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MULTIMODAL METAPHORS WITHIN COGNITIVE APPROACH IN ATHENIAN GRAFFITI DURING THE CRISIS

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Abstract

The aim of this study as a natural sequel of my MA thesis (Stampoulidis 2016) is to contribute in a unique way to the research of a current hot topic in cognitive semiotics: the multimodal metaphors in graffiti from a cognitive perspective. The street art activity on the city's walls as a linguistic and imagery phenomenon has already been approached in my MA thesis as the main symbolic mode of public expression generated by the recent crisis the last years.

Moving forward, the research on multimodal metaphors is one way to examine the cognitive grounding of graffiti artifacts, which still remains a new and rather underexplored area (Forceville: 2008b; Sonesson 1989). The study of multimodal metaphors in graffiti, in their diversity, is a booming sub-field of metaphors' study since graffiti is rich in them: graffiti language is a mysterious and sometimes obscure language since the graffitiists need a blurry but simultaneously effortless and comprehensible way to spread their messages to the passersby.

Consequently, the current project addresses the research question: How graffiti images are structured and how they are understood by the viewer. To address this research question annotated analysis of concept occurrences in different data bases of semantic information will be designed as long as we have experienced abstract concepts, such as fascism, freedom, morality, political corruption, slavery as a pre linguistic knowledge (Forceville: 2008b; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi: 2009). As seen, we do not have the same conceptual knowledge about how pictorial metaphors work in graffiti since these abstract concepts are understood by the human mind through metaphors (Sonesson 1989).

Thence, the second research question based on the cognitive perspective is how the abstract concepts are grounded in bodily experiences. To answer the second research question a classification of different kinds of metaphors (Forceville: 2008b) will be developed based on the existed corpus derived from my MA thesis.

Such analyses will shed light to the mappings that emerge from the alliance of two abstract concepts (the target and the source) in multimodal metaphors. The research findings will contribute to the understanding of multimodal metaphors through the prism of cognitive perspective using methodology of experimental semiotics, which provides reliable "third person" evidence to the project.

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