

# Multimodal Metaphors and Metonymies in Dynamic Multimodal Discourse: A Case Study of China's National Image Promotion Documentary

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**Abstract:** Metaphorical and metonymic thinking is pervasive in various forms of human communication, but the roles metaphor and metonymy play and the patterns in which they interact with each other vary according to the genres in which they occur. The present study attempts to investigate metaphor and metonymy in a realistic genre, focusing on their identification, patterns and interactions. The study adopts a cognitive-functional approach from the perspective of CMT, Multimodal Metaphor Theory and Social Semiotics to analyze a dynamic multimodal discourse (or audiovisual text) – *China's National Image Promo: Perspective*, a seventeen-minute documentary about China. In this promotion documentary, sixteen patterns of multimodal metaphors and six patterns of multimodal metonymies are identified, four patterns of the metaphor-metonymy interaction are revealed and the different cognitive and discursive roles of metaphor and metonymy are discussed. The significance of these findings is as follows. First, they further confirm the assumptions that, as basic cognitive mechanisms of human being, metaphor and metonymy are not limited only to language, but are pervasive in multimodal discourses; Second, they demonstrate that metonymy is more basic than metaphor and usually plays a predominant role in realistic genres; Third, they provide a clear picture of metaphor-metonymy interactions in a multimodal discourse. Finally, they highlight the importance of social cultural background and encyclopedia knowledge in identifying and interpreting metaphor and metonymy, and in the discussion of their roles in conveying ideological ideas. However, this study only explores one multimodal discourse, one genre, more work still need to be done to investigate metaphor and metonymy in more multimodal discourses and other genres so that a systemic study can be formed and shed more enlightenment on our understanding of the two cognitive mechanisms of human being.

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