

Finally, the book has an important underlying theme in the form of a fundamental question Aitchison returns to many times: Why, she asks, have intellectuals and literary institutions been so eager to deny news the status of literature? And how does this cultural categorization of news affect our capacities to theorize about it? Although she offers no final answer, she urges us to take this question seriously, since the answer has consequences for how we read, think about and make use of news in our work and our everyday lives.

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Metaphor and Gesture. *Alan Cienki and Cornelia Müller*, eds. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2008. IX + 306 pp.

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This volume provides an excellent synopsis of current research in the convergent fields of cognitive linguistics and gesture studies. The robust collection of papers represents groundbreaking work on metaphor and gesture. Although the book reflects different approaches to the study of gesture, metaphor, and metaphoric gestures with respect to the types of data and the methodologies used to analyze them, most papers share the theoretical premises of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT). Most of the contributors to the volume, with some exceptions discussed below, see metaphor as a cognitive and semiotic phenomenon. In the view outlined in many papers, gestural data provide evidence of the psychological reality of conceptual metaphors, and of the embodied nature of human cognition.

The volume is organized in two parts. The first part comprises an introduction and nine papers that were presented at a session on metaphor and gesture at the Eighth International Conference in Cognitive Linguistics. The second part is a collection of short essays by scholars from different disciplines, commenting on the papers that form the first part of the volume and on the potential that studying metaphor and gesture could have for their respective fields.

The book begins with an excellent paper by Alan Cienki, which is very helpful for those readers who are acquainted only with metaphor or with gesture, but not with research that interrogates their interface. Cienki begins by giving some basic definitions about gesture, metaphoric gestures, and metaphoricity as a cognitive phenomenon grounded in embodied experience, within the theoretical framework of CMT (*Metaphors We Live By*, G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). He then discusses some of the questions and contributions that the study of gesture can make to the study of metaphor, and vice versa. Similarly, Genieve Calbris' paper is an example of the kind of contribution that gesture analysis can make to the study of abstract thought. Her methodology is based on the qualitative analysis of six televised interviews with Lionel Jospin, former prime minister of France. Calbris analyzes co-verbal gestures that occur along the transverse (left-right) axis, which she claims has four main symbolic-metaphoric values: a value axis, where negative ideas and low numbers are located to the left, and positive concepts and higher numbers are located to the right; a spatio-temporal axis, where the past is located to the left and the future is located to the right; a logico-temporal axis, where cause is located to the left, and effect is located to the right; and a symmetrical development axis, which represents an evolving process. Calbris claims that the symbolic values of the first three axes (value, spatio-temporal, and logico-temporal) are proprioceptively motivated by three other axes of physical progression: the vertical axis, as in direction of growth, the sagittal axis, as in direction of walking or movement, and the transverse axis, as in direction of reading and writing.

Robert Williams', Rafael Núñez's, and Irene Mittelberg's papers explore the metaphoric gestures that are produced in instructional contexts. Williams investigates the role of gesture as a conceptual tool in the discourse of an instructor delivering a time-telling lesson to first graders. He approaches instructional discourse as a multimodal activity, where instructors use a combination of speech, gesture, and objects in the background to express abstract and metaphoric concepts. Núñez's excellent paper addresses the question of whether embodied

cognition can explain one of the most abstract domains of human thinking: mathematics. He focuses on mathematicians' use of metaphoric dynamic language to refer to concepts that, by definition, are static, such as "a sum approaches" or "a function oscillates," as well as the gestures that co-occur with these types of sentences. Mittelberg applies Peircean semiotics to the analysis of gestures produced by linguistics professors when they are explaining grammatical concepts.

The next three papers are inspired by the McNeillian tradition of gesture studies. David McNeill introduces the notion of "unexpected metaphor." According to McNeill, expected metaphoric gestures are those in which the culture provides the imagery to complete the growth point of an utterance. Unexpected metaphoric gestures are spontaneous, idiosyncratic and unpredictable from a cultural perspective. They "arise from the need to create images when the culture does not have them readily at hand" (p. 157). McNeill claims that although unexpected metaphors may seem iconic at first, when examined in the context of the wider discourse they appear to be originated by metaphoric thinking. Drawing on McNeill's concepts of "growth point" and "catchment," and on Tuite's ("The production of gesture," *Semiotica*, 93, 1999:83–105) ideas about the kinesic organization of speech and gesture, Jacques Montredon et al. analyze Derrida's metaphoric gestures as he is explaining the notion of "deconstruction" to a lay audience during a televised interview. Fey Parril discusses the "presenting" gesture and tests experimentally whether it is indeed a metaphoric gesture or an emblem. She hypothesizes that the mental representation underlying the "presenting" gesture springs from the conceptual metaphor "Ideas Are Objects."

Cornelia Müller's paper addresses some characteristics of metaphoric thought that can be inferred from gestural data. By applying a qualitative, multimodal microanalysis to several stretches of discourse, Müller shows that metaphoricity is "modality independent," as it is present in speech, gesture, and verbo-gestural compounds. She also argues that metaphoricity is dynamic and gradual: it can decrease or increase and it can impregnate and structure speech and gesture over entire stretches of discourse. Müller's paper also offers some evidence that metaphoricity is activated by means of other general cognitive processes like foregrounding and attention.

The second part of the book begins with a paper by Ronald W. Langacker, who briefly comments on how the study of metaphoric gestures can be useful to the cognitive linguist. In line with most of the papers in the volume, Langacker points out that metaphoric gestures provide evidence for "the embodied nature of meaning and the grounding of abstract conceptions in perceptual and motor experience" (p. 249). Along the same lines, Jürgen Streeck argues that metaphoric gestures are best understood as "abstractive actions" of the hands, which reflect action patterns of the hands (such as grasping, opening, closing, etc.), habitual motor actions of the body, and prehensile postures (p. 263). Gestures therefore are proprioceptively motivated (he calls them "propriocepts") and schematize the interactions of our physical bodies with the physical world, allowing us to "experience our abstract communicative acts as concrete physical acts" (p. 264). The contributions of Naomi Quinn, Anders R. Hougaard, and Gitte R. Hougaard offer a different perspective. Quinn offers a culturalist critique to McNeill's notion of "unexpected metaphor" and brings some examples of how the analysis of metaphoric gestures can contribute to the cultural analysis of discourse on marriage. Hougaard and Hougaard also critique the idea of metaphor as an individual cognitive process, which is the prevalent view of the studies in the volume, and instead propose to overcome the dichotomy of "inner" and individual cognition versus "outer" or social processes of sense-making by embracing a theory of metaphor that encompasses both the social and the embodied and cognitive aspects of the online construction of meaning. Sherman Wilcox's essay addresses the role that cognitive linguistics research on gesture has played in signed language studies. Paul Bouissac's contribution provides an interesting counterpoint to Mittelberg's paper, since he also uses Peircean semiotics, but in this case to problematize the very notion of iconicity. The two final chapters are written respectively by George Lakoff and Raymond W. Gibbs. Lakoff presents a concise summary of what is known about metaphoric gestures from the perspective of neuroscience, and Gibbs concludes with some suggestions about the possible directions that research on metaphoric gesture could take in the future.

Overall, the volume is deeply rooted in CMT and in embodiment theory, and constitutes an indispensable tool for scholars working in this line of research. The downside to having most papers in the volume committed to this particular theoretical framework is that it does not allow for a truly cross-cultural analysis of the nature of metaphoric thinking and gesture. Although the role of culture in the production of metaphoric gesture and metaphoric thinking in general is acknowledged by some authors (Quinn, Bouissac, and Gibbs), it is downplayed by

others: "The readiness of the mind to generate metaphors without cultural guidance strongly reinforces the conclusion by Lakoff & Johnson and many others, that metaphoricity is an integral part of cognition" (McNeill, p. 166). However, the question of whether these kinds of metaphors are culturally generated is an open one, as Quinn piercingly observes in her commentary. A number of scholars, in fact, have argued that gesture is not necessarily anchored to a universal level of bodily experience, but rather it is mediated by cultural conventions (e.g., "Immanuel Kant among the Tenejapans: Anthropology as empirical philosophy." S. Levinson and P. Brown, *Ethos*, 22, 1994:3-41; "Cognitive consequences of spatial description in Guugu Yimithir," S. Levinson, *Linguistic Anthropology*, 7, 1997:98-131; "Semantic typology and spatial conceptualization," E. Pederson, E. Danziger, E. Wilkins, D. Levinson, S. Kita, & G. Senft, *Language*, 74, 1998:557-589; "Cultural specificity of spatial schemas, as manifested in spontaneous gestures," S. Kita, E. Danziger and C. Stolz, *Spatial schemas in abstract thought*, M. Gattis (ed.) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001). On the positive side, at least the information provided especially by Bouissac's and Quinn's papers suggest theoretical alternatives that depart from the kind of physiological determinism embraced by CMT.

Within its own theoretical framework, however, the book is a magnificent collection of papers, written in accessible language which makes it a tool equally useful for the general reader as well as for the specialist working on metaphor and gesture. In most of the papers in the first part of the book, methodologies are carefully described, and in some cases extensive appendices with coded data are provided. Another extra value that the gesture researcher will find in the volume is a number of suggestions and examples on how to code data. I strongly recommend this volume to linguistic anthropologists interested in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of language and thought.

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