

## **4<sup>th</sup> Postgraduate Student Conference: Assessing and Analyzing Discourses**

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### **A corpus-based study of financial discourse metaphors in English and Greek: Raising students' metaphorical awareness in the treatment of idiomaticity**

*Panagiotis Fragkias*

This talk reports on a corpus-based study of financial discourse metaphors and their application to the development of pedagogical material aiming to raise learners' awareness of idiomatic expressions. In the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Glucksberg 2001; Kövecses 2002; Langlotz 2006) particular linguistic expressions are analyzed as linguistic manifestations of general conceptual patterns with fairly predictable entailments structuring the target domains of ECONOMIC RECESSION, ECONOMIC GROWTH, and ECONOMY in general. The pervasiveness and systematicity of the metaphors and the relevant expressions in the discourse of recession and growth renders them an integral part of the conventional idiomaticity of financial discourse and appropriate for sensitizing learners to the conceptual motivation of idioms and collocations.

A small corpus was compiled specifically for the purposes of this work, consisting of two separate sub-corpora, English and Greek, of journalistic discourse. The former includes news reports and articles on the online versions of the main news-agencies (BBC, REUTERS, and THE WALL STREET JOURNAL). The latter consists of news reports and articles of Greek news reports found in the online versions of newspapers and online press agencies (KATHIMERINI, TOBHMA and IN.GR). Both corpora belong to the same genre and consist of the same number of words (about 20.000 words each) and they include texts whose main topic is economic recession in the euro zone. Therefore, the main target domain researched was ECONOMY and, more specifically, ECONOMIC RECESSION and ECONOMIC GROWTH.

A manual research was then conducted, in which I extracted all metaphorical expressions referring to ECONOMIC RECESSION/GROWTH. The concordances were categorized under the different conceptual metaphors identified in the corpus. The main methodological tool according to which metaphors are analyzed is "sample analysis" of the concordances found in the two corpora (English and Greek); samples of metaphorical expressions related to the specific target domains (ECONOMY, ECONOMIC RECESSION and ECONOMIC GROWTH) are gathered and treated as linguistic manifestations of general metaphorical mappings.

The findings are best analyzed in terms of two-pole metaphors, e.g. ECONOMIC RECESSION IS A DISEASE (ailing economies, the spreading crisis) and ECONOMIC GROWTH IS HEALTH (a robust financial system, strengthen the economy) or ECONOMIC RECESSION IS DOWNWARDS MOTION (the recession's plunge, economic activity fell) and ECONOMIC GROWTH IS UPWARDS MOTION (stocks soared, a lift to the economy) among others. In line with recent research on the transference of metaphorical conceptualization from L1 to L2 (Boers 2000) and its interference with collocational learning (Wolter 2006; Eyckmans 2009), this systematic conceptual motivation was finally exploited in the

development of pedagogical material specifically geared to the learning of collocations and more generally idiomatic expressions, thus highlighting the importance of cognitive generalizations in treating otherwise conventional and arbitrary lexis in L2.

### **References**

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