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### **CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISCOURSE**

*The subject matter of the present article is an overview of the theory of conceptual metaphor and the application of this theory to different types of discourse. The theory of conceptual metaphor is presented mostly from the point of view of George Lakoff and his co-author Mark Johnson.*

*Discourse analysis is rendered within the framework of the theory developed by Jacques Derrida following its account in the monograph of Eleonora Lassan "Discourse of Power and Dissidence in the USSR" and an article "Metaphorisation and Discourse" by N. Belozerova. Practical application of the theories is illustrated by the examples of political and propagandistic discourse. The Address to the Nation of the US President George Bush of 19 March 2003 delivered at an early stage of the US war against Iraq serves as an illustration of political discourse. Propagandistic posters of the Soviet era, starting with the post-revolutionary period and finishing with the period of "cold war" and the acme of struggle against the "world imperialism" illustrate the application of conceptual metaphor theory to propagandistic discourse.*

**KEY WORDS:** *conceptual metaphor, deconstruction theory, différance, binary oppositions, visualisation of metaphor.*

The main objective of the article is to analyse conceptual metaphors in political and propagandistic discourse applying the theoretical postulates of George Lakoff and Jacques Derrida.

The conceptual theory of metaphor has been developed by George Lakoff. An early version of the theory was published in 1980 in cooperation with Mark Johnson under the title "Metaphors We Live By"<sup>1</sup>. In 1992 Lakoff's "Contemporary Theory of Metaphor"<sup>2</sup> was published.

In his theory Lakoff provides a qualitatively new conception of metaphor compared with its classical interpretation. The latter considers metaphor as "a figure of speech which concisely compares two things by saying that one is the other"<sup>3</sup>, i. e. it is a linguistic comparison, which is a

phenomenon of language. Lakoff, in his turn, claims that metaphor is conceived by mind. He defines metaphor as a 'mapping across conceptual domains'<sup>4</sup>.

Lakoff denies a well-established opinion that ordinary speech is devoid of metaphor. Lakoff's work "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor" refers to an article by Michael Reddy, where Reddy showed for the first time, according to Lakoff, that everyday English is predominantly metaphorical, thus, demonstrating the groundlessness of the definition of metaphor as a strictly figurative phenomenon.

Lakoff holds that "It is a system of metaphor that structures our everyday conceptual system, including most abstract concepts, and that lies be-

<sup>1</sup> LAKOFF, G.; JOHNSON, M. *Metaphors we Live by*. Chicago, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> LAKOFF, G. *Contemporary Theory of Metaphor* In ORTONY, A. (ed.) *Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> McARTHUR, T. (ed.) *Oxford Concise Companion to the English Language*. Oxford; New York, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> LAKOFF, G. *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor*. 1992. [http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~market/semiotic/lkof\\_met.html](http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~market/semiotic/lkof_met.html)

hind much of everyday language"<sup>5</sup>. He maintains that when a metaphor is created, the mapping is primary and the language, which serves as its realization, is secondary.

Furthermore, Lakoff differentiates between the terms 'metaphor' and 'metaphorical expression'. He reserves the term 'metaphor' for conceptual mapping and 'metaphorical expression' for the 'linguistic expression (a word, phrase, or sentence) that is the surface realization of such a cross-domain mapping'<sup>6</sup>.

When the theory of Lakoff and his colleagues was developed by other researchers, it was noted that the comparative analysis of metaphorical expressions of different cultures, related to the same concept, demonstrates similarities and differences in world conceptualization by the representatives of those cultures, thus drawing a parallel between the theory of metaphor proposed by Lakoff and his colleagues and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. For example, the article of Roman Labov "Yazyk Risujet Internet"<sup>7</sup>, among other things, deals with a comparison of conceptualization of browsing for information on the Internet in Russian and English. According to Labov, the English language uses the metaphorical expression 'to surf the net', creating a romantic picture of an exotic seaside and an impression of a pleasant way of spending time. The Russian language, in its turn, favours verbs *бродить* ("roam") or *лазить* ("crawl"). The first verb wakes the thoughts of a wanderer or a tramp, "whose movement is devoid of purpose"<sup>8</sup>, and the second is related to caves or catacombs (Labov discards the meaning of 'climbing a tree' in this context).

Moreover, the aforementioned article gives examples of metaphorical expressions, which can be borrowed for the sake of illustrating how minor changes of lexical structure of metaphorical expressions

can fundamentally amend the conceptual contents of the metaphor expressed by them. The examples in the Russian language deal with the interaction of a user with the Internet, which can be described as immobility. In this case "people crawl into the Internet and then 'сидят в нем' (*sit in it*) (not to mention a different metaphor – when people 'сидят на нем' (*sit on it*)"<sup>9</sup>. (Italicized English expressions literally render the Russian phrases). The Russian expression 'сидят в нем' (*sit in it*) renders the meaning of immobility and the expression 'сидят на нем' (*sit on it*) has a slang meaning of addiction, although the two differ only in preposition. The conceptual picture changes instantaneously with the substitution of prepositions and a man turns from an ordinary Internet user into a person suffering from pernicious addiction. Furthermore, the author notices that the distribution of users of metaphorical expressions is of an interest: the first expression is usually uttered by the users themselves and the second one – by their friends and relatives<sup>10</sup>.

Theoretical aspects of text interpretation are presented within the framework of the theory of deconstruction by Jacques Derrida. The term "deconstruction" was introduced in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the designation of an interpretative mechanism of written texts. The representatives of the theory view texts as a complex historical and cultural process, determined by the interrelation of texts as well as their connection with the societal institutions and conventions establishing the rules of written language<sup>11</sup>. One of the main notions of Derrida's theory is the 'différance' concept. Derrida spoke of the dual character of this notion claiming that signs are differentiated, i. e. cognized through differences, and they belong to the entire conceptual field, being subject to all the elements of this field.<sup>12</sup> He consi-

<sup>5</sup> LAKOFF, footnote 2.

<sup>6</sup> LAKOFF, footnote 2.

<sup>7</sup> ЛЕЙБОВ, Р. *Язык рисует Интернет*. <http://www.gagin.ru/internet/4/9.html>

<sup>8</sup> ЛЕЙБОВ, footnote 7.

<sup>9</sup> ЛЕЙБОВ, footnote 7.

<sup>10</sup> ЛЕЙБОВ, footnote 7.

<sup>11</sup> БЕЛОЗЕРОВА, Н. Н. *Метафоризация и дискурс*. Тюмень, 2001. <http://www.utmn.ru/frgf/No14/text01.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Quoted from: БЕЛОЗЕРОВА, footnote 11.

ders the concept difference as an ontological one and offers it as a philosophical basis for the study of cognitive processes. This principle was applied as a method of deconstruction.

Derrida's theory considers any text as a dual text or a series of texts and, moreover, it is claimed that each text contains features of other texts, which cannot be discovered via classical interpretation<sup>13</sup>. On the grounds of these theoretical assumptions the notion of a text was expanded and under the poststructuralist approach, from the semiotic point of view, the tendency was to consider text as any information entity created by means of sign systems, which can be expressed both verbally and non-verbally<sup>14</sup>.

Another distinctive feature of Derrida's theory is the establishment of binary oppositions, which serve as the basis for discourse. Traditionally, the first member of such oppositions is characterised as positive and the second one as negative. In addition, Derrida formulates the stages of text deconstruction: establishment of binary oppositions, determination of a negative member, ascertaining the general neutral presupposition, etc.<sup>15</sup>

The following analysis of conceptual metaphors in political and propagandistic discourse is based on the aforementioned postulates.

The Address to the Nation of the American President George Bush<sup>16</sup> delivered at the beginning of the war against Iraq will be considered as an example of political discourse (Appendix 1).

The surface level of the text clearly reveals the opposition *the USA (coalition states) – Iraq*. The positive member of the opposition, according to the text, is *the USA (coalition states)* and the negative one – *Iraq*. The framework of the positive member also includes the world (in the territorial sense of the word): *"I want Americans and all the world to know..."*

The Address communicates the President's reasons for the beginning of the military operation.

The President assures the citizens of the USA as well as the world community of the humaneness of intentions of the military command of the coalition forces and speaks of the forced launch of the military campaign.

The aims of the military operation are worded in the following way: *to disarm Iraq, to free its people, to defend the world from grave danger, to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war, to remove a threat, to restore control of that country to its own people, to defend our freedom.*

The actions of the military command and the coalition army are described in the following way: *broad and concerted campaign, common defence, skill and bravery, the honorable and decent spirit of the American military, ... coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm..., to apply decisive force...*

The attitude of the USA to the war and to the opponent is rendered in the following way: *...we come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for religious faiths they practice..., ...we have no ambition in Iraq..., ...our nation enters this conflict reluctantly...*

The actions of Saddam Hussein and the regime itself are characterised in the following words: *...an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality..., ...Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military – a final atrocity against his people..., ...an outlaw regime....*

Taking into consideration the fact that the military-political discourse, as such, is also constructed according to the principle of binary oppositions, the text provides us with an opposition *victim – aggressor*, which is characteristic of any war. Let us consider how the members of the opposition are distributed in relation to the parties of the conflict.

<sup>13</sup> БЕЛОЗЕРОВА, footnote 11.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted from: БЕЛОЗЕРОВА, footnote 11.

<sup>15</sup> ЛАССАН, Э. Р. *Дискурс власти и инкомыслия в СССР: когнитивно-риторический анализ*. Вильнюс, 1995, с. 39.

<sup>16</sup> *President Bush Addresses the Nation*. March 19, 2003. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030319-17.html>

The declarative knowledge<sup>17</sup> of the frame *victim* presented in the Longman explanatory dictionary is "someone who has been attacked, robbed, or murdered"<sup>18</sup>. The declarative knowledge of the frame *aggressor*, taken from the same source, is "a person or country that begins a fight or war with another person or country".

One of the first sentences of the Address sounds: "*On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war*". The verb "*to strike*" in this context signals the presence of the conceptual metaphor WAR IS APPLICATION OF PHYSICAL FORCE, that is the conceptual sphere of fight is mapped onto the conceptual sphere of war. The occurrence of a word group "*On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets...*" means that the initiative of applying force emanates from the high command of the coalition forces. In this case, the USA seeking not to become the victim of the war strike first at the referent of the other member of the opposition, stressing at the same time their unwillingness to enter the conflict. Striking a blow is explained as an action preventing Iraq from unleashing the war, although, in essence, equals to it itself. Further, actions of the coalition are presented as "defense": "...every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense...", "...we will defend our freedom..."

The preventive character of military action is overtly stated in the following metaphorical expression: "*We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.*" The words "*we will meet that threat now*" euphemistically render the idea of *attack*. The statement itself is an opposition of converse members *to attack – to suffer attack* (the members are presented in the order they are mentioned in the sentence). The meaning of the proposition testifies to the fact that the USA prefers the

role of an aggressor to the role of a victim, what is supported by the analysis of the conceptual metaphor WAR IS APPLICATION OF PHYSICAL FORCE. In this case the role of the victim should be ascribed to Iraq; the confirmation of it can be found in the conceptual metaphor, reflecting the fact that the strike is launched against it.

Against whom, then, the US President urges to defend oneself, if his country acts as the initiator of the conflict? The appeals for defence appear on both lexical and conceptual level. The examples of explicit lexical calls for defence were presented above and an example of conceptually lexical address can be the following sentence: "*May God bless our country and all who defend her*". In this case the country is conceptualised as a living creature. It is supported by the usage of a feminine pronoun applied to living beings – "*her*", instead of a pronoun for inanimate things – "*it*". That is, in this case, we deal with a conceptual metaphor, which is rather customary to military-political discourse, ONE'S OWN COUNTRY (HOMELAND) IS A WEAK WOMAN, WHO NEEDS DEFENCE (another widely known example of metaphorical presentation of a similar, although not entirely equivalent, conceptual entity is HOMELAND IS MOTHER<sup>19</sup>).

The impression of paradox is due to the fact that the lexical means, metaphorical impressions and conceptual metaphors used in the text do not correspond to the characteristic features of the oppositional frames *victim* and *aggressor*, which are shaped in our mind. The USA in the text is characterized both as an aggressor and as a victim. We can presume that the reason of the ambivalence of the contradictory rhetoric of the US President could be the wish to alleviate the fact of aggression under the disguise of preventive war against a hypothetical threat. It is supported by the appeals for defence and the allusions to the events of September 11, 2001.

Now, let us turn to the analysis of conceptual metaphors in propagandistic discourse, using posters of the Soviet era as the examples. This type

<sup>17</sup> ЛАССАН, footnote 15, c. 37

<sup>18</sup> Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. London, 1995.

<sup>19</sup> ЛАССАН, footnote 15, c. 45.

of discourse is distinguished by its pronounced evaluative character<sup>20</sup> and striving for imposing one's point of view on the addressee.

The analysis of the discourse of propagandistic poster includes the consideration of verbal and non-verbal (visual) information. Very often visual information is the literal interpretation of the verbal proposition, thus facilitating the exposure of conceptual essence of the proposition. There are other cases when verbal text carries minimal conceptual load or when it is absent at all.

First, let us consider the poster of 1949 "Same year, different weather" (Appendix 2, Poster A)<sup>21</sup>. Here is a clear opposition *the USSR – the USA*. The visual information of the poster conveys two conceptual metaphors:

- 1) ECONOMIC CONDITION OF A COUNTRY IS WEATHER;
- 2) ECONOMIC CONDITION OF A COUNTRY IS HEALTH AND MOOD OF ITS CITIZENS.

The first metaphor is presented both verbally (inscription at the bottom of the poster, an extract from an economy report, inscriptions: '*crisis*', '*military plans*', '*American industry*', '*Soviet industry*') and visually (on the 'American' side – storm-cloud, the word '*crisis*' in the shape of a lightning, on the 'Soviet' side – sunny, cloudless weather, on both sides – thermometer columns). Taking into consideration indications of thermometer columns, the first metaphor can be classified as partially orientational, because rise/fall of economic indices is conceptualised as rise/fall of temperature.

The second metaphor is of a visual character: on the 'Soviet' side of the poster there is a smiling merry worker, and on the 'American' one – an obese, discontent bourgeois with a swollen cheek. The verbal expression of the metaphor is represented by the two inscriptions: '*American industry*', '*Soviet industry*'.

Another example to be considered is a group of posters illustrating a conceptual metaphor *SOVIET STATE IS A MAN WITH STRONG ARMS*, which has a surface structure of visual

metonymy. This metonymy plays a significant role in many posters of the Soviet era (Appendix 2, Posters B, C, D, E, F)<sup>22</sup>.

All posters in this group are united by one conceptual metaphor, but each poster has its own semantic load. The poster "Plans of Interventionists are Ruined" (B) pictures a hand that holds an indictment to Promparty (the Industrial Party) and, moreover, it can mean the hand of justice. The poster of 1930 "We'll Carry Out the Plan of Great Assignments" (C) most vividly presents the metonymic character of the image – a multitude of hands combines into one hand – the hand of people, which, first of all, expresses agreement with the slogan and, secondly, readiness to work. The poster of 1937 "Let's Root out Spies and Saboteurs" (D) pictures a strong, muscular hand squeezing a snake, which wears an invariable attribute of all spies – a pair of spectacles. The poster of 1941 "Be vigilant" (E) presents an opposition: the red hand represents the people, the black hand – the embezzlers of public property, illustrating the expression "to catch by the hand". The visualisation of the second hand is worth mentioning: small, meagre, with long bent nails. The poster of 1944 "The Nazi Vulture got to know that Sheepfold is not the Name of our Home!" (F) shows a hand embodying the Soviet Army, judging from the sleeve of a military uniform and the red star.

The third example to be considered in this overview of metaphoric features of the Soviet poster will be two pieces by a group of poster artists of the Soviet era who worked under the pen-name Kukryniksy. The main part of their post-war posters is unified by a conceptual metaphor *IMPERIALISM IS MONEY*. This metaphor in most cases is expressed visually. It can be found in the posters "Putting off" (G)<sup>23</sup> and «He was afraid to object...» (H)<sup>24</sup>. Money in this case is visualised by means of currency symbols of the respective countries. The two-fold visualisation of the USA is worth attention. It is represented as a symbol of an American dollar in the poster "Putting off" (G): one can be observed on the top hat of a gentleman casting the Disarmament

<sup>20</sup> ЛАССАН, footnote 15, с. 32.

<sup>21</sup> *Collection of Soviet posters*. <http://www.davno.ru/posters>

<sup>22</sup> *Collection of Soviet posters*, footnote 21.

<sup>23</sup> КУКРЫНИКСЫ, *По врагам мира!* Москва, 1982, с. 55.

project into a box; another one is visualised as footprints over the box/coffin.

The poster "He was afraid to object..." (H) presents a twofold visualisation of the United Kingdom. It is metaphorically represented as a lion and as a symbol of pound sterling. The tail of an animal is bent in the shape of the latter symbol. It is noteworthy that only the Western countries are visualised by this conceptual metaphor: none of the Kurylnik's posters metaphorically pictures the USSR or any other socialist state via a symbol of rouble or any other socialist currency.

The analysis of conceptual metaphors in political and propagandistic discourse allows reaching the following conclusions:

- elicitation of the conceptual essence of statements helps to make assumptions regarding the intentions of authors of political texts;
- metonymic illustrations and semiotic units can be used as a means of visual representation of conceptual metaphors;
- visualization of metaphorical contents in posters plays a suggestive role, i.e. in a certain way imposes the authors' ideas about the character of the metaphorised notions;
- the capability of visualisation of metaphorical essence supports Lakoff's postulate that the conceptual metaphor is a phenomenon of thought, not language.

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#### KONCEPTUALIOSIOS METAFOROS ĮVAIRIAUS TIPO DISKURSUOSE

##### Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjamos konceptualiosios metaforos politiniame bei propagandistiniame diskurse. JAV Prezidento Džordžo Bušo kreipimasis į tautą nagrinėjamas J. Derrida dekonstrukcijos teorijos pagrindu išskiriant tekste binarines opozicijas bei analizuojant konceptualiasias teksto metaforas pasitelkus G. Lakoffo teorijos nuostatas.

Propagandistinio diskurso konceptualiosios metaforos straipsnyje nagrinėjamos pasitelkus tarybinio laikotarpio agitacinius plakatus. G. Lakoffo postulatą, kad metafora yra mąstymo, o ne kalbos reiškinys patvirtinamas tuo, kad konceptualiųjų metaforų esama tiek kalboje, tiek vizualiojoje medžiagoje.

**REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI:** konceptualioji metafora, dekonstrukcijos teorija, skirtumai, binarinės opozicijos, metaforų vizualizacija.

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#### METAFORY KONCEPTUALNE W RÓŻNYCH TYPACH DYSKURSU

##### Streszczenie

W niniejszym artykule omówiono kwestię użycia metafor konceptualnych w dyskursie politycznym i propagandowym. Orędzie Prezydenta USA George'a Busha do narodu amerykańskiego wygłoszone 19 marca 2003 roku w związku z planowaną wojną w Iraku przeanalizowano w ramach dekonstruktywistycznej teorii Jacquesa Derrida, wyróżniając w tekście opozycje binarne; metafory konceptualne przebadano na podstawie założeń teorii George'a Lakoffa.

Metafory konceptualne w dyskursie propagandowym omówiono na podstawie plakatów agitacyjnych z okresu radzieckiego. Postulat G. Lakoffa, że metafora nie jest zjawiskiem czysto językowym: poprzedza język i zarazem po nim następuje jako działanie uwarunkowane przez szczególną konceptualizację, potwierdza istnienie metafor konceptualnych zarówno w języku, jak i w materiale wizualnym.

**SŁOWA KLUCZE:** metafora konceptualna, teoria dekonstruktywistyczna, różnice, opozycje binarne, wizualizacja metafor.

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<sup>24</sup> КУКРЫНИКЫ, footnote 23, c. 53.

*President Bush Addresses the Nation\**

The Oval Office  
10:16 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. More than 35 countries are giving crucial support – from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all the men and women of the United States Armed Forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well placed.

The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military. In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military – a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable

and free country will require our sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people. And you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly – yet, our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others and we will prevail.

May God bless our country and all who defend her.

END 10:20 P.M. EST

\* *President Bush Addresses the Nation*. March 19, 2003. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030319-17.html>



Poster A



Poster C



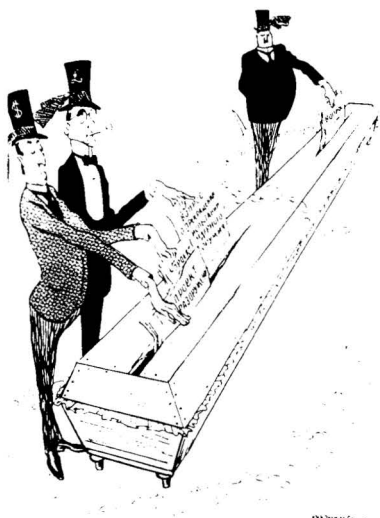
Poster B



Poster D



Poster E



Poster G



Poster F



Poster H