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Title

**USE OF LANGUAGE GAMES IN COMPETITIVE
ACTIVITY:**

**A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TWO NON-
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BRANDS**

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Abstract:

In 1984, Roger Enrico published, “The Other Guy Blinked: How Pepsi Won The Cola Wars” in which he participated as the CEO of Pepsico USA. In his book, Enrico presented a story of the commercial competition between Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola companies which he conceptualized with the metaphor of war.

By participating in a language game, social actors pragmatically coordinate their activities through the language they use. The author studied Enrico’s book and looked into the functions of metaphors and metonyms in three different levels: The level of the messages that each company sends to potential clients, the level of messages between the companies and finally the level of the narrative by Enrico. More specifically, considering these three levels, the author explained how Pepsi influenced Coca Cola via metaphors and metonyms - especially via superstar (celebrity) advertising – to make Coca Cola react by changing the almost hundred-years-old formula composition. Finally, the research highlighted the assumptions and the rhetorical techniques which may not be known for by Roger Enrico at the time the book was written.

Keywords: *Rhetoric, Metaphor, Metonym, Branding, Celebrity Advertising, Cola Wars.*

Introduction:

In 1986, PepsiCo USA's then-CEO, Roger Enrico, in his book, *The Other Guy Blinked: How Pepsi Won The Cola Wars* made the following observation:

Now Pepsi Challenge, the signing of Michael Jackson to make commercials for Pepsi-Cola, and New Coke are not three unrelated events. But history, even the history of the soft drink business, isn't ever a simple connect-the-dots affair. Relatively insignificant events often set much larger forces in motion.

“Nowhere is this clearer than in military history. World War I started with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife. World War II started with the invasion of Poland. Large-scale American involvement in Vietnam started with the purported shelling of an American ship in the Gulf of Tonkin.”

As Enrico puts it by creating association between Pepsi Challenge, Michael Jackson and three wars of the last century, at its core, Cola Wars is a story of how leaders present the interfirm rivalry through celebrities and images of war.

Despite frequent references to the role of the media as a source of legitimacy for industries and firms (e.g., Baum & Powell, 1995; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001), the media's role in shaping public perceptions of firms remains relatively unexamined and under theorized. Although celebrities play an important role in society and markets, the subject of celebrity has been understudied (Rindova et al, 2006). Moreover, Rindova et al (2004) point out the fact that current theoretical approaches tend to ignore the role of language in the conduct of competitive wars.

In order to address these theoretical gaps, our paper analyzes two big brands, Pepsi vs. Coke case from the art of persuasion perspective. More specifically, our goal is to explain how Pepsi influenced Coke via language games (i.e. metaphor and metonymy) - especially via superstar advertising - to change the almost hundred years old formula composition. Even though at the press conference in mid-April, 1985, Roberto Goizueta defended his move as “the easiest decision I ever made”, via his remarks in Wall Street Journal on April 24, 1986, he acknowledged the fact that reformulation was a response to the reality that “The value of the Coca-Cola trademark was going down the hill ” (Enrico, 1986).

This study is based on a reinterpretation of Roger Enrico's presentation emphasizing rhetorical means (e.g. metaphors and methonymies) used by both sides and the roles played by superstars. We highlight the assumptions and the rhetorical techniques which may not be known for by the author at the time the book was written.

Historical Background:

The Evolution of the U.S. Soft Drink Industry

Coca-Cola was formulated in 1886 by John Pemberton, a pharmacist in Atlanta, Georgia, who sold it at drug store soda fountains as a “potion for mental and physical disorders”. A few years later, Asa Candler acquired the formula, established a sales force, and began brand advertising of Coca-Cola. Tightly guarded in an Atlanta bank vault, the formula for Coca-Cola syrup, known as Merchandise 7X” remained a well-protected secret. Candler granted Coca-Cola's first bottling

franchise in 1899 for a nominal one dollar, believing that the future of the drink rested with soda fountains. The company's bottling network grew quickly, however, reaching 370 franchisees by 1910.

In its early years, Coke was constantly plagued by imitations and counterfeits, which the company aggressively fought in court. In 1916 alone, courts barred 153 imitations of Coca-Cola, including the brands Coca-Kola, Kocka-Nola, Cold-Cola, and the like. Coke introduced and patented a unique 6.5-ounce "skirt" bottle to be used by its franchisees that subsequently became an American icon. Robert Woodruff, who became CEO in 1923, began working with franchised bottlers to make Coke available wherever and whenever a consumer might want it. He pushed the bottlers to place the beverage "in arm's reach of desire", and argued that if Coke were not conveniently available when the consumer was thirsty, the sale would be lost forever. During the 1920s and 1930s, Coke pioneered open-top coolers to storekeepers, developed automatic fountain dispensers, and introduced vending machines. Woodruff also initiated "lifestyle" advertising for Coca-Cola, emphasizing the role of Coke in a consumer's life (Yoffie, 2004).

The Cola Corporate Brand Wars Begin

In 1950, Alfred Steele, a former Coca-Cola marketing executive, became Pepsi's CEO. Steele made "Beat Coke" his theme and encouraged bottlers to focus on take-home sales through supermarkets. The company introduced the first 26-ounce bottles to the market, targeting family consumption, while Coke stayed with its 6.5-ounce bottle. Pepsi's growth soon began tracking the growth of supermarkets and convenience stores in the United States: There were about 10,000 supermarkets in 1945, 15,000 in 1955, and 32,000 at the peak in 1962.

In 1963, under the leadership of new CEO Donald Kendall, Pepsi launched its "Pepsi Generation" campaign that targeted the young and "young at heart." Pepsi's ad agency created intense commercial using sports cars, motorcycles, helicopters, and a catchy slogan. The campaign helped Pepsi narrow Coke's lead to a 2-to-1 margin. At the same time, Pepsi worked with its bottlers to modernize plants and improve store delivery services. By 1970, Pepsi's franchise bottlers were generally larger compared to Coke bottlers. Coke's bottling network remained fragmented with more than 800 independent franchised bottlers that focused mostly on

U.S. cities of 50,000 or less. Throughout this period, Pepsi sold concentrate to its bottlers at a price approximately 20% lower than Coke. In the early 1970s, Pepsi increased the concentrate price to equal that of Coke. To overcome bottlers' opposition, Pepsi promised to use the extra margin to increase advertising and promotion.

In the late 1950s, Coca-Cola, still under Robert Woodruff's leadership, began using advertising that finally recognized the existence of competitors, such as "American's Preferred Taste" (1955) and "No Wonder Coke Refreshes Best" (1960). In meetings with Coca-Cola bottlers, however, executives only discussed the growth of their own brand and never referred to its closest competitor by name. During the 1960s, Coke primarily focused on overseas markets, apparently believing that domestic soft drink consumption had neared saturation at 22.7 gallons per capita in 1970. Pepsi meanwhile battled aggressively in the United States, doubling its share between 1950 and 1970 (Yoffie, 2004).

The Pepsi Challenge:

In 1974, Pepsi launched the "Pepsi Challenge" in Dallas, Texas. Coke was dominant brand in the city and Pepsi ran a distant third behind Dr Pepper. In blind taste tests hosted by Pepsi's small bottler, the company tried to demonstrate that consumers in fact preferred Pepsi to Coke. After its sales shot up in Dallas, Pepsi started to roll out the campaign nationwide, although many of its franchise bottlers were initially reluctant to join (Yoffie, 2004).

Coke countered with rebates, rival claims, retail price cuts, and a series of advertisements questioning the tests' validity. In particular, Coke used retail price discounts selectively in markets where the Coke bottler was company owned and Pepsi bottler was an independent franchisee. Nonetheless, the Pepsi Challenge successfully eroded Coke's market share. In 1979, Pepsi passed Coke in food store sales for the first time with a 1.4 share point lead. Breaking precedent, Brian Dyson, president of Coca Cola, inadvertently uttered the name "Pepsi" in front of Coke's bottlers at 1979 bottlers' conference (Yoffie, 2004).

During the same period, Coke was renegotiating its franchise bottling contract to obtain greater flexibility in pricing concentrate and syrups. Bottlers approved the new contract in 1978 only after Coke conceded to link concentrate price changes to the CPI, adjust the price to reflect any

cost savings associated with a modification of ingredients, and supply unsweetened concentrate to bottlers who preferred to purchase their own sweetener on the open market. This brought Coke's policies in line with Pepsi, which traditionally sold its concentrate unsweetened to its bottlers.

Cola Wars Heat Up:

In 1980, Cuban-born Roberto Goizueta was named CEO and Don Keough president of Coca-Cola. In the same year, Coke switched from sugar to the lower-priced high fructose corn syrup, a move Pepsi emulated three years later. Coke also intensified its marketing effort, increasing advertising spending from \$74 million to \$181 million between 1981 and 1984. Pepsi doubled its advertising expenditure from \$66 million to \$125 million over the same period. Goizueta sold off most of the non-CSD businesses he had inherited, including wine, coffee, tea, and industrial water treatment, while keeping Minute Maid.

Diet Coke was introduced in 1982 as the first extension of the "Coke" brand name. Much of Coca-Cola management referred to its brand as "Mother Coke," and considered it too sacred to be extended to other products. Despite internal opposition from company lawyers over copyright issues, Diet Coke was phenomenal success. Praised as the "most successful consumer product launch of the Eighties," it became within a few years not only the nation's most popular diet soft drink, but also the third-largest selling soft drink in the United States (Yoffie, 2004).

In April 1985, Coke announced the change of its 99-year old Coca-Cola formula. Explaining this radical break with tradition, Goizueta saw a sharp depreciation in the value of the Coca-Cola trademark as "the product had a declining share in a shrinking segment of the market". On the day of the announcement Pepsi declared a holiday for its employees, claiming that the new Coke tasted more like Pepsi. The reformulation prompted an outcry from Coke's most loyal customers. Bottlers joined the clamor. Three months later, the company brought back the original formula under the name Coca-Cola Classic, while retaining the new formula as the flagship brand under the name New Coke. Six months later, Coke announced that Coca-Cola Classic (the original formula) would henceforth be considered its flagship brand.

Conceptual Framework and Methodology:

Methodology

The study is based on the analysis of the content and the rhetorical form of Roger Enrico's book titled: *Other Guy Blinked: How Pepsi Won The Cola Wars* by Roger Enrico (1986). We line-by-line studied Enrico's book (1986) that took place between Coca-Cola and PepsiCo in the early 1980s from war language perspective.

Rhetoric and Language Games

Rhetoric, with its connections with logic and other arts of reasoning, constitutes a basic part of epistemology. In his book, "Rhetoric", Aristotle defined metaphor as the translation of the name of a thing to another thing based on the similarity or analogy between things.

In Greek, metaphor means translation. It is an implicit comparison where it is not stated that it is a comparison. The audience is expected to understand what is meant. Metaphors have a distinct place in rhetoric (art of persuasion by evidence). They can help build stronger arguments (*ESADE Lecture Notes*, Eduard Bonet, 2006).

In the modern times, Rhetoric of Inquiry was firstly coined by D. McCloskey in her critics on the research methods of economics. She claims that economic arguments are based on metaphors (*The Rhetoric of Economics*, 1985, 1998) and on narratives (*If you are so Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise*, 1990). Her approach is influenced by the Aristotelian conception of classic rhetoric, which was updated in the New Rhetoric, by communication theories and by new views on science and scientific research.

Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish – a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought for action. For this reason, most people think that they can get by perfectly well without metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claim, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

According to Weick (1969), “reality is a metaphor” and to talk about a “reality” is simply one way that people try to make sense out of the stream of experience that flows by them (Weick, 2001).

To give an idea of what it could mean for a concept to be metaphorical and for such a concept to structure an everyday activity, in their book, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) emphasize the concept “Argument” and the conceptual metaphor “Argument is War”.

The “war” metaphor frequently has been invoked to describe the competitive interactions between the two archrivals in the industry. The “cola wars” themselves are perhaps the best-known example of a frequently observed competitive phenomenon— for example, the “burger wars,” the “ice cream wars,” and the “internet browser wars.” (Rindova et al (2004). Enrico’s quote above shows how openly and widely firms engaged in competitive warfare use war related symbols. However, Rindova et al (2004) point out the fact that current theoretical approaches to the topic tend to ignore the role of language in the conduct of competitive wars.

According to Roman Jakobson, metaphor and metonymy are the two fundamental modes of communicating meaning, and - according to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson - the basis for much of our understanding in everyday life (Jakobson & Halle, 1956; Lakoff Johnson, 1980).

In rhetoric, metonymy is the use of a word for a concept or object which is associated with the concept/object originally denoted by the word. The kinds of associations that define metonymy and synecdoche are cause or effect, totality or part associations; they involve a kind of physical contiguity. Metonymy may be instructively contrasted with metaphor. Both figures involve the substitution of one term for another. In metaphor, this substitution is based on similarity, while in metonymy, the substitution is based on association.

Metonymy is attested in cognitive processes underlying language. Objects that appear strongly in a single context emerge as cognitive labels for the whole concept, thus fueling linguistic labels such as “sweat” to refer to hard work that might produce it.

Advertising frequently uses metonymy, putting a product in close proximity to something desirable in order to make an indirect association that would seem ridiculous if made with a direct comparison.

Although competitive wars have not been elaborated through linguistic perspective, some researchers interested in language and discourse have demonstrated how organizational conversations, texts, accounts, narratives, and stories affect the ability of organizations to take action, achieve legitimacy, and manage their relationship with their environments, and stories (Dunford & Palmer, 1996). Researchers working from this perspective have recognized that language and actions are closely related, because language defines certain actions as “legitimate, necessary, and may be even . . . the only ‘realistic’ option for a given situation” (Dunford & Palmer, 1996) and because people “do not use language primarily to make accurate representations of perceived objects, but, rather to accomplish things” (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000: 137; Rindova et al, 2004). Enrico (1986) uses war language to accomplish his goals as: “*The Pepsi army was, in my plan, being commanded by a neo-Patton, whose strategic philosophy was, in Cola War terms, the equivalent of Patton’s “L’avance, l’avance, l’avance”*”.

Wittgenstein points out that metaphors are devices that extend the meaning of words. In *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), he claims that we must dismiss the idea of concepts and focus on meanings of name. A name usually has many meanings that cannot be defined by a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. They only share a family resemblance. For example if we reflect on the meanings of the name “game”, we find football, athletics, chess, poker, solitary card games, strategic games, love games, etc. The properties of physical or intellectual abilities, individual or team organizations and competition between people or teams do not apply to all of them.

Wittgenstein describes the process of generating new meanings and explains in the following way why we can’t define them with a set of conditions: “We apply a name to a certain category of objects or events; but when a new category appears and their elements have a similarity with those of the previous class, we use the same name to refer to them. This metaphorical procedure operates many times with different criteria and, in consequence, the objects named with the same term constitute a very complex class” (Wittgenstein, 1953).

The metaphor of war frequently has been used by both business scholars and business practitioners to describe the competitive activities of firms (Hunt & Menon, 1995; Kotler & Singh, 1981; Rindfleisch, 1996). Business scholars have argued that this metaphor is substantive, in that the theoretical knowledge developed in the domain of military science can be usefully

transferred to the study and management of competitive interactions (Rindova et al, 2004, Hunt & Menon, 1995).

In constructing the reality of a competitive war, however, rival firms go beyond simply invoking the metaphor of war. They use military language to describe many aspects of their competitive activities. For example, at PepsiCo, bottlers were rewarded as “veterans in the war against Coca-Cola,” and for “invading” markets with new “sales weapons” (Watters, 1978; cited in Wayland & Porter, 1994: 7). Or at another instance, PepsiCo described Coke’s reformulation campaign as “*They’re leaving the battlefield, folding their tents*” (Enrico, 1986). Rindova et al (2004) argue that such systematic use of military language to characterize the practices of competition as warlike activities constitutes a war language game.

Wittgenstein considers language games as “language and the actions into which it is woven” (1953: 4). He stresses that the term *language game* is meant to bring into prominence the fact that “the *speaking* of a language is a part of an activity, or a life form” (Wittgenstein, 1953: 10). By participating in a language game, social actors pragmatically coordinate their activities through the language they use (Shotter, 1997). For example on the Headquarters decision to switch to aspartame, Enrico (1986) describes his tactic as follows: “Of course, we haven’t told our bottlers anything about the possible move to 100 percent aspartame... But we just can’t spring this on our bottlers, who are after all, going to share the additional cost of going to 100 percent aspartame... So we decide to seek the support of a representative group... We decided to use the (fishing) trip as a cover.”

In a language game words provide a practical guide for action, rather than images, associations, and representations, from which meanings are to be made. The meaning of the words is defined “by reference to their role in the fabric of human action, as opposed to, say, their being associated with internal images” (Perry, 1994: 24). Thus, the concept of a language game differs from other approaches to language in its emphasis on the immediacy of the relationship between words and actions and on the engrained, potentially subconscious understanding of the meaning of words as “knowing what to do” in a given context. Wittgenstein explains, “To understand a language means to be a master of a technique” (1953: 68).

Berger & Luckman (1966) define language as a system of vocal signs and claim that it is the most important sign system of human society. An understanding of language is thus essential for

any understanding of the reality of everyday life....Moreover, language is capable of transcending the reality of everyday life altogether. It can refer to experiences pertaining to finite provinces of meaning, and it can span discrete spheres of reality.

Wittgenstein (1953) uses the term *language game* to convey the idea that the meaning of words is defined through their use in social interactions. He compares words to tools and to “instruments for particular uses” (Wittgenstein, 1953; 291), because, in his view, words not only name objects but also imply the appropriate actions to be taken toward these objects (Perry, 1994). Thus, in a language game, words and actions are closely related, because the meaning of words is understood when an appropriate action is taken. While the words in a language game call for taking an action, the rules of the game define what constitutes an appropriate action by specifying the correspondence between words and actions (Wittgenstein, 1953: remarks 53–54). Rules are repositories of social practice. They are patterns of “regularity,” which are taught to new participants in the game “by means of *examples* and by *practice*” (Wittgenstein, 1953: 70). Thus, a language game is learned through social practice. It provides a context in which words and actions are connected on the basis of social institutions, such as rules, customs, and tradition (Rindova et al, 2004).

In competitive wars, the concept of a language game enables us to understand how language and action become intertwined in a way that the language of war is not just a reminiscent metaphor and metonymy but a system of expected, prescribed, or justifiable actions associated with the words and the rules the game consists of. Through the war language game, based on military language (itself a language game, with which managers and stakeholders, i.e. bottlers, Michael Jackson, have some direct or mediated experience), “rival firms provide internal and external stakeholders with pragmatic indicators of expected and appropriate behaviors. The war language game may imply expectations that employees obey orders more readily or that they take actions that are not expected as part of the ordinary course of business” (Rindova et al, 2004). For example, in his memo to Pepsi Bottlers and Pepsi-Cola Company Personnel, Enrico (1986) addresses as “It gives me great pleasure to offer each of you my heartiest congratulations. After 87 years of going eyeball to eyeball, the other guy just blinked” and comparing himself with Kennedy during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis against Khrushchev.

Rindova et al (2004) claim that the war language game is not simply a manipulation of words. Instead, it entails processes through which language both creates and emerges from the competitive practices of firms. The metaphor of war acquires a reality-like status for the actors participating in the language game. In other words, participation in the language game leads organizational members and external stakeholders (i.e. bottlers, Michael Jackson) to experience competitive activities as a war in more real ways than non-participants in the language game would. Michael Jackson, an external stakeholder, expresses his extreme involvement in the rivalry with these words: “Roger, I’m going to make Coke wish they were Pepsi”.

Within a war language game, language and action lead to changes in practices and, ultimately, in resource allocations inside rival firms and among external stakeholders. In this way, the language game underlies the processes of resource mobilization and allocation through which wars are waged. A competitive war is therefore better understood as a war language game generating intensified competitive activity. We can observe this change in practice from the following reaction of a PepsiCo bottler during the aspartame negotiations: “Roger, you know, it’s not our style to deal with the parent company this way. Usually, we bargain and fight – but I’m not going to do that today. This is the right thing to do, and I’ll support you on it.” (Enrico, 1986)

Superstars (Celebrities) and Advertising:

In marketing, even though there are studies on rhetorical effects of branding (Usunier and Haner, 2002) and visual communications (Durgee, 2003), we have not come across academic research on rhetorical effects of superstar advertising. PepsiCo’s use of superstars such as Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie demonstrates how effectively superstar advertising can be used extensively by the firms engaged in competitive warfare.

The most significant feature of advertising in our modern society is its persuasive power (Yu, 2003). Advertising has the power to change the knowledge consumers believe and possess concerning the factual state of the world. Human agents often take their experiences for granted and use their stocks of knowledge to solve everyday life problems they encounter (Schütz, 1970; Berger and Luckmann, 1966). The ordinary person, acting in the world, is in a biographically-determined situation, doing what he or she does according to the system of relevances that

enables her to select from the environment and from interaction with others... It is a world of culture because, from the outset, the world of everyday life is a universe of significance to us, that is, a texture of meaning which we have to interpret in order to find our bearings within it and come to terms with it (Schütz, 1953).

Very often, consumers' perceptions of the external worlds are 'locked in' by their experiences and therefore show no interest in the new consumption opportunities even though they may know their existence. Advertising helps consumers to unlock their pre-occupied knowledge and perceptions. It is a process of unlearning. Furthermore, many products can be furnished with new images through the use of some well-known figures in the society such as superstars. To consumers, the product that has been promoted by the use of a superstar is different from the product that has not been promoted. The former becomes another product with a new value. A believer of “you-are-what-your-hero-drinks” theme of advertising, Enrico puts it as “When I describe it to him, it stirs something in Michael’s (Jackson) soul – because it will benefit millions of other souls (i.e. consumers).

Advertising, when explained in the subjectivist view, is therefore not a waste. Thus, it is correct to claim that 'all effective communication is persuasive... both information and recommendations must be presented persuasively if they are to have any effect on purchasing decisions' (Rogers, 1983; Fu-Lai Yu, 2003). Enrico (1986) emphasizes the role of superstar advertising in transformation of Pepsi-Cola Company as, “I think this is bigger than a new advertising campaign. Michael Jackson can be used to bring a new aggressiveness into the entire Pepsi organization. A new spirit. A new attitude”.

Although celebrities play an important role in society and markets, the subject of celebrity has been understudied (Rindova et al, 2006).

Some marketers treat celebrity as a product of the “marriage of entertainment and fame to create and sell highly visible products called celebrities”. (Rein et al, 1987).

There are two contrasting views on celebrity that lead to its paradoxical treatment as both desirable and suspect. In one view, “fame is deserved and earned, related to achievement and quality”. According to the other, “the publicity machine focuses attention on the worthy and the unworthy alike, churning out many admired commodities, called celebrities, famous because they have been made to be (Rindova et al, 2006; Gamson, 1994).

McCracken (1989), argues that “the attractiveness of modern celebrities derived from their ability to symbolize the lifestyle aspirations of audiences and to embody highly self-relevant meanings related to social categories, such as gender, class and status. Rindova et al (2006) asserts that greater celebrity status enables individuals attract more revenue generating activities, including participation in films, shows, games, and endorsement opportunities, {such as advertising}.

Advertising frequently uses metonymy, putting a product in close proximity to something desirable in order to make an indirect association that would seem ridiculous if made with a direct comparison. For example when the consumers see Michael Jackson and Pepsi, they automatically associate the two and assume that Michael Jackson drinks Pepsi (even though they all know that being a pure oxygen addict, Michael Jackson would not even come close any carbonated drink).

Rindova et al (2006) attracts our attention to the central role the media plays in the process of celebrity creation as they control both the technology that disseminates information about firms to large audiences and the content of the information disseminated.

PepsiCo pushed Coke to the corner to change the almost hundred-years-old- formula. We claim that this success can be mainly attributed to language games - especially to celebrity advertising. According to Rindova et al (2006), achieving celebrity is not necessarily indicative of the long-term effectiveness and success of a firm. Yet celebrity alters the economic opportunities available to those who achieve it (Frank & Cook, 1995; Gamson, 1994), and therefore needs to be recognized and studied as a potentially important intangible asset of a firm. Rein, Kottler, and Stoller, define “celebrity” as an individual “whose name has attention-getting, interest-riveting and profitgenerating value” (1987: 15). In their views, celebrity is defined by its consequences for audience members and celebrity individuals. Consequentially, the authors suggest that celebrity’s economic value derives from the heightened public attention and interest it generates.

Therefore Rindova et al (2006) refer to two characteristics of celebrity: One defining characteristic of celebrity is that a social actor attracts large scale public attention: the greater the number of people who know of and pay attention to the actor, the greater the extent and value of that actor’s celebrity. A second defining characteristic of celebrity is that the actor elicits positive emotional responses from the public. These responses arise because the actor has a positive

valence (Heider, 1946; Trope & Liberman, 2000) for the audience to the extent that he or she helps fulfill various behavioral goals, which, in the case of celebrity, include meeting an audience's needs for gossip, fantasy, identification, status, affiliation, and attachment (Adler & Adler, 1989; Gamson, 1994; O'Guinn, 2000). Thus, Rindova et al (2006) claim that the actors who become celebrities have high salience and positive emotional valence for their audiences, and celebrity arises from the audience's attention and positive emotional responses to the actor. Celebrity is therefore a property of the actor's relationship with an audience, rather than a characteristic of the actor him/her/itself.

Content Analysis:

Content analysis (or textual analysis) is a standard methodology in the social sciences for studying the content of communication. Earl Babbie defines it as "the study of recorded human communications, such as books, websites, paintings and laws". However, it is also a scholarly methodology in the humanities by which texts are studied as to authorship, authenticity, or meaning.

Harold Laswell formulated the core questions of content analysis: "Who says what, to whom, why, to what extent and with what effect?." Ole Holsti (1969) offers a broad definition of content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages." Kimberly A. Neuendorf (2002) offers a six-part definition of content analysis:

"Content analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented."

Ole Holsti (1969) groups 15 uses of content analysis into three basic categories:

- make inferences about the antecedents of a communication
- describe and make inferences about characteristics of a communication
- make inferences about the effects of a communication.

He also places these uses into the context of the basic communication paradigm.

The following table shows fifteen uses of content analysis in terms of their general purpose, element of the communication paradigm to which they apply, and the general question they are intended to answer.

According to Dr. Klaus Krippendorff (1980 and 2004), six questions must be addressed in every content analysis:

1. Which data are analyzed?
2. How are they defined?
3. What is the population from which they are drawn?
4. What is the context relative to which the data are analyzed?
5. What are the boundaries of the analysis?
6. What is the target of the inferences?

Table I: Uses of Content Analysis by Purpose, Communication Element, and Question

Purpose	Element	Question	Use
Make inferences about the antecedents of communications	Source	Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer questions of disputed authorship (authorship analysis)
	Encoding process	Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure political & military intelligence • Analyze traits of individuals • Infer cultural aspects & change • Provide legal & evaluative evidence
Describe & make inferences	Channel	How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze techniques of persuasion

about the characteristics of communications			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze style
	Message	What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe trends in communication content Relate known characteristics of sources to messages they produce Compare communication content to standards
	Recipient	To whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate known characteristics of audiences to messages produced for them Describe patterns of communication
Make inferences about the consequences of communications	Decoding process	With what effect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure readability Analyze the flow of information Assess responses to communications
<p>Note. Purpose, communication element, & question from Holsti (1969). Uses primarily from Berelson (1952) as adapted by Holsti (1969).</p>			

Zipf's Law assumes that the words and phrases mentioned most often reflect important concerns in every communication. Therefore, quantitative content analysis starts with word frequencies, space measurements (column centimeters/inches in the case of newspapers), time counts (for radio and television time) and keyword frequencies. However, content analysis extends far beyond plain word counts, e.g. with Keyword in Context routines words can be analyzed in their specific context to be disambiguated. Synonyms and homonyms can be isolated in accordance to linguistic properties of a language.

Qualitatively, content analysis can involve any kind of analysis where communication content (speech, written text, interviews, images ...) is categorized and classified. In its beginnings, using the first newspapers at the end of 19th century, analysis was done manually by measuring the

number of lines and amount of space given a subject. With the rise of common computing facilities like PCs, computer-based methods of analysis are growing in popularity. Answers to open ended questions, newspaper articles, political party manifestoes, medical records or systematic observations in experiments can all be subject to systematic analysis of textual data. By having contents of communication available in form of machine readable texts, the input is analysed for frequencies and coded into categories for building up inferences. Robert Philip Weber (1990) notes: "To make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent: Different people should code the same text in the same way" (p. 12). The validity, inter-coder reliability and intra-coder reliability are subject to intense methodological research efforts over long years (see Krippendorf, 2004).

A further step in analysis is the distinction between dictionary-based (quantitative) approaches and qualitative approaches. Dictionary-based approaches set up a list of categories derived from the frequency list of words and control the distribution of words and their respective categories over the texts. While methods in quantitative content analysis in this way transform observations of found categories into quantitative statistical data, the qualitative content analysis focuses more on the intentionality and its implications.

Results:

Language and discourse organize experience and reality (Searle, 1969; Wittgenstein, 1953). Drawing on Wittgenstein's (1953) ideas of language games, Lakoff and Johnson's work on metaphors, and Jakobson's contributions on metonymy, we argue that senior management of rival firms uses "war" language to compete against each other. Being embedded in a language game, we conclude that competitive wars are enacted not only through classical marketing tactics and strategies but also through communication acts, such as superstar advertising, to create a new social reality through associations. By adopting a language game view, we focus on how linguistic practices influence each stakeholder and finally the performance outcomes. To develop our perspective, we carefully studied Roger Enrico's book (1986) on cola war that took place

between Coca-Cola and PepsiCo in the early 1980s. We use examples from this well-known competitive war throughout the paper to illustrate our ideas.

In the following section, we study the case and look into the structure of the narrative and functions of metaphors and metonymy in three different levels: The level of the messages that each company sends to potential clients, the level of messages between the companies and finally the level of the narrative by Enrico. More specifically, considering these three levels, we explain how Pepsi influenced Coca Cola via metaphors and metonyms - especially via superstar (celebrity) advertising – to make Coca Cola react by changing the almost hundred-years-old formula composition.

Level One: Messages that each company sends to potential clients:

Enrico (1986) elaborates on the influence of celebrity advertising on consumers skilfully as:

“Americans don’t drink fifty gallons of soft drinks apiece each year because they have to. Water’s a lot cheaper and booze (alcohol) gives a better kick. But you choose soft drinks because soft drinks become a part of American life... It’s that imagery critical to our success. Imagery is how we define ourselves – and then how we present ourselves to you. After making sure that our products are as good as we know how to make them, sharpening our image is the most important thing we do.”

Firms can shape their own brand's identity by trying to counter its opponent's brand values and associations in the eyes of consumers. In case of Cola wars, we observed that PepsiCo constantly improved its Corporate identity towards its consumers and bottlers through Pepsi Generation campaign. Enrico (1986) asserts this as:

“For twenty years, we’ve positioned Pepsi as the “leading edge” soft drink and called our consumers the “Pepsi Generation”. And, for twenty years, we’ve used Pepsi Generation campaign to reach out not just to the young but to all people who look forward, who are curious about the next thing, who want more out of life.”

On the other hand, with the superstar engagement in Pepsi Generation advertising campaign, PepsiCo wore Coke's Corporate Identity and corporate values out. This can be observed through Roberto Goizueta's defense of reformulation decision as

"The value of the Coca-Cola trademark was going down the hill".

Level Two: Messages between the companies:

In 1950, Alfred Steele, a former Coca-Cola marketing executive, became Pepsi's CEO. Steele made "*Beat Coke*" his theme and encouraged bottlers to focus on take-home sales through supermarkets.

In this level, PepsiCo senior management develops enemy mindset by using the language games and an advertising campaign in parallel.

Let's review the terminology used in the book:

"The other guy blinked"; "I'm reminded of another competitive battle – 1962 Cuban missile crisis- and its outcome"; "Zyman wasn't nicknamed The Aya-Cola for nothing" (About Sergio Zyman, of Coke, a former Pepsi employee, was taken as Ayatullah Humaini); "The Empire was ready to strike back" (Coke as the Dark Empire); "The Warfare must be perceived as a continuing battle without blood"; "The 180 Days war"; "This will be the biggest marketing coup ever", "Gods drink Pepsi", etc.

Roger Enrico's quote (1986) below seems to compare triggers of a war conflict with those of interfirm rivalry, highlights Coca-Cola senior management's weakness by using war metaphors:

"By comparison [to the major battles of history], of course, the battles that Pepsi-Cola and Coke fight in the Cola Wars are trivial. There are no final defeats. The ammunition we fire at one another is often damn silly stuff. But for all that, our battles are very real. Tens of billions of dollars are at stake. And "market share" - the sales performance of a soft drink compared to others in its category. And something intangible, but no less important: Pride. That last reason is, in this story, perhaps the most important ingredient".

Stakeholders in Cola Wars consist of Headquarters staff, employees, bottlers as distribution channels, competitor's staff and bottlers, advertising agency, consumers and finally the superstars. In this phase, PepsiCo engages the stakeholders in the Cola War by effective communication. For instance, upon Coke's formula change, Roger Enrico takes this as an opportunity to further engage the Pepsi bottlers and HQ personnel by writing the following victory statement like a commander-in-chief:

"It gives me great pleasure to offer each of you my heartiest congratulations. ... Coca-Cola is withdrawing their product from the marketplace, and is reformulating brand Coke to be "more like Pepsi".... I say victory is sweet, and we have earned a celebration. We're going to declare a holiday on Friday"

Let's take a look at the following quote to see the degree of involvement of one of the main stakeholders. Michael Jackson, an external stakeholder, expresses his extreme engagement in the rivalry with these words:

"Roger, I'm going to make Coke wish they were Pepsi".

Michael Jackson shows his full commitment by rewriting the lyrics of his Grammy-winner hit song "Billy Jean" as "Pepsi Generation".

Another way Pepsi senior management engages the stakeholders is by publishing the book we analyzed. Even though the Pepsi commercials and the book may seem to target the individual consumers, a content analysis of the book revealed us that the book is mainly targeted the Pepsi bottler's (and potentially Coca Cola bottlers who might consider defecting). We can observe this via three facts: First, along with couple of other stakeholders, the book was mainly dedicated to Pepsi Bottlers (as "partners"). Second, the word "bottler" has been mentioned 68 times, whereas the consumers have been mentioned only twice, and finally, Pepsi bottlers have been referred to as "most important customers".

Within a war language game, language and action lead to changes in practices and, ultimately, in resource allocations inside rival firms and among external stakeholders. In this way, the language game underlies the processes of resource mobilization and allocation through which wars are waged. A competitive war is therefore better understood as a war language game generating

intensified competitive activity. We can observe this change in practice from the following reaction of a PepsiCo bottler during the aspartame negotiations:

“Roger, you know, it’s not our style to deal with the parent company this way. Usually, we bargain and fight – but I’m not going to do that today. This is the right thing to do, and I’ll support you on it.”

Level Three: Narrative by Roger Enrico:

As Enrico puts it below by creating association between Pepsi Challenge, Michael Jackson and three wars of the last century, at its core, his Cola Wars story demonstrates how leaders present the interfirm rivalry through celebrities and images of war.

“Now Pepsi Challenge, the signing of Michael Jackson to make commercials for Pepsi-Cola, and New Coke are not three unrelated events. But history, even the history of the soft drink business, isn’t ever a simple connect-the-dots affair. Relatively insignificant events often set much larger forces in motion”.

“Nowhere is this clearer than in military history. World War I started with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife. World War II started with the invasion of Poland. Large-scale American involvement in Vietnam started with the purported shelling of an American ship in the Gulf of Tonkin.”

Enrico (1986) uses war language to accomplish his goals as:

“The Pepsi army was, in my plan, being commanded by a neo-Patton, whose strategic philosophy was, in Cola War terms, the equivalent of Patton’s “L’avance, l’avance, l’avance”.

Enrico (1986) emphasizes the role of superstar advertising in transformation of Pepsi-Cola Company as,

“I think this is bigger than a new advertising campaign. Michael Jackson can be used to bring a new aggressiveness into the entire Pepsi organization. A new spirit. A new attitude.”

With the following quote, Enrico (1986) without having access to the real cause of Coca-Cola’s dramatic action, he claims success due to PepsiCo’s conscientious action as:

“The next big event in what has come to be known as the Cola Wars occurred on April 23, 1985, when Coca-Cola made what its executives described as “the most important announcement in the company’s ninety-nine-year history”. Gone was the product which had made Coca-Cola famous- and which had made billions in profits. Instead, we would forever have “New Coke”....

And finally, Enrico describes Coke’s reformulation campaign:

“They’re leaving the battlefield, folding their tents”

Conclusion and Discussion:

Although there has been research on rhetorical effects of branding (Usunier and Haner, 2002) and visual communications (Durgee, 2003), we have not come across academic research on rhetorical effects of superstar advertising. Many products can be furnished with new images through the use of some well-known figures in the society such as superstars. To consumers, the product that has been promoted by the use of a superstar is different from the product that has not been promoted. The former becomes another product with a new value.

Our study contributes into two main areas in rhetoric in management and strategy research.

First, it extends the research in which markets are viewed as interpretative environments by drawing attention to the role of language games, specifically superstar advertisements in shaping organizational behaviour, competitive branding practices, and stakeholder relationships.

Second, adds to research on competitive dynamics by suggesting how competitive actions and the language in which they are embedded influence the perceptions and experiences of internal and external stakeholders.

By participating in a language game, social actors pragmatically coordinate their activities through the language they use (Shotter, 1997). Language and discourse organize experience and reality (Searle, 1969; Wittgenstein, 1953). Drawing on Wittgenstein’s (1953) ideas of language games, Lakoff and Johnson’s work on metaphors, and Jakobson’s contributions on metonymy, we argue that senior management of rival firms uses “war” language to compete against each other. Being embedded in a language game, we conclude that competitive wars are enacted not only through classical marketing tactics and strategies but also through communication acts, such

as superstar advertising, to create a new social reality through associations. By adopting a language game view, we focus on how linguistic practices influence each stakeholder and finally the performance outcomes. We use examples from this well-known competitive war throughout the paper to illustrate our ideas. To develop our perspective, we carefully studied Roger Enrico's book (1986) on cola war that took place between Coca-Cola and PepsiCo in the early 1980s.

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