

instrument for waging class struggle, while in English-language public culture ‘critical thinking as a discourse, is a tool of distinction’ (p. 181). Post-socialist Slovak education is making efforts to cultivate the students’ critical thinking along a similar track to what is cherished in US universities.

The book provides an eye-opening and inspiring understanding of critical thinking and civil criticism in post-socialist Slovakia, on the other hand. The ethnographic approach allows Larson to gain insider meanings and present a local interpretation. More importantly, it allows him to launch a challenge to those who assume that post-1989 Slovakia should uncritically adopt the norms of liberal democratic countries for its public culture without considering how the past saturates the present, and how critical thought has been influenced by interpersonal interaction, sentiments involved in criticism, and the collective intentionality of the social agents under political systems.

Chris Heffer, Frances Rock and John Conley (eds), *Legal–Lay Communication: Textual Travels in the Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; xiv + 332 pp., £64.00 (hbk), £25.99 (pbk).

**Reviewed by:** Annalisa Zanola, *Department of Economics and Management, University of Brescia, Italy*

In this book, Heffer, Rock and Conley provide a unique perspective on communication between legal professionals and the various groups and persons that they encounter in their work, by paying special attention to the transformation and ‘travel’ of texts as part of that communication. The three editors, joining their different backgrounds and expertise in language and law, combine a range of interesting perspectives on legal–lay communication. By this term, we refer here to those nodes of interaction where the legal world meets the everyday life world; this may involve people acting for the legal system – from police call-handlers to judges – as well as people encountering the legal process in a lay role, for example, as witnesses and suspects.

The theoretical nexus for the exploration in the individual chapters is the notion of ‘textual travel’, a portmanteau term for a series of concepts that are well established within linguistics, anthropology and sociology, and which are discussed using such terms as entextualization, decontextualization, recontextualization, intertextuality, interdiscursivity and textual trajectories (pp. 8–14). Collectively, notions of textual travel shed new light on the ways in which texts can be transformed in social and legal life. Considering that ‘to talk of texts “travelling” is to assume that there is a stable element to texts [...] and that there is some fluid element’ (p. 11), the book explores the wide range of texts and contexts involved in legal–lay communication: from varied legal sources (legislation, common law, regulations) to different lay audiences (defendants, witnesses, juries), and from possible lay producers (eyewitnesses, clients, lay litigants) to hypothetical legal addressees (interviewing officers, lawyers, judges). The complexity of this travel is underscored by the diversity in procedures, technologies and media involved, from talk and writing to email, telephone conversations and the World Wide Web.

The potential for participants in legal processes ‘to appropriate mediational means and to transform texts through intertextual processes’ (p. 14) is the main concern in the

Introduction of the volume, where textual mediation in policing settings is examined. Part 1 explores processes of mediation (through technologies, interactions and the media) as found in the investigatory stages of the legal process: vivid examples of intertextual construction in the criminal courtroom are presented here. Part 2 focuses on the importance of intertextuality in the legal construction of cases in court. Part 3 considers the transformative effects of recontextualization in processes of judicial decision-making. Finally, Part 4 explores how the apparent permanence of legal categorization is shaken by these processes of textual travel.

If the introductory chapter anticipates the main issues of the volume (namely, 'legal-lay' or 'lay-legal', together with the fundamental issue of 'textual travel'), Chapters 2 to 4 in Part 1 each offer perspectives on how textual mediation is part of police work: Garner and Jonson's chapter focuses on the micro-communicative events which often initiate investigations (e.g. emergency calls) and do so by mediating information from the public into the police institutions; Heydon's chapter develops the theme of mediation through the police interview; Rock's contribution considers how lay people's language is mediated by policing processes.

The chapters in Part 2 deal with the ways in which legal professionals – lawyers and judges – construct their respective cases and decisions. In Chapter 5, Maryns highlights the link between spoken and written discourses in Belgian criminal trials. Chapter 6, by Komter, aims at illustrating the process of producing a written version of a suspect's statement, perfectly complementing Maryns' methodology. Johnson's contribution in Chapter 7 chooses a famous English criminal case to analyse how the defendant's narrative was embedded and evaluated in the prosecution's case. The final chapter in Part 2 is Archer's study of the 1856 Palmer Trial, the so-called 'trial of the century': some of the practices present in this popular case are still prominent in criminal trials.

Chapters 9 and 10 in Part 3, respectively by Ehrlich and Heffer, argue that the recontextualization of texts within a new legal focus may obscure their original context, as happens to the complainant in the Maouloud Baby versus State of Maryland case discussed by Ehrlich. Tracy and Delgado (Chapter 11), on the other hand, show that the degree to which the legal process is 'lay' or 'legal' in style depends as much on the speaker's argument as on the particular legal genre.

The theme for the final Part of the volume is the way in which the travels of texts can elide the cultural and ideological boundaries between categories in lay-legal communication, and even change the content of those categories. Chapter 12, by Conley and several medical colleagues, addresses the travels of texts in the highly regulated domain of genetic research; the following chapter, by Davies, examines the UK *Highway Code*; the last chapter contains Trinch's analysis of Latina women's reports of rape in interviews with legal authorities.

Necessarily complex, *Legal-Lay Communication* skilfully melds together perspectives from the areas of discourse studies, linguistic anthropology, and sociolinguistics, still remaining accessible throughout to readers new to such fields. Written by a group of eminent international scholars, this work should rightly be seen as a significant contribution to a growing literature in Legal English discourse. As the Editors maintain in their Introduction, this book 'can enrich our understanding of the socially imperative matter of communication between legal actors and those they investigate, represent, and

sentence' (p. 28). This volume will prove a profitable read for scholars from the diverse range of disciplines from which it draws upon and is therefore highly recommended to students and researchers in forensic linguistics, as well as sociolinguists, anthropologists, and discourse and communication scholars interested in the relation between language and the law.

Jodie Clark, *Language, Sex and Social Structure: Analyzing Discourses of Sexuality*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; x + 157 pp., US\$85.00 (hbk).

**Reviewed by:** Kate Power, *Department of English, University of British Columbia, Canada*

In *Language, Sex and Social Structure*, Jodie Clark adds to the growing body of literature around discourses of sexuality by offering an ethnographic approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) that seeks to redress the 'overly top-down approach' (p. 143) for which CDA is often critiqued. More specifically, Clark proposes a method for analyzing local instantiations of repressive (in this case, homophobic) discourses within particular communities of practice, with a view to identifying opportunities for social change.

In doing so, Clark adopts the emancipatory agenda of critical social science, arguing that this agenda is best served by focusing on human agency, viewed not as the performance of social *actions*, but rather as the communication of *conceptual systems* which undergird broader social discourses and structures. At this point, Clark's work echoes but makes no reference to existing sociocognitive approaches to CDA (e.g. Van Dijk, 2002), which address social injustice by focusing on situated meaning-making, relevant context models, and cognitive structures that link text and context. Likewise, as is common in much (if not most) contemporary discourse analysis, Clark critiques analytical approaches that either purport to access a speaker's thoughts or view the meaning of specific words as inherent, fixed, or acontextual. Here again, Clark revisits well-traversed territory.

Where Clark does forge a new path, however, is in her proposal of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1998) as a structured means by which discourse analysts might both interpret and, more importantly, lay bare their interpretations of conversational data. According to Clark, relevance theory enables analysts more effectively to distinguish between their own understandings of conversations, and the corresponding understandings of their participants. In particular, Clark argues that relevance theory can contribute to explaining the local production of conceptual systems, identifying how participants' lexical choices invoke such systems, and tracing the relative stability of those same systems across different contexts.

Clark posits that the overriding purpose of her proposed methodology is 'to demonstrate empirically' (p. 6) that it is in discursive and interpretative variation that instability and the potential for change may be found. This is an ambitious project, which Clark takes on by devoting three of her seven chapters to a case study involving seven recorded dinner-table conversations between 10 members of a women's field hockey team at a small UK university. Treating her participants as members of a single community of practice comprising all members of their hockey team, Clark methodically traces their production of 'ad hoc' concepts around individual identity, team membership, sporting ability,