

LA MÉTAPHORE CONCEPTUELLE

Anca Cosăceanu
Université de Bucarest

ABSTRACT: *This article aims to outline the cognitive theory of metaphor, as well as to illustrate it by analyzing some conceptual metaphors conveyed by the media discourse. We begin by presenting the main concepts of the cognitive theory of metaphor, such as metaphorical mapping, target domain, source domain, idealized cognitive model, image schema. In our view, the idealized cognitive models and the image schemas are the basis for metaphorical mapping, as they represent basically stereotypical aspects of a source domain. CRISIS AS DISEASE metaphors, for instance, are activations of two idealized cognitive models, the SICKNESS model and the MEDICAL TREATMENT model, including elements as clinical context, type of illness, symptoms, spreading, doctor-patient relation. The second part of the article deals with the linguistic representation in media discourse of the global economic crisis of 2008-2010. Our aim is to offer an analysis of two recurrent conceptual metaphors employed in the French press to refer to this crisis: THE ECONOMY IS THE ENVIRONMENT – THE CRISIS IS A NATURAL DISASTER (structural metaphor) and THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT – THE CRISIS IS A DISEASE (organismic metaphor describing the economic crisis through personification). We present corpus data found in the French newspapers Le Monde, Le Figaro, Le Soir, L’Humanité, Le Point, Libération, and La Tribune. The corpus analysis allows us to notice similarities and differences in distribution patterns as well as in the lexicalization of the disaster vs. disease metaphors referring to the economic crisis. We explain both by identifying the sets of correspondences between the two source domains of nature and health and the target domain of economy. Another type of similarities, however, concerns the source domains themselves. These we try to explain by postulating two mental patterns that underlie both source domains: CAUSE – EFFECT and BALANCE/UNBALANCE.*

Keywords: *cognitive semantics, conceptual metaphor, conceptual domain, idealized cognitive models, image schemas, media discourse, metaphors of the economic crisis*