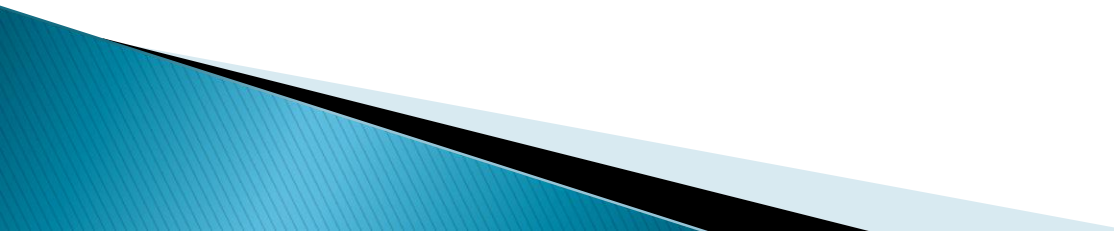


Conceptual Fluency

in Theory and Practice

Milka Hadjikotaeva
Foreign Language Centre
New Bulgarian University
mhadjikotaeva@nbu.bg

Contents

- ▶ the influence of Conceptual Fluency Theory within the framework of successful FL acquisition;
 - ▶ a case study carried out at NBU;
 - ▶ some ideas how to foster an interest in mastering conceptual fluency.
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Metaphor

- ▶ a rhetorical device of saying something as if it were something else;
- ▶ an ornament in literary works;
- ▶ an indispensable function in the human cognition – association by similarity;

Examples



Black widow



ladybugs/ladyclock/lady cow/fly

Tiger's Eye



Research

“the average speaker of English invents approximately 3000 metaphors per week”

Pollio, Barlow, Fine & Pollio, *Figurative Language in Psychology, Psychotherapy, and Education* (1977)

Conceptual Metaphors

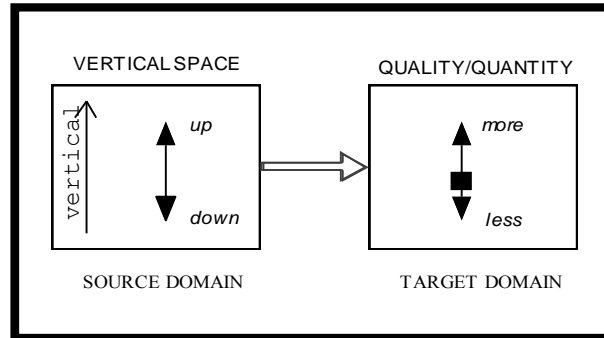
“Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.”

Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980)



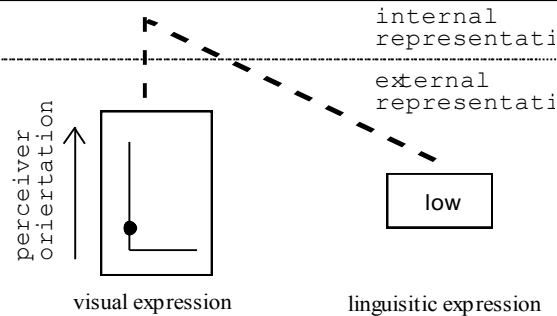
Graphic representation

Conceptual metaphor



MORE IS UP
LESS IS DOWN

Metaphorical expressions



Universal conceptual metaphors

English, Hungarian, Polish, Chinese, Zulu

[HAPPINESS IS UP]

to feel up

[HAPPINESS IS LIGHT]

to radiate joy

[HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER]

to be filled with joy

[ANGER IS A GAS IN A CONTAINER] to boil with anger

[LIFE IS A JOURNEY]

to be at a crossroads

Zoltan Kovecses, *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction* (2002)



Foreign Language Acquisition

Verbal Fluency – “the ability to control surface structure”

Conceptual Fluency – “the ability to interconnect this level with its underlying conceptual structure”

Marcel Danesi, *Semiotics in Language Education* (2000)



Problem

Students “speak” a FL using its formal structures but “think” in terms of heir NL conceptual system.

A case study

Approx. intermediate level (B1)

- ▶ Compositions
- ▶ Short answers to questions

Compositions

Titles

Only people who earn a lot of money are successful

Appearances are deceiving

Hope and fear are inseparable

Sometimes ambition is a false friend

Few wishes come true by themselves

Little knowledge is a dangerous thing

Answers to Questions

What is love?

What is hope?

What is fear?

How important is intelligence for you?

How important is money for you?

How important are words for you?

Use of Resources

- ▶ BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English
- ▶ Roget Thesaurus Dictionary of English Words and phrases
- ▶ Monolingual dictionaries

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

<http://www.ldoceonline.com/>

Compositions

Topics – concepts

Ex. Appearance (looks)

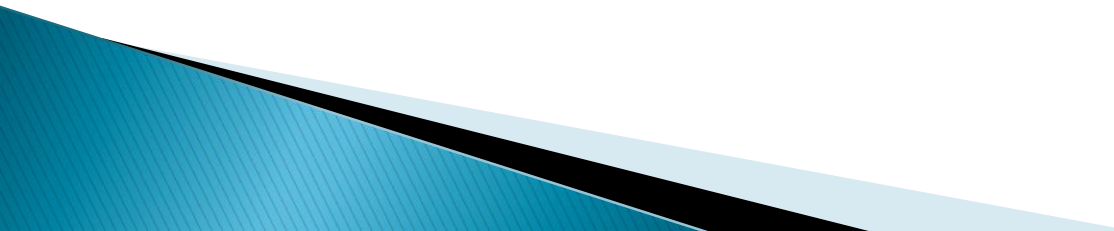
to make, put in an appearance

a dishevelled; immaculate, neat; shabby; unkempt, untidy appearance

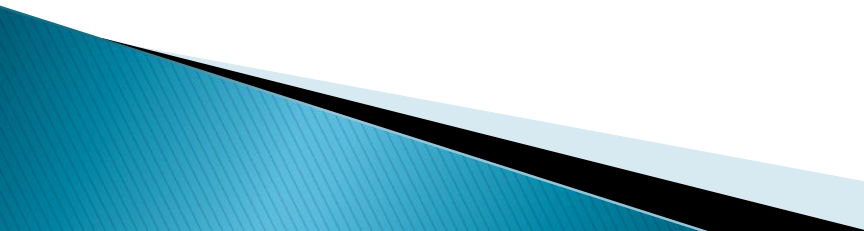
good looks

air, aspect, attitude, bearing, blind, carriage, cast, character, condition, countenance, demeanor, dress, expression, face, fashion, feature, figure, form, front, guise, image, look, looks, manner, mannerism, mien, mode, outline, pose, presence, presentation, screen, semblance, shape, stamp;

disappearance, disappearing



Appearances are deceiving

- ▶ to uncover the true self
 - ▶ to make people acknowledge smb. as smth. ingenuine as smb's fake manners are
 - ▶ control the temper
 - ▶ to present oneself in an appropriate light for the given situation
 - ▶ to be taken for an absolutely different kind of person
 - ▶ to win smb's approval or attention
 - ▶ We want to be smth that we are not meant to be
 - ▶ cheating hurts people
 - ▶ With a different outfit everyone could look different.
 - ▶ false make-up
 - ▶ People are judged by their clothes
 - ▶ material condition
 - ▶ to hide who I really am/my emotions
 - ▶ change the instincts
- 

Types of mistakes

Vocabulary

“to broadcast an advert”; “to watch commercials and adverts”

Synonyms

“to obey a temptation”, “to meet a temptation”

“to subdue to one’s fears” (subdue excitement/passions; suppress fear)

Types of mistakes

Typical of NL conceptual system

“to prove oneself in society”, ”mistakes build our character”, “to keep success”, “material condition”, “change the instincts”, “wide knowledge”, “smth. is happening without our knowledge”, “to give the maximum of one’s possibilities”, “words said on time and place they should be said”, “fight to make the wishes come true”

Answers to Questions

List of conceptual metaphors:

The electronic corpus of George Lakoff

<http://cogsci.berkeley.edu/lakoff/>

Zoltan Kovecses *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*,
Oxford, 2002

Love

[LOVE IS A BOND] a strong bond between them

[LOVE IS A UNITY] X is my better half

[AFFECTION IS CLOSENESS] X is close to Y

[EMOTIONAL INTIMACY IS PHYSICAL CLOSENESS] made for each other;
to be one; my other/better half; a perfect match

[LOVE IS A JOURNEY] at a crossroads in their relationship; this relationship isn't going anywhere; in a dead-end relationship; relationships, like sharks, have to keep moving to stay alive; this marriage is on the rocks; this relationship has been spinning its wheels for years; their marriage has really gone off the track.

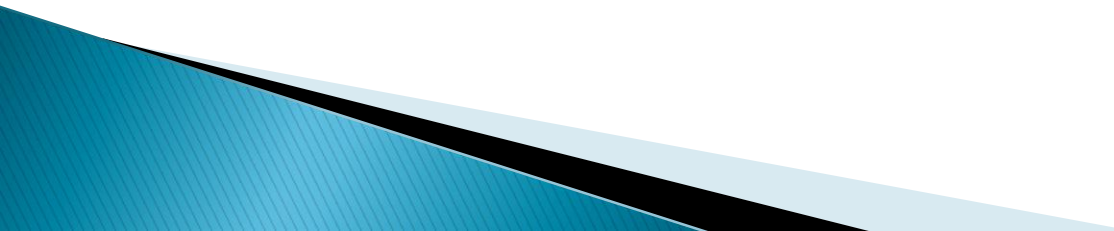
[LOVE IS MAGIC] the magic is gone; s/he is bewitching; enchanted; to be entranced; to be charmed

Expressions Used

“Love opens our hearts” - open your heart to love

“Love makes us better”; “Love has many forms”

“Love is magic”

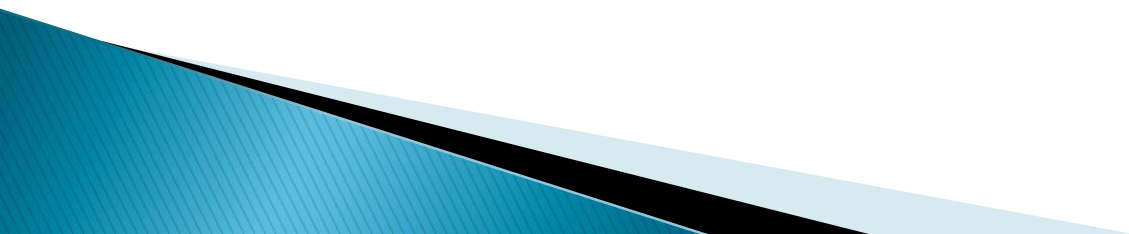


Possible solutions

to show how FL “reflects” or encodes concepts on the basis of metaphorical reasoning;

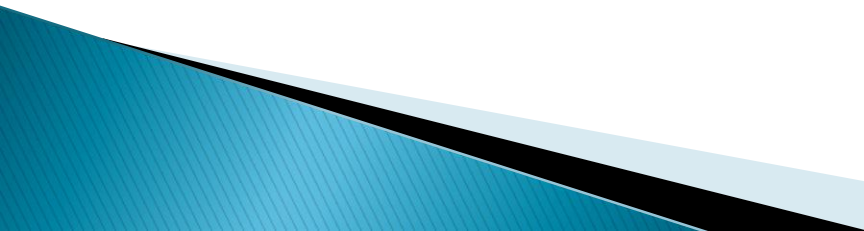
to recognize the verbal expressions and to pay attention to their underlying conceptual metaphors;

to encourage Ss to produce/invent metaphoric expressions;



“Showing” how metaphors work

Please discuss in which other areas of life the following phrases associated with sports are used. Think of your own examples.

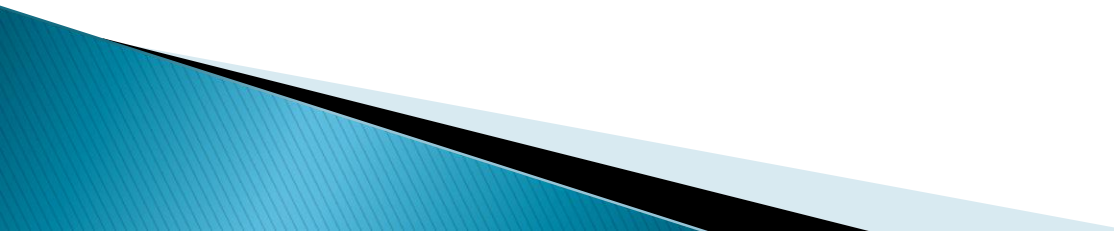
- ▶ His argument was completely off base.
 - ▶ Life is not a spectator sport.
 - ▶ The election campaign was a close race.
 - ▶ Candidates had to play it safe to gain the support of the public.
- 

Similarities and Differences

- ▶ Приятел в нужда се познава/A friend in need is a friend indeed
- ▶ Много баби, хилаво дете/Too many cooks spoil the broth
- ▶ На краставичар – краставици, Да не съм вчерашен/
“To cucumber grower – cucumbers, I’m not from yesterday

Idiomsatic expressions

[ANGER IS FIRE]

- ▶ Smoke was coming out of his ears.
 - ▶ He is smoldering with anger.
 - ▶ She was fuming.
 - ▶ Hey, I'm burned up!
- 

Life is a Journey



Money

Prosperity Savings Plan



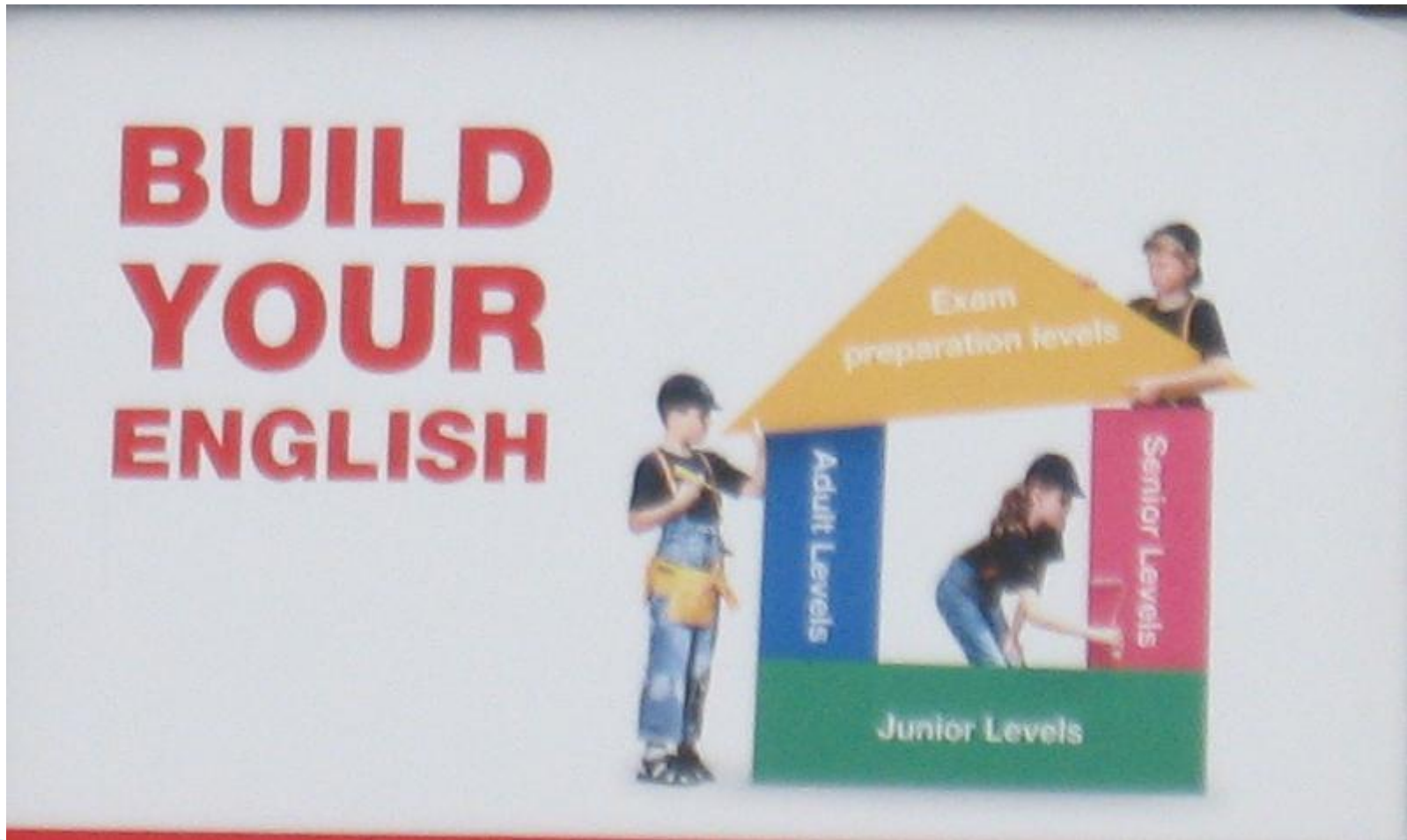
How have your savings grown?

Grow your money with regular savings

MONEY
DOESN'T GROW
ON
TREES



Encouraging creativity



Thank you for your attention!

Milka Hadjikoteva
Foreign Language Centre
New Bulgarian University
mhadjikoteva@nbu.bg

