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THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS AND METAPHORS – A Contrastive Analysis Of English, Serbian and Romanian¹

Under the theoretical wing of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in this paper we set out to comparatively investigate the conceptual metaphors used for the conceptualisation of the global economic and financial crisis in English, Romanian and Serbian print and electronic media reporting in the period 2008–2010. By adopting a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural approach to metaphor analysis in popular economic and business discourse, our main aim is to establish whether the same conceptual metaphors are used in English, Romanian and Serbian for the conceptualisation of the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression, or, alternatively, whether any culture-specific aspects may be found in the three languages. We also focus on any influence English, as well as the culture determined by the English language, may exert on Romanian and Serbian as regards conceptual and linguistic metaphors serving to structure the understanding of the global financial crisis.

Key words: conceptual metaphor; crisis metaphors; English; Serbian; Romanian

1. Introduction

The paper focuses on the use of metaphor in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press reporting on the current global economic crisis from 2008 to 2010. It is a known fact that, for the last three years, the industrialised world has been undergoing a pronounced economic downturn. Leading economists have labeled the present global economic and financial crisis as the most severe since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Similarly to the Great Depression, the current crisis seems to have originated in the Unites States, somewhere around the end of 2007, and by the beginning of 2009 it had spread all around the

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world, affecting all nations to a greater or a lesser extent. Consequently, the global financial crisis has gained extensive media coverage in the United States, Britain, Serbia and Romania since its onset. We therefore believe that the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press provides an excellent corpus source for analysing the way in which journalists rely on metaphor to conceptualise and present this particular economic issue to the reading public. By now, well-entrenched principles of cognitive linguistics (which are presented in the next section) will have us expect a wide use of metaphor in economic discourse, especially in media popularisations of economic topics, as the field of economy involves a considerable degree of abstractness. Consequently, our paper is an attempt to identify the most important conceptual metaphors used in the press to structure the understanding of the economic crisis (the economic crisis is x^2), as well as the particular aspects of the crisis which are emphasised by these conceptual metaphors. Moreover, cross-cultural variation in the metaphorical conceptualisation of the economic crisis in English, Serbian and Romanian is also examined; that is, we look both at the extent to which crisis metaphors in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian cultures overlap and at the ways in which cultural variation in metaphor is made manifest.

2. *Theoretical framework*

In order to explore the use of metaphor in the press coverage of the current economic crisis we draw on a framework of analysis established by Cognitive Linguistics. Before the presentation of the corpus used in the study and the corpus-analysis of crisis metaphors, let us briefly outline the concepts of the cognitive approach to metaphor which are most relevant to the present paper.

The advent of Cognitive Linguistics, mainly marked by Lakoff and Johnson's highly influential study *Metaphors we live by* (1980), has brought about remarkable changes regarding the status of metaphor in its relation to thought and language. If metaphor was traditionally regarded as a figure of speech used for rhetorical flourish, cognitive linguistic and philosophical studies have proven that metaphor goes far beyond language (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff 1993, Gibbs 1994, Kövecses 2002, Barcelona 2003). The locus of metaphor is thought, not language, as emphasised by Lakoff and Johnson: "our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (1980: 3). Metaphor seems to be deeply embedded in our way of conceptualising the world and as a result, metaphors realised in language, i.e. metaphorical linguistic expressions (Kövecses 2002: 4), are only possible due to the conceptual metaphors that structure our thinking. As such, metaphor becomes a "basic scheme by which people conceptualise their experience and the external world" (Gibbs 1994: 1) or a central cognitive process that "allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, or at least a more highly structured subject matter" (Lakoff 1993: 244). This process can typically

2 Conceptual metaphors are conventionally written in SMALL CAPITALS.

be formulated as TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN (ibid. 207). Of course, this does not mean that the two domains are identical. Only certain aspects of the source domain are transferred or mapped onto the target domain, depending on which aspects of the target one intends to highlight (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 10–13, Kövecses 2002: 79–92). Given the partial nature of metaphorical mappings, it follows logically that different source domains can be used to focus on different aspects of the same target domain, as will become evident in our analysis of crisis metaphors.

Moreover, as first explained by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and later systematised by Grady (1999) and Kövecses (2002), these conceptual mappings across the two domains (i.e. source and target) are not at all arbitrary but are deeply grounded in human experience (e.g. bodily, perceptual, cultural, etc.). Consequently, especially in the Western cultural context, many conceptual metaphors seem to be fairly similar, if not identical, at least on a generic level, while certain metaphors are potentially (nearly) universal (cf. Kövecses 2002, 2005). However, Kövecses (2005) shows that variation in metaphor is frequent among the various cultures in the world (although much less frequent within a restricted cultural space, such as the Western culture) and may take many forms, as for example, using different source domains for the same target domain, sharing the same conceptual metaphors for a particular target domain but showing clear preference for one (or several), or sharing the same conceptual metaphor but realising it differently in language (Kövecses 2005: 67–68).

In sum, cognitive linguistic research has convincingly demonstrated that metaphor is by no means confined to literature and rhetoric; on the contrary, the numerous examples of metaphorical expressions activated by various conceptual metaphors provided by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1993), Gibbs (1994) and Kövecses (2002, 2003), among others, reveal that metaphor is indispensable to our everyday conceptual system. Our paper will hopefully bring more evidence in favour of the conceptual nature of metaphor and its various linguistic realisations in the three languages (i.e. English, Serbian and Romanian).

3. *Corpus and methodology*

The corpus of this study consists of 200 articles from the print or online editions of three British (*The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Financial Times*), two American (*News Tribune* and *BusinessWeek*), two Romanian (*Ziarul Financiar* and *Capital*), and several Serbian business-oriented articles found in Serbian print and electronic media (e.g. *Biznis novine*, *Glas javnosti*, *Blic*, etc.).³ As 2008 is the year that marks the onset of the global economic crisis, all the aforementioned articles have been published from that year on.

³ All the linguistic contexts provided below are accompanied, in brackets, by references to the source, i.e. the name of the media (in an abbreviated form, i.e. G = The Guardian, I = The Independent, FT = Financial Times, NT = The News Tribune, BW = BusinessWeek, ZF = Ziarul Financiar, C = Capital, 24S = 24 sata, GJ = Glas javnosti, D = Danas, P = Politika, VN

Having established the corpus, crisis metaphors⁴ were analysed according to the cognitive paradigm of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). More specifically, this next step involved two operations: first, the identification and extraction of the most recurrent metaphorical linguistic expressions in the three study languages (e.g. *A financial hurricane rages on Wall Street*), and then, their classification according to the corresponding conceptual metaphors that they make manifest (e.g. *the crisis is a weather phenomenon*).⁵

Finally, we compared both the metaphorical conceptualisations of the economic crisis in the three languages and the corresponding metaphorical expressions they make manifest in order to identify instances of cultural variation in the conceptualisations of the global economic crisis in Britain, the United States, Serbia and Romania. Given the conceptual nature of metaphors and their grounding in experience on the one hand, as well as the fact that the cultures in question are part of the Euro-American, Western culture on the other, we expected that metaphors of the global economic crisis present in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian journalistic discourse⁶ reveal little cultural variation on a conceptual, generic level, and more pronounced variation (although not much) on a linguistic level.

4. *Metaphors of the global economic crisis*

We identified five major conceptual metaphors shared in the corpus of British, American, Serbian and Romanian press articles reporting on the current economic crisis, as well as a number of isolated metaphors, which are present randomly either in all three languages or in only one or two of them. In what follows, we shall discuss each of these conceptual metaphors together with their corresponding linguistic realisations in the three languages.

= Večernje novosti, B = Blic, B92 = B92 news media web site, BN = Biznis novine, Emportal business news media web site = EMP) and the date of the publication.

- 4 The method for metaphor identification we applied here is the one proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) (MIP – *Metaphor Identification Procedure*), which we used to check the metaphoricity of the lexical units relating to the global economic crisis as well as to establish their basic and contextual meaning. MIP is claimed to be a reliable method as it eliminates any subjective criteria for metaphor identification.
- 5 It should be noted that some metaphorical expressions can be included in more than one category. *Hurricane* and *tornado* are a case in point as they are examples of both weather phenomena and natural disasters (cf. 4.1 and 4.3.2). However, for simplicity, such double metaphorical expressions were ascribed to only one conceptual category. More specifically, they were registered according to their primary conceptual category (which is, for instance, weather phenomena for *hurricane* and *tornado*).
- 6 As the texts from which we excerpted the metaphorical expressions are mainly aimed at the general public, i.e. ordinary people, not specifically at experts, such discourse is referred to as “*popular socio-economic discourse*” (Boers 2000: 143) or *popular economic and business discourse*, defined as “journalistic texts that deal with current economic and business matters for an audience of experts and nonexperts, and seek to inform and entertain more generally” (Skorczynska & Deignan 2006: 89)

4.1. The crisis is a weather phenomenon

Corpus evidence reveals that THE CRISIS IS A WEATHER PHENOMENON is one of the most frequent metaphorical conceptualisations of the global economic crisis in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press. As illustrated in the examples below, journalists often convey the force of the crisis by recurring to various weather phenomena varying in intensity, ranging from slight atmospheric instability to hurricanes and tornados.

Not surprisingly, due to the increased severity of the crisis the least intense weather phenomenon, i.e. *turbulence/turbulencija* Srb./*turbulențe* Rom., is also the least recurrent. The Serbian corpus also registers, albeit rare, instances of the source domain *breeze* (i.e. *povetarac*) (example 4). Here are some examples:

- (1) *Financial turbulence* takes its toll on media firm. [...] The group said today that the securities arm was closing with immediate effect because of *turbulence* in financial markets. (G 19/05/08)
- (2) Nama je potrebno od 1,5 do dve milijarde da bismo bez većih *turbulencija* prošli kroz ovu tešku godinu (24S 13/3/09)
- (3) Sunt profesori la ASE care au anticipat de mult *turbulentele* de azi. (ZF 02/10/08)
- (4) Ekonomista Miodrag Zec ističe da je privreda povezana i da je srpsko tržište plitko i da ga može protresti i najmanji *povetarac*, što znači da će krediti poskupeti. (GJ 01/10/08)

In English, the increased intensity of the current economic crisis is often signalled by means of the noun *wind*, almost always premodified by intensifying words (e.g. *cold winds*, *gale force winds*, *rising winds*) or, less often, by other nouns denoting strong winds (e.g. *squall*, *whirlwind*), as exemplified in (5)-(7) below. The menacing force of these winds is further emphasised by verbs such as *to whistle*, *to buffet*, *to blow away* and *to knock down*, while their devastating effect on the economy is occasionally also conceptualised metaphorically as a meteorological phenomenon, e.g. *storm surges* in (6).

- (5) Until recently, the world's business schools have been largely sheltered from the *gale force winds* that have *buffeted* the global economy, but that's starting to change [...]. (BW 09/03/09)
- (6) But over the last year, what had been a crisis in the subprime mortgage market has been sending *storm surges* down Wall Street. Now, with the survival-by-buyout of Merrill Lynch and the outright collapse of Lehman Brothers, *rising winds are whistling* through financial markets in Europe and Asia. (NT 16/09/08)
- (7) Now they've been felled by the same *whirlwind* that *knocked down* other giants: Bear Stearns, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. (NT 16/09/08)
- (8) How a local *squall* might become a global *tempest* (FT 07/10/08)

Interestingly, although wind is a common weather phenomenon in all the four countries under consideration, corpus analysis reveals that such explicit exemplifications of wind metaphors are absent both in Serbian and in Romanian.

In all three languages, the conceptual metaphor THE CRISIS IS A WEATHER PHENOMENON commonly finds linguistic expression in another noun designating extremely violent winds accompanied by foul weather which usually cause massive damage along their path, namely: *storm/oluja* Srb./*furtună* Rom. (in English, the more literary *tempest* is also used, although not that often). The English corpus also registers examples of *blizzard* metaphors. For instance:

- (9) Goldman Sachs [...] has weathered *the storm* much better than its rivals. (G 18/03/08)
- (10) With the background of the present *financial blizzard* and the reputation of capitalists close to zero, [...] Bush did not relent. (I 25/01/09)
- (11) Ekonomska *oluja* potresla birališta (D 07/10/09)
- (12) Pietele financiare de la Bucuresti își revin greu după *furtună* (ZF 19/05/09)

In addition, it is interesting to note that the financial crisis is conceptualised as *tornado* in Serbian (i.e. *tornado*) and as *hurricane* both in Serbian (i.e. *uragan*) and in Romanian (i.e. *uragan*), even though such extreme weather phenomena are not specific to the two corresponding countries. However, such instances have a rather low frequency of occurrence in the two corpora, as compared to the corpus in English.

Again, all these nouns denoting types of winds often combine with verbs which enhance the catastrophic dimension of the economic crisis, e.g. in English: *to fell*, *to knock down*, *to roar*, *to rage*, *to blow away*, in Serbian: *pogoditi* ('to hit'), *uzdrmati* ('to shake'), *uzvitlati* ('to swirl'), *opustošiti* ('to devastate'), in Romanian: *a devasta* ('to devastate'), *a lovi puternic* ('to hit hard'), *a face ravagii* ('to wreak havoc'). Consider the following examples:

- (13) [...] and by Friday, when America was bailing out Bear Stearns, all thoughts of the Budget had been *blown away* by the *financial tornado roaring in* from across the Atlantic. (G 16/03/08)
- (14) A *financial hurricane rages* on Wall Street
When the housing bubble popped, it wasn't supposed to produce a *hurricane*. The question now: *Is this Ike, or is this Katrina?* The 504-point plunge Monday in the Dow Jones industrial average *felt like Katrina* [...]. (NT 16/09/08)

Concerning example (14) above, it is interesting to point out the unusual, creative way in which the American journalist who wrote the article elaborated the conceptual metaphor under discussion. Although the British, American, Serbian and Romanian cultures obviously share THE CRISIS IS A WEATHER PHENOMENON metaphor both on a conceptual and on a linguistic level to a great extent (as evidenced by examples 15–17 below), reference to hurricanes Ike and Katrina is an instance of cultural variation in metaphor. Moreover, not only do these linguistic choices attest the way in which metaphorical comprehension is rooted in culture-specific phenomena (cf. Kövecses 2002: 187), but they also reflect the magnitude of the crisis in a vivid manner as hurricane Katrina of

2005 is known to be the costliest and one of the most devastating in the history of the US.⁷

- (15) Finansijski *uragan*, koji je krenuo sa Istočne obale Amerike, iz njujorške novčane svetinje Volstrita, još pustoši njene obale, ali ozbiljno preti i berzama na mnogo daljim prostorima. (P 1/10/08)
- (16) Srbiju bi “*tornado*” uvezene finansijske krize ozbiljno mogao da pogodi već krajem prvog kvartala naredne godine... (VN 14/12/08)
- (17) Furtuna datoriilor din Europa risca sa devina *uragan*: randamentele obligatiunilor elene au explodat (ZF 28/04/10).

In addition to the different types of wind, journalists also rely on some other weather phenomena related to:

- water (e.g. *ripples*, *tide*, *waves/talas* Srb., *maelstrom*, *whirlpool*, *calmareea apelor* Rom., i.e. ‘calming of waters’): “...safe in the current *maelstrom*” (G 20/10/08); mogli izazvati drugi *talas* finansijskih potresa (B 30/01/10);
- very cold weather (e.g. *freeze*, *frozen/zamrznut* Srb./îngheț, *a îngheța* Rom.): “The *big freeze* is underway in...” (BW 07/10/09), “*frozen* money markets” (I 17/03/08); *zamrznuta* kreditna tržišta i dalje pretnja industrijama (B92 28/01/09); Piața împrumuturilor interbancare *a înghețat* (ZF 18/09/08);
- bad weather (i.e. *intemperii* in Romanian): In sistemul financiar exista jucatori care au invins *intemperiiile crizei* (ZF 03/11/09);
- fog (e.g. *ceață groasă* Rom., i.e. ‘thick fog’): “Producatorii auto europeni merg cu farurile stinse prin ‘*ceața groasă*’” (ZF 27/10/08);
- clouds (e.g. *nori negri* Rom., i.e. ‘dark clouds’): CE vede *nori negri* deasupra economiei europene (ZF 12/09/08)

However, except for WATER metaphors, such metaphors represent rather isolated instances.

4.2. *The crisis is a disease*

Metaphoric linguistic expressions triggered by the conceptual metaphor THE CRISIS IS A DISEASE also abound in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press. As shall become evident in the examples below, this metaphor is intrinsically linked to another conceptual metaphor, namely ECONOMY IS A SICK PERSON. The main idea underlying these metaphors is that certain economic systems have got *sick* (*bolestan* Srb./*bolnavă* Rom.) and *are now suffering from* (*a suferi* Rom.) the financial crisis – apparently, a highly *contagious* (*zara-zan* Srb., *contagios* Rom.) disease that *spreads rapidly* (*șiri se* Srb., *a se extinde rapid* Rom.). As a result, other economic systems *have also been contaminated* (*a contamina*, *a infecta* Rom.) and *have caught* (*a se molipsi* Rom.) the disease as well.

⁷ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Katrina.

Not only is the disease contagious, but also extremely severe, even life threatening. Most metaphors in all three corpora implicitly highlight the severity of the crisis by reference to the critical state of the economy, as for example: *intensive care, on life support, moribund, în fază terminală, în stadiu terminal* Rom. ('end stage'), *grav* Rom. ('severe'), *a se agrava* Rom. ('to get worse'), *a nu da speranțe* Rom. ('to be unlikely to get better'), *pati od hronične i neizlečive bolesti* Srb. ('suffers from a chronic and incurable disease'), etc. Just as any patient needs to be diagnosed, economy also needs an evaluation of *symptoms* (*simptome* Rom./*simptomi* Srb.) and a medical *diagnosis* (*diagnostic* Rom./*di-jagnoza* Srb.) in order to be administered the adequate *treatment* (*tratament* Rom.) and *remedies* (*remedii* Rom./*lekovi* Srb.). As far as the evaluation phase is concerned, here are some examples of both physical and mental symptoms indicating the presence of the disease: *atrophy, sneeze/kijavica* Srb., *fever, weakness/slăbiciune, slăbire* Rom., *paralysis/paralizie* Rom., *paraliza* Srb., *pain/durere* Rom., *enfeebled/fragil, șubred* Rom., *agonie* Rom. ('agony'), *soc* Rom. ('shock'), *agitație* Rom. ('nervousness'), *sufocare* Rom. ('suffocation'), *stres* Rom. ('stress').

Obviously, efforts are being made *to save/a salva* Rom. economy and *urgent treatment* is needed *to nurse, heal or cure/izlečiti* Srb./*a vindeca* Rom. it, such as: *injections/injekcija* Srb., *infusions/infuzii* Rom., *resuscitation/veštačko disanje* Srb./*resuscitare* Rom., *calmante* Rom. ('painkillers'), *antidot* Rom. ('antidote'), *amputare* Rom. ('amputation'). In extreme cases, when the disease proves incurable, even *eutanazija* Srb. ('euthanasia') is recommended. Apparently, medication seems to work well as there are signs of economic *recovery/ozdravljenje* Srb./*ameliorare, însănătoșire* Rom. In Serbian, economy has *come back to life (oživeti)* and is *back on its feet* (i.e. *stati na zdrave noge*), while in English and in Romanian it is *doing well/își revine* Rom. and is now *in convalescence/in convalescență* Rom. The hardship the economy as a patient has endured until it has reached a relatively good state of health is often signaled through premodification of the nouns *recovery* and *convalescence*; for instance: *prolonged period of convalescence/perioadă lungă de convalescență* Rom., *death-bed recovery, anaemic recovery/anemičan oporavak* Srb., *bolno ozdravljenje* Srb. ('painful recovery'). Here are some examples of THE CRISIS IS A DISEASE metaphor:

- (18) Boom nations *to catch cold* as *West's financial disease* strides the globe [...] The spectre of *contagion* from the western financial crisis reached South Korea this week [...]. (G 17/10/08)
- (19) More Countries Are *Catching America's Economic Virus* (BW 16/03/08)
- (20) These are only *symptoms* of the real problem. [...] The same lesson applies to *healing our economic ills*: [...]. (BW 28/04/09)
- (21) *Healing the global economy* is now the primary endeavour. We are engaged upon a project of *recovery*, whereby the object of our attentions passes *from intensive care into a prolonged period of convalescence*, before *its restoration to rude health*. (G 26/03/09)

- (22) Capitalism, it appears, has made a *deathbed recovery*. It is *out of intensive care* and, while *not quite fighting fit, is doing well in the recovery ward*. Another few months should see it *as good as new*. (G 12/05/09)
- (23) [...] the US subprime mortgage crisis in the US *was causing serious pain* to global financial markets. (FT 08/08/08)
- (24) Fresh evidence points to *paralysis of global economy*. (G 27/02/09)
- (25) When global financial market turmoil first erupted in August last year, a common view was that while the US economy *would catch flu*, continental Europe might escape with just a *cold*. (FT 10/10/08)
- (26) First, when the US economy catches *pneumonia*, everybody falls seriously ill. (FT 19/05/09)
- (27) Paulson and Bernanke *misdiagnosed* the root of the current crisis. (BW 01/10/08)
- (28) Kriza prolazi sama, kao *kijavica* ili *grip* (BN 09/02/09)
- (29) Čitav blok tranzicionih zemalja doživeo je *ekonomski infarkt* u kojem su najviše stradali zaposleni. (GJ 11/11/08)
- (30) Preduzetnici koji su u poslovnoj vezi s velikim magnatima više su izloženi rizicima, jer kad se takvi magnati *prehlade*, mi dobijemo *upalu pluća*. (B92 29/12/08)
- (31) ..i da je privreda te zemlje sada na putu *sporog oporavka*, prenela je agencija Blumberg. (BN 19/08/09)
- (32) Aktuelna *eutanazija* privrede u vidu gašenja brojnih firmi sve više uzima maha. (GJ 27/05/07)
- (33) Osim toga, ovoga puta bankarskom sistemu dato je „*veštačko disanje*“, što nije učinjeno tokom Velike depresije kada nisu preduzeti odgovorajući koraci da bi se sprečio kolaps privrede. (D 10/01/10)
- (34) Nova *injekcija* će popeti pomoć AIG-u na oko 150 milijardi dolara. (EMP 10/11/08)
- (35) Sectorul imobiliar din Franta are aceleasi *simptome* ca si cel american: incetinirea vanzarilor si a constructiilor. (ZF 03/06/08)
- (36) Ce *tratament* prescrie Jean-Claude Trichet pentru *combaterea* actualei crize. (ZF 23/11/08)
- (37) Primul lucru pe care trebuie sa il faca Romania este *sa puna un diagnostic corect* atat asupra situatiei economice [...] (ZF 30/11/08)
- (38) Economia americana *nu se va vindeca* mai devreme de 2011. Recesiunea cu care se confrunta economia Statelor Unite pare *sa se agraveze* pe zi ce trece, iar *infuziile* masive de capital din partea guvernului de la Washington ar putea sa nu fie suficiente. (ZF 30/11/08)
- (39) [...] indicatorii economici *nu dau prea multe sperante* in ceea ce priveste oprirea declinului cu care se confrunta economia SUA sau economia mondiala. (ZF 11/12/08)
- (40) Probabil ca si importurile au inregistrat o temperare dramatica a cresterii, avand in vedere ca economia a inceput sa dea semne de *oboseala*, iar companiile nu au mai putut sa isi finanteze operatiunile din cauza taierii liniilor de catre banci. (ZF 08/12/08)
- (41) Economia romaneasca este acum *in agonie*. (ZF 21/06/09)

(42) *Criza este ca gripa*: se extinde in toate directiile, il afecteaza si pe bogat, si pe sarac (ZF 23/11/08)

(43) Pietele financiare au facut *atac de cord*, dar investitorii se comporta de parca ar fi fost doar o zgarietura. (ZF 15/11/09)

4.3. *The crisis is a disaster*

Another very productive conceptual metaphor in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press coverage of the global economic crisis is *THE CRISIS IS A DISASTER*. In language, this metaphor commonly finds expression through various parts of speech: verbs (e.g. *to survive/a supraviețui* Rom., *preživeti* Srb.), *to wreak havoc/a face ravagii* Rom., *a pune la adapost* Rom., i.e. 'to find shelter', *a provoca daune* Rom., i.e. 'to cause damage', *a face victime* Rom., i.e. 'to cause casualties'), nouns (e.g. *havoc, calamity/calamitate* Rom., *disaster/dezasttru* Rom., *catastrofă* Rom./*katastrofa* Srb., i.e. 'catastrophe', *operațiune de salvare* Rom., i.e. 'rescue operation', *pierderi* Rom. 'loss') and adjectives (e.g. *disastrous/dezastruos* Rom., *katastrofalan* Srb.).

(44) Audur was one of the few Icelandic financial companies *to survive the crisis*. (BW 16/01/09)

(45) For students about to graduate, taking personal responsibility for world-wide *economic calamity* may be the most difficult and important lesson. (BW 09/03/09)

(46) Criza economica mondiala si *dezastrul financiar* care a lovit companiile gigant de pe Wall Street [...] (ZF 22/09/08)

(47) Industria auto se confrunta cu o *catastrofa* care s-a raspandit la nivel mondial (ZF 10/02/09)

(48) Analistii sunt de parere ca *operatiunea de salvare* ar putea forta creditorii europeni sa treaca *pierderile* in registrul pierderilor cauzate de contractele de asigurari financiare (ZF 18/09/08)

Sometimes the focus of this conceptual metaphor is not on the disaster itself, but on the great confusion and disorder it has brought about. This idea is rendered in language through synonymous words such as *chaos/haos* Srb./*haos* Rom., *turmoil/instabilitate, dezechilibru* Rom. and *mess/dezordine* Rom. For example:

(49) In fact, if there is one positive to come out of this *turmoil*, it would be a healthy skepticism on the part of [...] (BW 09/03/09)

(50) Kako najbezbolnije prebroditi finansijski *haos* (B 06/02/09)

(51) O a doua criza financiara risca sa izbucneasca in Est din cauza *dezordinii* din sectorul bancar. (ZF 16/09/09)

Romanian journalists often express the same idea of disorder and instability by means of verbs, such as *a se clătina* ('to stagger'), *a pierde controlul* ('to lose control'), *a da peste cap* ('to turn upside down'), *a dezechilibra* ('to lose balance').

As one can easily notice, all the above-mentioned linguistic expressions point to disasters in general, as there is no mention of their nature. Howev-

er, journalists are often very specific about the nature of the disaster that has shaken the global economy. In the following three sections we point out the elaborations of THE CRISIS IS A DISASTER conceptual metaphor.

4.3.1. The crisis is a biblical disaster

The three examples below reveal that journalists envisage the global financial crisis as a disaster that may reach or has already reached biblical proportions. In all three languages, journalists make reference to and express great fear of the final battle prophesied to occur at the end of the world, i.e. *Armageddon* in English, *Apokalipsa* in Serbian and *apocalipsă* in Romanian, thus emphasising the drama of the current economic transformations:

(52) *Armageddon* averted. A few months ago, financial markets feared *Armageddon* was just around the corner. (G 12/05/09)

(53) *Apokalipsa* iz Davosa (P 02/02/09)

(54) Croitoru a prezis degeaba *apocalipsa bugetara*. (ZF 04/11/09)

4.3.2. the crisis is cataclysm

The economic crisis is also conceived as a natural disaster. On the one hand, this metaphor finds expression in language through the use of generic terms, such as *natural disaster*, *cataclysm/katakliizma* Srb./*cataclysm* Rom., *urgie*, *prăpăd* Rom., with the observation that the Romanian *urgie* and *prăpăd* denote highly emotive terms, with special connotations in the collective imagery of the Romanian people.

(55) But for any government to take policy advice from America, the nation that brought us this *financial cataclysm* would be like getting stock tips from Bernie Madoff. (G 01/04/09)

(56) Svi koji su odgovorni za privredni sektor u svetu moraju promeniti ponašanje, jer ako se budu ponašali isto kao pre početka krize dogodila bi se *katakliizma* (EMP 08/05/09)

(57) Marele avantaj al Romaniei in acest *cataclism financiar* global este nu numai primitivismul pietei financiare [...] (ZF 18/09/08)

(58) *Urgie* pe bursă: 60 de brokeri concediați în zece zile (ZF 15/12/08)

Besides the use of these general metaphorical expressions, we could also find more specific elaborations of this conceptual metaphor in all three languages, e.g. THE CRISIS IS AN EARTHQUAKE/TECTONIC MOVEMENT and THE CRISIS IS A TSUNAMI (also cf. HURRICANE, TORNADO in 4.1.). The former is realised in language by means of earthquake-related terminology, e.g. *earthquake/zemljotres* Srb./*cutremur* Rom., *tectonic or seismic shifts/tektonski poremećaj* Srb., *tremors/potresi* Srb., *aftershock/replică* Rom., *epicenter/epicentar* Sbr./*epicentru* Rom., *magnitude, to shake/a zdruncina* Rom., *to reverberate/a se resimți* Rom.), while the latter is confined to *tsunami/cunami* Srb./*tsunami* Rom., *tidal wave, to sweep across, and to break to the shore*.

(59) Last autumn's global *financial crisis set off an economic earthquake*. And we are still feeling *the tremors*. The latest sign of *the ground shifting beneath our feet* is [...]. (I 06/10/09).

(60) Novoprmljene zemlje bile su *epicentar političkih potresa* koji su, kao eho svetske krize, pogodili i EU. (B92 04/05/09)

(61) Falimentul institutiei a generat un adevarat *cutremur* in intreaga lume, iar *replicile* acestuia se mai simt si astazi.

(62) The world's progress towards the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could be pushed back by at least three years by the "*financial tsunami*" sweeping across the world. (G 09/03/09)

(63) Godinu dana "finansijskog *cunamija*"! (B 15/09/09)

(64) Caderea Lehman a adus un adevarat *tsunami* pe burse. (ZF 25/10/09)

Additionally, THE CRISIS IS AN (ACTIVE) VOLCANO metaphor is sometimes used by journalists either implicitly, through the use of the noun *eruption* in English and *erupcija* in Serbian, and the verb *a erupe* ('to erupt') in Romanian, or (less commonly) explicitly, as *volcano* in English:

(65) Sir, what is the similarity between the current financial crisis and a *volcano*? The answer is the shape of the graph of activity levels leading up to the main event. It shows a long period of deceptive calm followed by a *dramatic eruption*, up or down, depending on which event is being plotted. (FT, Jan 29, 2009)

(66) *Erupcija* krize na američkom tržištu drugorazrednih hipotekarnih zajmova (D 21/11/08)

(67) In vreme ce criza financiara *a erupe* cu aproape un an inainte, [...] (ZF 10/05/09)

Romanian journalists also depict the financial crisis as *viitură*, a natural disaster specific to certain regions in Romania, caused by landslides due to overflow of rivers (usually in spring) and resulting in a great number of casualties, but linguistic instantiations of this metaphor only occur in isolation:

(68) Actuala criza globala ne-a surprins cu o puternica *viitură financiară*. (ZF 16/12/08)

4.3.3. The crisis is an accidental disaster

Moreover, lexical choice in the handling of the crisis by the press reveals that the disaster can also be accidental. Journalists thus write about the crisis as if it were:

- a maritime disaster, e.g. *shipwreck/brodolom* Srb./*nafragiu* Rom., *epavă* Rom. ('wrecked ship'), *to sink/a se scufunda* Rom., *colac de salvare* Rom. ('lifebuoy'), în derivă Rom ('drifting'):

(69) Fishing for good news after *economic shipwreck* (BW 16/11/09)

(70) Srpski privrednici će, za razliku od kolega iz većine evropskih zemalja, morati da nađu drugi način da se spasu mogućeg finansijskog *brodoloma*. (BN 20/11/08)

(71) Sefii "*epavelor*" Lehman si Bear au castigat 2,5 mld. \$ (ZF 28/01/09)

- a nuclear disaster (in English only), e.g. *meltdown*, *fallout*, *radioactive cloud*:

(72) Today's global *meltdown* is training a new generation of managers to build lasting value through innovation and create sustainable growth. (BW 28/04/09)

- an explosion (in English and Romanian), e.g. *to break/a izbucni* (Rom.), *to unleash pressures*, *to implode*, *(to send) shockwaves/unde de șoc* Rom., *explozie* Rom. ('explosion'), *a zgudui* Rom. ('to shake'), *absorbit* Rom. ('absorbed'):

(73) The deflationary *pressures unleashed* by the financial crisis are too strong. (FT 12/02/09)

(74) Luni, 15 septembrie 2008, o *explozie a zguduit* America și lumea întreagă. *Exploziile precedente*, produse în bănci uriașe – Bear Stearns, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae – fuseseră cumva *absorbite*. (ZF 14/09/09)

4.4. *The crisis is war / a war enemy*

Compared to English and Serbian, THE CRISIS IS WAR is a very productive metaphor in Romanian. The Romanian corpus provides numerous examples of this particular metaphor, which is realised in language through a variety of war related terminology, such as: *arme* ('weapons'), *a depune armele* ('to lay down one's arms'), *câștigători* ('winners'), *victime* ('victims', 'casualties'), *victime colaterale* ('collateral victims'), *cicatrici* ('scars'), *zgârieturi* ('scratches') *a aduce omagii victimelor* ('to pay homage to victims'), *carnagiu* ('carnage'), *a-și linge rănille* ('to lick one's wounds'), *cadavre* ('corpses'), *pluton* ('platoon'), *comandant de armată* ('lieutenant general'), *a lua măsuri în forță* ('to take force measures'). The financial crisis seems to have affected Romanian economy so badly that it looks as if after a war (i.e. *arată ca după război*). The English and the Serbian corpora also provide evidence of the war metaphor, although to a far lesser extent than the Romanian one. In both Serbian and English the idea of war is implied through reference to the *casualties/žrtve* Srb. left behind in this war (example 77), while in English, the crisis is also perceived as *carnage* (in Romanian as well, i.e. *carnagiu*), or as a terrorist attack. The choice of the culture specific lexical item *9/11* in example (75) highlights the extremely dramatic scale of the crisis:

(75) Amid *Economic Carnage*, Business Schools Mull Fixes (BW 09/03/09)

(76) As stunned bankers filed out of offices later that day, clutching boxes of belongings and blinking into the news cameras, it wasn't long before they would be described as the first *casualties of a financial 9/11*. (G 27/12/08)

(77) *Žene veće žrtve ekonomske krize* (BN 08/03/10)

We note that one particular, and again, very productive, variation of this metaphor in Romanian is THE CRISIS IS A WAR ENEMY. Romanian language articles often portray the crisis as a war enemy who attacks (*atacă*), strikes (*lovește*),

knocks down (i.e. *doboară*) and throws economic systems to the ground (i.e. *a pune la pământ*), which fall prey to the crisis (*cad pradă/victimă crizei*). The severity of the crisis is often emphasised through adjectives denoting the intensity of these attacks or blows, e.g. *puternic* ('strong'), *tare* ('hard'), *foarte dur* (*very tough*), *fără milă* ('mercilessly'). In the war/fight against the crisis (*în războiul/lupta cu criza*), economy, however, does not give up (*nu renunță*), it fights back (*contraatacă, contracarează*) and resists (*rezistă, face față*) the enemy in an effort to defeat it (*a învinge*). The following examples are a case in point:

(78) *Moda in lupta cu criza* (ZF 26/11/09)

(79) *Bucurestiul rezista mai bine. Criza loveste mai tare in provincie.* (ZF 21/01/09)

(80) *Piata de fashion in sa nu renunta atat de usor. De fapt, contraataca. Si aduce branduri noi care sa castige lupta cu criza.* (ZF 25/11/09)

The CRISIS IS A WAR ENEMY metaphor does not seem to be so richly exploited in the British, American and Serbian press. When used, this metaphor is often rendered through the expression *fight against/boriti se(borba) protiv krize* Srb. (either the noun or the verb).

4.5. *The crisis is a fall/a hole*

The conceptualisation of the crisis as a fall or a hole is intrinsically linked to the highly conventional metaphor BAD IS DOWN (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 16). It is this orientational metaphor we live by which allows one to associate lack of well-being with downward movement or with a deep hole. In language, this metaphor is expressed by journalists through various nouns, e.g. *collapse/kolaps* Srb./*colaps, prăbușire* Rom., *crash/krah* Srb., *downturn/declin* Rom., *depression/depresiune* Rom., (*free*) *fall/sunovrat* Srb./*cădere liberă, cădere în gol, picaj* Rom., *slump/mlaștină* Rom., *abyss/ambis* Srb., and verbs, e.g. *to climb, to come out/a ieși din, a scoate din* Rom., *to sink (deep) into/sunovratiti se* Srb./*a se afunda* Rom., *to plunge into, to hit bottom, a dobori* Rom. ('to knock down'), *a pune la pământ* Rom. ('to throw to the ground'), *a se prăbuși* Rom. ('to crash').

(81) In countries such as Hungary, *the economy is in free fall* as foreign banks and investors withdraw capital [...]. (G19/10/08)

(82) What Americans expect from Washington is action that matches the sense of urgency they feel in their daily lives – action that's swift, bold and wise enough for us to *climb out of this crisis*. If nothing is done, this *recession* might linger for years. [...] Our nation *will sink deeper into a crisis* that, at some point, we may not be able to reverse. (G 06/02/09)

(83) O tome kakav ekonomski *ambis* preti u skoroj budućnosti[...] (VN 09/11/08)

(84) ... da što pre pronadu rešenje i zaustave *sunovrat* svetskih berzi (B92 30/09/08)

(85) Asta vand cei trei candidati importanti la presedintie: trei solutii diferite de *iesire din criza*.

(86) In general, bancilor le este aproape imposibil sa se ridice din "mlastina" in care le-a aruncat criza pietelor de credit. (ZF 13/11/08)

As can be inferred from the metaphorical expressions above, in some cases, this metaphor may undergo a slight change, in that the crisis is understood as an extremely violent physical force that induces a swift downward movement of the economy. Thus, as explicitly and recurrently attested by examples in the Romanian corpus, it is the impact of the crisis (*impactul crizei*) that makes economic entities collapse, fall, sink deep, hit bottom, etc. Many other verbs used to refer to weather phenomena (cf. 4.1.), disasters (cf. 4.3.) and war (4.5.) could fall within this conceptual metaphor if there was no specification (be it explicit or implicit) of the doer of the action in the text.

4.6. Isolated metaphors

Besides the five recurrent conceptual metaphors discussed above, we also identified a number of isolated metaphors in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press coverage of the global economic crisis. Most such metaphors are present in all three language corpora, with or without variations.

4.6.1. The crisis is a nightmare

As examples (87) and (88) below illustrate, this metaphor is realised in language through the English noun *nightmare*, and its Serbian and Romanian equivalents, i.e. *noćna mora* and *coşmar*, respectively:

(87) Sub-prime and banking crisis: Who caused this *nightmare*? (FT 19/03/08)

(88) Trgovinski deficit postao je *noćna mora* za mnoge zemlje zapada... (B 25/05/10)

(89) *Cosmar* pe bursa: cea mai mare scadere a saptamanii, in contextul crizei internationale (ZF 23/01/09)

4.6.2. The crisis is a being

While the corpus in Romanian revealed the conceptualisation of the crisis either as a powerful, voracious creature that ate (i.e. *a mânca*) and swallowed (i.e. *a înghiţi*) various economic entities, or as one with superior authority that silenced (i.e. *a redus la tăcere*) and brought them to their knees (i.e. *a înngenunchiat*), exemplifications of this metaphor in English and Serbian are more specific about the nature of this being. Metaphorical expressions in both corpora portray the crisis as a fierce wild animal either explicitly, as it is the case in English: a *bear*, or implicitly, through reference to the claws of the animal, in Serbian (more specifically, being caught "in the *claws* of the unprecedented financial catastrophe", i.e. *u kandžama* dosad neviđene finansijske katastrofe).

(90) Few Small Companies Are Escaping This *Bear* [...] But some small outfits have defied *the bear* with big revenue gains. (BW 27/04/09)

(91) Criza financiara a mancat profiturile companiilor cu datorii mari (ZF 12/02/09)

(92) Criza a redus la tacere fondurile de private equity. (ZF 07/05/09)

It is worth mentioning that there are examples in the Romanian corpus where this scenario is somehow reversed. More specifically, compared to the above metaphor, where the crisis is the active, ferocious and superior agent that causes harm by devouring its opponent, other metaphors depict the crisis as food, i.e. as something passive, something to be eaten. Thus, according to a Romanian journalist, “Vorbim despre recesiune, *mestecam criza*, respiram de-presiune”, which translates as “we talk recession, we *chew crisis* and we breathe depression”. As chewing, a metonym for eating, together with breathing and talking, is an indispensable human activity, this example suggests that the crisis has unfortunately become an integral and unavoidable part of our lives, as essential and indispensable as food and air. Similarly, another journalist writes about the *bitter taste* that the crisis has left in everyone’s mouth (i.e. *gustul amar al recesiunii*).

4.6.3. The crisis is a movie / a play / a game

Although movies, theatre plays and games can usually be characterised as pleasurable and entertaining, these metaphors actually highlight certain undesirable features of the source domains. Romanian journalists depict the crisis as a movie (i.e. *film*), a worldwide production (i.e. *producție mondială*) with the plot (i.e. *acțiunea*) stretching over several episodes (i.e. *episoade*), whereas in Serbian, journalists write about the first act of the crisis (i.e. *prvi čin*):

(93) *Filmul crizei*, a carui *actiune* a inceput in zgarie-norii de pe Wall Street si din City, a devenit in scurt timp o *productie mondiala* care nu a ocolit nici Romania. (ZF 21/09/09)

(94) Pitanje je da li je grčka kriza korak ka jačanju EU ili predstavlja *prvi čin kolapsa*. (P 04/05/10)

Obviously, emphasis is placed not on the pleasure derived from watching a movie or a play, but on their dramatic structure, i.e. their division into several parts. In other words, more episodes or acts are yet to come, which inevitably leads to a tragic denouement.

As far as the source domain GAME is concerned, the game chosen to metaphorically replace the crisis both in Serbian and in Romanian, namely a game of dominoes (i.e. *domino* Srb., Rom.), obviously implies the so-called “domino effect” (i.e. *domino efekat* Srb., *efect de domino* Rom.).

(95) Ni 750 milijardi evra, koliko su Evropska unija i Međunarodni monetarni fond izdvojili za zaustavljanje *domino efekta* dužničke krize u Evropi... (BN 27/05/10)

(96) Ca intr-un *joc de domino*, aceste economii se adanceau din ce in ce mai mult in criza. (ZF 10/11/09)

Similarly to the tragic denouement hinted at in the examples above, this metaphor also suggests the fact that the menacing toppling chain cannot be avoided and thus all the tiles in the row are eventually affected and felled.

4.6.4. The crisis is an educational experience

Interestingly, this metaphor, present in all three corpora, is the only instance when journalists conceptualise the economic crisis in terms of a positively perceived domain. More specifically, the crisis is comprehended as a useful and valuable experience, usually *a lesson* (i.e. *pouka* Srb./*lecție* Rom.) from which one can learn a lot:

(97) Having learned *the lessons of this crisis*, these new leaders will think differently than their predecessors about how to build great institutions. [...] This economic crisis is providing *the best training ground* to develop a new generation of leaders. (BW 28/04/09)

(98) Od presudnog je značaja da *izvučemo pouke iz ove krize* kako se ona ne bi ponovila. (BN 07/03/10)

(99) Dintr-un popor generos, *criza ne-a invatat lectia* zgarceniei sau poate pe cea a cumpatarii. (ZF 17/10/09)

Additionally, the Romanian corpus reveals some other instances of isolated metaphors: the crisis is conceptualised as “an alarm clock” (i.e. *ceas deșteptător*) that should wake us up from our irrational spending habits, as a machine equipped with “mechanisms” (i.e. *mecanisme* *crizei*) and “an engine” (i.e. *motorul crizei*), which we “fill up with fuel” (i.e. *a alimenta criza*), as merchandise that “has been imported” to Romania (i.e. *criza a fost importată*), and as “the Sword of Damocles” (i.e. *sabia lui Damocles*), which highlights the imminence of a disastrous situation.

5. Concluding remarks

Our study has hopefully proven that the use of metaphor in the British, American, Serbian and Romanian press reporting on the current economic crisis is not only widespread but also systematic. As discussed above, we identified five salient conceptual metaphors that use the following source domains to refer to the crisis: WEATHER PHENOMENON, DISEASE, DISASTER, WAR/WAR ENEMY and FALL/HOLE, as well as a number of isolated metaphors, which do not play a central role in the conceptualisation of the crisis. Each of these conceptual metaphors is largely present in all four cultures and is realised in English, Serbian and Romanian by various linguistic expressions that range from highly conventional, i.e. they are part of economic terminology, to highly creative, coined by journalists for rhetorical purposes. Examples of the former include: *financial turbulence/turbulencia* Srb./*turbulențe* Rom., *financial storm/oluja* Srb./*furtună* Rom., *frozen market*, *capital injections/injekcija* Srb. and *infusions/infuzii* Rom., *economic depression/downturn*, *to get out of the crisis/a ieși din criză* Rom., *economic collapse/kolaps* Srb./*colaps*, *prăbușire* Rom., *crash/krah*

Srb., *downturn/declin Rom.*, while of the latter (which significantly outnumber the former): *financial 9/11, financial blizzard, global tempest, financial tsunami/cunami Srb./tsunami Rom.*, *to remain on a government respirator, Armageddon, domino Rom.*, *domine Srb.* ('dominoes'), *ceas deșteptător Rom.* ('alarm clock'), *financial hurricane/uragan Srb./Rom.*, *bear, financial shipwreck/brodolom Srb.*

As far as cultural variation is concerned, we note that, as expected, the differences in the metaphorical conceptualisation of the global economic crisis between the British, American, Serbian and Romanian articles are few and insignificant. For instance, corpus analysis points to a greater preference for the source domain FALL/HOLE and WEATHER PHENOMENA in the British-American articles and for WAR/WAR ENEMY and DISASTER in the Romanian ones, or to an obvious emphasis on symptoms within THE CRISIS IS A DISEASE metaphor in Romanian. The lack of major cross-cultural variation can be accounted for by the conceptual nature of metaphors and their grounding in human experience on the one hand, and the fact that the cultures in question are part of the Euro-American, Western culture, on the other (cf. Kövecses 2002, 2005). However, cultural variation seems to be more pronounced on a linguistic level. Among the different linguistic realisations of the same conceptual metaphors in the four countries we mention: a clear preference for *hurricane* and *wind* in the English corpus and for *storm* in the Serbian and Romanian ones, reference to hurricanes *Ike* and *Katrina* in a US article, *viitură* in Romanian (cf. 4.3.2.), *meltdown, fallout, radioactive cloud, blizzard* in English only, and *euthanasia* in Serbian. However, cultural variation at a linguistic level is difficult to spot out, mainly due to the fact that Serbian and Romanian journalists, being largely influenced by the Anglo-American media discourse, tend to adapt their writing style to it and therefore borrow culture-specific metaphors otherwise absent from Serbian and Romanian thought and language. Also, some articles featured in the finance- and business-oriented Serbian and Romanian press report on the development of the crisis primarily in its "mother country", i.e. the United States, and are thus translations of the original English-language articles. The use of *hurricane, tornado* and *tsunami* in Serbian and Romanian are a case in point (cf. 4.1.). That is why the findings of our study need to be characterised as tentative until proven by further research carried out on a much larger corpus of texts.

Irrespective of cultural variation, these metaphors, as used by journalists in the discourse of the global financial crisis, have a twofold rhetorical function. First of all, the choice of these specific metaphors obviously adds more drama to an already dramatic situation. The conceptualisation of the global financial crisis in terms of negative scenarios such as severe weather phenomena, disasters, war, disease, downward movement, etc., tugs at the heartstrings of the readership by making the text notably more vivid and emotionally loaded. Moreover, corpus evidence reveals that the reactivation of the same conceptual metaphor through various linguistic expressions (as a result of elaboration) throughout a paragraph, or even the entire article, contributes to the cohesion of the text, hence facilitating its readability (cf. Gibbs 1994). This observation

runs counter the traditional, widespread idea that metaphor hinders communication, as compared to literal language.

Secondly, and less obviously, from an ideological perspective, our analysis shows that the journalistic discourse on the financial crisis in all three study languages draws on “depersonalization” (Charteris-Black 2004: 140). In line with the metaphorical “hiding and highlighting principle” (Kövecses 2002: 79–80), the conceptual metaphors used by journalists highlight the scale and destructive power of the crisis, but at the same time hide the fact that the present economic situation has nevertheless been brought about by thought-governed human acts, and not by uncontrollable, hostile events such as weather phenomena, illnesses, disasters, etc. Therefore, by writing about the financial crisis in metaphorical terms, journalists shift readers’ attention away from its real causes, i.e. the (wrong) decisions taken by people, thus shaping the way members of all three speech communities perceive it.

In short, we believe that our corpus analysis of English, Serbian and Romanian crisis metaphors illustrates that metaphor is “a way of thinking and a way of persuading as much as it is a linguistic phenomenon.” (Charteris-Black 2004: 22).

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СВЕТСКА ЕКОНОМСКА КРИЗА И МЕТАФОРЕ – КОНТРАСТИВНА АНАЛИЗА ЕНГЛЕСКОГ, СРПСКОГ И РУМУНСКОГ

Резиме

Под теоријским окриљем теорије појмовних метафора у раду упоређујемо начине метафоричког поимања светске економске кризе у чланцима објављеним у штампаним и електронским медијима на енглеском, српском и румунском језику. Будући да су метафоре углавном утемељене у универзалном људском искуству, почетна хипотеза истраживања гласила је да се између три анализирана језика неће испољити веће разлике у метафоричкој концептуализацији светске економске кризе на појмовном нивоу, али да ће на језичком нивоу културолошке варијације доћи јаче до изражаја. Анализирали смо пет главних метафора за светску економску кризу: криза је метеоролошка појава, криза је болест, криза је катастрофа, криза је рат/ратни непријатељ и криза је пад/рупа. У складу са очекивањима, три анализирана језика користе исте појмовне метафоре путем којих се поима светска економска криза, док се на језичком нивоу испољавају метафорички изрази својствени културама омеђеним језицима који су предмет студије. У раду смо истакли и важну улогу метафора у обликовању одређеног начина мишљења, као и њену убеђивачку функцију у популарном пословном и економском дискурсу на енглеском, српском и румунском језику.

Кључне речи: концептуална метафора, енглески, српски, румунски

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