Review

María Martínez Lirola (ed.): *Discourses on Immigration in Times of Economic Crisis: A Critical Perspective*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013, ISBN: 978-1443840538, 310 pp.

When this review is going to press, it very much appears that Europe, and the European Union in particular, is facing an unprecedented extent of immigration with looming unprecedented and unpredictable developments. External Schengen borders are being planned to be reintroduced, walls to keep out migrants are being erected, mass deportations of "illegal" immigrants are being organised, surveillance boats are policing the Mediterranean Sea, and rescue missions are launched non-stop to save thousands of people trying to find their way into something that they deem safe and human. Against these developments as its backdrop, *Discourses on Immigration in Times of Economic Crisis: A Critical Perspective*, edited by María Martínez Lirola, is both a topical endeavour and somewhat of a premonition. The reference in the title to crisis-ridden periods alludes subtly to the recent economic crisis, starting from 2007 with the Credit Crunch in the USA and allegedly over by now in some parts of Europe (some would disagree, however), which suggests implicitly that earlier or later periods, unaffected by such crises, might not precipitate the very same or similarly grave immigration-induced consequences and discursive constructions in the media. As the foreword claims, the crisis "affects the treatment of immigration, in which immigrants are usually represented as a "people-problem" and as a burden to society" (xi).

Comprising eleven chapters and a masterfully succinct Prologue by Teun van Dijk, the book brings together interdisciplinary studies in order to provide new insights into how, during the globalized crisis, immigration-related issues are handled in media discourse in various countries (the United Kingdom, Spain, the Czech Republic, USA, etc.), with topics related to Spain predominating. The analytical methods include both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, relying on large-scale corpus data, printed visuals, audio-visual materials (interviews), etc. The major theoretical approach present in the studies, and duly referred to in the subtitle, is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with the help of which discursive construction of inequality, injustice and various other forms of domination involving immigrants can be best exposed. Coming with self-contained articles relying on diverse data and deploying versatile forms of CDA, the volume succeeds in capturing and elucidating dynamic complexities in media practices in our dynamically changing era of complex "crising", in which the topic immigration is often foregrounded.

It is noteworthy how successfully visual analysis has made its way into CDA in the past decade (see e.g., the articles in Mayr 2008), and hence the inclusion of the multimodal perspective is a welcome aspect in the present book. Three of the eleven articles in the volume utilize visual analysis, and one also relies on audio-visual analysis. Such a visual analysis is a forte of Chapter 1 by María Martínez Lirola, who studies how various media outlets portray immigrants returning to their home countries

under a Spanish government-funded scheme. Through carefully analysing images with immigrants and politicians in various settings, Lirola manages to show that the online and print editions of the three newspapers differ in several major ways. In articles dealing with the return plan, mainstream and local newspapers do not carry images of immigrants, preferring to show politicians instead; in *Latino*, which targets immigrants, photographs of immigrants feature in every article dealing with this plan. Similarly, immigrant voices are very thin on the ground in the mainstream and the local media, and the prevalent opinion is shown to be positive towards the return plan. *Latino*, by contrast, provides room for dissent, with immigrants talking about confronting the realities of the plan.

Jéssica Retis's contribution on immigrant Latina images (Chapter 2) in two countries with a huge influx of immigrants (USA and Spain) highlights the importance of adopting the gender perspective as well as that of not glossing over the increased extent of plurality of migrants' origins in social, educational, economic and cultural terms. The paper asserts that incorporating female migrant perspectives can elucidate the complex nature of transglobal displacement, integration and diverse levels of perpetuated subordination.

In their contribution (Chapter 3), Isabel Alonso Belmonte, Daniel Chornet and Anne McCabe discuss how ideological stances are constructed in online news commentaries to a piece of news on an incident involving migrants. Analysing 497 comments qualitatively, they identify three major ideological positions in the posts: acknowledgements of racism, denials of racism and so called "ambivalent" posts. Their taxonomy of rhetorical form and function used for justification of the stance taken within these three post types help the authors detect a "strategic rhetoric of whiteness" (Nakayama and Krizek 1995), which leads to the self-victimisation of white Spaniards and which is indicative of xeno-racism (however, eco(nomic)-racism might be a better term) where denial of being a racist is accompanied by referencing economic inequalities between "them" and "us". Pointing to a similar conclusion and using Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Eliecer Crespo-Fernández (Chapter 4), investigates persuasive X-phemistic language (orthophemism, euphemism, and dysphemism) in Spanish and British centre-right newspapers. The cross-linguistic study found that immigrants are depicted with dysphemistic metaphors in negative ways, which is more frequent in the British conservative press and which constructs immigrants as a potential threat to society.

Chapters 5 and 6 discuss various media representations of how immigrants pose a problem for the welfare system in Spain. In their fine qualitative study on health-related news items in the television news programme *Canal Sur* and in the comment sections of the online versions of *El País* and *Público*, Antonio M. Bañón, Samantha Requena and María Eugenia González (Chapter 5) observe that in contrast with the common image, in their otherwise scarce appearance in health-related news, immigrants are not associated with overusing the health system. One minor issue: a reference to some statistics on the actual health system use by immigrants could have helped contextualise the study more. In their thought-provoking and highly topical article (Chapter 6), F. Javier García Castaño, Antonia Olmos Alcaraz and Maria Rubio Gómez investigate news discourses on the presence of immigrant students in the Spanish education system. Their multimodal analysis provides an important insight into how immigrant students are shown in "racialised" images which use mainly phenotypic differences in news on the issue of overcrowding and segregation in public schools, suggesting a high degree of essentialism (an otherwise common finding in the extant CDA literature, but much less discussed in multimodal CDA studies). Interestingly, they also find that in cases when there are no images accompanying the article on immigrant students at schools, shocking and disturbing, highly salient images related to other articles appear directly next to immigrant news headlines. Finally, it is pointed out that with school enrolment-themed news items there is a preponderance of images which show Muslim women with headscarves, often photographed from behind, a practice suggesting discomfort about the symbolic, controversial (oppression of females) item of clothing and about Islam in general with the aim of showing how immigration of people who are supposed to be intolerant and authoritarian propels deterioration in the quality of education and disruption of the progressive democratic system of the country.

The thematisation of immigration in Spanish political party discourse is the topic of the contribution by Francisco Checa Olmos, Juan Carlos Checa Olmos and Ángeles Arjona Garrido (Chapter

7). The analysis of the proposals filed for the party platforms of the two major Spanish parties PSOE and PP in four general elections (2000, 2004, 2008, 2011) shows that in these writings the attention the topic of immigration received was fluctuating over time, and despite the different ideological stances of the two parties, the platform proposals are very similar.

In Chapter 8, Jan Chovanec investigates two revealing cases of how some segments of the Czech media reporting on criminal cases seek to frame innocent members of certain "internal" minority groups as outsiders (and as potential criminals themselves, in particular) by evoking negative stereotypes. The minute linguistic analysis of how in the given two cases even mainstream media tried to appeal to the in-group's ethnic othering tendencies (fed by underlying prejudices) reveals the use of two highly dynamic strategies: (1) the targeted deployment of irrelevant details to make Vietnamese minority family background suspicious *per se*; and (2) the strategic use of descriptive category labels (especially when social prestige is present) to evade negative stereotypification of some ethnic backgrounds (Ukrainian in the particular case) as long as, in form of a pay-off, another, more disparaged, out-group (the Roma) can be presented negatively. Indeed, capturing this dynamically changing, shifting local system of pay-offs and fleeting complexities befits super-diversity (Vertovec 2007).

In Chapter 9, Nicolás Lorite García is interested in how the media influences intercultural relationships in times of change. In order to answer this question, he analyses the media coverage of immigrants in considerably multi-ethnic Salt, Catalonia, with some multimedia examples of campaign films. Mostly, however, García focuses on longitudinal quantitative data on (1) how much time immigration receives in TV news; (2) figures of undocumented immigrants over the same time span. He notes that whereas between 1996–2006, 10% broadcast time was devoted to some aspect of immigration, after 2007, with the beginning of the crisis, only 3–5% of broadcast time was given to immigration, an unexpected figure in a time of crisis. The combination of the massive data sets for quantitative analysis with the visual analysis proves illuminating.

In Chapter 10, Antolín Granados Martínez, F. Javier García Castaño, Nina Kressova, Lucía Chovancova and José Fernández Echeverría discuss that public institutions fighting against discrimination, racism and xenophobia do not succeed in transmitting their messages in mass media coverage of migration-related topics. This is all the more curious as this happens against existing codes of conduct and style guides for the given media outlets. This alarming situation is analysed on the basis of data from codes of ethics, style guides and opinion polls.

The final chapter (Chapter 11) by Gema Rubio Carbonero is concerned with how immigration is represented in parliamentary debates in 2010–2011, well into the crisis. Rubio Carbonero finds that discourse on immigration is patterned in a similar negative way during and before the onset of the crisis (immigration is construed as threat, disrupting Spanish society). Nevertheless, quite surprisingly, it is also found that the topic of immigration occurs less frequently in debates during the crisis. Some speculation on the possible reasons would have done good after a slate of such robust and impressive array of examples.

In line with current multimodality-inspired work dealing with immigrants and race relations in CDA (see, e.g. Machin and Mayr 2008), the articles using visual data proficiently would have further benefitted from a somewhat more consistent analysis employing the framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) to a larger extent. This could have enabled them to show power imbalance and discrimination more clearly. Obviously, it could well be argued that, given the generic title, the volume could have used a higher number of papers dealing with countries other than Spain. However, the decision to focus on one country proved useful and not a limitation in the end. Interestingly, the contributions are still diverse: they help readers navigate an immensely complex topic with kaleidoscopic domain choices and new perspectives of how effectively media practices can relay health, education and political discourses in a crisis-stricken country with more than 4.1 million immigrants (Eurostat 2012). It is clearly the case that this insight could have been offered only by such a focused treatment, which, coupled with a simultaneous organisation of "capacity among diversity" (recycling the definition of culture in Chapter 6 to mean the diverse range of authors dealing with an all-encompassing topic) sets a new standard for immigration discourse studies to come.

References

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Tamás Eitler

Address: Tamás Eitler, Department of English Applied Linguistics, School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest H-1088, Rákóczi út 5, Hungary. [eitler.tamas@btk.elte.hu]