

AGENCY IN THE GIRL EFFECT
CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: A MULTIMODAL
DISCOURSE ANALYTIC STUDY

Master's thesis

Katariina Vihersalo

University of Jyväskylä
Department of Languages
English
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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Tutkimuksen aiheena on kansainvälisen 'Girl Effect'-kampanjan verkkoviestintä ja sivuston käyttäjälle rakennettu toimijuus. Nykyisin yksilön vastuuta painotetaan kehitysyhteistyössä kampanjoiden tukijoina, muutokseen velvoittajina, lahjoittajina sekä vapaaehtoistyöntekijöinä. Etenkin verkkokampanjointi perustuu yksilön toimijuuden korostamiseen; sivuston käyttäjä pyritään vakuuttamaan omasta tarpeellisuudestaan ja toimintojensa merkityksestä. Samalla kampanjoissa myös luodaan ”pohjoisen ja etelän” välisiä suhteita ja merkityksiä.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on tarkastella, minkälaista toimijuutta verkkosivun käyttäjälle rakennetaan. Samalla myös pohditaan, miten toimijuus perustellaan ja miten sen pätevyys ja paikkaansapitävyys luodaan diskursiivisin, tekstuaalisin ja monimodaalisin keinoin. Menetelmänä käytetään monimodaalista diskurssin tutkimusta, joka mahdollistaa teksti- ja kuva-aineiston analysoinnin genren näkökulmasta. Tutkimuksen aineistona toimii kehitysmaiden tyttöjen asemaan keskittyvä 'Girl Effect' -kampanjan verkkosivusto, joka pyrkii aktivoimaan sivuston käyttäjän osaksi kampanjaa.</p> <p>Tutkimus osoittaa, että kampanjan rakentama toimijuus perustuu muutamaa keskeiseen toimintoon verkkosivustolla; oppimiseen, lahjoittamiseen ja toisten saamiseen mukaan kampanjaan. Toimijuus on siten ennalta rajattu. Tärkeintä toimijuuden rakentumisessa on yksilön valtuuttaminen yhteiskunnalliseksi vaikuttajaksi. Toisin sanoen toimijuus mielletään moraalisesti oikeaksi valinnaksi, jolla on konkreettisia vaikutuksia, ja tyttöjen osoitetaan olevan kannattava sijoitus. Lisäksi toimijuus esitetään hauskana ja helppona, mikä saadaan aikaan kampanjan visuaalisen ilmeen ja kielellisten piirteiden avulla.</p> <p>Kampanjan analysoinnin perusteella näyttää siltä, että länsimaiseen yleisöön tähtäävä viestintä korostaa ”pohjoisen” toimijuutta ja tärkeyttä kuvaten kehitysmaat riippuvaiseksi länsimaiden avusta. Nopeutta ja helppoutta korostava verkkokampanja saattaa kuitenkin olla ristiriidassa yksilöllisen toimijuuden kanssa.</p>	
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1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the global North and South appears as topical as ever at the moment. The Western world buzzes about social justice, consumer ethics, and corporate responsibility and this means organizations, celebrities and campaigns advocating and mobilizing people to accept responsibility and agency for change. This holds true particularly when advocacy campaigns are explored. From this viewpoint, it seems that we live in an age of activism facilitated by the internet and social media making it easy to create, receive and share information that encourages taking charge and changing the world. Moreover, this activism happens online. One can donate, sign a petition, explore information, connect with likeminded people and so forth with online technology. This can be explored by looking at the premises of development cooperation. Koponen and Kontinen (2011), for instance, discuss development cooperation as an expression of international solidarity and see the need to solve problems such as poverty and inequality as intrinsic to Western culture. Thus this urge to solve problems is created, constructed and debated in texts, images and videos in the internet and the social media.

However, the structures of poverty seem to be blurred in the process of engaging the public in campaigns. In fact, the depictions of reality and the relationships between the North and South are gaining more and more visibility with advocacy campaigns but also critique. For example, the Kony2012 video has evoked strong reactions (cf. Taub 2012) this spring. That is, campaigns position certain social roles, ways of acting, and, hence, power relations. This does not mean that inequality or poverty, for instance, do not exist. Rather, it should be noted that solutions are always negotiated discursively and at the same time create certain “designs” and images of the world. This forms the phenomenon considered in the present study examined from a multimodal discourse analytical viewpoint.

My personal interest in exploring these questions comes from the strong reactions that the South and development cooperation evokes. Try, for instance, listing associations that you connect with the South, on the one hand, and with the North, on the other hand.

What kind of cultural conceptions do they reflect? Advocacy campaigns and organizations are for one related to these meanings and representations of the South and therefore provide reasons for examining the phenomenon. In fact, campaigns are purpose driven and compete with other campaigns of coverage as they are dependent on public support. Moreover, campaigns have the power to depict the South in many ways. This means that good intentions may also lead to bad outcomes that reinforce stereotypes and dependency between the North and South. This is what caused criticism for the Kony2012 video, for example. This is also connected to the wider context of the premises of development practice with the embedded categories of the developed and the developing world. Moreover, it seems that it is individuals that are made accountable of the world situation with advocacy campaigns more than other actors. Consequently, it is important to acknowledge the power of the view point of representing issues. Examining agency in the present study encompasses these observations; the phenomena of the (Northern) public being the centre of attention in development cooperation through advocacy campaigning.

The focus of the present study is exploring the phenomenon of advocacy campaigning and engaging the public in the Girl Effect campaign website. That is, this study examines how agency is constructed and validated discursively and multimodally for the Girl Effect campaign website user. Agency is considered in the study a trust to one's actions and to the wanted outcome following Darnton and Kirk (2011). This is seen as relevant as agency enables the viewpoint of expectations connected with the individual who is given a dominant position in advocacy campaigns. Kress (2010), for instance, relates the dominant position of the individual to changes in the social world as well as in technology that give power to the individual as a consumer and content creator. Furthermore, Fairclough (2003) and Bhatia (2004), share this view in positioning the individual as a significant decision-maker in promotional discourse. The changing world of communication further gives reasons for examining these changes that also influence genres used evoking new hybrids in the competitive and fast-changing online environment. As a result, agency enables considering the positioning of the public and the wider effects.

The visual and textual resources used to engage to agency are considered by employing multimodal discourse analysis. Image becoming the salient mode next to writing on screen and online communication explains this choice. Moreover, multimodal discourse analysis proves appropriate for researching the visual and textual mode and their interaction in the website for engaging the public in the campaign. The website is approached with the concept of genre enabling to consider the actions and the relationships formed. In addition, genre is seen as shaping the visual and textual resources. The ways meaning making and engaging in the campaign website are considered as communicating about the purposes of the campaign as well as about the values embedded in the practice of advocacy campaigning. In other words, the visual and textual resources of the Girl Effect campaign are examined by considering what cultural associations and meanings are drawn and used in constructing agency and engaging the public. Then by looking at genre, discourse and mode, it is possible to describe the interaction and positioning of the website user. As a result, the ways of engaging allows to examine online communication, the promotional culture and the embedded values. That is, the framework for examining agency as visually and discursively created relies on social constructivism. Consequently, the meaning making is analysed as involving choices and consequences.

2. BACKGROUND FOR DEVELOPMENT ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING

Before presenting the analytical framework of the present study for researching multimodal communication, this chapter frames the context and the background of development advocacy and online communication in order to locate the Girl Effect campaign website examined. First, this section introduces few salient characteristics of international development in terms of the present study, presenting briefly the actors within development practice and central lexical notions. Second, online campaigning and advocacy work is considered giving attention on the internet as a media and its functions for engaging the public for agency. Third, previous studies concerning advocacy campaigns and the forms of engaging are reviewed in order to establish the current study within the existing research and received results.

2.1 The field of international development as a context for advocacy work

The field of development cooperation is multidisciplinary, problem-oriented, and highly contested and criticized in the academia and by the public for its forms, goals, strategies, effectiveness, and the discourses surrounding it. It encompasses a variety of actors, different forms of aid or cooperation, divergent opinions and theorizations. The levels of action, goals and strategies are then many within this topic (see for example Koponen 2011). While as a topic of foreign aid it may be distant to many, development related issues are brought to the Western public's attention, for example, by the media and with campaigns for sponsoring children abroad or advertisements of consumer related products. There seems to be an increased attention on the behaviour of the individual, which is also used to validate this call for action. In fact, at the same time as the need for international development is questioned, the public support for development assistance is, however, not diminishing, according to the Eurobarometer¹

¹European Commission, Press release.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1390>. (4 Feb 2012)

from November 2011 indicating trust in the premises of the field. The view of Koponen and Kontinen (2011: 166) stating development cooperation as an expression of international solidarity and intrinsic to Western culture might explain the continuous presence of poverty related campaigns in the media. The problematic nature of this, however, is related to the power relations in the field that also give reasons for studying the advocacy campaigns. While reviewing all these viewpoints is beyond the scope of the present study, this section aims to highlight some general characteristics for understanding the focus on the individual agency in the Girl Effect campaign and the discussion(s) related to field of international development that are seen as relevant for the present study.

The field of development has seen many changes since its beginning and has become to not only consist of many goals and motives, but also of many actors. From the Western perspective it is not just considered foreign aid but also a matter of individuals taking part and understanding the causes and structures affecting the global relations. While there are different views of the ‘beginning’ of development, the concept of development as signifying progress became to exist after the Second World War with the US foreign aid being directed for the reconstruction of Europe (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2003, Koponen 2007: 60). Koponen (ibid.) calls this the beginning of ‘developmentalism’, meaning intervention for moral purposes for desired outcomes. From this well-known Marshall Plan and Truman’s inauguration speech, the forms and the meanings as well as the actors, the motives and the focus of development have amplified. As Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) describe, social, political and environmental goals have come forth along economic goals and the motives for development cooperation have diversified. This also means new emphasises like the focus on gender equity, and especially on the social rights of women and girls at the moment (see for example Wilson 2011). In addition to these changes, there are new actors working alongside the official bilateral and multilateral donors, that is, governments and international agencies (Brainard and Lafleur 2008). These are, according to Brainard and Lafleur (2008), NGOs, “megaphilanthropists”, the corporate sector, new bilateral donors e.g. China, celebrities and the global public. This means that international development is not seen only as negotiated by governments, but individuals are seen as contributing as well. Furthermore, the influence of a variety of

actors is regarded as transforming development to more competitive and market-led (Brainard and Lafleur 2008: 14). It should be, however, questioned what is the relationship between these actors and what kind of roles are allocated to the individuals. Moreover, Brainard and Lafleur stress that the most important actors are not the donors, but the recipients of aid. This claim illustrates the tension in the field of development; the approach taken often highlights the Western point of view. That is, international development is approached as predominantly Western accomplishment or duty rather than focusing on the receiving state and the individuals. This tension between the donor and recipient is also apparent in the discursive level and in naming practices.

The lexicon and the discourses of development exemplify the perspectives taken in the discussions surrounding development and the related phenomena. As discussed above, development has gone through many changes. In the lexicon of development, this means a turn from *aid* to *cooperation* and *partnership* (Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen 2003: 42). Koponen and Seppänen (2007: 336) see these changes as reflecting the goals of development, but argue that *aid*, in fact, would represent more accurately the (power) relations between the parties. This is further related to another observation: the naming practices and choices relating to the donor-recipient relations require attention. According to Koponen (2007: 45-47), the most common naming used nowadays is *the (global) South* or *the developing countries* as compared to *the North* and *the developed countries* depending on the desired tone. For him this naming that separates and unites certain countries is problematic as the economic and societal differences between countries as well as within each country is blurred. Furthermore, Koponen notes that while the reason for these naming practices is the differing historical processes, the steps taken by the post-industrial societies should not be considered the only and the right path. That is, he draws attention on the expectations and values attached to the dichotomies in the lexicon of development. This review also indicates the reasons for the concepts used in this study. I am referring to the global North and South as well as to the developing countries in this study and do so with the awareness of the problems linked to these concepts. By reviewing these few central naming practices, we can note that power relations and world making cannot be escaped nor should be ignored when examining development related topics or campaigns as they draw attention to the key issues and can also be used to blur realities.

This discussion also brings attention to the reasons for studying development that is covered more extensively at the end of this chapter: the power relations between the developed and developing world is seen as problematic but also reinforced with the discourses surrounding development. As this study examines advocacy campaigning and positioning agency for the individual, it is justified to take a closer look to online communication as enabling engaging as well as reviewing shared insights from previous studies.

2.2 Online communication and advocacy campaigning

The internet and the opportunities it presents for civic engagement, activism and advocacy campaigns interests several scholars. The reason for such attention is the shift from page to screen reviewed, for example, from the perspective of literacies (Snyder 2002), empowerment (Wheeler 2011), as well as democratization, identities and communities (McCaughey and Ayers 2003, Meikle 2002, Montgomery et al. 2004). Within civic engagement, it is viewed, for example, as facilitating political organizing and social change which is considered important because campaigns aim to reach wide audiences and bring people and organizations together (cf. McCaughey and Ayers 2003). Technology is also seen as potentially empowering and contributing to development (Wheeler 2011). While the features of the internet are regarded as facilitating movements, attention should be also brought to the website design and the choices available for the individual user. As a result, digital communication is in this section discussed as shaping advocacy campaigns by enabling fast paced interaction as well as excluding and limiting access.

Advocacy campaigns refer to action determined by specific goals and values. A campaign can be characterized thus as an “*action programme*” focusing on a specific cause or theme designed to motivate support and gather people and organizations together (Lahusen 1999: 189). One goal of a campaign is thus related to publicity. Getting public support is important as it validates the campaigns by backing the organizations’ and the governments’ actions as well as pressuring for change (Darnton

and Kirk 2011: 13-14). Furthermore, the public support is manifested in individual actions such as donations and consuming, for example, Fair trade products (ibid.). The public can be therefore seen as actors influencing decision-making. As a result the public is also regarded as an actor in the field of development. To illustrate this Brainard and Lafleur (2008: 12) argue that

Along with lending its voice to specific issue-driven campaigns, the public has become an active participant in financing development and a growing contributor to development activities on the ground.

The characteristics of advocacy campaigns can be further discussed by considering advocacy campaigns as a genre linked to philanthropic discourse like Bhatia (2004) does. He (2004: 95-104) sees the core values used to convince and engage the public as selflessness, social responsibility and moral action together with community participation, social consciousness and voluntary activity. On the other hand, as the field of actors and campaigns is expanding, also competition is becoming more fierce leading to new ways of influencing and drawing increasingly from marketing discourse (ibid.). This for Bhatia (ibid.: 104) is problematic as *“it is likely to undermine the real value and strength of much philanthropic discourse.”* Perhaps this has caused Biccum (2011: 1332) to denominate development advocacy as *“a unique combination of politics and popular culture”* relating to the mix of advertising, entertainment and information. However, also the mode of communication influences the characteristics of an advocacy campaign.

Advocacy campaigns realized online are part of online activism that refers to a variety of different forms and areas of action facilitated by digital communication. Online activism comprises of websites created for raising awareness of different causes, petitions, spoof sites, protest sites, hack attacks and electronic disobedience (McCaughey and Ayers 2003, Meikle 2002). The actions, goals, and engaging of these differ significantly. Vegh (2003), for example, groups and names the actions of the internet activism in 3 main areas: awareness/advocacy, organization/mobilization and action/reaction. The three are interrelated but also include different levels as donating online or providing information of a cause differ substantially from virtual sit-ins or hacking. In addition, online activism is seen as a space for community and identity formation (Clark and Themudo 2003: 114) which can be linked also the characterization of philanthropic discourse by Bhatia (2004: 95-104). In other words, the internet

enables planning and organizing activities, recruiting individuals, advertising, sharing information and fundraising (Montgomery et al. 2004: 86-101). These actions are facilitated by digital communication as the following quote from Montgomery et al. (2004: 94) illustrates:

Many activist websites provide not only an opportunity to join instantly, but also offer timely information via email newsletters and action alerts that prompt further engagement, thus making visitors feel part of something larger and more dynamic than a print brochure alone might convey.

In other words, the internet facilitates communicating and circulating materials easily, rapidly and with a low cost, organizing action such as demonstrations, lobbying or events and for viral marketing as well as creating spaces for online discussions (Montgomery et al. 2004, Vegh 2003). Electronic communication also enables individuals to access wide amount of information and offers the possibility to create content whether in the social media or say Wikipedia (Kress 2010: 27). In addition, Tatarchevskiy (2011) argues that visual presence enabled by social networking sites and its performative nature furthers connectivity as well as legitimizes the causes and campaigns by giving face to the supporters. Hence, we can see that campaigns benefit and use these features in order to reach the public and mobilize them for action.

While online communication is praised by many, authors have also expressed doubts and criticism towards accessibility, and the uses of online communication in advocacy work. First, access to the internet and technology is not self-evident in all parts of the world, which together with the English as the dominant language online excludes many (McCaughey and Ayers 2003: 4). Similarly, not everyone having the access to the internet has the skills needed. This becomes evident when examining the use of technology between age groups. Second, Meikle (2002: 29) points out how freedom for the user promoted by many scholars is, in fact, narrow as the user has a set of choices within preselected limits. This constrain of websites is also confirmed by Fairclough (2003: 78) who argues that a website user has the possibility to create his or her one path in a website within a set of choices made by the site creator. We cannot, for example, influence the content of websites or the messages received from mailing lists. According to Meikle (2002: 31), it is conversational interactivity that facilitates input from users and “working to *create* something.” Third, online activism and engaging itself does not hold high appreciation by all scholars. Darnton and Kirk (2011), for

example, see the lightness of engagement online as problematic. As a result they argue for more profound engagement and action for understanding the causes and global poverty related phenomena better. This can be also related to the use of promotional discourse and the increased competition in the field as mentioned earlier. Hence, while the internet and social networking sites make it easy for some to connect and share and find information, long-term commitment and ‘real life’ communication seems to hold a higher value.

The tools and features of the internet technology described here may seem obvious and taken for granted nowadays. However, they have contributed to naming and positioning the public as a significant actor within the field of development in the North. For example, the Jubilee 2000 campaign is seen as a pioneering campaign in civic engagement for using the internet to create an international movement (Brainard and Lafleur 2008: 12). Having discussed the features of online communication, we move on to examining recent studies on advocacy campaigns.

2.3 Advocacy campaigns and agency in recent studies

Various studies on development campaigns, and the imagery and discourses used indicate the problematic relationship of representation between the developed and developing countries. Furthermore, they also give attention to the ways of positioning and engaging with the public. Consequently, campaigns can be seen as either constructing and reinforcing or questioning the problematic relationship between the North and South. Cameron and Haanstra (2008: 1477) summarize this by saying that organizations “*have the power the control the ways in which they represent their own work and the people in the global South who are the presumed beneficiaries of it.*”. According to this statement, campaigns have a great deal of power; the ways of attracting support from the public also construct social positions and representations of the North and South.

The overall power relations and world making constructed in campaigns are described in critical words by many. While researchers such as Cameron and Haanstra (2008), Wilson (2011) and Biccum (2011) acknowledge the changes from the criticized visual discourses of misery to the positive imagery used at present, they disapprove of the underlining paternalistic construction of North-South relations similar to the one in misery discourse. To illustrate, Cameron and Haanstra (2008: 1486) argue that campaigns fail to challenge the notion of victimhood and passivity, whereby donors in charity campaigns are depicted as *“beneficent and as possessing the wisdom and agency needed to help Southern ‘others’, while the structural issues that sustain global poverty remain in the shadows.”* Furthermore, grim comments are given by Biccum (2011), who sees the models of development coming from the interest of the campaigners which raises questions of the goals of aid. Likewise, Cameron and Haanstra (2008) voice concern over campaigns not challenging consumer capitalism but actually supporting it. Moreover, the researchers demonstrate general judgement against the world view represented in campaigns where the current state of the world is not problematized (see Wilson 2011) and the causes and structures relating to poverty are heavily simplified (see Biccum 2011, Cameron and Haanstra 2008). This disapproval demonstrates the collective concern for advocacy work relying on simplified world view in order to receive support and stressing the agency of the Northern public.

In fact, there appears to be a strong consensus among researchers of the current development practice set in discourses of free market ideology, capitalism and business where only market-oriented solutions are offered (Biccum 2011, Wilson 2011, Wirgau et al. 2010). These scholars argue that this leads to presenting a narrow notion of the state of the world and poverty hence overlooking its complexity and the debates concerning it. This means emphasising more development aid than reflecting on social structures or world trade, or the agency of the receivers of aid (cf. Brainard and Chollet 2008: 22-24). Biccum (2011) specifies this conduct as celebration of ‘neoliberal subjectivity’. That is, these researchers regard the values and the world views embedded in development advocacy as problematic. In other words, campaigns are seen as focusing too much on getting more funds and not informing the public on the intricacy of global relations and poverty.

Also the positioning of the public is contested by many researchers. To discuss the positioning of the public, we can use the concept of *agency* that encompasses the power and responsibility attached to the position. For Darton and Kirk (2011: 18) it is “*a person’s belief that they are able to undertake an action to tackle poverty, and that that action will have the desired effect.*” This is the perspective also adopted in the present study as shall be discussed in section 3.2. On the other hand, the positioning of the public is discussed by scholar by referring to the actions that the public is expected to undertake or the roles that the public is expected to fill. Cameron and Haanstra (2008: 1483), for example, perceive the role of the public as “*more than a donor, less than an activist*” whereas Brainard and Lafleur (2008) draw attention on donations and volunteer work. Agency and the role of the public thus seem to vary from legitimating campaigns to donating and volunteering. In fact, many scholars see fundraising as the primary goal of advocacy campaigns leaving education and raising awareness to second place (see for example Cameron and Haanstra 2008). However, researchers see donations as the main form of engaging as problematic. Darnton and Kirk (2011), for example, see this as the reason for poor understanding of poverty. Similarly, Wirgau, Webb Farley and Jensen (2010) characterize agency as individual and more likely to be restricted to consuming rather than political engagement. Consequently, the current trend of emphasising the Northern public in financing campaigns and development above other roles or activities is regarded as problematic.

Another similarity among the campaigns examined in these studies is that the preferred forms of agency appear to highlight the Northern agency in ways limited and predetermined by the campaign. While the public is told to be highly appreciated and valued, the position given to the public relates either to donating or consuming, limiting the audience from other opportunities and not inspiring to think about the causes and structures of poverty (Wirgau et al. 2010). Similarly, Tatarchevskiy (2011) informs how ONE campaign routinizes and standardizes the participation and reduces volunteer creativity. According to her, the campaign wishes to engage people to be the spokespersons for the campaign and thereby also form an important part of the campaign representing community and solidarity – a message that the campaign emphasizes on its visual and textual features. While the participants receive praise for their action as well as screen space, Tatarchevskiy (ibid.) sees the forms of agency as

noticeably specified, though also described as significant to the campaign. She further claims that there is a clear division of labour between the campaign and the public. Hence, it can be argued that persuasion is done by explicit evaluations of the public. Furthermore, Biccum (2011) argues that the public is persuaded by attending to their needs i.e. by advising them to 'pursue their interests' in the campaigns which are valuable experiences for the volunteers. Furthermore, Tatarcheskiy (2011) considers whether agency is commodified and turned into a symbol that does not, in fact, mean anything. These observations raise important questions of advocacy campaigning. While the Northern agency is emphasised and the public is positioned as valuable, there seems to be little substance to the activities themselves as online communication especially relies on easiness and speedy functioning.

The image of agency forming for the public from these campaigns is one that emphasises the significance of small actions and relies on easiness and superficial knowledge and information. The focus is on celebrating the Northern public as consumers and this, according to Cameron and Haanstra (2008), creates more distance between the donor and the recipient. However, while the authors argue for the need for representing the Southern agency as the most important, the premises of development cooperation become apparent. The development campaigns reviewed are directed to the Northern (mainstream) public and as the campaigns seem to prioritise donations, also the agency highlighted is therefore that of the Northern public. Cameron and Haanstra among other authors thus argue that the recipients of aid should be empowered and shown in a different light that is not opposite to the Northern agency promoted in advocacy campaigns. They (*ibid.*) go on suggesting that this is the problem that international development is facing and argue for the need to change how development is determined as well as creating more significant ways of engagement for the public. Similar discussion is presented in the Finding Frames research that calls for long-term engagement and deeper understanding of global structures and relations (Darnton and Kirk 2011). Consequently, the criticism voiced by authors directed to the discourses of development and the embedded positioning of the public actually express a wish for changing development cooperation.

To summarize, the prevalent features of advocacy campaigns are neoliberal and consumerist values that also depict the state of the world in a specific light as well as position public agency for consumerism. Campaigns position the public, however, also as indispensable. Thus the agency constructed highlights the capability and importance of the public. At the same time, the public support for campaigns also validates further the campaigns. The tools used for campaigning draw from previous successful campaigns and use more and more online communication, social networking sites and celebrity reinforcement. At the same time, each campaign tries to stay unique and different, as the ONE campaign does with the imagery of ordinary people and constructed community feel (Tatarchevskiy 2011). The main findings in the above mentioned studies are connected with the construction of worlds of inequality. Attention is drawn especially on how campaigns highlight the Northern agency whereas the recipients of aid remain passive. While criticizing the development campaigns, advocacy work and the constructed agency, authors in fact criticize international development as a system. This indicates a wish for a balance of power where the South is not depicted as more vulnerable, passive and victimized and the North as the key to solving this.

3. DISCURSIVE AND MULTIMODAL EXAMINATION OF AGENCY

Having discussed the features of online advocacy campaigning and reviewed central discussions surrounding agency in campaigns, this section introduces the theoretical premises of multimodal discourse analysis for examining agency in the Girl Effect campaign. First, the phenomena influencing communication and hence the context in which the Girl Effect campaign is examined will be considered. Second, the key discourse analytic concepts and the framework for analysing agency is discussed. Third, the framework of multimodality and the features of visual modes are introduced in relation to the Girl Effect campaign website. Finally, these main theoretical assumptions and concepts are brought together in a summary.

3.1 The communicational context of the Girl Effect campaign

Communication is characterized today as multimodal and equally affected by the changes of the world view and social order. While multimodality, i.e. incorporating various modes together, is not actually new, the changes from page to screen, the technological changes leading to digital, electronic print and the salience of image instead of writing explain the need to study multimodality (Kress 2010, Seppänen 2005: 90-93). These changes originate in the alteration of the social, economic, cultural and technological that are connected with globalization transforming the somewhat previously stable society into continuous change (Kress 2010: 5-6):

Stemming from that - and generated by it - are far-reaching changes in the domain of meaning; in representation and in 'semiotic' production; in dissemination and distribution of messages and meanings; in mediation and communication.

Furthermore, the temporal, spatial and interactional features of online communication impose limitations as well as enable activities, the formation of relationships and designs (Janoschka 2004: 149). These changes need to be recognized in order to analyse contemporary phenomenon such as the Girl Effect campaign website under study. Moreover, multimodal understanding of meaning making is important as it characterizes today's visual media. While culture has not become more visual, media images form, according to Seppänen (2005: 17), a significant part of today's visual culture as the Western culture has become more and more mediated. Moreover, visual mode is salient on many webpages as digital technology and the screen have resulted in organizing and presenting content in a manner that does not rely on reading text but *engaging* with multimodal content (Kress 2010: 170). The quote from van Leeuwen (2011: 92) summarizes these aspects:

The *structure* of texts in magazines, websites and other modern media is now often signaled, not by means of words, but by means of layout, colour and typography, so much so that without layout, colour and typography, many of these texts would be incomprehensible.

These features apply to the Girl Effect website and hence explain the need for multimodal discourse analysis.

The fluidity and instability of communication also have to be taken into account because of the market-led social environment. In other words, communication is also

characterized by a neoliberal paradigm, i.e. the “*the neoliberal conceptions of market, state, family and the individual*”, where the public is considered consumers with choice (Kress 2010: 20-22). Kress (2010: 132) considers this emphasis of the individual and the related choices as a consequence of changes in the distribution of power. As a result, he (2010:134) states that *In the neo-liberal capitalist market, individuals are assumed to take and have responsibility for their actions*. This positioning of responsibility for the public in today’s communicational context provides the reasons for examining agency in the present study.

The shifts in the structures of the world have influenced and continue to influence the ways and modes of communication. As this study aims to examine multimodal and discursive meaning making in an online advocacy campaign, these ideological and technological shifts reviewed above are important to acknowledge. Furthermore, how these affect engaging and interaction between the public and the campaign is fundamental in order to understand how agency is constructed. However, whereas Kress (ibid.) stresses predominantly the choices and the meaning making possibilities of an individual, there are also limiting factors and hierarchies of power present. For example, Tatarchevskiy’s (2011) study raises questions about the division of labour online and its democratic sphere. For this reason agency is approached as a constructed position in the present study.

As researchers in the field of critical discourse analysis have received critique from ethnocentrism and making excessive generalizations about the above mentioned social and technological changes, few aspects of the present study require further clarification. First, while discussing changes in the Western social world and online communication, I do not assume these changes as having similar impact everywhere. That is, the number of people having the possibility of accessing and acting in the campaign is limited with, for instance, technological requirements as well as language skills. This is related to the critique voiced by Blommaert (2005: 35-36) who draws attention on the centrality of Western societies and the related phenomena in analysing discourse. Moreover, he disapproves of making general judgements or statements about the world based on this research. For this reason, my perspective on *Western* calls for further explanation.

Western in the present study refers to the general values and associations connected with Western society and development cooperation approached from the perspective of the Girl Effect campaign. One example could be the intrinsic need of the West to solve problems such as poverty voiced by Koponen and Kontinen (2011). The present study then joins in the discussion of the general nature of advocacy work and activating individuals presented in section 2.3 in the North, presenting the related history and dialogue from this angle. Furthermore, I also agree with Kress (2010: 8) about being able to examine and discuss phenomena only in relation to the discourse practices that I am familiar with. This explains the choice of the topic and data of the present study, further discussed in section 4.2.

3.2 Examining discursive agency: theoretical framework and key concepts

In order to examine how agency is discursively constructed in the Girl Effect campaign we need to clarify the framework behind the analysis and the main concepts. The verb ‘construct’ already indicates the fundamental view governing discourse analysis, that is, seeing language as social. Hence an important aspect and influencing idea is social constructivism with which language has become a central object of study as well as the premise for studying (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 12). In other words, reality is constructed in linguistic interaction: language does not only reflect reality but creates and shapes it (*ibid.*) This explains why language as social practice is seen as a fundamental starting point in discourse analysis and in this study.

The notion of *discursive agency* then indicates that it is a position created from a particular point of view in a particular context. That is, discourse refers to the view of language as social and to the dialectic relationship between the linguistic and the social. The framework is also related to critical thought and critical discourse analysis where language is then seen as subject to power (Blommaert 2005). That is, language use cannot be regarded as given or natural, but include decision making that have consequences (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 13). Choice of representing and

positioning the public is hence connected with power (Kress 2010: 139). Furthermore, there are ideological assumptions enabled by particular discourses. For example, neoliberal discourse in advocacy campaigning offers specific positions for the public as consumers or entrepreneurial subjects (see Biccum 2011) as discussed in section 2.3. These notions guide the present study and the perspective to agency.

Agency is a concept used in various fields of study with distinct perspectives. Within linguistics, agency has been approached, for example, from the perspective of performing, free will, resistance as well as from grammatical point of view (Ahearn 2001, Duranti 2004). In mediated discourse analysis, it is discussed by incorporating the concepts of habitus, ideology and consciousness (Norris and Jones 2005). The common factor in these is the focus on control and capacity in terms of one's actions. This perspective is also included in the definition of agency by Darnton and Kirk (2011: 18) who see it as positioning the public in a way that creates trust in one's actions in relation to the campaign. Following this point of view, agency is approached in the present study as a discursively created position which is established in language and created in multimodal context. In addition, agency is seen from the point of view of social relations and hence it is connected to questions of power and social distance (Fairclough 2003: 76). Hence the focus on capacity to act is also embedded in positioning agency in this study.

This also clarifies the difference between *agency* and *participation*. Agency holds not only the associations of being in control of one's own actions but also their evaluations (Duranti 2004). Furthermore, agency indicates the close connection constructed by the campaign and the power that is attached to the position and for the individual. A *participant*, on the other hand, would not include this dependency, or the significance attached to one's actions. Furthermore, *agency* is created for the *website user* or *visitor* in the campaign; positioning the user in a way that the person is convinced that his or her actions count and have the desired outcome. Hence I will not use the concepts of *ergodist* used by some to capture the decision making within *hypertext* (see for example Johnson et al. 2010). This is validated as the focus in the present study is not on the

choices made by the website user. In contrast, the focus is on how the website user is engaged to the campaign with specific actions and validations forming agency.

Agency is approached with the discursive resource of genre that can be considered from many perspectives. First, the general features of genre are regularity and norm-likeness, hence making it recognizable and relatively stable (Bhatia 2004: 23). This means that we are able to identify a genre and our knowledge of this genre tells us how to act in an acceptable manner, hence influencing our language but also on our expectations (ibid.). Genres are also recognizable for their communicational purposes (ibid.). For example, we know that a campaign promotes a cause in certain ways highlighting morality and is seeking for public support. In other words, we expect an advocacy campaign to use appealing images and lexicon. At the same time we know that we as a public should either engage by donating, for example, or justify saying ‘no’ properly, because refusal for increasing social justice is not seen as acceptable. Genre’s function is hence in framing social and discursive action in a certain way in a certain context (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 80-81). This is confirmed by Kress (2010: 113) in the following quote: *genre* (emphasised with italics by Kress) *addresses the semiotic ‘emergence’ of social organization, practices and interaction*. Furthermore, knowledge of genres and the accompanying action is shared culturally and socially and is recognizable in not only language use but also in other modes (Kress 2010, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 97). Despite the fact that genre is seen as established and constant, genres share, in fact, similar features and employ discursive recourses from other genres.

Second, while genres are recognizable for their set features, there is also continuous change and variation. While genres are discerned from their communicational purposes and set features in a specific context, there is genre mixing and new mixtures of features taking place (Bhatia 2004: 25). New genres appear when features of established genres are incorporated for the needs of changes in the social (Fairclough 2003: 34). Fairclough (ibid.) furthermore presents that changing technology and multimodality have an impact on genre variation making it an important object of study. This also incorporates the use of different modes and their interaction (ibid.: 77). To indicate these premises, he (2003: 65-70) refers to the disembedding of genres such as advertising in *genre chains*. Bhatia

(Bhatia 2004: 57-84), on the other hand, discusses *colonies of genres* to draw attention to the similarities of genres and their common features. In examining the colony of promotional genres, he argues that the increasing competition in the social world causes promotional activity to become more prominent. This, according to him, means the usage of similar lexico-grammatical and rhetorical resources by a variety of genres. This in turn has an effect on drawing from a mixture of genres and to the mixture of information and promotion and the new hybrids of ‘infotainment’, for example, that is associated with advocacy campaigns as well (Bhatia 2004: 84, 104). While both Bhatia (2004) and Fairclough (2003) give prominence to marketization, commodification and promotional features, the goals and goals and purposes of language use has to be examined in its specific context. Nevertheless, these characteristics provide a frame of reference in order to consider how the Girl Effect campaign website draws from different genres and discourses in positioning the site user as influential.

Third, the concept of genre is important because it refers to the interaction between social actors. In other words, the concept of genre is needed to examine the social relations created and positioned in the Girl Effect campaign. To be exact, from the point of view of discourse analysis genre presents a way of looking at a set of practices of a particular context i.e. the ways of structuring social action (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 87). This is why Bhatia (2004: 32) also perceives genre as action oriented where participants and their relationships should be examined in a particular context. Kress (2010: 138) further explains how the positioning of the audience is connected with the expectations of the knowledge and resources the audience has in order to access information:

Genres are projections and realizations of social relations; a different social relation is projected by each ‘page’. Each social relation and each genre assumes, implicitly usually, what semiotic work is to be done and by whom.

In addition, the social relations embedded are related to questions of power and social distance (Fairclough 2003: 76). Analysing genre hence enables to consider what actions the site user is expected and offered to take as well as what actions are absent or limited in the Girl Effect campaign website. These actions compose agency and their validations the significance of it.

Genres are furthermore shaped and framed by discourse. While Bhatia (2004), for example, views discourse as written language, in the present study discourse is seen as setting and framing the ‘world view’ where action takes place (Kress 2010: 121, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 53). For example, Biccum (2011) and Wilson (2011) argue that neoliberal discourse frames development from a specific viewpoint positioning agency and power relations in a way that embrace these values. That is, women in the South, for example, are positioned as efficient and enterprising, and hence as solution to poverty (Wilson 2011). Discourses are then connected to representation, i.e. how events and actors are categorized and what assumptions and values are attached to them (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 53). Kress (Kress 2010: 114) encapsulates this by proposing that *discourse* (emphasized with italics by Kress) *offers meanings to be realized; it shapes the world of knowledge as ideational ‘content’; and provides a social-conceptual location*. These discourse resources apply to multimodal linguistic and visual realizations, which will be discussed next.

3.3 Multimodal meaning making for examining agency

To examine the representational features in which the Girl Effect campaign is understandable, it is necessary to comprehend the resources and features of the different modes used. Multimodality refers to the relationship between different modes such as writing, image, moving image, sound, layout, and colour. Multimodal theory aims to understand the sign-making in modes and their interrelationship (Kress, 2010). Each mode, i.e. “*a socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning*”, furthermore, has its own affordances (ibid. : 79). That is to say, they have different resources, potentials and limitations, for making meaning (ibid.). In addition, “*modes offer distinct ways of engaging with the world and distinctive ways of representing the world*” (ibid. : 96). That is, image and text, do not convey meanings of the global South, for example, in a similar manner. Moreover, modes and the way they are employed are culturally bound (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 35). At the same time modes are also seen as functional, i.e. simultaneously functioning as ideational, interpersonal and textual (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 42-43, Kress 2010: 59). The approach governing the multimodal analysis is social semiotics that considers the

processes of sign-making and representing (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 6-14). In addition, the use of semiotic resources is considered socially made and shaped (Kress 2010). These are related to critical thought as representing is produced from a specific angle, and maintained (and contested) socially and hence includes specific ideological standpoints (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 6-14). Consequently, the choices related to modes and the use of resources for meaning making present the focus of multimodal analysis of the present study.

The methods and the concepts of multimodal analysis, are, however, also contested. To begin with, the relationship between linguistic and visual analysis is challenged to an extent. Seppänen (2005: 80), for example, points out that the notation of textual and visual is different; while both can represent similar things, the ways of doing it is different and therefore verbal and image do not match in exact terms. That is, together used they communicate and create a joint meaning, but ‘translating’ an image to words or vice versa in every respect is not possible. This is also confirmed by Machin (2007: 159-188), who assesses discussions criticizing the concept of visual grammar and literacy created by Kress and van Leeuwen. Machin does not deny the usefulness of analysing the components of the visual mode but questions the straight comparison of visual and language like Seppänen. Moreover, Machin challenges the concept of grammar used for images because fragmenting them into components is difficult. In addition, he finds that there is neither a finite system of rules nor the same level of abstraction than in language. The criticism hence addresses the concepts used for visual analysis. Similarly, Kress (2010) gives attention to the disparity between the fast changing communication and the theoretical tools and terminology used to examine it. That is, he claims that there is a need for new terminology and categories to capture the relationship with the present communication. Multimodal examination should not be therefore regarded as a copy of discourse analysis, but each mode should be considered individually with functional terminology. In addition, the relation between textual and visual modes has to be also regarded as contributing to the meaning.

Visual resources for communication and meaning making are cultural and connected to the choices of representation. Both visual and textual mode is related to constructing

representations; i.e. cultural, shared associations and meanings (Seppänen 2005: 84-85). However, the cultural in general and media imagery and discourse in specific has come to signify an important access to everyday experience (ibid.: 39). Hence, it is important to consider questions related to visual mode. Seppänen (2005: 11-15) uses the concept of visual culture to denominate action based on visual semiotics and its products such as media imageries. Hence, according to him, visual culture is made of imageries and visual orders. Visual orders and imagery form further strong cultural associations and are linked to their previous usage and connotations but also create new ones (Machin 2007: 25). The usage of visual also sets the ‘mood’ and requirements for engaging and positioning agency:

We can ask what the cultural associations of elements are. It is these associations that connote particular discourses, models of the world, scripts of likely sequences of activity, kinds of people and kinds of problems and solutions. (ibid.)

In relation to the present study, imageries of poverty and visual representations of the global South, for example, evoke strong reactions. Furthermore, these imageries of poverty may highlight misery or objectify and even sexualize the people in the images (Wilson 2011). This in mind, Wilson claims that when analysing visual representations of the global South, attention should be given to the means of representing as well as to the intended viewers. Consequently, also Seppänen (2005: 15) regards visual culture as political as it is constructed and created highlighting some meanings and values while others are downplayed. Therefore the political nature of using visual resources refers to the choices made in the process (ibid.). Furthermore, Seppänen also suggests that political refers to the competition of publicity and of meanings. Consequently, similar questions of power are related to choice and consequence in visual and textual modes.

Colour meaning as part of the visual is an important factor in meaning-making. It can be examined by looking at how colour can fulfil different functions (Kress and Leeuwen 2006, Leeuwen 2011, Machin 2007). In other words, colour can represent ideas such as childhood, for example, ‘do things’ (e.g. position the website visitor) and construct cohesion and unity (see also Koller 2008). In more specific terms, colour has to be considered as its own mode with its dimensions of hue, saturation, value and texture as these impact the meaning potential (Kress and Leeuwen 2006:225-238, Machin 2007: 63-81). For example, Koller (2008) specifies how the scale of associations goes from innocence and childhood to sexual connotations when comparing light pink and strong

pink. Hence colour saturation can evoke strong positive or negative emotions (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 233) The examination of an individual colour is not, however, necessarily enough but the overall colour scheme indexes, according to van Leeuwen (2011: 65), for example, “*an era, a culture, an institution.*” Furthermore, it is the combination of colour creating contrasts and differentiations that construct identity and textual meaning (ibid.). These are again cultural associations, as Koller (2008: 339) states “*After all, people are culturally socialized into colour meanings.*” Hence we can see that meaning is constructed in many levels and colour with the visual has a salient position in the analysis.

Some further elaboration is necessary on the interplay between modes in multimodal discourse analysis before summarizing the theoretical premises of the present study. Burn and Parker (2003: 38) define the interaction between the visual and textual modes in two websites targeted for children the following way:

Image and text have a complementary relationship; and orientationally, as we have seen, both point the same way – outwards at the reader. They indicate a dominant theme of the site, a reaching-out from the developing world to the developed world.

They especially draw attention on the combination of different modalities that together create cultural associations and construct meaning as well as agency. One salient feature is the semiotics of childhood including certain typeface, colours and cartoon elements. Furthermore, they also discuss the expectations and work to be done by the website user. For example, the Dubble site combines visual and discursive elements to “*demand a serious ethical reflection by the chocolate consumer*” (Burn and Parker 2003: 36). Representing the South is thus created with discourses of childhood and aid, for example, promoting specific values and practices. Whereas the websites examined by Burn and Parker are targeted for children, which is conveyed also in the semiotics used, the BBC Voices website emphasises credibility and rationality with the ‘calm’ colour range and orderliness of the website layout (Johnson et al. 2010: 240). These differences can be connected with the notions of reading and engaging with the website suggested by Kress (Kress 2010: 170). In other words, the interactivity is hence built with specific discursive and visual features as is mentioned by the authors. Furthermore, also genre is linked to these resources. Positioning with language, layout, colour and typeface is also achieved in advertisements and product designs (Koller 2008). To summarize, visual

and linguistic modes are then seen as reinforcing each other and the purposes of the communication and accomplish this with their affordances.

3.4. Summary of the multimodal discourse analysis

In order to explain the methodology behind this study in the next section, a few theoretical conclusions are important. The theoretical framework relies on social constructivism and functional view of semiotic modes. That is, meaning making is examined as constructed and political in the sense that the choices made embody ideological reasoning. The critical view adapted in this study refers to the fact that agency is constructed from a specific point of view in order to accomplish certain goals. This means that language and other modes are used to construct meaning and position site users in a particular way. Therefore questions of power are also related. Furthermore, the modes under examination, i.e. language, visual design, colours, can be seen as fulfilling various functions at the same time. This framework guides attention to the reasons of making choices; the reasons for particular agency in the Girl Effect campaign website, the reasons of the validations and the textual and visual features used. In addition, these observations are connected to the context of online communication and technology as well as to the field of advocacy campaigning in international development.

The main concepts of the present study encompass the aspects of multimodal meaning making in relation to agency. These are mode, discourse and genre that indicate the different levels of meaning making as Kress (2010: 121) suggests:

In other words, meaning is fixed three times over – *materially* and *ontologically/semiotically* as *mode*; *institutionally* and *epistemologically* as *discourse*; and *socially* in terms of *apt* social relations, as *genre*.

The engagement with the website user is accomplished with specific genres that govern the use of resources and compositional elements. In other words, these features create the wanted approach toward the campaign indicating the website user how to act. The resources that form the overall design are multimodal that address and engage the website user in a particular way. That is, genre functions between semantic modes and

therefore affects the textual as well as visual features of the website. At the same time, genre is, however, enabled and restricted with the technological context. Online campaigning, the features of the internet and interaction with the screen define the realization of a genre. Furthermore, the discourses positioning the campaign, the campaign's cause and purpose have an influence on genre and the used semiotic modes. Hence, genre proves an appropriate concept for examining the use of resources in a specific context and the engagement being constructed with the website user for agency. The available resources also indicate what kind of knowledge and behaviour is expected from the website user. As the Girl Effect campaign website is promotional as discussed earlier, the hybridity and dynamic nature connected has to be also considered. This entails the question of what new ways are incorporated to the familiar to establish the campaign as unique and separate, but still part of the familiar advocacy campaigning.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN FOR EXAMINING AGENCY

Having discussed the phenomenon of online advocacy campaigning and having reviewed the analytical framework for multimodal discourse analysis used to examine agency in the Girl Effect campaign in the previous chapters, this section will present the goals of the study, the data and the methodological tools used in the analysis of the Girl Effect campaign website.

4.1 Goals of the study

This study aims to give insight into the ways of engaging and assuring the public of agency in an online advocacy campaign by examining the Girl Effect campaign website. The reasons for this are the following. First, as discussed in the previous chapters, the field of development cooperation and advocacy campaigning is not unproblematic. The lexicon and discourses used together with the visual representation depicts the world from a particular point of view setting up categories and associations of the North and

South. The problematic nature is connected to emphasis of the values of selfless giving and community effort (cf. Bhatia 2004: 102-103) that are produced with creating the global South as needy and passive recipient of aid. For this reason, many criticize advocacy campaigns and the embedded values and discourses. Second, examining agency is justified as public support is important for validating action, but also for the campaign's existence. In fact, there is no campaign without public support as stated earlier. Analysing agency then gives information also from the interaction between the campaign and the individual. Third, examining the constructing of agency explains of the multimodal meaning making and the use of discursive resources. In addition, it also informs of the rhetorical means that are used to validate agency in the campaign.

While discussing how discursive agency is constructed together with the multimodal examination of the website, this study also considers the wider social relations depicted. In fact, while the examination informs about development advocacy and the ways of engaging the public in the North, also the macro level relationships, i.e. the North – South relations are discussed. This analysis helps to understand how the campaign as part of international development constructs agency, and, hence, the depicted social relations between the site visitor and the campaign can be extended to macro level analysis. However, the aim is not to build dichotomy between representing the North and South (while this, as discussed in chapter 2, is ingrained in development discourse and practice), but to examine the construction of agency with multimodal discourse analysis and relate this to the Western cultural background and world view.

In order to examine the micro level linguistic and multimodal meaning making resources and the macro level relationships, the research questions are the following for the present study:

- What kind of agency does the Girl Effect campaign website construct discursively and multimodally for the site visitor?
- How is this agency constructed and validated with the used genres and the accompanying textual and visual resources?

4.2 Data of the present study

The Girl Effect campaign website was selected for the data of the present study because of its focus on the individual and the topical cause. The data analysed comes from the Girl Effect campaign website that functions to raise awareness and funds for adolescent girls living in the developing countries. The campaign was created in 2008² in the USA and it is funded by the Nike Foundation, the NoVo Foundation, the United Nations Foundation and the Coalition for Adolescent Girls. The reasons for selecting this particular campaign were many. First, internet activism itself is the present-day way of mobilizing people and sharing information, which validates the selection of the data and the research questions. Consequently, the campaign and its website illustrate the advocacy campaigns in the internet that offer agency for the public and rely on the easiness of 'click to save the world'. The website is also linked with the social media such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, making it easy for the audience to connect and share. This approach also highlights the individual and his or her choice, which is seen as a characteristic of the today's communicational context (Kress 2010). Second, this campaign is also topical as it focuses on gender issues, which is an international development paradigm promoted by UN agencies as well as the World Bank (cf. Wilson 2011). Gender is not, however, the only element making this campaign up-to-date. Rather, it is the focus on girls that is gaining more attention among advocacy work, for example in organization such as Plan International, Care, Save the Children, UNICEF and Girl Up. Furthermore, the recent declaration from UN of the creation of International Day of Girl Child illustrates this approach³. As the Girl Effect campaign is a joint campaign of many organizations the data express also the ways of representing the cause and the discourses used by many organizations in their goal to raise awareness of adolescent girl's situation in the developing countries. Third, the Girl Effect campaign website is also easy to define and outline for the scope and purposes of the present study. For these reasons, the Girl Effect campaign website proved to be a valid choice for examining agency.

2 Girl Effect for Media - About the campaign. <http://girleffect.org/media/about/>. (19 Jan 2012)

3 About Plan – News. <http://plan-international.org/about-plan/resources/news/october-11-is-day-of-the-girl>. (13 Feb 2012)

The selection process of the data included familiarizing with a variety of campaigns and narrowing the focus on gender and individual agency. To begin with, I familiarized myself with several development cooperation websites and campaigns looking at the themes, the scope and organization of the sites and positioning of the website user. Next, I narrowed down the search on Western organizations as only these campaigns had extensive websites that could provide reasonable and extensive data for the needs of the present study. At this point I also defined the cause as gender related due to my own interests and its position as a central paradigm in the development policy. Third, I considered the structure of the websites; how the information was organized and the possibilities of defining the data in a simple and controlled manner. As my aim was to study agency and engaging the public in the campaigns, I decided to focus on a website that had plenty of main content texts and that did not only rely on reports, videos, for example. This is justified as reports and case studies in general require previous knowledge of the phenomena, whereas the campaign websites in their main content introduce the cause to ‘lay’ audience without requiring much familiarity with the topic. Therefore, the Girl Effect website provided a site whose contents could be narrowed down to the main content areas features and texts. With the chosen data, I hope to bring some understanding of constructing agency and engaging in an online advocacy campaign as well as to the North – South relations. These reasons explain the use of the campaign website as data to examine the interaction between the textual and visual modes and above all the interaction and engaging formed with the site visitor.

Figure 1 in below illustrates the website structure. It is divided into the following categories: *Home*, *Learn*, *Give* and *Mobilize*, of which *Learn* and *Mobilize* are further divided into subsections. These main sections are seen in figure 1 in black border. Before getting to the main content of the site, a splash page greets the website visitor with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ question: *The World would use a kick in the pants* that aims to activate the website user. To indicate the possibility of not engaging with the website by clicking either *agree* or *disagree* to the question on the splash page and watching the *Clock is ticking* video that appears after these stages, these features are bordered with grey. It should be noted that the website structure does not mean that every section and subsection is explored by the website user and in the order of sections (cf. Kress 2010: 170). However, in this study these grey areas are seen as part of the main sections due to

the fact that this specific video is provided for the visitor to introduce the campaign. Furthermore, the splash page aims to form an interaction with the visitor immediately. This is then already significant for examining engaging and interaction for constructing agency.

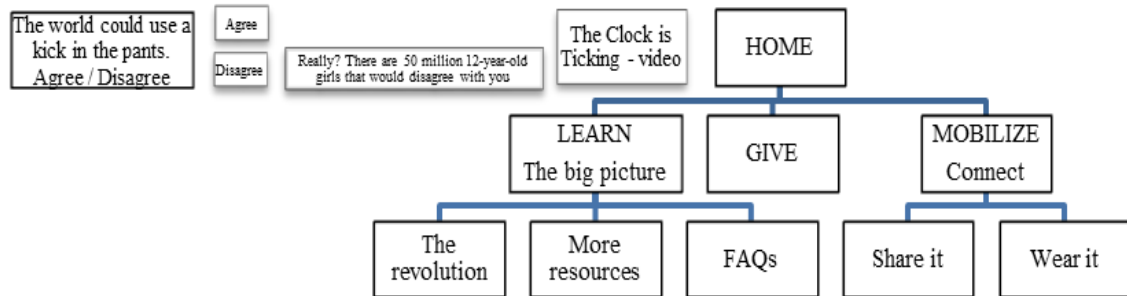


Figure 1. Structure of the girleffect.org website

To examine the agency constructed for the site user and the means of validating the agency, I have narrowed down the analysis of the website on the headings, and body content of each section. The data of the website were collected with screen capture as well as saving the data in textual form in January 2012. The chosen texts are ‘voiced’ by the Girl Effect Campaign, i.e. they introduce and explain the cause and the ways of engaging. In addition, the layout of the screen highlights this main content. The data left out of the analysis are a quantity of videos, tools, presentations and reports that offer additional information. The reason for this is that this study focuses on the main features of the website that engage the public in the campaign. Moreover, the extra material in PDFs and hyperlinks in the website do not use similar strategies to persuade and mobilize, but give more precise and deeper information for people who want to acquire more information and who also have a basic understanding of the phenomena. In addition, the videos in the website, for example, would provide more information on representing the adolescent girls living in the developing countries than offer more information about engaging the public. Furthermore, for the size of the present study, the data have to be ‘compact’ in order to get to a deeper level of analysis with specified analytic tools. In addition, as the focus of this study is on the girleffect.org website, the website hyperlinked to media and to policy movers is omitted from the data. These reasons explain the focus on the main content of the website.

While most of the videos and tools of the website meant for audience usage are omitted from the data being analysed in the present study, the first video that opens the website is included in textual form as it provides reasons for the existence of the campaign. I consider the video an important feature of the website structure as it presents a solution to the problem and introduces the campaign. This video is also posted in YouTube like all Girl Effect videos for further reach. While the website is in English only, the video clip also has subtitles in various languages: Arabic, Persian (Farsi), Chinese (traditional), Urdu, Bengali, French (France), Portuguese (Brazil), Chinese (simplified), Hindi, and Spanish suggesting a wider and multilingual audience. The video is also given a salient position in the website as it is presented as the most essential form of action for the public. The video is, hence, the first touch to the campaign and to the website and as such valuable for the analysis, whereas the other videos provided on the website do not hold as salient position within the website.

The limitations of the data concern its size and the features of online campaigning. First, this analysis concentrates on the visual and the textual information available on the girleffect.org website, leaving out the campaign's Facebook page, Twitter and YouTube connections, which form the channels for audience participation and 'performing' agency. However, this study concentrates on examining how agency is constructed, not how the public performs agency or how they value the agency offered, justifying the chosen data and research questions. Furthermore, the data is limited to the main texts and features of the website for the purposes of the present study, so the 'extra' materials provided by the website are not examined due to the size and focus of the study. The analysis cannot cover all possible features of the website, but aims to consider the phenomena in question, that is, agency with a carefully selected angle. Another limitation of the analysis is that it concentrates on only one website; hence it does not offer an extensive profile of the research topic. However, the scope of the present study does not enable a larger data. Furthermore, the chosen data is a joint campaign of many organizations presenting presumably commonly used framing on the issue. On the other hand, the changing nature of the internet also presents a limitation to the study. Montgomery et al. (2004: 90) argue that due to the changing nature of websites and the instability of the internet, it is difficult to offer wide-ranging observations and results. They also suggest that online data offers a chance to describe the features and the

strategies of the selected data. As a result, the present study can describe agency in the Girl Effect campaign website as it was on the time of data collection and suggest conclusions in the present social environment and technological context.

4.3 Methods for the multimodal discourse analysis

The approach taken in the present study employs multimodal discourse analysis. This means systematically examining the data by combining visual and linguistic analysis in order to understand what kind of agency is constructed in the campaign and how this agency is validated with specific genres and their resources. The methods employed have been selected for the purposes of the data and the research questions. To be precise, the study looks at how the used textual and visual resources construct agency, i.e. its activities and validations, at the micro level. This is considered communicating about advocacy work and the North and South relations framed within the campaign at macro level. With this investigation I also hope to offer ideas for further research.

The Girl Effect website is approached by locating it in the context of promotional and marketing discourse as well as online communication. This is due to the fact that campaigns not only aim for and rely on publicity, but use also promotional means for validating their significance (Bhatia 2004: 95-104, Lahusen 1999: 189). Furthermore, the competition for coverage means that strategies for highlighting the campaign's distinct characteristics can be situated in this context as well. The textual analysis employed in this study concentrates on the rhetorical moves of justifying the cause and indicating the value of the cause to construct agency. While this study does not aim to examine how the Girl Effect campaign fits into a specific genre, the features identified by Bhatia (*ibid.*) give information on what is highlighted in order to achieve the goal of engaging. At the same time, the online communication aspect of the context has to be taken into account in the analysis. The salient features of online advertising, according to Janoschka (2004: 132-158), concentrate on linguistic persuasion where interpersonal communication is formed by individualizing and personalizing the message to the site user. Furthermore, urgency in taking action is not persuaded only because of stressing

the value of the ‘product’ or cause, but also because of the online environment and screen layout (*ibid.*). These contextual features shape the methodological tools used in the analysis.

Agency is considered discursively constructed in this study. To examine this, the concept of genre is used to examine the conventions of social activity in organized forms (Bhatia 2004). Moreover, the adopted generic perspective enables considering the hybridity of the campaign website as reflecting the changes in the social world and technology as well as shaping the textual and visual resources used. It is thus useful to conceive genres as discursive practices realizing actions and social relations, and hence engaging the public in the campaign in a particular manner (Bhatia 2004, Fairclough 2003, Kress 2010). Genre is taken to include narrative also, though it could be separated as its own discourse resource (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 108). The reason for this choice is the hybridity of the website that draws on various genres and modes.

In the analysis, the data is structured in genres to reach the functions and communicative purposes of the website, the methods of activation, and the specific forms of agency. That is, to reach the norms that the used genres construct (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 82-83). Furthermore, as genres are expressed and realized as textual and visual resources, the salient characteristics of the data are approached with this perspective. In other words, genre shapes the modes used, the structure of the text, the lexico-grammatical features, the style as well as the visual layout, the used colours, the typeface and the graphics (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 87). These inform of the actions and social relations constructed. Hence the data was analysed by looking at the salient resources, text types and their functions. This approach enables examining the different ways of constructing agency in the hybrid Girl Effect campaign website.

The textual analysis considers the actions created for agency and how the website user is assured of agency. I examine the social relations formed between the campaign and the website with the social relations formed with genre on the one hand, but also by analysing how social actors are represented by applying Fairclough (2003), van

Leeuwen (2008) and Janoschka (2004). While Fairclough and van Leeuwen (and Bhatia (2004) discussed above) present their own models for textual analysis, I draw from their work for the purposes of the data and research questions incorporating some of the introduced features. These include addressing the site user and the social distance formed with the campaign as well as the representation of the cause. With this analysis, I can examine how the site user is positioned for agency and assured of one's actions and their outcome. The relationship between the campaign and the site user deserves also attention as there is social distance and unequal access to power (Fairclough 2003). In addition, by applying van Leeuwen (2008) and Fairclough (2003), the construction of legitimation and purpose of the campaign and the cause for agency are examined as this informs of the values embedded (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 111). The values are further related to the philanthropic discourse but also to the premises of development cooperation. They can be also linked with the used genres. In other words, by examining how the cause, the campaign, the actions for the site user are assessed with adjectives, specific semantic structures or embedded values, we gain information on how agency is justified. These are connected with the genres used as discussed above. To sum up, the textual analysis combines genre analysis with analysis of social actors and evaluations.

By applying the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), van Leeuwen (2008) and Machin (2007), the visual composition of the data is examined first by looking at the individual components such as modality, colour, typography and representation of social actors and second by considering the interaction and shared meaning making of these features. To be more specific, the colour scheme and colour dimensions i.e. hue, brightness, saturation, purity, modulation and textuality, and their indexed associations are studied taking into account also their function on the screen. Second, the features of typography meaning weight, expansion, curvature, connectivity, orientation, regularity and flourishes are examined (see Machin 2007). Third, the representation of social actors, that is to say the girl character, is analysed by applying van Leeuwen's (2008: 136-161) work. Thus, the activities, the background and the physical and cultural attributes of the girl character are identified. Gaze and angle of interaction mentioned by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) is, however, not considered as the girl character is a cartoon silhouette without any facial expressions drawn. These visual components are

also reviewed in relation to the graphic presentation of information. Fourth, the interaction and combination of these elements is examined for the overall meaning. The visual resources are also seen as being framed by the used genres and discourses. With these tools we can analyse the visual and multimodal context in which the campaign and the textual information is situated. The overall meaning constructed in the website is created together with the visual and linguistic features. By analysing the visual discourse we can get information of the cultural associations and meanings created with the combination of elements. To summarize, the specific units of analysis from the visual point of view are then the colours, typography, and visual representation of social actors that form the salient and recurring visual features of the website.

In conclusion, the methods used draw from multimodal analysis and genre and discourse analysis in order to structure the data and to examine how agency is constructed for the website user. The main theoretical concepts of genre, discourse and mode presented in chapter 3 are analysed with the tools presented here. These concepts and the methods of analysis are applied to answer how online advocacy campaigns use different strategies, genres and contextual discourses to engage public and reach the needed public support for agency. Furthermore, the findings can be used to indicate the values promoted by the campaign and to an extent by development cooperation. Hence, the present study aims to offer possible interpretations with the theoretical frameworks and methodology applied.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: AGENCY IN THE GIRL EFFECT CAMPAIGN

This section presents the findings of the analysis and examines them in relation to the theoretical background presented. First, the general aspects of the campaign website and engaging for agency are discussed. Thereafter constructing agency is discussed with drawing attention to the visual features as well as persuading, informing and instructing the visitor for agency. At the end of the analysis these aspects are gathered in a summary.

5.1 Overview of the features of the website

The Girl Effect campaign persuades people to take action to raise awareness, inform, and raise funds for adolescent girls living in developing countries. The overall function of the website is to inform of its existence, to gain coverage and to engage people in the campaign by emphasising the activities of learning, donating and mobilizing for the website user. Communicative purposes centre to soliciting support which encompasses sharing information with others predominantly via the social media and donating funds. For this reason, the website gives prominence to the website user. Agency as engaging in the campaign (website) and as engaging others into the campaign is motivated and highlighted throughout the website. Moreover, the visitor is oriented to fun, to learning, amusing, being useful and being part something important. The campaign is then understandable in the context of online communication, advocacy work, development cooperation campaign seeking for coverage, selling a cause and raising funds within the paradigm of gender and development as discussed earlier. Furthermore, the idea of Western development aid as good, needed and delivering the expected outcomes is embedded in the context. The relationship between the donor and recipient of aid is naturalised and the campaign stresses the fact that the adolescent girls living the developing countries need the Northern public for increased social justice. Thus, the website visitor is also expected to share this view in order to accept agency. As a result the website operates to make the cause as interesting and appealing as possible in order to get the website visitor to accept the agency offered. Thus the basic goal of the

campaign website is forming interaction with the website user to convince him or her of agency.

The communicative purposes and strategies of the website employ promotional and advertising strategies where the interaction with the website user is fundamental (cf. Janoschka). Moreover, the website and its design rely on entertainment value and informality. Each section of the website, i.e. *Home*, *Learn*, *Give* and *Mobilize*, promote specific activity, but use resources from a variety of genres. The colour scheme and imagery used connotes childhood drawing from familiar associations from children's books and toys. This upbeat and hopeful mood is one factor validating agency, but does not coincide with aspects that are seen usually as fundamentals on reliable information (cf. Johnson, Milani & Upton). On the other hand, the colours also connote of exotic and vibrancy setting the context of the global South. While the use of celebrities and sex appeal has been seen as the tool for creating more appealing campaigns (Cameron and Haanstra 2008, cf. Wirgau et al. 2010), this campaign uses feel-good imagery (see Biccum 2011) and language for motivating the reader of his or her importance in the campaign and on the other hand, assuring of the easiness of campaigning with ready-to-use materials.

5.2 Imagery of the campaign setting the context for agency

The colours and the imagery used in the website function to position the website visitor to the campaign as well as indexing exoticness, childhood and creating cohesion. First, the imagery and visual design of the campaign website is characterized by energy, informality and enthusiasm. This is achieved with the choice of colours, their dimensions and textuality together with the unpolished uneven imprint and scuff marks that create the visual background where also an unevenly printed girl character is present. The screens and their images echo stencil printing, and the imperfect, handcrafted atmosphere is what creates a relaxed visual outlook in contrast to, for example, a polished website design and a colder colour scheme. Furthermore, the stencil printing reminds of children's art and is hence connected to the theme of the campaign.

In addition to indexing print technique, the website uses ‘chalk lines’ for emphasis or separation of elements and paragraphs. Second, each section of the website is individualized with a different colour that appears in the main header and throughout the screen in ‘click here’ frames in the body content as well as in the footer as can be seen in Figure 1. This creates rhyme, which is used to link elements and create visual coherence (Machin 2007: 155-156). In other words, the visitor sees first the header, i.e. the uppermost part of Figure 1 and the rest becomes visible with scrolling down the page. There is then also an ideal-real layout where the main header can be considered as representation of the expected and idealized outcome (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 178). Third, the range of colours used for the sections is orange-red, green, red and purple with contrasting colour as shades of grey used to draw attention to graphics. This selection of colours is vivid and associates ethnicity and energy (Machin 2007). The warm hue used in the colour scheme, particularly in the orange-red used in the first touch to the website connotes foreignness and fascination (ibid.). Furthermore, the brightness of the colours creates a sense of optimism, which can be connected to the moral evaluations of the campaign (ibid. : 70). Consequently, the rich and flat colours with low modulation used by the campaign could be seen as indexing also childhood and simplicity as, for example, Machin (2007: 76-77) suggests. Thus colours and the visual resources in the context of the campaign contribute to the casual atmosphere and set the context of agency as exciting and easy.



Figure 1, <http://girlleffect.org/> 30.1.2012

A fantasy world (cf. Kress 2010: 172) is then achieved with the colour scheme together with other visual elements that connote vitality, imagination, excitement and liveliness. Furthermore, the childhood semiotics created with the cartoon imagery, chalk lines and printing conveys a context of innocence and hope to which the visitor is invited and positioned in. By relying on the positive spirit and showing trust in heroism, the website visitor is also invited to believe in a world where inequality and poverty can be fought and conquered. Overall, the visual semiotic resources focus on the positive outcome to which the site visitor can contribute. Moreover, the general campaign imagery does not intimidate with the layout and the language use, but focuses on creating a friendly and upbeat atmosphere. In contrast, a website highlighting suffering would appeal to guilt and would presumably cause the feeling of powerlessness rather than hope (cf. Cameron and Haanstra 2008). In fact, the context set for the campaign creates visual engagement with the website and positions the site visitor as sharing the values and connotations that the colour scheme indexes.

Visual prominence is given to the adolescent girl highlighting the theme of the campaign and positioning the website user to the global South in a novel way. The imagery differs substantially from other campaigns as no 'real' images are used (except in the short video clips presenting the stories of girls as seen in Figure 2 that are excluded from the data). In contrast, a silhouette of a girl character is used as illustration in every section of the website and also in the graphics. As the imagery of the campaign is drawn contributing to the reduced articulation of detail and depth, it could be expected that stereotyping is avoided. However, cultural and biological categorization is done with small elements. While the girl character is nameless and generic, the social roles, gender, ethnicity and age are signified with the girl character's appearance, activities and postures (Leeuwen 2008: 144-148). Femeness is signified with accenting the character's bust and depicting her pregnant. Furthermore, the different hairstyles indicate femininity but also ethnicity: afro textured hair in Figure 1, for example, can be seen as connoting Africa. In addition, the age of the girl is depicted with her activities. The girl character appears mostly as an individual and is depicted doing actions such as carrying water, jumping, running, playing and reading. Majority of these activities, except for carrying water, stand for innocence, youth and liberty that in the Western culture are connected with childhood. In addition, the assertive poses that the girl is pictured in such as with hands on hips (see Figure 1.) or standing arms wide open in Figure 2. can be regarded as indexing determination and carefreeness (Machin 2007: 35). Moreover, the self-determination of the girl is also depicted with a speech bubble in the *Learn the Revolution* section:



Figure 2 <http://girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution>, 30.1.2012

There is hence juxtaposition between having responsibilities and being free of duties and innocent. In conclusion, the imagery repeats the same message as the text highlighting the importance and the value of a safe and protected childhood.

In addition to representing gender and childhood, poverty and the global South is depicted in the imagery. Poverty is indexed with rurality as the landscape where the girl is drawn highlights rural setting with elements such as wells and cattle. In fact, only one of the header backgrounds is an urban silhouette. Also the scuff marks on the background could index traditional instead of modernity; an association also connected with the global South. Furthermore, familiar notions of poverty and burden can be connected to the images where the girl character is carrying water or is depicted as pregnant. In addition, the *Clock is ticking* video clip employs similar visual features, accentuating furthermore the vulnerability to HIV with black and red hands trying to capture the girl in the video. Poverty is also connected to Africa in the campaign. While the girl characters have different hairstyles, the girl with the afro textured hair seems to be the most salient one because it is used also in the campaign's Facebook icon (see Figure 1, footer). While the cartoonish imagery avoids images of suffering and stresses positivity familiar from other campaigns (see Wilson 2011), small visual features locate the context of the campaign in the global South and to the recognizable aspects of poverty. On the other hand, I share the view of Wilson (2011: 325), of the drawn features as an opportunity to avoid "*the more obvious forms of objectification and exoticisation*". However, I argue that these visual resources that depict the global South are needed within this website so that the audience can locate the campaign and act accordingly.

The typography used together with the other visual aspects of the website use a "rough" look creating coherence with the easy-goingness and chattiness of the textual content. The typeface as well its colour and design vary extensively within a screen as can be noticed in Figure 3. Salience for the headings is created with an uppercase typeface that is bold, round and expanded as well as with colour. The page title, *Learn* in Figure 3, is the most salient with the biggest typeface and white colour. However, the heading of the main text has also prominence as the font is black and the typeface is also here

uppercase, bold, round and expanded. This use of typography does not connote sophistication but furthers the relaxed and casual visual discourse. Similar typeface is used also in other media and modes to index childhood (cf. Burn and Parker 2003: 29-43). The difference between the headings and the text itself is, however, distinct. Whereas the headings are salient with the above mentioned typeface and colour, the text paragraphs are in small, narrow and sentence case font as Figure 3 illustrates. Furthermore, typography is connected with colour contrasts as well; the background colour influences the colour of the text: white text is used predominantly on colourful background and black mostly on light-toned backgrounds. These aspects including font size and colour, for example, indicate the most relevant information for the website user together with other framing resources. As Figure 3 illustrates, graphics is used to present information visually and hold salience together with the uppercase typeface. This element recurs through the website. Furthermore, visual modes dominate the website as the amount of text is in general concise; with the exception of *FAQs* section that relies exclusively on textual information (see Figure 4). The reliance on the visual, use of graphics and illustrations is further connected to the internet as medium with spatial and temporal restrictions (Janoschka 2004: 149). The used typeface together with other visual resources guides the website user and the reliance on visual mode contributes to engagement with the site.



Figure 3 <http://girlffect.org/learn/the-big-picture> 30.1.2012

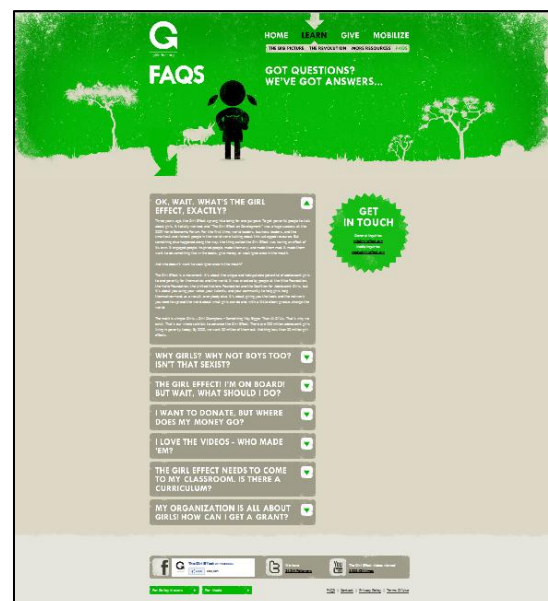


Figure 4 <http://girlffect.org/learn/faq> 30.1.2012

As illustrated in this discussion, the campaign website uses various visual elements and graphics to visualize information. In fact, graphics are mainly used to present the options for action – whether they target the reader or the girl. Figure 1 and Figure 3 illustrate some of the activities presented in the website in graphic form. Furthermore, an interesting visual element is on the *Learn the revolution* section where 10 things needing change are illustrated in a form of hopscotch (see Figure 5). Information presented in the form of a game here contributes to the use of childhood semiotics and perhaps makes the information more appealing inviting the website visitor to take part in the game. The cultural ideas of childhood used in the imagery and graphics also work as a contrast to the textual information: while the website seems to be fun and upbeat, also more serious facts and structures are presented, especially in this section in the form of the hopscotch. The visual discourse used in the campaign employs these cultural ideas to promote the cause.



Figure 5 <http://girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution> 30.1.2012

To summarize, the visual imagery of the campaign website creates a fantasy world where the site user enters. The visual elements of cartoon imagery, the lack of detail, graphical presentation of information and the colour scheme can be seen as distancing the site user from the adolescent girls and the global South as is also suggested by Burn and Parker about children's websites (2003). Hence the interaction formed with the site user differs from, for example, a campaign where a child is looking straight to the viewer (cf. Wilson 2011). The visual outlook of fantasy engages the visitor in the campaign that is done linguistically, for example, with direct address and lexicon of fighting. Furthermore, the site design also creates interaction and engagement with the site user from the beginning as the website user is greeted with a splash page and a narrated story when accessing the website. While the campaign website imagery differs from other campaigns, it also has recognizable elements locating it. The visual aspects apply a variety of familiar images and meanings connected to the developing world as well as to childhood to set the context of the campaign. In addition, the colours with their dimensions and textuality, the typography, and the graphical elements construct innocence, joyfulness and genuineness. Associations of childhood and exoticness also set the frame of reference for the textual information and the cause of the campaign that is discussed in the following sections. The colour scheme used communicates ideational, interpersonal and textual functions denoting the ideas of childhood and exoticness, inviting and positioning the visitor in the values and goals of the campaign and establishing coherence and unity as well as creating salience for individual elements. In addition, the circular elements, such as the logo of the campaign and graphics in Figure 1, can be seen as indexing global issues, unity and also running time in the *Clock is ticking* video. This imagery reinforced with corresponding language is familiar from development cooperation campaigns and further engages the visitor in a recognizable genre while also having a new point of entry with the cartoon representation of the cause.

5.3 Persuading and levelling for agency

The prevalent features of the website are promotional and include extensive orientation to the audience. Thus the website can be characterized as focusing principally on the

website user for the purposes of making the website as appealing as possible. This is accomplished by addressing the website user directly throughout the website with second person personal pronoun *you* and second person possessive pronoun *your*. Furthermore, a simulated conversation is constructed throughout the website with addressing the site user directly and anticipating his or her reactions. This interaction begins with the first screen of the website that invites the visitor to either agree or disagree with the statement *The world could use a kick in the pants*. Moreover, conversation markers are used, for example, to greet the site user with *Hey there, it's us again*, to ask questions *You know...?*, as well as to address him or her with 'filler' phrases like *you see* and to give feedback *That's right*. The familiar tone is reinforced by indicating an existing relationship with the adverb *again*. Furthermore, a relative equality between the site user and the campaign is achieved in addition to the direct address, for example, with the use of adverbs such as *way* and *a ton*, adjectives such as *awesome*, *tremendous*, situational ellipsis *Got questions?* (*Do you* ellipted). Also contractions are used widely, e.g. *let's*, *aren't*, *here's* as well as informal variant of 'them': *I love the videos – who made 'em?*. The *FAQs* section especially relies on this type of language use, probably because it does not present the information in as visually appealing way as other sections of the website (compare Figures 3 and 4 above). Furthermore, the style of the semantic structure of adding and contrasting sentences simulates spoken language as conjunction *and* and *but* are located in the beginning of the sentence like example 2 illustrates. While there is a social distance and inequality of power in the constructed dialogue as the website user cannot influence content of the website (although contact by email is possible), the informality of the language evokes everyday conversation and language. Fairclough (2003: 76) calls this mystifying the distribution of power. Hence, the familiarity and colloquialism constructed indexes shared beliefs and aims to decrease the social distance between the site visitor and the campaign.

This orientation to the site user is further strengthened with a problem-solving structure. This structure contributes to positioning the site user as the solution to the problem, i.e. to *start* and be the primary force for the problem to be solved. In other words, the structure makes it explicit that the girls and the South need the Northern agency to be rescued and to have agency. Examples 1 and 2 illustrate the contrastive semantic

relations that highlight the agency of the website visitor. The first sentence in the examples highlights the remarkable abilities of the girls that are presented as unknown to the visitor and other people with the adverb *actually* and *uniquely*. This potential is contrasted with the conjunction *but* to address the site user.

(1) *You see, an adolescent girl has the power to actually stop poverty before it starts. But she needs your help.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

(2) *It's called the Girl Effect, because girls are uniquely capable of investing in their communities and making the world better. But here are 10 things that stand in their way:* (girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

Furthermore, the conditional clause in example 3 and the temporal clause in example 4 highlight further the dependency and lack of agency of the girls. In example 3 the ability and (intrinsic) possibility of the girls is assessed with modal noun *chance* and modal verb *can*. Notice, however, that example 3 does not express a prediction for change with modal verb *will*, for example, but indicates a desired possibility. These contrastive clauses function as argumentative text to assure the website user of the cause and of his or her agency. Example 4 and 5, on the other hand, exemplify the temporal deixis *when-then* that expresses the desired sequence of action. Furthermore, *the world* is used as an agent in example 5 blurring the process itself.

(3) *Given the chance 600 million adolescent girls in developing countries can unleash the world's greatest untapped solution to poverty.* (girleffect.org/mobilize/connect)

(4) *When the power and potential of girls is raised into the global consciousness then the Girl Effect really begins and change starts to happen.* (girleffect.org/give)

(5) *As long as girls remain invisible, the world misses out on a tremendous opportunity for change.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

These five examples also illustrate how girls are represented as the only solution to poverty (emphasised with adverbs) that is unrecognized by majority of people. Other participants are further mainly not mentioned. In other words, girls are presented as the only solution for solving poverty without mentioning men's input or other actions such as changes in the world trade. This also provides reasons for taking action: women's potential is not recognized without this campaign and its supporters. The problem-solving structure hence makes the campaign and the website user as part of it necessary, validating its existence.

All in all, agency is motivated by positioning the visitor as indispensable. The adolescent girls and their actions are depicted as being conditional on the site visitor's actions with conditional clauses. To illustrate phrases such as *given the opportunity girls*, *given the chance girls* are used and in these girls appear as the beneficiary of the action. This relation of conditionality is explicitly expressed through the website. Furthermore, the website user is explicitly evaluated as the most important actor instead of the girls in the campaign in examples 6 and 7 with repetition of the second person personal pronoun *you*. Example 7 further illustrates the strong emphasis on the sequence of action expressed with the negated modal auxiliary *can't*. Furthermore, moral claims are expressed on behalf of the girls: *girls deserve*, *girls have a right*, *girls need to be*. This also constructs a powerless depiction of the girls: they need Northern advocates to speak in favour of them.

(6) *Your support, your voice and your action – that's what it's going to take to wake up the world and make a real difference.*

(7) *It's about giving you the tools and the network you need to spread the word about what girls can do and, with a little elbow grease, change the world.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

(8) *Her change can't happen without the girl champions who each bring their own superpowers to the party.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

Consequently, the site visitor is situated as powerful and whose actions matter on a global level to persuade for agency.

Distancing to the reality of the global South and to the realities of development cooperation is employed to emphasise the significance of the site user's agency. The general tone of the campaign is entertaining and enthusiastic, giving information in a simple way instead of burdening the website user with heavy facts and complicated tasks. However, the metaphors and the register of the website, in general, are connected to *fighting poverty*. Hence, forceful but at the same time playful language is used to convince the website visitor to accept agency within the campaign. To illustrate, the visitor is told to *give the world a good kick in the pants*, *sock ignorance in the mouth*, and *tell poverty to run and hide as right here is where the magic starts*. These metaphors humanize abstract concepts like ignorance and poverty and give the actions that the website encourages (e.g. sharing the *Clock is ticking* video in Facebook) a

deeper, metaphorical meaning. In addition, the time frame of immediacy is stressed with the circumstantial adverb phrase *right here*. Furthermore, the website user acting is individualized with the individual address but also categorized in terms of functionalization with the name *girl champions* emphasising further the role of the defender. Girls, however, are not represented by their names or functions, but as collectivized or individualized indicating of the salience of the website user.

In fact, the site visitor is positioned as a hero who has special powers to help the girls. The girl champions are further invited to bring their *superpowers to the party* and what is needed is *little elbow grease* to achieve the target: *If we can release girls living in poverty, they will do the rest*. To summarize, the lexicon combines metaphors of warfare (e.g. verbs *release, fight, mobilize*) and engaging in a battle (e.g. verbs *kick, sock*, noun *champions*). Moreover, the combat is referred as *a party* and *magic* connoting fun and undermining the violent associations of warfare. However, this lexicon includes values of justice and moral goodness associated to the created heroism. Hence, the context of actions and their significance is made unquestionable. In the world of make-believe, which the campaign site could be referred to following Kress (2010) and Burn and Parker (2003: 29-43), different rules apply and the complexity of the world is reduced inducing trust in one's actions. These discourse features name explicitly the site user as important and use the moral associations of the fighting lexicon to persuade the public.

While the website visitor's individual actions are highlighted, togetherness and shared goals with the campaign are created as well. As discussed in chapter 2, public support is important for validating the campaign and its existence. Hence, the visitor needs to be assured of shared interests and values as well as of the public support to engage in the campaign. The Girl Effect website expresses sharing tasks and values with the website user by using the first person personal pronoun *we* to construct a community. This is a way of diminishing social distance and assumes shared values and goals (Fairclough 2003: 76). It is used as inclusive encompassing the visitor's agency as part of the campaign in the phrase *If we can release girls living in poverty, they will do the rest* and in the command *Let's change the math*. On the other hand, in the command *help us, we* might express the campaign or the community. At the same time, the inclusive *we* also

separates the adolescent girls from *us* with the juxtaposition of *them-us* in the example above and in example 9 below. Girls, the related poverty and the system maintaining it are also depicted as a threat to us with the adverb *overboard* and the negations *nothing*, *not*, *not* which is used for encouraging action:

(9) 10. *EVERYONE GETS ON BOARD OR WE'RE ALL OVERBOARD*

Boys, girls, moms, dads. If we don't all rally to support girls, nothing is going to change. Not for them, and not for us. Change starts with you. So get going. (girlleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

Furthermore, positioning the site user with kinship relations in this example conveys a threat to families, so accepting agency is also grounded for protecting oneself and one's family indicating an appeal to emotions. In addition, the community is also expressed with the salience of Facebook and Twitter panels that demonstrate the public support by showing the latest discussions and the people who endorse it. Similarly the *Mobilize share it* section shows the number of supporters with visits to convince of the success of the campaign as is illustrated by Figure 7. Hence, social media is used also to validate the campaign as Tatarchevskiy (2011) suggests. Togetherness is thus created in visual and textual means indicating the value of the campaign.

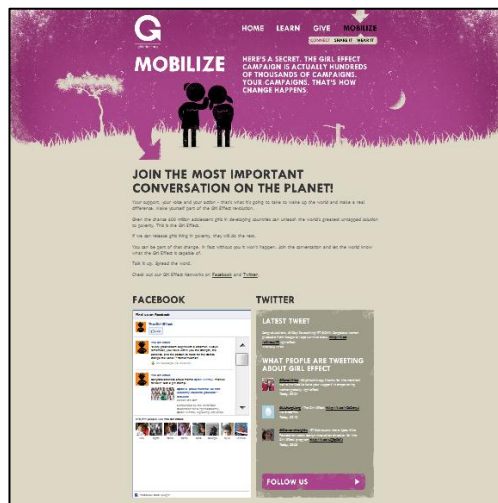


Figure 6 girlleffect.org/mobilize/connect 30.1.2012



Figure 7 girlleffect.org/mobilize/share-it 30.1.2012

In conclusion, constructing agency for the website visitor is a central part of the campaign and hence persuading and assuring for agency is emphasised. The features of

direct address, familiar tone and constructing shared goals and values, to mention a few, have also been recognized as established features in online advertising (Janoschka 2004) and can also be seen as confusing or obscuring hierarchical relations and social distance (Fairclough 2003: 76). The website user is positioned in the agency as powerful in order to engage in the campaign. Hence the interaction can also be described as instrumental (Fairclough 2003: 71). The text presupposes shared value systems and their desirability, hence ruling out the possibility of not accepting agency. In addition to verbal boosting, taking action is made to seem effortless for the website users as everything needing to be done is either one click away or in the form of ready-made instructions. Also fun and playfulness is also positioned in agency (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 33). All in all the visitor is situated as powerful and his or her actions count on local and global level, having an effect on the website user's own life and the adolescent girls' lives. The campaign hence suggests that the campaign is more about the website user than diminishing poverty. This is also related to the previous studies of advocacy campaigning where the Northern agency is praised and emphasised (cf. Cameron and Haanstra 2008).

5.4 Educating and informing for agency

As the visual context of the campaign and the orientation to the website user employ features of informality and closeness, also informing and educating in the campaign is done in this manner using visual and textual modes. The informing has the purpose of convincing the website user of the campaign. That is, introducing the campaign and clarifying the circumstances in which the girls live is done from a specific angle to assure the website user of the significance of the campaign and his or her actions in it. These elements consist of a combination of informal elements and entertaining together with formal, aggregated reporting that validates the campaign. The informality is constructed with the textual and visual resources and graphics. The genres used to accomplish this draw from storytelling elements, FAQ, children's textbooks, reporting and graphic presentation. These give the direction for the resources and modes used and position the website user as a learner. At the same time the social distance is levelled to position the website user as a co-experiencer who is powerful. Consequently, learning is

constructed as informal action by drawing from the above mentioned genres where the unequal relationship is levelled with familiar address and vernacular language.

Storytelling is used to engage and introduce the website visitor to the campaign with a narrative. The site user is provided with a narrative of the life story of an individualized girl from adolescence to adulthood. This is communicated in simple present tense using chronological sequencing as well as comparing and contrasting her current (negative) life with the possible optimistic version where *she's calling the shots*. The storytelling elements are used in the *Clock is ticking* video and in the *Learn the big picture* section. In these narrations, the focus is on the individual girl instead of the website user, who is emphasised in other sections. Moreover, where the storytelling is the prevalent genre, the site user is not invited directly to do something for the situation. The story is told by a Western narrator to a Western audience, even though the video suggests a wider audience with the variety of subtitles. Although, the potential of the girl is highlighted, she does not get to tell her story from her perspective raising questions of the Southern agency (cf. Cameron & Haanstra, 2008). While the video uses more traditional storytelling elements, such as abstract, orientation, complication and reflection (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 111), the same complication is displayed: 12-year-old girls are at risk of not being able to influence their own lives. This individualised girl is representative of the collectivized and aggregated girls whose social roles and capabilities provide reasoning for the visitor's agency. The storytelling elements then provide a convenient way of captivating the interest of the website user and forming a relationship to provide incentives for further exploring in the website.

Indeed, the strength of storytelling in informing is the interaction and engagement formed with the audience. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 105) suggest that storytelling and narration is used to share experiences and to increase understanding. Therefore, the use of this genre in the campaign is valid and frames the use of textual and visual resources. For example, storytelling elements include narration and short sentences in simple present tense. To illustrate, in *Learn the big picture* the narration starts from the header of the screen with: *The girl effect is about girls. And boys. And moms and dads and villages and towns and countries*. This unusual sentence structure

of listing reminds of spoken language that forms interaction with the audience and is also a typical characteristic of storytelling. In addition, the individualisation of the girl in the imagery and in the text is a characteristic of the genre and contributes to forming a relationship with the visitor of the website as Machin (2007) suggests. Moreover, the textual narrative in the video forms an interaction with the site user with direct address and evaluations of the reactions of the website user. To illustrate, the user is addressed with *hey there, it's us again, imagine, you get the picture right?* as well as directing and evaluating the astonishment and shock of the site user with negations in example 10.

(10) *In the eyes of many, she's a woman now. No, really she is. She faces the reality of getting married by 14. Getting pregnant by the time she's 15. If she survives the childbirth, she might have to sell her body to support her family, which puts her in risk for contracting and spreading HIV. Not the life you imagined for a 12-year-old right?* (girleffect.org/video)

While the website user is not encouraged to do anything in the context of the story, both narrations lead to sections where the user is invited to *start* the effect. Narrated storytelling is hence a way of forming an interaction with the website user that also contributes to distancing of realities together with the visual semiotic and the lexicon of heroism. Furthermore, stories traditionally have happy endings, connoting hence of success and reliability.

Storytelling is also a genre used for legitimizing. Legitimation constructed through storytelling is what van Leeuwen (2008: 117-119) calls Mythopoesis. The storytelling elements in the *Learn* section and in the video unite characteristics of moral and cautionary tale. In other words, engaging in the campaign leads to positive outcomes and not engaging into negative as the heading *Things can go one of two ways for her and for everyone around her* exemplifies. Evaluative adjectives are used to express the moral good, to which the campaign can contribute to, e.g. the girl getting *educated*, and staying *healthy and HIV negative*. In these examples, the agency of the girl is also constructed on semantic level. On the other hand, the cautionary tale emphasises the unhappy ending with the stative *is illiterate, married off, isolated, pregnant, vulnerable* stressing the lack of agency as Figure 8 illustrates.



Figure 8 <http://girleffect.org/learn/the-big-picture> 30.1.2012

The difference between the two options is also highlighted in the imagery with the girl character posing with determination juxtaposed with holding a baby. The storytelling hence indicates what values are respected and function to justify intervening. Van Leeuwen (2008: 117) calls this the *legitimate order*. For example, the story highlights the innocence of youth and children by drawing attention on the girl's age and to the threats she is facing. Furthermore, the aggregated indetermination "*In the eyes of many, she's a woman now*" indicates the need for the Northern agency by showing moral wrongs that need rectification. Hence, protecting childhood and the girls is emphasised with textual and discourse resources as well as with visual resources.

Moral evaluations are furthermore employed for persuasion and legitimation. Value-laden adjectives such as *happy & healthy, safe, ready, educated* are used to describe the positive outcome and the characteristics that the girl receives with the campaign. This then entails the presupposition that she lacks these qualities without the campaign. In addition, explicit positive evaluations are used throughout the website. For example, the adjective *good* with its degrees of comparison is used throughout to state the value of the campaign in relation to the girls and to the agency of the visitor. *Good* is used as a qualifier to the campaign itself where the significance and usefulness of the campaign is emphasised; *The good news is that there's a solution*. On the other hand, good is also negated to explicate moral wrongs like *Illiteracy does not look good on a resume... and pregnancy doesn't look good on a little girl*. Combining the concept of illiteracy with a resume, and pregnancy with a little girl that are incongruous by their definition it is highlighted how unacceptable the state of the world is. The comparative *better* in

example 11 and 12 below evaluates change for an improved state and includes the contrast to the present that presupposes the need for this change. However, *better* is also vague; it does not clarify how, but shows a positive value.

(11) *Indeed, better lives for girls mean better lives for everyone in their communities, including their brothers, fathers, future husbands and future sons.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

(12) *It's called the Girl Effect, because girls are uniquely capable of investing in their communities and making the world better.* (girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

In addition, all the evaluative statements are in simple present tense form increasing the credibility of the statements because of high modality. This further validates the campaign and the proposed agency for the visitor. Positive evaluation of the activities is furthermore created with determiners, such as the superlative *most* in *Join the most important conversation on the planet* or *the most influential force*. These textual resources are a characteristic of advertising (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 134) and are used to convince of the value of the campaign and hence of the value of agency.

In addition to moral evaluations, instrumental evaluations of the girls are employed to indicate their value for the economy with discourses of efficiency and economics. To begin with, the girl is described as *educated*, *productive* and *prepared* to indicate her function for economic growth and diminishing poverty. Moreover, these qualities are connected to the social roles in which the girl is categorized as having a function, i.e. as a mother, a citizen and an employee in economic discourse. These provide reasons for investing in her.

(13) *As an educated mother, an active, productive citizen and a prepared employee, she is the most influential force in her community to break the cycle of poverty.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

This is further elaborated with the noun phrase *most influential force* that dehumanizes her. Furthermore, the lexicon draws from discourse of economics and efficiency with verbs phrases such as *invest*, *earn*, *realize*, *eradicate poverty*, *raise standards of living*, noun phrases like *quality education*, *resources*, and adjective phrases *financially literate*, *educated mother*, *an active and productive citizen*, *prepared employee*. This positioning of the girls as instruments suggests that women as individuals are

responsible for development, instead of corporations or states, for example. Furthermore, as Wilson (2011) claims, the gendered structures are not questioned but reinforced in this discourse, where women are shown to be more reliable and efficient than men and this way responsibility is feminised.

In addition, the rationality of agency as a good investment is accomplished with aggregations with definite and indefinite quantifiers as a resource for reporting. The elements of reporting include a dictionary styled definition indicated with a headword, grammatical information (*n.*) and full sentence definition in example 14. In this definition the girls are quantified with *600 million* positioned at the same time as a possibility and a threat. Reporting in passive is furthermore used to express authority on the subject illustrated in examples 15 and 16. These statistics are, however, elaborated with clauses that morally evaluate the statistics justifying the campaign with *girls deserve better* in example 15 and *girls have a right* in example 16. The statistics are also contrasted with the conjunctive *and yet* in example 17 evaluating the statistics as problematic and rationalizing investment based on efficiency indicated by the noun phrase *much higher rate*. Example 18 also indicates the disparity in development aid that the campaign aims to right.

(14) *The girl effect, n. The unique potential of 600 million adolescent girls to end poverty for themselves and the world.*
(girleffect.org/home)

(15) *70% of the world's out-of-school children are girls. Girls deserve better.*
(girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

(16) *Pregnancy is the leading cause of death for girls 15-18 years old. Girls have a right to be able to protect their health & their bodies.*
(girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

(17) *Less than two cents of every international aid dollar is directed to girls. And yet when a girl has resources, she will reinvest them in her community at a much higher rate than a boy would.* (girleffect.org/learn/the-revolution)

(18) *It has been shown that an educated girl will invest 90% of her future income in her family, compared to 35% for a boy. Yet 250 million adolescent girls live in poverty and are more likely than boys to be uneducated, married at a young age, and exposed to HIV/AIDS.* (girleffect.org/learn/faq)

As these examples illustrate, girls as well as aid are aggregated and hence made an object of reasoning as van Leeuwen (2008: 38) proposes. Informing is hence done in the website by uniting moral evaluations with aggregated rationalizations that emphasise the capability of the girls and them as purposeful actors in stabilizing global differences.

The information content in informing the website user is mostly vague. The statistics are given to highlight problematic structures and to indicate the rationality behind the campaign by aggregations and presenting the girls as a good investment with discourse of efficiency. However, while the visitor is being convinced of the rationality of the campaign, specific details of action is not given on anything else but campaigning. That is, it remains unclear how bigger structures are changed. Hence, the frequently used noun and verb *change* remains unclear and vague. The nominalization of *change* in *change starts to happen*, for example, indicates how it is presented as naturalized and given as well as inherently good. Moreover, the agents of this process are absent. Similarly, the noun *effect* used in the campaign slogan “*Girl Effect*” and in the example below contains the same positive values. Furthermore, *effect* is also very abstract as it refers to the process as well to the wanted result that is not explicated in detail.

(19) 50 million 12-year-old girls in poverty equal 50 million solutions. This is the power of the girl effect. An effect which starts at 12-year-old girl and impacts the world. The clock is ticking. (girleffect.org/video)

In addition, while the *Learn the Revolution* section lists structural problems needing change in a form of hopscotch, the common semantic relation is elaboration with moral or aggregated evaluation instead of indicating how these problems can be addressed. Vagueness is also the result of the absence of details of cultures and countries as well as other social actors beside the girls and the website user. It could be then argued that the informing and educating purposes in the website are for justifying the cause for agency where it is enough to be aware of the injustices related to the girls. In contrast, presenting the complexity of poverty as an issue that cannot be solved with only development aid would probably shake the trust on the constructed agency.

The genres used for informing combine tactics of entertaining, informing and validation with informal and formal textual and visual resources. The goals of a campaign are related to persuasion as well as to informing that often receives a secondary role. That is, overtly positive tone with a narrow and simplified view of poverty to be fixed with more aid is presented in campaigns instead of exploring poverty and the surrounding structures in a more in-depth way as discussed in section 2.3. Also the Girl Effect website presents a positive and energetic approach for reducing poverty conveying a message that this is not only simple but also feasible. The storytelling genre is used to construct common values (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 106), which is important for engaging the public for agency. Legitimation, on the other hand, is created with the authority of statistics and aggregations as well as discourses of efficiency and economics. The graphics used present the information in a summarized form offering visual interest and showing possibilities, causal connections or options for action. These graphics combine text, illustration and colour and visualize the content. Information is hence divided for fast intake that answers to the technological requirements of the internet as well as to the needs of lay audience (cf. Janoschka 2004: 149, Kress 2010: 30). The hybrid genres used illustrate hence the many goals of the campaign as well as the importance of forming an engagement with the website user for agency.

5.5 Instructing for agency

Instructing for agency is accomplished with direct address with second person personal pronoun *you*, procedural texts and graphics as well as emphasising the immediacy and the website as the context for action. The informing is done in all sections of the website, though predominantly in the *Mobilize* section. However, the sections forming the website also constitute of actions in the website as they are in imperative mood: *Learn*, *Give* and *Mobilize*. These main actions construct the agency for the website user and can be realized in the website by a click response. For example, clicking the *Learn* section the website user initiates the action. Furthermore, in the homepage (see Figure 1) the site user is urged to make a decision to *Donate – Do it*, *Spread the word – Email the video*, *Learn more – Watch* in the module with heading *3 things you can do right now!*. In other words, the site user is directed to activities with visual and textual

commands. The colours used emphasise the most salient features of the screens which also entail instructions for action. Moreover, directives in imperative (e.g. *donate*) and conditional mood (*3 things you can do right now*) are used as requests and instructions throughout the website to get website users to carry out the set actions and their agency. These directives also create the time-frame where acting immediately is advocated and reinforced with temporal adverbs such as *right now*. In addition, the context for the actions is set to the website with location adverbs such as *here*. Furthermore, temporal dimension and the chronological order of events are indicated with the verb *start* that is principally connected with the website user. To illustrate the website visitor is instructed to *Start making a difference. Start the girl effect.* as well as indicating the website as a *Good place to start*. Hence the actions of the website user are emphasised and given salience. Only one section expresses the girl character's voice saying *The revolution starts with me*. However, this is also connected to the command *Get her started*. Furthermore, the video also expresses immediacy with fast-paced moving image and the phrase *the clock is ticking*. In other words, the imperative mood, present tense verbal phrases, temporal adverbs as well as temporal lexicon are used to construct urgency and emphasise the chronological order of events where the agency of the girl is dependent on the agency of the site user.

While commands are given to the site user, the authoritative tone of the imperatives is downplayed with playful language as well as repetition of motivating phrases to engage and inspire. To begin with, procedural texts outlining actions have metaphorical headlines as example 20 illustrates. The headings of the 3 steps comprehend the actions of sharing *the clock is ticking* video, using the materials provided by the site and contacting the organization if needed. As discussed earlier, these metaphors humanize abstract concepts and associate the activities with happy endings and a greater significance validating the actions. Furthermore, the used lexicon offers a way of understanding the complex world in a way that one can relate to.

(20) *The Girl Effect! I'm on board! But... wait, what should I do?*

Step 1: Give the world a good kick in the pants.

Step 2: Tell poverty to run and hide.

Step 3: Wash, rinse, repeat. (girlleffect.org/learn/faq)

(21) *DONATE. Send a girl to school. Help fight her legal case. Give her a microloan. Start making a difference. Start the Girl Effect. TEXT / ONLINE*
(girleffect.org/give)

(22) *Share the videos, email, tweet, shout and holler*
(girleffect.org/mobilize/share-it)

(23) *This is your opportunity to be part of a global mind shift. Your chance to say that you were there when the Girl Effect really began. This is your chance to change the world.* (girleffect.org/mobilize/wear-it)

Second, the imperatives also function as validating the main actions. In example 21, the sequence of imperatives can be regarded as synonyms to each other and also exemplify how important act donating is. Third, the instructions given are easy to accomplish. The visitor is urged predominantly to share the campaign message to others online as example 22 illustrates. These actions, however, are evaluated as having a big impact with unquestionable positive values as example 23 expresses. In addition, the site user becomes agent of changing in the third sentence in example 23, not just being part of the campaign but the force behind it. The instructions and the validations hence depict the website visitor as powerful.

While the agency of the website visitor is highlighted, the actions are restricted. There is a division of labour where the authority of the campaign is explicated by the instructions and by defining the actions and materials. For example, the site user is told *here's everything you'll ever need for spreading the word and wearing the Girl Effect* emphasising the indisputable nature of the authority of the campaign. Thus while the site user is addressed in familiar terms and the lexicon is upbeat, agency is actually restricted to very specific action to be accomplished predominantly in the website and in the social media. These findings are consistent with Tatarchevskiy's (2011) findings. As the instructions given are clear and straightforward with a downloadable toolkit, the threshold of engaging is low. Hence, the website user does not have to do hardly any work to be part of the campaign; all action is unitary, giving the same message and cause. Hence, the campaign has a similar strategy for engaging public as other campaigns reviewed by Darnton and Kirk (2011) where engaging in short-term agency is easy, undemanding and does not compel for long term commitment. On the other hand, this predetermination of agency can be seen as incongruous with the expectations and emphasis of the power and responsibility positioned for the user. That is, this

indicates that the distribution of power between the campaign and the site user is not as equal as the campaign claims. Furthermore, this can be connected to the choices and limits set with online technology for website users; a website has predetermined modules and content in which the website user cannot directly influence (Fairclough 2003: 78, Tatarchevskiy 2011). This brings back to the idea of constructed agency as a position trusting to one's actions and their significance.

To summarize, instructing in the website is informal which is accomplished with textual and visual resources. The main activities that the website user is instructed are learning, donating and mobilizing and this is accomplished with the website layout, and repetition of these actions in visual and textual form. Furthermore, the actions are presented with imperatives that are played down with playful language and the informal visual context of the campaign. Even though the website user is told to create his or her campaign, the activities are still predetermined with online actions or ready-made PowerPoint shows. While the campaign constructs agency to the website user in a manner that emphasises the website user's decision making and power to influence to the world, the website user does not have many options in functioning in the campaign. This, however, probably facilitates engaging in the campaign easily.

5.6 Summary of the analysis

To sum up the main features of agency in the Girl Effect campaign, I review the characteristics of the constructed agency and the ways of validating it in the next paragraphs. Table 1 below summarises the main findings and the characteristics of the constructed agency. First, the main actions for the constructed agency in the campaign are learning, giving and mobilizing. That is, the activities are familiarizing oneself with the campaign, donating and creating one's own campaign to engage more people. This last one is given the most salience and signifies in practice sharing the *Clock is ticking* video. These actions are depicted as fun and simple, which is accomplished with the informal and playful lexicon as well as the visual semiotics creating the context for the actions. Furthermore, the actions are mainly non-recurrent as they can be accomplished

online in the campaign website in an instant. The possibility for engaging other people with presentations, stickers and fundraising parties also are mentioned, but receive less screen space.

Table 1. Agency in the Girl Effect campaign

Agency	Genres	Visual resources	Textual resources
Key activities: learning, giving, mobilizing	Storytelling, FAQ, reporting, educating, procedural informing, advertising	Website structure and layout: sections <i>Learn</i> , <i>Give</i> , and <i>Mobilize</i> individualized with colours, procedural graphics	Persuading, informing and instructing for these activities
Fun and simple	Storytelling and narration, advertising	Colours: wide colour scheme, brightness, rich, flat, saturated, low modulation Graphical design: scuff marks, connotations of authenticity, typeface, the girl character Graphics: procedural visual informing and instructing e.g. hopscotch	Familiar tone in addressing the site user, simulated conversation, features of spoken language, You orientation, Entertaining and upbeat lexicon; heroism and optimism, explicit evaluations
Short-term	Procedural text	The website structure and layout, the social media icons, interaction achieved with a click response	Immediacy of acting: temporal and location adverbs
Special and significant	Storytelling	Distancing from the realities: created fantasy world of the global South with colours, decontextualization, the girl character, exclusion of other actors	You orientation, problem-solving structure, dependency, distancing with the lexicon of fighting and heroism, explicit evaluations, evaluations of benefits and risks, Signifiers of immediacy
Validated as morally right and good	Storytelling and narrative	Brightness of the colours, the semiotics of childhood, representations of the girl character	Lexicon of fighting, affective reactions of the girls' needs, moral evaluations, individualization of girls
Validated as rational: girls as a good investment	Reporting and educating; textbook	Graphics: procedural information	Girls aggregated and collectivized, aggregated aid, discourse of efficiency: girls an untapped resource, evaluations of benefits and risks

Second, agency is motivated by appealing to rational and moral reasoning. This is achieved in two ways; the website user is convinced of the significance of his or her actions, which are legitimated by indicating the benefit for the girls and ultimately their communities and the world. In other words, girls living in the developing countries are represented as being dependent on the website user with the used lexicon and semantic structures. This authorizes the campaign and the website user to act indicating their value and need. Furthermore, the girls are depicted as benefitting from the website users' actions. That is, the campaign promises safe and healthy childhood as well as education, which would enable the girls to acquire agency for taking care of their communities. Girls are hence characterized as an unused resource and instruments for economic growth and diminishing poverty. This is accomplished with the aggregations of girls and aid as well as the lexicon from economic and efficiency discourse. In addition, the value of the campaign for the girls is emphasised with explicit evaluations and positive attributes where benevolence is given prominence together with the effective outcomes.

Third, agency is constructed with engaging the public in the campaign with discourse practices that guide the used modes and resources. The hybridity of the genres used include features of storytelling, advertising, dialogue and reporting drawing hence from fairy tales and textbooks, for example. In addition, the characteristics facilitated by online technology also shape the genres, such as the *FAQs* section and the incorporation of the social media. This mixture of genres used to engage and interact with the public shape the semiotic and textual resources. These include conversational style, narration, direct address, lexicon, optimism, bright and vivid colour scheme, drawn visual context using a variety of childhood semiotics and playful graphics. The choice of genres thus indicates the two goals set for the campaign, i.e. to entertain and inform. Furthermore, the choice of genres offers a familiar way of understanding and making sense of the world. That is, the website user can relate to the campaign with the help of the used genres and their resources. Storytelling, for example, enables constructing shared values, simulated dialogue and a way of distancing to the realities of the global South (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 106-107). This is also evident in the use of semiotics of childhood and the constructed heroism and optimism. Reporting, on the other hand, uses more formal characteristics and depends on the authority of statistics and

aggregations. These can be located in economic discourse highlighting efficiency and function. Hence, also the discourses setting the context differ. The overall campaign features can also be placed in advertising and promotional discourse indicating the communicational context (Bhatia 2004: 94, Fairclough 2003: 91).

The visual context of the campaign site is interesting as it uses unconventional imagery by giving salience to drawing. This is worth noticing as Seppänen (2005: 105) argues that picture is considered to be more credible than drawn image. Moreover, the visual resources employed do not concur with clean-cut design and images that are seen as indicating reliability, for example, by Johnson et al. (2010) and (Kress 2010: 107). In contrast, the campaign plays with authenticity of the campaign with scuff childhood semiotics and colours indicating exoticness and vibrancy. A similar approach to public engagement is also mentioned by Tatarchevskiy (2011) in ONE campaign. However, whereas ONE campaign uses visual discourse of ordinariness and community, the Girl Effect emphasizes the extraordinary with the imaginary cartoon world creating distance from reality. The genres used in the campaign website further enable this with the narration that indexes the fight between good and bad. One could ask, however, why pink was not chosen in this campaign when it is often related and used in marketing discourse connected to girls. One answer could be the avoidance of associations to femininity and sexual connotations discussed by Koller (2008) and on the other hand, femininity in general as campaign stresses the all-encompassing ‘effect’ of the campaign. The visual design of the campaign thus establishes uniqueness that also recurs in the textual level.

Finally, the findings support previous studies. To begin with, the constructed reality is one-sided and presents only one view of poverty. This excessive optimism and focusing only on the Northern agency, like suggested by Wirgau et al. (2010), diverts from questioning the cause and means of action. In addition, the depiction of girls as dependent on the North as well as the only solution to poverty is problematic. Hence strong assumptions are made of women’s responsibilities in the South as Wilson (2011) discusses. Third, the campaign constructs short-term agency online with an emphasis on the social media and donations. While individual action and choice is emphasised, there

are issues of authority and power also present. The delimiting of agency determined for specific actions can be seen as limiting choice and as well as learning like Wirgau et al. (2010), for example, mention. Community feel or being part something important is then connected with online presence and activities as suggested by Tatarchevskiy (2011). Moreover, the claim of Tatarchevskiy of civic engagement being commodified and made into a symbol with little actual understanding or commitment has to be kept in mind.

6. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how agency is constructed and validated discursively and multimodally in the Girl Effect campaign website. The question of agency was considered important for various reasons. First, from the perspective of the campaign context engaging the public in the campaign is relevant. The public has a salient role and the campaign's success is dependent on the public support. For this reason, examining online campaigning was also seen as contributing to the discussion of a topical phenomenon with multimodal discourse analytic study. That is, examining agency contributes to the theme of engaging with screen and the interplay with textual and visual modes. The analysis also offers understanding of online technology as enabling and limiting choice. Second, agency is also topical as the individual is positioned as a powerful decision maker and consumer due to changes in the distribution of power (Kress 2010). The topic then also touches on marketization and competition between campaigns. Third, this study is concerned with the on-going discussion of the Northern development advocacy and its positive and detrimental sides. Examining agency and engaging on macro level joins in the discussion of the global North-South relations that are represented, constructed, and reinforced discursively and visually. The criticism expressed by many scholars (cf. Biccum 2011, Cameron and Haanstra 2008) of the focus on the Northern agency also provides reasons for examining the justification of the campaign and agency. To sum up, the main purpose of this study was to discuss the phenomenon of advocacy work and to examine the values and assumptions it constructs, questions and reinforces in the context of online communication.

Multimodal discourse analysis enabled considering the visual design and cultural associations that form the context for the constructed agency. While multimodal examination is still forming (cf. Kress 2010) and can be applied in different ways, for the purposes of this study the examination of representing social actors and colour scheme among other tools provided sufficient information of the context in which agency is constructed. In addition, discourse analysis provided tools for studying the interaction formed linguistically by using genre analysis as well as representation of social actors. The findings of the study concur with characteristics of online communication and advocacy work.

This study found that agency in the campaign is constructed by naming key actions for the site user that are framed as meaningful and leading to desired outcomes, i.e. enhancing the adolescent girls' life and contributing to diminishing poverty. Agency is then constructed as necessary for the Southern wellbeing. The key actions for agency are learning, donating and mobilizing. These actions are promoted by informing, instructing and persuading the site user with a mixture of genres that together with textual and visual resources create interaction with the site user and engage in the campaign. Furthermore, the visual context and the storytelling elements used create an imaginary world where the constructed agency is significant. This agency is validated with moral arguments highlighting protecting childhood and women's value for enhancing communities and increasing economic growth. Agency is also meaningful as girls are, according to the campaign, a good investment that profits the whole world, including the site user. In other words, motivating for agency emphasises the benefits for the girl and eventually the world, but also the beneficial nature of it for the website user.

An important finding of the study was the combination of entertainment and factual content used to construct and validate agency. The genres, the visual semiotic resources, the lexicon and the semantic structures predominantly emphasise an optimistic imaginary world where agency is fun and significant. That is, distancing from reality is constructed with the visual and textual resources, which is also used to form an interaction and shared values with the website user. This is noteworthy, as it does not coincide with general notions of reliable information, at least in other online contexts

(Johnson et al. 2010). This also applies to the storytelling used in the website suggesting that the created close relationship is more important than a rational representation of the world. However, the website also rationalizes and legitimizes the campaign and agency with aggregations and economic discourse. Hence, the constructed shared values also encompass efficiency and results. For the purposes of convincing the site user of agency, a less complex world is created where financial aid and awareness of girls as instruments of change is sufficient for increased social justice. This also corresponds with the demands of online communication. It could be argued that with this approach the campaign differentiates itself from other campaigns and engages the website user in the story of the girls. Perhaps similar elements could be used to create a more complex story from the perspective of the South to reduce the discourse of dependency.

However, the website does not help people to understand the topic in a way to make their own decisions about it. This could be expected to be the purpose of advocacy work and agency, also mentioned by Wirgau et al. (2010). The simplified world, restricted actions and ready-made materials indicate that the requirements for agency are low. Furthermore, the public is positioned to a restricted agency with specific actions. This means that the public is not, in fact, encouraged to use own consideration or initiative. Thus agency seems to be only significant as predetermined activities in the context of the website. As the data was limited to the main contents of the website, these findings only apply to those. However, one can ask what the significance of agency is if it leads to passive behaviour or commodification as Tatarchevskiy (2011) suggests. While this approach is used to create trust in the actions, one can still question the truthfulness and depth of agency. Is the individual, in fact, a significant actor as Brainard and Shollet (2008) argue?

The findings can be applied to the field of development cooperation where the Northern individual agency is given a salient position in changing the world. Responsibility for action is not given hence to corporations, states or international communities. Moreover, the agency of the South is depicted as dependent on the North. These findings support the previous studies on presenting development aid as the means for solving poverty and presenting a simplified view of global relations. Furthermore, no other means of diminishing poverty are discussed and hence, as noted in other studies,

the neoliberal values are not criticised. However, as long as development advocacy campaigns depend on voluntary donations rather than other kind of agency, e.g. volunteer work suggested by Darnton and Kirk (2011), the Northern donor is on focus and the South remains the beneficiary. The paradox lies then in the cultural representations: the public is convinced of agency with the global South's inability for agency.

Finally, the question of limitations and further areas of examination also arises. While the agency constructed in the Girl Effect campaign website applies to this particular campaign, it also shares elements, discourses and values recognised in other studies. Some wider conclusion can be drawn from this data also, as discussed above. With more extensive data and comparing several campaigns wider patterns of the means of engaging could be perceived. For example, the differences of the websites for different audiences would be interesting to compare within the Girl Effect campaign. This would offer insights into the expectations and division of labour also discussed by Tatarchevskiy (2011). Furthermore, the North-South relations depicted in a larger data could offer interesting insights. In addition, the findings of the study do not tell if the campaign is successful in engaging the public. Hence also performing agency could provide an area of study for further research giving attention to the remarked combination of easiness and fun in development cooperation.

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