference to the symbolism of lying and deception in the Western cultural imagination, derived from Christian theology in terms of the snake's association with original sin. The strange shape of the eye (closer to an inverted triangle with an acute angle in the green color value) which is interpreted as an indication of "distorted vision" or "ideological view," which reinforces the interpretive dimension; that lying is not only in speech but also in vision. These formations represent what Maurice Merleau-Ponty calls the "figurative structure of perception," where abstract meanings are embodied in specific visual images that directly influence the recipient's perception. The main title of the magazine cover, "Art of the Lie," was written in bold, thick script, which created a clear visual balance in terms of formal distribution, giving it a strong cognitive presence through the expressive use of the word "Art," with its dual connotation: aesthetic-decorative, and technical-literal, to suggest that lying is no longer a deviation, but rather a skill or organized practice. This is coupled with the subtitle, "Post-truth politics in the age of social media," which frames the meaning within a philosophical and political context linked to the concept of postmodernism, when truth falls before the effectiveness of interpretation, and lying becomes an effective tool of power. This clearly echoes Jean-François Lyotard's theory of "The End of Grand Narratives." Where absolute truth dissolves into a sea of partial narratives and symbolic manipulation, documented by the black color value in the shadows that express mystery, closure, and the invisible or irrational, which is in line with the concept of post-truth, where shadows dominate the light. The red color value in the snake's tongue connotes warning, danger, and temptation, stimulating a rapid cognitive reaction (Gestalt Activation) in the recipient's consciousness. The green color value in the eye seemed strange and repulsive, despite being a vibrant color value, but it came as a reaction against the apparent meaning: that life itself may stand tainted by the distortions of a false vision. All of this is reinforced by the hierarchical organization of the font, which is visually precise and directs the viewer's gaze from the top (the magazine's name), to the main headline, and then to the explanatory paragraph—a concept known as "perceptual hierarchy." The font used for the magazine's classic name (Serif White on Red) ensures that the corporate identity remains clear despite the bold, symbolic nature of the font. As is the case with the remaining sans-serif fonts, they are more modern, clear, and

in line with the intellectual content of the magazine's cover: "post-truth" and digitalization. According to Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction, this cover exposes the underlying structure of "truth" through a strategy of formal duality: truth/lie, art/deception, vision/delusion. All of these are transformed by partial formal variables (such as tongue/eye/title) into units that open up meaning rather than close it off. This simple visual transformation (such as adding just a snake's tongue) affects the entire structure of meaning and reshapes the act of perception, in what Derrida calls (*différance*): the difference and postponement of meaning. Ultimately, these partial formal variables here do not function as decorative elements, but rather as philosophical tools that bring about a cognitive shift in perception and meaning. The image not only shows us what a lie is, but also how the lie is produced as an alternative truth. The title and fonts formulate this lie as "art," which leads us to a complex aesthetic and ethical question: Is graphic design a tool for revealing the truth, or a means for producing beautiful lies?

4. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Research Results and Discussion:

- A. Revealing the effect of the partial formal variable as a visual mechanism for reproducing meaning; subtle changes in gesture, posture, facial expressions, and physical proportions do not alter the symbolic identity, but rather redirect its meaning within a specific political and economic context. What is happening in sample (1) is not a demolition of identity, but rather a modification of the angle of reception. Here, the recipient doesn't just see the wrestler, but rather sees him as an economic threat. Thus, the philosophy of the partial formal variable within its visual organization does not deprive it of its symbolism, but rather reframes it within a new context, transforming it from a "significant" structure into an "active" structure, engaged in a network of forces and discourses. Thus, "formal modification" transforms from a mere visual modification into an interpretive act within an ideological context. By producing a visual discourse charged with tension and conflict, the visual discourse here is not built solely through grand symbols, but through minute details that exercise "soft visual power," as Nicholas Mirzoeff called it. Gesture, curvature, and color value are transformed from design units into coded ideological indicators. Every partial composition within the visual organization engages in a game of power; whoever controls the gesture controls the interpretation.
- B. The dialectic of metaphorical perception is realized according to Merleau-Ponty; the image is perceived as a "physical event" before it is read as a linguistic text, which confirms that meaning is embodied through perception and not merely a logical deduction. Here, the centrality of language for the recipient is dissipated in favor of the physical experience. In sample (1), the symbolic images (Uncle Sam, the sumo) appeared as bodies bearing tension, not as texts ready to be read. Perception itself has become an embodied interpretive act, mediating between reception and reason, and between image and meaning.
- C. Revealing the deconstructive nature of visual discourse according to (Derrida); meaning in sample (1) is unstable, but rather revealed through internal contradictions in the representation of symbols, when the identity signifying "freedom" was transformed into a sign of "aggressive force." Thus, moving from perception to deconstructing its stability, this reveals that symbols do not carry "essential" meanings, but are always subject to the horizon of varying reading and interpretation.
- D. Activating Gestalt laws within the design strategy; that is, the tension resulting from a partial shift in the center of a fixed structure within the sample (1) produced a metaphorical perception that opens up horizons of interpretation on multiple levels. The tension resulting from the shift is not viewed as a "fault," but rather as a cognitive energy that generated meaning. This intersects with reception theory, whereby the artwork is reconstructed in the recipient's mind through subtle interactions. Thus, perception does not receive the image, but rather metaphorically creates it. Simple shift within the visual organization becomes a means of opening up to the multiplicity of layers of meaning within a single visual unit.



- E. Semantic shift in the "compass needle" as an interpretive gap; the "moral compass" in sample (2) carried a deep cognitive connotation of confusion when it appeared as a "traitorous symbol" that did not indicate anything specific, but rather revealed a crack in moral awareness as a structural concept. This gap in meaning is what Ricoeur calls "interpretive anxiety," whereby the recipient is forced to question the structure of moral meaning, not just its content. Philosophical questioning here does not lead us to the truth, but rather to a continuity of understanding, through a small formal tool that redefines the entire moral experience as a fragile and fluctuating perception.
- F. The image of the hand as a structure of responsibility, not power; the "hand" in sample (2) is not a symbol of power, but rather a symbol of individual responsibility. The first indicates a desperate attempt at steadfastness, through which the phenomenology of the body is clearly evident - the human hand, isolated from the face, has become a horizon for individual moral decision-making, where the body carries meaning rather than signifies it. The tense angle of the thumb and the confused grip bring us back to Sartre's philosophy of individual responsibility as an existential burden, not power. The hand here did not exercise power, but rather endured the anxiety of moral guidance. In this way, it transformed a formal detail into a burdensome existential mark.
- G. Perceptual tension through the contrast between the title's elements: The presence of the word (ETHICS) in large, bold print, contrasted with a question in smaller print, creates a visual tension between the call and the explanation. This contrast between a pivotal word and an elusive question produces what can be called a "perceptual rift." The shock of reception in Sample (2) was represented by the large word (ETHICS), which was pushed forward like a scream, while (the question) receded as a whispered note. This juxtaposition reframed presence without existence, as an absence concealed by the announcement. The space around the word (ETHICS) did not complete the meaning, but rather opened it up to its absence. This is an intersection of Saussure's statement that "language means what it says, but also what it does not say," where deletion becomes a signifier.
- H. The gray background is a color of tense neutrality. The gray background conveys extreme neutrality, yet simultaneously raises suspicion and doubt. The middle ground of this value—between white and black—endows the visual organization of the magazine cover with a tense, oscillating cognitive space between its claim to truth and its denial. This makes it an ideal representation of what Lyotard calls "postmodern uncertainty." The gray scale color value in Sample (2) served only to evade the viewer's perception and weave doubt around it, transforming the entire visual organization into a horizon of suspicion. Thus, the partial color variable became a driver of moral anxiety, not for reassurance. Meanwhile, the red color value served as a pressure frame for moral identity. "The red color value formed a pressure frame for intellectual content by warning of imminent 'danger.'" It never symbolized the meanings of life or emotion, but rather expressed a state of moral emergency. It served as a "visual spotlight" to attract attention within a balanced visual organization. The red-colored frame reconstitutes the content as a "confined content," simulate Althusser's concept of "the invocation of ideology."
- I. Subtle contrast as a source of cognitive dissonance: "The contrast between the color value of the text and the background constitutes an implicit cognitive reality in the case of dissonance." The dissonance in sample (2) was not shocking, but rather sneaked in as an "intentional error," similar to what Gestalt calls "productive dissonance." The case of "subtle cognitive dissonance," according to the visual organization, reshaped the apparent harmony as a surface structure only, while the deep structure carried cognitive anxiety. It is an imitation of what Benjamin spoke about; "the disturbed aesthetics", when aesthetics is not soothing, but rather a flood of questions.
- J. The indirect overlap between text and image as a generator of metaphorical narrative represented by the visual narrative (the image) and the textual narrative (the title). The image did not say where morality lies, but rather raised a question through signs of confusion and brokenness that it did not disclose. This is what Derrida calls "playing within language," where each sign refers to other signs, in an endless series of deferred

visual narrative connotations. Which formed a structure that does not reveal the truth, which in turn reshaped the relationship between symbol and meaning within a space of open metaphorical interpretation.

- K. The "metaphorical structure of perception" was formed through visual symbolism. The silhouette of the human head, the snake's tongue, and the green eye represented visual metaphors deeply rooted in the Western cultural imagination. Thus, we are faced with a metaphor rooted in Christian theology, where sin is embodied not as an intellectual content, but as a visual embodiment. The snake—an extension of the human mouth—transformed the text itself into a devious behavior, where lies are not spoken. Rather, it is practiced through the speaking organ itself. The sharp triangular eye—with its green color value—reflected the blurring of both vision and speech, establishing a philosophy that views falsehood not as a mask for truth, but rather as an alternative lens. Design thus became a perceptual event, not a mere visual construct.
- L. "The Art of the Lie" as an institutional symbolic skill; the main title "Art of the Lie" presented lying as an art, not as a distortion, through a thick font and the double meaning of the word (Art). The title in sample (3) played on the chord of double intertextuality: art as a technical skill, and art as false aesthetic. This raises an existential question about the nature of lying in a post-truth era; is what we see a disguised falsehood? Or a truth crafted with skill? The bold typeface didn't emphasize the concept, but rather framed it as a visual semantic authority, giving it cognitive weight, in contrast to the state of "symbolic satisfaction," according to Jean Baudrillard, when the image surpasses reality and replaces it. The recipient here doesn't question the lie as a symptom, but rather as "art exercising interpretive hegemony."
- M. Semiotic framing through the subtitle: "Post-truth." The subtitle frames the meaning within a digital and postmodern context, where the concept of truth has fallen under the dominance of interpretation. With its multiple narratives, the subtitle undermines the grand narrative of the concept of truth, echoing Lyotard's concept of the "end of grand narratives." To establish the concept of the end of belief in a "single" or absolute truth. Therefore, the concept of (lie) in sample (3) was not discussed in opposition to the concept of truth, but rather established the concept of "alternative truth," thus redistributing cognitive authority. Accordingly, graphic communication media do not completely erase truths, but rather saturate them with details of intertwined and interconnected narratives. Thus, lying becomes a new social cognitive function that cannot be isolated from the contemporary system of perception.
- N. Color value as a semantic strategy for decoding meaning. Black color value expressed ambiguity, red color represented a warning, and green color symbolized polluted life. All of these were employed to create an unconscious cognitive action. The color values in Sample (3) are not merely aesthetic effects, but rather stimulating cognitive codes—as Gestalt science calls them. The black color value not only expressed darkness, but also the invisible, in everything that the recipient's eye could not prove but sensed implicitly. As for the red color value represented in the form of (the tongue), it doubled the meaning between warning and seduction, which produced a double cognitive state; the recipient of the sample (3), naturally does not know whether to be repelled or attracted to it, which reproduced (the lie) as a "seductive element" far from being rejected. While the green color value in (the eye) was a symbol of activating visual contradiction; it is a color that is supposed to give life, but it turns into something that provokes cognitive nausea through its estrangement from its original function.
- O. The hierarchical organization of the script as a directed perceptual system, represented by the progression from the magazine's name to the main title and then the subtitle, created a precise perceptual hierarchy. Visual awareness was formed in Sample (3) according to a theatrical interpretive path, where the recipient was not left free to look, but was led within a system of precise guidance. This intersects with Foucault's theory of "regulatory control," where power is produced not through direct command, but rather through the organization of vision itself. Thus, in this sample, the recipient does not choose where to look, but is visually led to experience meaning as they are intended to experience it.



- P. Fonts as a dual cognitive identity between tradition and modernity; the (Serif) font in sample (3) of the magazine's name refers to institutional continuity, and (Sans-serif) to the intellectual modernity of the content. The font here is not only read according to its linguistic function, but also as a narrative tool to reinforce identity. The (Serif) with its white color value on the red background preserved the "authority of tradition," While the sans-serif fonts practiced dismantling this authority within the new text. Since "every written system is an ideological system," according to Barthes, the decision to choose the font type in this sample was not a formal one, but rather a cognitive statement. It shaped the magazine's identity according to a dual mechanism: a reference—contemporary, traditional—that was penetrated, reflecting the nature of the lie itself, as a truth cloaked with aesthetics.
- Q. Deconstruction (Derrida) - Lying is a means of multiplication of truth; all elements lead to what Derrida calls "difference and postponement of meaning." For him, truth is infinite, its meaning postponed and displaced to another meaning. The partial change in the shape of the snake's tongue, the eye, and the word "Art" - appearing as deconstructive cracks within the visual organization - reconstitutes truth as a productive structure through a series of overlapping contradictions, far from being a goal. The cover's content embodied the idea of deception, which led us to an aesthetic question about the seriousness of revealing the truth by transcending the aesthetics of form to the ethics of meaning. Does formulating a lie in an artistic style deprive it of its ethical character? Does linking falsehood to aesthetics give it postmodern legitimacy? This is an imitation of what Habermas calls the "rationalization of falsification," when lies are organized and institutionalized to become an alluring visual reality.

4.2. Conclusions:

Through the results of the analysis that this research has produced, and the scientific content included in the theoretical framework, a set of conclusions appear to us, which I have summarized as follows:

- A. The partial formal variable is a rhetorical tool that generates meaning and redirects symbols within authoritarian contexts, where perception is produced through soft visual dominance.
- B. Metaphorical perception: It seems that meaning is embodied in the image before it is articulated in language. Thinking about the image occurs through sensory presence rather than through logical analysis, which transforms the act of reception into an embodied experience that establishes meaning from within perception itself.
- C. The visual symbol does not carry a fixed meaning, but rather unfolds as a continuous difference, in which the meaning shifts from freedom to dominance, revealing the fragility of meaning and its reliance on endless interpretation.
- D. The partial change in form within the visual organization activates perception as a generative field for meaning, where metaphorical tension becomes a tool for opening interpretation—not a visual glitch, but a formative energy that summons meaning from within the recipient himself.
- E. Shift reveals an interpretive anxiety that destabilizes moral meaning, transforming perception from semantic certainty into a perpetual philosophical question.
- F. The image of the body transforms from a symbol of power to a manifestation of the weight of responsibility, as body language reveals the meaning of intellectual content as an existential burden rather than an act of authority.
- G. The visual disparity between the question and the font size used in the title creates a cognitive rift, where meaning emerges from the silence of the omission more than from the clarity of the public, in a tension between presence and absence, generating a deliberately incomplete meaning.
- H. The gray color value camouflages certainty with a game of doubt, while the red color value confines meaning within ideological frameworks. Color values thus become a mechanism for invoking suspicion and imposing cognitive dominance.
- I. Slight contrast creates a subtle cognitive dissonance, where apparent harmony masks an anxiety-generating imbalance, so that aesthetics becomes a hidden tension.



- J. When text and image are superimposed together, they produce a deferred semantic space, where meaning is not expressed but implied, in a deconstructive game that postpones truth within a series of open metaphorical references.
- K. Visual symbols were embodied as a metaphorical and material cognitive structure, so lying became a visual, not a linguistic, act, and falsehood an undisguised perspective.
- L. Lying was embodied as an encrypted institutional art that does not deny reality but rather creates it, where the script and context framed falsehood as a symbolic skill that exercises dominance under the guise of aesthetics.
- M. The subtitle activated lying as an alternative truth, not its opposite. It deconstructed the centrality of "truth" and reshaped epistemic authority within the intertwined narratives that dominate contemporary perception.
- N. Color values transcended their aesthetic values, becoming cognitive codes that deconstruct meaning. They transformed into instinctive symbols that produce cognitive ambiguity ranging from attraction to repulsion, making lying itself a seductive sensory experience rather than a mere false discourse.
- O. The title's hierarchical organization embodies a soft cognitive authority, as the design becomes a surveillance mechanism that directs awareness through visual engineering and framing interpretation.
- P. The font's positioning as a dual cognitive structure: the serif maintains the authority of tradition, while the sans-serif forms a deconstructive, modernist horizon. Thus, the font itself becomes a rhetorical tool that exerts tension between reference and innovation, just as a lie does when it disguises itself as truth.
- Q. Lying is no longer the opposite of truth, but rather a mechanism for postponing and multiplying it. Partially changing formal elements produce symbolic shifts that transform falsehood into an aesthetic-cognitive discourse, legitimizing deception through the "rationalization of falsification" within a postmodern horizon.

4.3. Recommendations

- A. Rehabilitate design awareness to understand the partial formal variable as a rhetorical tool. Designers must go beyond viewing partial details as complementary elements, but rather as semantic generators that shape the interpretive structure of visual work within cognitive, political, and ethical contexts.
- B. Establishing the partial formal variable as a central concept in graphic design education curricula, within units concerned with understanding cognitive tension, aesthetic impact, and the interpretive structure of fine details, and linking it to concepts of power, domination, resistance, and reception.
- C. Warning against the misleading advertising use of the concept of partial morphological variables. Despite the effectiveness of these variables, their misuse in graphic communication media leads to the production of misleading and ideological visual discourse. Therefore, it is recommended to enhance ethical awareness in their use to avoid invisible dominance over the perception of the receiving audience.
- D. Produce comparative applied studies across different cultures to observe variation in perception of partial formal variables across multiple cultural contexts, as well as the extent to which the cultural environment influences the generation of meaning from minor visual shifts.

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