ABSTRACTS

Hermes 41-2008

THEMATIC SECTION
Knowledge Communication in a Multimodal Context

ARTICLES

Anthony Baldry & Paul J. Thibault

Applications of Multimodal Concordances

Multimodal corpus linguistics has so far been a *theoretical* rather than an *applicative* discipline. This paper sketches out proposals that attempt to bridge between these two perspectives. It does so with particular reference to the development of the conceptual and software tools required to create and concordance multimodal corpora from the applicative standpoint and as such is designed to underpin the study of texts at universities in foreign-language teaching and testing cycles. One branch of this work relates to *multimedia language tests* which, as illustrated in *Section 2*, use concordancing techniques to analyze multimodal texts in relation to students' understanding of oral and written forms of discourse in English. Another branch is the exploration of *multimodal tests* concerned with the *explicit* assessment of students' knowledge of the principles and/or models of textual organization of multimodal texts. The two types of test are not mutually exclusive. A third branch of research thus relates to the development of *hybrid tests* which, for example, combine a capacity to analyze multimodal texts with an assessment of students' language skills, such as fluency in speaking and writing in English or which ascertain the multimodal literacy competencies of students and the differing orientations to meaning-making styles that individuals manifest. The paper considers these different applicative perspectives by describing the different categories of concordance achievable with the *MCA* online concordancer (*Section 2*) and by defining their relevance to multimodal discourse analysis *(Section 3)*. It also illustrates the use of meaning-oriented multimodal concordances in the creation and implementation of *multimodal tests (Sections 4)*. It concludes by suggesting that the re-interpretation of the nature and functions of concordances is long overdue and that the exploration of new types of concordance is salutary for linguistics and semiotics in general.

Francesca Coccetta

First Steps towards Multimodal Functional Concordancing

The development of the *MCA* (*Multimodal Corpus Authoring System*, Baldry 2005, Baldry/Beltrami 2005) online corpus construction and concordancing system, capable of investigating a variety of multimodal texts without denuding them of their distinguishing features, has led to extensive research on the integration of multimodal corpora, and multimodal concordancing in particular, into university syllabuses in the past few years (Baldry et al. 2005, Grunther 2005, Ackerley/Coccetta 2007b, Baldry 2007, in press, Grunther 2007, Coccetta in press, Dalziel/Metelli in press). This article describes a pilot project set up at the University of Padua (Coccetta 2004) which through the use of the *MCA* system made a small corpus of film texts, the English Language Learning Oriented (ELLO) film corpus, more easily accessible to language learners and allowed them to investigate: a) how a specific language function (van Ek/Trim 1998a, 1998b, 2001) is enacted by a set of different language forms and b) the ways in which the various manifestations of this function perform in relation to the *multimodal co-text* in which they are produced. In so doing, it illustrates some of the benefits this approach brings to language learning and gives examples of teaching materials based on the ELLO film corpus which are designed to promote language learners' communicative competence.

Carmen Daniela Maier

Multimodal Communication of Specialized Knowledge across Hypertext Innovation and Generic Tradition

The development of the *MCA* (*Multimodal Corpus Authoring System*, Baldry 2005, Baldry/Beltrami 2005) online corpus construction and concordancing system, capable of investigating a variety of multimodal texts without denuding them of their distinguishing features, has led to extensive research on the integration of multimodal corpora, and multimodal concordancing in particular, into university syllabuses in the past few years (Baldry et al. 2005, Grunther 2005, Ackerley/Coccetta 2007b, Baldry 2007, in press, Grunther 2007, Coccetta in press, Dalziel/Metelli in press). This article describes a pilot project set up at the University of Padua (Coccetta 2004) which through the use of the *MCA* system made a small corpus of film texts, the English Language Learning Oriented (ELLO) film corpus, more easily accessible to language learners and allowed them to investigate: a) how a specific language function (van Ek/Trim 1998a, 1998b, 2001) is enacted by a set of different language forms and b) the ways in which the various manifestations of this function perform in relation to the *multimodal co-text* in which they are produced. In so doing, it illustrates some of the benefits this approach brings to language learning and gives examples of teaching materials based on the ELLO film corpus which are designed to promote language learners' communicative competence.

Sophia Diamantopoulou

Engaging with Children's Graphic Ensembles of an Archaeological Site: A Multi-modal Social Semiotic Approach to Learning

Children's drawings have been widely used in the field of museum education as indicators for learning, as well as means for evaluating the teaching that takes place in a museum or a heritage site. This paper employs social semiotics and multimodality as tools for introducing a different perspective when it comes to building a descriptive and an interpretative framework for analysing children's production, as representative of their learning. The insight into their work is based on the assumptions that learning can be multi-modally mediated through a particular pedagogy and further be made accessible to us through the material realisation of children's production across multiple modes. The paper aims to explore the implications of this position for generating knowledge about children's learning. The main argument discussed here is that engaging with a child's graphic ensemble through a multimodal and social semiotic perspective can enable us, hypothetically, to recover children's meanings about the archaeological site as well as the aspects of their overall learning experience. Viewing their graphic ensembles as constructions that are interest driven and multi-modally realized could open up more possibilities for accessing the agendas and interests that guide their learning. The paper further uses this visual material as an opportunity to argue that when engaging with children's learning, multimodality can work not as a theory on its own means, but as the framework that conditions a theory (e.g. social semiotics and discourse) into a direction of encompassing more possibilities for reading their understanding of the world.

Alison Gibbons

Multimodal Literature 'Moves' Us: Dynamic Movement and Embodiment in *VAS: An Opera in Flatland*

Multimodality is a recent academic development, fuelling a surge of related research (Kress/van Leeuwen 1996; 2001; Baldry/Thibault 2006; Royce/Bowcher 2007). In parallel to this, the turn of the millennium has seen an increase in the inclusion of typography, graphics and illustration in fiction yet, with only a few exceptions (Gibbons forthcoming a; forthcoming b), printed literature has often been neglected in multimodal study. Focusing on the 'imagetext novel' *VAS: An Opera in Flatland*, written by Steve Tomasula and designed by Stephen Farrell (2002), this paper explores multimodal printed literature through cognitive-poetic analysis. The examination of visual elements is aided by theories from visual perception and multimodal research. This cognitive and perceptual methodology is strengthened through reflection upon recent findings from neuroscientific work on embodiment. In consequence, this paper presents a fresh approach to multimodality, an approach which not only attends to all modes of meaning-making equally, as well as collaboratively, but one which considers the cognitive and embodied aspects of a multimodal literary experience.

OTHER ARTICLES

Annette Grindsted

Negociación y el manejo de riesgos

The article defends the position that it is the construction of interpersonal relations that determines the zone of possible agreements in a negotiation rather than 'economic' considerations. It is assumed that negotiation is a communicative activity that implies risk and that to be able to initiate negotiations it is a precondition that a certain degree of trust has been established between the parties. Two different ways of conceptualizing trust are described, and two e-mail negotiations that give empirical support to these conceptualizations are analyzed. One reaches a dead-lock, the other does not.

Hanne Tange

Global Commitment or Local Grievances?
An Assessment of the Grundfos Language Policy

This empirical study discusses language workers' involvement with and responses to the introduction of a corporate language policy at the Danish multinational Grundfos in April 2004. The core argument is that a discrepancy exists between language workers' global commitment to language management and respondents' local practices. The analysis explores this differentiation in relation to the themes of language value, language visibility, and the visibility of the corporate language policy, comparing the conflicting views of respondents from management, communications, branding, technical marketing, production, and development units. This leads to the conclusion that the effect of the corporate language initiative is closely related to language attitudes in the different parts of the organisation, which calls for a research perspective that may accommodate local as well as global concerns.

FORUM

Sven Tarp

Revival of a Dusty Old Profession

This text is the inaugural lecture presented by Professor Sven Tarp at the Aarhus School of Business on March 14, 2008. Firstly, the text provides a brief retrospect of the history of lexicography with emphasis on the experience of the big Chinese encyclopedias and the first big National Danish Dictionary. On this basis, it calls for the further development of an independent theory of lexicography in order to go beyond the experience of past and present lexicographic works and project the discipline into the future. It then discusses some of the problems hampering this process. With a call for innovation, it urges the lexicographers to produce the works that are really needed by users and the State to finance the production of such tools of national, cultural, social and economic importance in the present information era. Finally, it concludes that the researchers in lexicography need the audacity to go beyond the usual boundaries and generate new ideas, even if they are initially not welcomed or even understood.