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**MONEY METAPHORS IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN. A  
COMPARATIVE APPROACH**

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**Abstract**

The paper aims to analyse conceptual categories clustered around money metaphors both in English and Romanian. It also explores the differences and similarities arising between the realization of this category of conceptual metaphors in Romanian and English, the mappings between Source Domain and Target Domain, the frequency of money metaphors, as well as the morphological realizations of this conceptual category. We will identify the metaphorical mapping which establishes between source domain and target domain. The first stage before embarking upon analysing and identifying conceptual metaphors is establishing the methods of annotation as well as the targets. Depending on the purpose of the research as well as on the length, the researcher can opt for manual processing or for electronic annotation, feeding the concordancing programs with headwords belonging to source domain and/or target domain. In our investigation we rely on previous research studies dealing with the figurative aspects of business language. The degree of interaction between source domain and target domain will also be mentioned.

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**Keywords:** Metaphors; Business English; Corpus.

## 1. Introduction

The study of metaphors is approached from two perspectives: the traditional view and the cognitive linguistic one. The difference between these two perspectives lies in the fact that in the traditional view one word is used instead of another, while in cognitive linguistic view one conceptual domain is used instead of another. In traditional view metaphors are seen as linguistic devices used with the purpose of adorning language. (Kövecses, 2010). Conceptual Metaphor Theory came into picture with the seminal

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work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) *Metaphors we live by* and it points out the difference between cognitive metaphors and linguistic metaphors. In *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction* Kövecses (2010) defines conceptual metaphors as follows:

A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains, in which one domain is understood in terms of another. A conceptual domain is any coherent organization of experience. The two domains that participate in conceptual metaphor have special names. The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called **source domain**, while the conceptual domain that is understood this way is the **target domain**. The target domain is the domain that we try to understand through the use of the source domain. (Kövecses, 2010, p.4).

Kövecses (2010) clearly explains the difference between linguistic metaphors and conceptual metaphors, he distinguishes conceptual metaphors from metaphorical linguistic expressions. According to Kövecses metaphorical linguistic expressions are words, other linguistic expressions that come from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain (i.e., domain B). (Kövecses, 2010. p.4). Kövecses considers that the principle of motivation characterizes the cognitive linguistic view, while predictability characterizes the traditional view of metaphor.

## 2. Literature review

Money metaphors have aroused linguists' interest. A comprehensive study of money approached from a diachronic perspective was conducted by Tejada Caller and Guerra (2012), it analyses the way money was perceived in classical Greek period 8th century BC- 6th century BC. The authors study the way monetary vocabulary was perceived, i.e. in terms of wealth, value, means of exchange. The research is based on corpus, the authors analyse Greek words which have meanings of coins and developed a clear economic sense. Diachronically monetary vocabulary is referred to as means of exchange and the lexical realizations are based on metonymy: utensils and substances for exchange, object for substance, object for activity. The authors outline the following aspects: on the one hand the transformation of Greek vocabulary which goes hand in hand with lexical development and enrichment and on the other hand the cultural implications. From a lexical point of view the authors see an evolution from money seen as a means of exchange to money seen as profit. The authors tried to reconstruct the cognitive models associated with the concept of exchange with the help of interactional and habitual forms of behaviour and with the help of vocabulary. The authors dwell on the idea that linguistic research is a useful tool in discovering different stages of a country's language and behaviour. The frame of material exchanges shows a social and emotional perception of money, money gets mobile and countable, the ancient static system turns dynamic, wealth becomes transactionable.

Mouton (2012) also draws on the historical perspective in the study of money metaphors. In the sub-chapter *Medieval conceptions of money*, the author identifies a series of mappings money and blood

in order to show how specific economic organs fit into the social body. In his opinion metaphors underlying economic reasoning should be seen as flexible and dynamic processes rather than fixed static systems. Mouton (2012) mentions researchers who find mappings between blood and money. Spencer (1891, as cited in Mouton, 2012, p. 52) sees societies in terms of organisms, the lack of money in primitive societies is analogous to the lack of blood in simple organisms.

In her study *Towards a better understanding of metaphorical networks in the language of economics: The importance of theory-constitutive metaphors*, Resche (2012) dwells on economic and business metaphors. She believes that liquid metaphors are fully exploited when dealing with money. Resche (2012) identifies and analyses the metaphorical networks of the European monetary union before the Euro was born as a marriage, a journey, a club, a construction, religion, a guest, transport, a building. All these metaphorical branches share a common denominator: personification.

### **3. Research Methodology**

Conceptual metaphors can be explored either by resorting to the lexical approach, advocated by Zoltán Kövecses or by relying on corpus. The methodology we resort to is corpus-based, as we start from the assumption that nowadays almost every attempt to study business metaphors is approached from a corpus perspective. Corpora represent efficient tools in discovering and revealing linguistic metaphors, they can facilitate both synchronic and diachronic study of metaphors. Arguments for resorting to corpora include: they enable researchers to conduct quantitative analysis of conceptual metaphors, they draw on the frequency of conceptual metaphors within a type of text or discourse, they open new avenues in the study of conceptual metaphors. Consequently, a large number of linguists adhered to corpora in studying business metaphors. In the following lines we will look at two different methods in the study of conceptual metaphors: the lexical approach and the corpus-based one.

Zoltán Kövecses who advocates the lexical approach in the study of conceptual metaphors is of the opinion that corpus linguistics can bring advances in the study of most common source domains and target domains. The author believes that corpus linguistics which can give a better picture of all events and actions and which he describes it as "a remarkable new tool in the study of metaphors that as far as I can tell, mostly confirms but also often challenges and requires us to modify the findings of conceptual metaphor theory". (Kövecses, 2010, p.27).

For conducting a corpus-based analysis the researcher has to compile a corpus, establish the concordancing program to be used, insert headwords in the concordancing programs, identify, interpret and analyze the findings. The population of texts comprising the corpus depends on the purpose of the analysis. This method is very efficient in analysing long texts, it also has the advantage that larger categories of data can be processed and analysed. This method is promoted and adopted by Stefanowitsch 2006, Koller 2006, Deignan 2008. According to Anatol Stefanowitsch target domain can be investigated with the help of key words-based method, he believes that this search can be fruitfully applied in the case of target domains like economics. (Stefanowitsch, 2006a, p.3).

Stefanowitsch (2006) compares the two approaches in the investigation of conceptual metaphors, namely the text-based analysis promoted by Zoltán Kövecses which deals with the ideological, social,

communicative and cultural functions of metaphors and the corpus-based method and he concludes by saying that corpora open new vistas in investigating conceptual metaphors.

For our analysis we adopted the following methodology: we incorporated two parallel corpora, one in English and another one in Romanian, both having the same structure and comprising similar population of texts. The use of parallel corpora enables us to compare findings in English and Romanian, as well as to analyse similarities and differences. The two corpora comprise 600,000 words each and they were populated with business English and Romanian business texts retrieved from daily British and Romanian newspapers (*The Economist, The Telegraph, The Independent, The Guardian, Ziarul Financiar, Capital, Adevarul financiar, Business Magazine*). The time span for selecting the articles runs for the duration of two years from 2013 to 2015. The articles from specialized and general newspapers were selected at random from business/ economic section, financial, business, money, banking sections, covering a large array of economic topics.

We resorted to the following methods of extracting conceptual metaphors from the corpus:

1. Manual annotation using the MIP method;
2. Automated annotation using the corpus-based approach. Automatic annotation was achieved in two ways: a. searching for target domain; b. searching for source domain.

We will refer briefly to the advantages and disadvantages these two methods provide. The MIP method (Metaphor Identification Procedure) for identifying conceptual metaphors was devised by the Pragglejaz Group of linguists. This method can be successfully applied on small texts (Kövecses, 2010), it entails the examination of the contextual meanings of the lexical units comprising the text and it enables researchers to identify various metaphoric expressions. MIP is advocated by Zoltán Kövecses who points out the fact that conceptual metaphors typically employ a more abstract concept as target and a more concrete or physical concept as their source (Kövecses, 2010, p.7). Before identifying conceptual metaphors Zoltán Kövecses suggests we need to know which linguistic metaphors point to their existence, we need to distinguish linguistic metaphors from unmetaphorical (literal) linguistic items (Kövecses, 2010, p.4-5). Manual annotation comprises several stages: identification of the metaphoric expressions, establishing the source domain and target domain and identifying the entailments establishing between source domain and target domain. The main disadvantage of manual annotation is that it is time-consuming and it limits the size of the corpus, on the other hand it has the advantage that this type of annotation enables the researcher to search for source domain and target domain vocabulary.

Automatic annotation relies on extraction from a corpus annotated for semantic fields, the researcher can search for all lexical items belonging to a source domain. Our annotation consists of inserting headwords clustered around the semantic field of money and cash and we can extend them to profit, deposit, futures as well as their Romanian equivalents. The findings of automatic annotations were then manually processed in order to identify the metaphorical uses of money.

We embrace the keywords-based method proposed by Stefanowitsch (2006), who suggests that we choose a lexical item referring to the target domain under investigation and extract its occurrences from the corpus. For our investigation, however, we opted for a combination of the two methods on the one hand because the corpus-based approach identifies the general metaphors and on the other hand because manual processing of the text is necessary in order to see the entailments between source domain and target domain.

## 4. Findings and results

The corpus-based approach enables us to draw on the frequency of headwords which may point to the existence of conceptual metaphors. In the English corpus we identified 400 hits of money, however not all the uses of money are connected with conceptual metaphors. The general idea pervading the texts comprising both corpora is that money is an important aspect of contemporary economy, it is the engine that drives a country's economy. Money is seen as a valuable possession which must be well-managed and taken care of, the owner must avoid putting money at risk. In comparison with conceptualisation of money as identified and analysed by Tejada Caller and Guerra (2012) we may see that nowadays money still maintains the conceptualisation of wealth, value, assets, profit. The Romanian corpus abound in the uses of money seen as a very valuable resource.

The noun *money* mostly collocates with the following verbs: *to make, to collect, to allocate, to invest, to create, to manage*. The same collocational patterning is maintained in the Romanian corpus, *a obține, a investi, a face, a câștiga, a stoarce bani*. The most common conceptual metaphors are:

### 4. 1. Banks are containers for money

Source domain: money

Target domain: economic transactions.

1. be zero. There is a ready alternative to keeping **money** in banks: holding it as cash. Mattresses do not charge for storing notes. ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015)

2. The **banks have simply absorbed the cost** of deposits ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015), **banks are containers for money**

3. Long-term returns from private equity have been better (14% annualised over the past decade, according to Bain, a consultancy), but the industry is not large enough to absorb huge amounts of pension money. ("Investing in a world of low yields. Many unhappy returns. Pension funds and endowments are too optimistic", 2015)

4. un magazin de lux înghite mulți bani ca investiție ("Lux de criză... reduceri de până la 70% în magazinele de pe Victoriei", 2013)

### 4. 2. Money is a liquid

This conceptual category is morphologically realized by means of verbs such as: *to pour, to flood, to flow, to pump*.

1. A further cut in the ECB's deposit rate of 0.2 percentage points could **squeeze the net profits** of European banks by 6%, according to Autonomous Research. ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015)

2. credit far more reliably than **dispersed flows of money** from multiple sources. But the idea that non-banks (Jenkins, 2014)

3. on/2013-05-25> FOR the past three years, foreign **money** has been flooding out of Greece. But the tide may. ("Greek banks redux. System reboot. Recapitalisation approaches the finishing line", 2013)

4. es). Perhaps Silicon Valley has so much cash that **money** is flooding all the way to

New York. But venture c ("Buzzfeed and online news. Which media company are you? How a young company plans to take on the news Leviathans, 2014)

5. y railways is tailing off but it is still pumping **money** into subways. So is India: Bangalore's metro opens ("Metro systems. Going Underground. Subways are spreading fast", 2013)

6. over their entire portfolio in a year. If enough **money** flows into these smart-beta products, then they will ("Fund management. The rise of smart beta. Terrible name, interesting trend", 2013).

7. or stemming unwelcome inflows and outflows of hot **money**. When Brazil imposed a tax on inflows in 2009-10 (EC, 2013) ("World economy. The gated globe. The forward march of globalisation has paused since the financial crisis, giving way to a more conditional, interventionist and nationalist model. Greg Ip examines the consequences", 2013)

8. er €400 billion available to them from September. **Money** is also being poured directly into SMEs by public- ("Financing Europe's small firms. Don't bank on the banks. Small businesses seek alternatives as banks leave them in the lurch", 2014)

9. s is not the only consideration. They have poured **money** into their carrier in part to promote the country ("Etihad. Flying against convention. The ambitious airline is trying a riskier route to expansion than its Gulf rivals", 2014)

10. the big banks will require an injection of €14.4 billion ("Recapitalising Greek banks. The damage", 2015)

11. e anecdote holds a number of lessons: how quickly **money** can evaporate in the futures market; how trivial t ("CME Group. The futures of capitalism. The biggest financial exchange you have never heard of", 2013)

12. It is customary for the central bank to pump out **cash** before China's two annual weeklong holidays, one o ("China's economy. A test of will. After a sharp slowdown, stimulus is back on the agenda", 2014)

13. hort of taking control, it is limited to offering **cash** injections as an incentive for the airlines it inv ("Etihad. Flying against convention. The ambitious airline is trying a riskier route to expansion than its Gulf rivals", 2014)

14. cât sunt de ingenioși străinii în stăruirea de **bani** de aici. „Adevărul” vă propune, în continuare, dev (Ancutescu, 2014)

15. fiind ultima lună în care mai pot fi absorbiți **bani** europeni din prima alocare de după aderarea țării (Bâtcă, 2015)

16. Retailerii continuă să pompeze **bani** în deschideri în pofida faptului că niciunul nu în (Roșca, 2013)

17. FOR the past three years, **foreign money has been flooding out** of Greece ("Greek banks redux. System reboot. Recapitalisation approaches the finishing line", 2013)

18. **bani injectați** de francezi pe plan local, potrivit estimărilor Business Magazin. (Neferu, 2015)

The morphological realization of conceptual metaphors in the Romanian corpus makes use of verbs such as: *a absorbi*, *a pompa*, *a storce*.

### 4. 3. Business is war

The ECB is not alone in testing the lower bound to interest rates. Denmark's central

bank has set its main policy rate below zero for much of the past three years to repel **capital inflows** that had threatened its exchange-rate peg with the euro. ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015)

#### 4. 4. Money is wealth/ Cash is wealth

At dairy group Parmalat, where Mr Mosetti sits on the board, Amber is challenging a move by French majority shareholders Lactalis to use a **cash pile** by Parmalat to buy out Lactalis's US business. (Sanderson, 2013)

Developing the deposits, which are in ultra-deep waters and buried under rocks and a thick layer of salt, will require **oceans of cash**. ("Brazil's oilfields. Back in business. Strong bidding for exploration rights ends the industry's long dry spell", 2013).

This conceptual category is mainly expressed by means of nouns.

The costs of counting, storing, moving and insuring **lorry-loads of banknotes** apparently trumps the smallish charge Europe's central banks are levying to hold electronic deposits. ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015)

#### 4. 5. Economy is an engine

1. up with having to pay banks simply to park their **money in** regular accounts and are considering making mas (Jones, 2015).

2. **Low returns are like a car with a fuel leak**; it can still be driven for a while before it grinds to a halt. ("Investing in a world of low yields. Many unhappy returns. Pension funds and endowments are too optimistic", 2015).

3. and that **money is fuelling consumer spending** (Walker, 2015)

Within this category we identified a sub-category: Money is a vehicle/ Cash is a vehicle:

Mark Haefele, the bank's investment guru, said his clients are growing wary of bonds but do not know where **to park their money instead**. (Evans-Pritchard, 2015)

55 lenders a year later. But the long slow **flight of cash from** Greek bank accounts has turned from a stroll (Jenkins, 2015)

An equivalent in the Romanian corpus is a plasa, there is no figurative meaning entailed: Numai că realitatea ne-a arătat că cine **ar fi plasat banii** în depozite în dolari ar fi scos după un an o sumă mai mica (Pîrloiu, 2013).

#### 4. 6. Time is money

Source domain: money

Target domain: money

Greece and its creditors remain at loggerheads and **time is running out** to secure a deal before funding expires, yet investors in Europe appear remarkably relaxed. (Moore, 2015)

#### 4. 7. More is up

Any form of pre-paid card, such as urban-transport passes, gift vouchers or mobile-phone SIMs could **double up as zero-yielding assets**. If interest rates became deeply negative, it would turn business conventions upside down ("Negative interest rates: Bankers v mattresses", 2015)

#### 4. 8. Less is down

I was broke. I'd studied PPE [philosophy, politics, and economics], which was completely useless but I was very lucky because I had three or four job offers. I had no idea really what Shell did. I took it because they were offering to pay me 50 quid more than Morgan Grenfell [the merchant bank] and I needed the money," Taylor says, laughing. (Evans-Pritchard, 2015)

#### 4. 9. Personification

1. Capital is blind. ("Banks and commodity trading. Sell signals. Banks are scrambling to ditch their commodity-trading businesses", 2014)
2. It is a Black Friday filled with uncertainty for the made-in-America retailer, which filed for bankruptcy last month after bleeding money for years. (Tabuchinov, 2015)

#### 4. 10. Proverbs

Bani albi pentru zile negre", a fost motto-ul românilor (Dobrescu, 2015)

#### 4. 11. Healthy economy is a healthy organism

Analysts at Exane BNP Paribas, a broker, estimate that currency hedging, among other costs attributed to Santander's "corporate centre", eat up around a quarter of the profits made by its various units. BBVA, for its part, hedges about 30-50% of earnings a year in advance. ("Spain's multinational banks. Impecunity in diversity. Foreign subsidiaries are proving a headache for big Spanish banks", 2015)

#### 4. 12. Economic vitality is the vitality of an organism

Fresh funds

### 5. Conclusions

The manual and automatic annotation of the corpus leads us to the conclusion that a manual processing of the text is more accurate, more comprehensive and yields more results in comparison with the corpus-based one. It also enables the identification of a higher number of conceptual metaphors. Due to the length of the corpora we had to resort to both types of annotation.

In terms of frequency the English occurrences of money and its semantic field outnumber the ones in the Romanian corpus, on the other hand the use of money in the English corpus highlights a more positive overtone, while in the Romanian corpus negative connotations of money occur more often. The second headword we searched for cash and its Romanian equivalent yields more hits in the English corpus in comparison with the Romanian one. None of the hits containing the word numerar highlights the existence of conceptual metaphors. Moreover, we identified the same metaphor created by the same journalist occurring two times in the Romanian corpus, which points again to the conventionality of Romanian journalists.

Not all money and money-related conceptual metaphors explicitly comprise the word money or its Romanian equivalent bani, or other words from the semantic field of money. Such metaphors are difficult



to identify with the help of concordancing programs. The metaphors identified by us pinpoint the figurative load of business and economic genre, the English corpus is more laden with figurative and metaphorical uses of money than the Romanian corpus. We may assume that the journalists' capacity of coining new metaphors is in close connection with the three levels of metaphors as identified by Kovecses (2010, p.307), mainly with the individual and supraindividual levels which highlight that the British journalists master a higher creativity and have a capacity of creating more dynamic metaphors compared to Romanian journalists who resort to conventional metaphors. The figurative uses have a deeper load in the English corpus in comparison with the Romanian one, bearing the influence of context, culture, political and historical environments.

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