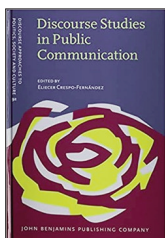


Book Reviews



Discourse Studies in Public Communication

Eliecer Crespo-Fernández (ed).

Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2021, 323 pages. ISBN: 978-9-0272-0853-8.

Discourse Studies in Public Communication, edited by Eliecer Crespo-Fernández, is an excellent methodological resource for the students and researchers working not only specifically in the area of discourse analysis, linguistics or corpus analysis but also in the area of communication, political science, gender studies, and history. All the articles in the book are outstanding examples of corpus-assisted research combining qualitative and quantitative analysis- as Andreas Musolff in the Preface underlines, they “demonstrate the fascinating complexity of critical discourse analysis at its best” (page viii.).

Part I is devoted to political discourse. In Chapter 1, Ruth Breeze examines the discursive representation of the people and the nation in the official discourses of the six main political parties in Great Britain (i.e. Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats, UKIP, Scottish National Party, and Plaid Cymru) in their 2017 election manifestos. From an exploratory, comparative perspective informed by corpus assisted discourse studies, drawing on mixed methodology, she focuses on the role of particular naming practices in building the ideological position of each party. Her study clearly demonstrates that corpus assisted discourse studies focusing on a finite list of culturally significant keywords productively map out the discourses associated with particular parties at a specific period in time and, in this sense, provide a short cut to understanding the essence of a party’s ideology.

In Chapter 2, Escoriza Morera investigates how lexical analysis can be used to uncover the different ideological positions in journalistic and political language as regards the same event. Within the framework of critical discourse analysis, he compares the treatment of one news item, the unilateral declaration of independence proclaimed by the Catalan

government in October 2017 and the reaction of the Spanish government, by seven different newspapers published on 28 October 2017, the day after the declaration. After comparing the content on the newspapers' frontpages, he focuses on two newspapers to examine the different ways that the same information is treated and the linguistic mechanisms used to downplay or enhance the same facts for different ideological purposes.

Chapter 3 by Muelas-Gil presents an example of Critical Multimodal Metaphor Analysis by drawing upon the groundings of Kress and van Leeuwen's multimodal critical discourse analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996; Machin 2007) and critical metaphor analysis (Charteris-Black 2004) for a contrastive study on national and international political cartoons depicting Catalonia's independence process (her corpus consists of 37 cartoons published in September-November 2017).

Chapter 4 by Fernández Smith analyses quantitatively and qualitatively a sample of key words frequently used in Spanish Political discourse (namely, empowering, sustainability and gender violence) as a show case of conceptual networks and some general patterns of persuasive communication within the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. He shows that how these conceptual networks are materialized through the cooccurrences and lexical combination of particular keywords with other words. His research findings indicate that media and press reproduce the discourses and the words of politicians, not only in terms of the transmission of news but also as being a part of an establishment that promotes and defends a particular way of thinking which is believed to be the actual state of affairs.

In Chapter 5, López-Campillo explores how political power and persuasion was exerted in eighteenth-century England through a critical analysis of persuasive verbal devices used by Daniel Defoe in his essays as a political journalist to produce effective political propaganda. Her study centres on the issue of immigration and analyses boosting and hedging as two of the most common rhetorical strategies that Defoe resorted to in an attempt to shape belief and defend his views.

In Chapter 6, Heynderickx and Dieltjens present the results of a bottom-up discourse analysis of 100 obituaries of politicians from the six most important political parties in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium and Brussels. Their content analysis focusses on two aspects: the qualities mentioned and the presence of political orientation in the description of

the deceased. Their study explores the use of metaphors in the obituaries and whether they are politically inspired. Their findings demonstrate that the personal and political qualities and the political career of the deceased are used to rekindle the cohesion and enthusiasm of the party members, thus often turning the obituaries of political figures into political propaganda.

Part II brings together four chapters on gender and sexuality discourses. In Chapter 7, Hellín García investigates the role of metaphorical female and male animalization in reggaeton musical discourse. By combining a cognitive view of metaphor based on the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (Lakoff 1993) with a pragmatic perspective based on Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris & Black, 2004) she successfully analyses how animal metaphors shape men's perception and attitude towards women. Her corpus-based metaphor analysis shows that animalization acts as a discursive device to frame hostile sexism in the shape of taming, domesticating, whipping, hitting, and punishing. Reggaeton as a cultural product normalizes and integrates these chauvinist, aggressive and neo-sexist precepts.

In Chapter 8, García-Gómez presents in-depth gender-specific discourse analysis of cyberbullying (online aggressive verbal behaviour) among British teenagers on Twitter which was performed on a sample of 415 Twitter threads created by female and male adolescents between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. On the basis of Goffman's analytical framework (1959), he explores how the strategies of self-presentation and of impression management differ between male and female teenagers in the episodes of cyberviolence, and discloses gender-specific differences in choosing and developing different types of self-presentation strategy.

Chapter 9 by Martínez Lirola studies the visual discursive representation of women in advertisements in order to unveil stereotypes associated with female bodies and to discover if the traditional stereotypes associated with women are still valid in the twenty-first century. With a corpus comprising all the advertisements from January 2016 to December 2018 published by Dolce&Gabbana in its web-based newspaper, she conducts a quantitative and qualitative visual analysis that relies heavily on the principles of Kress and van Leeuwen's model of visual grammar (2006) and van Leeuwen's (2008) characterization of social actors. The findings indicate that women are represented as stereotyped, following traditional canons of beauty and foregrounding their bodies as objects of desire.

Chapter 10, by Sánchez Rui, is a unique study on the way that teenagers conceptualize sex in the context of telecinematic discourse. Through telecinematic discourse analysis of British Netflix original dramedy *Sex Education*, she classifies the linguistic units about sex-related topics in order to understand how forbidden contents, forbidden reality and forbidden meaning create particular contextual and emotional effects to attenuate or reinforce taboos. This analysis is complemented by metaphor analysis which demonstrates that metaphorical language plays a key role in how teenagers cope with the taboo topic of sex.

Part III of the book is devoted to business and academic discourse studies. Cestero Mancera and Díez Prados in Chapter 11 present a comparative study of non-verbal paralinguistic signs used in persuasive business communication in two parallel Spanish/British English Corpora of TV entrepreneurial pitches, which are composed of 20 presentations made on one TV Programme (Spanish version: *Tu Oportunidad*; British version: *Dragon's Den*). They aim to identify which and how frequently paralinguistic devices (i.e. volume, sound lengthening emotional reactions quasilexical elements and pauses) are used, and whether gender or L1 is more important when determining the type and frequency of the nonverbal signs used.

Chapter 12 by Carmen Varo Varo provides guidance on how to integrate neuropsychological linguistic models in order to produce a more complete definition of business discourse as a communicative modality. To illustrate how knowledge of the neurological underpinnings of semantic and morphosyntactic processes can benefit discourse analysis, she quantitatively and qualitatively analyses a corpus compiled of the annual reports, CEO (Chief Executive Officer) letters, mission statements, social responsibility reports, annual reviews and presentations, and business press releases by three Spanish companies Santander, Inditex, and Mercadona. She also explores the use of metaphor with special attention to press releases as essential vehicles for the dissemination of the corporate image. Her chapter presents several illustrative examples from the corpus to show the uniqueness of the principle of contrast in business discourse.

Griffith in Chapter 13 studies bilingual academic discourse in the university classroom. The data collected through direct classroom observation is comprised of 34 hours of spoken discourse with eight different Spanish professors teaching Computer Science through English. The study first focuses on the errors in spoken performance in the context of the bilingual

classroom; second, assesses the impact of these errors on intelligibility through qualitative post coding analysis; and third, explores how compensatory discourse strategies such as clarification strategies, summarisation and negotiation of meaning impact intelligibility comparing to the errors detracted.

Overall, I highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in discourse analysis. Highly thought-provoking and solid studies brought together at this volume make it a strong candidate to be a handbook for any reader at any level of expertise in the area, whether an undergraduate student, an instructor, an early-year researcher or an expert in the field.

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