FACE-GIVING (BAGI MUKA) AND FACE-PROTECTING (JAGA MUKA) THROUGH METAPHORS: ANALYSIS OF VERBAL INDIRECTNESS STRATEGIES AND POLITENESS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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INTRODUCTION: FACEWORK

- Facework is fundamental to human interaction.
- In many languages there are special terms for face-giving and face-saving.
- In Malay/Indonesian, we have terms such as bagi muka ‘give face’ and jaga muka ‘protect face’.
- Facework is important in daily life, not only in the personal domain but also the professional and public domains as well.

FOCUS OF THIS TALK

- We focus on facework in political discourse from a cross-cultural perspective.
- In particular, we focus on politicians’ use of metaphor as a verbal indirectness strategy:
  - constructing positive political identities for self
  - constructing negative political identities for rivals

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

- Conceptual Blending Theory
  (Fauconnier & Turner 2002)
- Interactional Linguistics framework
  (e.g. Selting & Couper-Kuhlen 2001)

DATA

- Data for our analysis come from recent election campaigns in Asian regions, including Singapore and Hong Kong.
Findings from a perception study will also be discussed to examine the effects of metaphor in enhancing, maintaining, or damaging a speaker’s public image.

OBJECTIVES
- To examine how electoral candidates construct political identities through the use of metaphors in electoral discourse:
  - Constructing favorable political identities for self
  - Constructing unfavorable political identities for rivals
- To analyze the facework implications of these political metaphors.

WHY USE METAPHORS?
- Metaphors are "innovative and creative; they do not stem from pre-existing similarities, but induce similarities between different objects" (italics added).
- In this way, they help trigger a sense of awe, wonder and delight in us and “contribute to our new understanding and perception of the world”.
  
  (Yeung, Yung & Fan 2013: 7; citing Hausman 1989)

Metaphor as conceptual mapping

(Lakoff & Johnson 1980)
Metaphor and conceptual blends
(Turner & Fauconnier 1995; Fauconnier & Turner 2002)

November 2001, The Arizona Republic
VARIOUS TYPES OF VISUAK METAPHORS

Forceville (1996, 2010) identifies 3 different types of visual metaphors:

- Simile
- Hybrid metaphor
- Contextual metaphor

Simile

mapping based on resemblances
(Forceville 1996)

This visual metaphor is a simile because the source domain and the target domain are visually presented SEPARATELY.

The Adidas swimwear is a second skin as smooth as the skin of a dolphin.

The Adidas-clad swimmer has the sleekness (and speed) of a dolphin.
Another simile

Hybrid metaphor
convergent mapping of different domains into one
(Yeung, Yuen & Fan 2013)
This visual metaphor is a hybrid metaphor because both the source and target domains are MERGED TOGETHER into a single entity.

'Ready to bake at home.'

Another hybrid metaphor
Contextual metaphor
cancelated mapping
(Forceville 1996)

A Clerget shoe, like the tie, is a most beautiful accessory.

La chaussure en beauté

This visual metaphor is a contextualized metaphor because the intended meaning of the target domain is understood within the context of the source of the source domain.

Clerget shoes are not just for the feet.

Wear them with pride.
WHY LOOK AT VISUAL METAPHORS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE?

- Metaphors abound in political discourse, often with no shortage of them in electoral speeches.
- Political leaders often use metaphors to establish common ground with the public.
- At the same time, they also often use metaphors to criticize their rivals, and thus indirectly promote themselves.
- Metaphors are an excellent means to narrativize and characterize oneself and others.

METAPHORS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

- Metaphors are highly valued because:
  - they add a touch of novelty and wit to what is said, and thus greatly enhance the speaker's positive self-image;
  - at the same time, they can also be used as verbal indirectness strategies to mitigate potential face-threats to both speaker and addressee.
- (Kuo 2003; Obeng 1997; Wilson 1990)

POLITICAL METAPHORS AND HUMOR

- Political metaphors are often accompanied by humor (sometimes with a heavy dose of sarcasm as well).
- This combination is frequently used to criticize rivals without excessive violations to politeness maxims.
- (Kiley & Shuttleworth 1971; Inge 1990; Lewis 2006; Taskona 2009)

NARRATIVE THEORY

- Narration and renarration of political events
  - contextualize individual stories into a bigger picture
  - meanings framed by socio-cultural and political contexts
  - a tool of manipulation biasedly constructed according to an underlying purpose
- (Mona Baker, invited talk at HK PolyU, March 30, 2016)
Constructing political identities through narration/renarration during election campaign events
- Donald Trump vs. Marco Rubio (Feb, 25, 2016)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CR0k5xdUxBs

SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS
- How do politicians use (visual) metaphors in electoral discourse?
- How effective are these (visual) metaphors in helping electoral candidates construct positive political identities for themselves and negative ones for others?

OUR ANALYSIS OF THE 2012 HONG KONG ELECTORAL DISCOURSE
- Some visual metaphors used in the 2012 Hong Kong Legislative Council Election Debates
  - The ladder metaphor
  - The cushion metaphor (if time permits)
  - The actor metaphor (Journal of Pragmatics; Chan & Yap 2015)
  - The anime-lover metaphor (Journal of Pragmatics; Chan & Yap 2015)
- We probably won’t have enough time to cover metaphors in the 2015 Singapore electoral discourse (but see Wong et al. 2016)
  - e.g. Over the past 50 years, Singapore has evolved from an unassuming sampan to a luxury cruise liner.
- Conceptual blending analysis of (visual) metaphors
- Perception study on the effectiveness of these metaphors
  Over the past 50 years, Singapore has evolved from an unassuming sampan to a luxury cruise liner.

DATA SOURCE
- Database: 5 televised debates hosted by RTHK
- Period: 18th August – 1st September 2012
- 50-60 minutes each
  Total minutes of data: 290 minutes
• Total no. of metaphors: 48 (visual and non-visual ones)
• Gift-giving session (送大禮環節) inside the debate: Candidates can present gifts, either to the public or to particular rivals. Most of the candidates would make use of this chance to attack the opponents.

### Frequency of characterization metaphors in political discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of metaphors</th>
<th>Number of tokens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characterization</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bag</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Positive vs. Negative Metaphors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended referent</th>
<th>Metaphors with positive connotations</th>
<th>Metaphors with negative connotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Constructing political identities through metaphors during election campaign events

The Ladder Metaphor

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXMZhpdHen4
DAB vs. LSD
Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong vs. League of Social Democrats

Chan Han Pan (CHP) 陈恒镔
The largest party in LegCo
Centre-right
Conservative
Pro-Government
Very pro-Beijing

Using 3 ladder metaphors

Presents a ladder to the Hong Kong people, wishing them good prospects under the government’s housing and youth development policies.

The ‘ladder gift’ is also used to ridicule the Democratic Party.

Visual humor

‘We are here today to present a ladder for all Hong Kong citizens,’
hoping that our housing policy is the ladder for solving our housing problems, so that those who live in sub-divided units can move into public housing estates more quickly.

(We also hope that) the next generation can afford to own a house, (while) the middle class do not need to be the slaves of housing.
"(I would) also give it to all youngsters in Hong Kong, hoping that there will be a way (lit. ladder) for upward mobility in terms of homeownership, studies, career opportunities and business entrepreneurship."
- Third largest party in the Legislative Council
- Centrist
- Pro-democracy
- Constant internal strife since handover in 1997
  - Discord between the young Turks (members advocating reform) and members from Meeting Point, who are considered as founding members of the Party
  - Members from the young Turks camp left the party one after another owing to their dissatisfaction with the party
‘(ill) should also present this gift to the members of the third tier of the Democratic Party, hoping that you have a chance to climb up (i.e. enter the Legislative Council)’
DAB vs. LSD
Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong vs. League of Social Democrats

(LSD 社會民主連線)

- Tsang Kin Shing (TKS) 曾健成
- Left-wing
- Pro-democracy
- Pro-labour

Using 1 ladder counter-metaphor

Mocking DAB by using the ladder metaphor but invoking a different source domain—the ladder as the jumping-site for suicides

Intended meaning:
The DAB is not helping HK people but making them more desperate.

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01 TKS: Social Liberalism in HK

mang 3 jin 3 jen 4 dung 3 leung 3 lai 1 kwang 1 soi 1

DAB
give
this
CL
ladder
FRT

02

hon1
bi1
gan6gan4
le1
hoi2
sin6paang2
kam4
gau3jor4le1
mu6sau2

COP force
HongKong people
FRT et
roof
climb
higher
jump off building

03

jei1wan3
loang3zon6bling1
smang6smang3
zil1mu6
le1

because
Leung Chunying come to power
after
FRT

04

siu4gau3
soi1
zing1
soi1
laal	zing4

housing price again group mean one tenth

DAB presented this ladder so as to force Hong Kong people to climb up higher and jumping off the roof. Because the housing price has gone up by ten percent since Leung Chun Ying came to power.

Caustic sarcasm

Accusations need to be backed up by reason or evidence.
What the ladder metaphor symbolizes

The ladder was used to symbolize the following:

1. **The progress of the housing policy** (by Chan)

2. **Upward mobility — a better life for the general public and career development opportunities for the younger generation** (by Chan)

3. **Encouragement to rival party — seen as ‘fake goodwill’ and hence a sarcastic remark** (by Chan)

4. **The current stagnant housing policy, which becomes a tragic inducement for some who despair to unfortunately end their life** (by Tsang)
WHAT THE ‘LADDER’ METAPHOR DOES
• The ladder metaphor provides a narrative whereby political identities are constructed and reconstructed by rival parties.
• This is possible because symbolic representations behind a given metaphor can be interpreted differently by different political parties and these different interpretations are then used to compete for the audience’s attention.
• Heightens the curiosity of the audience.
• Engages the audience in deeper thinking through a rich network of mental maps.
• Provides a visual cue to make a more lasting impact in the memory of the audience.
• Creates a positive public image for oneself
• At the same time can create a negative image of rivals through verbal indirectness, without openly flouting politeness maxims.

AUDIENCE-PERCEPTON ANALYSIS OF THE 2012 HONG KONG LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTION
• To examine how politicians’ use of visual metaphors help them to construct a positive image for themselves and negative ones for their rivals when aggressively campaigning for votes
• Pre-test and post-test computerized questionnaire
  - 43 participants were asked to indicate their impression of the public image of each candidate using a 10-point Likert scale.
  - Participants were then shown videos of political candidates using (visual) metaphors and were asked to rate each candidate again.
  - The two ratings were analyzed statistically.
  - Comparisons were made for (visual) metaphors in which the candidates (a) promoted themselves, (b) discredited others, (c) or did both.
CONCLUSION

1. Politicians need to construct a positive political identity for themselves, and they sometimes also engage in constructing a negative political identity for their rivals, particularly during election campaigns.

2. Because both the act of self-promotion and the act of other-denigration can be face-threatening to the political candidate himself/herself, verbal indirectness strategies are often deployed to help mitigate the face threats through indirect but clever talk.
3. Among these verbal indirectness strategies is the use of (visual) metaphors as witty and ‘relatively safe’ narrative strategies to characterize oneself and/or others.
4. Skillful politicians can use (visual) metaphors not only to promote themselves and discredit others, but when attacked, they can also use (visual) metaphors to reconstruct their damaged identities as well, sometimes to the detriment of their attacker.
5. Conceptual blend analyses help us better understand the contribution of metaphors in the construction of memorable mental images.
6. Our perception study reveals that during the 2012 Hong Kong Legislative Council Election, skillful politicians were often able to either improve or at least maintain their positive public image ratings through clever use of (visual) metaphors.

REFERENCES

OVERVIEW
1. Narrativizing through (visual) metaphor
2. Narrative theory and the construction of political identities
3. Use of (visual) metaphors in Hong Kong political discourse
   3.1 The ladder metaphor
   3.2 The cushion metaphor (if time permits)
4. A conceptual blending analysis of (visual) metaphors in HK electoral discourse
5. A perception study on the public image of political candidates before and after their use of (visual) metaphors
6. Conclusion