

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR AND ENGLISH LEXICAL BLENDS

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The paper deals with the way conceptual metaphor is exemplified by English lexical blends. The text briefly outlines some main points in Conceptual Metaphor Theory including metaphorical mapping, types of conceptual metaphor, and metaphor ~ metonymy interactions. The aim of the study is to discover instances of conceptual metaphor in a corpus comprising English lexical blends. The paper lists some more conspicuous examples of metaphorization, part of which stem from metonymic transfer. It also arrives at certain conclusions regarding the prerequisites for metaphorization in the semantics of English lexical blends.

Key words: metaphor, metonymy, mapping, image schemas, lexical blends

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

In Cognitive Linguistics, metaphor is regarded as a way of thinking which is grounded in human experience. Conceptual metaphor exemplifies the interaction between conceptual domains. Conceptual metaphor theory states that people conceptualize target concepts by means of source concepts. Lakoff and Johnson compare metaphorical mapping to OHP projection. They visualize the target concept as the first transparency placed on the projector screen and metaphorical mapping as the addition of another transparency on top of the first one. In this way, the authors show that metaphorical mapping adds new elements and relations to the target concept. Metaphorical mapping is unidirectional (from source to target) and the image schemas of the source concept help in the conceptualization of the target concept (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 253). Image schemas have to do with the notion of embodiment: they are based on people's experience with their bodies and the human body is often the source domain in metaphorical mapping. Metaphor-based language can be motivated by image schemas, such as the schemas of motion, containment, and scale, and image schemas often function in combination (Luizova-Horeva 2014).

Ungerer and Schmid distinguish between lean and rich metaphorical mapping depending on the type of concepts involved. Rich mapping is established between a specific source concept consisting of basic level concepts and an abstract target concept, e.g.: the +ARGUMENT IS WAR+ metaphor. Lean mapping occurs between a specific source concept and a generic target concept, for instance when the source concept refers to an animal or a bird and the target concept defines an instrument or a machine. Both lean and rich mapping can take place between a generic source concept and an abstract target concept whereas only lean mapping, also known as personification, holds between a generic source concept and a specific target concept. In lean mapping, the metaphor highlights one or more attributes of the target concept which is well structured in order to be conceptualized successfully (Ungerer and Schmid 2006: 125 – 126).

On the basis of their cognitive functions, conceptual metaphors are subdivided into structural, ontological and orientational (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). A structural metaphor is, for example, +TIME IS MOVEMENT+ in *Time flies* because it imposes structure on the concept of TIME. Ontological metaphors impose a new ontological status on abstract target concepts and give rise to new abstract categories (Kövecses 2010: 38). For instance, *in love* exemplifies the ontological metaphor +A STATE IS A CONTAINER+. Kövecses points out that personification is a subtype of ontological metaphor which makes objects or abstract characteristics adopt human features, e.g.: *Inflation is eating up our profits* (ibid.: 39). With ontological metaphors, abstract categories are conceptualized as things. Orientational metaphors are grounded in the way people move through space. They contribute to the coherent conceptualization of a set of target concepts: some concepts are UP (*Speak up*) whereas other concepts are DOWN (*Keep your voice down*), which reflects the metaphors +MORE IS UP+, +LESS IS DOWN+. All three types of conceptual metaphor often interplay.

An interesting field of study is the conduit metaphor which shows that: 1) language functions as a conduit for conveying thoughts from one person to another; 2) people conceptualize writing and speaking in terms of inserting emotions and thoughts into words; 3) words are containers of emotions and thoughts; 4) people conceptualize listening and reading as taking emotions and thoughts out of words (Reddy, in Ortony 1993: 170). Examples of a conduit metaphor are: *Try to get your thoughts across better; Your words are hollow; That remark is completely impenetrable.*

Jakobson views metaphor ~ metonymy relations in terms of a continuum between two poles. The metaphoric pole is based on similarity while the metonymic one has to do with contiguity. Similarity presupposes

belonging to the same category. Contiguity is related to the adjacency between real-world objects and is exemplified as semantic contiguity. Jakobson believes that this dichotomy is fundamental for all kinds of verbal behaviour and for human behaviour as a whole (Jakobson 1971: 256). Jakobson's ideas have been further developed by more recent studies on metaphor and metonymy (see, for instance, Radden, in Dirven and Pörings 2003). There are plenty of studies on the interactions between metaphor and metonymy emphasizing the role of metonymy in metaphorization. Goossens talks about metaphor stemming from metonymy, metonymic relations in the metaphor itself and metaphoric relations in metonymy. The latter two types of interactions are referred to as integrated metaphonymy, combining metaphor and metonymy in the same expression, and cumulative metaphonymy where metaphor comes from metonymy or metonymy comes from metaphor (Goossens, in Dirven and Pörings 2003).

According to Pencheva, metaphors compare two heterogeneous entities, as a result of which a new set of features is formed. The entities compared usually belong to the 'Animate' category or to the 'Inanimate' category. Characteristics are transferred from 'Animate' to 'Inanimate' or vice versa. If both entities are animate, which is less common, one of them is conceptualized as *part* of an animate entity, i.e. as inanimate. Apart from entities in their entirety, we can compare their constituent parts and characteristics, which illustrates that the metaphorical image is based on the interaction between the mental images of the entities. Since the comparison does not bear upon the real images of the entities, we are able to compare ontologically different things. Pencheva points out that most heterogeneous is the 'Inanimate object' > 'Person' model while the least heterogeneous model is 'Animal' > 'Person' (Pencheva 2001).

Conceptual metaphor and metaphor ~ metonymy interactions as exemplified by English lexical blends

In contemporary English, a lot of neologisms and nonce-words are formed via lexical blending. In many cases, their semantics is constructed metaphorically. As a word-formation process blending resorts to the fusion of two or more lexemes into a unified whole. This is done by the combination of source words kept intact in the new coinage, intercalative word formation or a reduction of at least one source word at the point of fusion of the lexemes.

The linguistic material under study largely embraces occasionalisms and neologisms which usually originate from colloquial speech and slang.

For the most part, the analyzed corpus was compiled with the help of Internet sources, such as dictionaries of nonce-words and articles in *American Speech*. The corpus embraces the language of computer specialists, the language of the mass media, the terminology of tourism, youth slang. It features words long established in the system of language but largely occasionalisms which remain to be integrated in it.

Some English lexical blends are examples of metaphorization based on the 'Person' > 'Person' model but this model is further complicated by an additional interplay between metaphors or metonymy and metaphor. For instance, *trustafarian* < *trust (fund)* + *Rastafarian* means "an unemployed person who has a stable income and a bohemian lifestyle". The second source word is associated with specific behaviour, appearance and social status. In a similar fashion, in *Meanderthal* < *meandering* + *Neanderthal* ("a person who walks aimlessly and languidly") the second component of the blend denotes specific behaviour and, probably, specific appearance. With *trustafarian*, the second source word denotes the beneficiary of the trust fund but *trust fund* also signals metaphorization and metonymization. The metonymy +EMOTION FOR ORGANIZATION+ (*trust* as an emotion and *trust* as an organization) interplays with +EMOTIONS ARE ARTIFACTS+ because an abstract entity (emotion) is perceived as a material one (an artifact or object) which can be given or transferred to a third party (the trustee who manages the trust fund). In the case of *Meanderthal*, the first source word (*meandering*) contributes to the 'Inanimate' > 'Animate' model by assigning non-human characteristics to human beings: rivers, streams and roads meander when they do not follow a straight route.

In the case of the 'Woman' > 'Man' metaphoric transfer following the 'Person' > 'Person' model, we achieve degradation of the image of a male by means of associating him with a female (see Pencheva 2001: 248). For example, in *mimbo* < *man/ male* + *bimbo* and *himbo* < *he/ him* + *bimbo* the second source word usually denotes women ("an attractive but not very clever young woman"; (slang) "a promiscuous young woman"). The 'Woman' > 'Man' metaphoric transfer constructs a mental image of a man with specific physical and intellectual characteristics and behaviour ("an attractive but silly man").

The 'Person' > 'Person' model is manifested in the following metaphor where some blends denote people as a whole whereas other blends refer to men or women:

+PEOPLE ARE FAIRYTALE/ MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS+:
Spinderella < *spin* + *Cinderella*, *Broseidon* < *bro* + *Poseidon*, *FOBbit* <

Forward Operating Base + *hobbit*, *mathamagician/mathemagician* < *math/mathematics* + *magician*.

The ‘Animal’ > ‘Person’ model is an example of lean mapping according to Ungerer and Schmid 2006:

+PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS+: *sheeple* < *sheep* + *people*, *manther* < *man/male* + *panther*, *douchepotamus* < *douche* (French) + *hippopotamus*, *butch* < *buff* + *bitch*, *pigmobile* < *pig* + *automobile*, *designosaurs* < *designers* + *dinosaurs*, *transbeastite* < *beast* + *transvestite*.

+PEOPLE ARE MONSTERS/ EVIL BEASTS+: *bridezilla* < *bride* + *-zilla/ Godzilla*, *groomzilla* < *groom* + *-zilla/ Godzilla*, *promzilla* < *prom* + *-zilla/ Godzilla*. This metaphor can be regarded as a subtype of the +PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS+ metaphor.

The ‘Animal’ > ‘Person’ model is quite common in both English and Bulgarian. Yanev 2014, for instance, points out that these languages abound in human-animal comparisons. Some expressions which describe human behaviour and compare people to animals can be found in both languages, e.g.: *глупав като говедо* – *as stupid as a cow*; *хитър като лисица* – *as sly as a fox*, etc. Many anthropocentric comparisons in English and Bulgarian are oxymoronic, e.g.: *умен като маймуна* means “a silly person”, i.e. in this case the metaphoric image is built up by means of naming an animal perceived as possessing the opposite characteristic (Yanev 2011).

A person can also be conceptualized with the help of inanimate entities. Some of the following metaphors express a negative attitude to specific human behaviour:

+PEOPLE ARE PLANTS+: *brotato* < *bro* + *potato*, *vidspud* < *video* + *spud*. These blends draw an analogy with *couch potato*.

+PEOPLE ARE DISEASES+: *manthrax* < *man/male* + *anthrax*.

+PEOPLE ARE ARTIFACTS/ SUBSTANCES+: *flexexecutive* < *flexible* + *executive*, *flexitarian* < *flexible* + *vegetarian*, *flexivore* < *flexible* + *carnivore*.

+PEOPLE ARE MACHINES+: *scandroid* < *scan(-ning)* + *android*, *oblividroid* < *oblivious* + *android*, *governator* < *governor/ governing* + *terminator*. This metaphor reflects the mechanistic view of the world. According to Descartes, the human body is a machine and a healthy person can be compared to a clock mechanism. The Cartesian mechanistic doctrine is exemplified in the metaphorical language of medicine which perceives diseases as malfunctions in certain components of the machine (Pacheva-Karabova 2005: 248).

The +PEOPLE ARE MACHINES+ metaphor accounts for the existence of the following two metaphors:

+PARTS OF THE HUMAN BODY ARE PARTS OF MACHINES/ ARTIFACTS+: *Chevrolegs* < *Chevrolet* + *legs*.

+INTUITION/ INSTINCTS IS/ ARE INSTRUMENTS/ DEVICES+: *gaydar* < *gay* + *radar*.

The meaning of some English lexical blends is also constructed on the basis of these metaphors:

+DISEASES ARE NATURAL PHENOMENA+: *flunami* < *flu* + *tsunami*.

+TIME IS A SUBSTANCE+: *flexitime* < *flexible* + *time*.

+EMOTIONS ARE DISEASES+: *emola* < *emotional* + *ebola*.

+EMOTIONS ARE SUBSTANCES+ specifying +THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS+: *hopium* < *hope* + *opium*.

+SPEAKING/ STORYTELLING IS THREAD SPINNING+: *Spinderella* < *spin* + *Cinderella*, *Spinnish* < *spin* (doctor) + *English*. Here one can find analogy with the verb *spin* (as in *spin something into thread* and *spin a story*).

+SOCIETIES ARE PEOPLE+ (personification), +SOCIETIES SUFFER FROM DISEASES+ and +EXCESSIVE AFFLUENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE+: *affluenza* < *affluence* + *influenza*, *afflufemza* < *female* + *affluenza*. With the first two metaphors, the metaphoric model is from 'Inanimate' to 'Animate'. The meaning of the blends is constructed via the interplay of the three metaphors.

+DEVICES/ MACHINES/ ARTIFACTS ARE ANIMALS+: *collelephant* < *college* + *elephant*, *docubug* < *document* + *bug*. The metaphoric model is also from 'Inanimate' to 'Animate'.

+WORDS ARE OBJECTS/ ARTIFACTS+: *wordrobe* < *word* + *wardrobe*.

+WORDS ARE CONTAINERS+ which presupposes the existence of +IDEAS ARE OBJECTS/ ARTIFACTS+: *malamanteau* < *malapropism* + *portmanteau*. This is an example of a conduit metaphor.

+WORDS ARE WEAPONS+: *twitchfork* < *Twitter* + *pitchfork*.

+INFORMATION IS A SUBSTANCE/ FOOD+: *infosumer* < *information* + *consumer*.

+INFORMATION TRANSFER IS TRANSPORTATION+ which presupposes the existence of the +INFORMATION IS CONTENT+ metaphor: *infobahn* < *information* (superhighway) + *autobahn*, *superhypeway* < *hype* + (information) *super-highway*, *twaffic* < *Twitter* + *traffic*. This is an example of a conduit metaphor.

+THE INTERNET IS A NARCOTIC/ AN ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCE+: *twabstinence* < *Twitter* + *abstinence*.

+THE INTERNET IS A (CLOSED) COMMUNITY/ COUNTRY/ WORLD+: *netizen* < *Internet* + *citizen*/ *denizen*, *Inter-vasion* < *Internet* + *invasion*, *Twibe* < *Twitter* + *tribe*, *Twitpocalypse* < *Twitter* + *apocalypse*, *Gulog* < *GULAG* + *blog*, *webbelganger* < *web* + *doppelganger*, *webciety* < *web* + *society*, *Yahooligans* < *Yahoo* + *hooligans*.

Some English lexical blends demonstrate metaphor ~ metonymy interactions:

+SKIN COLOUR FOR RACIAL IDENTITY+ (or +COLOUR FOR RACE+) interplays with +RACE IS AN ARTIFACT+: *wigga* < *white* + *nigger*, *Windian* < *white* + *Indian*, *Blindian* < *black* + *Indian*, *buppie* < *black* + *yuppie*, *ebonics* < *ebony* + *phonics*, *Blatina* < *black* + *Latina*, *blaxploitation* < *blacks* + *exploitation*, *blaccent* < *black* + *accent*, etc. Most examples include the adjectives *black* and *white*. Black and white are regarded as diametrically opposite: black symbolizes darkness whereas white stands for light. The lack of political correctness in the usage of these colours as racial/ ethnic identity denominators is attributable to the fact that they help in the conceptualization of entities most of which are negatively evaluated: legality (white) – illegality (black), morality (white) – immorality (black), absence (black), secretiveness (black), fear (white), intensity (white), war (white) (Hamilton 2016: 114 – 146). *Ebonics* presupposes the existence of +PEOPLE ARE ARTIFACTS+ which observes the ‘Inanimate’ > ‘Animate’ model (the dark colour of ebony > dark skin colour).

+COLOUR FOR (POLITICAL) BELIEFS+ interacts with +BELIEFS ARE ARTIFACTS+: *guppie* < *green* + *yuppie*. The green colour, symbolizing vegetation, helps in the conceptualization of: youth and lack of expertise, envy, money, political beliefs and environmental protection (Hamilton 2016: 170 – 171). Here green metonymically stands for the idea that the natural environment should be protected. It may also denote belonging to a social or a political group supporting such beliefs.

+SYMBOL OF AN INSTITUTION/ GROUP OF PEOPLE FOR THE INSTITUTION/ GROUP OF PEOPLE+: *Owlmaha* < *owl* + *Omaha*, *duncaroo* < *Duncan (College)* + *kangaroo*. Here the symbol of the institution or group of people is an animate entity. We discover the +PEOPLE/ INSTITUTIONS ARE ANIMALS+ metaphor. The same metonymic transfer can also be found when the symbol is inanimate, i.e. an artifact: *violincest* < *violin* + *incest*. In this case, the metaphor is +PEOPLE/ INSTITUTIONS ARE ARTIFACTS+.

+PLACE FOR INSTITUTION+: *Nollywood* < *Nigeria* + *Hollywood*, *Silliwood* < *Silicon Valley* + *Hollywood*, *Bollywood* < *Bombay* +

Hollywood. This type of metonymy accounts for the conceptualization of Hollywood as a metaphorical space associated with specific material culture symbols as well as with people who are engaged in specific activities there.

+ARTIFACT FOR PLACE+: *pajamahadeen* < *pajamas* + *Mujahadeen*. Here an artifact (*pajamas*) stands for the concept of HOME. We also find metaphorization based on the ‘Person’ > ‘Person’ model, i.e. the metaphoric transfer is restricted within the conceptualization of ‘Person’. *Mujahadeen* denotes specific behaviour which can be described as “(extreme) activism; terrorism”.

+PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECT FOR EMOTION+: *coffeegasm* < *coffee* + *orgasm*, *eargasm* < *ear* + *orgasm*, *flavourgasm* < *flavour* + *orgasm*, *geekgasm* < *geek* + *orgasm*, *joygasm* < *joy* + *orgasm*, *laughgasm* < *laugh* + *orgasm*, *musigasm* < *music* + *orgasm*, *peegasm* < *pee* + *orgasm*, *sargasm* < *sarcasm* + *orgasm*, *skingasm* < *skin* + *orgasm*, *Swirllgasm* < *Swirl* + *orgasm*. Emotion concepts are structured by the establishment of metonymic links with physiological effects. The metonymic transfer leads to metaphorization which endows emotion concepts with structure (Ungerer and Schmid 2006: 143).

+ARTIFACT FOR EMOTION+ presupposes that +EMOTIONS ARE ARTIFACTS+, the latter serving as a basis for +EMOTIONS ARE SUBSTANCES+: *menoporsche* < *menopause* + *Porsche*. In this case, basic emotion concepts show that they are grounded in basic human experience by means of parasitic categorization (a term used by Ungerer and Schmid 2006: 139). According to Ungerer and Schmid, basic emotions are, for instance, sadness, anger, hatred, fear, happiness, and love (ibid.).

+ARTIFACT FOR COLOUR+: *snowmo* < *snow* + *homo*. This example illustrates how an inanimate entity with a characteristic colour (“snow”) helps in the conceptualization of the colour itself. Metonymy interacts with the ‘Person’ > ‘Person’ metaphoric model. The second source word of the lexical blend (*homo* < *homosexual*) expresses a negative attitude to the referent’s appearance.

Conclusion

The instances of conceptual metaphor in the analysed corpus demonstrate that metaphorization often takes place on several levels, i.e. metaphors interplay because they establish conceptual links with each other or build a hierarchy. The presence of conceptual links between metaphors which are not in a hierarchical relationship means that they exist on a similar level of abstraction but are interdependent. The hierarchical structure of conceptualization is evident in the differing level of abstraction, e.g.: +COMMUNITIES ARE FAMILIES+ > +PATIENTS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ARE RELATIVES+.

On the lexical level in English, metaphorization can be based on one of the components of the construction or on the combination of all components. Metaphoric transfer is often signalled by paronomasia. It can be expected that polysemy will be brought about by metonymy or metaphor. For example, *spam* < *spiced* + *ham* originally denoted food. Through metaphorization, *spam* probably adopted the meaning of “Internet junk mail”.

As regards English lexical blends, the most common examples of conceptual metaphor are the following: +THE INTERNET IS A (CLOSED) COMMUNITY/ COUNTRY/ WORLD+; +PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS+ and +PEOPLE ARE MONSTERS/ EVIL BEASTS+; +PEOPLE ARE FAIRYTALE/ MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS+. The metaphoric transfer is usually from ‘Animate’ to ‘Animate’. The conceptualization of the Internet via metaphorization is probably attributable to the rapid growth of new technologies as well as the necessity to coin new concepts for them. Metaphorization often interplays with conceptual metonymy, the latter being based on the construction as a whole or on one of its components. Concerning the interaction between metonymy and metaphor, two major tendencies are discernible: 1) one source word contributes to metonymic transfer whereas the other source word accounts for metaphoric transfer; 2) one source word or the construction as a totality contributes to metonymic transfer which presupposes the existence of a specific metaphor.

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