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**METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE CONFLICT IN  
THE GERMAN MEDIADISKURCE**

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***Abstract***

Texts of modern mass media form a mass consciousness using various means. One of the most effective means of such impact is metaphor, which is not just a stylistic device from the cognitive point of view, but the way of knowing, structuring and explaining the world. Conceptual metaphors are the mediums of cultural conceptual information, they are considered the main means of conceptualization to understand and perceive one type of objects in terms of objects of another type, as a means of comprehension some abstract sphere in terms of more well - known specific sphere. The article deals with the peculiarities of metaphorical conceptualization of the conflict in mass media discourse. The research is based upon modern texts within German mass media.

German mass media texts contain metaphorical expressions to compile metaphorical models based on the source areas of metaphorical transference "Man", "Society and social relations", "Nature", "War and military actions", "Game", "Artefacts", "Religion", "Music". The metaphorical models created in the texts of mass media conceptualize the reality and constituent fragments in the form of similarity to a man, his portrait or body, physiological or physical actions, behavior, connections and interpersonal relationships with other people. According to the quantitative analysis, the most productive kind of metaphor, used in the modern German Mass media texts to describe conflicts, arises physiological and play metaphors. The least productive metaphors turned out to be religious and musical metaphors by results to our research work.

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**Keywords:** Metaphor, metaphorical modeling, media discourse, metaphorical model.



## 1. Introduction

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by a permanent increase in the number of conflicts at various levels. Conflict is the most acute way of resolving significant contradictions that arise in the process of interaction, consisting in opposing the subjects of the conflict and usually accompanied by negative emotions. The most dangerous are intergroup and interinstitutional conflicts, as well as conflicts that break between states, cultures, and confessions. The mass media use new lexical means to highlight the development and beginning conflicts with certain purpose to create imagery to strengthen the influence on readers, to form a proper reaction, which, in turn, is of particular interest to linguists

## 2. Problem Statement

Man thinks with metaphors creating the world he lives in. As G. Lakoff and M. Johnson noted, “conceptual sphere is mostly metaphorical in nature, human thinking, everyday experience and behavior are conditioned by metaphor to a large extent” (Lakoff, Johnson, 1990, p. 387). Following by A.P Chudinov, we treat metaphor as the basic mental (cognitive) procedure with concepts. Metaphor incorporates two conceptual spheres, “allows us to comprehend a particular area of reality in terms of conceptual structures that were originally formed on the basis of experience obtained in other areas”, and “creates the possibility of using structuring potency of the source sphere in the conceptualization of a new sphere (Chudinov, 2012). According to E.V. Ivanova, conceptual metaphors are bearers of cultural conceptual information along with paremia, aphorisms (Ivanova, 2015). Conceptual metaphor is considered the main means of conceptualization, by means of which we understand and perceive one type of objects in terms of objects of another type, as a means of understanding some abstract sphere in terms of a more known, usually concrete sphere (Ivanova, 2017). Based on the theory of regular polysemy and theory of conceptual metaphor, the Russian scientists represents the term “metaphorical model” through the prism of synonymy “conceptual metaphor”. The scientist describes metaphorical model as “existing and / or emerging scheme in the minds of native speakers, scheme between the conceptual spheres, which can be represented by a certain formula: “X is Y” (Alekseeva, Tschudinov, Mishlanova, Nakhimova, 2014). The components of the metaphorical model, according to A.P. Chudinov, include the original conceptual domain, the new conceptual domain, the metaphorical model of frames and slots that make up the metaphorical model, and the components that connect the conceptual domains. Each metaphor is parallel in several levels: in context, text and discourse. The context gives the opportunity to unravel the meaning of the metaphorical expression. Metaphor is a part of the metaphorical concept of the text within it. There is an expansion of one metaphorical model in some texts, while in others there are metaphorical expressions of different models. The metaphorical expressions of different metaphorical models intersect, they can connect as synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

### **3. Purpose of the Study**

The main goal of this research is to identify metaphorical images (conceptual metaphors) which help to verbalize conflicts in German mass media.

### **4. Research Questions**

The wording of the problem suggests the search for an answer following questions:

- 4.1. What metaphorical models describing conflicts in German massmedia are the most productive, which ones are less productive?
- 4.2. What are the main spheres sources of metaphorical transfer when describing conflicts by mass media?
- 4.3. What are the main categories of media metaphor models in the conceptualization of conflicts?

### **5. Research Methods**

At the initial stage of the discourse modelling, a full sample is carried out using the definition analysis from the texts of the ecological discourse. This allows us to identify the basic cognitive models and the metaphorical models that structure them, as well as their language content. Subsequently, full-sample data can be verified and validated by a representative sample of other texts of environmental discourse. As a rule, if the preliminary analysis was carried out accurately, the highlighted directions of the conceptual deployment are confirmed and unfolded. Next, we analyse and describe the highlighted metaphorical models for determining the initial semantic spheres of the language and the field of metaphorical expansion, the metaphorical deployment vector, and the filling of metaphorical models. The most significant and typical models undergo linguistic and cultural interpretation.

### **6. Findings**

In German mass media texts metaphorical expressions compose metaphorical models based on the sources of the metaphorical transference "Man", "Society and social relations", "Nature", "War and military actions", "Game", "Artefacts", "Religion", "Music". These source areas allow us to distinguish the following categories of media metaphor models in the conceptualization of conflicts: an anthropomorphic metaphor ("Man"), a sociomorphic metaphor ("Society and social relations" "War and military actions", "Game", "Religion", "Music"), nature-metaphoric metaphor ("Nature"), artefact metaphor ("Artefacts"). Let us consider these categories of metaphors and the metaphorical models on examples selected by the method of continuous sampling in the German media texts.

Anthropomorphic metaphor

Sphere-source "Man"

## The metaphorical model "Conflict is the human organism"

The metaphorical expressions that constitute the metaphorical model "Conflict is a human organism" conceptualize reality and its fragments in the form of similarity to a person, his portrait or body, physiological or physical actions, behavior, relationships and interpersonal relationships with other people.

Having inquired a set of sources of the megasphere "Man", we discovered that only mental processes belong to a human being: speech, individual characteristics, and types of temperament and features of character. The rest of the psychological and physiological qualities are both human and animals, however in the present research work we bounce off the idea that mentioned features are anthropomorphic, i.e. they belong to a man first and for most. We consider examining which anthropomorphisms are the source of the creation of metaphorical images in the speech of journalists.

### Frame "Human body parts, organs, external senses"

Physiological metaphor is one of the most traditional and detailed structured in media discourse when describing conflicts. It is always actively used in the speech of journalists; herewith one can note the archaization of some former expressions and the emergence of a number of new metaphorical images. Spheres-sources of metaphors of this type are "naive" representations of a person about his body, its parts (organs), the functions and physiological actions.

#### Slot "Heart"

The main function of the heart as an image is the designation of the emotional characteristic, the dynamic of emotional states, the emotional motivation of actions. War as a conflict between states appears in the form of a living organism with a human organ - the heart: *"Zwei Journalisten waren im Herzen des Krieges"*.

#### Slot "Body"

Metaphor is based on the mental reflection of the common properties of the human body and the "body of conflict". The functional transfer from the human body to an inanimate object helps us to form a new understanding of the possibilities of this object, based on the fact that we know how our body functions: *«Die Stäbe in den Flottillen und Geschwadern sind das Rückgrat der Flotte in See»*.

#### Frame "Gender"

A metaphorical comparison of conflict and a man (female or male) attracts the attention of the mass media readers. The war rejects its belonging to the female gender: *«Der Krieg hat kein weibliches Gesicht»*.

#### Frame "Human actions"

Conflicts are endowed metaphorically with the functions of a living organism. First, they are common actions inherent in a man. There are such lexemes as *gehen, kommen, laufen, sprechen, etc.* in the articles: *«Wenn die Waffen sprechen, schweigen die Musen»*. *«Syriens Krieg geht in Libanon weiter»*.

We can also highlight the frame "Physiological Actions", which includes such processes as birth, growing, aging or dying. More often the following verbs are used to express actions like these: *aufkommen, gebären, sterben*: *«Jeder Tag gebärt neue Herausforderungen für Menschen in Not»*. *«Die Hoffnung stirbt zuletzt»*.

#### Frame "Disease"

The metaphor “War is epidemic” is widely used in German mass media texts. Vocabulary depicting diseases of society is figuratively used in accordance with this model. There are nouns *Epidemie* and *Krankheit* in the frame “Disease”. People are instilled the thoughts about war as a whole and its components as some disease to span masses and manipulate their conscious: «*Kriege schüren die Epidemie*». «*Krieg ist Krankheit, keine Lösung ist jetzt zu kaufen*».

Conflict in a metaphorical sense introduces not as a pure disease but a contagious illness, which might be transferred from one state / nationality to another: «*Soziale Ansteckung nennt das die Konfliktforschung*».

Sociomorphic metaphor

Sphere source “Society and public relations”

Society is a part of material world detached from nature. Society includes ways of interaction, forms of uniting people, it is capable to produce tools and use them in the process of labor. Society develops in its own laws and lives as a complex social organism. Conflicts arise in a society as in any other social system.

We understand conflicts in a society as ones take place in different social spheres (economics, politics, social and spiritual). There are a collision of interests, values, views and aims of special subjects of social interaction – nationalities, states, classes, parties, unions, etc. in conflicts

Social conflict is a complex social phenomenon, it has close ties with those social structures where it appears and develops.

Frame “Professional Activity”

There is a metaphorical conflict in modern German mass media. It reveals like professional activity. In the following example the participants of the conflict are trying on actor’s profession: “*Humanitäres Völkerrecht und nichtstaatliche Gewaltakteure: neue Regeln für asymmetrische bewaffnete Konflikte?*”

Country in conflict is depicted metaphorically as a ship, government authorities are sailors: «*Irak driftet auf neuen Bürgerkrieg zu*».

Frame “Economics and Finance”

In accord with this model lexicon for economic processes is used figuratively. This frame is build more often with the help of the verb «bezahlen (to pay smth. for smth.)»: «*Ermordeter Leiter eines Hilfsprojekts in Indien: Einsatz mit dem Leben bezahlt*».

Here are some more examples to illustrate frame “Economics and Finance”: «*Krieg als Bankrotterklärung der Menschlichkeit*». «*Die orangene Fläche sind die Truppenbeiträge aus Asien*».

Sphere source “War”

Metaphorical model “War and Hostilities”

Frame «Hostilities»

Almost every generation knows what war is. This is the reason to present military vocabulary as the main source of metaphorical expansion at different levels of language development. Society has rich military experience, which reflects traditionally in national mentality, military metaphors show the most effective and fast way to solve complex problems.

Everyone heard about war, people get used to war as natural social phenomenon. War is armed confrontation of two opposing groups. Generally, these groups are states. Social conflicts may have

different character of its development. If confrontation of opposing sides results of armed violence, the conflict turned out to war: *«USA torpedieren Friedensbemühungen in Pakistan»*.

Sphere source “Play”

Metaphorical model “Conflict – Play”

Frame «Kind of Play”

The role of games in people’s activity is quite outstanding. Due to this fact, metaphorical use of the sphere source “Play” has spread among different communicative spheres. This model is fully used by German journalists. The dominant model is conflict as a game. Normally they mean the well-known kinds of games in Germany, such as football, card games, board games. Conflict situation is likened to a card game in most cases. Most likely this is because of association with the greatest degree of excitement, huge bets and heavy losses: *«Wenn wir Afghanistan fallen lassen, fällt Pakistan wie ein Kartenhaus»*. *«Machtpoker im Kreml, im Kaukasus droht jetzt ein neues Tschetschenien»*.

There are examples of another games, for instance skittles: *«Washington wird die Nato natürlich nicht rauskegeln»*.

Sphere source “Religious”

Metaphorical model “Conflict – Hell”

If one believes mass media, humanity is rapidly approaching the apocalypse. Metaphorical images of different conflicts-catastrophes are widely spread in mass media. First, it is a religious metaphor, it describes conflict as an action of some higher power. It looks like the punishment of God or the devil, due to that one can not prevent it or avoid. This very fact deprive saman his confidence and capabilities. Religious metaphor is represented by a scope of metaphorical expressions. The idea of conflict catastrophe as the punishment for man’s sins and faults is the main component of religious metaphors: *«Niemand hätte diesem Inferno entgehen können»*. *«Die Syrien hat sich in eine Hölle verwandelt»*.

Sphere source “Music”.

Musical metaphors belong to metaphorical archetypes. One can find them in mythology and cultural traditions at the initial stage of development of human civilization. Music became an integral part of human life in the XX century and musical metaphors penetrated into psychology, pictorial art, and literature.

Metaphorical model “Conflict – Piece of Music».

Music is art. Artistic images are embodied due to sounds and silence specially organized within time. We depict conflict in our work as a piece of music: *“Der Bombenangriff scheint nur die Ouvertüre gewesen zu sein”*.

Sphere source “Nature”

Metaphorical model “Conflict – origination of nature”

Conflict as a social phenomenon appears metaphorically in mass media with the help of natural objects and phenomena. They are independent, animate entities, capable to affect a person positively or negatively.

Frame “Natural phenomena”.

Pragmatic potential of a major part of this group does not have aggressive character but contains a high degree of anxiety. Lexemes describing natural phenomena build this frame: *donnern* (about thunderclap),

*hageln* (about hail fall out) *Regen* (rain): “*Hundert Kampfflugzeuge donnern über Europa*”. “*Es hagelt Raketen*».

Frame “Reservoirs”

Lexemes *Sumpf* (swamp), *Meer* (sea), *Fluss* (river), *Ozean* (ocean) can become metaphors. Water is a morphousand swift, these characteristics define its special role. Different reservoirs, either large bodies of water or flowing water bodies behave themselves differently. Large bodies of water are ocean, sea, and vortex. Image of huge accumulation of water lies on the basic idea about ocean or sea. There is only small visible part of it but nobody knows what lies in the depth. Respectively, conflict through such metaphors looks like boundless nature, the depth of which is unclear: “*Wird er die Straßen Mannheims in ein Meer von Blut verwandeln?*“ „*Der EU-Anwärterstaat Türkei versinkt immer tiefer im Sumpf der Gewalt*“ „*Dann kam eine zweite Welle von russischen Bombern und zielte auf die Wohngebiete*”.

Artifact metaphor

Sphere source «Artefacts»

Metaphorical model «Conflict – the creation of human»

Artefact metaphor is a type of metaphors where objects and phenomena of objective reality are represented in associative connection with the world of things created by man. Metaphorical expressions with lexemes denoted different kinds of fuel are used often: «*Blut wird zum Treibstoff der Revolution*».

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that there are eight main spheres areas of metaphorical transfer in German mass media. They are as following: “Man”, “Society and Public Relations”, “Nature”, “Music”, “Religious”, “Play”, “Artifacts”, “War and Hostilities”. In each sphere there are corresponding metaphorical models formed by certain frames and slots.

Metaphorical models of the mass media texts conceptualize reality and constituent fragments in the form of a man, his portrait or body, physiological or physical actions, behavior, communication and interpersonal relations.

According to the quantitative analysis, the most productive kind of metaphor, used in the modern German mass media texts to describe conflicts, arises physiological and play metaphors. The least productive metaphors turned out to be religious and musical metaphors by results to our research work.

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