Book reviews


Reviewed by Alejandro Curado Fuentes

As may be easily inferred, the subject covered in this book reflects the ongoing and ever-growing interest in the linking possibilities of Corpus Linguistics (CL) with L2 teaching via the analysis of learner discourse. The title brings the point to the fore: There may be different approaches in teaching when dealing with language errors, but in the field of CL, it is clearly and consistently pointed out that empirical results are best conveyed by means of systematic methodologies and customized tools for the classification and evaluation of foreign language learner errors. The 1990s seemed to sow the seeds for the CL analysis of the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE), whereas the 2000s have demonstrated that ICLE analytical processes can be put effectively into practice. This book is one more contribution in that scope.

*Linking up Contrastive and Learner Corpus Research* expands the CL focus to describe the pedagogical possibilities derived from close examinations of learner writing. The information obtained from the enquiries would serve a double function in the process of error detection and evaluation, i.e., coping with specific issues in L2 writing from lexico-grammatical and discourse viewpoints, and providing some initial strategies in the development of frameworks for L2 learner profiles.

The book in fact distinguishes four main areas of study: methodology (first two chapters), lexis (one), syntax (four), and discourse (three). In my view, and after reading all the contributions, there are two chapters, 2 and 3, that could have easily been classified under the fourth section of discourse, given their respective foci on speech-derived involvement and writer’s creativity. The volume is clear and direct for any researcher interested in the area of contrastive linguistics and learner errors, but with a more overt categorization, I deem, it
may have gained in simplicity and directness, attributes that any reader likely appreciates. In addition, because all the chapters were presented in a workshop, held in the Fourth International Contrastive Linguistics Conference (Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2005), a simple structure contributes to the book’s standing differently and more unified as a collection (versus the common edition of papers derived from a conference).

Following a brief introduction to the volume by the editors, chapter 1, by Gaëtanelle Gilquin, rightfully opens the edition as a sort of reference framework for the learner error analyses in the volume. The Detection/Explaination/Evaluation (DEE) approach described seems to work as an effective tool that explores learner interlanguage with Contrastive analysis (CA) and Contrastive Interlanguage analysis (CIA) mechanisms. The study in the chapter offers some in-depth explanations of L1 transfer and L2 use, where both positive and negative examples of L1 transfer are examined. Although the method is described with learner writing corpora, I believe that it could well apply to other types of written and spoken material so that the analyst may have readily available information in his/her process of coming to terms with intricate pragmatics-based development and speech discourses.

The scientific method used in the first chapter is reflected, almost evoked, throughout the rest of the chapters. Annelie Ådel, in chapter 2, rightfully claims for the deserving importance of two external factors in the analysis of learner errors: timed versus untimed tasks, and use of secondary resources in the tasks. The author uses the SWICLE corpus (the Swedish component of the International Corpus of Learner English—ICLE) for the measurement of involvement in written discourse, and it is demonstrated that there is more personal involvement when the task is timed. A good additional mechanism to validate this type of leaner error analysis is the use of a compared native writing corpus in various academic fields (e.g., the LOCNESS corpus). In this regard, Ådel proposes a specific type of methodology for contrastive linguistics and learner error assessment, albeit with what I find as a less innovative step than shown in the previous chapter.

In chapter 3, John Cross and Szilvia Papp examine the use of verb + noun combinations by three different groups of learners, and evaluate their value for L2 writing. The authors specifically focus on the dividing line of creativity versus mistakes and errors. Of the three sets of students (German, Greek, Chinese) compared, the Chinese writers produced the largest amount of clearly unacceptable verb + noun combinations. Although I am not sure on how and/or why the other learners might reflect more creativity with their use of open combinations in the discourse, I agree with the authors in the appropriate development of techniques that clarify why some users have less linguistic competence in the area measured (e.g., due to L1 transfer interference, lack of exposure, environment, etc.).
Cristóbal Lozano and Amaya Mendikoetxea (chapter 4) explore the use of inverted subjects in L2 writing by Spanish and Italian learners in the ICLE corpus. The fact that the two nationalities of learners invert the subjects with unaccusative verbs is already accounted for as common knowledge, while the plausible reason for inversion when the subjects are heavy or present new information had not been documented empirically yet. The authors present significant data that demonstrates this tendency in the two cases, while there is also a clear distinction in the less noticeable overuse made by the Italians, by comparison with the Spanish, even with unaccusative verbs.

John Osborne, in chapter 5, presents more evidence for the need to focus on leaner syntactic error analyses. In his case study, the structural choice is L2 adverbial placement after verbs, and for the analysis he provides ample external contrastive information from different nationalities in the ICLE and outside reference (native writing). Among some questions for which he tries to answer with the provision of data and results, is the question of variation in writing. It is a fact that the Spanish learners, for instance, position the adverb before light noun phrases in 75 percent more cases than a native writer would. This type of observation, when taken to the L2 teaching scenario, is one example, among many, that corroborates the importance of leaner corpus and contrastive analysis.

María Belén Díez-Bedmar and Szilvia Papp close this section on syntax with their exploration of definite/non-definite article use via CA, CIA and interlanguage development. I agree with the authors that this focus on article or non-article use aptly combines the syntactic level with semantics and pragmatics, thereby illustrating the rich groundwork on which CA and CL can be put into play. The results display a wealthy variety of errors related to text-internal and text-external planes of discourse (e.g., ±specific/±hearer and knowledge, etc.).

The last section of the book (discourse errors) probably presents the chapters that have involved more intricate computer work and analytical effort on the part of the researchers due to more subtle tagging procedures. In chapter 7, Christelle Cosme’s tagging of participial and non-participial clause levels may testify to the required time-consuming CL work for learner error detection at the discourse plane. She works with multilingual corpora to explain and interpret these interlanguage features for the packaging of information. The results demonstrate that the Dutch overuse more finite/non-participial clauses, leading to interesting conclusions regarding the nature and role of L1 transfer in the errors made, task settings influence, and other external factors such as maturity, teaching-induced variables, development, and so forth, in agreement with chapter 2 above.

Marcus Callies (chapter 8) marks the frequencies that raising constructions have in advanced learners’ corpora. His analysis explores the pragmatic
reasons behind this special use (or non-use). The computation of the marked elements in the tagged raising constructions enables the interpretation of the results in the light of context. The author concludes that the demand for greater cognitive effort on the part of the learner, a phenomenon co-occurring in most cases analyzed, is a key factor for production restriction.

Chapter 9, by Mike Hannay and Elena Martínez Caro, focuses on the use of themes by Spanish and Dutch learners. The analytical process involved also deals with different tags according to the types of theme misfits encountered. Overall, the results show that the Spanish learners make more grammatical errors for theme positioning, e.g., lacking pro-subjects or causing ambiguous subject-verb agreements. The data is also attractive for teaching implications.

Annemie Demol and Pascale Hadermann (chapter 10) use learner corpora and CIA in order to find out if the more horizontal organization “forced” upon learners when using English actually produces more horizontal writing. In other words, the authors explore the way the learners pack information in the clauses in comparison with their own L1s. Interesting results and conclusions are also reached in the comparison of intra- and inter-language features by using French and Dutch learners’ interlanguages as contrastive sets.

In conclusion, I think that this publication has contributed well to the formulation and resolution of up-to-date hypotheses in the area of L2 learner errors. The use of CL in conjunction with CA and CIA is also well documented and applied. The chapters overall illustrate the fact that this type of CL research in Spain is coming into its own, not only via the hosting of events and by inviting important scholars and writers in the field, but also with already well-known researchers in the CL arena producing important publications, collaborative projects within and outside the country, international seminars and workshops, etc.


Reviewed by Mingwei Peng

1. Definitions and expressions of Multimodal metaphor

Multimodal metaphor is the first book that specially discusses metaphors in contemporary social life and their multimodal usage. The most valuable part of
this book is its discussion of metaphorical modes’ definition, classification, and application.

In the first part of the introduction, the two editors gave a definition to multimodal metaphor. Under the system of the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), as far as Lakoff and Johnson concerned, “human thought processes are largely metaphorically” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3–6), metaphor is not only a figure of speech, but also a mode of thought. In other words, in addition to verbal mode, metaphor can also occur in other modes. “If researching non-verbal and not-purely-verbal metaphor does not yield robust findings, this jeopardizes the Lakoff-and-Johnsonian presupposition that we think metaphorically. The supposedly metaphorical nature of human thinking would turn out to be a misconception: what has been presented as the CONCEPTUAL level of metaphor would then simply be a verbal metaphor under a different name, disguised in SMALL CAPITALS” (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 19).

In chapter 2 of the first section, Forceville put forward a theoretical framework of analyzing nonverbal and multimodal metaphor cognitively. He tried to summarize a definition and classification of “mode.” He mentioned that in the past 25 years, people were convinced that the extensive use of metaphor derived from human’s metaphorical ideology. If the CMT were correct, then the metaphor would not only occur in language, but also have other communicative means such as pictures, music, sounds, and gestures. However, the research of these modes was far from being fully accessed as a verbal metaphor. He concluded that, “a mode is a sign system interpretable because of a specific perception process” (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 22).

The modes can be linked together by five basic senses: (1) the pictorial or visual mode, (2) the aural or sonic mode, (3) the olfactory mode, (4) the gustatory mode, and (5) the tactile mode. Forceville emphasized that both written language and gestures would have to be part and parcel of the visual mode. Also he made a conclusion that the modes system contains at least nine categories: (1) pictorial signs, (2) written signs, (3) spoken signs, (4) gestures, (5) sounds, (6) music, (7) smells, (8) tastes, and (9) touch.

The application of multimodal metaphor in this book is drawn mainly from six social fields: advertising; political cartoons; comics, manga, and animation; spoken language and co-speech gesture; music and sound; metaphor.

2. Mechanism of multimodal metaphor and its application

There are seven parts, 18 chapters total in this book. The first section contains two chapters, using the name “scene setting” to set the tone for the whole book.
2.1. *Multimodal metaphor in advertising*

This part includes four chapters that are all about the multimodal metaphor in advertising. Koller selected a few examples from the top 50 and the bottom 50 companies among the 500 top companies all over the world. These examples are mainly from the corporate website and its brand culture copies. The author concluded that these enterprises took advantage of metaphorical expression to the brand culture in common, which was “BRAND IS A LIVING ORGAN” or “BRAND IS A PERSON.” These companies’ brands were regarded with some characteristics of business: growth, flexibility, dynamism, and connectivity.

Moreover, the author discussed the relationship between modes and the five senses. She argued that although Forceville (2006) had rightly pointed out that modes could not simply be equated with the five senses, distinctions needed to be made between, for instance, different forms of acoustic mode (speech, music, sound; see Van Leeuwen 1999). Indeed, if one followed a perceptual taxonomy based on the five senses, it would be impossible to analyze the multimodal metaphor as being constituted by visual and verbal elements. Verbal elements can be perceived visually as written language, acoustically as spoken language, and haptically as Braille language (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 153).

To perform smell and taste experience of commercial adverts, Caballero had provided an analytical method of the wine culture metaphor. The author chose six wine advertisements from France, Spain, and other countries, describing how words and pictures represent the smell and taste of these wines in these advertisements. The author concluded that verbalization usually involves using metonymies (ripe flavors), similes (it smells like a barnyard) and synesthetic metaphors (it smells crisp).

On the basis of this analysis, the author claimed that beside the five basic sensory perceptions, the classification of modes ought to add a new dimension: experience. With the perceptual experiences fully accessed in the second generation of cognitive science, the CMT, which is formed on the basis of cognitive science, deeply affects linguistics and other scientific disciplines, therefore, it is reasonable for the author to stress the importance of embodied experience.

Urios-Aparisi selected four TV commercial films as cases to study the interaction between metaphor and metonymy from the aspects of cognitive process, communicative role, and motivation. Urios-Aparisi had speculative thoughts about the interaction between metaphor and metonymy with four cases. As to the first example of car advert, six cross-cut shots of the athlete’s preparation, starting, and sprinting, comparing with five of a car’s interior, taxing, and galloping, making the conceptual metaphor that the “CAR IS A LONG-JUMP ATHLETE.” As to those three examples, the tabular forms were used with
modes, divided by visual, words, and sound as the horizontal dimension, and source domain and target domain of metonymy and metaphor as vertical dimension. Comparing to some lengthy verbal descriptions, this analysis looks clearer.

Ning Yu chose a commercial image promotion advert of China Central Television, “however big one’s heart is, that is how big the stage is,” analyzing the nonverbal and multimodal metaphor expressions in it. Ning Yu extracted the metaphorical themes of this film—“LIFE IS A JOURNEY” and “LIFE IS A STAGE.” The author concluded that both metaphor and metonymy were used to display the dance’s cultural cognition and self-identity with crossed or parallel multi-modes performed by dynamic scenes, music, subtitles, and dialogues. The author borrowed the method from Lakoff and Johnson, analyzed the reasoning process of the two-part metaphor hidden behind the advert in detail.

In sum, the authors of this advertising part shared a common method and theoretical frame of television advertising, which is trying to conclude a noun form conceptual metaphor hidden behind, for example, “LIFE IS A STAGE” in Ning Yu’s paper, and “CAR IS A LONG-JUMP ATHLETE” in Urios-Aparisi’s paper. They used either verbal description or tables to analyze the modes. Nevertheless, as a newly developing research object, there ought to be more analysis methods of multi-modes.

2.2. Multimodal metaphor performed in political cartoons

The third part is mainly about multimodal metaphor performed in political cartoons. Fracisco Yus discussed some metaphorical devices in cartoons, such as associating, contrasting, and personification. Meanwhile, the author tried to explain the working mechanism of metaphorical modes. He argued that visual mode can share the same analyzing method as verbal mode, because visual information is decoded by another module: the perceptual module. The language module and the perceptual module shared similar properties due to the following reasons (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 153):

(a) They are fast and automatic,
(b) They are domain-specific,
(c) They are part of our genetic endowment,
(d) They have a uniform path of development.

Obviously, he tried to prove his opinion from biological and physiological reactions of human beings’ experience.

What’s more, the author challenged Forceville on his proposed definition of multimodal metaphor, “multimodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes.” The author persists that the thinking process of different modes in the brain is very similar, not irrelevant. In his opinion, visual metaphor and verbal
metaphor in political cartoons should not be antithetical, but be complementary to each other in the context of metaphorical expression just like the two sides of a coin.

El Refaie had some interviews and surveys directed toward the younger British audience in response to political cartoons. The author concluded that the subjects could read out the meaning of the metaphor only if they have an understanding of political events drawn in the picture as well as certain cultural knowledge, but it is still difficult for them to interpret the real meaning of the cartoons. She paid attention rather than data analysis. It could be a better way to use ZMET (Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique, Zaltman and Coulter 1995) as a method to analyze the metaphorical thinking in the subjects’ mind.

Teng selected six examples from the Christian Science Monitor to illustrate the multimodal metaphor in which images are arranged in an ironic way to express the theme “SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT.”

Schilperoord and Maes analyzed editorial cartoons with three analytical steps:

Step one: Define the conceptual content of a cartoon by paraphrasing the metaphor using the “X IS Y” template, thus determining target and source domain and the aspects to be mapped.

Step two: Determine the way in which the two domains are realized.

Step three: Following the above two steps, in analyzing the argumentative structure of editorial cartoons, reconstruct as objectively as possible the point of view expressed.

Schilperoord and Maes gave several examples of these three steps. However, clearer definition of the operative details would be useful. There is no direction in the paper for how to make certain that these methods can explain all the verbal and visual metaphors including editorial cartoons.

In addition, the authors also raised the question of what a multimodal metaphor is, and whether their analysis belongs to the analysis of multimodal metaphor. They asked for a more precise definition of a multimodal metaphor.

2.3. Metaphors of emotion in comics, manga, and animation

The fourth part is about metaphors of emotion in comics, manga, and animation. This section consists of two chapters that focus on the emotional expression of metaphors. Eerden deconstructed “anger in Asterix” in two comic albums and two animated films. On using Idealized Cognitive Models (ICM), he listed animation and comic expression of anger in detail, from exaggerated facial expressions by the mouth, chin, cheeks, and eyes, to actions such as smoking, shaking one’s head, blushing, trembling of hands, and so on.

Schinohara and Matsunaka compared Japanese comic (manga) with cartoons in the expression of emotion and found they there were so common in the
expression of emotional metaphors, mainly because the same background of Japanese culture. They tried to include six metaphorical expressions: joy, anger, happiness, fear, love, and despair. This made the paper much more complicated than Eerden’s, which only focused on one metaphorical expression of anger.

2.4. **Metaphor in spoken language and co-speech gesture**

The fifth part is about metaphor in spoken language and co-speech gesture, Müller and Cienki offered a systematic account of the forms that mono- and multimodal metaphors may happen to have in face-to-face communication. They pointed out that the process of oral communication was a newly creative process of multimodal metaphor in real life, with special modes of stress and intonation.

Waugh established her own corpus with videotaping four professors giving introductory linguistics lectures, discussing metaphorical features of co-speech gestures in class, using CMT and Jakobson’s view of metaphor and metonymy.¹

2.5. **Metaphor involving music and sound**

The sixth part focuses on metaphors involving music and sound. Zbikowski selected examples of musical passages from Palestrina, Bible, Bach, Schubert, and Jerome Kern. This was under the theoretical frame of conceptual blending theory, which summarizes that music modes, such as scale, pitch, movement, as well as the design of chord or mixture of different styles, are all the means of performing the player’s or the composer’s emotions. They emphasized that the analysis of music metaphor was essentially the same to that of verbal metaphor, although the external forms were different, the cognitive resources for constructing meaning behind the forms could be common. Unfortunately, the author didn’t explain clearly how common it was and why.

Forceville chose 10 examples of multimodal metaphors involving sound and music from two different genres: advertisements and films. He analyzed how sonic modes, i.e., sound and music, performed the source domain and the target domain in the two-dimensional print advertisements or three-dimensional movies.

The author concluded that sound is seldom responsible for the identification of the source domain by itself (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 153). This was doubted because it was historically recorded that in ancient China, sound alone was used as the source domain for selling goods in the early advertising period. *The Book of Odes: Sacrificial odes of Zhou*, which was written in the sixth century B.C., had a poem line, “Xiao tube is equipped.” The Xiao tube
was a kind of aero-phone, which was played by peddlers for selling their confectionery products. Therefore, the sound of the Xiao tube was the earliest sonic mode of metaphor. In addition, ancient Chinese peddlers also used different wind instruments and percussion instruments to attract people. Different occupations use different instruments, such as itinerant peddlers rotating a rattle-drum, whereas teal-oilmen knocking a wooden clapper (Pei-ai Chen 2009: 9–10). The sound made by these instruments, which was played to be the source domain of metaphorical peddling means, is still heard nowadays in China.

2.6. Metaphor in films

The seventh part is about metaphor in films. Rohdin analyzed sound films from 1920 to 1950. The breakthrough of sound film in the late 1920s enhanced the construction of multimodal metaphors in sound films since speech, music, and sound effects were added to images and written texts. This article focused on how to perform the film theme with language, sound, and music modes.

The author pointed out that the montage technique in films was very effective, different viewing angles or enlarging part of the lens can be seen metaphorically to express certain meaning. Thus, montage was a special film metaphor method. It contained all kinds of modes such as pushing, pulling, shaking, moving, zooming in, and zooming out. The authors even believed that any film techniques could be used as the source domain to express metaphorical meaning.

Eggertsson and Forceville took three horror films as a case study to show how the metaphorical terrorist theme “HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL” performed in the movies.

3. Evaluation and commentary of “Multimodal metaphor”

This volume is the first comprehensive study on multimodal metaphor. The authors have shown us a full display of metaphor usage in modern life, deepened their research with cases from real social scenarios.

3.1. The advantages of the book

3.1.1. Unified framework in theory. Almost all of the papers in this book share the same theoretical foundation of CMT and the second generation of cognitive science view of embodied experience. A small amount of papers are based on CMT plus Relevance Theory or Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT). However, this is not a problem, since CBT is rooted in the CMT system.
ysis of CMT is basically looking for the mapping of source and target domains and reconstructing a metaphor form “X IS Y”. CMT framework deeply affected the metaphor research in this book. The definition of multimodal metaphor is a proof, “multimodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes.”

3.1.2. Analysis methods of modes. For classification and analysis of modes, there were mainly three methods used: list of modes, making contrastive analysis, or verbal description. All these methods were applied to seek out a clear and comprehensive display of the meaning and the viewpoint of the author.

3.1.3. Fresh social cases and corpus. The book discussed extensively the phenomenon of multimodal metaphor from various application fields in life, including advertising, cartoons, television programs and movies, and co-gesture speech. One author made her corpus data by videotaping four professors’ speeches and gestures in class.

3.2. Issues that remained to be discussed

3.2.1. Commonality of Multimodal analysis. How are different analytic methods of modes associated with each other? Is there a systematic approach to the analysis of all kinds of modes? Many authors in this book addressed this issue, but it still requires more attention.

One of the authors, Fracisco Yus, raised an objection to Forceville’s view that not all multimodal metaphor required its sources domain and target domain to belong to a different perceptual mode. He argued that the thinking process behind the performance of each mode shared commonality, that is, the mental process behind different modes was common.

Müller and Cienki cited the view of Forceville (1999, 2005, 2006) and Müller (2007, 2008) that monomodal verbal metaphors as well as multimodal metaphors are in spoken language and also instantiated in other media, such as film or cartoons. All the analysis of different modes can be universal.

Zbikowski also cited Wittgenstein’s (1980) view that understanding a sentence is much more akin to understanding a musical theme than we may think of first. Although the author didn’t give a clear explanation of similarity, he agreed to some of the same cognitive resources for constructing the meaning.

According to the above three points, these views implied that a common mental system existed behind different modes. They could have a common classification and analysis system, rather than just research in different applied fields, independent of each other.
3.2.2. **Quantitative research of multimodal metaphor.** There are only a few quantitative research studies in this book. Some of the quantitative studies in two papers used interviews and simple statistical method, and one paper conducted a corpus study using videotapes. Overall, while there was verbal description in great length, experimental investigation was almost inadequate. As a first book on multimodal metaphor, it is reasonable for this book to focus mainly on the discussion of research framework and descriptive analysis, leaving the quantitative analysis of questionnaires and the experimental methods for future studies. One editor, Charles Forceville, pointed out that it is necessary to combine theory and practice together in the application and development of multimodal metaphor. This is something that should be emphasized in future research.

**Notes**

1. In Jakobson’s (1956) view, metonymy is not a sub-type of metaphor, but the two are in opposition with each other and thus create a fundamental polarity that is at the root of all symbolic processes, cultural manifestations, and human thought in general.

2. “X IS Y” form is borrowed from two Holland authors in this book, Joost Schilperoord and Alfons Maes.

**References**


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