

Mario stands for ... Mentor, Metonymy, Multimodality

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Paragon Intonation Constructions

The aim of the presentation is to examine the role of sensorimotor experience in the case of the thought-to-be marginal mechanisms motivated by iconicity. The case in point is paragon to be examined in paragon-intonation constructions, discussed in Lakoff (1987: 527-9). Some of the examples he provides are:

- a. Now THAT's a *real* cup of coffee!
- b. Now THIS is chicken soup *the way mama made it!*

Pointing to a cup of coffee (which is real) and to a chicken soup (like the one mama used to make) by means of the deictics *this* and *that*, highlighted in capital letters, emphasizes their excellence, thus their paragon status. Iconicity has been detected in the deictic terms, *this*, *that*, *there*, *here*,.. and iconic form-meaning correspondences have been investigated by Johansson & Zlatev (2013). Pointing at entities is prototypically indexical. However, when deictic terms like the ones above are met in discourse, pointing can also be iconic. In fact, in this paper, my hypothesis is that indexical signs, expressed by the demonstratives, elevate iconic meaning, thus enhancing figurativity, and additionally promoting emotionality and expressivity.

Keywords: constructions; deixis; icon; index; paragon

Lakoff, G., 1987. *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: what Categories Reveal about the Mind*. University of Chicago, Chicago.

Johansson, N., & Zlatev, J. 2013. Motivations for Sound Symbolism in Spatial Deixis: A Typological Study of 101 Languages. *Public Journal of Semiotics*, 5(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.37693/pjos.2013.5.9668>

Barcelona. Antonio

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Metonymy, trigger(ing) and my longtime connection and debt to Mario (and Rita)

In my brief 15 m presentation I will present and comment on a number of examples in which metonymy, with the aid of context (especially the immediate co-text), prompts the inference of conventional and non-conventional constructional meanings and utterance- and text-level (pragmatic) inferences. This prompting role of metonymy can be of the sort I call *triggering* or of the sort I call *facilitation* (Barcelona 2024). On the other hand, I will also show, and, if possible, comment on, examples where a metonymy is itself prompted by contextual factors (“metonymy triggers”) and / or by another metonymy in a metonymic chain. In the course of my talk, I will highlight my connection over the years with, and debt to, Mario and Rita.

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Réka Benczes

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The metaphor we live by: Social factors as motivational effects in the metaphorical conceptualization of life

Finding the meaning of life is one of the most fundamental challenges of human existence that we all grapple with. While there are several scientific approaches to what “meaning” in life is (Steger, 2012), research indicates that people who consider their lives as meaningful enjoy higher level of physical and mental health (e.g., Schnell, 2009) and are less prone to age-related cognitive decline (Boyle et al., 2010). Language, in the form of conceptual metaphors, can substantially contribute to making sense of life: there is now experimental evidence to demonstrate that

conceptual metaphors can give both structure and significance to life by making less comprehensible experiences more understandable – and this positive effect might be understood as “meaning in life” (Baldwin et al., 2018).

Yet where do our metaphors for making sense of life come from? There is a substantial body of research within cognitive linguistics that has highlighted the significance of cultural history in the form of culture-specific metaphorical conceptualizations with regard to metaphors of life (Kövecses, 2005; Kuczok, 2016; Schmidt & Brdar, 2012; Yu, 2017). Much less is known, however, about the factors that might motivate within-culture variation in the metaphorical conceptualization of life. Our presentation seeks to address this research gap by building on a number of recent, representative surveys carried out in Hungary (Benczes and Ságvári, 2018a, 2018b; Benczes et al., 2024). Results suggest that social factors in the form of generational and cohort effects play a significant role in the metaphorical conceptualization of life; nevertheless, the range of dominant source domains is relatively limited across society, with a restricted set of major metaphor types – including STRUGGLE/WAR, ROLLERCOASTER, GAME, TREADWHEEL, ADVENTURE, CHALLENGE, GIFT, JOURNEY, THEATER, WEATHER – dominating metaphorical conceptualization across all age groups. The data also indicate that metaphorical variation decreases with age – implying that the older we get, the more resistant to change our metaphorical conceptualizations become.

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Ksenija Benčina

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What's in a nAIme: A conceptual analysis of digital naming practices

The paper examines the phenomenon of naming artificial intelligence tools and the underlying linguistic patterns that reveal how meaning and perception are connected in this rapidly evolving field. AI naming practices reflect complex socio-cultural, linguistic and cognitive relations and reveal how names not only express technological function but also aim to impact user perception and build trust. This qualitative study examines strategies in AI nomenclature from the perspective of cognitive linguistics and critical discourse analysis. Based on a sample of 25 AI systems classified into five categories (conversational AI, voice assistants, AI writing tools, AI image generation tools and AI research tools), the analysis reveals specific patterns in how different AI functions employ cognitive mechanisms. For instance, anthropomorphization (Alexa, Jenni) can be observed in naming AI assistant, while AI tools for creative expression, writing and research also employ metaphor (Midjourney), metonymy (Consensus) and conceptual integration (Quillbot). These results suggest that AI naming is a sophisticated practice that influences the

relationships between humans and AI and reflects our perceptions of AI tools' functions.

Keywords: AI naming, cognitive linguistics, anthropomorphization, metaphor, metonymy, conceptual integration

Sanja Berberović, Nihada Delibegović Džanić, Adisa Imamović

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University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

From Personal Names to Political Discourse: A Cognitive Linguistic Journey Inspired by Mario Brdar

This presentation offers an overview of our research in cognitive linguistics, with a particular focus on how it has been shaped by the mentorship and scholarly influence of Professor Mario Brdar. Our early work examined the motivation of grammatical structures such as the figurative use of personal names and nominalizations. These early investigations, grounded in cognitive linguistic theory, laid the foundation for our ongoing research into multimodality and conceptual integration in political discourse and humor. We have investigated how conceptual blending and metaphor are employed in advertising, political cartoons, internet memes and late-night shows, especially in constructing ideological positions and social criticism.

Throughout these projects, Professor Brdar's immense contribution to the field of cognitive linguistics as well as his guidance and unwavering support have served as both a model and a motivation. His influence is evident not only in the topics we pursue but also in the cognitive-linguistic principles that underpin them. This presentation is therefore both a reflection on the intellectual paths we have taken and a tribute to a mentor whose contributions continue to shape cognitive linguistic research in our region and beyond.

Key words: metaphor, metonymy, conceptual blending, multimodality, personal names, political discourse

Gabrijela Buljan

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On the path to true evaluation: the Croatian suffixes -ulja and -onja

In this talk, I discuss the so-far unrecorded functional shift of two Croatian derivational suffixes, *-ulja* and *-onja*. Both suffixes have been recognized as building, among others, person nouns with (mildly) pejorative connotations, like *nosonja* ‘a man with a big nose’ > *nos* ‘nose’; *mahnitulja* ‘a raving mad woman’ > *mahnit* ‘raving mad’ (Barić et al. 1997, Babić 2002). To the best of my knowledge, neither has been recognized as being in the business of evaluative modification in the strict sense of the term (cf. Grandi & Körtvelyéssy 2015), i.e. as building nouns for entities that belong in the same conceptual category as those represented by the derivational base (Grandi 2002: 172). To wit, *žegulja* ‘sweltering heat’ > *žega* ‘heat’ or *Mesonja* ‘Mesić, pejorative’ < *Mesić* ‘last name of a former Croatian president’. Inspired by a recent observation of a similar shift in an otherwise predominantly locative mutational suffix *-ar(a)* (Buljan 2024), and by Grandi’s (2011) typological work on the development of morphological and augmentative suffixes, I will here offer some preliminary hypotheses on the conceptual mechanisms (notably conceptual metonymy), and possibly structural affordances (truncation and multiple motivation) that may have been critical in this development.

Key words: evaluation, derivational suffixes, conceptual metonymy, multiple motivation, analyzability

Renata Geld

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I Wish I Could See My Shadow - Mental Imagery and Linguistic Meaning Construal in the Blind

The talk draws on a series of studies conducted over two decades of research on the language of the blind (Geld 2014). It begins with an overview of the initial

exploratory studies and their cognitive linguistic grounding, followed by more focused investigations into the primacy of space in the mental imagery and meaning construal of the blind. It concludes with a recently conducted case study of a blind speaker of Croatian (L1) and English (L2).

Two initial exploratory studies (conducted in 2005 and early 2006 by Geld, Starčević, and Stanojević) aimed to identify possible differences in salience and situatedness in the language of legally blind Croatian native speakers (L1) compared to sighted individuals. These studies investigated how blind speakers code scalar adjustment from schematicity to specificity, and how their language reflects an "in-the-scene" position of the conceptualizer, hypothesizing a shift due to their haptic experience and reliance on other sensory modalities.

A more focused third study, conducted by Geld and Čutić (2014), examined the primacy of space in the mental imagery and meaning construal of blind individuals. Using English particle-verb constructions (PVs) with Croatian L2 users (both blind and sighted), the study tested whether blind users employ distinct cognitive strategies. It specifically hypothesized differences in the strategic construal of PVs, particularly a bias toward topological elements in composite wholes, reflecting the blind participants' unique haptic exploration of space.

The following study aimed to double-test the research instrument used to investigate topological elements and to confirm the importance of spatial elements in meaning construal among native English speakers, both congenitally and adventitiously blind.

Finally, the most recent case study confirms previous findings and provides nuanced insights into mental imagery and meaning construal in the blind. The talk concludes by presenting a model that integrates key language-internal and language-external factors influencing meaning construal in this population, emphasizing the dynamic and subjective nature of linguistic meaning.

Key words: mental imagery, meaning construal, the blind, topological bias

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Tanja Gradečak

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Schematisation and periphrasis in the process of euphemisation

In my talk I intend to revisit some of the permanent topoi in my research, from my dissertation supervised by Mario to some of my latest papers, namely, the periphrasis as a euphemistic strategy and with it closely connected process of schematisation triggered by specific metaphorical and metonymic processes.

I intend to analyse the effects of a periphrastic or expanded predicate with light verbs, e.g. ‘to have a read’, ‘to take a look’ or ‘to give a push’ where the Aktionsart element of the lexically encoded aspect is, in Algeo’s words “doubtlessly always rhetorical” (Algeo 1995:205). The rhetorical category of these constructions is detected as euphemistic since their shortness of duration implicates an act of hedging, in pragmatic terms, and the effect of decreasing the impact of the full verb as a potential aspectual counterpart.

A further step in the process of meaning disintegration or narrowing by introducing the process of periphrasis or circumlocution as a familiar strategy of euphemisation is the so called politically correct *people-first language*, e.g. “person who is blind” or “people with spinal cord injuries” is opposed to the *identity-first language*, which puts the disability first in the description, e.g., “disabled” or “autistic.” Pushing it to the extremes of schematicity, the vagueness of the most novel phrase in migration discourse, ‘people on the move’, may beg the question of what is actually to be achieved by this extreme semantic bleaching and periphrastic structure. In Gradečak

and Milić (in preparation) we suggested that the metonymy GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC has a particular role of extracting the schema which should cover all the specificities of the migration terminology and at the same time avoid the pejorative aspects of more frequent, dehumanising metaphors in the migration discourse such as MIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS or MIGRANTS ARE WATER.

Sanel Hadžiahmetović Jurida

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*From the Linguistic Properties of Netspeak to Figurative Use of Computer Terms
in the Context of English as a Global Language*

The present paper focuses on the major distinctive features of Netspeak and the figurative use of computer terms in the context of English as a global language. According to Crystal (2001), Netspeak is a brand new electronic medium of communication, global and interactive in character. The corpus was selected from several Internet sites, and then further analysed, following the model proposed by Crystal (2001). The analysis of the data has proven that Netspeak displays a number of highly distinct features undoubtedly classifying it as a brand new (electronic) medium of communication.

In addition, the rapidly emerging terminology associated with the Internet and its use result in highly figurative use of the terminology in this domain (the Internet), and its supporting technology (the computers). The paper examines the figurative use of computer terms from a cognitive linguistics point of view, arguing the vocabulary of the language of information technology is created in a number of ways, including neologisation, derivation, blending, conversion, etc. with metaphor being highly used in the language of information technology.

Finally, it introduces the language of information technology and its accompanying features in the context of Netspeak as a new online medium of communication.

Key words: information technology, metaphor, cognitive linguistics, Netspeak

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Machine translation of Facebook and Instagram posts from Bosnian and Croatian into English

With the rise of social media networks such as Instagram, X (previously Twitter), and TikTok, a significant part of human interaction has shifted from offline to online form. Such trends have led to various brands, services, and even educational opportunities being promoted on social media. To promote anything and successfully reach international audiences, it is important to bridge the language gap. Thus, Meta (the owner of Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, WhatsApp, etc.) developed the “No Language Left Behind (NLLB)” AI translation model that offers automatic translation of posts for 200+ languages, many of which were not supported well or at all by even the best existing translation tools today. This paper focuses on the promotion of educational institutions (i.e. the English Departments at the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences in Tuzla, BiH, and Osijek, Croatia) on social media and the usefulness of NLLB in allowing communication between social media users who speak different languages. Automatic translations of posts from Bosnian and Croatian into English are analysed using a qualitative approach (e.g. an error analysis modelled on Costa et al. (2015)), putting special emphasis on the level of the message, in an effort to determine whether and to what extent this service can enhance or hinder communication.

Keywords: machine translation, NLLB, educational institutions, error analysis, communication

Zoltán Kövecses

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Some reflections on Mario and Rita's view on metonymy

In several papers, Mario and Rita (e.g., 2022) suggest that “metonymy is thus a cognitive operation of conceptual elaboration based on the part-whole relationship that is started by the use of an expression (or metonymic vehicle) associated with a certain conceptual content (or metonymic source) within a conceptual domain so that the activation of the source conceptual content triggers the opening up of a mental space linked to it by means of reduction or expansion.” In my brief talk, I comment on certain aspects of this definition, agreeing with some parts and disagreeing with others.

Brdar, Mario and Rita Brdar-Szabó. 2022. Targetting metonymic targets. *In: [Figurative Thought and Language in Action](#)*, edited by Mario Brdar and Rita Brdar-Szabó

[\[Figurative Thought and Language 16\]](#) ► pp. 59–86.

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Towards a cognitive-linguistic account of ironic uses

The present study addresses ironic usage from a cognitive-linguistic perspective. Previous classifications of ironic usage (Muecke, 1969; Colebrook, 2004; Hutcheon, 1994; Booth, 1974) have divided ironic uses according to the historical periods where they can be found. Nevertheless, this study provides a finite set of fundamental ironic uses, each of which has distinct communicative functions. We argue that the scenario-based approach to irony by Lozano and Ruiz de Mendoza (2022) provides a unified theoretical basis for the study of the evolution of the communicative

functions of irony. This approach further reveals how ironic meaning – fundamentally attitudinal – arises from the clash between an epistemic scenario, shaped by echoic expectation, and an attested scenario, based on verifiable reality. The typology we propose persists across the ages through processes of adaptation and re-adaptation.

We distinguish six fundamental uses of irony: Socratic irony, whose maieutic structure is adapted from Ancient Greek pedagogy into modern forensic rhetoric; rhetorical irony, which evolves from Ciceronian persuasion into contemporary satire; satirical irony, which moves from Horatian mockery to systemic criticism; tragic irony, which transitions from Sophocles' fatalism into postmodernism; dramatic irony, which moves away from theatrical commentary into cinematic mystery; and metafictional irony, which stems from Chaucerian humor into postmodernist narrative deconstruction. The study distinguishes between basic and its repurposed variants. Basic uses can be defined as those classical forms tied to their original contexts and adapted and re-adapted uses redefine basic uses to address new sociocultural challenges.

The present paper systematizes the cognitive stability and functional plasticity of irony and provides a typology that resolves long-standing theoretical fragmentation in terms of ironic usage. All in all, this exploration endows the study of irony with a greater degree of explanatory adequacy and posits irony as a universal cognitive tool.

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A Mouthful of China: Locative Metonymy in Donald Trump's Public Messaging

The present paper examines the metonymic use of toponyms (e.g., *China*, *the US(A)*, *Kiev*) as conventional linguistic instantiations of the conceptual metonymy **PLACE FOR INSTITUTION**, including more specific patterns such as **CAPITAL/COUNTRY FOR GOVERNMENT**, as attested in various instances of public discourse by the U.S. president Donald Trump on the social networks Truth Social and X (formerly Twitter) during his two terms as president. These platforms have been extensively and skilfully employed by Trump as channels of digital communication in the modern “era of social media” (Enli 2017), primarily for political purposes.

The study builds on the extensive work of Brdar (2007, 2015, 2021) and Brdar & Brdar-Szabó (2007, 2009, 2011, 2014) on the cross-linguistic universality of such referential metonymies, as well as on the structural and typologically specific alternatives—described as their “virtual synonyms” (Brdar 2015)—attested across languages but differing in function and pragmatic effect (cf. Milić & Vidaković, 2007; Zhang, Speelman & Geeraerts, 2011; Zhang 2013). It seeks to further investigate the complex interplay of factors underlying both the ubiquity of these conceptual metonymies and their linguistic realizations in English, as well as address and elaborate on the numerous constraints on their use and distribution. In contrast to other (non-) metonymic options (e.g., personal names such as *Putin*, *Zelensky*, *Netanyahu*), these are attributed to “structural, cognitive-cultural, and communicative-pragmatic factors responsible for creating conditions (dis)favourable to their use in a language” (Brdar 2015, 99).

To this end, the study combines an initial coarse-grained quantitative analysis of Trump's posts on X and Truth Social, as well as his public addresses harvested from the online database of The American Presidency Project (<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents>), with subsequent fine-grained qualitative analyses of specific uses. This two-step approach aligns with a discursive methodology for metonymy analysis, which Brdar (2015) identifies as indispensable for a more comprehensive account. Special attention is given to the existence and

intricate interplay of metonymic (and metaphorical) chains (Barcelona 2005) operating at various macro- and micro-levels, both conceptual and linguistic. Finally, Trump's linguistic choices are examined as a test case for hypotheses on the **FRIENDS AND FOES** cultural model (Brdar 2007) and the conceptual metaphor **EMOTIONAL DISTANCE IS PHYSICAL DISTANCE** (Brdar, 2015). These, are explored as pragmatic factors that may, respectively and in interaction, motivate Trump's preference for certain metonymic forms (e.g., *China* for 'Chinese government' as a metaphorical 'foe') over alternative structural or linguistic options at his disposal.

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The Figurative Power of Names: Translating Phraseological Units with Onomastic Components

Phraseological units (PUs) with onomastic components (OCs) have been an attractive and controversial research topic in many scientific disciplines for a number of decades. They are of various origins, encompassing international PUs, like those of mythological or biblical origins, as well as other widespread units, whose origins are culturally specific. Due to their omnipresent nature, PUs have received a prominent status among speakers of different language communities and as such have become an integral part of foreign language curriculum and syllabus design. However, mastering PUs with onomastic components pose much of a problem to foreign language learners in their attempts to provide appropriate cross-linguistic/cross-cultural equivalents in the fields of phraseology, translation and interpretation. Since special attention in most of the recent literature overviews has been paid to theoretical issues (Carroll 1983, Coates 2006, Van Langendonck 2007)

and infrequently to specific aspects in individual languages, current paper tries to fulfil that void.

The present paper discusses Croatian translational equivalents of the English phraseological units with onomastic components. An anonymous questionnaire with the targeted corpus of English PUs with onomastic components was designed and administered among the university EFL students. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, both of which shared the same number of identical idiomatic expressions categorised into 4 groups (personal names, towns, countries/counties, nationalities) but presented in and out of context. Concerning their potentially dual character, expressions are divided into two categories: the universal (presumably transparent) and culturally specific (potentially unknown). The respondents were required to provide translation equivalents or paraphrases of the same idea or concept in Croatian. Bearing in mind that PUs with OCs can often be regarded as culturally connoted, the only logical approach to their analysis is a contrastive one. However, the aim of this research is to further explore the idea that PUs with OCs are products of our conceptual system and not only a matter of language (Talmy 2000, Croft and Cruse 2004, Evans 2006). Our further attempt is to throw more light on the benefits of applying the insights of cognitive linguistics in translation studies, and hopefully, to provide EFL students with a keener awareness of the translation process directions and all the knowledge structures at work. The frequency analysis of the equivalents revealed EFL students' preferential translation strategies related to different groups of PUs and the qualitative part pointed to lexical and syntactic changes which figurative expressions undergo dependent on and constrained by the cognitive mechanisms motivating their meanings.

The research findings confirm some of the initial hypotheses and point to the following: PUs concerning universal concepts present much less of an obstacle to the EFL learners than culturally loaded expressions; context provides more accurate/creative variants; understanding of the proper names and their interpretation to a great extent depends not only on the activation of their visual and informative content, but also on experience, socio-cultural competence and more general knowledge structures.

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Variation of conventionalized similes in English and Croatian: A view from Cognitive Grammar

In English and Croatian, conventionalized similes have a relatively stable lexical make-up and structure, and follow two common patterns. Units comprising an adjective in the first slot express properties (e.g. *white as a sheet*, *black as coal*, *clear as day*; *lagan kao perce* lit. light as a feather, *sretan kao malo dijete* lit. happy as a little kid), while those containing a verb describe processes (e.g. *spread like wildfire*; *raditi kao konj* lit. work like a horse). Even though similes occur within fixed frames, research has shown they are prone to variation (Omazić 2002; Moon 2008). Furthermore, corpus-based studies conducted within the Cognitive Linguistic framework have established similarities among variant realizations of similes in Germanic and Slavic languages (Parizoska 2022). However, mechanisms underlying variation of similes cross-linguistically have not yet been explored. Given that Cognitive Grammar views constructions as symbolic assemblies (Langacker 2008), it is reasonable to assume that common mechanisms are involved in the types of changes which similes undergo in different languages.

This paper explores the variability of similes in English and Croatian using the Cognitive Grammar approach. The aim is to show that variant realizations are dependent on global and local mechanisms. We conducted studies in two corpora: enTenTen21 and CLASSLA-web.hr. First, we obtained a list of the most frequent similes in each corpus by constructing queries which included an adjective or a verb in the first slot and a noun in the second slot. Next, for each simile we searched the two corpora for its variations. Three groups of results were obtained. Firstly, adjectives and verbs commonly alternate in the first slot, which reflects different construals (properties vs. processes, e.g. *be/turn white as a sheet*; *sretan/radovati se kao malo dijete* lit. happy/rejoice like a little kid). Secondly, in some similes the first slot contains a wide range of semantically unrelated items, and this is the result of subjectification (e.g. *mad/funny/scary/boring as hell*; *skup/težak/boljeti/smrđjeti kao vrag* lit. expensive/heavy/to hurt/to stink like the devil). Finally, similes undergo language-specific changes: in English, they occur as adjectival forms (e.g. *coal-black*) and may be used as premodifiers (e.g. *clear-as-day instructions*), while in Croatian the tertium may not be expressed explicitly (e.g. *bicikl je ko perce* lit. the bicycle is [light])

like a feather). Overall, this study shows that variation of conventionalized similes is constrained jointly by semantic and grammatical factors.

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Klaus-Uwe Panther

Crossing the Boundary between Cognitive Linguistics and Pragmatics I:

The case of embodied speech acts

I would like to discuss the ubiquity and pervasiveness of metonymy (associative thinking) and metaphor (analogical thinking) in the production and interpretation of speech acts — more specifically, illocutionary acts — that cross the boundaries of various folk models (e.g. Action, Talk, and Embodiment), and to consider the impact of such models on the coding of illocutionary acts. Embodied speech acts (ESAs) are atypical actions in that they do not change physical reality, but rather change social reality. Even so, they may be performed in lexical terms that denote **embodied physical actions**; e.g., in declaring *I hereby **step down** as head of the GNU Project, effective immediately*, the speaker accomplishes a resignation. Additional examples of declarations coded by verbs of bodily activity are **open** (*up*), **table** (*a motion*), **put forward** (*a motion*), and **close**. Interestingly, illocutionary acts may also be accomplished by uttering acts of *giving*, *making*, and *extending* that collocate with a noun that names the illocutionary act: e.g. *I (hereby) **give** you my **permission** to speak to my father, I hereby **make** my steadfast **pledge**, and Finally, I **extend** my **thanks** to all the anonymous reviewers for their very thoughtful remarks*.

Two deeper questions raised for consideration and discussion are:

- Why are ESAs, in contrast to indirect speech acts and hedged performatives, felt to be explicit, i.e. not cancelable (Grice 1975, Zakkou 2018, Panther 2022)?
- Do ESAs flout Grice's Maxim "Be brief"?

Proposals for further research:

- What are the specific discourse functions of embodied performatives?
- What are language-specific constraints on the operation of metaphor, metonymy, and possibly other figures in the production of embodied speech acts?

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Contested Coordinates: Metonymy and the East–West Divide in Hungarian Political Rhetoric

Metonymy serves as a culturally variable tool that political actors strategically utilize to influence meaning. In contemporary political discourse, ambiguity assumes a pivotal role, with vague and context-dependent expressions—such as cardinal points—employed to evoke regions imbued with historical and ideological significance (Brdar-Szabó & Brdar, 2011). Terms like “East” and “West” operate as metonymic shortcuts, with their referents shaped by culture, collective memory, and evolving geopolitical narratives.

This research delves into the ways Hungarian political rhetoric, as expressed in the speeches of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán from 2010 to 2025, reflects the evolving cultural perceptions of the East and West. In the wake of Hungary's 2012 "Eastern Opening" foreign policy initiative, state discourse began to elevate Eastern powers while questioning the perceived supremacy of Western liberal ideals. By utilizing a discourse-based metonymy framework, this study investigates how metonymic indeterminacy allows for adaptable, context-specific applications of cardinal directions, thereby uncovering significant cultural transformations in the understanding of global power structures (Brdar & Brdar-Szabó, 2022; Brdar-Szabó & Brdar, 2021; Szabó, 2025).

The findings indicate that metonymic interpretations of "East" and "West" are not universally applicable but are instead culturally specific and subject to political contestation. In Hungarian discourse, the West—once idealized for its democracy, prosperity, and freedom—has increasingly come to represent ideological rigidity, moral decline, or foreign imposition. Conversely, the East, formerly associated with Soviet oppression, is now portrayed in certain political contexts as a source of economic potential, cultural tradition, or renewal. These competing meanings are not static but emerge through ongoing reinterpretations shaped by local histories, strategic interests, and cultural narratives.

These divergent associations highlight the role of metonymy not only as a cognitive mechanism but also as a culturally embedded and ideologically charged instrument in the construction of political meaning.

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Günter Radden

Thoughts on Mario's retirement

Dear Mario, you have come to mean more to me than simply a colleague with a shared interest in cognitive linguistics. Over the years, we have met up at a number of conferences in many different countries, including Croatia, Hungary, Spain and Estonia. We have exchanged ideas, listened to each other's presentations, and learned from each other. I have had the pleasure of visiting you in Osijek on three or four occasions and have always enjoyed and appreciated your hospitality, just as I have been glad to welcome you in Hamburg. Our acquaintance now spans over 25 years and has grown into a valued academic and personal friendship. This warm rapport has also come to include our families—your dear wife Rita, your daughter Teréz, and my wife Aila.

I must begin with an apology for not contributing an academic piece to the festschrift in your honor. I truly would have liked to, but the time was simply too short. Instead, I would like to offer you, Mario, a light-hearted preview of what lies ahead in the life of an emeritus professor in his retirement. Now that you are liberated from teaching duties and grading papers, retirement surely promises peace and leisure—or so the story goes. Like many fresh retirees, you might believe that you will finally have the time to read the ever-growing stack of books that are in your study. But then, reality sets in. New and noteworthy publications in cognitive linguistics continue to appear at a pace that makes even the quickest download obsolete. And as for writing those

long-awaited papers—well, that brings its own challenge. It turns out that fewer people have the time (or patience) to read them in full anymore. Why wade through a detailed argument when a neatly packaged AI-generated summary is just a click away? Welcome to emeritus life—where the work doesn’t quite stop, but it certainly takes on new and unexpected forms!

Fortunately, Mario, you are in excellent company—many retired colleagues share your continued passion for research and are eager to engage with your work. Your contributions are widely appreciated, and there is no shortage of fellow scholars who look forward to discussing them with you. You have had the good fortune of working under truly ideal conditions. A significant number of your publications have been co-authored with none other than your wife, Rita—a remarkable intellectual partnership. We can easily picture the two of you at your computer crafting elegant and persuasive linguistic examples in English, Croatian, Hungarian, and German. Some of your publications appeared under Mario Brdar & Rita Brdar-Szabó, some under Rita Brdar-Szabó & Mario Brdar, and a few under just one name—there must have been a few spirited discussions between the two of you!

Your work has focused primarily on metonymy in grammar, an area that was largely overlooked in the early 2000s. The cognitive linguistic landscape at that time was still dominated by Lakoff & Johnson’s conceptual metaphor theory. In your book *Metonymy in grammar*, published in 2007, you aptly observed that “the role of metonymy in grammar, just like its pragmatic aspects in discourse, is virtually a virgin territory” (Brdar 2007:67). You and Rita set out to fill the gap, analyzing and identifying grammatical phenomena ranging from indirect speech acts to predication metonymies, thus expanding the scope of cognitive linguistic enquiry. Your discussion of the historical motivation behind the progressive aspect is particularly noteworthy. When drawing parallels with contemporary prepositional phrases “as a surrogate for the progressive,” you illustrated your point with the German examples “Ich bin am Schreiben” and “Günther ist am Radfahren” (Brdar 2007:58). Let me assure you that both sentences are correct, and when Günther isn’t writing, he is still riding his bike.

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We wish you, dear Mario, a smooth and fulfilling transition into this new chapter of retirement.

Günter & Aila

Francisco José Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez

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Metaphor and metonymy revisited: Reassessing the roles of correlation and resemblance

Traditionally, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has emphasized experiential correlation as the primary driver of metaphorical thought, often marginalizing the role of similarity (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Grady, 1999). For instance, the observation that levels rise as quantity increases underlies the correlation metaphor MORE IS UP (e.g., *The water level climbed steadily*). Later work reinforced the experientialist thesis by treating metaphor as embodied (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999) and neurally entrenched (Lakoff 2014). This presentation refines CMT by demonstrating two key points: (1) correlation can motivate metonymy, and (2) correlation metaphor requires high-level similarity.

First, correlation can generate situational metonymy through domain-internal cause-effect pairs. For example, touching a hot stove co-occurs with being burned, making *Don't touch the stove* a metonymic warning about the broader danger. Similarly, *Don't poke the bear* exploits the correlation between provocation (poking) and retaliation (attack). Here, the action (poking) metonymically represents the ensuing risk, a mapping grounded in experience. When generalized (e.g., *Don't poke the bear in negotiations*), the expression becomes metaphorical, yet its logic relies on the initial cause-effect metonymic link. Such cases align with Panther and Thornburg's (2018) and Brdar and Brdar-Szabó's (2022) view of metonymy as target elaboration of the source domain, but here elaboration is explicitly motivated by experiential correlation, a factor underexplored in metonymy research.

Second, metaphor demands high-level similarity atop correlation. MORE IS UP works because vertical elevation (source) and accumulation (target) share an abstract sense of increase. This principle applies to other uses of *high*: *high latitude* draws on the similar sense of remoteness in elevated places and distant locations; *high priority* exploits the shared sense of importance between physical height (e.g., a king's throne) and situational urgency; *high intellectual ability*, rests on the similar sense of progress and complexity involved in a high structure and in advanced achievements. In each case, correlation provides the initial scaffolding by pairing two experiences (e.g., rising levels/increasing quantity), but high-level similarity aligns their cross-domain structure.

The presentation further examines other correlation metaphors (e.g., TIME IS MOTION, AFFECTION IS WARMTH) through the lens of high-level similarity, arguing that CMT must reinstate resemblance as a core theoretical component. Otherwise, the theory cannot fully account for why certain correlations yield productive metaphors while others do not. By integrating both factors, CMT can better explain the systematicity and flexibility of metaphorical thought. At the same time, this proposal allows us to find one of the motivations for metonymy that has generally been missing in the theoretical debate, that is, the fact that it can be grounded in co-occurring experiences one of which affords access to the other when there is no cross-domain similarity, which would give rise to metaphor.

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Of evaluative cuckoo's eggs in Croatian CAPITAL FOR GOVERNMENT expressions

In a number of papers dealing with the CAPITAL FOR GOVERNMENT metonymy (e.g., Brdar and Brdar-Szabó 2009; 2011), Brdar has shown that its underuse in Croatian depends on a variety of conceptual, structural and discourse-pragmatic factors, including local variation based on the PROXIMITY IS DISTANCE metaphor. In this paper, I focus on the expressions such as *službeni Zagreb* ‘official Zagreb’ mentioned in passing (Brdar and Brdar-Szabó 2009, 234), which is claimed to increase distance in relation to “regular” metonymies. Based on a corpus study of *službeni* + capital in the Croatian MaCoCu corpus (Bañón et al. 2023), I show that *službeni* + capital functions on two levels. On the first level, it allows the ego to establish implicit distance to the actions of governments, as seen in the use of reporting verbs (*tvrditi* ‘claim’, *smatrati* ‘regard’, etc.). The expression is neutral from the ego’s point of view, but it is clear that the values held by the government are not necessarily shared by the ego. On the second level, the distance created may attract explicit negative evaluation of the actions of the government (e.g., *službeni Zagreb je dvostruki igrač* ‘official Zagreb is a double player’). The two levels conform to Brdar’s metaphorical scale of conceptual and emotional closeness. The use of the more evaluative expressions, however, depends on the ego’s political affiliation, with wide-circulation online sources being more neutral, and local, smaller, politically affiliated or specialized sources being largely negatively evaluative. The latter use is a metaphorical cuckoo’s egg: a way to achieve a semblance of a more impartial, authoritative and believable discourse style by discourse actors whose positioning is, in fact, not neutral.

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Embodied Simulation and Figurative Thought in the Construction of Meaning

This talk argues for a meaning-centric perspective on language, grounded in cognitive linguistics, neuroscience, and simulation-based theories of meaning. From this perspective, the primary function of language is to convey meaning, and linguistic structures can be fully understood only through speakers’ embodied, encyclopedic, and experiential knowledge. Simulation semantics posits that understanding language crucially involves mentally simulating perceptual, motor, and affective experiences—a claim strongly supported by the discovery of mirror neurons and the neural theory of language and thought (Rizzolatti et al. 2001; Feldman 2006; Bergen 2015). The core idea is that the ability to imagine our own and others’ actions is central to comprehension. Simulation semantics draws on frame semantics (Fillmore 1976, 1982), the concept of mental spaces (Fauconnier and Turner 2003), and the neural theory of metaphor (Lakoff 2008) to explain how abstract concepts are grounded in embodied experience.

To effectively simulate and thus comprehend linguistic input, the brain relies on multiple levels of structure: lexical items (nouns and verbs) provide concrete content to be simulated (for example, *toothbrush* evokes perceptual and motor scenarios of brushing teeth), while grammatical context contributes a second-order modulation—dictating *how* to simulate rather than *what* to simulate. For instance, active voice enhances simulation from the agent’s perspective. Furthermore, simulation depends

on constructions, frames, embodied schemas, metaphors, and mental spaces, which collectively constrain and parameterize the mental enactment of meaning. Understanding involves running the best-fitting simulation for the given linguistic input in context.

We will also present the neuroscientific distinction between referential semantics, combinatorial semantics, emotional-affective semantics, and abstract semantics (Pulvermüller 2002, 2013)—all of which are necessary for processing meaning in the mind and brain—and argue that these findings must inform linguistic semantic theory. Additionally, we will discuss recent results from E. Fedorenko’s research (Fedorenko et al., 2012; 2016), which reinforce and align with the constructionist view of language. These findings support a clear distinction between language and other cognitive processes, resolving the long-standing debate about whether language shares neural machinery with general cognition. Crucially, there is no dedicated brain region specialized exclusively for syntactic processing; instead, each region within the language network is sensitive to both lexical and combinatorial information. This directly challenges the Chomskyan view that lexicon and grammar are distinct cognitive components. Moreover, lexical information is represented more robustly across the language network than combinatorial information, consistent with the fact that content words contribute more to meaning than function words and word order. Thus, lexical meaning plays a more critical role than syntax in the representation and processing of linguistic meaning.

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Linda L. Thornburg

Crossing the Boundary between Cognitive Linguistics and Pragmatics II:

The roles of genre, context, and emotion in a give construction

I extend the exploration of figuration in uses of verbal expressions in English that denote literally the embodied activity of ‘giving’ as in *She gave him a book* but, as Klaus demonstrates in his talk, may be used also to encode speech acts, e.g.

permitting, I **give** you my **permission**, and promising, I **give** you my **word**, arguing that they are motivated, *inter alia*, by a social-cultural model of embodied action and the reasoning tools of conceptual metaphor and metonymy. Interestingly, linguistic expressions with *give* are deeply intertwined as well with cultural values and emotional experience. The noted psycholinguist Ray Gibbs (2024), contending that metaphors are manifested in *all* facets of human experience, not just language, but also gesture, dance, art, music, and internally, as specific emotional reactions (e.g. disgust), proposes that since metaphor may be everywhere in experience, the *motivation* for the why, when, and how metaphor emerges *in use* must be explained. Gibbs maintains that metaphor arises in *pivotal moments* of disruption or transition *in everyday life* and “provides guidance” as to what actions should be undertaken to cope with adaptive challenges. In light of Gibbs’ claims regarding motivation, I discuss in detail one such example of a unique, figurative use of *give*, retrieved from the comedy TV series “Hacks” (s.3, ep.5/9, min.18:00, “One Day”):

- (1) Ava (looking up at the nearby tree): You know what? I’m gonna climb this tree, see if I can get a better view of the parking lot or the road or something. **Deborah:** **Uhhhh**
 Ava: You don’t think it’s safe?
Deborah: No, it’s You’ve never given me nimble.

Give: A project

In the online Free Dictionary, the list of idioms with *give* contains hundreds of examples of what *give* may collocate with and which are in conventional use (available at: <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/give>). An interesting project would be to select those that provide material for performing different types of speech acts, e.g. Expressives as in *Frankly my dear, I don’t give a damn*, or Directives like *Don’t give me any of your lip*, for the purpose of discovering (i) which linguistic constructions co-vary with expressing which emotions, (ii) wherein the figuration lies (metaphor, metonymy, or combinations thereof), and (iii) cross-language variation.

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Copula-Like Uses of Croatian Posture Verbs

It has been shown crosslinguistically that counterparts of posture verbs SIT, STAND and LIE have developed a wide network of related meanings, in some languages even grammatical ones (e.g. posture verbs in some languages can function as copulas or markers of progressive aspect).

The way in which the prototypical meanings of these verbs, in which they denote the human posture, have been extended in numerous languages, both genetically and aerally unrelated (Newman 2002), lends support to the central tenets of cognitive linguistics that the relationship between meaning and form is not arbitrary, but experientially motivated and embodied.

The results of the analysis of different meanings coded by Croatian posture verbs *stajati*, *sjediti* and *ležati* reveal that they are reminiscent of the meanings of posture verbs attested in other languages, primarily in that they denote the location of entities in physical and abstract environment (Vidaković Erdeljić 2024).

In this paper we turn to those uses of posture verbs in Croatian in which they resemble copulative uses of their counterparts in other languages. In the sentence *Novoizgrađeni stanovi stoje neprodani*. (Newly-built apartments stand unsold.) the posture verb *stajati* is denoting neither the posture nor the location of the apartments. Rather, it resembles copulas in that it can be replaced by a copula, in this case Croatian copula *biti* (to be) and still retain its intended meaning, it is followed by an obligatory predicate functioning as a subject complement, in this case by a past participle, and its prototypical meaning of posture is bleached (Quirk et. al 1985, Horton 1996).

This paper presents a study of such copula-like uses of posture verbs in Croatian based on the analysis of the use of posture verbs *stajati* (STAND), *sjediti* (SIT) and *ležati* (LIE) in the hrWaC corpus of the Croatian language.

The analysis is carried out with the aim of finding answers to the following questions: 1) how frequent are copula-like uses of posture verbs with respect to their other uses; 2) are there any constraints with regard to elements functioning as subject complements in constructions with copula-like uses of posture verbs, and 3) how different are copula-like uses of Croatian posture verbs from such uses of posture verbs attested in other languages.

The data suggest that Croatian posture verbs have not grammaticalized into copulas as in some other languages. Also, the copula-like uses of posture verbs in Croatian have maintained a link with the INACTIVITY sense of posture verbs, which was metaphorically extended from the prototypical postural meaning of these verbs via their locational sense. This INACTIVITY sense is quite prominent for Croatian posture verbs and it is also that which makes copula-like uses of Croatian posture verbs semantically different from the prototypical Croatian copula *biti* (to be).

Key words: posture verbs, Croatian, copula verbs, grammaticalization, corpus linguistics, INACTIVITY sense of posture verbs

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The role of metaphor in writing about emotional events in the first and second language

Describing emotional autobiographical events can alter people's moods (Siedlecka & Denson, 2019), which may impact creativity in general (e.g., Russ, 2013), and potentially the quantity and quality of produced metaphors (e.g., Fuoli et al., 2021). This talk examines the use of metaphors in expressing emotions in both the first

language (L1 British English speakers in Lancaster and Birmingham) and the second language (Croatian L1 speakers with L2 English), with a specific focus on the types of metaphors generated. The project addresses these questions through an experiment involving the production of written texts, followed by detailed linguistic analyses of the texts. We hypothesize that both L1 and L2 speakers will employ more metaphors in describing emotional episodes compared to non-emotional experiences. Moreover, higher creativity is anticipated to correlate with higher participant affect ratings and potentially, the text's affect.

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