Use of Metaphors in Tourist
Discourse of Danube Region

Tetyana Shyliaeva[1]

Abstract: The aim of the article is to explore the use of figurative language, metaphors in particular, and to describe their contribution to the communication of tourist images used in the tourist discourse of the Danube region. Several theories of study of metaphors are described. The functions of cognitive metaphors are studied. The article points out how metaphors can create the identities of destinations, tourists, and tourism services. The metaphorical frames from the tourist discourse are analyzed. The study shows that the concept sphere of travelling in the Danube region is represented by the following metaphorical frames: "Human being", "Nature", "Art and culture", and "Artifacts".

Keywords: frame; functions; metaphor; slot; tourist discourse

Modern society is characterized by increase in mobility in search of new experiences, which is often done through tourism activities. Tourist websites advertise new places and experiences. According to Bauman (Bauman, 2000, p. 109), mass media are important cultural institutions to create consumption desire in modern society.

The majority of tourism research explores the images represented visually, for example, by means of pictures or photos, as the visual plays a vital part in the production and performance of tourism services. Less attention is paid to the text in this context, although it should be mentioned that a text has a strong visual element expressed in words. One of the ways of this is by using metaphors.

There are many advantages of the use of metaphors in tourist discourse. They inject novelty, increase motivation and create images. Images are important as perceptions and ideas stimulate customers to act more than reality itself (Gallarsa et al., 2002, p. 56; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000, p. 7). Metaphors in tourist discourse represent one of the most widespread cognitive instruments. Understanding the concept of image is central to the understanding of tourism. An image develops a vision through which a person perceives his/her environment. Dann (Dann, 2002) emphasizes that of those images, perhaps the most frequently employed is that of the sun, along with the images of dreams, heaven and escape.

---

[1] Lecturer, PhD, Izmail State University of Humanities, Ukraine, Address: Repina St, 12, Izmail, Odessa Region, Ukraine, 68601, Tel.: +38(04841)51388, Corresponding author: izm.tatyana1965@gmail.com.

There is a huge body of empirical work on metaphor from many academic disciplines. Metaphor is not simply an ornamental aspect of language, but a fundamental scheme by which people conceptualize the world and their own activities (Raymond, 2008, p. 3). In modern science there are several theories of metaphor. The main property of metaphor is that it is applicable to two or more objects at the same time, as a result of which the properties of one object are viewed through the properties of another object whose name represents it. Metaphor is a universal instrument of thinking and world cognition. Viewing metaphor as a natural outcome of human minds shows the new ways in which metaphor is related to other linguistic forms and cognitive activities.

Metaphor has come a long way from the means of expressive speech to the cognitive mechanism, the way of studying and categorizing reality. Earlier works conducted within traditional disciplinary framework aim to locate metaphor as part of language (linguistics), mind (psychology), or culture (anthropology). Traditional metaphor scholars see metaphor as a special rhetorical device that enables us to transcend momentarily above the ordinary literal world.

A new impetus to the study of metaphor was given by cognitive linguistics. It allows us to take a fresh look at metaphor that is understood as a verbalized way of perceiving and comprehending the world, a universal cognitive mechanism. Much credit in the cognitive understanding of metaphor belongs to G. Lakoff and M. Johnson. George Lakoff represents the neural theory of metaphor that offers a coherent set of explanations for why there should be conceptual metaphors in the first place, how metaphorical inferences work, how metaphors differ from blends, and how primary and complex metaphors contribute to our understanding of abstract concepts and the meanings of words, complex expressions, and grammatical constructions (Gibbs, 2008, p. 6).

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is viewed as the transfer of a cognitive structure, prototypically associated with a certain linguistic expression, from one content domain to another, a kind of expansion of the concepts of the source area, as a result of which the target area is captured and mastered (Ivanova, 2013, p. 21).

The source area is characterized by specificity, anthropocentricity and connection with the sensorimotor experience of a person. The goal area is always more abstract, it requires comprehension through an appeal to a specific, already known thing. Behind the metaphorical transfer there is no objective similarity of objects, but the correspondence between the two spheres is subjectively established by people.

The study of the theory of the conceptual metaphor and the description of its specific models in various types of discourse is one of the intensively developing trends in modern cognitive linguistics, which in the study of the phenomenon in question completely abandoned the traditional (coming from Aristotle) focus on

metaphor as a "reduced comparison", one of the ways of "striking out" the speech or visions of metaphor as a kind of interaction between two deep (basic) structures, as well as from the orientation inherent in structure-oriented analysis of the "linguistic proper" laws of metaphorization. Modern cognitive science (M. Johnson, F. Johnson-Laird, E. Kittey, G. Lakoff, M. Turner, J. Fauconnier, N. D. Arutiunova, A. N. Baranov, Yu. N. Karaulov, E. S. Kubryakova, A. P. Chudinov, etc.) examines metaphor as the main mental operation, as a way of posing, structuring and explaining the world. Man does not only express his thoughts with the help of metaphors, but he also thinks with metaphors, creates with the help of metaphor the world in which he lives, and also seeks to transform the language picture of the world existing in the mind of the addressee in the process of communicative activity.

A.P. Chudinov included a description of the frame-slot system in the theory of conceptual analysis of metaphor and identified semantic spheres that could serve as a source of metaphorical expansion. These include an anthropomorphic metaphor, through which a person modulates the surrounding world in his own likeness, a nature-metaphorical metaphor that interprets man's ideas about the existing reality through the prism of natural phenomena, a sociomorphic metaphor that simulates reality according to the pattern of social activity, and an artifact metaphor associated with the creative capabilities of man (Chudinov, 2001).

Techniques employed in advertising are often important to the successful life of an advertised product (Gully, 1996, p. 2). Through these techniques, consumers are first introduced to the product, and the first impression is always vital as it stays with the consumer. A figure of speech is not just a device for ease of memorizing the text. It is a device which in some cases can contribute to the comprehension of the invisible advertised product. For example, metaphors have been used in advertising to create images of the destinations (Djafarova, 2008, p. 82).

This article explores the use of figurative language, specifically metaphors and their contribution to the communication of tourism images. The aim of the article is to describe the metaphors used in the tourist discourse of the Danube region. The study shows how metaphors can create the identities of destinations, tourists, and tourism services.

In various types of discourses, metaphor performs different functions, for example, in a poetic text the main function of metaphor is aesthetic. In scientific discourse, the cognitive function of metaphor is fundamental. In political discourse, metaphor performs a predominantly pragmatic interactive function. In the advertising framework metaphor performs an expressive function, being a means of emotional impact on the recipient. Metaphor makes a reader consider new associations by drawing links between the source domain object and target domain object of the metaphor (Young, 2000, pp. 191-203). Consequently, the reader re-conceptualizes his/her old ideas and opinions about the tourism service described. Metaphors are

sporadic in discourse; they sometimes appear in thick clusters and sometimes are absent altogether. The following example illustrates this function of metaphor. In the sentence "*Thailand is a paradise*", the reader maps together common attributes between the tourist destination – Thailand and a paradise. The reader is forced to draw links and make associations between these two objects.

In the investigated material we found metaphors based on the image "paradise": *Directly behind the castle is Europe's largest treetop stork colony. Tours are available to the stork paradise.* The place where there is a habitat of storks and which can be visited by tourists is called a paradise.

Metaphors are combined to form frames. When people come across something new, they try to locate it within an existing frame, either real or metaphorical, to help understand it.

One of the functions of metaphor is personification. This function actualizes the property of metaphor, which consists in transferring human features to inanimate objects and phenomena. Personification is not only a stylistic device that creates imagery and attaches beauty to the utterance, it is also a way of expressing a certain worldview, namely mythological thinking.

In the frame "Human being" there is a slot "Social status": *The Danube is the king of the European rivers. Budapest is often referred to as the Queen of the Danube based on its prime location on the river.* The superiority of the places is highlighted by the metaphorical pattern which compares the tour destination with a "king" or 'queen'. Budapest is referred to as the Queen of the Danube, and the Danube is compared with the King of all European rivers. A queen or a king can be considered as symbols of power and the centre of an empire. A queen can also symbolize a beauty, so the recipient of the advertisement information can conclude that Budapest is a very beautiful city.

Slot 2 is "Parts of the body". Metaphors derived from bodily experience are widespread and used universally: *Cruise into the heart of Budapest, one of Europe's most striking capitals, nestled along the banks of the Danube.*

Slot 3 is "Human actions and abilities". The sites advertising tours in the Danube region use metaphors associated with taste sensors because one of the pleasures that tourists expect to have is good food, so a lot of impressions of travelling are associated with the domain "food": *You will have a chance to savour the Baroque elegance of romantic Vienna. This city is a cheesecake for resort lovers.*

Slot 4 is "Occupations and professions". A lot of metaphorical uses are connected with the profession of a tailor: *We organize wine experiences tailored to your group. Danube river cruise – a patchwork quilt of counties. Germany's castles and quaint villages woven with views of Austria's dramatic Alps. Slovakia's medieval*

history and cobblestone knit with Hungary's remarkable architecture. So many countries to explore. Sewn together by the deep blue thread of the Danube.

The frame "Art and culture" has a slot "Travelling is music". Travelling is compared with music: *The trip from Passau is the Danube Rhapsody.* Slot 2 is "Travelling is reading". The domain "book" is used to compare travelling with reading a book or part of it: *The journey takes visitors to a fascinating chapter of the earth's history.*

The frame "Nature" contains two slots. Slot 1 is "Plants": *The trip was never intended to be "a return to one's roots".* Slot 2 is "The Sea": *The landscape turns into a fragrant sea of pinkish white blossoms.*

The frame"Artifacts" includes metaphors within the slot "Treasures". Holiday destinations are often promoted through the metaphoric use of the words *treasures, jewels, gems, pearls, gold.* These metaphors have the function of enhancing the destination and conferring a connotation of unique preciousness. They add a touch of sacredness to the history of the visited places: *The historic city centre of Krems is a treasure trove for sightseers.* The city of Vienna is described as a crown jewel because of its special beauty: *We end it in Vienna, the Austro-Hungarian Empire's crown jewel.*

The effective adoption of the jewel-crown metaphor helps to see the sights as worth visiting: *One of the crown jewels of the Washau Valley is the splendid Benedictine abbey of Göttenweig, a working monastery for more than 900 years.* Metaphors of jewels and treasures can be considered as powerful strategies of persuasion in tourist promotional texts. They create an atmosphere of a precious and exclusive holiday: *The castle and its surrounding architectural gems occupy a hillside overlooking the city and river.*

Slot 2 is "Buildings and organizations": *The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve is a real museum of biodiversity, a natural generic bank with incalculable value for the worldwide natural heritage.*

Advertising language needs to follow the changes in the consumers' tastes and preferences. Creating vivid images in the minds of prospective customers is possible with the help of metaphors. The attractive function is the dominant function of the metaphor in the tourist discourse and consists in shaping the attractiveness of tourist knowledge by understanding it through concepts that the recipient associates with positive emotions. As our study shows the concept sphere of travelling in the Danube region is represented by the following metaphorical frames: "Human being", "Nature", "Art and culture", and "Artifacts". In tourist discourse, metaphor plays an important role, as it affects the addressee's consciousness and emotional world.

References

Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. Bauman Z. Liquid Modernity/Z. Bauman. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, p. 240.

Chudinov, A.P. (2001). *Russia in a metaphorical mirror: a cognitive study of political metaphor*/Россия в метафорическом зеркале: когнитивное исследование политической метафоры//Екатеринбург. 238 с. Access mode: http://www.philology.ru/linguistics2/chudinov-01.htm.

Dann, G.M.S. (2002). *Theoretical Issues for Tourism's Future Development, Identifying the Agenda*. In Pearce, D.G., & Butler, R.W. *Contemporary Issues in Tourism Development*, London, Routledge, p. 273.

Danube River Cruise Guide. Lower Austria. Access Mode: https://www.donau.com/fileadmin/user_upload/Bilder_und_PDFs/Informieren_und_service/Blaetterkataloge_und_Prospekte/2016/Danube-River-Cruise-Guide-Lower-Austria.pdf.

Djafarova, Elmira (2008). Language in tourism advertising: the contribution of figures of speech to the representation of tourism. *Doctoral thesis*, Northumbria University. Опубликовано 31.07.08. Access mode: http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/1581/1/elmira.djafarova_phd.pdf.

Gallarza, M.G.; Saura I.G. & Garcia, H.C. (2002). Destination image: Towards a Conceptual Framework. *Annals of Tourism Research,* Vol. 29, no 1, pp. 56-78.

Ritchie, J.R.B. & Crouch, G.I. (2000). The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective. *Tourism Management,* 21(1), pp. 1-7.

Gully, A. (1996). The Discourse of Arabic Advertising: Preliminary Investigations. *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, 1 (1), pp. 1-49.

Ivanova, E.V. (2013). Religious metaphor in media texts/Религиозная метафора в текстах СМИ// *Вестник Челябинского государственного университета*, № 14 (305). Филология. Искусствоведение. Вып. 77. С. 21-24.

The Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought (2008). Edited by Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. University of California, Santa Cruz Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 550.

Young, B.M. (2000). The child's understanding of promotional communication. *International Journal of Advertising and Marketing to Children*. 2, 3, pp. 191-203.