**Collaborative metaphor identification in digital space**

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This paper contributes to the ongoing discussions concerning ways of strengthening the study of metaphor through the application of valid, reliable and transparent research methods, an area that has increasingly received focus in the past decade (see e.g. Pérez-Sobrino & Julich-Warpakowski, 2020). It details experiences gained during the operationalization of a collaborative international research project called ‘Metaphor in Academic Talk: L2 metaphor production in higher education CLIL discussion seminars’ (MetCLIL).

The project aims to research the role of metaphor in university seminars where English is used as the Medium of Instruction (EMI), a follow-up to the EuroCoAT project investigating metaphor produced in EMI office hour consultations at various universities throughout Europe (http://www.eurocoat.es/). By contrast, the MetCLIL data consists of EMI discourse recorded during discussion seminars at universities in 6 countries: Spain, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The project’s first phase, corpus compilation, has been completed: 9 sessions have been recorded and transcribed (amounting to 15 hours 30 minutes /111,552 tokens).

The project’s second phase involved the metaphor tagging using the Metaphor Identification procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU; Steen et al., 2010). Consisting of explicit step-by-step instructions for identifying metaphor, MIPVU is intended as a reliable and replicable procedure. Despite this, issues with respect to its consistent application have been raised (see e.g. Nacey et al., 2019).

In this paper, we discuss ways in which an international collaborative team, whose members have varying degrees of previous experience with MIPVU and are based in different locations, may nevertheless effectively apply the procedure to large amounts of data. Here we detail digital solutions, ways in which we organized the analysis and assure its quality, and many of the challenges and theoretical issues that arose in the group.

Regarding this latter issue, for instance, we found some differences between novice and expert researchers in certain space-related terms such as certain prepositions (e.g., ‘about’ and ‘at’) or nouns (e.g., ‘boundary’ or ‘span’). We report the problems these and other terms entailed and how they have been addressed and solved.

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