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Cognitive theory of metaphor and idiom analysis

We wish to establish to what extent the methods of analysis developed within the framework of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (CTM) can be applied to idiom analysis. Conventionalised figurative metaphors, and hence idioms, have a different function and a different cognitive and communicative value, as compared to novel metaphors. Idioms contribute much less to the structuring of unstructured situations, but they rather convey different kinds of knowledge that they have accumulated in the course of their functioning in the language. What is needed in addition to CTM is a theory specially designed to describe the irregularities of idioms. To develop such a theory is the main aim of modern idiom research. This paper should be viewed as a contribution to developing such a theory.

Keywords: idiom analysis; Conventional Figurative Language Theory; Cognitive Theory of Metaphor; conceptual metaphor, cultural semiotics; cultural knowledge; image component; symbolic meaning

1. Preliminary remarks

The Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (CTM, hereafter)—initiated by Reddy's (1979) study on the "conduit metaphor"—had been developed mainly by La-

koff, Johnson and their colleagues (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999; Lakoff 1987, 1990, 1993; Lakoff & Turner 1989). It met with wide response. The metalinguistic apparatus proposed in the framework of this theory (cf. the notions of conceptual metaphor, metaphoric model, source and target domain, mapping, conceptual correspondences, etc.) proved to be efficient for the analysis of all kinds of metaphoric expressions, from novel poetic metaphors to near-universal SPACE-TIME shifts in the semantics of prepositions. This metalinguistic apparatus has been successfully adopted and emulated by many other linguists, cf., for example, studies on metaphoric expressions in different languages and studies on psycholinguistic aspects of metaphor processing.

One of our aims is to discover to what extent the methods of analysis developed within this theory can be used in idiom analysis, and above all at what point they are not sufficient so that other instruments are required. According to the so-called "classical view", idioms are frozen elements of a language and have arbitrary meanings. Within cognitive linguistics, however, most of the idioms are considered motivated rather than arbitrary. Being motivated does not mean that idioms arise automatically by implementation of productive rules, but they tend to fit one or more patterns already present in the speakers' conceptual system. The actual meanings of idioms can be accounted for by their imagery, so to speak, *ex post factum*. According to findings discussed by Keysar and Bly (1999), part of our understanding of an idiom is a backward-working rationale that attempts to make the idiom comprehensible. In this sense, idioms are parts of a conceptual system that is fixed in the metaphors of a given language.

The CTM attempts to develop methods and tools for analysing metaphorical expressions of all kind, including idioms. Not all proponents of the CTM, however, have familiarised themselves with the generally accepted results of idiom research, as repeated quotations of the so-called "classical views" on idioms in their papers indicate. There is a consensus in phraseological studies – in the tradition of Charles Bally (1919) – that idioms, for the most part, are not frozen elements and they usually are not arbitrary either, but clearly motivated by different structures of knowledge (cf. e.g. Fleischer 1997; Dobrovol'skij 1995, 1997; Burger 2003).

2. Discussion: are all postulates of CTM consistent with linguistic data?

CTM met with some criticism. Critical remarks have stressed the overvaluation of the physiological basis in CTM, disregarding the cultural implications of many metaphors. This criticism concerns, among other things, the analysis of metaphors denoting emotions (primarily anger) in Western languages (2.1) as well as in languages that are very different from them, such as Japanese (2.2).

2.1. *Conceptual metaphors, the humoral doctrine or something else?*

One of the general – and seemingly very productive – conceptual metaphors, namely ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, has been found in many expressions in different languages (Lakoff & Kövecses 1987; Lakoff 1987; Kövecses 1990, 1995a, 1995b; cf. also Gibbs 1990; Gibbs et al. 1997). The assumed "universality" of this metaphor has been a target of criticism from different sides. According to Lakoff, Kövecses and Gibbs, this metaphor is based on physiological experience. The conceptualisation of ANGER as THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER is supported by a physiological explanation in terms of body heat and increasing internal pressure, based on shared ideas about the human body. Due to the essential sameness of human beings and their physiological functioning across cultures, this body-based conceptual metaphor has been regarded as ubiquitous in all cultures, if not "universal".

One point of criticism comes from Geeraerts and Grondelaers (1995). According to these authors the body-based interpretation of the ANGER metaphor does not apply to various metaphoric expressions that have been described in this way because the relevant cultural background has been ignored, cf. idiom (1).

(1)   German *jmdm. läuft die Galle über* "someone's gall/bile is overflowing"
      'someone is getting very angry'

According to the physiologically motivated ANGER metaphor, "gall" is merely a "container", randomly interchangeable with other hollow organs of the body, but this is not the case. As Geeraerts and Grondelaers (1995) point out, there is a motivating link between the literal reading and the actual meaning that is more convincing than the body-based conceptual metaphor ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. An ancient cultural model with a great deal of influence on European languages is the "humoral pathology" (primarily ascribed to Hip-

pocrates and further developed by the physician Galen). According to this theory, combinations of the four fluid humours of the body—blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile—determined the four prototypical temperaments, namely the sanguine, the phlegmatic, the melancholic and the choleric temperament. This doctrine was effective from antiquity and medieval times up to the 18th century before it became outdated as a result of modern medical science (see e.g. Schöner 1964).

In the medieval way of thinking, this fourfold schema was an elaborated semiotic system, which influenced several cultural domains. Within this semiotic system, the choleric temperament manifests itself in anger and irascibility. Anger was seen as an overproduction of yellow bile. Several idioms maintain traces of this in their lexical structure. Idiom (1) cannot be put down exclusively to bodily experience but has to be seen mainly as a cultural product. From classical Greek antiquity and medieval times up to the present, the humoral doctrine is still effective in contemporary metaphoric expressions. This cultural model continued to exist in popular belief for much longer, and the theory of the four humours has influenced the vocabulary of emotion in several European languages. The emotion 'envy', closely related to 'anger', is more clearly elaborated by means of ancient colour concepts, cf. (2-4). The idioms in (2) literally mean "to be green of/with envy", while the idioms in (3) prefer "yellow" and those in (4) "yellow" and "green".

(2) English: *to be green with envy*

French: *être vert de jalousie*

Spanish: *estar verde de envidia*

Croatian: *biti zelen od zavisti*

Finnish: *olla vihreänä kateudesta*

(3) German: *gelb vor Neid sein* "to be yellow of envy"

Dutch: *geel zien van nijd* "to be looking yellow of envy"

Hungarian: *elsárgul/sárga lesz az irigységtöl* "to be/turn yellow with envy"

(4) Romanian: *a fi mellen (e verd) da la scuidanza* "to be yellow (and green) of envy"

Danish: *være gul og grøn af misundelse* "to be yellow and green of envy"

all meaning 'to become or be very envious, very upset or annoyed be-
cause one wishes one had someone's possessions, abilities, success, etc.'

The relation between YELLOW or GREEN and 'envy, jealousy' does not seem to
be comprehensible anymore, but maybe there are associative links, just because
these expressions exist. Connections between particular colours and tempera-
ments or emotional states are to be traced back to knowledge about the ancient
humoral doctrine, which ascribed 'red' to the (lively, cheerful) sanguine person,
'white' to the phlegmatic person, 'black' to the melancholic and 'yellow/green'
to the choleric temperament, to anger, rage and jealousy. Although this doctrine
has become outdated, some traces are still effective in contemporary idioms.
There are many words like English *bilious* 'morose', *choleric* 'splenetic, irasci-
ble' or Dutch *zwartgallig* "black-bile like" – a loan translation of Old-Greek
μελαγ-χολικός (*melancholikós*) 'melancholic', Russian *желчный (želčnyj)* "yel-
low-bile-like" 'irascible', etc. All these examples show that various types of
knowledge have to be taken into account when explaining the motivational basis
of idioms, including tacit knowledge of cultural models remote in time. There-
fore, there is reason for interpreting idioms such as (1) and (2-4) by means of
traces of the humoral doctrine and not only by THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A
CONTAINER metaphor.

In further articles, Kövecses (1995b, 1995c) deals with Geeraerts' and Gron-
delaers' criticism, providing a corrective according to which both opinions are
right: ANGER is a CONTAINER metaphor and, at the same time, based on the pre-
scientific humoral theory. These two influences seem to operate at two different
levels of abstraction: at the generic level, which "gives us a sense of similarity in
the conceptualisation of anger across [...] cultures", and at a less generic level
where "significant differences in conceptualisation, concerning especially the
causal and the expressive aspects of the concept" are focused (Kövecses 1995b:
143). However, speakers may have a vague idea of the (pseudo)-causal connec-
tion between "gall/bile" and "yellow/green" on the one hand and the concepts of
'anger' or 'envy' on the other. This means that the conceptual metaphor deter-
mines that ANGER is in a container while culture determines which container (i.e.
which of several hollow organs) is chosen. Some of these ideas have been modi-
fied by Kövecses (2005) where more attention is paid to the cultural foundation
of metaphorical expressions.

Even if this kind of connection contradicts modern scientific knowledge, it
does not impede the processing of idioms like (1-4). There are many expressions
in natural language that are conceptually based on ideas rejected in the course of
development of scientific knowledge (cf. *sunrise* or *sunset*). Nowadays they may

be interpreted in terms of culture because all these old models of the world are part of our "cultural memory". These "wrong", "unscientific" ideas can provide motivating links for understanding such expressions.

Another strand of pre-scientific folk theories with long cultural traditions is connected with the LIVER. It proves to be a culturally loaded part of the human body. In medicine of classical antiquity and Middle Ages, the liver was seen as the organ of vital energy and emotions, especially of wrath. Numerous idioms reveal specifics of this semiotised concept of the LIVER, e.g. the Italian (5a) or the Hungarian (5b):

> (5a) Italian: *mangiarsi il fegato* "to eat the liver"
> 'to be very angry'

> (5b) Hungarian *nagy mája van* "his liver is big"
> 'he is angry'

The concept of LIVER used for denoting emotional states in many idioms of European languages is an example of a metaphor interpretation that is typical of CTM. Like many others, it seems to lack a cultural component crucial for explaining motivating links. Kövecses (1995a: 125) analyses the Hungarian idiom (5b) only in terms of the CONTAINER metaphor. Aware of the fact that Kövecses, as a Hungarian native speaker, knows the meaning, functional properties and imagery basis of this idiom very well, we would still propose an alternative interpretation, including elements of relevant cultural knowledge that may provide crucial motivating links. From the perspective of CTM, the LIVER is just a "container" like any other. If this was true, any other hollow organ could replace LIVER in idiom (5b). This is obviously not the case. It seems worthwhile to emphasise the status of LIVER as a cultural concept, remote in time, though still active in contemporary figurative language.

According to pre-scientific anatomy, the liver was believed to produce the blood. The red liver, supplied with blood, was associated with 'courage', whereas the liver lacking blood was connected with 'cowardice'. This folk belief, once widespread in Europe, left traces in a few European languages. It is clearly tangible in English idioms from the field 'cowardice' (*to be yellow-livered/a white liver/a lily-liver*) and in French idioms (*avoir les foies rouges* "to have the red livers" 'to be courageous', *avoir les foies blancs* "to have the white livers" 'to have a terrible fear, be terribly worried', *donner/ficher les foies à quelqu'un* "to give/make the livers to someone" 'to frighten someone, to make someone anxious; worried'); cf. also Italian *avere del fegato* "to have liver", Spanish *tener higados* "to have livers" 'to have courage' or Greek *μου κόπικαν τα ήπατα* (*mu kópikan ta ípata*) "the livers cut me" 'I lose courage', *μου*

κόβονται τα ήπατα (*mu kóvonde ta ípata*) "the livers make me break down" 'I am frightened, horrified', etc.

In all these idioms drawn from languages that belong to the Central and Southern European cultural area, LIVER is just not replaceable by, for example, "stomach" or any other hollow organ. There is a long cultural and historical tradition as to why the LIVER represents a special place of emotions. Let us consider the Ancient Greek myth of Prometheus being punished. In an act of vengeance, Zeus had him fettered to a pillar and sent an eagle to eat his immortal liver (i.e. the place of the juices of life and temperaments), which constantly replenished itself. Therefore, the idiom (5b) must be primarily interpreted within the edifice of the pre-scientific folk models, and not merely as a CONTAINER metaphor.

In other cultures, the KIDNEYs are believed to have similar functions of vitality (e.g. in the culture of Biblical times, above all in the Old Testament), or the HEART represents a salient concept as organ of feelings. Expressions such as English *to lose heart, to be disheartened* or Dutch *geen hart in zijn lijf hebben* "to have no heart in one's body" 'to have no courage' reveal a related folk model, namely the semiotisation of the concept HEART, which is strongly effective in European phraseologies (cf. the French word *courage* itself, derived from *cœur* 'heart'). The cultural specifics of these expressions become even more comprehensible when we turn to languages of distant cultural areas, such as East Asia (see 2.2. below).

To summarise, we would like to stress that although CTM can explain significant portions of figurative language (first of all, the mechanisms providing the understanding of novel metaphors), it is not a universal instrument in revealing all possible motivating links in this domain. In the field of conventional figurative language (including idioms), many other kinds of knowledge, especially knowledge of cultural conventions with historical roots have to be taken into account.

2.2. *Japanese culture, anger, and emotions as cultural constructs*

Japanese linguists have addressed some other aspects of criticism of the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER. Partly they argue against the assumption of a universality of this metaphor (e.g. Lakoff & Kövecses 1987; Lakoff 1987; Kövecses 1990, 1995a). Here we pick out three points of criticism, concerning (i) the empirical data, (ii) the cultural uniqueness of the concept of HARA, and (iii) social factors.

(i) As comprehensive studies (Matsuki 1995 and Tsuji 1996) on ANGER in Japanese show, one point of criticism concerns the empirical data, which were not always correctly interpreted. Arguing that there are "many" idioms that denote ANGER and are based on the HEATED-FLUID metaphor in Japanese, Kövecses (1995a: 125ff.) presents sixteen Japanese expressions containing this metaphor. On closer examination, however, the bulk of these examples is made up of one and the same idiom. This is the familiar Japanese idiom (6).

(6)   Japanese *hara ga tatsu* "(the) abdomen/belly rises up/stands"
       'to be/get angry'

The form *hara ga tatsu* is the neutral standard notation normally used as a dictionary entry, also called "infinitive form". The same idiom is present in different morphosyntactic and/or lexical variations, such as *hara o tateru* "somebody raises (the) abdomen/belly" (with a transitive verb) or *haradatashii* "abdomen/belly-rising", but also in accidental example sentences such as *anmari hara ga tatta node hon wo nagetsuketa* "because (the) abdomen/belly rose up so much, I threw (the) book", *haradatatashisa ni mune wo shimetsukerareru* "feel straggled with (the) chest because of (the) rise of (the) abdomen/belly" or *haradachi magire ni* "rising (the) abdomen/ belly in/with anger". Furthermore, the Sino-Japanese reading *rippuku* "standing abdomen/belly" 'anger' is given as an example for the variety of metaphorical expressions based on the HEATED-FLUID metaphor. To summarise, the Japanese empirical basis of the conceptual metaphor under discussion is certainly not as comprehensive as a cursory glance at the studies on ANGER-metaphors would suggest.

(ii) However, the main criticism of the interpretation of Japanese metaphorical expressions in terms of CTM, which comes from Matsuki (1995) and Tsuji (1996), concerns the omission of cultural factors. At this point we would like to distinguish between factors that have to be interpreted within the framework of cultural semiotics and factors connected with contemporary Japanese society (for the latter see (iii)). It is questionable to consider HARA merely a kind of "container". It has often been stressed that HARA enjoys the status of a key concept in Japanese culture and has no equivalent concept in Western languages (e.g. Dürckheim 1956; Yamaoka 1976; Matsumoto 1988; McVeigh 1996, Hasada 2002). There are various Japanese figurative expressions in which *hara* emerges not in its literal meaning (denoting a part of the human body, the lower abdomen) but as a semiotised concept. In all these idioms, HARA is a positively connoted symbolisation and not a "belly". The concept HARA manifests itself in various semiotic systems other than language, e.g. in mythological and aesthetic symbolisations. Mention should be made of China's ancient traditional medical theories with their way of thinking in analogies, or of the concept of a BIG/FAT

BELLY, connected with Buddha or with Hotei, one of the Shintoistic Seven Gods of Luck, symbolising wellness and prosperity. HARA as the centre of vitality is also important in specific breathing techniques in Zen Buddhism, in sumo wrestling or in the ancient Japanese ceremonial rite of self-disembowelment, of cutting out the vital centre of life (*seppuku*, mistakenly also called *hara-kiri*).

Within the framework of folk theory, HARA is considered the location of the spirit, of a person's inner self, the centre of mental energy and emotions. There is no strict separation between intellectual thought and emotion in the East Asian way of thinking. Knowledge is not just a matter of mind and theoretical reasoning but rather an activity of the person as a whole; the instrument of thinking should not be the head but the HARA. What is "thought" in the HARA is taken as more fundamental than what is "thought" in the head (Dürckheim 1956: 55, 62; McVeigh 1996: 39). HARA contains some invisible, hidden truth. This culturally based concept emerges in idioms like *hara wo waru* "to split the belly" 'to reveal one's thoughts, to tell the truth', *hara wo kimeru* "to decide the belly" 'to make up one's mind, to make a decision', *hara ga kuroi* "belly (is) black" 'evil, underhand, deceitful, scheming', *futoppara da* "to have a thick belly" 'to be magnanimous; generous', *hara ga miesuite iru* "(one's) belly is transparent" 'one's true intentions are obvious', *hara wo mirareru* "(one's) belly being seen" 'to have one's thoughts found out', *hara ga wakaranai* "to not understand (the) belly" 'I can't understand his intentions', etc. (cf. Piirainen 1995; Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen 2002: 72f.). Describing figurative language, from this point of view, does not mean finding a universal framework for all possible conceptualisations of similar entities across cultures but seeks to reveal the culture-specific features that make every language and the corresponding model of the world more or less unique.

(iii) Both Matsuki (1995) and Tsuji (1996) point to the fact that not all Japanese expressions for IKARI (the Japanese pseudo-equivalent of ANGER) seem to be based on conceptual metaphors similar to those found in the European languages. Yet there is the factor of contemporary Japanese society, which makes it impossible in principle to compare Japanese metaphorical expressions denoting ANGER with corresponding expressions from American English. In Japanese culture, one does not express his or her anger but keeps it under control, especially in the public domain, where one is part of a social hierarchy. Many sociocultural factors (the maintenance of status-differences, the gender role, the differentiation between ingroups and outgroups, etc., cf. Matsumoto 1996: 86f.) are crucial for the emotional behaviour of people and, therefore, for their conceptualisation of a given emotion as well as for the use of relevant metaphors. As a consequence, the conceptual target domain of ANGER itself is not exactly the same in Japanese culture on the one hand and Western cultures on the other. Conse-

quently, the metaphors (even if they look similar) can never be identical because they refer to different target domains.

In sum, the stipulation of universal or near-universal metaphoric models is one of the most problematic postulates of CTM. Without being based on the analysis of a sufficiently wide range of empirical data from different languages, these metaphoric models are assumed to hold for all human beings just because they obviously correspond to biological features. However, languages often make use of a kind of cultural filter, which allows only a few biological features from a relevant set to pass through into the given conceptual domain. Similar ideas can be found in Wierzbicka (1999). She points out that almost everything in language reveals a certain degree of cultural specifics. In the same way, emotion concepts (emotion prototypes) are not "universal" but differ from culture to culture, whereas the semantic primitives with which these differences are expressed in the semantic metalanguage, can be universal. What people say about their emotional states or what metaphors they use is not part of a universal, innate way of conceptualising the world but part of a semiotic system that prescribes what signs (both verbal and nonverbal) must be used in what situation.

3. Idiom semantics from a cognitive viewpoint

In this section we deal with the role of cognitive heuristics in idiom analysis. The first set of questions to be answered is: How far does conceptual metaphor explain the specifics of idiom semantics? What level of analysis has to be chosen to achieve most efficient results? The second set of questions deals with the role of cultural knowledge for processing idioms. Can the relevant motivating links be explicated without addressing cultural phenomena? Or does their explication (at least in some cases) require addressing people's cultural experiences?

3.1. *Idiom semantics and conceptual metaphor*

It is evident that subsuming all possible metaphorical expressions of different languages under the same conceptual metaphor would be an important step of linguistic analysis. It would enable us to compare idioms with other kinds of metaphorical expressions and enlarge the explanatory basis. For example, expressions like *to be down, to be low* on the one hand and *to be beaten to the ground* on the other (all going back to the conceptual metaphor SAD/UNHAPPY IS DOWN) are analysed separately in the framework of traditional lexicology because of their different status in the taxonomy of lexical units. The cognitive ap-

proach allows us to put taxonomic differences aside and semantically and pragmatically analyse related lexical units across boundaries between taxonomic classes. Compare, for example, the following metaphorical expressions based on the conceptual metaphor DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION:

(7) English: *to drive someone into a corner; to put a spoke in someone's wheel; in a bind; in a fix; in a jam; up the creek (without a paddle); in queer street; with one's back to the wall; there is no way out; between a rock and a hard place; caught in a cleft stick; encirclement; bottleneck; logjam; strait*

(8) German: *in der Klemme sitzen* "to sit in a clamp" 'to be in difficulties, in a great predicament'; *ein Klotz am Bein* "a block at the leg" 'a problem that is stopping someone from succeeding or progressing'; *ausweglos* "without way out" 'hopeless'; *Engpass* "narrow way" 'difficulties with supplying, etc.'

(9) Finnish: *olla ahtaalla* "to be in [a/the] narrow" 'to be embarrassed, to be in great difficulties'; *olla pinteessä* "to be in [a/the] clamp" 'to be in a great predicament'; *olla puun ja kuoren välissä* "to be between [the] tree and [the] bark" 'to be in a hopeless situation, in a great predicament'; *heitellä jklle kapuloita rattaisiin* "to throw cudgels in someone's carriage/cart" 'to hinder someone violently'; *jku ei pääsee eteen eikä taakse* "someone does not come out at the front nor at the back" 'someone is in great difficulties'; *ahdingossa* "in the narrow" 'in great difficulties', etc.'

(10) Japanese: *happō fusagari* "eight (all) directions being blocked/closed" 'in a great predicament'; *itabasami ni naru* "(to become) squeezed between boards" '(to be) in a dilemma, in a very difficult situation'; *atsui kabe ni butsukaru* "to collide with a thick wall" 'to be up against a problem'; *nitchi mo satchi mo ikanai* "not (able to) progress two nor three" 'to be in a great predicament'; *fukuro no nezumi* "mouse/rat in a sack/bag" 'trapped/ surrounded, in a difficult position'; *michi wo saegiru* "to block the road" 'to hinder, obstruct'

Clusters like these provide a good basis for semantic analysis. From this point of view, the idea of conceptual metaphor as cognitive foundation for different linguistic expressions is an efficient instrument of analysis, both within one language and cross-linguistically. On the other hand, it is obvious that we need a more sensitive tool of analysis than conceptual metaphor for explaining fine-grained semantic differences between the expressions listed under (7-10).

Idioms and other metaphorical expressions based on the same conceptual metaphor often reveal semantic differences that cannot be explained on the basis of rather abstract metaphoric models. There are idioms that belong to the same conceptual metaphor and nevertheless display specific semantic features, cf. Gibbs (1990: 421):

> Thus, even though *spill the beans, let the cat out of the bag, blow the lid off,* and *blow the whistle* each roughly mean 'to reveal a secret', there exists some convention such that *spill the beans* might be appropriate to use in situations where a person is revealing some personal information about someone else, while *blow the lid off* might be used to talk of revealing secrets about, say, governmental corruption.

The two idioms *spill the beans* and *blow the lid off* activate the same two conceptual metaphors at the same time, namely MIND IS A CONTAINER and IDEAS ARE PHYSICAL ENTITIES, so an explanation for the above-mentioned differences in meaning has to be looked for in another domain. It is obvious that these differences are caused by mental images corresponding to the idioms under consideration. *Spill the beans* evokes the image of an accidental, non-intentional action, whereas *blow the lid off* involves associations with an active role of an observer who makes certain efforts to look into a container where some secret processes are going on. Therefore, the explanatory power of metaphorical models increases if the corresponding source domains are oriented towards the basic level of categorisation (in the sense of Rosch 1975; 1978) rather than formulated in abstract terms like CONTAINER or PHYSICAL ENTITIES. This does not contradict Lakoff's (1993: 212) postulate that mappings from a source domain to a target domain "are at the superordinate level rather than the basic level". For the description of semantic properties of idioms inherited from the image structure, the level of primary conceptualisation, where rich mental images can be found, is more important than the superordinate level, which is suitable for relevant generalisation (for more details see Dobrovol'skij 1996).

Another example of the relevance of "rich images" for the semantic description of metaphorical expressions can be taken from the conceptual domain presented under (7-10). As the most salient feature of figurative language is its image component, the traces of the literal meaning inherited by the figurative meaning, and not only the conceptual mapping at the superordinate level of categorisation, have to be taken into account:

(11) English *(caught) between a rock and a hard place*
    'in a very difficult position; facing a hard decision' (Spears 1997: 15)

The explanation of the meaning given here is not sufficient because it neither involves the images connected with the individual constituents nor the metaphor

as a whole. The constituent *rock*, as well as *hard place*, evokes an image of something very solid, heavy, and immovable that hurts when one attempts to remove it, etc. The underlying literal reading (i.e. the source concept), on the other hand, is to be described as 'lack of freedom of movement'. When mapped on the target concept 'difficult position', idiom (11) appears as a realisation of the well-known conceptual metaphor DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION. Still it is intuitively clear that this idiom cannot be substituted by any other English expression belonging to this metaphoric model, cf. (7).

The concrete image fixed in the lexical structure of (11) presupposes that the subject finds himself/herself in a situation where he/she has to choose between two possibilities which both entail difficulties and failure. Therefore, idiom (11) should be defined as (12).

(12) 'facing a situation of choice between two possibilities that both entail difficulties and failure, as if the person pursuing his/her goals was not able to move away freely'.

This definition seems to be more appropriate not only than the definition given in (11) but also than the following definitions (13-15), which are more elaborate than (11).

(13) 'in a difficult situation in which any choice that you make will have bad results' (Longman ID 1998: 286)

(14) 'in a situation where one is faced with two equally difficult or unpleasant alternatives' (Oxford ID 1999: 297)

(15) 'nothing to choose between two difficult situations' (Penguin DEI 2001: 17).

Although the definitions (13-15) point to the fact that an important part of the meaning of this idiom is the existence of a choice between different ways to manage a situation, they do not take the image component itself into account, which provides relevant links between the lexical form of the idiom and its actual meaning. This example shows the importance of developing an efficient metalanguage for describing the semantics of figurative lexical units in contrast to non-figurative ones, which would include discriminating semantically related figurative units that are based on the same conceptual metaphor, but reveal fine-grained image-dependent specific features.

The presence of the idea of choice between two possibilities, both of which are perceived as disadvantageous for the subject, as well as the image-based ref-

erence to a 'lack of freedom of movement' can be exemplified by the following contexts taken from the British National Corpus (16-18):

(16) She wanted to scream the words back at him, but they log-jammed in her throat. To reveal the truth would be to render herself still more vulnerable to him, and she couldn't allow that to happen. But the alternative – to have him believing her poor showing had been caused by drugs, was equally untenable. She was *caught between a rock and a hard place* – with no obvious way out.

(17) "[...] If you produce the right designs I'll use them. And be only too happy to give you full credit." He paused. "But, if you fail, I'll show no mercy. You can absolutely bank on that." That scarcely needed saying. Lisa felt a chill go through her. Suddenly she was *caught between a rock and a hard place.* "So, I would advise you", he added, nodding at her folder, "to make a bonfire with those sketches and start again from scratch."

(18) "[...] But if this is what love does to you, it's perhaps just as well you've never suffered from the malady before." Rory shook her head, sending her long wheat-coloured curls tumbling about her face. "Don't be ridiculous", she said adamantly, then bit her lip. She was *caught between a rock and a hard place* here, she realised with grim humour. Since Adam had been monopolising practically all her time, she couldn't protest her dislike of him too vehemently. Candy would pounce on that like a terrier, demanding to know why she didn't just tell him to get lost. But she'd given her promise, albeit with great reluctance, not to confide the truth to her friend.

In all these examples, the idiom *between a rock and a hard place* means more than just 'in a very difficult position', revealing additional semantic components that can be traced back to the mental image captured in the lexical structure of the idiom. The necessity of taking mental images into account results from the fact that the figurative component not only has a connotative potential that modifies relevant imaginative associations of speakers but also affects the meaning and usage of idioms.

In general, the conceptual mapping from source domain onto target domain is only one of the tools of cognitive semantics. What conceptual metaphor can contribute to idiom analysis is, above all, provide a semantically structured empirical basis for investigating into both intra- and cross-linguistic specifics of figurative language. Especially promising is the possibility to compare idioms with other kinds of metaphorical expressions, on the one hand, and to structure

semantic fields according to metaphoric models, on the other. However, the semantic analysis proper requires a much more detailed description of mental images underlying the actual meaning of idioms. Among the main tasks of a cognitively based theory of idioms are, firstly, a description of all fine-grained differences between near-synonymous idioms both within one language and cross-linguistically, and secondly, an explanation of these differences in terms of conceptual structures. The question is to what extent the specific features of meaning and usage can be traced back to the mental imagery. Are relevant constraints due to the usage only, or can they be explained in terms of knowledge structures fixed in the lexical form of idioms? A semantic theory that does not respond to these needs cannot be considered an adequate tool for describing idioms. Thus, the most efficient results of an analysis of idiom semantics can be expected at the level of rich mental images and rich knowledge structure (i.e. at the basic level of categorisation), and not at the superordinate level of conceptual mapping.

Metaphors as motivational basis of figurative units show different levels of abstraction. Let us consider idioms like *to split hairs* or *to throw the baby out with the bath (water)*. The relevant motivating link is provided at the basic level of rich images, evoked by the lexical structure of the idioms. One could picture the situations to oneself, when someone behaves or acts *as if* he was splitting hairs, or *as if* he was throwing the baby out with the bath water, the images serving as bases of inference. An abstract metaphorical correspondence in the sense of conceptual metaphors at the superordinate level can hardly be formulated in these cases. In contrast, an idiom like *to be slow on the uptake* 'to lack the ability of understanding quickly, especially of understanding something new' provides motivating links at rather an abstract level and does not involve "rich imagery" of any kind. To process this idiom one has to access the conceptual metaphor UNDERSTANDING IS GRASPING. In other cases, however, both the basic and the superordinate level of metaphor can contribute to the motivation of an idiom.

3.2. *Cultural components in idiom semantics*

The concept of culture was addressed repeatedly in section 2. It has been pointed, from different perspectives, to the crucial role of culture in both understanding linguistic expressions and processing knowledge. The role of culture becomes even more obvious when comparing idioms from different languages. What seems to be "natural" in a given language and unquestionable from the perspective of one's own culture turns out to be idiosyncratic and conventional from the perspective of another language and culture. In the realm of idioms, the

sameness of the human body provides motivating links between mental imagery and actual semantics less often than do the specifics of culture. In what follows we will discuss elements of cultural knowledge which are relevant for idiom analysis.

Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2005) distinguish between five types of cultural aspects underlying figurative units.

(i)   The first type is represented by figurative units whose underlying cultural knowledge can mainly be traced back to knowledge of culture-based *social interaction* within a given community, including all aspects of social experiences and behaviour.

(ii)   Figurative units of the second type reveal image components that can be ascribed to *material culture*, primarily to artefacts of a given culture, including all aspects of material environment.

(iii) The third type of figurative units can be subsumed under the label "textual dependence." Originally they are quotations or allusions. Thus, they are related to certain texts that can be identified as their sources. This type is similar to the next two types, although they should not be confused.

(iv)   Type four is represented by figurative units tracing back to *fictive conceptual domains*, such as ancient folk theories and pre-scientific conceptions of the world (including religion, superstition, ancient beliefs etc.).

(v)   Type five deals with *cultural symbols*. In expressions of this type, the relevant cultural knowledge extends to mainly one single constituent and not to the figurative unit as a whole. The motivational link between the literal and figurative readings is established by semiotic knowledge about the symbol in question, about its meaning in culturally relevant sign systems other than language. In order to describe figurative units of this type we apply metalinguistic tools developed in the framework of cultural semiotics.

Examples of type (iv) have been given in the sections 2.1. and 2.2. In the following we will concentrate on type (iii) "textual dependence" and (v) "cultural symbols". Let us first consider the concept OWL as it is used in idiomatic expressions across languages and cultures. We restrict ourselves to the languages English, German, Dutch, Swedish, French, Finnish, and a Low German dialect. There are only a few idioms containing the concept OWL whose motivation does not originate in cultural traditions or in symbolic interpretations (for this notion

see Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen 2002) of the OWL. Let us look, for example, at the French simile (19).

(19) French: *avoir des yeux de hibou* "to have eyes of a screech owl"
    'to have big round and fixed eyes'

As owls really have big eyes (a salient property of the bird, which everybody can identify), this simile is based primarily on direct experience, i.e. immediate perception of the appearance of an owl. No other knowledge is required.

Most idioms with OWL, however, are motivated by cultural phenomena in a wide sense. On the one hand, certain idioms are motivated on the basis of well-known texts, i.e. the motivating link between the lexical structure of the idiom and its actual meaning is not provided by a conceptual metaphor but by knowledge of the text in question and its role in the cultural tradition (type (iii)). On the other hand, idioms can be motivated via a key constituent, which is used in its culturally loaded symbolic meaning and does not directly refer to a certain entity in the world but to a relevant piece of cultural knowledge, i.e. to some semiotic phenomena (type (v)). An example for the textual dependence is provided by (20).

(20) German: *Eulen nach Athen tragen* "to carry owls to Athens"
    'to present certain mental entities (ideas, artistic achievements, etc.) as being new when they are already well-known at a given place, or to bring certain objects to a place where there are already many of that kind'

There is an equivalent of this idiom in many different languages; in some of them it is obsolete (e.g. English *to send owls to Athens*, French *apporter des chouettes à Athènes*) or belongs to very elevated language (e.g. Finnish *viedä pöllöjä Ateenaan* "to bring owls to Athens"); in others it is quite well-known and familiar, as in colloquial German, Dutch and Swedish (cf. Dutch *uilen naar Athene dragen* and Swedish *bära ugglor til Aten* "to carry owls to Athens"). Although these idioms may be motivated only for well-educated people and seem opaque to the majority of speakers, the cultural knowledge, which is implicitly present in the plane of content of this idiom, cannot be neglected. The idioms originate from Aristophanes' satirical comedy "Birds" (414 BC; Greek "Ornithes"), verse 301. The Old Greek expression *γλαῦκας Ἀθήναζε ἄγειν* (*glaykas Athénaze ágein*) was used almost in the same meaning as idiom (20) and is still alive in the Modern Greek idiom *κομίζω γλαύκα ες Αθήνας* (*komízo gláfka es Atínas*) "to send owls to Athens". This is the text that motivates idiom (20).

The motivating text is, in its turn, culturally motivated. Its basis is provided by knowledge about the function of the concept OWL in classical Athens. The owl was not only a bird that abounded in Athens but also the emblem of *Athene*, the protective goddess of Athens. The coin of Athens bore an owl on the reverse. So there were plenty of owls in Athens (in form of all sorts of pictures), and it would have been superfluous and unnecessary to bring more of them.

Now let us look at some examples in which the OWL appears in its symbolic function. As has been mentioned, the OWL in ancient Greece was dedicated to Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom and the sciences. This cultural tradition gave birth to the conceptualisation of the OWL as a symbol of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE, which is well established in the occidental world but would be completely misunderstood in other cultural areas, e.g. in East Asia (although many Japanese speakers have become familiar with this conceptualisation of the wise owl through Western literature). In Europe the OWL is often symbolically connected with intellectuality. The OWL as a symbol of 'intelligence, wisdom' it is known in philosophy just as well as a logo of an academic publishing house or a university, as a prize in an intellectual quiz show, etc. This has left some traces in figurative language, above all in similes, cf. (21).

(21) English: *as wise as an owl*

Swedish: *vis som en uggla* "wise as an owl"

both meaning 'very wise'

This symbolic function, which is widespread in the occidental world as part of a shared cultural knowledge, does not play any role in idioms of some other languages. Surprisingly, another semiotisation of OWL, that of 'stupidity', has left more significant traces in idiomatic expressions across languages. The symbolic import of the OWL in culture is ambivalent, reaching from positive assessment as a symbol of wisdom to most negative estimations: the OWL is seen as a bird of darkness, messenger of bad luck and ill-omen (see Biedermann 1994: 249). Among the negative symbolic functions of OWL, the symbolic meaning of stupidity appears to be dominant in some languages, such as Dutch, Finnish, and a Low German dialect called "Westmünsterländisch" (see Piirainen 2000, 2004a, 2004b for details):

(22) Dutch: *zo dom als een uil* "as stupid as an owl"

Finnish: *tuhma kuin pöllö* "stupid as an owl"

both meaning 'very stupid'

(23) Dutch: *uil, die ik ben* "the owl that I am" 'the idiot that I am'

Finnish: *mikä pöllö ollenkaan ollut* "what an owl was I"

'what a fool have I been; what a nonsense have I created'

Interestingly, the two symbolic functions of the OWL, which are obviously contradictory, coexist in the conceptual sphere. The widespread knowledge of the OWL as a symbol of wisdom does not impede the use of linguistic expressions in which the OWL emerges as a symbol of stupidity. Academic symbolism and symbolism of popular belief, being two different domains of cultural knowledge, neither influence nor affect one another. It is notable that Dutch and Finnish, two languages with a written tradition, do not employ the ancient interpretation but the opposite symbolic meaning. As for the Low German dialect Westmünsterländisch, this is less surprising, since the cultural tradition of the ancient world has had no direct influence on it. The dialect provides idioms with this symbolic function in its own way: 'stupidity' in (24a) is a property "inherited" by being brooded under an owl:

(24a) Westmünsterländisch: *he is under de Uule uutbrodd* "he is brooded under the owl"
'he is very stupid'

(24b) Westmünsterländisch: *he is nich under de Uule uutbrodd* "he is not brooded under the owl"
'he is smart, keen, cunning'

Another symbolic function of the OWL represented in some idioms renders the idea of danger, disaster or bad luck. The conception of owls as messengers of ill fortune can still be observed in popular beliefs today (cf. Opie & Tatem 1996: 295f.). This symbolic function can be found in the Swedish idiom (25).

(25) Swedish: *ana ugglor i mossen* "to foresee owls in the bog"
'to feel something in advance, to sense danger; to begin to think that someone is trying to deceive you, or that something about a situation is wrong'

There is one Standard German proverb with OWL containing some Low German elements (26). Low German *Uhl* 'owl' stands symbolically for something negative, in contrast to the positively connoted NIGHTINGALE. This symbolic contrast also can be described as 'bad luck, misfortune' versus 'good luck, good fortune'.

(26) German: *was dem einen sin Uhl, ist dem andern sin Nachtigall* "what is the owl for the one person, is the nightingale for the other"

'what the one person does not like at all, can be appreciated very much
by the other; the disadvantage or misfortune of one person can be an ad-
vantage for another person'

What is important for our argumentation is only the fact that in different lan-
guages we encounter idioms that cannot be explained via conceptual metaphors
based on direct experience, and require rather addressing cultural codes, such as
popular beliefs, literature, arts and so on. So, the linguistic analysis which com-
pletely relies on the conceptual metaphor is not able to explain how idioms de-
scribed in this section came into existence and how they are processed by the
speakers. However, if an additional dimension of analysis is accepted, namely
that of the semiotics of culture, many linguistic facts, which would be consid-
ered arbitrary in the framework of the "classical version" of the cognitive theory
of metaphor, get plausible explanations. The question of whether these cultural
codes themselves once, remote in time, came into existence by direct experience
as well, does not belong to the scope of this study.

3.3. *Does the conventional figurative language need its own theory?*

The previous discussion has shown that it is not possible to exhaustively de-
scribe idioms and conventional figurative units of other types using just the ap-
paratus of CTM. The reason for this is that CTM was not developed with the in-
tent to analyse irregular features of idiom semantics and pragmatics. CTM is
aimed at discovering general cognitive mechanisms governing cross-categorical
conceptualisations. Such a gap calls not for the extension of CTM but rather a
new theory. At present we are working on developing such a theory, namely the
Conventional Figurative Language Theory (CFLT). Central to this theory is the
idea that there is a specific conceptual structure underlying the meaning of a
figurative unit. This conceptual structure, which we call "image component", is
based on mental imagery and is an element of the plane of content of a given
figurative unit. Thus our basic assumption can be formulated as follows: The
image component (a specific conceptual structure mediating between the lexical
structure and the actual meaning of figurative units) is a relevant element of
their plane of content.

Traditional structuralist approaches to figurative language made a strong dis-
tinction between "diachronic (etymological)" factors and "synchronic" ones. In
general the differentiation between "etymological derivation" and "synchronic
motivation" is not so important from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics be-
cause both are based on comparable conceptual operations. Hence from our
point of view research on the motivation of figurative units cannot refrain from

including etymological description as a constituent part. This does not mean that etymology always influences actual meaning and brings about relevant usage restrictions, but it cannot be excluded a priori. There are sufficient examples to show how the "etymological memory" of a lexical unit determines its behaviour in discourse. After clarifying the etymology of a given figurative unit, the second task is to check for possible linguistic consequences, i.e. certain usage restrictions, traceable back to the etymology.

Obviously, such linguistic consequences can be detected in the field of gender-specific usage restrictions (cf. Piirainen 2001, 2004c). There are various cases of such usage restrictions in all languages considered in our study. Usage restrictions of this kind may be traced back to relevant etymological phenomena if the following conditions are fulfilled:

- The inner form of the figurative unit in question points to a concept that once was prototypically and exclusively related with either females or males respectively (e.g., a garment, a gesture).

- The significance of this concept in question has been lost in the present.

Using large text corpora shows that at present these lexical units can also refer to female or male persons respectively (except from all kinds of ironic or jocular use). Thus the gender-restrictions originating from the inner form of the idioms are stable components of their semantic structure. Let us have a look at idiom (27).

(27) German: s*einen Hut nehmen* "to take one's hat"
     'to resign from one's post, office, to step down (referring to men)'

The inner form of this idiom is based on a physiological action. In former times, middle class men used to wear a hat in public. They had to take the hat off entering a room. If a man was leaving he took his hat, and the expression denoting this action developed the meaning 'to leave a group, to say goodbye' (cf. Röhrich 1991: 776). Of course, women also wore hats in public, but were not obliged to take them off when entering a room. Therefore, a woman who was going to leave did not have to take her hat. The consequence is that this idiom was originally restricted in its use and referred exclusively to males. Though the custom of wearing a hat in public has changed and the action of "taking the hat" no longer is of any importance, the gender-specific restriction of this expression still has an impact on its usage. The restriction to males clearly emerges from frequency analysis. Among more than 500 text examples drawn from the Internet only one example has been found with reference to a woman, to be precise,

to a female minister. The text examples reveal another peculiarity of this idiom: the person resigning has to be socially important and their resignation has to have some consequences for a given social group. Either they come from a higher occupational group, such as ministers, directors, managers, chairmen and the like, or they are, e.g., a popular sportsman leaving a club. This usage restriction can be interpreted as correlating with the etymology. The etymologically relevant feature 'belonging to the middle class' (wearing a hat was left up to middle class men) corresponds with the social importance of the resigning person. So the elements of etymological knowledge (labelled here "etymological memory") may have synchronic relevance.

However, there is a gradual scale, from a clear relevance of etymologically anchored traces for the actual meaning and/or usage to cases where etymology is not important any more. A good example is the German idiom (28).

(28) German: *unter die Haube kommen* "to get under the bonnet"
      'to get married (reference to women)'

First, let us look at the etymological description. The bonnet (*Haube*) was the headgear that belonged to the traditional costume of the married woman. A significant gesture was involved when the bride, on her wedding day, had the bonnet donned for the first time (Röhrich 1991: 674). Second, the sociocultural aspects connected with the concept BONNET (a sign of being married; a married woman had to wear this headgear) have completely lost their familiarity in the present. It could be assumed that the "etymological memory" of the idiom preserved traces of this historical origin in the form of usage restrictions, but an Internet enquiry shows the contrary. About one third of the examples refer to males (*Kronprinz Frederik kommt unter die Haube* "Crown prince Frederik comes under the bonnet"; *Boris Becker schon wieder unter der Haube?* "Boris Becker once more under the bonnet?", and the like). Obviously there is a trend to weaken the gender-specific usage restrictions, but it would be wrong to say that they have disappeared completely. We cannot decide whether a real meaning shift has taken place here (i.e. the abandonment of one element of the semantic structure of the idiom). Corpora alone cannot answer the question whether a usage restriction is in the process of being abandoned. We need also the relevant knowledge of speakers to be able to answer this question. However, empirical research along these lines would go beyond the scope of our study.

In short, we do not argue that all motivation is based on the knowledge of the true etymology, but we do argue against the postulate that only "folk etymology" is relevant for the processing and the usage of conventional figurative language whereas knowledge of the real etymology is never relevant for explaining

motivational phenomena. The result of these reflections is that the investigation of motivation must include an etymological description. Only at the next stage of analysis can we decide whether the data obtained via etymological analysis are consistent with the specifics of usage and whether they are suitable for explaining the structure of the image component. Even if the true etymology does not influence the usage, it is important for describing the cultural context in which a given figurative unit came about. This aspect of research on figurative language is, to be sure, not central to linguistically dominated approaches, but it is significant from the viewpoint of semiotics of culture.

4. Conclusions

CTM is important for investigations into the phenomenon of figurative language because it provides the researcher with a well-developed metalinguistic apparatus, including heuristically significant concepts such as source domain, target domain, metaphoric model, conceptual mapping, conceptual correspondence, metaphoric entailment, etc. In many cases, applying this apparatus allows us to explain many properties of figurative units that could not be captured in the framework of any traditional approach. The explanatory power of CTM is especially high in cases where we need an explanation as to how a particular novel metaphor works. Speakers creating a new metaphor in order to be able to talk about a difficult, barely structured situation propose, by using this metaphor, a way of structuring the given situation, i.e. an original view on it. The metaphor is therefore not just a means of naming but also a way of conceptualising the world. CTM is the only theory which calls attention to this fact and offers appropriate tools of analysis.

However, conventionalised figurative metaphors, including idioms, have a different function and a different cognitive and communicative value. What they have in common with individual novel metaphors is their origin, i.e. they often use the same mappings; but their value in understanding a situation is quite different. This fact has not received enough attention so far. Conventional figurative metaphors, especially idioms, contribute much less to the structuring of unstructured situations than do novel metaphors, but they rather convey different kinds of knowledge that they have accumulated in the course of their functioning in the language. This does not mean that the metalinguistic apparatus of CTM cannot be applied to the description of idioms. However, what is needed, in addition to that, is a theory specially designed to describe the irregularities in the realm of conventional figurative language, including, among other things,

idioms. To develop such a theory is the main aim of modern idiom research (cf. Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen 2005).

As for the discussion about the validity of certain postulates of CTM, different points are of different value for our purposes. Thus, the extent to which metaphors influence thinking and behaviour is not so important for the issues investigated in this study. Much more important are the purely linguistic questions, such as the question whether certain traces of the source concept are implicitly present in the structure of the target concept. If these conceptual traces exist, do they influence the use of a given lexical unit? If so, do they belong to the semantic structure of this lexical unit? What metalanguage must be developed in order to be able to capture the relevant specifics of the semantic structure? If the traces of the source concept do not influence the use of a given lexical unit (i.e. no relevant combinatorial constraints can be found), does this mean that there are none? Alternatively, could they be implicitly present in the plane of content and play a certain role at the conceptual level, which would be potentially significant for the actual meaning? Which level is more salient linguistically, the abstract level of conceptual metaphors, at which very general correspondences between source and target can be stated, or the more concrete level of individual mappings (i.e. frame correspondences in the sense of Baranov & Dobrovol'skij 1996, 2000), at which individual lexical units can be distinguished from each other? What tasks of linguistic description demand addressing what parts of metaphor structure?

As for the question concerning linguistically relevant conceptual traces in the semantic structure of idioms, we can state that some idioms reveal usage restrictions due to mental images fixed in their lexical structure. The examples discussed in (11-16) have shown how mental images can influence the use of certain idioms. However, this does not mean that all idioms behave in this manner. Obviously, many idioms are indifferent towards the underlying images. We suggest that even in such cases (i.e. where no relevant combinatorial constraints can be found) certain traces of the source concept are implicitly present in the structure of the target concept. These traces can become explicit in contexts that focus on the image in question. In other words, parts of the mental image underlying the actual meaning of a given idiom belong to its plane of content, even if they may not be qualified as components of its semantic structure in the strict sense.

As far as the question of linguistic salience of levels is concerned, our results suggest that the level of rich images is the most promising for revealing specific semantic and pragmatic features of single idioms, i.e. for describing every idiom as a lexical unit with a unique set of properties. Often some concrete features of

the metaphor structure play a more important role for determining the actual meaning of an idiom than does the metaphor's schematic structure fixed in the conceptual mapping. At the basic level, near-synonymous idioms can be distinguished from each other. In addition to that, certain combinatorial constraints can be explained better by addressing the less abstract parts of the metaphor structure than by addressing the level of conceptual metaphor.

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion above is that CTM in its present version does not cover all relevant aspects of the semantic and pragmatic behaviour of idioms. The knowledge of underlying conceptual metaphors is not the only type of knowledge which is linguistically relevant. In order to describe how idioms function, one has to take into account other concepts as well, above all culturally based concepts, which in many cases govern the inference from literal to figurative. The *Conventional Figurative Language Theory* proposed in (Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2005) is specially designed to uncover the relevant features of conventional figurative units, such as idioms, proverbs, lexicalised one-word-metaphors, etc.

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KOGNITIVNA TEORIJA METAFORE I ANALIZA FRAZEMA

U ovom se radu ispituje u kojoj se mjeri metode analize razvijene u okviru kognitivne teorije metafore (CTM - *Cognitive Theory of Metaphor*) mogu primijeniti na analizu frazema. Konvencionalizirane figurativne metafore, a tako i frazemi, imaju različitu funkciju i različitu kognitivnu i komunikacijsku vrijednost u odnosu na nove metafore. Frazemi znatno manje doprinose strukturiranju nestrukturiranih situacija, već prenose različite vrste znanja koja su akumulirali tijekom svojega postojanja u jeziku. Ono što je uz kognitivnu teoriju metafore nužno je teorija koja je posebno osmišljena kako bi se opisale nepravilnosti frazema. Ovaj je rad doprinos razvoju takve teorije.

Ključne riječi: analiza frazema, teorija konvencionalnih figurativnih izraza, kognitivna teorija metafore, konceputalna metafora, kulturološka semiotika, kulturološko znanje, simboličko značenje