

Thinking Out of the Box

in English Linguistics,
Language Teaching,
Translation and Terminology



Proceedings of the XXIX AIA Conference

edited by
Katherine Ackerley, Erik Castello, Fiona Dalziel,
Sara Gesuato, Maria Teresa Musacchio
and Giuseppe Palumbo

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“Lexical verbs in a medical case-report wordlist”, in *ASIALEX* 4, pp. 39-62 (in collaboration with Philippa Mungra); (2016) “Metaphors in the mirror: the influence of teaching metaphors in a medical education programme”, in *CercleS* 6 (1), pp. 185-206.

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Smith Review, vol. 13, London: Routledge and Taylor Francis Book, pp. 285-302; (2022) "Migration Discourse and the New Socially Constructed Meanings of the English Lingua Franca", in P.C. Leotta (ed.), *Language Change and the New Millennium*, European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 18 (18), pp. 33-49, Offices: Spain and Macedonia; (2020) "Fascist Terminology in English Lexicography: Considerations from the Merriam-Webster Unabridged and the Oxford English Dictionary", in *Textus*, XXXIII, 1, H. Béjoint and S. Nuccorini (eds), pp. 145-163, Roma: Carocci Editore.

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*THE PROMOTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF MODERN AND
ANCIENT SEA-MIGRATIONS THROUGH MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE
HYBRIDIZATION AND ELF EXPERIENTIAL REFORMULATIONS*

Pietro Luigi Iaia
University of Salento

Lucia Errico

This chapter reports on the latest stage of a research project that is being carried out at the University of Salento. The project's main aim is the 'emotional promotion' of cross-cultural integration by creating multimodal compositions where images, sound and words interact so as to induce in viewers a re-evaluation of the reasons behind migrations, as well as a reconsideration of the common experiential schemata of ancient and modern sea-odysseys. This study focuses on a two-phase research activity involving tourists and migrants living alongside one another in seaside resorts in the Apulian district of Lecce. The analysis of Phase 1 explores the experiential reformulation strategies, through English, of a selected corpus of extracts from the first book of Virgil's *Aeneid*. The label 'experiential' means that the phonetic and verbal features of English in the retextualizations are selected by the authors of the reformulations to reproduce the sensations of fear, despair and hope that belong to the several phases of migrants' journeys. The description of Phase 2 details the audiovisual strategies of genre hybridization between the 'mockumentary' and 'journalistic interview' genres, which are activated to produce a video that is envisaged as a way to promote intercultural integration via social media. The multimodal analysis of the video illustrates the extent to which the association between images depicting migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea and the experiential retextualizations serve to achieve the communicative goals of attracting the viewers' attention and uncovering the actual nature of sea traveling.

Premotional discourse; migration; epic narratives; ELF subtitles; experiential reformulations

1. Introduction¹

This chapter reports on a case study of the multimodal representation of sea migrations from past and current times. This case study was implemented at the University of Salento within the context of a research project on Responsible Tourism (Prayag et al. 2013; Lin et al. 2014) which has benefited from the collaboration with the local administration of some local seaside resorts affected by mass arrivals of migrants, such as the town of Castro, in the Apulian province of Lecce. The research conducted so far has adopted a cognitive-pragmatic model of Experiential-Linguistics (Langacker 1991; Lakoff and Johnson 1999) and some strategies of Experiential Place Marketing (Jani and Han 2013), for the elaboration of a series of research and pedagogic activities (Guido et al. 2019), which are meant to raise the migrants and tourists' awareness of the shared sea-voyage experience reported in ancient and contemporary migration narratives. These activities focused on the Salento area due to its geographical position on the Southern Mediterranean coasts of Italy, and because of its reputation as a group of hospitable towns and resorts characterized by hybridization of languages and cultures. The main objective of the project is to promote multicultural integration for the potential users of Responsible Tourism, whose aim is "to create better places for people to live in and [...] to visit", and to contribute "to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and to the maintenance of the world's diversity" (<http://responsibletourismpartnership.org/>). Tourists are guided towards the evaluation of cross-cultural encounters as one of the advantages of their holidays. Additionally, in the course of this research, the initial aim has been expanded to investigate the possibility of showing the audiovisual texts that were produced by researchers, merging ancient and modern narrations, to a general audience – hence not only tourists – for the purpose of counteracting ideological or biased views about intercultural meetings. The methodology has mainly consisted in comparing ancient and modern sea-voyage narratives rendered in English as a *Lingua Franca* (ELF), in order to help the implied audience – mainly tourists, local communities and migrants – come to discover together their common 'identity roots' as seafaring travelers. The multimodal nature of the project is represented by the creation of four videos (Guido et al. 2016; Guido et al. 2018; Iaia and Errico 2018), where images of fictional and actual migrations alternate with Ethnopoetic reformulations (Hymes 2003) of non-Western migrants' traumatic accounts of sea journeys, as well as with Western epic narratives of Mediterranean dramatic voyages translated from Ancient Greek and Latin into English. The resulting unique multimodal composition

¹ The authors have contributed equally to the overall drafting of this chapter. Pietro Luigi Iaia is responsible for Sections 1, 2, 4 and 5; Lucia Errico for Section 3.

(Kress 2009), where linguistic and extralinguistic semiotic resources interact to highlight the conceptual and experiential similarities between past-time and current migrations, is characteristic of the type of discourse that was devised specifically in the course of this project, and which was labeled 'promotional'. The latter adjective was coined by the research team to underline that the 'emotional promotion' ('promotion') of the objects of representation is pursued by means of multimedia texts that foreground the role of one's sentiment and feelings at the time of commencing, developing, and witnessing cross-cultural exchanges. Migrants and tourists represent the two main groups of subjects, who took part in the production and analysis stages of the written reformulations and multimodal renderings. As concerns the examined case study, thirteen people (five migrants and eight tourists) were asked to partake in a series of activities consisting in examining the selected accounts of epic sea odysseys, in order to comment on the analogies between past and present journeys before providing alternative retextualization through English. The tourists – from France, Germany, Italy, and Spain – were also involved in the reception study about their reactions to the audiovisual representations, which is mentioned at the end of Section 4.

After describing the rationale and objectives of Promotional Discourse (Section 2), this chapter illustrates the two practical phases of this study. Section 3 focuses on Phase 1, in which a selected corpus of extracts from the first book of Virgil's *Aeneid* is reformulated through English. In that Phase, under the researchers' guidance, participants first notice the spontaneous organization of these texts into 'ethnopoetic verses' (Hymes 2003), reproducing the sequences and rhythms of human feelings, actions, and reactions, as is typical of autochthonous oral narratives. Then, these characteristics are embraced by the migrants and tourists to create their 'experiential reformulations', using English, of the epic narrations from the past. The adjective 'experiential' is used here to highlight that the phonetic and verbal features of the language variation that is found in the retextualizations are meant to reproduce the sensations of fear and despair, as well as hope and courage, which distinguish the several phases of migrants' journeys. Section 4, instead, covers the audiovisual strategies of genre hybridization that are activated, in Phase 2, for the production of a video for the emotional promotion of cultural integration, to be posted and shared on social media. The visual and acoustic features of the file work alongside the 'ELF subtitles' (which include the experiential renderings) to actualize the interaction between epic and modern sea odysseys from an extralinguistic viewpoint as well, showing the interview of a migrant – playing the role of the 'Observer'/'Traveller' – who narrates the emotions that are associated with his voyage to Italy. The analysis will detail the extent to which the relationship between the short film's verbal and nonverbal features,

and between the ‘mockumentary’ and ‘journalistic interview’ genres, serve to attain the goals of attracting the viewers’ attention and uncovering the actual nature of sea traveling.

2. The (hi)story so far: Research context, objectives, and rationale of Promotional Discourse

This research project started in 2016 and has produced, to date, a number of products ranging from analyses of the causes of miscommunication in cross-cultural encounters (Guido 2018), to proposals of strategies to connote intercultural meetings in the field of Responsible Tourism as opportunities for personal and cultural growth. Data have revealed that, in the context of cultural interactions in seaside resorts, specific role-playing strategies are used to facilitate the integration between migrants, tourists, and local communities. As Guido (2018: 174) reveals, local administrators tend to act as “tour operators”, offering “tourists holidays in voluntary-work camps where they are invited to play the role of ‘mediators’ facilitating the integration between migrants, tourists, and local communities”. Unfortunately, this does not always allow interactants to pursue the noble objective of encouraging communication, due to the subjects’ lack of skills to decode the messages that are produced by migrants. Furthermore, the critical analysis of real interactions (Guido 2018: 177-180) has confirmed that “[tourists] don’t understand” migrants when they have to narrate their experience. In fact, the latter are sometimes even asked to talk about their traumatic stories while finding themselves involved in holiday entertainment that eventually brings about a ‘Dystopian manipulation’ of the semantic and pragmatic meanings of their accounts, along with the opposition between ‘recreational-Utopian schema’ and ‘Dystopian-migration schema’. It is precisely such schema contrasts that our research activities try to counteract. These activities see the collaboration of two main groups of subjects – mainly, tourists and migrants together in seaside resorts – who are guided to act as ‘intercultural mediators’ devising alternative and unbiased strategies of representation that hinge on the interactants’ common experiential knowledge in order to achieve reciprocal understanding – and, therefore, positive cross-cultural exchanges. A case in point is represented by the creation of four audiovisual texts (this chapter focuses on the latest one), whereby researchers intend to enquire into the effects of emotions on the perception of holidays as an experience that has the potential of leading to individual and socio-cultural development. These texts are presented as the multimodal actualization of the so-called ‘Promotional Discourse’, the discursive frame that was devised by researchers so as to: (i) promote holiday destinations in Southern Italy that are affected by the mass arrivals of migrants; (ii) explore

the emotional experience of Italian seaside resorts whose geographical position has always made them places of hospitality and hybridization of languages and cultures; and (iii) enquire into the effects of emotions on tourists' perception of holiday as an experience of personal and cultural growth.

The elaboration of Promotional Discourse stems from the acknowledgment that most representations of sea journeys in contemporary media adhere to an ideological association between modern seafarers and the phenomenon of "culture clash" (Facchini et al. 2009; McAuliffe and Weeks 2015), connoting migrants as one of the "social problems" (Bruno 2016). Hence, this research intends to identify the steps leading to the production of an unbiased multimodal composition, such as the video that will be commented on in section 4, whose linguistic and extralinguistic resources attempt to induce in viewers a cognitive twist concerning their evaluation of what forces people to escape from their native countries. The association between past and present sea voyages is rendered, in Promotional Discourse videos, through the alternation of images of fictional and actual, past-time and current migrations, and through the passage from Ethnopoetic reformulations (Hymes 2003) of non-Western migrants' traumatic accounts of sea journeys, reported in their own ELF variations, to Western epic narratives of Mediterranean dramatic voyages rendered from Ancient Greek and Latin into modern ELF variations. The comparison between past and present is also performed by means of a multimodal hybridization (Catenaccio 2008) between styles and genres that can help attract the interest of Western recipients. Its objective is to provide viewers with an expected situation before presenting to them that alternative take on the objects of representation, which could trigger a positive reconsideration of migrations and cross-cultural societies. Thanks to these structures, participants can become aware of the cognitive association, in the epic and current narratives of Mediterranean 'odysseys', between the characters of the 'Observer' – namely, the 'voyager' in the structure of the classical Utopian genre – and the 'Traveler', or the modern 'migrant' embarking on a perilous sea-voyage. The connotation of language uses as instances of 'ELF' is due to the fact that English represents the shared language with which participants try to make the communicative dimension of reformulations and of the subtitles of the video more accessible to their interlocutors. To be precise, in this project, a 'hybrid ELF variant' is co-created by migrants, tourists and researchers, and characterized by semantic, syntactic and pragmatic transfers from the speakers' native linguacultural background, as is highlighted in the following section (Guido 2018). The polisemiotic nature of audiovisual texts is thus exploited to connote media as tools that can foster intercultural communication and integration.

The research hypotheses are that: (i) the adoption of multimedia in educational contexts can contribute to the qualitative improvement of intercultural mediators' training, possibly reducing the cases of miscommunication

and misunderstanding that stem from the lack of appropriate professional skills; and (ii) by showing the short films under discussion to potential users of Responsible Tourism first, and then to a general audience, it is possible to provide an alternative path for the construction of one's beliefs and views about important – although controversial – social phenomena. The direct involvement of migrants and tourists, the former's oral accounts of the dreadful sea odysseys that they had undergone, along with the common analysis of epic verses reveal an emotional dimension that generates a renovated perception of ancient and modern migrations, and the partial (at least) reconsideration of the reasons behind contemporary sea journeys. Assessment of such emotional engagement is in progress by obtaining the participants' direct feedback and conducting a reception study (Iaia and Errico 2020). The first practical Phase is the production of the experiential reformulations of a selected corpus of passages from epic narratives of Mediterranean 'odysseys'. The following section illustrates the rendering of a group of chosen extracts from the first book of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

3. Phase 1: Experiential reformulations of Ilioneo's speech from Virgil's Aeneid

The intercultural activity described here was carried out from May to July 2019. Participants – migrants and tourists visiting Lecce or spending time together in seaside resorts – were asked to cooperate by narrating (the migrants) and commenting on (the tourists) the actual experience of sea crossing. At first, French, German and Spanish participants had to react to the migrants' report, and they realized that these texts are generally characterized by peculiar features of ergative languages. In their view, "the sea seems to live", it is described "as a mythological monster", or "it is as if the ship were human", referring to strategies and features such as providing animate representations of inanimate objects, including 'objects' in the position of 'subjects', or creating metaphorical personification of violent natural phenomena (such as waves, wind, or thunderstorms) as elements having an autonomous, dynamic force that destroys human beings. These productions are thoroughly explored in other outputs of this research (Guido et al. 2016; Guido et al. 2018), so they will not be described here. Instead, this section focuses on the subjects' collective reading and reformulations – through English – of the selected corpus of texts belonging to the Western tradition of Ancient-Greek and sea-voyage narrations. The reason for blending culture-bound odysseys was to stimulate the participants' awareness of the common 'identity roots' and 'archetypal schemata' as seafaring voyagers facing the violence of natural elements in their life-threatening journeys. Before enquiring into the renderings, it seems useful to clarify that they aim to make participants aware of the shared linguacultural features of the epic and current Mediterranean 'odysseys' belonging to the Western cultural heritage through a

series of stylistic choices. In particular, words are included and arranged, in the re-elaborated verses, in ways that would trigger an emotional response on the part of recipients. Sentiments of peril, fear, but also courage and determination, therefore permeate the retextualizations in order to prompt a positive (and also unbiased) reconsideration of the causes and consequences of migrations. Finally, the use of English – and the features of English uses – can be interpreted as a particular type of communication through a lingua franca. English represented their only available choice to express in words their reactions, and it is prevalently marked, in the examined reformulations, by: (i) simplified lexis and syntactic structures; (ii) preference for past simple and present simple; and (iii) phonetic properties that reproduce the changing emotional rhythms of narrations. As the participants themselves claimed when justifying their verbal choices, the adoption of a shared language eased their discussion of the sensations that were fostered by the collaborative interpretation and re-interpretation of literary and oral sources. In turn, this helped them to find common sentiments of despair, fear, hopelessness, but also anticipation and relief, depending on the odysseys' stages that were remembered.

English hence assisted subjects in delivering the emotional side of ancient and current voyages – for this reason, we decided to label these language uses 'experiential'. The adjective is proposed to stress that the lexical, structural and phonetic traits of the reformulations are expected to let readers and viewers recognize the dramatic nature of ancient and modern odysseys towards Utopian places. For example, the vowels and consonants that are used in the production of alternative verses such as those below are meant to reproduce the sound of sea waves, or to prompt specific reactions on the part of recipients. In this study, the epic accounts come from the first book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, precisely when Virgil describes the storm that devastates the Trojan ships escaping from war. Some castaways land on the coast of Carthage, on the Sicilian channel, where Dido reigns (Bettini 2019). Once the seafarers land, they feel threatened by the Carthaginians, and therefore they try to show that they are not criminals, but pious fugitives. Ilioneo, one of the people shipwrecked, reveals to the queen that their destination is Italy. The following passages were chosen as the objects of Phase 1, by the author of this section of the article, so as to help the audience reflect upon the migrants' struggle to reach a utopian Wonderland at the mercy of the open sea, escaping from poverty, war, and famine. The first excerpt sees migrants claiming that their intentions are peaceful:

Aeneid 1, 527-529

We haven't arrived here to ruin your homes

or to bring captured booty to the shore.

Such brutality and arrogance are not in our hearts.

Ilioneo's words are part of the corpus of narrations to reformulate, as well as of the video (see Section 4), because of the emotional dimension of the character's prayer. The man invites his listeners to understand the strangers' intention and condition more closely, in order to overcome the prejudice and ignorance causing the evaluation of fugitives as invaders or criminals. The perlocutionary effects are pursued by remarking that it is not the castaways' intention to "ruin" other human beings' homes, that their hearts are free from hatred. Additionally, Ilioneo's confession sharply coincides with the data that were collected in refugee centers and in the course of interactions between tourists, migrants, and intercultural mediators (Guido 2018). In one particular case, which is commented on by Guido (2018), after being invited to talk about his journey, a man claims that it is "crazy" that one has to justify their past choices in the context of holiday entertainment such as a "flashmob on the beach" ending with "the liberating shout to make tourists understand the migration problem" – which he himself witnessed. When the "flashmob" ends, participants still "don't understand" what it means to leave one's native country, but "consider" migrants "as animals", although they "don't walk on four legs [... and] they don't eat people". The experiential characteristics in the above passage are meant to underline the typical traits of the topic of 'culture clash', by means of the selection of vibrant (/r/), plosive (/b/) and velar (/k/, /g/) sounds, in words such as "bring", "captured", "brutality" and "arrogance".

At the end of the first part, Ilioneo reveals that their final destination is Italy, "which Greeks call Hesperia". The mythological name describing Southern Italy is left in the experiential reformulation, as was proposed by all subjects while discussing the function of "Hesperia" with the researcher guiding this phase. Although one may claim that this choice prevents an appropriate interpretation on the part of viewers, who may not know what "Hesperia" denotes, the tourists who worked on the examined passage stated that it helps to maintain the sense of the final destination as an epic place, as the archetypal representation of peaceful landing.

Aeneid 1, 530-534

A place there is, which Greeks call Hesperia,
an ancient land, rich in arms and wealth soil.

Oenotrians were there; now rumor has it that
a younger race has named it after their leaders, Italy.

Ilioneo describes a specific land (Bettini 2019) by resorting to words that remind the audience of the migrants who are now crossing the Mediterranean Sea to escape from death and destruction, but are victims of a shipwreck. At the time of creating the above reformulation, participants decided to render their reading 'experientially' by selecting plosive and fricative consonants (/p/, /θ/, /h/) and glide sounds (/w/) entailing a calmer rhythm as well as the motion of sea waves. In their opinion, "these words [from "Hesperia", to "wealth", to "were

there”] can promote positive feelings”, such as hope and anticipation, which are felt “at the beginning of the journey” towards a place where better living conditions can be found.

In the last fragment, Ilioneo complains about other people’s hostility and lack of hospitality:

Aeneid 1, 539-543

What race of men is this? What land is so barbarous
to accept this custom? We are not welcomed
on the sand; we are not allowed to rest our feet
on the border of their land. If you don’t believe in humans
and their mortal arms, at least look unto gods
who will remember right and wrong.

In the passage above, sentiments of violence and fear, as well as sadness and resignation, are highlighted utilizing specific lexical and phonetic features. The harshness of words is justified by the topic, namely the ‘inhuman’ habit of leaving someone else dying because of their different skin colors or origins. Viewers are guided towards questioning the appropriateness of this behavior, which is negatively evaluated by the speaker. This is explicitly uttered in the final moments, when the narrator entrusts himself to the “gods”. The emotional shift is rendered by anticipating words such as “barbarous”, “accept” and “custom”, having vibrant (/r/), plosive (/b/, /p/) and velar (/k/) sounds, before including “land”, “don’t believe”, “right and wrong”, with liquid (/l/), dental (/d/), plosive (/b/) and glide (/w/) sounds that slow the rhythm down, signifying the end of the journey, as well as resignation.

The above passages from Phase 1 and their experiential reformulations are considered as utterances that suit the dramatic conditions of contemporary migrants. This conclusion is achieved by participants as well, thus supporting the research hypothesis according to which the choice of blending epic verses and current odysseys activates the viewers’ awareness of the similar experiential schemata of dangerous sea journeys, notwithstanding the native socio-cultural contexts. And such awareness coincides with the ultimate objective of this research project, which is also pursued by means of an unbiased multimodal pattern for the representation of migrations.

4. Phase 2: Multimodal association of ancient and modern sea-voyage narrations

The polisemiotic nature of this research project is more evident from Phase 2. So far, language has been the primary resource that participants adopted to convey the personal and emotional dimensions of their sea voyages. Now, language is blended with images and sounds from a cognitive-functional

perspective (Langacker 1991; 2008). This means that the extralinguistic features reflect the subjects' perceptions of migrations and their experiential traits, while also serving the peculiar intent of Promotional Discourse. The video created in Phase 2 represents the fourth and latest multimedia research product. The previous clips were intended as prototypes for the 'emotional promotion' of Castro (Guido et al. 2016) and the Salento area (Guido et al. 2018; Iaia and Errico 2018) and prevalently addressed users of Responsible Tourism. Since the research on Promotional Discourse is now enquiring into the possibility of extending its application to the creation of strategies against biased views about intercultural encounters, the clip analyzed here mainly attempts to prompt a different interpretation of intercultural relationships. In compliance with the theme of hybridization of people and their cultural and experiential schemata, images of modern voyages alternate with narrations of epic odysseys, resulting in a hybridized multimodal composition (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006), which is supposed to guide viewers to focus on the emotional and archetypal association between past and modern migrations. In particular, the distinguishing features of the "journalistic interview" (Broersma 2010) and "mockumentary" genres (Campbell 2017) are selected to activate the audience's evaluation of what they watch as something factual, something whose dramatic nature is not mitigated by seeing professional actors re-enacting excerpts from literary texts. As concerns the experiential reformulations of Ilioneo's speech, they are included in the multimedia product under examination as if they were the protagonist's utterance. This framework is expected to attract the envisaged recipients towards the initial conveyance of a known situation, which is gradually modified as the clip continues, in order to enable the viewers' positive (re)interpretation of the object of promotional representations.

In the 'mockumentary' fragments, viewers hear a man narrating his story, just like Ilioneo does in the previous section. The protagonist of the video is presented, at the beginning, as a "sea traveler" who was met by the author of this section in August 2019. In fact, Phase 2 ended in that month, when an eighteen-year-old Nigerian migrant, who lives in the Apulian district of Brindisi, was directly involved in the final editing process by the author of the video and this section². The Nigerian participant agreed to include his voice and read the subtitles after watching an earlier version of the file, saying that he appreciated how the theme of intercultural encounters was portrayed. Furthermore, he added that the feelings that are roused by the audiovisual representation coincide with what he himself had experienced when crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Italy. The proposed audience is imagined as comprising people who are acquainted with multimedia and language uses in social networking. For this reason, the creative

² The video can be seen at the following link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B4uull3_KGbeDkGZqhDZqUbh-E5btC1z/view?usp=sharing.

potential of English, when it has the shape of the international language, is exploited in the claim of the video, namely “Searching and finding #anormalife”. On the one hand, through creativity, the video reproduces the language uses that are commonly found online, such as the insertion of the hashtag, which is meant to foster the actions of sharing the video and discussing it. On the other hand, “anormalife” is a peculiar construction that is expected to trigger both biased and unbiased readings, by instigating viewers’ ‘expected/unexpected’ cognitive clashes when they interpret the short movie. To be precise, “anormalife” can be read as “a normal life”, reiterating the prejudice of migrants leaving their homeland to live in a foreign country for leisure purposes. At the same time, it can also suggest thinking of an “anormal life” characterized by the potentially fatal conditions that they are forced to experience. And from an ELF perspective, “anormal” is a non-standard construction that reveals the influence from the author’s L1, that adjective being the Italian rendering of ‘abnormal’, ‘anomalous’.

The video can be divided into three parts, according to the questions that are posed to the interviewee. In part one, after introducing the context of the mockumentary, the ‘journalist’ asks the young man about the destination of the people on the boat:


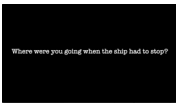

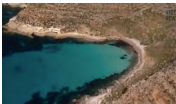

<i>mm:ss</i>	<i>Visual frame</i>	<i>Verbal frame</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>Genre</i>
00:01		In August 2019, we met a modern sea traveler. He answered three questions...	Lack of acoustic score	Journalistic interview
00:09		Where were you going when the ship had to stop?	Lack of acoustic score	Journalistic interview
00:14		A place there is, which Greeks call Hesperia,	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary
00:20		an ancient land, rich in wealth soil.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary
00:23		Italy is its name. That’s where we were going.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary

TABLE 1. Multimodal transcription of the first part of the video “Searching and finding #anormalife”

Before the Nigerian man speaks, no sounds can be heard. The lack of the acoustic score – as can be inferred from the multimodal transcription above – is a meaning-making strategy that allows viewers to concentrate on the questions and, above all, on the answers. The narrator replies to the ‘journalist’ by means of selected passages from verses 530-534 of *Aeneid’s* first book, but it is interesting to notice a modification to the original text. After examining the epic reports and the multimodal composition of the video, participants decided to add a final explanation that serves to clarify the man’s reference to Hesperia. When the passage from the *Aeneid* was examined in Phase 1, subjects suggested leaving the ancient name, in order to maintain the sense of archetypal representation of a utopian destination. Now, instead, since the video addresses general viewers, including a younger audience, they elaborated a short comment, on the part of the “sea traveler”, which makes the reference to the country explicit. Besides addressing the potential viewers’ background knowledge, the direct inclusion of the noun “Italy” is also thought of as a strategy causing an intensification of the recipients’ interest, in particular as concerns the Italian ones, when they hear the man mentioning their nation and associating superb qualities with it.

The association between epic ‘old’ and ‘contemporary’ sea narratives is maintained in the whole video, as is evident from the second part. After asking information about their destination, the ‘journalist’ enquires into the reasons behind the travelers’ choice to leave their birthplace:

<i>mm:ss</i>	<i>Visual frame</i>	<i>Verbal frame</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>Genre</i>
00:27		Why were you going to Italy?	Lack of acoustic score	Journalistic interview
00:33		We haven’t arrived to ruin your homes, or to bring captured booty to the shore.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary
00:39		Such brutality and arrogance are not in our heart.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary

TABLE 2. Multimodal transcription of the second part of the video “Searching and finding #anormalife”

As happens in the first part, the migrant reads the experiential reformulation of verses 527-529, remarking through the tone of his voice

the feelings that are to be prompted by the rhythm and association of words chosen by participants in Phase 1 (see Section 3). In fact, the speaker underlines the words that are made up of velar and plosive sounds, such as “captured”, “booty”, and “brutality”. Additionally, the cadence of narration slows down when the final experiential reformulations (starting at 00:39) are read, so as to accentuate the sadness that is provoked by evoking sentiments of hate or lack of integration and by the inhuman conditions of the migrants’ journey. This emotional tone remains in the third part of the video:

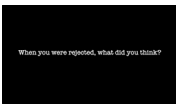



<i>mm:ss</i>	<i>Visual frame</i>	<i>Verbal frame</i>	<i>Sound</i>	<i>Genre</i>
00:45		When you were rejected, what did you think?	Lack of acoustic score	Journalistic interview
00:50		We are not welcomed on the sand. We are not allowed to rest our feet on the border of the land.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary
00:59		We are searching a normal life. We are finding anormal life.	Migrant’s voice	Mockumentary
01:04		SEARCHING AND FINDING #anormalife	The natural sound of sea	Mockumentary

TABLE 3. Multimodal transcription of the third part of the video “Searching and finding #anormalife”

The claim, at the end of the clip, addresses viewers that are accustomed to using social media and communicating online, and positioning it in the middle of the visual frame is another strategy that aims to emphasize the subversion of one’s prejudices or conventional interpretation of the object of the multimodal representation. Assessment of the empirical reception of the audiovisual implementation of Promotional Discourse is still in progress. So far, seventy viewers have been involved in a reception study. They were asked to watch the video before talking about the reactions that the short clip triggered in them. Although this investigation is still in progress, initial results (Iaia and Errico 2020) seem to indicate that the multimedia output of this research

can help viewers reconsider their ideas about mass migrations. The particular association between ancient and modern odysseys, in fact, reveals to recipients the immobility of history and the dramatic side of the events that are depicted, at least as the respondents have claimed to date.

5. Conclusions

This chapter has illustrated the interdisciplinary approach developed at the University of Salento in the context of a research project on Responsible Tourism, for the polisemiatic representations of ancient and modern sea-voyages. Whereas this project initially aimed to devise strategies for the emotional promotion of local seaside resorts, so as to mark tourism as an activity that can lead to personal and cultural growth, the research focus has gradually shifted towards the creation of a multimodal framework serving the unbiased depiction of migrations in audiovisual texts. Multimedia representations are conceived as means that can help make the nature of migrants' journeys more accessible to modern audiences, while counteracting the mass-media portrayals that correlate the notion of 'culture clash' with the dramatic journeys of migrants across the sea. The article first illustrated how the cultural activity that saw groups of migrants and tourists working together, to produce the 'experiential reformulations' of epic odysseys belonging to Western experiential schemata, has led to the realization of the archetypal association between past and modern migrations. Those reformulations then became the verbal dimension of a video produced by the researcher and voiced over by a Nigerian migrant, where the hybridization between the 'mockumentary' and 'journalistic interview' genres attempts to propose an unbiased multimedia representation of the reasons for and nature of sea journeys.

The earlier results of a study on the empirical reception of Promotional Discourse seem to corroborate the educational value of alternative multimodal compositions, when they succeed in inducing in viewers the reconsideration of the reasons and consequences of migrations. Yet, it is paramount to enquire into the extent to which the experience of Promotional Discourse helps to expand people's empathic understanding of today's migrations, as well as to monitor the adoption of multimedia as resources that can foreground the importance of cross-cultural integration. The multimodal evolution of English as the international lingua franca is also worth exploring, so as to contribute to the expansion of its area of exploration and application, as is advocated in the literature.

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The contributions collected in this volume are a selection of papers presented at the XXIX AIA conference. They explore a variety of linguistic phenomena using “out-of-the-box” approaches. Getting out of the box challenges us to consider possibilities previously not even imagined, and to extend our vision – of the world and ourselves – to include alternative, complementary, or even contrasting perspectives. It means engaging in self-reflective, creative and/or lateral thinking, beyond what is obvious or commonplace, or even implicit in what we say and do. Most of all, it means becoming aware of the existence of “the box” (i.e. what we take for granted and how this conditions our conduct) and also being willing to question the validity of our convictions so as to expand our knowledge. In linguistics, language teaching, translation studies and terminology, it may involve re-labelling phenomena and concepts; investigating familiar communicative practices through novel methods; checking whether the concepts we use are suitable for describing the phenomena we study; determining to what extent our claims and assumptions are supported by the evidence available; and exploring approaches that are sometimes claimed to have reached the limits of their potential. Thinking out of the box may also be considered in terms of innovation, creativity, a rethinking of attitudes and approaches, and even a “daring” return to theories and practices that may have been swept aside in the drive to move ever forward.

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