

BOOK REVIEWS

Honesto Herrera-Soler and **Michael White** (Eds.), *Metaphor and Mills. Figurative language in business and economics*. Berlin/ Boston: Mouton de Gruyter, 2012. Pp. 329. ISBN 978-3-11-027296-3.

Reviewed by Crina Herteg, *1 Decembrie 1918* University of Alba Iulia, Romania

The book *Metaphor and Mills. Figurative language in business and economics*, edited by Honesto Herrera-Soler and Michael White (2012) is an important contribution to the study of economic metaphor as it exploits different facets of conceptual metaphors and it covers all aspects related to the study of metaphors in business and economic contexts: the translatability of metaphors, the teachability of conceptual metaphors, the frequency and density of conceptual metaphors in business texts, the aesthetic function of the metaphor and the role played by metaphors. There are many approaches to economic metaphors in business English texts. Herrera Soler and Michael White bring out novel interpretations of metaphors, metaphors in business genre and its subgenres (project management, corporate communication) are studied from different angles.

The book is divided into three sections: Section 1 - *Metaphor in economic theory and in economics as an academic discipline*, Section 2- *Cultural filters in contrastive studies*, Section 3 - *Metaphor in economy and business in practice*. Each section comprises four contributions totalling 12 articles written by well-known specialists. The book is not clustered around categories of conceptual metaphors shaped in a business environment, it interprets the economic metaphors from an organic perspective. The book brings together different points of view in the study of metaphors: metaphors in translation, metaphor and terminology, diachrony, pedagogical implications of metaphor, metaphors and banking discourse. The book focuses on business/ economics metaphors exploited from different perspectives: as a result of the translation process, metaphors seen from a diachronic perspective, as a result of networking, as a means of adorning communication, figurative meanings with aesthetic function. The articles have in common the methods adopted for conducting the research. In almost all articles the method used for collecting and interpreting data resorts to corpora.

The authors of the 12 contributions originate from different countries, bringing intercultural glimpses into the study of metaphors. The different entailments arising between metaphor, politics and culture are mentioned, the political and cultural implications are drawn on in all articles. Politics and culture shape have

different impact on economic metaphors. The economic metaphor is influenced by the political transformations a country is going through. The editors highlight the importance of resorting to metaphor in business English class drawing on the pedagogical implications of business metaphors as a tool during the process of instruction. Despite mentioning the role of business metaphors in the language class no article from the book addresses the topic of the teachability of business English metaphors.

In chapter one *From barter to coin: Shifting cognitive frames in classical Greek economy* Paloma Tejada Caller and Antonio Guzman Guerra start from the assumption that linguistic research is a useful tool in discovering and revealing different stages of a country's language and behaviour from social, cultural and mental perspectives. The authors believe that lexical transformations go hand in hand with the development of the country and its enrichment. Every change and development in the cultural, economic and political evolution of money (the way in which money is perceived, the concept of profits, the idea of wealth) is lexically reflected. At their turn lexical transformations were captured by means of metonymy and metaphors. Based on the results of their investigation, the authors attempt to reconstruct cognitive models associated with the concept of exchange. Dwelling further into these aspects we can see how ancient Greeks perceived money, their emotional perception of money, their social life and the role money played in shaping daily life.

Nicolaas Mouton (*Metaphor and economic thought: A historical perspective*) sees the economic metaphors from an organic perspective. The economy is seen as an organ and the phenomena occurring in an economy are the result of the good or bad functioning of the body. According to Mouton the role money plays within an economy is similar with the role blood plays in the human body. The circulation of money ensures the functioning of an economy the same way as the circulation of blood keeps the body alive and helps it function properly.

In the chapter entitled *Towards a better understanding of metaphorical networks in the language of economics: The importance of theory constitutive metaphors* Catherine Resche follows the evolution of economics as a science and observes that in order to function as a scientific discipline economics borrows concepts from other disciplines with institutional identity: medicine, biology, industry, physics.

Tony Berber Sardinha authored the chapter entitled *Metaphors of the Brazilian economy from 1964 to 2010* which analyses economic metaphors in the Brazilian space from a diachronic perspective. Metaphors have been used to express problems and solutions, major economic plans have been underpinned by metaphors. The author draws on the fact that metaphors are shaped by economic and political realities, the developments the country has gone through are reflected linguistically in the choice and use of metaphors.

Siaw-Fong Chung deals with the translatability of metaphors in the chapter *Mandarin translation of English economic metaphors: A cross-linguistic study of conceptually related economic terms*.

Pedro Fuertes-Olivera and Marisol Velasco Sacristan refer to the role metaphors play in shaping business/ economic discourse. The research methodology the authors resort to includes corpora and case study. Their tenet is that the process of creating metaphorical terms is influenced by their aesthetic value in specialized discourse. Pedro Fuertes-Olivera and Marisol Velasco Sacristan draw on the interdisciplinarity of the metaphor as they relate metaphors in specialized texts to terminology issues. The researchers advocate the idea that metaphors and metaphorical constructions in a text are also the result of terminological work: terminologists create metaphorical terms in order to enhance the rhetorical potential of the text. The authors opted for investigating dictionary entries, i.e. decontextualized terms and they apply a comparative approach in their investigation, comparing accounting terms in English with their equivalents in Spanish by observing and explaining the decisions taken in the translation process, as well as the implications arising from the translation of metaphors.

The article relies on Eva Samaniego Fernandez's theory of translating and translatability of metaphors. The authors propose three methods/models and analyse terms which acquire metaphorical nuances/ figurative meanings in the translation process. Pedro Fuertes-Olivera and Marisol Velasco Sacristan agree with and adopt the factors which influence the degree of translatability of metaphors as described by Eva Samaniego Fernandez.

Jeannette Littlemore's contribution *The Use of verbal and gestural metaphor in explanation of management theory* focuses on the use of verbal and gestural metaphor in speech within the boundary or outside a discourse community. The author focuses on the use of gestures in two different contexts: a discussion with a native speaker, a discussion with a non-native speaker. According to Jeannette Littlemore, the factors which affect communication range from the use of gestural metaphors, the speaker's experience, competence, expertise, topic familiarity.

Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli conducts an investigation on the use of hyperbole in business and economics lectures. The author analyses the means through which the hyperbole is achieved and the frequency of each means expressing hyperbole. The methodology applied includes qualitative analysis and the approach relies on corpora. Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli processes the two corpora with grammatical software. The author believes that understanding the role of the hyperbole can provide additional disciplinary insights and reveal new trends in the teaching of these subjects. The author's findings draw on the fact that business and economics lectures use hyperbole rhetorically on the one hand in order to persuade listeners and on the other hand in order to stimulate students to think critically.

Philip Eubanks deals with the perfect storm metaphor (*The Perfect storm: an imperfect metaphor*), the author traces the origin of the phrase, the treatment and behaviour of the perfect storm metaphor, highlighting its unexpected behaviour and its conventionality. According to the author, the phrase is one of the most commonly asserted explanations for the recent global collapse (Eubanks 2012: 225). The author relies on a corpus-based approach in order to demonstrate how the perfect storm metaphor works. Philip Eubanks gives examples of perfect storm metaphors in

different contexts in relation to companies and to the economy. He believes that personal experiences and perceptions influence and act as filters on conceptual metaphors influencing their productivity on the one hand and constraints on the other hand. Philip Eubanks identifies two dangers menacing the perfect storm metaphor: overuse and extendibility. Thus, *perfect storm* is seen as a metaphor subject to extension as well as to limitation. As regards the extendibility of metaphors Philip Eubanks believes that the use of perfect storm to describe positive events gives us reason to suspect that when it is not extended its entailments are few.

The chapter *Framing a bank: reputation management during financial crisis* authored by Lise-Lotte Holmgreen attempts a novel and interesting analysis: the study of banking discursive and metaphorical constructions used as part of the bank's corporate communication. The author has in view Danske Bank, one of the most important and known Danish banks. Holmgreen starts from the assumption that the study of discursive and metaphorical framing highlights the construction of reality. She points out that in order to find out the discursive and metaphorical strategies the bank resorted to for securing a good image, the researcher needs to know who are the influential actors outside the organisation as the bank's image is closely related to them. Among these actors, Lise-Lotte Holmgreen identifies the media as one of the most important factors in shaping the bank's image, the way the bank is reflected in press influences the stakeholders' image of the bank. Holmgreen mentions previous research related to linguistic, rhetorical and communicative aspects of the public relations pinpointing the advantages of framing in conducting linguistic investigations on rhetorical and communicative aspects of public relations: it links the conceptual level of communication with the rhetorical/ linguistic one. More precisely the author investigates semantic framing. The author explains the tenets of semantic framing within Conceptual Metaphor Theory and refers to it as the coherent organisation of human knowledge required to understand a particular word or sentence (Holmgreen 2012: 246) The corpus on the basis of which Holmgreen supports her analysis consists of articles from the major Danish broadsheets as well as the bank's website. The author analyses press articles on the topic of the Danske bank against alternative frames emerging from the quotes of the Danske Bank CEO Peter Staarup and the bank's site. The perception on the bank differs from one newspaper to another. The bank's image as framed by the media draw on the bank's lack of ability to deal with the crisis, a bank whose leading position on the market begins to be questioned. The bank's CEO frames a totally different image: the bank is the victim of the crisis which affects the entire banking sector.

Lise-Lotte Holmgreen concludes by pinpointing the role metaphors play in framing, adding evaluation to the frames introduced by other lexical items.

Hanna Skorczynska's contribution *Metaphor and knowledge specialization in business management. The case of project management discourse* exploits another facet of metaphor variation: vertical metaphor. The author insists on the novelty of this approach to metaphor. She outlines the fact that metaphors have been analysed from different perspectives: conceptual metaphors, metaphors as vehicles of transferring knowledge, metaphor's discursive and communicative functions in

business management. Research on metaphors exploit a large array of aspects pertaining to conceptual metaphors, this contribution brings a new insight in the research of metaphor: metaphor variation within the same field of specialization involves the use of certain general level metaphors alongside specialist sub-field metaphors. Hanna Skorczynska proposes a different research pattern. In order to compare how metaphor is used in general business discourse and in its more specialised sub-genres, she chooses to explore metaphors in project management discourse. She accounts for her choice referring to the small number of scientific production in the field of project management. Moreover, the metaphor in project management discourse hasn't been studied in depth.

The idea that underlies is that metaphors used in general business genre permeate more specialized levels of business genre shaping different metaphorical constructs. The author starts from the assumption that certain metaphors from the general level of a particular field are re-exploited at a more specialized level providing distinct cognitive constructs and different metaphorical expressions. The research methodology the author resorts to relies on corpus. The corpus proved a valuable tool in analysing the frequency of metaphors, the Source Domains involved and their collocates. The author amassed two corpora: one of general business and another one of project management discourses. The findings point out that there are differences in metaphorical uses in a general and more specialised sample of discourse within the same domain of knowledge.

Hanna Skorczynska also refers to the role of metaphors in terminology. Her point of view complements Fuertes-Olivera and Velasco Sacristan's thesis as regards the role of metaphors in terminology in that she explicitly mentions the role of metaphors in mature sciences. The idea underlying this tenet is that metaphors shape terminological treatment in mature sciences not during the initial stage of coining new terms.

The last but not least contribution in the book, *Metaphor as instrument of linguistic and social identity co-construction in business development network (BDNs)* addresses metaphor development through interaction (Blazkova 2012: 291). Hana Blazkova gives the definition of BDNs as "coalitions of business owners and professionals who, through a structured support system help each other to generate business" (Blazkova 2012: 293). The author supports her research on the data collected from 2005 to 2007 in the meetings of four BDNs groups based in Birmingham. During these meetings the members have to deliver a 60-second speech which is structured according to a certain format. This is the second contribution in the book which explores spoken discourse within the same field of specialisation, yet from a different perspective. Hana Blazkova stresses the fact that in interactional contexts speakers tend to influence one another by favouring previously used metaphors, metaphors are conveyed within the same conversation by different speakers. Metaphors are seen as dynamic and fluid. The group acquires linguistic identity by adopting linguistic patterns and characteristics: metaphor repetition, metaphor appropriation. By analysing discursive patterns and linguistic features of the speeches delivered, the author attempts to capture the linguistic identity of the

group and the ways in which this identity is expressed, as well as metaphors and metaphorical constructions occurring in these speech acts.

The new avenues it opens in the study of economic metaphor turn the book into a valuable tool for the research of business metaphors.

References

Semino, E. (2008). *Metaphor in discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stefanowitsch, A., & Gries, Th.S. (Eds.). (2006). *Corpus-based approach to metaphor and metonymy*. Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

White, M. (2003). Metaphors and economics. The case of growth. *English for specific purposes*, 22(2): 131-151.