
Katherine E. Russo, *The Evaluation of Risk in Institutional and Newspaper Discourse* (Napoli: Editoriale Scientifica, 2018), 167 pp.,
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Reviewed by Giuliana Regnoli

Katherine E. Russo's *The Evaluation of Risk in Institutional and Newspaper Discourse: The Case of Climate Change and Migration* offers a great contribution to the fields of social sciences and corpus linguistics with regards to two contemporary urgent issues: climate change and climate-induced migration. In addressing risk communication as inherently related to discourses of meaning, perception and evaluation, the volume points to their fundamental role in relation to climate change in the communication of Anglophone social and political institutions and organisations. The volume intends to shed new light on the apparent paradox between the apocalypticism of many climate discourses and the technocratic jargon used to describe the latter as a 'problem' to be solved. Considering that news media shape public perceptions and that they play a pivotal role in policymaking and institutional discourse, Russo delves into the evaluation of risk communication as a social process dealing with complexity and uncertainty, ultimately engaging in the evaluation and the representation of social actors across institutional and newspaper discourse.

In doing so, the volume devises a theoretical framework based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Appraisal Linguistics in order to elaborate a semantic prosody cutting across the two different genres involved. Specifically, it designs and analyses a corpus of texts covering the years 1996-2017 and combining the following sub-corpora: the News Reports sub-corpus – 285 texts selected from the Anglophone newspapers *The Australian*, *The Global Mail*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Washington Post* – and the Institution sub-corpus – 370 documents selected from communication documents between organs of the same institutions, staff working documents, reports, press releases and news alerts – gathered from the following institutions: the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the European Commission (EU).

Through the analysis of the spread of risk information across such 'genre chains' or 'networks of texts', the CCCMC (Climate Change and Climate-Induced Migration Corpus) aims to reveal how social institutions and conventions influence risk communication and to "provid[e] a window into how societies express and define themselves as they grapple with uncertainty about facts, opinions, beliefs and common values" (21).

The present study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methodological tools such as lists of frequency, concordances and collocation analysis have been combined with the qualitative analysis of context and discourse structural evaluation. The quantitative strand was carried out through the aid of *AntConc*, a corpus analysis toolkit for concordance and text analysis to better explore frequencies, statistical significance, the context of specific lexical items, phrases, lexical bundles and multiword units. Following an explanatory sequential design, the data were followed up with a qualitative phase drawing on CDA and Appraisal Linguistics.

The volume begins with an overview of the debate on the evaluation of information and the viral power of media dissemination across institutional and newspaper genre chains. Specifically, it delves into the concepts of ‘evaluation’ and ‘appraisal’ in relation to their multifunctional, ideological and political positioning to construe news values and to engage an audience. Evaluation, interpreted as “the writer’s expression of opinion or subjectivity” (44), contributes toward the recontextualisation and the transformation of scientific, political and institutional social practices in newspaper discourse as in the case of ‘contested science’ such as climate change and migration. Appraisal, defined as “a discourse semantic system for interpersonal meaning” (47), is a crucial theoretical tool since it attends to the speaker/writer’s certainty in evaluation and investigates how the textual voice positions itself in relation to others. Hence, attending to such frameworks reveals many of the tensions that characterise the communication of evidence on climate change and its related risks.

Chapter Two examines attitude and evaluation regarding climate change in the communication of social and political institutions and organisations, arguing that “semantic preference and lexicogrammar related to the case of climate-change is particularly relevant for the analysis of the many and often contradictory rhetorical and ideological strategies of organizational and institutional actors” (25). The analysis, in fact, showed not only a strong tendency toward the positive evaluation of action against climate change, but also a high degree of instability and uncertainty in the language, terms and significations related to climate change and climate-induced migration.

The volume proceeds with the analysis of risk communication in newspaper discourse, first providing a detailed overview of the genre of newspaper language, and then delving into epistemic modality linguistic realisations regarding climate change and migration. Specifically, Chapter Three addresses the degree of un/certainty, im/probability and im/possibility in the CCCMC, revealing that communication and news operators often privilege spectacular, catastrophic and unexpected events in order to maximise persuasion and to reach the lay audience. Therefore, they tend to frame climate change backgrounding sensational elements, forecasting and risk assessments.

The last chapter provides an accurate analysis of the ways in which climate change and climate-induced migration are appraised and (re)contextualised in social and political institutions and organisations. In doing so, it explores the linguistic resources for the representation of social actors, and, specifically, those strategies such as ‘nominalisation’ and ‘nominating strategies’ that lead to

successfully depicting the figure of the climate refugee as an apocalyptic collectivised other – embodied in the image of hundreds of millions of destitutes uprooted from climate change.

The semantic instability encountered in the lexis and terms related to climate change and climate-induced migration in the CCCMC reinforces the significance of the present study, which aims to delve into the linguistic structures of such rapidly evolving discourses in order to reveal how specialised information is conveyed to lay people. The data, in fact, confirm that the scientific perspective on climate science has been widely misrepresented in newspaper discourse due to the influence of journalistic norms, authority and balance and that risk communication “is also marred by journalistic norms in the selection and composition of news” (141). The study ultimately sheds light on the representation of climate change as characterised by “affective labour” (142), responsible for triggering feelings of fear, anxiety and alarm toward transnational mobility.

As can be seen, Russo’s volume deals with a number of complex themes that go even beyond climate change since it invites readers to be critical about the apocalyptic and spectacularised tones of risk science as depicted by institutions and news operators, in order to delineate how societies express and define themselves through discourse.