

A Comparative Study on Multimodal Metaphors in Public Service Advertising of China and Germany

Authors : Xing Lyu

Abstract : Multimodal metaphor promotes the further development and refinement of multimodal discourse study. Cultural aspects matter a lot not only in creating but also in comprehending multimodal metaphor. By analyzing the target domain and the source domain in 10 public service advertisements of China and Germany about environmental protection, this paper compares the source when the target is alike in each multimodal metaphor in order to seek similarities and differences across cultures. The findings are as follows: first, the multimodal metaphors center around three major topics: the earth crisis, consequences of environmental damage, and appeal for environmental protection; second, the multimodal metaphors mainly grounded in three universal conceptual metaphors which focused on high level is up; earth is mother and all lives are precious. However, there are five Chinese culture-specific multimodal metaphors which are not discovered in Germany ads: east is high level; a purposeful life is a journey; a nation is a person; good is clean, and water is mother. Since metaphors are excellent instruments on studying ideology, this study can be helpful on intercultural/cross-cultural communication.

Keywords : multimodal metaphor, cultural aspects, public service advertising, cross-cultural communication

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