

Preface

Thirty years ago, the year 1980 saw the publication of a real classic of metaphor research, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By*. Maybe the approach taken by those two American cognitivists is less original than they themselves would like to think, as many of the ideas presented in that book had been raised before in the two millennia since Aristotle, and formulated in rhetoric, in poetics, in philosophy, in literary criticism, or in early modern philology. But without doubt, they triggered a regular boom of metaphor research, in which theoretical aspects as well as linguistic data are being discussed productively, from various perspectives, and in interdisciplinary fashion. From its first issue in 2001, *metaphorik.de* has regarded itself as an open platform for discussions of this kind, and we are happy to be able to prove once more, that the field of metaphor research – metaphorically speaking – continues to bear fruit.

One aspect touched upon by Lakoff/Johnson, though without any empirical validation, is that of metaphor in the comparison of languages or cultures. The question, to what extent particular metaphorical concepts may be culture specific or universal can only be answered empirically. Sondes Hamdi's contribution tackles the question, to what extent the metaphorisations of the target domain 'time' coincide in English and Arabic. His investigation supplies a building block for a better understanding of the language specificity of individual metaphorical expressions as well as of the underlying concepts. In the next contribution, Helge Skirl treats an issue at the interface between lexical morphology, word-formation semantics, and metaphor research, analysing metaphorical compounds in German. It becomes clear, that in particular ad-hoc formations need to be seen and interpreted in their textual and situational context. Metaphorisation in word-formation can serve some elementary pragmatical functions, an aspect, which may at times be lost if regarded from a mere cognitive perspective. Finally, Rachel Sutton-Spence proves the importance of metaphor in non-acoustic languages, when she considers the role of spatial metaphors in the expression of identity in English (BSL and ASL) sign language poetry. The crucial role of the human body in the constitution of metaphors, as postulated by Lakoff/Johnson, is taken to yet another dimension. In sign language, spatial and orientational metaphors are expressed directly in gestures and movement, preserving and re-motivating the underlying concepts.

Two congress reports provided by Corinna Koch also bear witness to the vitality of international metaphor research. In July 2010, the network "Researching and Applying Metaphor" met in Amsterdam, and Stockholm University has taken to host an annual "Metaphor Festival" each autumn. Events like these underline that our journal with its genuine focus of interest and research is in good company.

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We wish our readers a happy new year, which will also bring an anniversary for *metaphorik.de*. Therefore, in spring 2011 we are going to organize an international workshop on "Emerging Perspectives on Metaphor and Metonymy", whose results are due to be published here in December 2011 in order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of our first issue.

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