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Dr. Zeinab Laleh Khosravi (Damghan University, Iran)

A Comparative Study on Two Major Schools of Naqqāli How does Naqqāli, as an Iranian Traditional Storytelling Style, develop through co-speech gestures?

This study conducts a comparative analysis of two major schools of "Naqqāli", a form of Iranian traditional storytelling where the performer narrates national epic tales using gestures and body movements. Previous research on Naqqāli has primarily focused on the verbal aspects of narration, often neglecting the rich gestural elements integral to oral storytelling. To address this gap, the research focuses on the visual data of two well-known contemporary Naqqāls, Master Torabi and Master Saeedi. They belong to the last generation of Naqqāl in Iran. Each Naqqal represents different schools of Naqqāli, making their performances valuable resource for studying the role of gestures.

The analysis centers on the second wrestling scene between Rustam and Sohrab, who are tragically unaware of their father-son bond. This study examines recorded performances by Torabi (2009) and Saeedi (2007), using Mueller's(2024) Multimodal Gesture Analysis(MGA) tools to explore the multimodal interactions in both styles. The research highlights the role of gesture in conceptualizing narrative and aims to contribute to broader study of Iranian gesture culture by investigating the diverse functions of gestures across different narrative levels.

Keywords:

Dr. Thomas Scherer (European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), Germany)

Manufacturing Communality? Audiovisual Appeals to 'the Common Good'

Audiovisual appeals in the name of 'the common good' are omnipresent in persuasive communication, ranging from advertisements for organ donation cards to election campaigns. However, 'the common good' is a purposely vague political concept, and each societal actor claims the prerogative to interpret this concept for themselves. This results in competing implicit notions of who makes up the communities thus addressed and which societal changes are needed. Audiovisual campaign videos offer multimodal understandings of who 'we' are as a community in order to persuade. This lecture deconstructs three common strategies for evoking communality in social and political advertising: appeals to shared feelings, evocations of shared historical imaginations, and the staging of temporally unbounded communities. Framing this approach to multimodal poetic community-building within Boltanski and Thévenot's theory on societal negotiation processes allows the analysis of audiovisual discourse formations. As an example, this lecture will discuss how campaign videos on the occasion of referendums on same-sex partnerships strategically constellate ideals of civic and domestic community.

Schuyler Laparle, PhD (Tilburg University, Netherlands)

Multifunctionality in gestural discourse markers

Gestural discourse markers (GDMs) are a subset of recurrent pragmatic gestures that convey stable discourse structural information across contexts (Laparle 2022). As with lexical discourse markers (LDMs), the meaning of GDMs can be difficult to pin down. To engage with this challenge, I focus on REMOVAL and STOPPING gestures (often grouped under the 'away' gesture family; Bressem & Muller 2014, 2017) which appear to convey both discourse structural (topic termination) and stance-taking (negative assessment) information. However, it is unclear whether this multifunctionality is inherent, incidental, or compositional. If it is inherent, then both the discourse structural and stance-taking information should always be conveyed. If the multifunctionality is incidental, then the gestures should be attributed a narrower meaning that happens to appear in contexts where the remaining meaning is

inferable (e.g. topics are often ended because they are negatively assessed, but this need not be the case). Finally, if the multifunctionality is compositional, then particular formal properties (e.g. hand shape or movement) should map to particular aspects of meaning (e.g. Fricke 2014). By comparing the function of REMOVAL and STOPPING gestures to that of frequently co-occurring LDMs, I will argue for the final compositional approach.

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17 December 2024

Emma Kusuoba Pedavoah (University of Ghana, Legon)

Metaphorising Corruption in Selected SONAs of the Fourth Republic of Ghana: A Discourse Dynamics to Metaphor Analysis and Cultural Model Approach

This study employs the discourse dynamics to metaphor model of Cameron (2010) and the cultural model approach of Sharifian (2003) as theoretical and analytical frameworks to investigate the (cultural) metaphorical conceptualisation of corruption as they occur in selected presidential speeches of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Corruption is often discussed as part of democratic political discourse.

The present study examined fifteen (15) State of the Nation Addresses (SONAs) delivered by the five (5) Ghanaian presidents of the Fourth Republic to identify linguistic choices, such as metaphors that were used to encode the cultural understanding of corruption in Ghana.

The analysis of the data revealed that corruption was metaphorically conceptualised (generally) as A FIGHT, A DISEASE, A CRIME, A LEGACY, and AN ENEMY while measures to solving corruption were metaphorically conceptualised as WAR. These

metaphors were systematically linked to the following cultural schemas/models in Ghana: THE NATION AS A FAMILY, POLITICAL LEADERS AS PARENTS (NOT BE CRITICISED PUBLICLY), GIFT-GIVING AS SHOW OF APPRECIATION and FAVOURITISM AS BUILDING FAMILY TIES. Using communicative strategies, the presidents challenge and negotiate attitudes towards corruption. This research contributes to theory by combining the discourse dynamics and cultural model approaches to studying metaphorical conceptualisation relating to corruption.

14 January 2025

Sandra Debreslioska, PhD (Lund University, Sweden)

Language, gestures and discourse: Insights from studies on German and German Sign Language

Gestures are considered to be part of language and to form a tightly integrated system together with speech. Thus, when engaging in talk, speakers use a combination of speech and gestures to get their messages across. But while speech is mostly obligatory in order to communicate information to an addressee, gestures are not. Rather, during a certain stretch of discourse, there are moments in which gestures are produced and others when they are not. For instance, in the context of a narrative, if speakers want to introduce a new entity into the story, they will necessarily have to mention the entity in speech by using a referring expression denoting it (e.g., 'there was <u>a cat</u>'). If they do not, the addressee will have no representation of the entity in question. When it comes to gestures on the other hand, this obligatoriness does not apply in the same way. Speakers have the possibility to but do not necessarily always accompany each mention of a discourse entity with a gesture.

In this talk, I highlight the role that discourse-pragmatic principles play for the incidence of gestures. Specifically, I focus on how speakers represent discourse referents multimodally (i.e., in speech and gesture), and show that speakers do not only vary how they refer to referents in speech as a function of the discourse context (e.g., by using fuller referring forms for new vs. leaner referring forms for given referents), but that they also vary the production of gestures (e.g., by accompanying referents with gestures vs. not). The findings of three different studies bring to light the multifunctionality of gestures, showing that they can have a parallel or complementary relationship to speech. They also suggest that gestures' discursive functions may differ across languages modalities (i.e., in spoken vs. signed languages). More

generally, the studies further our understanding of the close relationship between language and gestures, and advocate that gestures be considered in linguistic studies on discourse.

04 February 2025

Prof. Dr. Martin Luginbühl (University of Basel, Switzerland)

Medial shaping of war reporting: A comparison of European TV news shows covering Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Using the example of war reporting in television news from Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Switzerland on the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, the lecture will examine the extent to which the multimodal design (Wildfeuer et al. 2020) of the contributions of different programmes differs. A particular focus will be on the question of the extent to which entertaining reporting can also be observed in such events. In numerous media linguistic and media studies, entertainment is associated with light-heartedness, distraction and pleasure (e.g. Klein 1997, 1998, but also McQuail/Deuze 2020). However, many of the characteristics cited in these studies (e.g. emotional ‚closeness', suspense, spectacularity, pace, etc.) can also be related to events and forms of presentation that are serious, stressful or frightening (Burger/Luginbühl 2014, Wirth 2013). Entertainment is interpreted as a specific form of 'media shaping' (Luginbühl 2019).

After a brief localisation of television news within media and genre studies, an operationalisation of 'entertainment' follows, which does not necessarily focus on light-heartedness, but more generally sees the aim of evoking emotions as a constitutive feature of entertaining content and presentation methods. The focus is then on the detailed analysis of selected examples. Entertainment cues are analysed (in the form of 'text usefulness cues', Hausendorf et al. 2017), which are established with different modalities and their coordination in form of different gestalts, which can be related the journalistic cultures of different shows.

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