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1

Introduction. *The World Told and the World Shown: Multisemiotic Issues*

Eija Ventola and Arsenio Jesús Moya Guijarro

This collection of papers represents the research of scholars working within different contexts, sub-disciplines and languages in different parts of the world, while sharing the frameworks of systemic functional linguistics and visual semiotics. The volume is concerned with the development of multi-modal, or rather multisemiotic, meaning-making theory, and it enhances the ways of multisemiotic analysis of texts and visuals in today's media-oriented world, hence the title of the book, *The World Told and the World Shown: Multisemiotic Issues*. It draws the attention of linguists and students alike to the fact that language rarely stands alone in written and spoken discourses, that is, mono-modally, and that we urgently need to sharpen our tools in analysing discourses multisemiotically. We cannot continue analysing language alone, but need an integrated multisemiotic approach, and the volume shows various ways of analysis within such an approach, which will be conducted on multisemiotically realized discourses.

The principal aim of the volume is to point out the ways in which spoken and written discourses combine with other modes, simultaneously making use of the multiple resources of different semiotic systems as they are subsequently created and consumed. The chapters discuss the relationship between the discourses that 'tell' and visuals (either still or moving, like film) that 'show'. The viewpoint that all the various modes specialize in the transmission of particular meanings is shared by all of the writers of the volume, and their understanding of the way discourses work in today's world is a semiosis of such varied modes. Discourses in our modern societies always make use of the various resources of semiotic systems, and the following chapters show how we can interpret what people say and do by means of words and images.

The innovative component of this book in comparison to those existing in the field is the application of current multisemiotic theories to a great variety of genres: picture books, billboards, cartoons, advertising, web games,

science documentaries, poetry, etc. The volume begins with chapters that take the theorizing of the text/discourse-visualization a step beyond current frameworks. The book, which is divided into five sections, highlights the importance of cultural and social aspects in the configuration of language and visualizations as well as their uses in the community.

The first Part, *Multimodal Theories: Coding the Visual*, contains five chapters that represent multimodal views in systemic functional linguistics, cognitive linguistics and social semiotics. They focus on some relevant expansions of current multimodal theories from their own perspectives which, for the reader, are complementary approaches. The concepts introduced are, for example, the cline of integration of telling and showing, multimodal cohesion, metonymy, multimodal issues in representations of humour, semiotic metaphor and resemiotization. They challenge current views and encourage the theoretical and analytical experimentation which can break conventional boundaries of research on multisemiotics.

Part I begins with **Chapter 2** by Christian Matthiessen, *Multisemiosis and Context-Based Register Typology: Registerial Variation in the Complementarity of Semiotic Systems*. Matthiessen discusses some essential aspects of multisemiotic systems operating together in the same context. He explores these systems in terms of a typology of systems of different orders – physical, biological, social and semiotic systems, and he proposes ‘a cline of integration’ for different semiotic systems. He argues that at one pole of this cline, different semiotic systems are in fact integrated within one and the same semiotic system and gives the integration of ‘melody’ into language in the form of intonation as an example. However, as we move towards the other pole of the cline of semiotic integration, he claims, we find semiotic systems that are increasingly distinct and separate from one another. Thus, it is necessary to account for these distinct and separate systems that, nevertheless, operate together to create meaning in a mutually supportive way. This involves exploring the context in which they are coordinated. He illustrates the operation of parameters set out to study context – in particular, Mode and Field. He shows the value of investigating cooperation of multisemiotic systems, especially when some meanings are ‘at risk’ within a register that operates in a particular kind of context.

Chapter 3, *Developing Multimodal Texture*, by Martin Thomas, first shows how the theory of systemic functional linguistics has been adapted by semioticians, and how the theoretical multisemiotic tools have been expanded to cover such systems as information value, salience and framing. By looking at designs of packages that come from three distinct locales, China, Taiwan and the United Kingdom, he is able to point out the necessity of developing the theory to begin to account for multimodal texture as well. In those cases in which the systems of framing and salience proposed by the grammar of visual design are not sufficient to account for the texture of multimodal

messages, the field of typography (modulation and segmentation) provides us with further tools allowing the creation of multimodal cohesion.

In **Chapter 4**, *Metonymy in Visual and Audiovisual Discourse*, Charles Forceville's starting point is a cognitivist-oriented approach to an originally literary concept, the metaphor, which, as he points out, has traditionally been considered a matter of language. Now it is a common assumption of cognitivist linguists that other tropes besides the metaphor are worthy of their attention, particularly of metonymy, although research has still strongly focused on verbal aspects of the manifestations of metonymy. However, Forceville argues that, like the metaphor, metonymy is a conceptual phenomenon rather than a verbal one, and it should also appear in sign systems other than language. In this chapter, he formulates parameters that can help us guide further research into non-verbal and multimodal metonymy. To support his claims, Forceville analyses a number of pictorial and multimodal metonyms in advertisements and film to show that cultural knowledge and narrative context turn out to be essential in the construction of the metonymy and its interpretation.

In **Chapter 5**, *What Makes Us Laugh? Verbo-Visual Humour in Newspaper Cartoons*, Elisabeth El Refaie outlines the three main approaches to humour: superiority theory, incongruity theory and release theory. She attempts to formulate an integrated approach to what is told and what is shown in cartoons in British newspapers. The chapter develops ways of understanding humour and the creative mechanisms and social functions of laughter and ridicule. Earlier approaches have focused on verbal humour only, jokes in particular, and they have ignored the important role of visuals, music, sound and voice in many cases of humour. The chapter develops ways of theorizing and analysing multisemiotic humorous texts and emphasizes the importance of perceived intentionality, cultural knowledge and the shared common ground in understanding humour in cartoons.

In the last chapter of this section, **Chapter 6**, *Citizenship and Semiotics: Towards a Multimodal Analysis of Representations of the Relationships between the State and the Citizen*, Giulio Pagani examines the discursive construction of states and citizens by considering the meanings of the multisemiotic texts made publicly available. He proposes a systemic functionally based model for analysing multisemiotic meaning-making resources. His chapter focuses on the semiotic potential of discourses in public sector service provision. Complementing the cognitive perspective discussed by Forceville in the previous chapter, he demonstrates how a combined analysis of register, semiotic metaphor and 'resemiotization' can be used to track meaning-making and interaction across a range of modes. He shows how the critical investigation of multimodal discourse resources is a valuable and worthwhile task for analysing how states and citizens shape their expectations of each other.

Part II, Children's Narratives and Multisemiotics, includes two chapters that cover the interaction between the verbal and the visual in children's narrative picture books. The meaning potential of such tales can only be fully revealed by detailed multimodal analyses – they show how what is told and what is shown complement and enhance one another. Using and adapting earlier frameworks on visual design and functional linguistics, the authors in this section highlight the ways in which the intersemiotic interaction of verbal and non-verbal modes contribute to the process of constructing meanings in picture books, written for both native and non-native young second language readers.

In **Chapter 7**, *On Interaction of Image and Verbal Text in a Picture Book. A Multimodal and Systemic Functional Study*, Arsenio Jesús Moya Guijarro and María Jesús Pinar Sanz analyse the co-deployment and interaction of verbal and visual elements in *Guess How Much I Love You*, a children's narrative for six-year-olds and under. The study reveals an essentially symmetrical/complementary creation of meaning at both the visual and verbal levels. As the narrative is intended for young children, no cases of contradictory or counterpointing interactions have been identified; rather, the visual and verbal components seem to reinforce each other and fulfil complementary roles in the meaning-making process.

In **Chapter 8**, *The Text-Image Matching: One Story, Two Textualizations*, María Cristina Astorga analyses the interaction of text and image within the context of EFL/L2-learning. The author compares two different versions of the same story intended for young readers whose mother tongue is English and for those learning English as a foreign or second language. This comparative analysis focuses simultaneously on both modes – the told and the shown – in order to determine to what extent these two versions may or may not share a resemblance. Using the grammar of visual design, the author captures the essential experiential meanings of the stories as they are communicated by both language and images, and shows how links between the processes, participants and circumstances are realized both linguistically and visually. The findings from the study suggest that in order to enhance the teaching of the visualized stories, EFL/L2-teachers need to learn to reread picture books in new ways which involve the ability to uncover relationships of meanings between language and image.

Part III, *Text and Visual Interaction in Advertising and Marketing*, brings together three papers that discuss and theorize how texts and visuals interact in advertising and marketing discourses. The advertising examples discussed in the chapters vary in their dealing with traditional paper format, TV-film and Internet modes. They share the common problem of sequencing in advertising and how to deal with this in respective modes. Simultaneously, perspectives are given on how luxury advertising is intermingled in media print and how corporate and product advertising is realized in television and pop-up advertisements on the Internet.

In **Chapter 9**, *Sequential Visual Discourse Frames*, Kay O'Halloran and Victor Lim Fei explore questions such as: What are the systems that operate in the visual mode? and How are meanings produced through sequential visual discourses? Understanding the systemic operations of visual modality is empowering as it enables the design of advertising visuals that are communicatively and ideologically effective. But at the same time, to balance this out, the consumers need to develop their critical reading abilities of these advertising texts. The chapter focuses on developing new possibilities for research on designing and reading visual discourses by considering the applications and limitations of the intersemiosis between language and images; and thus demonstrating these in practice with the analysis of a sequence of visual text in a themed Cartier paper advertisement.

In **Chapter 10**, *A Systemic Functional Framework for the Analysis of Corporate Television Advertisements*, Sabine Tan shows how semiotic modes and resources combine in complex ways in corporate television advertisements. In order to enhance our understanding of these semiotic modes and their resources, this chapter proposes an integrative systemic functional multisemiotic framework for exploring the meaning potentials that are conveyed through the processes of intra- and intersemiosis in a dynamic multimodal text. It examines the multimodal meaning-making mechanisms that operate in a corporate television advertisement for an international financial institution and discusses the methodological aspects of selection criteria for the segmentation of dynamic text into appropriate constituent levels. It concludes by evaluating the semiotic approach and industrial practices in the analyses of corporate television advertisements.

In **Chapter 11**, *Multisemiotic Marketing and Advertising: Globalization versus Localization and the Media*, Anna Hopearuoho and Eija Ventola discuss the need to localize global product marketing on the Internet and the consequential multisemiotic realizational differences of global product ads for local contexts. The chapter shows how a number of advertising agencies in a local market see the 'localization processes' and then exemplifies some of the multimodal strategies used for globalization and localization of products in Internet marketing advertising. The analysis and results generated show that there is a growing need in this field to train interdisciplinary experts able to design such advertisements while being linguistically and semiotically sensitive to the localization needs of the global market. Hopearuoho and Ventola highlight the fact that local contexts may demand totally different linguistic and other semiotic realizations both in traditional and current means of advertising through the use of the new medium, the Internet (i.e. local languages are used for advertising, and certain cultural semiotic realizations are also highlighted in the ads).

Part IV, *Multisemiotics in Enacted Roles and Virtual Identities*, discusses the use of multisemiotic resources in an enactment of real and virtual identities. Here the focus is first on how verbal and visual modes complement

each other in a television documentary series and thus lead viewers to interact with TV presenters and experts in the field of geology. The second focus is on the interactions that are created in a virtual world. The chapters together show how we construe our own world multimodally by the enactment of our communicative roles through various semiotic modes.

In **Chapter 12**, *Taking the Viewer into the Field: Interaction between Verbal and Visual Representation in a Television Earth Sciences Documentary*, Alison Love discusses the verbal and visual strategies that are used in popularizing science in a television documentary series, *Earth Story*, screened by the BBC in 1998 (DVD 2006). The series sets out to answer questions about the formation of the Earth, plus the forces that have changed it over time. The chapter examines the ways in which the presenters use the verbal and visual modes transporting viewers into the field of geology – literally – through showing the places geologists go and the features they examine while, more metaphorically, introducing viewers to the principles and methods of ‘doing geology’. It shows how the two modes of representation, sometimes assisted by the musical mode, complement each other to lead viewers to share and enjoy an experience as a geologist.

In **Chapter 13**, *Developing the Metafunctional Framework for Analysing Multimodal Hypertextual Identity Construction*, Arianna Maiorani focuses on the fact that thousands of players all over the world, from a wide range of ages and social backgrounds, are today attracted to the virtual world and the adventures offered by online games. The chapter analyses the roles and identity construction from one type of the Massively Multiuser Online Role Player Games (MMORPG). Multimodal hyper-discourse is created as a result of playing the game when one enters the discourse generated by the virtual community of players. To do so, the player has to become a visually active, interactive and creative participant. This process is social, which therefore implies interaction and communication. The identity that a player/participant takes on in order to participate in the hyper-discourse of the game is a social construction that is created as a response to the hyper-social context of the game and to his/her own social context. The chapter also tests the ability of the Hallidayan metafunctional framework and its meaning categories to capture these kinds of worlds, hyper-social multisemiotic discourse activities and identities that the game generates through the use of visual and verbal/audio resources.

The last section of the book, **Part V**, *Integrating Text, Visual and Space Multimodally*, is concerned with the integration of text, visuals and space, as well as the development and use of multimodal resources in meaning-making contexts. The first chapter in this section gives us an interesting view on how Western museums have developed over time and through different stages into places of telling and showing, and even today into multimodal places of entertainment. The second chapter in this section discusses how a piece of literature, such as a poem, is visualized in a culturally

significant way as a mural, thus completing the discourse of 'the world told and the world shown' in this volume.

Chapter 14, *From Musing to Amusing: Semogenesis and Western Museums*, by Maree Stenglin, applies social semiotic tools to illuminate the ideology of Western museums in two seminal moments of their evolution as cultural and multisemiotic institutions: the emergence of the public museum in the eighteenth century, and the evolution of the hybrid museum of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Stenglin uses the model of social context, developed in systemic functional linguistics and the notion of semogenesis, that is, the ways in which meanings unfold over time, to show how the ideology of telling and showing in exhibition spaces has been construed in concrete moments. In particular, semogenesis is conceived as projecting both stratified planes of social context: context of situation (register) and context of culture (genre). This relationship of projection is an important one as it enables social semioticians to systematically explore multisemiotic meanings from the perspective of social change.

Finally, in **Chapter 15**, *Floods and Fidget Wheels: A Comparative Systemic Functional Analysis of Slessor's 'Five Bells' and Olsen's 'Salute to Five Bells'*, Kathryn Tuckwell discusses multisemiotic isomorphism between a poem and a mural – two very distinct forms of art: the former 'tells' and the latter 'shows'. The poem 'Five Bells' is very evocative of Sydney Harbour and is written by the Australian modernist poet Kenneth Slessor who lived most of his life near Sydney Harbour and drew his inspiration for the poem from it. The mural is John Olsen's 'Salute to Five Bells', and it pays homage to the poet, the poem and the poem's images of the Harbour. It was commissioned from Olsen in 1971, the year Slessor died and the famous Sydney Opera House was still being built on a small peninsula, surrounded on three sides by the Harbour. The study of the comparison of the poem and the mural demonstrates how multisemiotic systemic functional analyses can improve our comprehension of how verbal and visual systems operate in meaning-making. The isomorphism between different semiotic systems gives us evidence that meaning-making has an inherent and universal structure, which is used by everyone who makes meaning, regardless of their form of expression – not just artists, writers and musicians, but everyone who uses language and other modes of meaning-making.

Human communication and experience has throughout ages been recorded through writing systems of languages and images (sometimes as parts of writing systems). Recording speech and action changed the description of human experience when gramophones, tape recorders, film/video cameras, computers and Internet were developed in the previous century. The challenge for this century is to develop tools to capture the complexity of this new world of discourses as integrated multisemiotic realizations of human communication and experience. The chapters in this volume are a step towards developing ways of the intersemiosis of multimodal

meaning-making. The contributors have not only argued for the necessity of studying contextual meanings in both verbal and non-verbal manifestations in different genres, but they have also sought ways and solutions for analyzing such multimodal communicative artefacts as product packaging, film and TV, cartoons, picture books, games, advertising in magazines, on TV and in Internet, even public transport, museums and works of art in order to see how the integration of modes works and what we can learn from it. The authors in this volume are concerned with the effects and implications of multisemiotic integrations and call for further research in understanding our social realities in the integrated multisemiotic global world. Their work points out that Multisemiotics seems to be an appropriate discipline to deal with the complex communicative manifestations of the world we live in now.

We, as editors, hope that the readers will find their immersion into *'The World Told and the Word Shown: Multisemiotic Issues'* a rewarding experience and we hope that the discussions in this volume will entice them to participate and contribute to the exploration to this exciting area of Multisemiotics.

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