

Review

Martínez Lirola, M. (ed). 2013. *Discourses on Immigration in Times of Economic Crisis: A Critical Perspective*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

At the historical moment when the volume edited by M. Martínez Lirola is designed and later on published, its merits seem self-explanatory. More than ever, the subject matter dealt with in *Discourses on Immigration in Times of Economic Crisis: A Critical Perspective* is undeniably relevant in the four contexts where it is examined (i.e. Spain, the US, Britain and Central Europe). In a time of crisis, migration is portrayed as a problem, and moreover, as a threat to the countries welcoming migrants, who are said to constitute the out-group, in Edward Said's (1978) words, "the Other", a collective which the in-group will find to play the role of the perfect scapegoat. Furthermore, the different approaches from which this volume addresses its study prove that multidisciplinary is a very potent analytical tool to comprehend the particularity of various social practices, and to make sense of the complex nature of discourse functioning (see Weiss and Wodak 2003). Finally, there is no doubt that, having changed the landscape of ideologies and priorities in less than a decade, the economic factor generating this research (i.e. the financial collapse that has reshaped human relationships in the twentieth century) encourages scholarly work on one issue of paramount importance in Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2003, Wodak and Chilton 2005, Wodak and Meyer 2006): The prejudiced representations of minorities, as especially privileged in the media and the public arena, tend to lead to asymmetry and inequality, and, consequently, to victimisation, racism and xenophobic discourse (see van der Valk 2000, van Dijk 2000, Wodak and van Dijk 2000, Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Gabrielatos and Baker 2008, KhosraviNik 2009).

This is not the first time that the editor herself delves deeply into the portrayal of immigrants in all sorts of multimodal texts (see Martínez Lirola 2006); nonetheless, so far this book is definitely one of the few on the market where scholars from different universities all over the world, with very diverse backgrounds but similar agendas,

Hidalgo Tenorio, Encarnación. 2014. "Review." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 13(1):148-54.

tackle the matter of migration from what comes to be complementary perspectives (e.g. sociology, communication, anthropology, linguistics, etc.). In the eleven chapters this volume consists of there is room, as well, for especially influential theoretical models such as conceptual metaphor analysis, for example, and for other topics with which the main one is intertwined. Henceforth, I will outline its main contents and justify the reasons why it is worthwhile both reading and using it as a resource in the university teaching context, as well as for research purposes.

Some of the papers show the findings of comparative studies, as in the case of Martínez Lirola's, who analyses both the linguistic and the visual components in a collection of articles from several Spanish newspapers with different readerships (i.e. Spaniards and Latinos). The author's familiarity with Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2001) canonical multimodal theory leads to a very convincing application of this model, although some other views which contradict it in some respects, such as Forceville's (1996) visual metaphor theory, would have been welcomed. Lirola's approach to this type of materials results in an excellent prototypically qualitative study that could have accommodated data revealed by corpus-based research methods with a quantitative bent.

The chapter by J. Retis provides detailed data about a phenomenon which seems to have similar sociodemographic patterns in the USA and Spain: The perception of women as construed in the discriminatory discourse of the host country's media can be justified on the grounds of misunderstanding and biased imagery. The members of the out-group under analysis, which is claimed to be treated homogeneously, and misrepresented or underrepresented most often in connection with criminality and domestic violence, are invisible because of their class, race and gender; this is a fact which encourages exclusion, victimisation and patronising attitudes in an area that needs more corpus-informed research. The comparative nature of this paper allows for extrapolation.

I. Alonso Belmonte, D. Chornet and A. McCabe write on user commentary regarding racial issues in the digital edition of Spanish broadsheet *El País*. Bearing in mind the authors' main hypothesis about how the financial crisis has caused immigrant scapegoating in the media, in their examination of the reactions to one news article

reporting immigrants' access denied to nightclubs in Madrid, they aim for a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis using Atlas.ti 6.0. Although attention to more texts and statistical treatment of the findings would improve this paper, the detailed description of the methodology itself, which facilitates replicability, makes it a notable contribution to the field, especially given the dearth of studies where race relations with ethnic groups are understood in terms of Spaniards' racial identity as "white". The discourse of normalcy vs. otherness comes to the fore along with the notion of xeno-racism.

In "The Treatment of Immigrants in the Current Spanish and British Right-wing Press: A Cross-linguistic Study", E. Crespo-Fernández combines CDA and the conceptual metaphor framework as theoretical paradigms. Aware of the limitations of the paper due to the time span and the relative small amount of data, the author carries out a mainly qualitative analysis with a clear explanation of the findings and the research process. The analysis of X-phemism (i.e. ortho-phemism, euphemism and dysphemism) as a means for verbal manipulation point to interesting conclusions concerning the newspapers under analysis: (1) *El Mundo* prefers euphemistic lexical items in comparison with *The Daily Telegraph*, which opts for both euphemism and dysphemism alike; (2) the British press shows a greater tendency for a negative representation of immigrants, by comparison with the Spanish, which is more balanced in this respect; (3) the criminalisation of this group can result in public outrage.

The research hypothesis of Chapter 5, by A. Bañón Hernández, S. Requena Romero and E. González Cortés, is that immigrants' alleged abuse of the national health system may have its reflection on discourse. Although the authors analyse the comments sections of some online Spanish newspapers together with a limited number of items taken from an audiovisual corpus we cannot have access to, as well as their failure to proceed systematically, the paper's interest lies in the very topic itself. This encourages the reader to disentangle the particular strategies of elite discourse on immigration and its power to produce the negative and patronising evaluation of a group that the media generally associate with fraud.

The paper by F.J. García Castaño, A. Olmos Alcaraz and M. Rubio Gómez revolves around the positive and negative sides of diversity, and discusses the Spanish media's depiction of immigrant

students, especially Muslims, in the education system through contradictory discourses that tend to cause social alarm. Despite its clear exposition of the aims, this chapter lacks in a more detailed presentation of the methodology adopted and the materials analysed. Nonetheless, its focus on image and text analysis as a means for the naturalisation of racialization is a plus in a paper where difference and segregation, and thereby, stereotyping, cultural essentialism and problematisation are taken to go hand in hand.

Chapter 7 deals with a different type of corpus which comprises the messages put forward by the two main Spanish political parties in the election campaigns from 2000 onwards. F. Checa Olmos, J.C. Checa Olmos and A. Arjona Garrido examine the role played by these organisations in shaping the phenomenon of immigration through their platforms so that they can compare and finally draw conclusions about their supposedly dissimilar ideological premises. Agenda-setting theory is the theoretical framework that assists them very well in explaining how social perceptions lead to hostility and discrimination. The coda of the paper is socially promising: Some policies are being carried out to change things in order to encourage integration.

There is a change in the geopolitical focus of the paper by Jan Chovanec. The object of investigation is the Czech Republic's immigrants and internal outsiders such as the Roma, who embody the interconnection between delinquency and ethnic stereotyping. For the analysis of the representation of social actors in crime reports, the author relies on the main tenets of the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak and her colleagues') and Socio-Cognitive Discourse Analysis (van Dijk's in the main). With a good description of the context and an appropriate application of the method, this chapter confirms and exemplifies the basic ideas presented in most papers in this volume: People belonging to a minority group, especially if ethnically diverse, are generally assessed in a negative light based on the prejudice originated in xenophobia.

N. Lorite García looks at the development of intercultural relationships in a period when blogs, free messaging, twitter or facebook have changed dramatically what communication means. The author studies the press coverage of a conflict roaring in Catalonia after the death of a young Muslim hiding from the police along with the media representation of immigrants during the 2011 municipal,

regional and national election campaigns. Some political speeches are also scrutinised by the author in an outstanding qualitative analysis, with a thorough delineation of the context. Although the findings would benefit from some statistics, they are already very interesting: (1) Newspapers may condemn racism but only in a defensive fashion; (2) the social impact of bad news happens to surpass that of good news such as the final reconciliation of the in-group and the out-group. Another merit of this paper is the final avenues for research mentioned (applied action research, multimodal methodology).

The team of the Migrations Institute at the University of Granada, formed by A. Granados Martínez, F.J. García Castaño, N. Kressova and L. Chovancova, is centered on the way in which racism and xenophobia can be combated in the public domain. The authors describe the measures taken by the EU in order to fight racism, with education and the media being key cornerstones, and make reference to all the projects by the government bodies designed to pinpoint and minimise the levels of discrimination in Spanish society. Although the country enjoys a rather advanced legal system and there exist well known guidelines journalists must follow to avoid discursive exclusion, the fact of the matter is that discriminatory patterns are still reproduced in the media, where the simplified perception of actors and phenomena facilitate the stereotyping of social practices, and as a consequence help to view migration as a problem. On the whole, this paper is well written and reports interesting findings concerning how figures can be used in a subjective way. However, a further developed analysis would have enriched its final output.

The research hypothesis of the last chapter by G. Rubio Carbonero is that the way politicians represent reality may have a bearing on society's behaviour and attitudes. For that reason, the paper focuses on Spanish parliamentary discourse concerning immigration from a CDA perspective. The analytical categories employed are mainly van Leeuwen's. Other aspects taken into account are presuppositions, implications, topoi, fallacies, metaphors and rhetorical structures. These help shed some light on the real nature of the discourses of pity, fear and threat in a type of text privileging an overall negative picture of the out-group. The excellent organisation of its contents and the clear explanation of ideas make this paper an excellent contribution which concludes that few changes have taken place after the crisis.

Due to the singularity of this edited volume, in the present review I have especially attracted the reader's attention to its strengths, which does not mean, however, that its few weaknesses have been ignored. As the reader will have noticed, the list of the former is countless: This international enterprise, with a prologue by eminent and prolific discourse analyst Teun van Dijk, produces research less known in the Spanish academic context; it encourages comparative analysis of the way in which the media reinforce the generation and distribution of stereotype-based attitudes; the papers altogether explore both verbal and non-verbal cues of different types of texts such as newspaper articles, news reports, opinion polls or political speeches; there is a fair balance between quantitative and qualitative methods; the volume itself suggests many other avenues for future research connected with the fields that each author works in.

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