Public Healthcare Posters: A Social Semiotic Approach to Cross-cultural Studies

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Overview

Research motivation
Research background
Research design
Research motivation

- Public health education
  - the objectives of any health education (Gilbert et al., 201):
    - knowledge about the behaviour
    - attitudes associated with the behaviour
    - skills necessary to enable behaviour adaptation
  - The influence on behaviour takes priority over the dissemination of knowledge and other aspects.

- Multimodal studies
  - Approaches
  - Domains and issues
  - Trends
Approaches to multimodality

- Jewitt (2014)

1. Social semiotic multimodal analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, 2006; van Leeuwen, 2005)

2. Multimodal discourse analysis (SF-MDA) (Baldry and Thibault, 2006; O’Halloran, 2008; O’Toole, 1994)


- Socio-functional multimodal analysis (e.g. Bateman and Schmidt, 2012; Feng et al., 2014; Lemke, 1998b; Liu and O’Halloran, 2009; Martin, 2011; van Leeuwen, 2005)

- Multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (e.g. Djonov and Zhao, 2014)

- Social semiotic (MDA) and cognitive approach to multimodality (e.g. El Refaie, 2003, 2013; Feng, 2011; Feng and O’Halloran, 2013a, b; Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Holsanova, 2012, 2014; Pinar, 2013).
Domains in multimodal studies

- gesture (Hood and Forey, 2005; Lim, 2011; Martinec, 2004)
- paralinguistic features (Hood, 2011; Knight, 2011)
- music (Caldwell, 2010; Machin, 2013; McDonald, 2011; van Leeuwen, 1999)
- film discourse (Bateman, 2007, 2009; Bateman and Schmidt, 2012; O’Halloran, 2004b; Tseng, 2009, 2013a, b; Wildfeuer, 2014)
- children’s picture books (Nikolajeva, 2014; Painter et al., 2013; Wignell, 2011)
- textbooks (Chen, 2010; Guo, 2004)
- photographs and newspapers (Bednarek and Caple, 2012; Caple, 2008, 2009; Economou, 2009; Macken-Horarik, 2003a, b)
- print advertisements (O’Halloran, 2008)
- ...
Issues of multimodal studies

• Most of the performed analyses of multimodal meaning-making are case studies whose orientation is providing “painstakingly detailed descriptions of carefully chosen artefacts or communicative situations” (Hiippala, 2013: 4).

• These bottom-up analyses must be complemented by “top-down conceptualisations” to avoid the problem of “infinite detail” (Forceville, 2007: 1236).

• linguistic imperialism

• impressionistic
Multimodal corpus: Challenges

- Some areas included within the multimodal corpora are considerably more developed than others.
  - Spoken corpora
    - e.g. Adolphs and Knight, 2010; Allwood, 2008; Allwood et al., 2003; Gibbon et al., 1997; Hill, 2000; Taylor et al., 2000

- in “experimental” condition (Bateman, 2013)
  - Tools and mechanisms that work well with real-time data (e.g. spoken discourse) turn out to be unusable with non real-time data.
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Semioticians’ preliminary explorations of image-text relations (e.g. Barthes, 1977; Schapiro, 1973)

Modelling intersemiotic relations for both theoretical development and pedagogic implications

Model developments and multimodal corpus-based studies
A brief literature review

- Barthes (1977)
  - Royce (1998)
  - Lemke (1998)
- Cheong (2004)
- Matthiessen (2007)
- Bateman (2008)
  - Lim (2004)
  - Martinec and Salway (2005); Salway (2010)
  - Thomas (2009, 2014)
- Lin and O’Halloran (2009)
  - Painter and Martin (2011); Painter et al. (2013)
  - Hiippala (2013)
- van Leeuven (2005)
- O’Halloran (2011)
- etc
Key concepts

- Barthes (1977)
  - anchorage, relay
- Royce (1998, 2007)
  - intersemiotic complementarity
- Lemke (1998)
  - multiplying meaning
- Thibault (2000); Lim (2004); Cheong (2004)
  - contextualisation relations; co-contextualisation/re-contextualisation relations; contextualisation propensity
- O’Halloran (2005, 2008)
  - mechanisms of intersemiosis
- Martinec and Salway (2005)
  - system of combined status and logico-semantics for image-text relations
- van Leeuwen (2005)
  - visual-verbal linking: elaboration and extension
- Matthiessen (2007)
  - rhetorical relations: projection and expansion
Key concepts ctd

  - the model of image-text relations for multiliteracies pedagogy
    - e.g. Gill, 2000; Lemke, 2002; Lim, 2004; Macken-Horarik, 2003a, b, 2004; Royce, 1998
- Kong (2006)
  - network of relations
- Liu and O’Halloran (2009)
  - intersemiotic texture
- Painter and Martin (2011); Painter, Martin and Unsworth (2013)
  - instantiation
    - commitment and coupling
- Bowcher and Liang (2013)
  - internal and external cohesion
- Thomas (2009, 2014); Kong (2013); Hiippala (2013)
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- The database
  - 76 posters from Hong Kong and the New York City retrieved from websites within the period from May 2012 to May 2014

- Methodology
  - Analytical framework
    - Systemic functional (social semiotic) theory (Halliday, 1978; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014)
    - Visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006)
    - The GeM model (Bateman, 2008)
Methodology

- **from above**
  - Contextual parameters
  - Pan-semiotic meaning potential (Christian, forthcoming)

- **from roundabout**
  - Semantic parameters
  - Rhetorical-relational structure (RST)

- **from below**
  - Lexicogrammatical parameters
  - Semiotic systems (language + visual grammar)
Methodology ctd

- How meanings are apportioned to different semiotic resources — the complementarity of realization across semiotic resources.

- The corpora will be compiled by applying the GeM model (Bateman, 2008) and its XML-based schema.
  → annotate the base units & rhetorical organisation

- How the general health-related information is constructed in lexicogrammar parameter through language and images.
  → carriers of information & art of persuasion
Multimodal corpora

No 27 of the NYC corpus
Poster for ‘Know More Hepatitis’ campaign (It targets the baby boomer generation and reminds people that 1 in 30 Americans born from 1945 to 1965 has Hepatitis C.)

Title: BORN FROM 1945 to 1965?

6 separate photos put together in an interesting combination to show the iconic years (picture montage)

Text: BABY BOOMERS HAVE THE HIGHEST RATES OF HEPATITIS C.
Talk to your doctor about getting tested.
Early detection can save lives.

QR code
Logo for HHS and CDC
Website info
Logo for ‘Know More Hepatitis’ campaign
Publication No.
1. the Beatles band (John, Paul, George and Ringo) landed at JFK airport in the NYC, 1964


3. Martin Luther King (1929 – 1968), iconic preacher who spearheaded the civil rights movement in the US


5. The Brady Bunch, an American sitcom aired from 1969 to 1974 on ABC

6. Woodstock Music Festival, held at Yasgur’s farm, Woodstock NY, 1969. (a typical example of the hippie culture)
XML file of the base units (No 27 of the NYC corpus)

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<gemBase>
  <unit id="u-27.01">BORN FROM 1945 TO 1965?</unit>
  <unit id="u-27.02" alt="Photo: The Beatles band"/>
  <unit id="u-27.03" alt="Photo: Alan Alda"/>
  <unit id="u-27.04" alt="Photo: Martin Luther King"/>
  <unit id="u-27.05" alt="Photo: Neil Armstrong"/>
  <unit id="u-27.06" alt="Photo: The Brady Bunch"/>
  <unit id="u-27.07" alt="Photo: Woodstock Music Festival"/>
  <unit id="u-27.08">
    BABY BOOMERS HAVE THE HIGHEST RATES OF
    <unit id="u-27.08.1">HEPATITIS C</unit>
  </unit>
  ...
  <unit id="u-27.09">Talk to your doctor about getting tested.</unit>
  <unit id="u-27.10">Early detection can save lives.</unit>
  <unit id="u-27.11" alt="QR code"/>
  <unit id="u-27.12">www.cdc.gov/knowmorehepatitis</unit>
  <unit id="u-27.13" alt="Logo: HHS and CDC"/>
  <unit id="u-27.14" alt="Logo: Know More Hepatitis campaign"/>
  <unit id="u-27.15">Publication No. 221235</unit>
</gemBase>
```
RST diagram

motivation

identification

enablement

motivation

elaboration

circumstance
Thank you for your attention!