

CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURES OF EXTENDED METAPHOR IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract – The study aims at applying Kövecses’ “multi-level view of conceptual metaphor” to extended metaphor. This model gives the possibility to explain systematically, from a cognitive point of view, the interactions and the relationships of the multiple micrometaphors contained within an extended metaphor. The idea is that the metaphors within the extended metaphor share the same image schema and domain in a scale of metaphorical conceptualisations, which goes from the most schematic level to the least schematic one. It is at the level of frames that the micrometaphors within the extended metaphor differ from each other and show their connections, because they elaborate different aspects of the same domain. The connections between the micrometaphors not only contribute to give cohesion and coherence to the text, but also allow the speaker to articulate the speech in an effective and comprehensible manner, and the addressee to better understand the message conveyed by the metaphor. In order to give empirical substance to my claim, Kövecses’ model is applied to a series of extended metaphors found in everyday language and political discourse. In particular, to Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech.

Keywords: extended metaphor; conceptual structures; frames; multi-level view.

1. Introduction

Metaphor as figurative use of language has been analysed from the perspectives of various disciplines, including linguistics, stylistics and rhetoric that have studied its applications and effects in different contexts of use, from poetry to everyday language. This study deals with a particular type of metaphor which has received less attention especially in the field of linguistics: extended metaphor.

Extended or sustained metaphor is generally defined as a linguistic metaphor extending over more than one clause. It is often confused with allegory which has sometimes been used to include extended metaphor (Crisp 2005, pp. 325-6). Although allegory can be considered a super-extended metaphor, Crisp argues that the former displays a qualitative rather than just a quantitative difference with “ordinary” extended metaphor. In particular, extended metaphors create a conscious, and rather strange, experience of metaphorical blended spaces, while allegories refer to and characterise

fictional situations functioning as their metaphorical sources (Crisp 2008, p. 293).

The present work aims at analysing some instances of extended metaphor by applying Kövecses's (2020) theoretical model which makes a distinction between the various conceptual structures that come into play in the process of conceptual metaphor interpretation. Kövecses differentiates between image-schemas, domains, frames and mental spaces, placing them along a scale that goes from the most schematic structure (image-schemas) to the least schematic (mental spaces), which, however, is also the most specific, therefore richer in information.

Kövecses argues that conceptual metaphors are realised at four levels of schematicity in an interconnected vertical hierarchy of image-schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces. In other words, contrary to how they are conceived in the literature, conceptual metaphors cannot and should not be connected to a single conceptual structure, such as frames or domains: they are at the same time complexes of all four of these structures. He calls this structuring the “multi-level view of metaphor”. This study adopts that perspective in order to explain the articulation of an extended metaphor into two or more “micrometaphors”.

Furthermore, the study aims to explore the contribution that the presence of an extended metaphor within the text can provide to the process of understanding the text itself. Following Rezanova and Shilyaev's (2015) studies, I will argue that extended metaphor provides coherence and cohesion to the text. Moreover, I will show how it is used in political discourse with a rhetorical intention to persuade the audience. Finally, I will hypothesise that the presence of multiple micrometaphors that elaborate on multiple aspects of the frames may facilitate text comprehension, resulting in a lower demand on pragmatic resources.

In the following sections, I will describe Zoltan Kövecses' model, recalling the definition of the various conceptual structures adopted to describe the framework of conceptual metaphor; then, I will provide three examples of extended metaphors from three different contexts; finally, I will try to apply Kövecses' model to a series of extended metaphors from everyday discourse in order to account for the conceptual structures underlying it, with particular emphasis on Martin Luther King Jr.'s “I have a dream” speech.

2. Conceptual structures

In his work “Extended conceptual metaphor theory”, Kövecses (2020, p. 50) argues that Cognitive Linguistics uses a number of different categories to refer to the conceptual structures that constitute conceptual metaphors. The

most commonly employed one is that of domain (as in source and target domain), but several others are also in circulation, including image schemas (e.g., Lakoff 1990, 1993), frames (e.g., Kövecses 2006; Lakoff 1996), scenes (e.g., Grady 1997), mental spaces (e.g., Fauconnier, Turner 2002), schemas (e.g., Lakoff, Turner 1989), and scenarios (e.g., Musolff 2006, 2016).

For this reason, it is difficult to identify the appropriate conceptual unit which comes into play in the formation of conceptual metaphors. It may be argued that we can replace one unit with another without affecting the process of metaphorical categorisation; or that some conceptual structures are inappropriate for describing this operation. For instance, both Grady (1995) and Musolff (2006), although for different reasons, claim that domains are not the appropriate units to modulate this process.

Kövecses (2020, p. 51) claims that it is best to think of conceptual metaphors as simultaneously involving conceptual structures, or units, on several distinct levels of schematicity (see, e.g., Lakoff 1987; Langacker 1987; Rosch 1978). He distinguishes four such levels: the level of image schemas, the level of domains, the level of frames, and the level of mental spaces (in addition to the linguistic level of the actual utterances with which the metaphors are instantiated). Kövecses describes this proposal as a new comprehensive framework for the study of metaphor in Conceptual Metaphor Theory: the “multi-level view of conceptual metaphor”.

Central to this view is the notion of schematicity, a term of Cognitive Grammar that refers to the level of detail in the form or the function of constructions. It is defined as the relation between a schema and its instantiation, where the schema is a relatively unspecified conceptual structure whereas the instantiations have a higher degree of specificity (Kerevičien 2009, p. 2). The multi-level view of conceptual metaphor places the conceptual structures involved in the process of metaphorical categorisation in a hierarchy of schematicity.¹ Within this hierarchy, the four conceptual structures occupy different levels disposed from the most schematic to the least schematic, as in Figure 1.

¹ This view entails that, given particular concepts, the various levels of schematicity form a continuous hierarchy; the various levels shade gradually into more or less schematic levels. In other words, the levels within such schematicity hierarchies do not have rigid boundaries but are graded as regards their schematicity. For instance, the concept of JOURNEY presupposes the more schematic structure of MOTION and, more specifically, SOURCE-PATH-GOAL MOTION (to distinguish it from other types of motion) (Kövecses, 2020: 52).

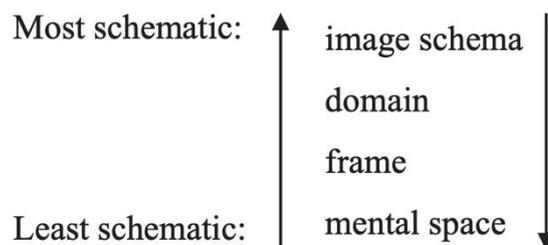


Figure 1

Schematicity hierarchy for four conceptual structures (Kövecses, 2020, p. 52).

The least schematic unit is also the most specific one, which means it is the unit providing the highest amount of information.

2.1. *Image-schemas*

Mark Johnson defines an image schema as “a recurring dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that gives coherence to our experience” (Johnson 1987). Image schemas have several important properties: they are imagistic, not propositional, in nature; they are relatively abstract conceptual representations that arise directly from our everyday interaction with and observation of the world. More specifically, they are concepts arising from embodied experience. These structures are meaningful at the conceptual level precisely because they derive from the level of bodily experience, which is directly meaningful. For example, our image-schematic concept COUNTERFORCE arises from the experience of being unable to proceed because some opposing force is resisting our attempt to move forward (Evans, Green 2006, p. 301). Among the most common image schemas we find OBJECT, CONTAINER, LINK, CENTRE-PERIPHERY, CYCLE, NEAR-FAR, SCALE, PART-WHOLE, CONTACT, PROCESS, PATH and VERTICALITY (cf. Johnson 1987).

The term ‘image’ in ‘image-schema’ is equivalent to the use of this term in psychology, where imagistic experience relates to and derives from our experience of the external world. Another term for this type of experience is sensory experience, because it comes from sensory-perceptual mechanisms that include, but are not restricted to, the visual system (Evans, Green 2006, p. 178).

Kövecses (2020, p. 53) argues that “because of their highly schematic nature, image schemas range over the entire conceptual system making a wide variety of concepts and experiences meaningful. For example, the concept of journey presupposes the more schematic structure of MOTION and, more specifically, SOURCE-PATH-GOAL MOTION (to distinguish it from other types of motion). Further, concepts may take several image

schemas to support them conceptually. For example, the concept of BODY is based on the image schemas of CONTAINER, VERTICALITY, (STRUCTURED) OBJECT, and so on. Finally, concepts may be characterized by the same image schemas. For instance, the concept of BUILDING (in the sense of an enclosed construction), similar to the BODY, presupposes the CONTAINER, VERTICALITY, and OBJECT schemas”.

2.2. Domains

Domains are necessarily cognitive entities: mental experiences, representational spaces, concepts, or conceptual complexes (Langacker 1987, p. 147). In other words, domains are conceptual entities of varying levels of complexity and organization.

The only prerequisite that a knowledge structure has for counting as a domain is that it provides background information against which lexical concepts can be understood and used in language (Evans, Green 2006, p. 230). Unlike image schemas, domains are not analogue, imagistic patterns of experience, but propositional in nature in a highly schematic fashion. They are at a level immediately below image schemas. If on the one hand image schemas make domains such as JOURNEY, BODY, and BUILDING (mentioned above as concepts) meaningful, on the other hand, domains have many more parts than image schemas, and are thus more information rich (Kövecses 2020, p. 53). In fact, they bring some relevant aspects of a concept to the foreground (Ruiz de Mendoza 2012): for instance, the concept of BODY can be used both to indicate our motor system and for spatial location or topological relationships (Heine 1997).

2.3. Frames

According to Fillmore (1982), a frame is a schematisation of experience (a knowledge structure), which is represented at the conceptual level and held in long-term memory. More specifically, the frame relates the elements and entities associated with a particular culturally embedded scene from human experience. Fillmore argues that words and grammatical constructions are relativised to frames, which means that the ‘meaning’ associated with a particular word (or grammatical construction) cannot be understood independently of the frame with which it is associated. The semantic frame is a knowledge structure required in order to understand a particular word or related set of words. Consider the related group of words: “buy”, “sell”, “pay”, “spend”, “cost”, “charge”, “tender”, “change”, and so on. Fillmore argues that in order to understand these words, we need access to a COMMERCIAL EVENT frame which provides ‘the background and

motivation for the categories which these words represent' (Fillmore 1982, pp. 116–17).

According to Kövecses, the relationship undergoing between domains and frames is one of inclusion: domains include or consist of frames. Therefore, we can think about this relation also in terms of schematicity, with domains being more schematic and frames involving more specific information than domains.

2.4. Mental spaces

The concept of mental space derives from Fauconnier's Mental Spaces Theory:

mental spaces are very partial assemblies constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action. They contain elements and are structured by frames and cognitive models. Mental spaces are connected to long-term schematic knowledge, such as the frame for WALKING ALONG A PATH, and to long-term specific knowledge. (Fauconnier 2007, p. 351)

Mental spaces are more specific than frames, in that they do not operate with generic roles and relations in most cases, but with specific instances of roles and relations. At the same time, they are also coherent organisations of experience, just like frames and domains, but they function at a very specific and conceptually-rich level. Moreover, mental spaces are used in online processing for purposes of local understanding (Kövecses 2020, p. 54).

2.5. Multi-level view and conceptual metaphor

Summing up, while image schemas exist as continuous and analogue patterns beneath conscious awareness, prior to and independently of other concepts (Hampe 2005, p. 1), domains and frames work on a different level of long-term memory, with frames offering more specific information than domains (although they do not cover all aspects of a domain). Finally, mental spaces are used in online processing in working memory. A fifth level is the one in which speaker and listener use symbols (linguistic or otherwise) that make manifest, or elaborate, the content of particular mental spaces (Kövecses 2020, p. 55). The four structures participate in metaphorical conceptualisation.

Following the studies of Grady (1997), Kövecses illustrates the example of the source domain of BUILDING, analysing it at different levels of schematicity. BUILDING is a concept that is based on, or characterised by, several image schemas, such as CONTAINER, VERTICALITY, PART-WHOLE, and OBJECT.

Domains are conceptually supported by image schemas in the sense

that the image schemas apply to the various aspects of domains that characterise them. These aspects are essentially the concepts that belong to the domain matrix associated with BUILDING (Kövecses 2020, p. 68). In other words, domains elaborate image schemas. The domain of BUILDING also possesses several frames of BUILDING as a PROCESS, a PHYSICAL SUPPORT or frames related to its PARTS (walls, windows, rooms, etc.) or its FUNCTION. Thus, frames further elaborate the various aspects of domains. At the mental spaces (or scenario, as in Musolff 2006) level, we would have further specifications of any of the frames discussed above. For example, an elaboration of the BUILDING frame would be the mental space associated with a sentence like “John built himself a strong house” that indicates the specific individual who built the house and a structural property of the house. These are pieces of information that are not contained in the more schematic BUILDING frame (Kövecses 2020, pp. 59-60).

As for conceptual metaphors, the mappings between the source and target concepts occur on the same level: image schemas correspond to image schemas, domains to domains, frames to frames, and mental spaces to mental spaces (Kövecses 2020, p. 90). Take the conceptual metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS (Lakoff, Johnson 1980, p. 46): the BUILDING source domain participates in the conceptualization of THEORIES by means of two frames within it: the BUILDING AS PROCESS frame (which gives rise to the first mapping of BUILDING and CREATION) and the PHYSICAL SUPPORT frame which structures two more mappings (ABSTRACT STABILITY and LASTINGNESS). The meanings of the conventionalised expressions, the three mappings on which they are based, the two frames associated with the BUILDING source domain, as well as the other constitutive frames are at the supraindividual level, i.e., at the level of long-term semantic memory, where we store decontextualized conceptual information related to building as a conceptual domain (Kövecses 2020, p. 63).

Then, this decontextualised information is used in real discourse, where people communicate interacting with each other and the context of utterance. The presence of information-rich context and the more flexible use of frame elements allows the participants to process online (i.e., at the level of mental spaces) a linguistic metaphor based on the PHYSICAL SUPPORT frame such as:

Is that the foundation for your theory? (Lakoff, Johnson 1980, p. 46)

Or we may have another linguistic metaphor based on the PROCESS frame such as:

Increasingly, scientific knowledge is constructed by small numbers of specialized workers. (Kövecses 2002, 2010).

In sum, a metaphor that is used in a specific communicative situation as part of a mental space will activate the frame structure to which it is linked, which will, in turn, activate the domain of which the frame is a part, and this activation will reach the image schema that conceptually supports the frame (Kövecses 2020, p. 69). In other words, conceptual metaphors cannot and should not be linked to a single conceptual structure, such as frames or domains. Conceptual metaphors are complexes of all four of these at the same time. Furthermore, this view is in line with Lakoff's (1993, p. 215) Invariance Principle, which states: "Metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain".

3. Extended metaphor

As discussed above, the operation of metaphor processing extends to cover the four structures which participate in its formation. In this section, I would like to look at a specific aspect of this trope: the extension of the metaphorical field over more than one clause, which characterises extended metaphor.

Extended or sustained metaphor (or megametaphor, as in Rezanova, Shilyaev 2015) is a powerful linguistic device which is employed especially, but not exclusively, in literary language. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989), literary and ordinary metaphor do not differ in kind, but in terms of degree: "great poets, as master craftsmen, use basically the same tools we use; what makes them different is their talent for using these tools, and their skill in using them" (1989). However, Werth (1994, p. 84) argues that there are some differences between these two. In particular, literary metaphor is often used simply to make the expression more striking. Metaphor in such cases is much more a question of poetic choice, then, rather than being forced on the producer because of the poverty of the language.

As we will see below, extended metaphor is not used only in poetic language. One of its most striking features is the ability to work as a cohesion and coherence device through the entire discourse, as discussed in Rezanova and Shilyaev (2015, p. 33). Megametaphor provides a paradigm for metaphorical expressions of a particular text, organising at the same time the text into a coherent² whole. As Kövecses notes, it "may run through entire

² Textual coherence, being primarily a cognitive category, is expressed in the cohesion of text on the surface level (Rezanova, Shilyaev 2015, p. 38).

literary texts without necessarily ‘surfacing’” (Kovecses 2010, p. 57). Rezanova and Shilyaev (2015, p. 33) argue that it manifests itself through the metaphorically used lexemes in the text, commonly called “micrometaphors”.

Micrometaphors can be found in certain relationships with each other as shown in the following example:

- (1) *Freezing* the country was a challenge, *thawing* it out will be just as hard. (The Telegraph, 30/05/20)

The Telegraph’s article describes the lockdown measures that were taken to stop the spread of Covid-19 throughout the country. The lockdown is described in terms of freezing the country thus stopping all its activities. However, now is the time to restart: we understand the second metaphor “thawing it out” as a function of the first one, as there is a conceptual dependency relationship within the metaphorical interpretation. In particular, these two micrometaphors are in a relationship of complementarity.

The presence of a higher number of micrometaphors gradually contributes to strengthen the message conveyed by the extended metaphor, thus making it a powerful device when used for ideological purposes, especially in politics. Metaphors in political speech are not only used to describe a domain in terms of another: they always have pragmatic “added value”, which allows the speaker to express his or her evaluation of a specific topic, to make an emotional or persuasive appeal or to rescale and frame certain problems or situations within a familiar experience pattern. Then, these situations can be dealt with by familiar problem-solving strategies (Musolff 2016, p. 4). Just like ordinary metaphors work as rhetorical devices, extended metaphors allow the speaker to modulate the content of the speech often with a rhetorical intention of persuading the audience:

A year ago, at the height of the emergency, we called on Prime Minister Draghi to take responsibility [...] Today, if we have entrusted *this ship* in trouble to a *helmsman*, there are no conditions for *stopping the engines*, for *changing the crew*, for asking the helmsman for a new assignment. On the contrary, this confirms the importance we attribute to the *role of the helmsman*, because our ship is still in trouble. (Giuseppe Conte, 25th January 2022)

Here, Giuseppe Conte is expressing his contrariety to current Prime Minister Mario Draghi becoming President of the Republic, because Italy, as the rest of the world, is facing a particularly difficult period due to the Covid-19 pandemics. He conceptualises Italy in terms of a sailing ship and Draghi as its helmsman who must not abandon the ship and the crew. This is because, as a ship would be stopped by turning off its engines, the country would

momentarily stop if Parliament had to nominate a new Prime Minister in case Draghi became the new President of the Republic.

The use of the extended metaphor gives force coherence and cohesion to Conte's speech. Also, it allows him to express his disapproval regarding this political situation, using a clear, effective and comprehensible language. As these examples prove, extended metaphor is widely employed also outside literature. Further examples of literary and non-literary uses of extended metaphors can be found in Goatly (1997), who compared the use of metaphor in samples extracted from six different genres (in English). Amongst other things, he found that modern lyric poetry has a larger percentage of active and extended metaphors than literary (e.g., modern novels) and non-literary (e.g., conversation and news reports) genres. However, the previous examples show that extended metaphor is commonly employed in everyday speech as well as in political speech, due to its capacity of creating powerful images and articulating them into further images at different levels of granularity which enables the speaker to insist on an idea by modulating the contents without the risks of dull repetitions.

It is precisely for this reason that understanding whether extended metaphor is an element of difficulty or facilitation in the recovery of meaning is particularly interesting. Unfortunately, there are no experimental studies which have analysed the processing ease or difficulty of extended metaphor from this multi-level perspective. However, in the following sections, I will hypothesise that the presence of an extended metaphor may contribute to lowering the demand of pragmatic resources.

4. Multi-level view of extended metaphor

In this section, I will show how Kövecses' multi-level view of metaphor described in section 2 applies to the instances of extended metaphor discussed in section 3, providing a systematic account of their internal structure as we have seen in the above-mentioned example (3). As previously underlined, there is a conceptual dependency undergoing between the two micrometaphors within this short extended metaphor. Now, I will look at the structures which take part in the metaphor conceptualisation.

The conceptual metaphor underlying this utterance is TEMPERATURE IS INTENSITY. These domains are based on the mappings between the image-schemas of HEAT/COLD and STATE. Both micrometaphors "Freezing the country" and "Thawing it out" share the same source domain, and, for the Invariance Principle, the same image-schemas as well. It is at this level that we can perceive the relationship of complementarity between the two states implicated by the metaphors COOLING IS SLOWING DOWN MOVEMENT and HEATING IS

INTENSIFYING MOVEMENT.

As regards Giuseppe Conte's interview, we are dealing with the conceptual metaphor A COUNTRY IS A SHIP, based on the image schemas of MOTION (SOURCE-PATH-GOAL MOTION) and ACTIVITY. The domains of SHIP and COUNTRY are further elaborated in different frames, such as COUNTRY AS PHYSICAL OBJECT and SHIP AS CREW, which respectively map with ABSTRACT MOTION and POLITICS frames. In particular, the mapping between COUNTRY AS PHYSICAL OBJECT and ABSTRACT MOTION refers to the path a country has to follow in order to move forward and, eventually, overcome difficulties; the mapping between the metonymic use of CREW for the SHIP and POLITICS refers to the internal organization of the COUNTRY, where a government is in charge in the same way as a helmsman steers the ship, whose passengers are the citizens of the country.

As a consequence, we will have the online conceptualisation of SHIP as a COUNTRY at the level of mental spaces with linguistic metaphors such as “there are no conditions for stopping the engines” or “this confirms the importance we attribute to the role of the helmsman, because our ship is still in trouble”. It is at the level of mental spaces that we process the conceptual metaphor in relation to the context of utterance. Thus, we understand that Conte is speaking about Italy and its current Prime Minister Mario Draghi, and he is expressing his disagreement with this specific scenario.

These examples prove that it is possible to apply Kövecses' model on extended metaphor. The brief discussion shows that the micrometaphors in it belong to the same domain (and, for the Invariance Principle, to the same image schemas), but it is at the level of frames that they differ from each other (while maintaining the internal coherence that characterises the extended metaphor), because frames make use of and elaborate on the various aspects of the domain. They further differ at the level of mental spaces, where we contextualise on online specifications, elaborations, modifications and fusions of frames (Baicchi 2020, p. 5). In the following subsection, I will apply the multi-level view of metaphor to a passage of one of the most famous speeches in recent history.

4.1. Multi-level view analysis of the “I have a dream” speech

I will take into consideration a short extract of Martin Luther King Jr's “I have a dream” speech:

In a sense, we've come to our nation's capital to *cash a check*. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were *signing a promissory note* to which every American was to fall *heir*. This note was a *promise* that all men,

yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the “*unalienable Rights*” of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” It is obvious today that America has *defaulted on this promissory note*, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of *honoring this sacred obligation*, America has given the Negro people *a bad check*, a check which has come back marked “*insufficient funds*”. But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are *insufficient funds* in the great *vaults of opportunity* of this nation. And so, we’ve come to *cash this check*, a check that will give us *upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice*. (Martin Luther King Jr, 28th August 1963)

This is one of the most powerful metaphors that Martin Luther King Jr used in his speech. He describes the civil rights written in the Constitution and in the Declaration of Independence (“promises”) in terms of promissory notes or checks which were given to every American citizen, regardless of skin colour. The African American community has every right to cash this check, but America does not seem willing to keep its promises, due to “insufficient funds”. Therefore, this country’s system of justice and equality has failed (“bankrupt”). Apparently, they are not able to guarantee to the African American community the same rights, the same opportunities every American citizen must have.

This is an extended metaphor, consisting of a number of micrometaphors such as “to cash a check”, “promissory note”, “the bank of justice is bankrupt”, “there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation”, “a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice”, etc. All these metaphors belong to the domain of BANKING which participates in the conceptualisation of RIGHTS. The image schemas working as basis for the BANKING domain are CONTAINER and RESOURCES.

At the level of frames, a number of aspects of the BANKING domain is then elaborated. The frame of BANKING ACTIVITIES maps with PROMISE. In particular, we can conceive the activities performed by and through a banking institution (such as signing a check, cash a check, signing a promissory note or honour an obligation) as agreements between the bank and its clients or between the clients themselves. If these promises are broken (e.g., due to insufficient funds or bankruptcy), then one of the parties to the contract does not receive what is due to it. Within this perspective, the frame of RESOURCES maps with RIGHTS. Therefore, we find that “check”, “promissory note” or “funds” are used to describe the civil rights every citizen has.

Finally, the frame of BANK AS PHYSICAL OBJECT maps with RIGHTS. The “vaults” of a bank are a secure space where money, valuable or documents can be stored. There is nothing as precious as civil rights, so they must be kept safe and, at the same time, available to all citizens. These

mappings are then processed online at the level of mental spaces where, by interpreting the situational context, we can conceive the laws written in the American Constitution in terms of checks or promissory notes which cannot be cashed by every citizen; the bankruptcy of the bank of justice as a failure in guaranteeing every American citizen the same rights; and the empty vaults in terms of the country, whose efforts were directed only to one group of citizens and none remained for the other.

As in the previous example, each micrometaphor expands and elaborates specific aspects of the frame, thus modulating a concept into several conceptual structures that preserve its integrity at the levels of image schemas and domains, while at the same time introducing differences that keep the reader/listener focused. Understood as basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality, frames are able to organise knowledge and motivate inferences: they create slots for expected objects (Bertuccelli Papi 2020, p. 28). Within this view, each micrometaphor constitutes a slot which has to be filled with information available in the mind of the reader. Given that they further elaborate aspects of the same domains and image-schemas, every frame is connected with the others. Thus, with the metaphor extending over multiple micrometaphors, the addressee's interpretation of one micrometaphor leaves place to the following expected interpretation, gradually lowering the cognitive demand for meaning retrieval.

In other words, the presence of a number of micrometaphors allows the speaker to deliver his/her message, without necessarily making it too complicated, and helps creating expectations in the reader/listener, whose cognitive effort may decrease as the metaphor unfolds. Therefore, extended metaphor is shown to organise the text both conceptually – via a coherent set of frame structures of the source domain – and linguistically, by way of applying a network of metaphorical lexemes to the description of a concept (Rezanova, Shilyaev 2015, p. 31). It would be interesting to further explore this aspect of extended metaphor on an experimental basis.

In sum, within this view, it is the frame that guarantees the coherence and the consistency of the extended metaphor. Acting as organising structures in long-term memory, frames further elaborate specific aspects of the domains level, by providing the knowledge structures necessary to process particular words or related set of words.

5. Conclusions

The present study aimed at applying the multi-level view of conceptual metaphor to the phenomenon of extended metaphor. I analysed two short passages collected for another research work and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I

have a dream” speech. All these extracts contained extended metaphors characterised by different degrees of complexity.

The analysis has shown how multi-level view can be profitably applied to extended metaphor as well. It shows how the micrometaphors within the extended metaphor share the same source domain and the same image schemas. These metaphors conceptualise the target domain at the level of frames (which is more specific and, therefore, richer in information), by elaborating specific aspects of the domains. Frames allow to perceive the connections between the micrometaphors by establishing the common conceptual basis, thus guaranteeing the coherence of the extended metaphor. These connections enable the speaker to communicate his/her message effectively, without, probably, making the process of understanding the text more difficult. However, this aspect needs empirical verification in order to provide an accurate answer. Finally, it is at the level of mental spaces that we can process online and contextualise instances of metaphorical speech.

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