

A Comparative Study of Metaphor in English and Slovene Popular Economic Discourse

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This paper is aimed at analysing and comparing linguistic and conceptual metaphors identified in Slovene and English economic and business articles. It is focused on two important aspects of metaphor, namely its systematicity and organisation in hierarchical structures. The findings indicate much similarity in conceptual and linguistic metaphors between the two languages, but some differences in the frequency of particular linguistic metaphors. For example, both languages share conceptualisations of the economy as an organism and downward market movements as natural disasters. While these conceptual metaphors are often linguistically rendered with similar lexical metaphors, there are a few examples in which the linguistic realisation of a metaphor is culturally and/or linguistically conditioned. It has been argued that the metaphors identified in the Slovene popular economic discourse are largely influenced by the Anglo-American tradition.

Introduction

Motivations for undertaking metaphorical analyses differ. While figurative language, of which metaphors are a prime example, has traditionally been the concern of general philosophy and linguistics, today a number of diverse academic disciplines are recognising the importance of metaphorical research. Metaphors have long been viewed as a matter of mere language rather than primarily as a means of structuring our conceptual system and the kinds of everyday activity we perform. Claims for the cognitive nature of metaphor that were seen as new and dramatic less than twenty years ago, are now taken as obvious. This shift in metaphor studies, which was prompted by Lakoff and Johnson's book *Metaphors we live by*, published in 1980, arose from the perception of inadequacies of formal logic-based approaches, and the need to take into account new findings about the psychology of categorisation. The work of Lakoff and others fostered an array of interesting publications on metaphor in cognitive linguistics, as well as in other disciplines such as psychology,

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Managing Global Transitions 2 (2): 179–196

computer science, economics, organisation theory, business and management studies, to name but a few.

An advantage of working with metaphors is indeed the potential link with many other disciplines. This is especially evident in the numerous interdisciplinary studies, which have addressed diverse economic and socio-economic issues from a metaphorical perspective. On the one hand, there are authors whose primary concern lies with the study of language and whose work in this field has been closely connected to their interest in applied linguistics (Henderson 2000; Boers 2000; Charteris-Black 2000; Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001). On the other hand, Morgan (1996; 1997), Grant and Osrick (1996) and others have been concerned with the legitimacy and value of metaphor in social and economic sciences, especially in relation to organization science, as researchers whose concern for language is second only to their interest in the field under consideration. Common to the efforts of both is the belief that metaphors play a significant and powerful role in understanding social and economic phenomena.

This paper offers a cognitive analysis of conceptual metaphors identified in Slovene and English articles dealing with business and economic topics, often referred to as popular economic discourse (Boers 2000). In this respect, we have found that research of metaphor based on contrastive analysis can provide valuable insights into the importance, role and implications of metaphor in business and economic texts. Following scrutiny of a great number of articles from selected English and Slovene magazines, the analysis of results revealed two aspects of metaphors worth looking at, namely the systematicity of metaphor and different levels of metaphors.

Several authors have pointed out that the development of the framework of models through which economic phenomena are interpreted has been almost entirely Anglo-Saxon and largely Anglo-American. This has had a powerful influence in causing similar conceptual metaphors to be established across languages (Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001, 251). It is sometimes even possible to trace the source or the author of the metaphorical concept, such as in the case of the metaphor used in relation to the activity in which money that has been obtained illegally is put into legal business and bank accounts in order to hide the source from from which it was obtained. Allegedly, the metaphor 'money laundering' first appeared in the press in 1973 in relation to the scandal that brought down the Nixon administration, often referred to as the 'Water-

gate affair'. Today we can find this conceptual metaphor in a number of languages, including Slovene: *pranje denarja*, *blanchiment d'argent*, *Geldwasche*, *riciclaggio di denaro sporco*, *penge vasking*, *pranie brudnych pieniedzy*, *lavado de dinero*, etc. (Pranje denarja, *Kapital*, 16 August 1999)

In this respect, it can be argued that a number of conceptual metaphors identified in the Slovene corpus have been either transferred from English or at least influenced by it. This process, which might be termed conceptual metaphorical transference, works at the conceptual level and does not necessarily yield linguistic expressions in terms of translation equivalents. On the contrary, a number of conceptual metaphors identified both in English and Slovene articles have different linguistic renderings in the two languages.

Method and Sources

Lakoff and others have strengthened the connection between metaphor and thought by proposing that the conceptual system is not only involved in the processing of metaphor, but that thought is itself structured metaphorically, and that the systematicity of metaphor on the surface of language merely reflects the underlying conceptual structure in which something is understood, stored and processed in terms of something else. Metaphors involve a *source domain* (usually concrete and familiar), a *target domain* (usually abstract or less structured), and a set of *mapping relations* or *correspondences*. The mapping relations involved in metaphor are of two kinds: ontological, involving entities in the two domains, and epistemic, involving relations of knowledge about the entities (Lakoff 1993).

The main aim of our research was to identify conceptual metaphors through the analysis of ontological and epistemic correspondences on the basis of collected examples of conventional metaphors found in business and economic articles in Slovene and English. We did not attempt exhaustively to identify every metaphor in the text, but rather just certain key metaphors that particularly stand out either in Slovene or English texts, or in both. While we disregard the various typologies dealing with different types of metaphors, we need to emphasise that we will be especially concerned with 'live' metaphors,¹ i. e. 'those which require both a certain context and a certain creativity to interpret adequately and that lend themselves to further conceptual development' (Grant and Oswick 1996, 9–10). The data for this study were collected from two English business magazines (*The Economist*, *Business Central Europe*) and

two Slovene business magazines (*Kapital*, *Gospodarski vestnik*). Among the selected publications, *The Economist* has the widest readership since both the political and the economic section deal with current affairs on a global level. *Business Central Europe* is focused on political and economic events in Eastern and Central Europe, while *Kapital* and *Gospodarski Vestnik* are among the most widely read business and economic magazines in Slovenia, covering a wide variety of topics, from financial reports and news on local and international markets to commentaries and opinions on local and worldwide economic and business issues. Examples of metaphors from sources other than the above mentioned are indicated accordingly.

Results of the Study

SYSTEMATICITY IN METAPHOR STRUCTURE

The following conceptual metaphors stand out as especially conspicuous both in English and Slovene economic articles owing to their clear and solid structure: MERGERS ARE LOVE RELATIONSHIPS, THE ECONOMY IS A SHIP, THE STOCKMARKET IS A BUBBLE. The transparent structure of the conceptual metaphor MERGERS ARE LOVE RELATIONSHIPS can be analysed as follows:

1. *Entological correspondences.* Entities in the domain of love relationships correspond systematically to entities in the domain of mergers:

source: LOVE RELATIONSHIP	target: MERGER
lovers	companies
love relationship	business relationship
courtship	negotiations
wedding	signing the contract
marriage	merger

2. *Epistemic correspondences.* Our knowledge about love relationships is mapped onto knowledge about mergers. These two sentences give an example of the kind of knowledge that might be evoked:

A man and a woman find each other attractive and they decide to get married.

Two companies find a common interest and they decide to form a merger.

The clear correspondences in the above metaphor suggest that it is a metaphor with great generative power as it seems to be an almost inexhaustible source for new and creative metaphorical expressions. These

can often be found within one single article, as the example below will show. If we insert the following words in the missing spaces below: (1) merger brief, (2) Bayerische Vereinsbank (3) Bayerische Hypotheken- und-Wechselbank, (4) corporate, (5) the rivals, (6) banks, (7) merger, (8) cross-town rivals, (9) Vereinsbank, we can see that the article does not talk about a blazing love affair, but about the merging of two banks.

Our (1) ... is a reminder that, when couples mate in a hurry for the wrong reasons, things can go wrong. ... the marriage of (2) ... and (3) ... was announced in July 1997 ... It serves as a lesson of what can go wrong if (4) ... couples leap too hastily into each other's arms. It is also a reminder that old (5) ... can turn out to know much less about each other than they thought ... (6) ... were scrambling to the altar. The (7) ... was touted by some as a match made in heaven. Here were two (8) ... that had long known and respected each other, but had only just realised they were in love. Yet this was not a love match. (9) ... went a-wooing mainly because it was the object of an unwanted suitor. (A Bavarian botch-up, *The Economist*, 5 August 2000)

This metaphor is fairly conspicuous also in the Slovene corpus, generating a number of interesting conventional metaphors which support the metaphorical concept. Similarly as above, the metaphor has often been identified as a leitmotif within one single article. By inserting (1) *dosedanjimi konkurenti*, (2) *združitev*, (3) *združitve*, (4) *namestnik*, (5) *tiskovni konferenci*, (6) *računovodje in kadrovniki obeh podjetij* in the missing spaces below, we can see that the words and expressions usually associated with weddings in reality refer to the merging of Daimler-Benz and Chrysler.

Obstoj ... v poroki z ... (1) po ameriških analizah je bilo lani povprečno po dvesto ... (2) na teden in le polovica je uspešnih. Uverture v ... (3) pa poznamo: previdno in tiho snubljenje, namesto podoknice 'podšankica', po kateri se partnerja vdata drug drugemu, nato je na vrsti veličastna poroka, na kateri se še ne ve, kdo je v zakonu glavna in kdo njen ... (4); poroko objavijo na veličastni ... (5) ... Po sijajnih medenih tednih seveda pride streznitev z vsakdanjimi problemi, ki naj bi jih na prvi pogled reševali predvsem ... (6). (Vsaka poroka ni hazard, *Manager*, 25 January 1999.)

While it can be argued that the marriage concept with regard to mergers was transferred from English to Slovene, the example also shows that once transferred, the metaphor develops in accordance to the cultural and linguistic paradigms of the target language. It therefore becomes

linguistically and culturally conditioned by taking into account, for example, the wedding customs in the target culture. The wordplay in the Slovene article which suggests that the ‘singing beneath the window of the beloved’ (Slo. *podoknica*) was more like ‘singing underneath the bar’ could be seen as culturally specific.

The conceptualisation of the economy as a ship, which is based on a solid and systematic structure, was frequent in both English and Slovene articles. The captain is usually the president of the central bank, his assistants are his crew, the sea is the socio-economic environment of a country, obstacles (reefs, storms) are critical situations in economy, nautical instruments (anchors, compasses, maps) are various guidelines and directives. Implicit in all these nautical titles is the assumption that central bankers know exactly where they are heading, how their craft works, and how their actions will affect its course. Yet it can be argued that they operate in a world of huge uncertainty, with no reliable maps or compasses. If we just look at some recent events in the socio-economic environment, consequences brought about by 11 September, the collapse of American corporations, stock market crashes, etc., we can see that some of the policy dilemmas they face are the equivalent of not knowing whether the earth is round or flat. This suggests that it is often not the quality and number of correspondences that are questionable, but rather the part of the source domain which cannot possibly be mapped onto the target domain.

English corpus: ‘domain names’ have been the *Gordian knot* of the Internet (E3, 59), Mr Grasso needed further warning that he *is steering* a potential *Titanic*, the NYSE’s fattest rats have been preparing to *jump ship* (E3, 61), in this increasingly *foggy* world, the chances of *navigational errors* are high (E6S), instead, new hazards are looming which the *navigators*, still euphoric about their defeat of inflation, have been slow to spot. (E6S), the *seas* ahead could *get much rougher* ... if and when investors realise that Mr Greenspan *has not discovered a new world*, America’s bubble could burst, painfully (E6S), the whole economy could *sink* (E6S), Mr Greenspan and the rest of his *crew* (E6S), some sort of nominal *anchor* to *guide* policy and tie down inflationary expectations ... the gold standard proved the firmest possible *anchor*, but at the cost of unacceptable *swings* in output (E6S), the options are either to fix exchange rates permanently or to *float* (E6S), central banks cannot use the money supply *to sail on auto-pilot*, but they would be foolish to ignore its *warning lights* (E6S), their *instruments are blunt* (E6S)

Slovene corpus: so on (predsednik Evropske osrednje banke) in njegova *posadka* doživeli resno lekcijo (GV4, 47), da je Slovenija lani dokaj uspešno *krmarila svojo* gospodarsko *barko* (GV5, 18), čeprav smo se v preteklosti *čere*m presenetljivo uspešno izogibali (GV5, 18), pravi *potop* evropske valute (K3, 55), *pot čez Atlantik* je za druge lahko mučna, težka in dolgotrajna, v EU je čedalje manj kruha, o Balkanu in preostanku Evrope pa je odveč vsaka beseda (GV3, 61)

The metaphor THE STOCKMARKET IS A BUBBLE, whereby 'bubble' usually refers to a situation in which the price of shares becomes much higher than their real value, has become so common in English business and economic articles that it can be seen as a conventional metaphor. In addition, most modern English dictionaries give examples or definitions of its metaphorical meaning in an economic context, while contemporary business English dictionaries have separate entries explaining the metaphorical meaning of 'bubble' (*Longman business English dictionary* 2000). In the selected Slovene articles, only one example of such a metaphor was found, whereby the key word was written in inverted commas. This suggests that the concept is relatively new in the Slovene economic discourse. However, the conceptual metaphor is slightly different in Slovene as it uses the concept of 'balloon' (Slo *balon*) rather than 'bubble' (Slo. *mehurček*). The two concepts are analogous in many ways, i. e. as air is blown into them they both get larger and rounder and they burst at a certain point. Compared to a balloon, however, a bubble is much more delicate and bursts more easily, a quality that is partly lost in the Slovene examples below.

English corpus: the Fed has allowed the stock market *bubble* to *develop* (E6s), to raise interest rates to *deflate a bubble* in its early stages (E6s) most central bankers are hostile to the idea to try to *puncture bubbles* (E6s), central bankers offer three reasons why they should not attempt to *prick bubbles* (E6s), in their time, tulips, canals, railways, gold, silver, property and share prices have all *bubbled up* and then *gone 'pop'* (E6s), a second problem with *prickling bubbles* is that central bankers have no laser-guided weapons for the purpose (E6s), there are two examples of central banks deliberately trying to *burst a bubble* (E6s), history shows that markets do *overshoot* and that *bubbles can persist* for some time . . . it also shows that *the bigger a bubble gets, the greater the excess* it creates in the economy – and *the bigger the bang when it eventually pops* (E6s), Wall Street will slide slowly downwards, *letting air gently out of the bubble* (E6s)

Slovene corpus: mnogi trgovci že nekaj časa svarijo pred tem, da bi se

'balon' lahko razpočil . . . mnogi znani analitiki se strinjajo v tem, da 'balon' dejansko obstaja, vendar si nihče ne upa napovedovati, kdaj bo tudi počil . . . se bo 'balon' še kar nekaj časa napihoval (κ2, 50)

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF METAPHORS

Metaphorical mappings do not occur isolated from each other. They are sometimes organised into hierarchical structures, in which lower mappings in the hierarchy inherit the structures of the higher mappings. The research revealed two such higher level metaphors, i. e. *THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM* and *DOWNWARD MARKET MOVEMENTS ARE NATURAL DISASTERS*, with a number of conceptual metaphors on the lower levels which correspond to them (Tables 1 and 2).

The metaphor *THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM* reflects an important underlying cognitive model for the conceptualisation of the economy as a whole. An extension of this higher-level metaphor was found in a number of lower-level metaphors in both languages. The most conspicuous among them was clearly the conceptualisation of the economy as a patient, with a number of conventional metaphorical expressions which could be directly translated from English into Slovene and vice versa: recovery, healthy, qualms, flu, limping along/hobble, sweat, depressed (Slo. *okrevanje, zdrava, slabotnost, prehlad, je ohromljena, potenje, depresija*) and others. Charteris-Black argues that the underlying notion expressed in the conceptualisation of the economy as a patient implies that the economy is a passive entity whose condition can be influenced by the right decisions; this perception permits the economist to present himself as a doctor or surgeon who can take an active role in influencing economic events (Charteris-Black 2000, 157). The doctor-patient metaphor system is reflected in a number of articles analysed in this research.

The metaphor *LEAN IS HEALTHY / FAT IS UNHEALTHY* is closely related to the conceptualisation of the economy as a patient and it can also be seen as supporting the overwhelmingly dominant image of the organisation as a body. Our research revealed some examples of this metaphor only in the English corpus, all associated with the concept and practices of downsizing, an expression which can be seen as a metaphor in its own right. However, an example of a related metaphor was identified in another Slovene source (*Primorske novice*, 17 August 2001), which can be perceived as evidence that the concept exists in the Slovene language. The expression *kadrovska podhranjenost* (Eng. human resources malnutrition), which is here used to discuss the problems of an understaffed

Table 1: Conceptualisation of the economy as an organism

Higher-level metaphor: THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM	
Slovene corpus	English corpus
ECONOMY IS A PATIENT	
<p>gospodarska rast <i>je</i> bila v Nemčiji in Italiji <i>ohromljena</i> (κ2, 28), <i>zdrava</i> ekonomija je pomembnejša (κ5, 45), čeprav IMF z milijardnimi finančnimi injekcijami <i>ohranja</i> medvedov <i>krvni tok</i>, lahko ponovno pride do <i>infarkta</i> (κ1, 50), gospodarstvo potrebuje še malo časa za popolno <i>okrevanje</i> (κ6) veliko podjetij je zaradi recesije <i>oslabelih</i> (GV1, 47), če je <i>vročina</i> nekoliko popustila, še ni rečeno, da svetovno gospodarstvo resno <i>ozdravlja</i> (GV4, 47), jeseni je namreč <i>bolezen</i> začela napadati tudi jedro svetovnega gospodarstva (GV4, 47), zdaj <i>gre</i> na teh trgih <i>spet bolje</i> (GV4, 47), to pa je slabo vplivalo na zasebno porabo, ki naj bi bila <i>motor oživljanja</i> (GV4, 47), <i>slabotnost</i> se je nadaljevala še v letošnjem prvem četrtletju (GV4, 47), ob evropskem <i>kihanju</i> mi brez <i>prehlada</i> (GV5, 18), in ko <i>kihne</i> Nemčija, <i>se prehladi</i> Avstrija in <i>zakašlja</i> Italija, potem pa <i>se bolezen</i> hitro <i>širi</i> po Evropi (GV5, 19), da se nemška <i>depresija</i> ne bo prav kmalu privlekla k nam (GV5, 19), smo na svetovnih borznih trgih <i>znali nervozo</i> (κ1, 50), morebitno <i>potenje</i> tudi ob pričakovanju mere stopnje inflacije (κ1, 10)</p>	<p>markets seem to have <i>qualms</i> (E1, 83), with <i>recovery</i> still <i>fragile</i>, the last thing Japan now wants (E2, 84), China's financial system is far from <i>healthy</i> (E4, 57), developments, shrieked <i>hysterics</i>, endangered Japan's economic <i>recovery</i> (E5, 80), <i>ailing</i> and cheap steel sector (BCE1, 41), Hungary's economy looks distinctly <i>wobbly</i> (BCE2, 35), <i>healthy</i> foreign investment (BCE2, 35), businesses have been <i>limping along</i> (E1, 76), oil firms have been dumping assets on a <i>depressed</i> market (E5, 67), the Japanese economy's <i>painful</i> progress from boom to bust (E6, S), interest rates are set according to the economy's <i>temperature</i> today (E6, 35), the economy will <i>wake up in a sweat</i> (E6, 35), this was a <i>benign</i> sort of deflation, in contrast to the <i>malign</i> sort (E6, 23), that will help shelter Phillip Morris from tariff changes, one of its biggest <i>headaches</i> (BCE5, 28) radical <i>surgery</i> (BCE2, 25) to <i>inject</i> capital (BCE2, 25), the emerging market <i>flu</i> (E4, 12), European <i>chronic</i> risk-aversion (E6, 103), poor countries are <i>hobbled</i> by a lack of know-how (E6, 109)</p>
LEAN IS HEALTHY / FAT IS UNHEALTHY	
<p>kadrovska <i>podhranjenost</i> (<i>Primorske novice</i>, 17 August 2001)</p>	<p>the Bundesbank's new <i>diet</i> (E2, 86), Germany's <i>bloated</i> central bank became a primer candidate for a shakeup ... keeping the Bundesbank happy while it <i>slims</i> (E2, 86), <i>overstretched</i> staff of 250 inspectors (E2, 86), French workforces are <i>shrinking</i> (E1, 74)</p>

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organisation, is a counter-metaphor to LEAN IS HEALTHY. It is worth mentioning at this point that the conceptualisation of lean as healthy has become conventionalised in a number of technical business terms,

continued from the previous page

TAKEOVERS ARE BLOWOUTS

velika požrtija ... tržišni analitiki prerokujejo, da jih *bo* prej ali slej *pogoltnil* eden od velikih (GV3, 10), analitiki pravijo, da naj bi bili na svetovnem in evropskem telekomunikacijskem trgu samo dve možnosti: *požre*ti druge ali dopustiti, da *te požrejo* (GV3, 10), Pop TV *je pojedel* Kanal A (*Delo*, 15 July 2000)

gobbling up the whole company (BCE6, 37), ConSors *snapped up* a French broker (E3, 65), KBC *has bitten off more than it can chew* (BCE3, 34), the bank has avoided Deutsche-style *cannibalism* (E3, 66), borrowers seem to have *developed an appetite* (E1, 87), they make no secret of their *hunger* to acquire (E2, 73), this time everyone is determined to *get a slice of the cake* (E3, 57), we don't want to *get the crumbs* ... says the taskforce's chairman (E3, 5)

THE FINANCIAL MARKET IS A THEATRE

borzni igralci si zastavljajo vprašanja, s katerimi mislijo priti do jedra stvari in razumeti borzna dogajanja (K4, 10), tipično nepravo vprašanje, ki te dni *kroži po* borznih *kuloarijih* (K4, 10)

in a parallel *debut* on the Nasdaq, the firm recorded a 40% gain (E3, 58), *behind the scenes* Mr Grasso has been preparing bold plans (E3, 61), Mr Grasso is famous for his *showmanship* whenever a company lists (E3, 61), banks ... *are still looking for a role* (E6, 113), the Japanese still see *high drama* in the smallest setback (E5, 80), this week, the *theatre* turned to the currency markets (E5, 80) it's *a rosier scenario* than those on offer elsewhere (BCE3, 25)

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usually related to the use of the most effective methods with the fewest employees possible (lean organisation, lean production, etc.).² Dunford and Palmer (1996) argue that the received knowledge as to the effect of downsizing metaphors would suggest that the nature of these metaphors has a material effect on downsizing practice or even a reinforcement of strategies based upon reduction of workforce numbers.

Financial markets are usually associated with fast changes and unpredictability. In this respect, the conceptualisation of the stock market as a theatre, the evidence for which was identified in both Slovene and English articles, is to a certain extent surprising. It implies, for example, that the stock market players operate according to a predictable and predetermined scenario. If we take predictability to be a crucial entity of the source domain (i. e. theatre), then this metaphor can be perceived as either weak in terms of mapping correspondences or purposefully hiding certain aspects of the target domain (i. e. financial markets).

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COMPETITION IS WAR / TAKEOVERS ARE WAR

banke izčrpavajo še same sebe ko *merijo* moči pri prevzemih (GV1, 3), v *neizpros-nem* konkurenčnem *boju* ne bo *zmagal* izkušeni British Telecom, temveč nemški koncern, ki je bil šele pred 16 meseci *spuščen* v privatizacijsko *areno* (GV3, 10), za *prevlado* na trgu prihodnosti se *bojujejo* vse velike evropske in ameriške telekomunikacijske družbe (GV3, 10), boj za tržne deleže bo *izbojevan* na glavnih *dirkalnih progah* (GV3, 10), monopolista bi bila na evropskem trgu *tekmeča*, saj '*pakt o ne-napadanju*' ne velja več (GV3, 11), nova družba bo ... *napadala* celo na njegovem domačem trgu (GV3, 10), *lov* na Adriaticove delnice (GV5, 10), *četudi veliki met* Slovenici ne bi uspel, pa ta ne bi *ostala* popolnoma *praznih rok* (GV5, 11)

businessmen *huff and puff about keeping out the Anglo-Saxons* (E1, 73), the battle for Efl (E1, 73), a foreign counter offer would not meet with such *equanimity* (E1, 73), *barriers have kept foreign companies out of the country* (E1, 73), Vivendi and Suez Lyonnaise *are vying with each other* in markets as far *afield* as China and America (E1, 73), Elf last month *fell victim* to just such an impulse, when its bid *was sabotaged* by Norsk Hydro and Statoil (E1, 73), Carrefour could still *be vulnerble* to a *hostile* bid (E5, 68), the *unfriendly* effort of Banque Nationale (E5, 68), Mr Schmidt is looking for *targets* in Italy and Spain (E3, 65), banks are not yet *on the block* (E3, 66) Vodafone *snatched* AirTouch from Bell (E6, 92), *foreigners already own a big chunk* of French firms (E1, 74), this will prevent *border-busting* deals (E1, 74), local banks *are fighting back* (E2, 85), local cigarette makers *are up in arms* (BCE5, 29), to *fend off* hedge funds (E4, 57), it could *torpedo* the merger itself (BCE3, 33) Rába, another national darling that *was shielded from* foreign takeover (BCE3, 29)

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The evidence for the metaphor COMPETITION IS WAR was identified in a number of metaphorical expressions in both languages. Conceptualising competition in terms of war has become so commonplace that today we talk about traditional wars (trade wars), which have been, metaphorically speaking, raging for years, such as the war between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola (often referred to as the Cola War), Nike and Reebok, Microsoft and AOL, etc. Several authors have pointed out that the notion of a struggle for survival and survival of the fittest is a peculiarly accurate and potent conceptualisation of the rise of global capitalism and the growth of multinational corporations during the 1980s and 90s.

Another example of describing inanimate in terms of animate entities can be found in metaphors in which the source domain is death. The

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A MERGER IS MARRIAGE

Bayer bo spravil svojo hčerinsko družbo Agfa na borzo ... *na pot pa ne bo šla brez dote* (GV2, 24), Švedska Telia in norveški Telenor morata odstraniti le še nekaj *razlik v pogledih* preden *podpišeta poročno pogodbo* (GV3, 10), po intenzivnih pogajanjih med Deutsche Telekom in Telecom Italia je na vrsti *poroka* (GV4, 77), meseci *ponorelih snubcev* (GV5, 47), je bil teden po 22. marcu za evropske družbe čas *frenetičnega snubljenja* (GV5, 47), Sanofi se ženi s Synthélabo (GV3, 48)

wooing investors abroad (E4, 57), Asda ... *has its eye also on France* (E5, 68), no *champagne*, no *cake*; in fact, no *party* at all to mark the anniversary of the alliance between the London and Frankfurt stock exchanges (E1, 89), the *courtship* has not gone smoothly (BCE1, 27), US Steel has a good cause to be a *skittish suitor* (BCE1, 27), Hungary's Rába and Icarus *court* foreign investors (BCE3, 29), no foreign *suitors* have *stepped forward* as yet (BCE3, 29), Netia needs a mobile *partner* ... *there is one boy on the dance floor and two lovely girls* ... the question is *who will go to bed with whom* (BCE3, 60), the *odd couple* (two Poland's leading banks) (BCE3, 33), *damaged bride* (Poland's PBK) (BCE5, 37), the Polish partners *received the wink* from the new lot and started selling their stakes (BCE5, 37), Bulbank has a suitor – but the state won't *bless the union* ... *the belle of the ball*, you would have thought (BCE6, 32)

concept of death and dying was identified in a number of metaphors in the English corpus as a positive (1) or negative (2) consequence of economic trends, while there was just one occurrence in Slovene (3), with the key word in inverted commas.

1. their sole job was *to kill* inflation (E1, 5), reports on *the death* of inflation are therefore much exaggerated ... far from *being dead*, inflation may have taken on a new, more dangerous guise (E6, 10) inflation is *dead* (E6, 10), inflation may not be as *dead* as it seems (E6, 6)
2. such a move *would kill* the offshore market for good (E1, 86) the losses have been so heavy as *to kill* the firm (E6, 28), the same people who have made *a killing* in the stock market (E1, 84)
3. prebujanja in ponovna 'ubijanja' tečajev (K1, 10)

An important characteristic of metaphor is that it can be used generatively in building a model, such as employing the analogy found in family relationships to describe types of companies (parent/mother company, sister company, daughter company, etc.). A similar example of a generative model is reflected in the metaphors used to describe different sizes

of organisations, based on boxing categories. The metaphor was rather conspicuous in the English articles, while there were no examples supporting this analogy in the Slovene corpus:

with a bit of help from ConSors, these *heavyweights* are belatedly toasting the successes of a cracking retail business (E3, 66), these companies are only *middleweights* in the global steel arena (BCE1, 27), the global *heavyweights*, like Nippon Steel and British Steel, are enmeshed in deep restructuring themselves (BCE1, 27), KBC is not such a *lightweight* (BCE3, 34)

Similarly, with an increasing number of mergers and acquisitions, organisations have been described in terms of legendary stereotypes, such as giant and white knight. While the metaphorical meaning of *giant* (Slo. *gigant*) defined as ‘a very large and successful organisation’ can be found in the Slovene dictionary of literary/written language (*Slovar Slovenskega knjižnega jezika*), the metaphorical meaning of *white knight*, i. e. someone who buys shares in a company to prevent another company taking it over completely, which is included in specialised English dictionaries (*Longman Business English Dictionary* 2000), is yet to be admitted into the Slovene business and economic terminology.

Besides being perceived as mythological legends, organisations are often compared to different animals. A frequent analogy with the animal world is related to different types of traders in the stock market. The most common term is the ‘bear’ (Slo. *medved*) which refers to a person who predicts a fall in the price of stocks and shares, while the metaphor ‘bull’ (Slo. *bik*), with its various derivations ‘bullish’, ‘bull run’, implies the opposite practice of purchasing shares in the expectation of a rise in price. This metaphor is particularly important as it was relatively frequent in Slovene articles, all taken from *Kapital*. Besides its inclusion in general and specialised English-English dictionaries, its metaphorical meaning is also indicated in English-Slovene/Slovene-English business dictionaries.

bikovski borzni trend (κ3, 49), monetarna likvidnost je gorivo, ki žene *bikovski* trend (κ5, 44), jen še naprej v *bikovski* podobi (κ5, 45), japonski jen se spogleduje z *biki* (κ3, 55), čeprav IWF z milijardnimi finančnimi injekcijami ohranja ‘*medvedov*’ krvni tok (κ1, 50)

The research revealed evidence of a second higher-level metaphor, i. e. the conceptualisation of downward market movements as natural disasters. As we can see from Table 2, the selected metaphors relate negative

Table 2: Conceptualizations of downward market movements as natural disasters

Higher level metaphor: DOWNWARD MARKET MOVEMENTS ARE NATURAL DISASTERS	
Slovene corpus	English corpus
DROUGHT	
Po nekaj letih <i>hude suše</i> je ta panoga že zelo okleščena (GV3, 62), po lanski, za to panogo zelo <i>uspešni žetvi</i> , letošnje <i>napovedi niso samo slabe</i> (GV3, 61), hkrati že od drugega lanskega polletja <i>usihajo</i> tuje finančne naložbe (GV3, 22), saj bo mogoče še <i>odpreti državne pipe</i> za večje nabave (GV1, 46)	Rita's commissions began to <i>dry up</i> as her clients quit her for a better deal (E2, 89), the river of gold <i>will soon run dry</i> (E2, 89), <i>pouring in</i> some \$2 billion in investment (BCE5, 28), the money it <i>pumped into</i> modernising the defunct plant (BCE5, 28), to <i>channel</i> state subsidies to millions of farmers (BCE2, 27)
BAD WEATHER	
zavejan <i>hlad</i> v trenutku <i>ohladi</i> in <i>zamrzne</i> še tolikšno naložbeno strast (K1, 10), trenutna <i>ciklonska gibanja onemogočajo jasen pogled</i> v prihodnost (K1, 10), <i>temni oblaki</i> , ki <i>so se zbirali</i> nad Ljubljansko borzo, <i>so se</i> v zadnjih dveh tednih nekoliko <i>razredčili</i> (K2, 12), nenehne <i>turbolence</i> na mednarodnih borzah (K6, 35)	<i>clouds</i> over Hong Kong (E4, 57), are Hong Kong's <i>best days</i> as a financial centre <i>over</i> (E4, 57) <i>the outlook</i> for the stockmarket <i>will remain cloudy</i> (E1, 86), besides the other risks <i>buffeting the region</i> (E1, 86), <i>the outlook</i> for the coal industry <i>is bleak</i> (E5, 67), the banks' <i>worst days</i> were behind them (E5, 83)

continued on the next page

behaviour of the economy to the domain of drought, bad weather conditions, flood and earthquake.

There are a number of cases in the above metaphors related to natural disasters, in which both languages use the same linguistic expression: clouds, is flooded, sink, run dry (Slo. *oblaki, je poplavilo, se utaplja, usihajo*). Besides the above mentioned natural disasters, the research revealed a few other isolated examples which support the higher-level metaphor. The concepts of heat (overheating, inflaming) and nuclear disaster (meltdown) were identified only in English texts, while one example from the Slovene corpus referred to market instability in terms of a volcano eruption. Interestingly, in their contrastive analysis of metaphors from English and Spanish financial reports, Charteris-Black and Ennis (2001) identified the following conceptual metaphors in both languages where the source domains relate to natural disasters: bad weather conditions, earthquakes and the behaviour of gas under pressure.

Conclusion

A number of questions concerning the way metaphors operate emerge from this research. First, can the metaphors identified in the selected

continued from the previous page

FLOOD

ali ne *bo* recesijski *val* prej ali slej *poplaval* tudi najmočnejšo svetovno silo (GV3, 62), lanska *valovanja* na svetovnem gospodarskem *oceanu* so različno vplivala na slovensko 'gospodarsko *lužo*'; nekateri *rušilni valovi* je celo sploh niso dosegli (GV5, 18), *zaježitev* inflacije, ki *je začela groziti* aprila (K2, 51), udeleženci denarnih trgov so lahko videli pravi potop evropske valute (K3, 55), bi močno udarilo po proračunu, ki se že zdaj *utaplja* v primanjkljaju (GV1, 46)

the market *is flooded* with Bulgarian left-overs (BCE4, 19), we're trying to empty the pool ... but it's *raining very hard* (BCE2, 25), the sudden *deluge* of unfrozen CLOB shares might *drench* the whole market (E1, 86), the whole economy could *sink* (E6, S)

EARTHQUAKE

so naši obrambni *zidovi* dovolj *trdni*, če bi v svetu nastal še kak dodaten ekonomski *potres* z *valujočo rušilno močjo* (GV5, 18), koliko *se bo* še *stresalo* in kje *se bo* najbolj usodno ter vplivno *udarilo* svetovno gospodarstvo (GV5, 19), finančni *pretresi* niso nujno nekaj, kar bi v idilično deželico zanesli zlobni tujci (K3, 11), stabilnost delnic je letos kar nekajkrat *porušila* notranja erupcija (K1, 10)

financial markets *tremble* (E6, 23), the central bank became a prime candidate for a *shakeup* (E2, 86), spectacular rebound from financial *collapse* (E3, 63), South Korea's hard-won *stability seems to be crumbling* again (E3, 63), Daewoo's *ruinously* heavy debts (E5, 83), *huge chunks* of the economy *would collapse* (E1, 87), the stock-market is higher than it was before the *crash* (E2, 71)

Slovene and English economic articles also be found in the language used by economists in the two cultures? The importance of this is that if these metaphors are only characteristic of popular discourse found in newspapers and magazines, they can be understood as stylistic devices aimed at attracting the reader and enhancing sensationalism.

Second, it is not clear whether the metaphors used in the articles discussed in our research were selected consciously by the authors because they felt them to be appropriate to the situation they wanted to describe, or whether this is largely a subconscious process. Were the authors of the articles analysed in our research aware of the possible ideological implications of metaphorical expression or is their choice of metaphor to be attributed simply to the solid correspondences between the source and target domains?

Third, while most metaphors identified in English were often found in Slovene as well, and vice versa, there were some differences in the form and size of the evidence supporting the existence of such metaphors.

We could see that some metaphors were more salient in English, and that some, given their inclusion in business and general dictionaries, have become conventionalised and can now be considered as technical terms rather than original metaphors. We have argued that a number of metaphors found in the Slovene corpus develop concepts transferred from Anglo-American frameworks of models used for interpreting economic phenomena. On the other hand, we need to take into account that there could be other reasons for the differences between the Slovene and English articles. The different degrees of frequency of a particular conceptual metaphor in one of the two languages may to a certain extent depend on the importance given by the selected magazines to individual topics. Finally, metaphors play a significant role in determining how we perceive the world. While they are rarely as tidy as we might like, they nevertheless indicate a certain systematicity which is reflected in the numerous conceptual metaphors found in our everyday language. Metaphors found in English and Slovene economic articles provide valuable insights into how economic processes and participants involved in them are conceptualised in the two cultures respectively.

Notes

1. As opposed to dead or dormant metaphors. See Grant and Oswick 1996, 9–10.
2. In the Slovene-English/English-Slovene dictionary *Slovar poslovnih izrazov v angleščini in slovenščini* (Filipovič et al. 2000) the concept lean (Slo. vitek) is retained in the translation of 'lean organisation' (Slo. vitka organizacija).

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