

# Metaphors, stereotypes, and the linguistic picture of the world: Impulses from the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin

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## Abstract

This article discusses possibilities for an elaboration of cognitive linguistic metaphor theory that takes into account the sociocultural situatedness of language and cognition. The approach of the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin, linking anthropological with cognitive perspectives on language, is introduced. The objectives of the article are i) to introduce this line of research, well-known in linguistics in Eastern Europe, but little known in the “Western”, English speaking scientific discourse; ii) to illustrate the usefulness of particular ideas within this approach for metaphor analysis in a corpus study of the metaphorical understanding of *system transformation* in German public discourse in the late 1980s and early 1990s; and iii) to discuss diverging elaborations of the notion of *experience* in cognitive linguistics, contrasting the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin with Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

In diesem Artikel werden Möglichkeiten einer Ausarbeitung der kognitiv-linguistischen Metapherntheorie besprochen, mit dem Ziel, die soziokulturelle Situiertheit von Sprache und Kognition stärker in den Mittelpunkt zu stellen. Der Ansatz der Lubliner Ethnolinguistischen Schule, die anthropologische und kognitive Perspektiven auf Sprache verbindet, wird vorgestellt. Die Ziele dieses Artikels sind es, i) diesen Ansatz in den englischsprachigen kognitiv-linguistischen Diskurs einzuführen; ii) die Fruchtbarkeit einiger Ideen dieses Ansatzes für die Metaphernanalyse zu illustrieren, und zwar durch eine Korpusanalyse des Verständnisses der *Systemtransformation* in Deutschland in den späten achtziger und frühen neunziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts im deutschen öffentlichen Diskurs; und iii) verschiedene Ausarbeitungen des Erfahrungsbegriffs in der Kognitiven Linguistik zu diskutieren, wobei die Lubliner Ethnolinguistische Schule der Theorie der konzeptuellen Metapher gegenüber gestellt wird.

## 1. Introduction

This article has two general objectives. The one is to introduce to the English speaking (and reading) scientific discourse one particular line of research in cognitive linguistics:<sup>1</sup> the work of the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin (ESL). The other objective is to outline impulses that this line of research can give for metaphor analysis and theory.

The structure of the article is as follows: In §2, I present a brief overview of some basic notions employed in the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin and the context of research in which they evolved over the past four decades. In §3, I try to illustrate how these notions can be employed in the analysis of metaphor. I do this by applying them in a corpus analysis of the metaphoric understanding of the *system transformation* in Germany in the late 1980s and early 1990s that emerged from the public discourse of that time. In §4, I juxtapose the notion

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<sup>1</sup> In this article, “cognitive linguistics” with small initials does not refer to a particular school, but to all approaches interested in the relation of linguistic meaning to conceptualisation.

of experience as it is modelled in the ESL with that of recent elaborations in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

## **2. The Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin**

The ESL has been conducting research on the cognitive and anthropological aspects of oral and written language for the past 30 years.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, this work is well-known in the international scientific discourse its authors engage in – as with many disciplines belonging to the humanities in Central and Eastern Europe, this discourse is (still) based on the Russian language. Not surprisingly then, the work of the ESL is far less known in the “Western” scientific discourse based on the English language.

Research in the ESL is focused on three domains. The largest program is the reconstruction of the *linguistic picture of the world* (*językowy obraz świata*) of traditional, rural people in Poland (e.g., Adamowski, 1999; Bartmiński 1996, 1999b; Majer-Baranowska, 1993; Niebrzegowska, 1986). The second domain is the analysis of social (national, professional, gender etc.) stereotypes (e.g., Bartmiński et al., 2002; Lappo, 2002). The third domain of research concerns axiological concepts (e.g., Bartmiński, 2003).

The common theme of those interests is to reconstruct *pictures of the world* entrenched in language. This interest places the ESL in a research tradition going back to work in Russian semiotics and semantics<sup>3</sup> and ultimately to the German “romantic” tradition in language philosophy, i.e. the work of Herder and Humboldt.

The central notion in the ESL is that of a *stereotype*. Stereotypes are the “building blocks” of the linguistic picture of the world. The general idea of what a stereotype is builds on Putnam’s treatment of linguistic meaning (Putnam, 1975). One of the conceptual contributions the ESL has made to contemporary cognitive linguistics is the elaboration of the stereotype notion.

Stereotypes are not restricted to knowledge and opinions about members of social groups, as in the common usage of the word and in social science and sociolinguistics research (e.g., Quasthoff, 1987). Rather, stereotyping is regarded a general mechanism of organising knowledge about entities (objects, acts, relations) in the world. Thus, stereotypes are viewed as a chiefly cognitive phenomenon, with the evaluative function of enforcing in- and out-groups in the case of social stereotypes being secondary.

Stereotypes are not an unstructured sum of knowledge fragments, they are organised in *aspects*. Some of the aspects forming a stereotype are more salient than others in linguistic activity, which is captured by the notion of *stereotype profiles*. A profile in this terminology is

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<sup>2</sup> An early overview of work on folk conceptualisation is Bartmiński (1980).

<sup>3</sup> Notably Apresjan’s work on the “naive world model”, e.g. Apresjan (1995).

a specific actual (e.g., textual) organisation of the stereotype knowledge giving salience to particular *aspects*, this organisation depending on various subject-bound factors such as a *point of view*, a *perspective*, a *type of rationality* and a *value system*:

“In our definition, profiling is a subjective (ie., having a subject) linguistic-conceptual operation, consisting in a specific configuration of the object’s image in terms of particular aspects (sub-categories, facets), such as, e.g., origin, traits, appearance, functions, events, experiences, etc., within a certain type of knowledge and in keeping with a specific point of view. [...] The factors governing the profiling belong to the subjective categories mentioned earlier: type of rationality (someone’s rationality), someone’s encyclopedic knowledge, someone’s value system and someone’s point of view; they are part of the higher level of the organisation of language, where the presence of a human being [as an interpreter of the scene] is necessary.” (Bartmiński & Niebrzegowska, 1998: 212-213 [translated by J.Z.]

“W naszej definicji profilowanie jest subiektywną (tj. mającą swój podmiot) operacją językowo-pojęciową, polegającą na swoistym kształtowaniu obrazu przedmiotu poprzez ujęcie go w określonych aspektach (podkategoriach, fasetach), takich jak np. pochodzenie, cechy, wygląd, funkcje, zdarzenia, przeżycia, itp., w ramach pewnego typu wiedzy i zgodnie z wymogami określonego punktu widzenia. [...] Czynniki sterujące profilowaniem są związane ze wspomnianymi już podmiotowymi kategoriami: typu racjonalności (czyjejś racjonalności) czyjejś wiedzy o świecie, czyjegoś systemu wartości i czyjegoś punktu widzenia; należą one do wysokiego poziomu organizacji języka, na którym obligatoryjna jest obecność człowieka [jako interpretatora sceny]”

“Point of view for me means a subjective-cultural factor governing the way of talking about an object, e.g., governing the object’s categorisation, the choice of an onomasiological ground for creating a name, the choice of traits that the object is said to have in particular utterances or that are entrenched in the meaning. [...] ‘Perspective’ for me means a set of characteristics of a word’s semantic structure which correlates with a point of view and is, at least to a certain extent, its result.” (Bartmiński, 1999: 105-106 [translated by J.Z.]

“Przez punkt widzenia rozumieć będę czynnik podmiotowo-kulturowy, decydujący o sposobie mówienia o przedmiocie, w tym m.in. o kategoryzacji przedmiotu, o wyborze podstawy onomazjologicznej przy tworzeniu jego nazwy, o wyborze cech, które są o przedmiocie orzekane w konkretnych wypowiedziach i utrwalone w znaczeniu. [...] Przez ‘perspektywę’ rozumiem zespół właściwości struktury semantycznej słów, skorelowany z punktem widzenia i będący, przynajmniej w pewnym zakresie, jego rezultatem.”

The differences between this notion of profiling and the one used in Langacker’s *Cognitive Grammar* seem to be gradual. Both versions outline the idea that linguistic entities have meaning only against a background (the *base* in Cognitive Grammar, the *experience base* (*baza doświadczeniowa* in the ESL) (Bartmiński & Niebrzegowska, 1998: 211-212). The differences seem to lie in the types of profiles and bases which scholars in the two lines of research are interested in. Langacker focuses on individual predications on the sentence level. The bases he cites as relevant for these predications’ functioning are derived from (visual)

perception.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, in *Cognitive Grammar* the use of notions like *perspective* and *point of view* in order to explain aspects of the functioning of language is probably not meant to be metaphorical at all.

On the other hand, these same notions are much more metaphorical in their usage in the ESL, whose scholars are primarily interested in “higher levels” of the organisation of language (see [1]), such as speech genres, texts of folklore, and the linguistic conceptualisation of the world. The *experiential base* constituting the ground for linguistic activity includes also social and cultural experience. The *point of view* that Bartmiński and his colleagues reconstruct is a metaphor for socio-cultural situatedness. Where Langacker is interested in the influence of general (and universal) perceptual capacities on language structure and function, Bartmiński is interested in the influence that the particular speaker’s situatedness has on conceptualisation. The points of view and perspectives described in the ESL are generalisations over patterns of linguistic behaviours of speakers *as members of a particular speaker community*. E.g., the concept of water is profiled in a functional manner by *urban* speakers, outlining such aspects as its **uses** (*it is used for making tea, to brush teeth etc.*), whereas the traditional, *rural* profile is more ontological, with aspects such as its **quantity** (*many parts of the earth are covered with water*) being more salient (Majer-Baranowska, 2002). Both profiles utilise (more or less) the same set of predications<sup>5</sup> available from the *experiential base*. However, they organise them differently, placing different weight on particular aspects.

The theoretical apparatus of the ESL has evolved in the course of many years of fieldwork. It might therefore be useful to illustrate a stereotype profile with an empirical example.

In (3) I present the aspects used in reconstructing the folk picture of *the sun* (*słońce*) in traditional Polish (the same aspects are used in explications of other elements of the folk cosmos). The main purpose is to introduce the aspects identified in the ESL, therefore the presentation of the stereotype of the sun itself is very brief.<sup>6</sup> All the information is taken from Bartmiński & Niebrzegowska (1996: 119-129).

Aspects used to explicate stereotypes of cosmic elements, with examples from the folk stereotype of the sun in traditional Polish

**Hyperonym** – as a sort of what is the object understood; e.g., the sun is, among other things, a *light*;

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<sup>4</sup> E.g., the word “elbow” profiles a particular part from an image of the “arm”, which is the base. Profiling for Langacker is one dimension of the imagistic character of human cognition. Accordingly, he illustrates his cases with drawings (for the *elbow* and *arm* case, see: Langacker, 1987: 183).

<sup>5</sup> According to Bartmiński (e.g., 1988), linguistic knowledge takes the form of predications rather than traits.

<sup>6</sup> The actual explication of the stereotype of *the sun* in Bartmiński (1996) occupies 12 pages, with another 14 pages of documentation of relevant language data (riddles, idioms, fragments of fairy-tales, etc.).

**Collections** – with which other objects does the object appear in space and time; e.g., the sun builds a collection with the *moon*, sun and moon being regarded as *man* and *wife* or as *brothers*, whose *sisters* are the *stars*. *Collections* are categories formed on the grounds of experiencing things as belonging together from a subject's point of view, e.g. a saw, an axe, and a log belong together functionally, because the saw and the axe would be useless without the log. On a more abstract conceptual level, though, only the axe and the saw can be grouped together as belonging to the category of *tools*. Reasoning on the basis of collections seems to be characteristic of people living in traditional communities, especially among illiterate people (cf. Leezenberg, 1996).

**Oppositions** – what other object(s) is the object opposed to; e.g., the sun is an important part of the general opposition of *life* and *death*, e.g., the sun is made by *God*, whereas the moon is made by the *devil* from a small stolen bit of the sun. The importance of oppositions in human thought has been stressed by the Russian semioticians, e.g., Ivanov & Toporov (1976).

**Origin** – where does the object come from; e.g., the sun was made by *God*;

**Appearance** – what does the object look like; e.g., the sun is *bright*, *white* and *golden*, among other characteristics;

**Characteristics** – what is the object like apart from its appearance; e.g., the sun is *holy*, *eternal*, and *ever-returning*;

**Activities, states, processes** – what does the object do, and what activities/processes is it subject to; e.g., the sun, among many other characteristics, *moves* across the sky, it *sinks into the sea* each evening. The circle-like movement of the sun serves as a pattern for the manner of motion to be adopted in a variety of (rural-economic, magic, or customary) activities. E.g. the group walking a bride to the church sings a song that links the circle movement of the sun with the bride's journey to church (Bartmiński & Niebrzegowska, 1996: 123). This example shows the close integration of a certain interpretation of the cosmos (a folk stereotype) with both cultural customs and linguistic texts. Accordingly, Bartmiński and his colleagues speak of cultural practices not as the non-linguistic context of language, but as its *by-linguistic* (*przy-językowy*) context (Bartmiński, 1996: 11).

**Actions** – what is the impact that the object exerts on other things; e.g., the sun *warms* the world, is the/a *source of life*, *cleans* and *heals*. In folk songs, the *burning sun* is associated with masculinity and *fertilisation*.

**Experiences** – what experiences does the object go through; e.g., the sun *feels* like human beings do, it *laughs* and is *happy*, or it is *sad* and *weeps*.

**(Additional/Peculiar characteristic)** – important elements of the object that can't be easily assigned to any one aspect; e.g. the sun is linked to the *snake* in a variety of ways. This has to do with the phallic form of the snake and the masculinity associated with the sun (see

Actions), but also with beliefs that the snake can drink the shine from the sun – therefore killed snakes have to be buried deep in the earth.

**Recipient/Partner in Communication** – how is the object involved in communication; e.g., shepherds *ask* the sun to sink quicker, a young bride *talks* to the sun before leaving home.

**Object of actions** – how is action towards the object regulated; e.g., it is forbidden to *point a finger* at the sun, to *swear* or *take a pee* in its presence.

**Space & Time** – where and when does the object appear; e.g. the sun is *in the sky*, and its position is interpreted temporally: when the sun is *high*, it is time to be at work.

**Forecasts** – what does the object tell about the future; e.g., a red sun throughout three days foretells *war*, *death* or *hunger*.

**Equivalents** – what other objects “work” in a similar way; e.g., the sun is like *gold*, because it makes the earth *golden*, and like *fire*, because it *burns* and *warms*.

**Symbols** – what does the object symbolise, and how is it symbolised; e.g., the sun symbolises *life* and *truth*, it is symbolised as a *circle*, but in the folk tradition the sun is also symbolically linked to the *egg* and the *snake* (the sun’s rays are drawn as serpentine).

Other aspects used in explications of elements of the cosmos, but not relevant in the conceptualisation of the sun, are **Hiponyms**, **Parts**, **Quantity**, **Cause**, **Effect**, and **Usage as a Tool**.

The attempt to integrate this approach to the relation between conceptualisation and language with better-known, “Western” approaches, sparks a range of interesting questions. In the remainder of this article, I will stick to the issue of possible insights for metaphor analysis that can be drawn from the ESL.

As the previous discussion and the exemplary explication of the folk stereotype of the sun show, metaphor is not a central notion in the ESL. However, Bartmiński and colleagues do acknowledge that metaphor is *one* important means in the linguistic interpretation of the world, and in the profiling of stereotypes, i.e. in the cognitive (re-)organisation of knowledge. Whereas metaphor in CMT is analysed as the primary object of interest itself, in the ESL it is utilised as one source of evidence in the reconstruction of culturally salient concepts. This perspective will be adopted in the next section.

### **3. Points of view in metaphorical discourse**

I have introduced in brief form a few related notions elaborated and utilised in the ESL: *picture of the world*, *stereotype*, *aspect*, *profile* and *base*, *perspective*, *point of view* and *type of rationality*. In this section, I will try to show the usefulness of these notions for the analysis of metaphor in public discourse.

### 3.1 Corpus information

The data analysed here stem from a research project on metaphors in Russian and German public discourse. The discourses analysed were about the state system transformations and the “end of communism” in the two countries in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The study had a corpus-driven design: we read the Russian and German newspaper texts compiled in the two corpora and collected all the metaphors with target domains that can roughly be described as “political”, “social” or “economic”. Approximately 8.000 metaphor contexts were collected for each language. Novel and conventional metaphors were included, the latter only when they were textually “re-awakened”, e.g. by putting the metaphorical expression into quotation marks, or by elaborating the conventional metaphor in an unconventional way.<sup>7</sup>

All metaphors were coded in a database according to the scheme exemplified in table 1:

**Table 1: Database form**

<b>data base field</b>	<b>Entry</b>
Metaphor	communism, this twin of fascism
Significative Descriptor	twin/kinship
Denotative Descriptor	communism/fascism/ideology
Example	Das Kreuz der Kirche hat den Kommunismus, diesen Zwilling des Faschismus, bezwungen.
Source	Bild
Author	Tiedje, Hans-Hermann
Date	30.12.89

The last “denotative descriptor” describes a topic domain, the last “significative descriptor” describes a metaphor model.<sup>8</sup>

The questions I want to address here are these: What does the picture of system transformation drawn in the German public discourse of the time look like? And more specifically: What stereotypical interpretation of the events can we reconstruct from analysing the metaphors used in this discourse?

<sup>7</sup> For a typology of textual metaphor re-awakening strategies, cf. Baranov (1994).

<sup>8</sup> For more details on methodology, cf. Baranov & Zinken (2003), Zinken (2003), Zinken (in print).

### 3.2 Quantitative information

In keeping with the usage-based approach in cognitive linguistics, I assume that information about the frequency of particular metaphor models should be important for any answer to these questions. Table 2 shows the 15 most frequent metaphor models of the German transformation discourse.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 2: The most frequent metaphor models of the German transformation discourse**

metaphor model	absolute frequency
SPACE	1.392
PERSONIFICATION	792
MOTION	610
OBJECT	434
WAR	433
ARCHITECTURE	417
PATH	404
ORGANISM	207
FLORA	195
FAUNA	148
WEATHER	147
SPORT	134
MECHANISM	126
RELIGION	119
GAME	116

As can be seen from table 2, the quantitative relations between adjacent models differ widely. This needs to be accounted for if we want to use frequency as an indicator of the importance of particular models. One way to do this is to group models into quantitative clusters based on

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<sup>9</sup> Overall, around 25 metaphor models were found in the discourses.



similar frequency. The graphic presentation of quantitative gaps between models in figure 1 is a useful heuristics for this task:

**Figure 1. Quantitative gaps between metaphor models**

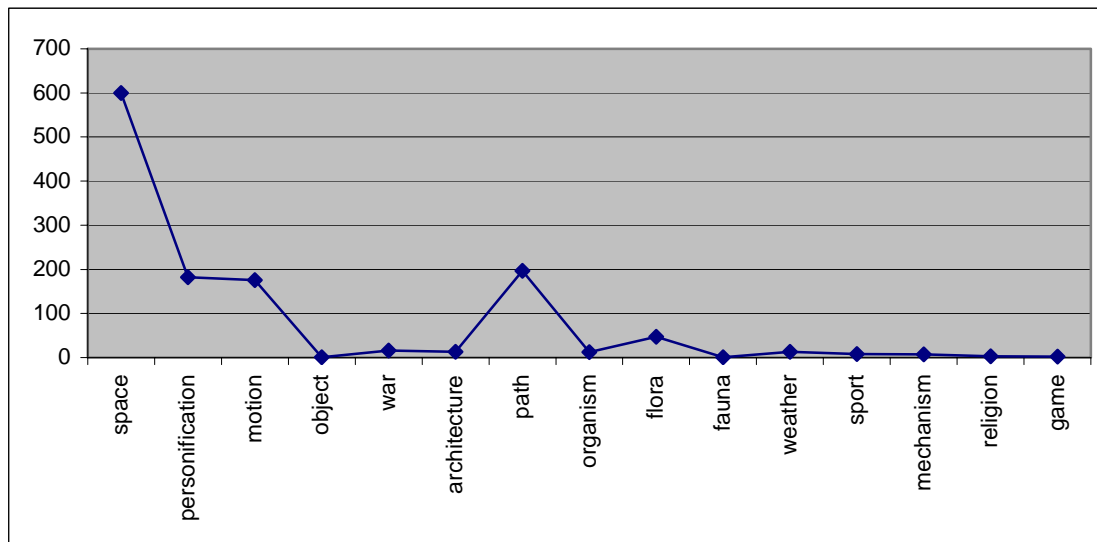


Figure 1 shows that the quantitative gaps between SPACE and PERSONIFICATION, PERSONIFICATION and MOTION, and MOTION and OBJECT are all relatively big. Therefore, these three models form three quantitative clusters of their own. On the other hand, the quantitative gaps between OBJECT and WAR, WAR and ARCHITECTURE, and ARCHITECTURE and PATH are relatively small, so that they form one cluster. The next cluster starts from ORGANISM, which is saliently less frequent than PATH, and also contains FLORA, which shows a similar frequency as ORGANISM. The sixth cluster starts from FAUNA, and it contains all the remaining models shown in Fig. 1: WEATHER, SPORT, MECHANISM, RELIGION, and GAME. The six clusters containing the 15 most frequent metaphor models of the German transformation discourse are:

- 1: SPACE
- 2: PERSONIFICATION
- 3: MOTION
- 4: OBJECT, WAR, ARCHITECTURE, PATH
- 5: ORGANISM, FLORA
- 6: FAUNA, WEATHER, SPORT, MECHANISM, RELIGION, GAME

### 3.3 Perspectives

To ask about the picture of system transformation drawn in discourse by means of metaphor is not a question about what system transformation was like. It is a question about how system

transformation was perceived and interpreted by particular subjects from their *perspective* and their *point of view*. More generally, answering this question tells us something about the sociocultural situatedness of interpretation (Dirven et al., in prep.). What are the perspectives on system transformation implied in the most frequent metaphor models in German discourse?

The two most frequent models in table 1, SPACE and PERSONIFICATION, and the fourth most frequent model, OBJECT, are of a different type than the remaining models. Building on terminology established in cognitive linguistics, SPACE, PERSONIFICATION and OBJECT can be called *ground models*, whereas the others I would like to call *figure models* (Baranov & Zinken, 2003). SPACE, PERSONIFICATION and OBJECT provide the ground for metaphoric interpretation in the sense that they are often implicitly or explicitly *implied* by figure models. E.g., interpreting a political discussion as a *war* (WAR) implies that there must be a metaphorical *battleground* (SPACE), sometimes<sup>10</sup> metaphorical *soldiers* (PERSONIFICATION), and – often implicitly – *weapons* (OBJECT). Interpreting European unification as the *building of a house* (ARCHITECTURE) implies a metaphorical *building site* (SPACE), sometimes metaphorical *architects* (PERSONIFICATION), and *bricks* (OBJECT). On the other hand, talking about institutions as if they were acting people or talking about abstract entities as if they had a spatial existence that can be grasped does not require any particular one of the more specific metaphorisations in terms of figure models. In the remainder of this section, I restrict the analysis to figure models. These models are far richer and their relation to different target domains is far more complex than it might appear from the illustration below. This illustration is kept simple on purpose, because its goal is to give an idea of *typical* – rather than all – perspectives set by various source domains.

MOTION is the most frequent figure model. This is not surprising given the keyword that became established to denote the whole transformation process, which was *Wende* (*turn*). On a very general level, the perspective provided by this model is one from which transformation appears as a time of increased activity. It is well established that the mapping from MOTION to ACTION is cross-linguistically very wide-spread (Lakoff, 1993). The relevant characteristic of this mapping in term of the cognitive perspective it provided in German transformation discourse is that it translated the very complex process of transformation into a) particular (motion) actions carried out by political subjects (4) and b) events involving moving objects (5). In other words, a vague and opaque process is chopped down into a myriad of small-scale motion events. A typical example of a) is the *step* metaphor:

- (4) “Politik der *kleinen Schritte* reicht nicht mehr aus” [politics of *small steps* isn’t enough anymore] (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1.10.1989)

An exemplary context of b) is

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<sup>10</sup> This is a PERSONIFICATION metaphor only in cases where institutions, rather than actual people, are carrying out the *fighting*.

- (5) “der SED-Parteivorstand will *das sinkende Schiff* der SED-PDS vor den Wahlen zur Volkskammer am 6. Mai [...] retten.” [the leadership of the SED wants to save **the sinking ship** SED-PDS before the Volkskammer elections on 6<sup>th</sup> of May] (Mannheimer Morgen, 22.01.1990)

This *ACTIVE* perspective conveyed by (4) is also set by many other models. Some of those are themselves partly figurative in relation to the more general model MOTION, e.g. WAR (*the old system is retreating*) or TRANSPORT (*X is the engine of change*). However, these models add additional, more specific perspectives. E.g., WAR is the most frequent model of those that view aspects of transformation from the perspective of a *COMPETITION* between political, social or economic subjects. Semantically similar models are SPORT and GAME.<sup>11</sup> Here are contexts exemplifying the *COMPETITION*-perspective set by WAR (6), SPORT (7) and GAME (8):

- (6) “Kritisch äußerte Bahr sich über die Medienberichterstattung der letzten Tage in der Bundesrepublik, in der so getan würde, ‘als ob wir die **Sieger im Kalten Krieg**’ wären.” [Bahr was critical of media reports in recent days in the FRG, which gave the impression ‘as if we were the **victors in the cold war**’] (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 3.10.1989)
- (7) “zwischen privaten und öffentlich-rechtlichen Sendern hat der **Wettlauf** um Fernsehrechte und Hörfunkrechte in der DDR begonnen” [the **race** for TV and radio rights in the GDR has begun between private and public stations] (Spiegel, 16.04.1990)
- (8) “es mag zwar nicht der feinen diplomatischen Art entsprechen, [...] den Verhandlungspartner, von dem viel abhängt, offen des **Pokerns** zu beschuldigen” [it might not be a sign of good manners to accuse the partner in negotiations, on whom depends a lot, to be **playing poker**] (Rheinischer Merkur, 11.05.1990)

The next most frequent model after WAR, ARCHITECTURE, also fulfils the fundamental role of cutting an opaque process down to particular actions. However, the *ACTIVE* perspective is supplemented here by a view onto the “material” that is being acted upon: the *building*, mapped most frequently onto the *state* and its *institutions*. Again, this is a very complex mapping, but the most salient perspective it sets in the context of subjective activity is that of *RATIONAL ACTION* (Baranov & Zinken, 2003). Portraying transformation as (re-)building makes this process highly transparent: it makes it possible not only to talk about particular actions carried out by particular subjects, but also to talk about the effects these actions have on particular “parts” of the state, and how these relate to other elements of the *building*. This model can provide a whole (folk) theory of the conditions for change and reform, as in (9):

- (9) “die Erneuerung unserer Gesellschaft, die wir erstreben, braucht das **feste sozialistische Fundament**, das wir **gemeinsam gelegt** haben.” [the renewal of our society needs the **stable foundation** of socialism, which we have **laid** together] (Berliner Zeitung, 25.10.1989)

The model PATH is closely related to MOTION – together they form the complex source model MOTION ALONG A PATH, which is conventionally mapped onto (*political*) *activity*. Within this

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<sup>11</sup> These differ from WAR in other respects, e.g., SPORT often implies a watching public, GAME is akin to THEATRE in that it presents politics as a *parallel world* with rules of its own etc.

model, PATH plays a similar part as does the *building* within ARCHITECTURE. It brings the objective situation that political subjects deal with into view in terms of a “material” being acted upon, e.g., by means of talking about characteristics of the PATH:

- (10) “Der *steinige Weg* aus der Planwirtschaft” [the *stony path* out of command economy] (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 9.10.1989)

All models discussed so far, as diverse as they are, basically provide a perspective on transformation in which political subjects are *actively* pursuing goals. This is different in the next two most frequent models, ORGANISM and FLORA. In quantitative terms, two things are noticeable about these models: they are far less frequent than the next more frequent model, PATH (404 entries, ORGANISM only 207 entries), and they are nearly equally frequent (FLORA has 195 entries). This similarity in frequency seems not to be coincidental. Both models overlap in the frequently used subdomains of *growth* and *ripening/maturing*.<sup>12</sup> E.g., the linguistic metaphor of “growth” is sometimes elaborated as an ORGANISM metaphor (11), sometimes as a FLORA metaphor (12), and sometimes it remains vague with respect to these two models (13).

- (11) “Vereinigung müßte [...] ein *beiderseitiges Zusammenwachsen* bedeuten, bei dem beide Teile das Ihre in den neuen *Organismus* einbringen würden.” [unification would have to mean a process of *mutually grow together*, so that each part can contribute to the new *organism*] (Neues Deutschland, 22.12.1989)
- (12) “Ihr Verschwinden [das der DDR, J. Z.] von der Bildfläche wäre schon deshalb katastrophal, weil so schnell nichts Neues *nachwachsen* könne.” [the GDR’s disappearance would be a catastrophe for the fact alone that nothing can quickly *grow again*] (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 5.09.1990)
- (13) “Daß beide Teile Deutschlands *zusammenwachsen*, und zwar im Rahmen eines *Zusammenwachsens* Europas, [...] das gilt auch für beide Teile Berlins.” [As both parts of Germany are *growing together* as part of Europe’s *growing together*, [...] this is also true for both parts of Berlin.] (Bundestagsprotokolle, 21.06.1989)

In (13), the metaphor could in principle be understood in two quite different ways, where Berlin, Germany and Europe are seen either as *one* ORGANISM with a wound that needs to grow together [= heal] *again*<sup>13</sup> or as a territory on which *several* PLANTS (FLORA) are growing together *anew*.

The important point to stress here is that both ORGANISM and FLORA set a perspective on transformation that is fundamentally different from the ones discussed so far. In this perspective, the discourse participant portrays transformation as something self-driven that is quasi-natural in its processuality. The influence on public life of political subjects, profiled in all of the other models, is hidden here. The causes of developments are attributed to states or parts of the system on a global level, e.g., to *open wounds* (ORGANISM), *European roots*

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<sup>12</sup> The German word “reifen” can be used with reference to both *fruit* and *people*.

<sup>13</sup> It is conventional in German to talk about a wound *growing together*.

(FLORA) etc. In other words, ORGANISM and FLORA propose a rationality for looking at transformation that is radically different from the *ACTIVE* perspective. I call this the *NATURAL* perspective.

Other models that are semantically similar are (by frequency) FAUNA (in its subdomain *wild animals*), WEATHER, RIVER, BODY OF WATER, and KINSHIP. However, these models set more specific perspectives. E.g., WEATHER (14), RIVER (15), and *wild animals* (FAUNA) (16) often profile the idea of a potentially dangerous *LACK OF CONTROL*, as in the examples (14-16):

- (14) “Wir, die Genossen einer Partei, die schon so viele **Stürme** bestanden hat, lassen keinen Zweifel an unserem Standpunkt.” [We, the comrades of a party that has persisted so many **storms**, don’t leave a doubt about our position] (Neues Deutschland, 7.11.1989)
- (15) “[...] in demselben Rhythmus, in dem sich die **Flut** der DDR-Besucher über die bundesdeutschen Städte **ergießt**.” [[...] in the same rhythm in which the **flood** of GDR citizens **gushes** over West German cities.] (Rheinischer Merkur, 24.11.1989)
- (16) “Wer gestern noch die **scharfe Kralle der Macht** zeigte und heute das weiche Pfötchen des Dialogs hinhält, darf sich nicht wundern, daß viele noch die **Kralle** darunter fürchten.” [Someone who was still showing the **sharp-edged claw of power** yesterday and offers the smooth paw of dialogue today should not be astonished that many still fear the **claw** underneath] (F. Schorlemmer, Kundgebung auf dem Alex, 4.11.1989)

Table 3 summarises the perspectives that seem to have been *discourse practices* in German transformation discourse (Baranov & Zinken, 2003; Zinken, in print). The perspectives noted on level 2 are subcategories of the perspectives on level 1 above and inherit their rationality. E.g., the perspective of *COMPETITION* inherits the logic of the perspective of *INTENTIONAL ACTIVITY*:

**Table 3: Perspectives set by metaphor on different levels of specificity, in order of frequency**

Level 1	Level 2
Intentional activity	Competition Rationality
Nature	Lack of control

A noteworthy aspect of this analysis is that the metalanguage of *perspectives* is itself largely neutral with respect to different theories of metaphor. By making the statement that German discourse participants saw transformation as a time of *competitive action*, we do not have to make the claim that mental representations of transformation are themselves metaphorical. Neither do we have to rule out such a possibility.

### 3.4 The stereotype and its profiles

A near exhaustive reconstruction of the folk stereotype of system transformation would have to be based on a far more detailed analysis, not least because system transformation is a very complex concept that entails a range of other complex concepts, such as (political) change, (political) competition, progress, stagnation, etc., and because it can be applied in diverse contexts, such as that of companies, refugees, political parties, etc. However, for the sake of argument, I would like to present a tentative stereotype profile of *system transformation* reconstructed from the presented analysis of metaphor:

**Table 4: A tentative stereotype profile of *system transformation***

Aspect	Stereotypical traits
<b>Hyperonym</b>	system transformation is an <i>intentional activity</i> carried out by political subjects; it is a <i>complex event</i> that sometimes seems to be self-governed;
<b>Origin</b>	system transformation has been initiated by the people; it is formed by political subjects who make an effort to take <i>steps</i> into the <i>right direction</i> ; some of its aspects evolve and <i>grow</i> in their own time
<b>Characteristics</b>	system transformation requires a lot of thought for the new system to be based on <i>stable foundations</i> ; it can be characterised by aggression, when political subjects <i>fight</i> to stay on the chosen <i>course</i> ; transformation can become dangerous when it goes out of control; e.g., this can cause large quantities of people to <i>flood</i> other territories.
<b>Activities, states, processes</b>	system transformation <i>moves</i> forward; as long as it is under control, it moves slowly, like a <i>fresh breeze</i> which causes vital societal processes to <i>flow</i> ; when it takes on <i>pace</i> it can become dangerous, it can turn into a <i>storm</i> ;
<b>Actions</b>	system transformation affects the social, political and economic life; it makes the economy <i>grow</i> or <i>shrink</i> ; it affects many people's lives by making the system those lives are embedded in <i>tumble</i> and <i>crash</i> ;
<b>Object of actions</b>	system transformation is constituted by actions carried out by political subjects, who <i>construe</i> a new system by <i>setting</i> the right <i>course</i> and taking the right <i>steps</i> ;
<b>Space &amp; Time</b>	system transformation will be finished when the <i>goal</i> is <i>reached</i> ; Germany is the <i>building site</i> of the ongoing <i>construction</i> ;
<b>Symbol</b>	system transformation is symbolised as a <i>turn</i> .

Bartmiński (1999a: 105) emphasises that a stereotype is the result of an *interpretation* of the world, bound to a subjective *point of view*. We can therefore ask: Whose point(s) of view is/are entrenched in a given stereotype profile? Relating concept structure to points of view is

interesting for evolutionary questions, because it allows us to trace how situated cognition in different historical periods leaves its “footprints” in symbols (cf. Bartmiński, Lappo & Majer-Baranowska, 2002). In a synchronic perspective, the relation of stereotypes to points of view enables us to explicate how the same knowledge base entrenched in a cultural concept is profiled in different ways.

To say that the stereotype profile presented in table 4 reflects the point of view of the ordinary German speaker might be too much of a hypostasis. However, I think that it is legitimate to talk of the point of view of a speaker *as a member of a certain group*. This does not rule out the possibility that a speaker can adopt different perspectives in different discourse contexts, related, e.g., to different aspects of a person’s identity.

E.g., the transformation corpus shows distinctive differences between the points of view of the *GDR representative*, the *FRG representative*, and the *observing FRG citizen*. The differences can be assessed by comparing the quantitative characteristics of metaphoricity in these subdiscourses. We find that in texts written by GDR representatives or reproducing speeches of GDR representatives, FLORA metaphors as well as metaphors emphasising the destructive nature of transformation are used much more frequently than in any other subdiscourse. The function of FLORA in these texts is to present transformation as a slowly evolving change that has been *sawn* by the GDR itself<sup>14</sup> and which will naturally *bear fruits* in the end. The use of the FLORA model thus delegitimises radical actions towards change and paints a positive picture of the GDR as a *growing, ripening* economy (Zinken, 2003, Baranov & Zinken, 2004). In other words, GDR representatives profiled transformation in a way which places more emphasis on aspects and traits accessible from the *NATURAL* and the *LACK OF CONTROL* perspective. Accordingly, in this stereotype profile the respective predications belonging to the aspects **activities**, **states**, **processes** as well as **actions** should be more salient. In texts by FRG representatives, FLORA and ORGANISM metaphors are also frequent, but their function is different. They are applied to the whole of Germany as an ORGANISM, and FLORA metaphors are mainly designed to carry a positive evaluation grounded in a romantic image of nature. Therefore, interestingly, the aspect structure in the stereotype profiled from the point of view of the FRG representative might not be so dissimilar from the structure profiled from the point of view of the GDR representative. However, the “filling” of some aspects would be quite different. Finally, texts written from the point of view of the observing citizen focus on the (often failed or failing) actions of political subject, portrayed in terms of metaphors such as MOTION, ARCHITECTURE, or WAR. Therefore, the aspect **object of actions** occupies a higher position in this particular stereotype profile. Table 5 shows, in a rough sketch, the tentative aspect structures of these three stereotype profiles.

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<sup>14</sup> Especially in the early stages before the GDR’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, when there was still a fight for the term “turn”, which the GDR representatives wanted to occupy to denote their efforts.

**Table 5: Aspects in stereotype profiles from different points of view**

Point of view	GDR representative	FRG representative	Observing citizen
	<i>Hyperonym</i>	Hyperonym	<i>Hyperonym</i>
	Activities, states, processes	Activities, states, processes	Object of actions
	Actions	Object of actions	Activities, states, processes
	Characteristics	Origin	Origin
	Origin	Characteristics	Characteristics
	Object of actions	Actions	Actions
	Space & Time	Space & Time	Space & Time
	Symbol	Symbol	Symbol

Again, it must be emphasised that this is a preliminary depiction that is primarily meant to illustrate the value of the ESL approach as a metalanguage for metaphor analysis. In the next section, I turn to the discussion of a (meta-)theoretical issue that arises from bringing together conceptual metaphor research with the ESL approach to cognitive linguistics.

#### 4. Models of experience

In this section I will outline some aspects of a theoretical issue which arises out of the previous discussions and which is relevant for metaphor theory: the way different approaches in cognitive linguistics model experience and its significance for language, metaphor, and worldview.

The ESL shares with Western approaches to cognitive linguistics an experientialist framework, in which the motivational relation of (linguistic) meaning to the kind of world human beings inhabit is outlined. Initial formulations of this relation between language and experience in the work of Lakoff (e.g., Lakoff, 1987) were very broad, as in (17):

- (17) ‘Experience’ is thus not taken in the narrow sense of the things that have ‘happened to happen’ to a single individual. Experience is instead construed in the broad sense: the totality of human experience and everything that plays a role in it – the nature of our bodies, our genetically inherited capacities, our modes of physical functioning in the world, our social organisation, etc. (Lakoff, 1987: 266)

Although lip service is occasionally paid to the importance of cultural and social contexts, the elaboration of this general approach in the 1990s has led to an ever increasing focus on the importance of individual sensori-motor experience in a physical world as the basis for



conceptualisation and ultimately linguistic structure (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, for a more detailed justification of this assertion, see Zinken et al., 2003; Zinken, 2002). This particular model of embodiment involves a shift towards placing everything that is relevant for explaining conceptualisation in the *individual in a physical environment*. Such a way of modelling experience and embodiment has various consequences for metaphor theory. Some of them are spelled out in (18):

(18)

- a) *If conceptualisation is motivated by the way an individual's sensori-motor make-up interacts with the physical world, then all conceptualisation not immediately grounded in individual sensori-motor experience is metaphoric;*
- b) *If all human beings' sensori-motor make up is largely the same, then metaphors should be largely the same everywhere*
- c) *If conceptualisation happens in the individual, then metaphors should be mental structures.*

The lack of regard for cultural situatedness has recently been criticised from the perspectives of discourse analysis and cross-linguistic metaphor research (see the articles in Dirven et al., in prep.). The most basic criticism is maybe that CMT reduces *human* conceptualisation to cognitive structures that *all primates* are capable of acquiring, namely simple schemas such as PATH or CONTAINER (Tomasello, 1999; Zinken et al., 2003). Given the monodirectional causal chain assumed in CMT (Frank, 2003) - from sensori-motor experience to image schemas to abstract concepts to linguistic expressions – it is not clear how any discontinuities at all between human beings and other primates could ever have emerged.

The ESL proposes a view on language and conceptualisation that places a much bigger emphasis on the sociocultural situatedness of speakers. The experiences motivating semantic and conceptual structure are experiences of a *subject in a sociocultural environment*. Consequently, bi-directional influences between the subjective and the objective (e.g., cognition and convention) come into view. Although there is no explicit theorising on metaphor in the ESL, I would like to try and tentatively formulate positions on the *extent of the metaphorical*, the *universality of metaphors*, and the *status of metaphor as a stable structure* (cf. 18 a-c) from the point of view of the ESL.

I shall start with pointing out a commonality between CMT and ESL: Both approaches agree that metaphor is vital in conceptualisation. However, the extent of the metaphorical is certainly more restricted in the ESL. Many of the things regarded as metaphoric in CMT would be described as *myths* in the ESL (Niebrzegowska, 1986). E.g., folk beliefs that the sun is rejoicing and other conceptualisations that we could call anthropomorphisms are not considered metaphorical. How can they not be metaphorical?

The key to understanding the ESL perspective on this is the notion of *types of rationality*. Conceptualisation is not independent of the contexts in which it occurs. As cultural and situational contexts change, one individual's reasoning might change between different types

of rationality. This is evident in studies on folk classification in rural areas of Poland today (Bartmiński, 1989), where a modern type of rationality, imported through radio, television, institutions, etc. co-exists with a traditional type of rationality. These different rationalities are motivated by different *experiential frames* (Bartmiński, Lappo & Majer-Baranowska, 2002: 106).

The claim is thus that talk of the rejoicing sun is not metaphorical in contexts where speakers adopt a particular type of rationality, because within this rationality the sun *really* (i.e., conventionally) is a living being capable of feelings. The whole problem of course lies with the term ‘really’.

According to the CMT (in the reading I am giving it) the *real* knowledge about the sun would probably be restricted to *warmth* and *light*. The experience of warmth and light might be subjectively judged as positive, so people might develop a primary scene (Grady, 1999) associating the sun with positive feelings. Still there would remain a gap between this and an understanding of the sun as a living being, capable of having feelings itself. This gap, according to CMT, is bridged metaphorically – independently of whether anyone apart from the researcher *feels* this metaphoricity. The feeling of anthropologists that there is nothing metaphorical about the rejoicing sun would not contradict this account – it would rather point to a “traditional” understanding of what metaphor is on the part of the anthropologist in question.

The ESL understanding of metaphor is indeed more traditional than the CMT understanding. Instead of regarding as metaphorical everything that is not directly available to sensori-motor experience, it regards as metaphorical such linguistic acts in which a speaker actively remoulds an aspect of the culturally situated, conventional picture of the world. The distinction between metaphors and myths serves the purpose to distinguish two types of an imaginative, narrative understanding of the world: a type in which the speaker – more or less unconsciously – (linguistically) *behaves* according to a particular picture of the world (= the mythical type), and a type in which a speaker (linguistically) *acts* upon this picture (= the metaphorical type) (Zinken, 2002). Metaphoric acts can become habitualised and thus be used with very little consciousness – as in what I have called discourse metaphors (Zinken et al., submitted).<sup>15</sup> But brought to the speaker’s consciousness, a metaphor will be judged to be not literally true from the point of view of a particular rationality, while a myth will be judged to be a true statement by a speaker thinking in this rationality type. Therefore, talk of the rejoicing sun is metaphorical when it appears in communication that is happening within a modern type of rationality, but it is not metaphorical when it is happening within a type of rationality belonging to a worldview that regards the sun as a living being. Metaphor then would not be a stable *mental structure*, but an *activity* that potentially alters mental structure.

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<sup>15</sup> The distinction between (conscious) *acts* and (unconscious) *behaviours* draws upon activity theory (Leont’ev, 1984).

In other words, the assumption that talk of the rejoicing sun must always be metaphorical is itself a generalisation made from the point of view of a particular rationality: a modern rationality that considers the individual to be the basic unity of analysis. For modern speakers it makes perfect sense to say that man is the basic entity carrying life, therefore talk of a living sun implies a process of carrying over (metaphorising) the characteristics of life onto something else. In fact, in traditional Polish culture, and in traditional cultures more generally, the cosmos is a “highly integrated living organism” (Niebrzegowska, 1986: 39) and the basic carrier of life.

The general point here is that there is no metaphor without a semiotic context codifying what is *real* and what is not. This means that conventions should be a part of how we define the phenomenon of metaphor. This does not mean that metaphors have to vary widely across languages and cultures. What it does mean is that the search for metaphor universals and for explanations for potentially universal metaphors cannot be based solely on universals of the human body. It has to be based also on universals of human culture, which seem to be especially well traceable in traditional cultures (Bartmiński, 1996: 19).

These are, in a nutshell, the impulses for metaphor theory that in my opinion a reception of the work of the ESL can give:

It encourages the study of “conceptualisation in action”, focussing on authentic language data rather than introspection;

It draws attention to the importance of taking varying contexts into account, in terms of types of rationality, but also, e.g., in terms of different modalities (e.g., written vs. oral language);

It integrates metaphor – as one important aspect of conceptualisation – into a general framework of studying language and conceptualisation. It thus takes seriously a basic claim of cognitive linguistic metaphor theory: that metaphor is nothing extraordinary.

## **5. Conclusion**

It was the aim of this article to introduce to the English scientific discourse the cognitive linguistic approach of the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin. I have introduced the notion of the *linguistic picture of the world* elaborated in that approach, entailing the concepts of *stereotype*, *profile*, *aspect*, and *type of rationality*. In the empirical part of the paper, I have presented an analysis of the German understanding of the system transformation of the late 1980s and early 1990s as it emerges from newspaper discourse data from that period. The results show the main *perspectives* on system transformation that were conveyed by the dominant metaphors. A meta-theoretical discussion of conceptions of experience in the ESL and in CMT was presented in section four. While metaphor is regarded to be a conceptual structure grounded in individual sensori-motor experience in CMT, scholars in the ESL view metaphor as a conceptual *activity* grounded in a conventional, semiotic *picture of the world*. It

seems to me that this latter view is more coherent with discourse approaches to metaphor, as it more directly accounts for the well-documented interactive function of metaphor in the evolution (Musolff, 2004) and negotiation (Zinken et al., submitted) of concepts.

I am convinced that in practicing science as a cultural activity we can learn a lot from contact with other research communities. I hope to have shown that one way of making advances in (metaphor) theory is to look across the borders of our scientific discourse, which are drawn by the English language.

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