

RaAM

the Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor

PLENARIES & WORKSHOPS RaAM Workshop 2009 "Metaphor, Metonymy & Multimodality" (University of Amsterdam, Dept. of Media Studies, NL (4-5 June 2009))

PLENARIES

Frank Boers & Fiona MacArthur: Plenary 1 (Thursday 4 June, 9.30-10.30)

Title: "The use of pictorial and gestural modes in fostering the learning of idioms and conventional metaphors in instructed second language acquisition: overview."

Studies on multimodal discourse in educational contexts have proliferated in recent years, with close attention being paid to the benefits that may accrue from the use of pictorial and gestural modes alongside (or instead of) verbal explanation in the classroom and the variables that need to be taken into account when considering their efficacy. In our plenary, we will give an overview of recent research into the role of pictures and gestures in the foreign language classroom, when the aim is to foster the learning of conventional metaphors and idioms. In this overview, we will consider a number of factors that need to be taken into account when investigating the role of pictures and gestures in this particular educational context. Among these are:

- Desired learning outcomes (for example, whether the use of pictures is designed to foster understanding, recall or production of the figurative expression);
- Learner characteristics (for example, the cognitive style of learners or their visual literacy);
- The sequencing of verbal, visual or gestural modes of elucidation (for example, whether pictures precede, accompany or follow verbal explanations);
- Alternative realisations of pictures and gestures (for example, more or less naturalistic pictorial representations and teacher- versus learner-generated gestures, and the distinction between object imagery and spatial imagery).

Proposals will be framed within recent trends in applied linguistics and the research findings will be interpreted with reference to established models in cognitive psychology. We will also discuss the limitations of visual and gestural elucidation in language pedagogy.

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Daniel Casasanto & Irene Mittelberg: Plenary 2 (Thursday 4 June, 14.00-15.00)

Title: "The psychomotorics of metaphor/ The metonymic nature of (metaphoric) gestures."

Part I (Casasanto). Gesture research, like language research, provides a window on the mind. But in order to interpret what we see, researchers must sometimes go beyond analyzing how people speak and gesture naturally. In this talk, I will describe a series of experiments that take natural speech and gesture as a source of hypotheses about the mental representation of abstract concepts, and go on to manipulate aspects of speaking and gesturing in order to "carve the mind at its joints." Results provide insight into the cognitive and communicative functions of gestures, revealing that some aspects of gestures function like other symbol systems, notably language. Other aspects, however, reflect the activation of spatio-motor representations in the mind that appear to have no symbolic function. These findings support theories of metaphorical mental representation, while calling into question traditional notions of the relationship between "representation" and "symbol."

Part II (Mittelberg). Metonymy is, just as metaphor, a cognitive-semiotic process that may motivate expressions in both verbal and non-verbal modalities. Focusing on the role of metonymic modes in co-speech gesture, this part of the plenary aims at drawing attention to some of the ways in which metonymy (contiguity) and metaphor (similarity) jointly create meaning in multimodal communication. Based on academic discourse videotaped in linguistics and language courses at American universities, we will see that while metaphor is central to accessing abstract domains, metonymy may drive sign formation, serve distinct referential functions, and indeed prepare the ground for metaphoric processes (regardless of whether or not the concurrent speech is figurative). Several types of contiguity relations will be discussed: between gesture and referent, between hands and the imaginary objects they seem to manipulate, and between two hands in bimanually achieved gestures.

Combining cognitive-linguistic views with traditional semiotics, I will demonstrate how Jakobson's notions of *internal metonymy* (i.e., synecdoche) and *external metonymy* (based on adjacency or contact) may account for some of these complex meaning-making processes. From the perspective of the interpreter, we will explore how hands may serve as visible, physical signposts triggering cognitive access to the imaginary objects or traces the viewer needs to infer from hand configurations and movement trajectories. The overall goal is to illuminate connections between abstraction, inference, and embodiment.

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Cornelia Müller & Alan Cienki: Plenary 3 (Friday 5 June, 9.30-10.30)
Title: "Multimodal metaphor in speech and gestures."

If we look beyond words to other ways in which metaphors may be realized while speaking, we find not only metaphoric mappings that are familiar from previous research on verbal expressions, but also previously unrecognized mappings which reveal other aspects of the imagistic nature of metaphorization. We will outline the main patterns discovered so far. For gesture these include aspects of spatialization through relative gesture location, shape depiction in the reification of abstract ideas, the handling of non-tangible abstractions, and movement corresponding to processes of change or gradations in relations. We will consider the challenges presented by using the traditional means of conceptual metaphor analysis, the static verbal formula of "Target is Source," and explore ways in which the limitations of this formula may be overcome.

We will then give a brief overview of what is known about the manners in which metaphor may be expressed in speech in real time, that is: monomodally or multimodally at any given time. While it may not be surprising that we find metaphoric verbal expressions without co-occurring metaphoric gestures, interestingly we also find metaphoric expression monomodally in the converse manner – metaphors in gestures without metaphors in the co-occurring speech. Furthermore, multimodal use may take place as one might expect, with the source domain of the same conceptual metaphor appearing simultaneously in both verbal and gestural form. But we also sometimes see different conceptual metaphors being used at the same time in the two modalities. When, in a further move, we extend the perspective from single instances of multimodal metaphor to the succession and sequencing of monomodal and multimodal metaphors in a sample of discourse, we find that metaphor is a dynamic property that can be more or less activated or foregrounded. For conceptual metaphor theory this raises questions about how to account for metaphoricity as a dynamic property, which can be more or less highlighted. We will see that for researchers of spoken language, moving beyond the level of the words can uncover facets of metaphoricity that had previously lain hidden. Thus extending the scope of inquiry – from monomodal verbal metaphor to multimodal verbo-gestural and monomodal gestural metaphor – opens up new pathways of metaphor theory and research.

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Charles Forceville & Lisa El Refaie: Plenary 4 (Friday 5 June, 14.00-15.00)

Title: "How to study multimodal metaphor: overview/(Verbo-)visual metaphor in autobiographical comics."

Part I (Forceville). Humanities scholars interested in "discourse" can less and less afford to neglect its non-verbal and multimodal dimensions, and the same holds for metaphor (see Forceville 2006, 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi forthcoming in 2009). Although it is difficult to present an exhaustive list of modes, or modalities, these include at the very least the visual, the sonic, the musical, and the gestural, whereas there are good reasons to count oral and written language as two different modalities. In the first half of this plenary lecture, an outline will be presented of some of the issues that a full-blown theory of multimodal metaphor needs to address in further research, and how such research can fit into the study of multimodal discourse in general. These issues include attention to the affordances and constraints of various modes, media, and genres. Examples are drawn from print and TV advertising; film; and animation film.

Part II (El Refaie). Over the past four decades, a new breed of literary comics has gradually evolved. Apart from exploring new subject matters such as history, documentary and autobiography, many comic artists are using the medium in a self-reflexive way, deliberately subverting traditional stylistic and formal features (Hatfield 2005). This talk examines the different forms and functions of (verbo-)visual metaphors in autobiographical comics, drawing a distinction between their surface realization and underlying concepts.

Lakoff and Turner (1989) argue that metaphors occurring in poetic texts tend to reflect the same entrenched metaphorical mappings that underlie our everyday language, with abstract target domains typically being understood in terms of embodied source domains. However, they concede that poets are often able to find fresh, idiosyncratic extensions or formulations of conceptual metaphors, which are able to guide us beyond their 'automatic and unconscious everyday use' (ibid: 72). Crisp (2003) believes that writers also commonly create novel cross-domain mappings, particularly in the case of "image metaphors," where the visual appearance of one thing is compared to that of another. As Forceville (2006) has demonstrated, many pictorial metaphors in advertising and film are similarly based on visual resemblance, which means that their source and target domains are necessarily both concrete.

I will first outline a rough taxonomy of the different forms of (verbo-)visual metaphor in autobiographical comics, ranging from highly explicit and extended pictorial allegories to more subtle and implicit resemblance metaphors, and try to relate these forms to their narrative functions. I then

explore the extent to which (verbo-)visual metaphors in comics can be seen as reflecting pre-existing conceptual correspondences. I argue that, in many cases, narrative context and the socio-cultural connotations that attach to the source domain are more important for potential mappings than the principle of embodiment.

References

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 and Dr. Ch. Forceville, Department of Media Studies, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands (<http://home.medewerker.uva.nl/c.j.forceville/>).

WORKSHOPS (six different workshops will be offered, each of them twice; given the schedule, each participant can attend four different workshops):

Workshop Images 1a (Forceville, Thursday 4 June, 11.00-12.30 & Friday 5 June, 16.00-17.30). Title: "How to study multimodal metaphor: applications."

In the workshop we will discuss issues raised in the plenary by Forceville & El Refaie by analyzing multimodal discourses of various types purportedly forcing or inviting metaphorical interpretation. We will look at specimens from print

and TV advertising; film; and animation film, and address (a selection of) the following questions:

- What are the target and source of the metaphor, and how do we know?
- In what mode(s)/modality(-ies) are target and source represented?
- What mode(s) are (in)dispensable for (i) identifying the metaphor; and (ii) deciding on what (aligned) features are mapped? Can we think of ways to adapt the metaphor for usage with different modes?
- How important is (suggested) movement and spatiality for the metaphor?
- What are the affordances and constraints of the *medium* for the metaphor? Is the metaphor translatable to different media?
- What consequences for interpretation does the discursive *genre* have for the metaphor's identification and interpretation?
- What, if any, is the role of metonymy in the metaphor?

Workshop Images 1b (Boers & MacArthur, Thursday 4 June, 11.00-12.30 & Friday 5 June, 16.00-17.30). Title: "The use of pictorial and gestural modes in fostering the learning of idioms and conventional metaphors in instructed second language acquisition: applications."

In the Workshop, we will provide:

- Opportunities to engage in a number of hands-on activities that will allow participants to develop and consolidate their understanding of the issues involved in this field of research. We hope to replicate the results of (classroom) experiments which have demonstrated what the mnemonic benefits of pictorial and gestural elucidation are and also how small modifications to task design can weaken or enhance those effects.
- Opportunities to discuss, with the organisers and other participants, ongoing research being carried out by participants into the use of pictorial and gestural modes in the teaching/learning of idioms and conventional metaphors in English and other languages. A bibliography of relevant publications in this field will be made available for cross-pollination.

Workshop Images 1c (El Refaie, Thursday 4 June, 11.00-12.30 & Friday 5 June, 16.00-17.30). Title: "Forms and narrative functions of (verbo-)visual metaphor in autobiographical comics."

We will consider excerpts from both European and American works, in order to explore the forms and functions of (verbo-)visual metaphor in autobiographical comics. The data set will include examples of explicit, extended allegories, as well as instances of resemblance metaphors, where a particular object or person is made to look like something else. We will also study cases where

metaphorical meaning emerges from subtle features of style and layout. The specific aims of the workshop are:

- to look for criteria for judging whether a particular (verbo-)visual surface realisation is metaphorical or not, and to explore the sometimes fuzzy boundaries between metaphor, metonymy and symbolism;
- to test the comprehensiveness and validity of a rough taxonomy of the different forms of (verbo-)visual metaphors in comics;
- to explore whether these different forms are typically associated with particular narrative functions;
- to compare workshop participants' individual responses to the examples and discuss the possibility of a pragmatic account of metaphor interpretation that takes narrative context and the connotations of source domains into consideration.

Workshop Gestures 2a (Müller & Mittelberg, Thursday 4 June, 16.00-17.30 & Friday 5 June, 11.00-12.30). Title: "Methods of Gesture Analysis (MGA): From form to meaning."

This workshop will focus on a systematic analysis of metaphor and metonymy in spontaneous co-verbal gestures. While, when listening to talks on metaphoric gestures and seeing examples, it may seem quite obvious that hand configurations and movements may depict certain aspects of the source domain of a metaphor, such insights tend to create challenges for the analyst in the process of identifying, describing, and reconstructing the meaning of gestures employed in naturalistic discourse.

The session will begin with a brief review of the multimodal approach to metaphor and metonymy we are taking here and then provide an introduction to Methods of Gesture Analysis (MGA), moving from formal features to semantic processes. We will start off with an in-depth analysis of examples touched upon during the plenary talks, offering participants a chance to take a close look at the different steps that went into arriving at the results presented. In a second step, the participants will do hands-on analyses of additional examples representing different discourse genres. Video sequences to work on will be provided, but anyone who wishes to bring in sequences of his or her own data is welcome to do so (please contact the workshop leaders in advance). The workshop will conclude with a summary of the analytic steps and perspectives applied in reconstructing the meaning of metaphorically and metonymically motivated gestures. The goal is to get a sense of what aspects of such dynamic instances of multimodal communication we are able to account for and what aspects pose difficulties in view of theoretical interests, empirical methods, and other forms of multimodality.

Workshop Gestures 2b (Casasanto, Thursday 4 June, 16.00-17.30 & Friday 5 June, 11.00-12.30). Title: "Analyzing gestures to test cognitive theories: When coarse coding can be fine."

A rapidly advancing area of gesture research concerns the fine-grained analysis of form-function relationships in naturally occurring gestures. Another area of growth concerns precise analysis of gesture timing relative to speech.

In this workshop, I will outline an alternative approach, in which "coarse coding" of the form and timing of gestures is used to address questions about their communicative and cognitive functions, and to test psychological theories of mental representation. Some techniques require "zooming in" the lens to focus on certain components of gesture in isolation, and others "zooming out" the lens to study broad patterns in speech-gesture production, abstracting away from the details. These techniques do not replace fine-grained analysis schemes, which are needed for addressing a host of questions about gesture and speech that are of interest to linguists and psychologists, alike. Rather, they add to the gesture researcher's toolkit, and allow for the kind of objective data analysis necessary for scientific hypothesis testing.

Workshop Gestures 2c (Cienki, Thursday 4 June, 16.00-17.30 & Friday 5 June, 11.00-12.30). Title: "Similarities and differences between metaphors in spoken words and gestures."

If metaphor can be expressed in manual gestures, and not only in words, what are the similarities and differences we find between how metaphor appears in these two modes of expression? Furthermore, what kinds of metaphors are more likely to be expressed in each mode? In this workshop, participants will analyze some video-recorded excerpts of people conversing about abstract topics to see how we might begin answering these questions. Video material (in English) will be provided, but participants may also wish to bring some of their own video data to work on, in the language of choice of their research or interest (if so, please contact the workshop leader in advance).

The session will begin with some background on metaphor analysis in words and gestures, including consideration of ways to operationalize analysis of these two types of data. With some basic methods established, participants will work with the video data in pairs or small groups on computers/laptops on the process of identifying metaphorically used words and gestures.

The session will wrap up with discussion of the findings. Consideration will be given to challenges that arose in the process of analysis, and to what types of metaphors appear more or less frequently in words and gestures, and what this might reveal about the role of metaphor in thinking-for-speaking.