

*Kraievska O. D.,  
Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences,  
Assistant Professor of English Philology Department  
Donetsk National University named after Vasyl Stus*

## CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION WARFARE

**Summary.** The article has been devoted to peculiarities of conceptual metaphor influence on intercultural communication and information warfare. The basic concepts and conceptual metaphors of modern intercultural communication and information warfare have been explored, the prospects of cross-cultural communication research by means of cognitive linguistic framework have been outlined.

**Key words:** conceptual metaphor, intercultural communication, information warfare, propaganda, mental space, unifying concepts.

A theory proves to be truthful and useful in time, judging by its applicability and relevance to preceding and forthcoming challenges of social and scientific nature.

Cognitive linguistics, which studies language as a means of organizing, processing and conveying information, turns out to be especially effective in dealing with modern communication issues as it studies human experience and understanding reflected in language, as well as questions the meaningfulness of human everyday experience.

Intercultural communication is studied by numerous disciplines under different angles for its importance has proved to be vital in the recent decades. The key concepts of this phenomenon are to become the agenda of cognitive linguistics as it deals with world perception and reflection, which is crucial in intercultural communication.

Culture and communication are mutually effected and language is the means and medium of their coexistence. It describes and fixes a wide range of communication processes and possible problems. The social context of the modern global world consists of individuals of different ethnic, religious, social and educational background.

Myron W. Lustig and Jolene Koester emphasize that culture, cultural differences and intercultural communication are among the central aspects of modern life. It is also noted that there are forces which encourage and discourage understanding and accommodation among people who differ from one another [1, p. 1]. The authors claim that there are urgent democratic, technological, economic, peace and interpersonal imperatives for effective intercultural communication [1, p. 3].

By means of cognitive linguistics, it is possible to seek to understand how people of different origin perceive the world around them and behave and talk in their native surroundings and out of their comfort zone in unfamiliar or untypical environment.

Culture and language determine how people encode and decode messages, choose the medium of their transition and interpret the messages. It is crucial to work out the framework for effective cross-cultural cooperation, based on understanding, search for common goals and loyalty to differences.

**The purpose of the article** is to explore the basic concepts and conceptual metaphors of modern intercultural communication and information warfare, as well as outline the prospects of further re-

search of cross-cultural communication by means of cognitive linguistic framework.

According to the pioneers of cognitive linguistics George Lakoff and Mark Johnsen human ordinary conceptual system, in terms of both thoughts and actions, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. The scientists prove that concepts govern our thoughts and everyday functioning, structuring perception of the world and relation to it, thus defining people's everyday reality. However it is crucial to realize that human conceptual system is stated to be only partially conscious and one of the ways to examine the system is to study the language they speak. George Lakoff and Mark Johnsen claim that language is an important source of evidence for what the conceptual system is like [2, p. 4].

The practical side of the linguistic study is as follows: most of the things people do are structured by the concept of the objects and phenomena they deal with; modern society has faced a number of complicated challenges in international and intercultural communication and even a very alarming phenomenon of information warfare – these challenges are to be scrupulously studied by a wide range of specialists of different spheres (cognitive linguistics among them) in order to revise concepts and strategies of communication and interactions. On this basis, intercultural and international communication can be viewed, experienced, carried out and talked about differently in future.

Meanwhile, in the context of modern conflicts and information warfare, it is crucial to identify significant concepts and conceptual metaphors which have proven to be a hindrance to peaceful coexistence and understanding.

One of the founders of cognitive semantics, Leonard Talmy in his pioneering work "Toward a Cognitive Semantics" claims that there is a set of crucial conceptual domains, such as motion and location, space and time, attention and viewpoint, causation and force interaction. These are the parameters which structure conception by language and language what shapes and determines concepts [3, p. 12].

One of the key concepts of cognitive semantics, mental space, can become an effective framework for intercultural communication structuring and resistance to information war patterns. Mental space is a construct suggested by Gilles Fauconnier and defined as an idealized cognitive model. The scientist claims that meaning construction processes involve building mental spaces and creating mappings among them. This is the basic idea of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's blending theory in cognitive semantics [4, p. 6].

On condition that a common mental space is created – based on humane values, appreciation of cultural diversity and understanding that it implies differences – perception of intercultural communication will be dramatically changed, which will automatically put it on another level and solve its urgent problems of hostility, arrogance, intolerance etc.

It has been proved by cognitive linguists that metaphor is not just a matter of language, human thought processes are largely metaphorical. Human conceptual system is largely metaphorical, that is why it is reasonable to talk about metaphorical concepts or conceptual metaphors [2, p. 7]. Conceptual metaphors are set linguistic expressions which constitute a person's conceptual system and predetermine his/her attitude and actions towards an object or phenomena. Since the solution of dramatic and global communicative problems is to be given a high priority in the information era, the research of conceptual metaphors' influence on intercultural communication and information warfare is significant and urgent.

In order to analyze key conceptual metaphors which have proven to be a hindrance to peaceful coexistence and understanding of different social groups and cultures, it is proper to identify them in the information streams of modern information warfare attacks.

Information warfare is a concept involving the use and management of information and communication technology in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent. Modern information warfare includes collection of tactical information, assurance that one's information is valid and spreading of propaganda (or disinformation) in order to demoralize or manipulate [5].

It is important to pay attention to the difference between tactical and strategic information. The strategic information refers to what somebody wants to achieve in the short or long term as it corresponds to one's needs and requirements. The tactical information is actually necessary and sufficient for implementation of a strategy. Strategic information explains what and why somebody wants to do something in the future while tactical information explains how it is possible to implement the strategy [6]. Hence, information warfare includes search of modes of misleading in order to demoralize and manipulate.

It is reasonable to claim that artificial metaphorical concepts are constituents and key ingredients of this misleading process or propaganda. Metaphorical concepts in general are systematic, i.e. they form a conceptual network of metaphorical expressions and dramatically influence people's perception of metaphorical nature of reality and their activity in it. These concepts used to be based primarily on consistent reflection of individuals and common experience. Today, the mechanism of propaganda and aggressive information behavior in combination with the global net of communicative ties enable creation and quick spreading of artificial metaphorical concepts, which are mendacious, false and dangerous. Artificial metaphorical concepts are created by means of purposeful manipulation with truthful and false facts for the sake of dramatic and systematic influence on people's world perception by effecting basic human instincts. The aggressive information behavior is revealed in powerful and constant development of false conceptual networks made of deceitful conceptual metaphors.

A bright example of artificial (created intentionally to mislead) and completely false (without grounding on true facts and experience) conceptual metaphors is "modern fascism in Ukraine". According to its definition, fascism is a form of radical authoritarian nationalism, characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, and control of industry and commerce. Fascism rejects assertions that violence is automatically negative in nature and views political violence, war, and imperialism as means that can achieve national rejuvenation [7]. Modern Ukraine, on the contrary, has faced military aggression from Russia in the east of Ukraine and in the Crimea, which has been annexed, and has to protect its sovereignty, independence and democratic course.

Informational aggression of Russia against Ukraine is accompanied by propaganda, which, according to its definition, is "information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view. Propaganda is often associated with the psychological mechanisms of influencing and altering the attitude of a population toward a specific cause, position or political agenda in an effort to form a consensus to a standard set of belief patterns. Propaganda is information that is not objective and is used primarily to influence an audience and further an agenda, often by presenting facts selectively (perhaps lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis or perception, or using loaded messages or "loaded language" to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information that is presented" [8]. Russian propaganda is considerably powerful due to a wide information net of update media resources and a high rate of productivity in providing fake facts and psychologically loaded messages.

Russian propagandist loaded language, which is emotive language based on wording (in Russian and translated in other languages) that is aimed at influence by appealing to emotion and stereotypes and doesn't imply logic and reasoning. Artificial conceptual metaphor of "modern fascism in Ukraine", which has no ground or reason, enables Russian politicians to justify violence, interference into other country's affairs and violation of international agreements. This immoral psychological manipulation concerning Ukrainian nation, whose losses in the struggle against fascism in World War II are claimed to be up to 7 million people, is based on Russian chauvinism and its traditional misrepresentation of historical facts for the sake of political convenience.

Modern problems in intercultural communication and information warfare emphasize the importance of critical thinking approach to conceptual metaphors perception. It is essential to make common human values the basis of world perception and conceptualization.

Among the basic concepts and conceptual metaphors concerning modern intercultural communication are "overcoming barriers", "communication problems", "different social, ethnic, religious and educational backgrounds", which emphasize differences between people from various cultures. It is reasonable to claim that such an approach to the topic of intercultural communication has not proved to be effective in finding common values, following common principles of humanity and appreciating life of every person. To get rid of "barriers" and "problems", based on "different social, ethnic, religious and educational backgrounds", it is crucial to find and intensively discuss a whole set of unifying concepts like "every life appreciation approach", "mutual intercultural respect", "common goals and values", "history truthful analysis and acceptance" etc.

Thus, a common intercultural mental space can become an effective framework for intercultural communication structuring and resistance to information war conceptual systems, propaganda and other destructive phenomena.

#### References:

1. Lustig M. Intercultural competence: interpersonal communication across cultures/ M. Lustig, J. Koester – Boston : Pearson Education, 2010 – 395 p.
2. Lakoff G. Metaphors we live by / G. Lakoff, M. Johnson. – London : The university of Chicago press, 2003 – 276 p.
3. Talmy L. Toward a Cognitive Semantics / L. Talmy. – Cambridge : MIT Press, 2000 – 560 p.
4. Fauconnier G. The Way We Think / G. Fauconnier, M. Turner. – New York : Basic Books, 2002 – 440 p.

5. Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access : [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information\\_warfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_warfare).
6. Difference Between Similar Terms and Objects [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access : <http://www.differencebetween.net/language/difference-between-tactical-and-strategic-information/>.
7. Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fascism>.
8. Wikipedia – the free encyclopedia [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>.

**Красвська О. Д. Концептуальна метафора в міжкультурній комунікації й інформаційній війні**

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена особливостям впливу концептуальної метафори на міжкультурну комунікацію й інформаційну війну. Вивчено основні поняття та концептуальні метафори сучасної міжкультурної комунікації й інформаційної війни, викладені перспективи дослідження між-

культурної комунікації в рамках когнітивної лінгвістики.

**Ключові слова:** концептуальна метафора, міжкультурна комунікація, інформаційна війна, пропаганда, ментальний простір, об'єднувальні концепти.

**Краевская О. Д. Концептуальная метафора в межкультурной коммуникации и информационной войне**

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена особенностям влияния концептуальной метафоры на межкультурную коммуникацию и информационную войну. Изучены основные понятия и концептуальные метафоры современной межкультурной коммуникации и информационной войны, изложены перспективы исследования межкультурной коммуникации в рамках когнитивной лингвистики.

**Ключевые слова:** концептуальная метафора, межкультурная коммуникация, информационная война, пропаганда, ментальное пространство, объединяющие концепты.