

Multimodal Cohesion in Online Newspaper Articles about Migration

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Research in multimodality has grown over the past few years, surely also due to visual elements becoming more important in our society ('pictorial turn') and due to digital resources blending previously separated media (e.g. videos and audio files are now commonly embedded in news webpages). Thus, multimodality has also become an interesting field for linguists. However, multimodal critical discourse analysis as well as research combining multimodality, (critical) discourse analysis and corpus linguistics are still rare (Bednarek & Caple 2017; Yalaz & Zapata-Barrero 2018). At the same time, cohesion, i.e. grammatical and lexical links, has played a minor role in the analysis of multimodal discourse, although semantic links, i.e. coherence, have been addressed by many researchers, based mostly on Halliday and Hasan (e.g. Liu and O'Halloran 2009; Subrayan Michael et al. 2013; Crane 2016). Research on cohesion investigating a larger multimodal corpus of newspapers is still missing.

Based on contributions from Machin & Mayr (2012), Caple (2013), and Bateman (2014), the paper intends to examine cohesion in online newspapers articles about migration. In particular, it investigates grammatical and lexical links between image(s) and text (headline, caption, body of an article). To do so, a corpus of online newspaper articles dealing with migration in a wide sense (e.g. immigration, emigration, refugees) has been compiled. The corpus consists of quality newspapers from three English-speaking countries (UK, USA and Australia). It comprises about half a million words and includes over 1,300 images.

The paper will discuss the types of cohesive links occurring most frequently as well as the implications these links carry for the representation of migrants. Additionally, corpus linguistic and qualitative findings will be used to embed multimodal cohesion occurring in these articles in a context.

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