



## **Book Reviews**

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*Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines*

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*Way, L.C.S., and S. Mckerrell (eds.) (2017). Music As Multimodal Discourse: Semiotics, Power and Protest. London/New York: Bloomsbury. 229 pages; ISBN: 9781474264426 (hbk); Price: £95 (hbk).*

This book brings together scholars working in different research areas (Cultural Studies, Discourse Studies, Ethnomusicology, Linguistics, Media and Communication Studies, English, Music Studies, Sociology) with the aim of renovating the approach to music and music studies. The very interesting and varied collection of essays proposed in this volume aims to project the study of music into the research areas of Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Social Semiotics, thus providing scholars and students who do not necessarily specialise in Music Studies with valid examples of critical approaches and models of analysis that will inspire them to integrate the study of music into their research work. On the other hand, it also provides scholars who specialise in Music Studies with new perspectives and approaches that will allow them to explore music as social discourse.

The editors and their contributors propose a new perspective on music as multimodal discourse, thus eliciting the re-visitation and revitalisation of Music Studies within a profoundly interdisciplinary and very lively epistemological domain. The editors also clearly address what they believe to be an epistemological gap: they state that Multimodal Discourse Analysis is currently not paying enough attention to the fundamental contribution that music provides to all contemporary meaning making practices. This book is therefore proposed as a step towards a more comprehensive research culture that builds connections between different research subjects and allows for more inclusivity and interdisciplinarity. In this sense, *Music As Multimodal Discourse* is also a fundamental contribution to the specific development discourse analysis as an interdisciplinary research area.

The general focus of all the chapters is the study of music as a meaning-making practice, music's communicative power and its capacity to encode and convey specific political ideologies, cultural beliefs and social constructs, especially in relation to the validation or critique of social hierarchy, to the

representation of social and political struggle and to community cultural values. Music is analysed in this varied collection of essays in its capacity to define the social architecture of specific contexts, in its power to shape fictional characters as well as symbolic agents in integration with other semiotic resources (especially lyrics and visual resources), in its complexity as a discourse element that inherently embodies also the technological advancement of an era and the material and experiential quality of instruments, players, recording and archiving supports and facilities.

The main strengths of this book are its original epistemological drive to innovate music studies and include music discourse analysis in a broader, interdisciplinary research area and the very interesting outcomes of the analyses carried out in each chapter. The former informs the whole volume like a *fil rouge*, an ideological position that is clearly shared by all contributors and solidly based on scientific reasons well explained and justified by the editors in their introductory chapter. The latter are a feature that each and every chapter shares, which accounts for the quality of the collection: from the social discrimination revealed in TV soundtracks by Göran Eriksson and David Machin to the class discrimination explored in a song by Morrissey by Aileen Dillane, Martin J. Power and Eoin Devereux; from the music recontextualization typology proposed by John E. Richardson to the subversive nature of the videos analysed by Lyndon C. S. Way and the sonic logos functionality explained by Theo van Leewen; from the semiotic interplay in advertising jingles discussed by Johnny Wingsted to the accusation of domestic violence analysed by Laura Filard-Llamas, the anti-colonial discourse of Guatemalan hip-hop investigated by Rusty Barrett and the input of sound recording techniques studied by Matthew Ord. Case studies include data from TV programme soundtracks, music and lyrics of popular songs, propaganda music, video music, and advertising music.

The book is generally informed by the theoretical background offered by Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1995, 2003; Wodak 2001), Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001; 2006; Machin 2007, 2013) and Social Semiotics (Kress 1989, 2010; Halliday 1978, 2004) but the approaches offered by the different chapters all develop specific analytical methodologies that draw on the expertise of each contributor. It will be particularly appealing for scholars working in the areas of Multimodal Discourse Analysis and Social Semiotics who are interested in including music discourse analysis in their research. It will also be of interest for scholars who are willing to develop interdisciplinary research on meaning making practices, especially those who have an interest in approaching Music Studies from an innovative, broader perspective.

Each chapter is made accessible to readers who are not necessarily experts in the specific field addressed by the author: this is a fundamental quality for a volume that openly aims at creating an interdisciplinary environment that includes scholars and topics who are traditionally restricted by obsolete academic subject boundaries. Graduate students in Humanities and Social Sciences (especially Literature, Critical Studies, Communication Studies, Linguistics, Music Studies, Sociology) will find in the essays collected in this book an original source of inspiration for interdisciplinary research projects involving the study of music as a social phenomenon, as well as guidance on

the possible application of ad-hoc analytical methodologies created for the case studies proposed by the authors. Undergraduate students in the same disciplines who are working on advanced-level assignments or on dissertation projects might also be interested in the case studies proposed by this volume.

The book definitely marks a first step in a very interesting research direction: one wishes that more musical genres will be included in the next steps, like classical, opera and ballet. Opening this new perspective to a more diverse range of musical text-types would encourage even further the development of music discourse analysis elicited by the editors and it would engage a wider community of scholars beyond the barriers between popular and 'elite' music.

*Music As Multimodal Discourse* takes the reader through a fascinating journey in the multimodal dimension of music as discourse, through its material and ideological purport and through its incredible power of integration with other models of discourse. It is a reading that addresses academic boundaries that have no more reason to exist. It is also very much a creature of this time: it will appeal to generations of scholars and students who live by now in a world where music is a fundamental feature of almost all forms of daily communication, from the music they download on their many electronic devices to the ringtone they choose for their smartphones.

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Musolff, A. (2016). *Political Metaphor Analysis: Discourse and Scenarios*. London: Bloomsbury. 208 pages; ISBN: 9781441160669 (pbk); Price: £27.99 (pbk).

Ever since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) seminal *Metaphors We Live By*, it has become an axiom of researchers in the field that metaphor is much more than a feature of language, but also of cognition. The close relationship between metaphor and thought mean that it has been studied extensively by Critical Discourse Analysts (CDA) as a constituting feature of ideologies (important contributions include Charteris-Black 2004; Koller 2005; Lakoff 2002). Indeed, as Wodak (2006: 180-1) suggests, most of the cognitive linguistic work in CDA has tended to focus on conceptual metaphor to the exclusion of other frameworks, such as Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 2008), Cognitive Semantics (Talmy 2000), or Text World Theory (Gavins 2007; Werth 1999, although, see for example, Cap 2013; Chilton 2004; Hart 2014). One of the great achievements of Musolff's *Political Metaphor Analysis*, then, is that it manages to be such an original and engaging contribution to an area of study that has – in a relatively short period of time – become very large indeed.

Whilst much of the cognitively-oriented research in CDA uses Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), this has often involved breaking with the biologically grounded, seemingly universalist claims made by, for example, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) (see for example, Koller 2005: 201). *Political Metaphor Analysis* provides a similar critique of CMT but goes further, challenging some of its central concepts and terminology. In CMT, metaphors are viewed as conceptual mappings between two domains of human experience – the source domain and the target domain. The source domain is a more concrete domain of experience that structures our understanding of the usually more abstract target domain. For instance, 'as children, we were very close', 'we grew further apart with age', and 'he often feels very distant', are examples of an underlying conceptual mapping from the source domain, SPACIAL RELATIONSHIPS, onto a more abstract target domain, SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. Musolff (2016: 23) refutes the claim that metaphors in discourse are necessarily the instantiation of pre-existing conceptual mappings between domains, writing that "metaphorical frame-building emerges in the discursive process rather than 'underlying' it *a priori* but once started, it can develop a dynamic of its own". The point, here, is that a speaker or writer actively constructs mappings between domains, choosing which aspects of source domain structure to map onto the target according to the communicative and – importantly for Musolff, political – exigencies of the discourse event (Stockwell 2002: 107, calls a similar process 'vehicle construction'). Thus, in addition to exploring the cognitive dimensions of metaphor in political discourse, the aim of *Political Metaphor Analysis* is to

provide an insight into the communicative function of political metaphors (Musolff 2016: 2).

To do so, Musolff marshals a variety of evidence from two metaphor-specific corpora. The first, the EUROMETA corpus (494,000 words), is a bilingual corpus of metaphors used in British and German political discourses about Europe. The second, BODYPOL (610,000 words), comprises body-based metaphors used in public media and political discourse in eight different languages (Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish). Musolff uses data from these corpora to argue that the notion of a ‘domain’ is too broad a category to be analytically useful in the analysis of metaphor in political discourse. For instance, in Chapter 3, he notes that although FAMILY metaphors are frequently employed in discussions of the European Union, politicians and journalists tend to choose only a narrow set of concepts from this domain, such as FAMILIAL SOLIDARITY, MARRIAGE PROBLEMS, and PARENT/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS, in the mappings they use to describe the relationships between EU institutions and member states. As Musolff (2016: 38) argues, ‘CMT’s view of metaphor as a cross-domain mapping does little to explain these choices’. Rather than elaborate extended mappings between source and target, then, Musolff (2016: 37-8) claims that ‘a salient characteristic of metaphor use in political discourse’ is the ‘highly economical use of source domain material’.

To account for this economy, Musolff suggests the metaphor ‘scenario’. He likens the concept of a scenario to a conceptual frame (c.f. Fillmore 1975). Whereas frames are “‘schematic’ conceptual ensembles that include a selection of domain elements and an action ‘script’... ‘Scenarios’ are a less schematic subtype of frame insofar as they contain specific narrative and evaluative perspectives” (Musolff 2016: 30). This yields three different kinds of conceptual structure operating on three different levels of abstraction:

- Domains: The most abstract conceptual structures that include the complex interconnected encyclopaedic knowledge relating to a particular aspect of human experience.
- Frames: More detailed conceptual structures which profile particular aspects of domain knowledge.
- Scenarios: More detailed still, profiling not only aspects of domain structure, but also organising the elements of that structure – the objects and entities it involves – into a narrative, including all the evaluations of those objects and entities such a narrative might entail.

Thus, we can speak of the domain of FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS, the frame of ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS, and the specific scenario of a SPURNED LOVER or a REJECTED SUITOR. The scenario, then, is the most ‘economical’ unit insofar as it only utilises a small portion of the encyclopaedic knowledge of the domain. After introducing the broader theoretical context in Chapters 1 and 2, Chapters 3-7 apply this framework to a variety of political contexts. The result is a discourse-oriented model of metaphor which coheres much more readily with the social-constructivist assumptions of CDA.

Throughout the book, Musolff subjects what he calls the ‘therapeutic’ role of the critical metaphor analyst to scrutiny. He suggests that in the traditional

CMT/CDA account, conceptual metaphors are automatically and unconsciously comprehended, and their metaphorical entailments uncritically accepted by the recipients of the metaphor (Musolff 2016: 41). He writes (2016: 41):

However, it is arguably better for a political metaphor to be hotly debated and criticized than to be simply uncritically accepted: the more it is disputed and reinterpreted, the more salient will it become in the public sphere and the longer will it stay 'alive' in it.

That political metaphor scenarios are produced in discourse has consequences for their salience to language users. In Chapter 4, in the discussion of the metaphor scenario, 'Britain at the heart of Europe', Musolff provides an example of how ideological metaphorical entailments are often contested in discourse. As he outlines (2016: 41),

a total of 147 of the 221 texts [using the metaphor], that is, more than 66 per cent, quote or explicitly allude to preceding speaker's utterances, and many of these quotations also include explicit interpretations and evaluations of the preceding uses.

Given these figures, Musolff's corpus of data clearly demonstrates that discourse participants do not passively accept the metaphors to which they are exposed. In fact, they can be quite vocal and creative in their opposition. Musolff amply illustrates the creativity involved in metaphor interpretation in Chapter 8. The chapter describes how participants from different cultures interpret the nation-state-as-body metaphor scenario described in Chapters 4 and 5. Given the emphasis on analysing metaphor in context throughout the book, the approach in this chapter is a little anomalous – participants of different nationalities were asked to apply the metaphor scenario to their own home nation in 5-6 sentences (Musolff 2016: 120), rather than interpret what somebody else might mean by this metaphor in a specific "real-life" context of use – but his results are nonetheless very interesting. Musolff found that there tend to be patterns in the way respondents utilise aspects of source domain structure in the metaphor scenarios they create. These patterns correlated with cultural background. For instance, Chinese participants tended to map body parts onto geographical places (for example, 'Beijing is the head'), whereas European participants tended to provide body part to political institution mappings ('the Queen is the head'). However, Musolff (2016: 131) also notes that these scenarios are

neither the only one[s] available nor [are they] exempt from reflexive or meta-linguistic comment and critique... the decision to accept, endorse and disseminate the whole metaphor scenario that it is embedded in, together with its ideological bias, is in the gift of the interpreter.

It seems to me that this is the most stimulating and provocative aspect of *Political Metaphor Analysis*. The concept of a metaphor scenario furnishes analysts with a theoretical framework not only for exploring how it is political metaphors change in discourse, but how audiences *resist* metaphor or co-opt and reconfigure existing metaphors for their own rhetorical or polemical purposes. It therefore has wider consequences for how critical metaphor

analysts – and I would argue, critical linguists in general – view audiences. Given that metaphor scenarios are the product of choices over what conceptual structure to utilise from the source domain, ‘the communicative, social and political responsibility for any action ensuing from political metaphors... lies with their users and interpreters’ (Musolff 2016: 139). In *Political Metaphor Analysis*, then, audiences are viewed as active discourse participants who bring their own preferred metaphor scenarios to the discourse event, in addition to those proffered by the speaker or writer. It is this break with more “traditional” CDA which makes the book such an engaging and provocative text. For this reason, I would recommend it not only to researchers of political discourse, but also to those who are interested in the persuasive power of metaphor in audience reception.

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