

## **THE POWER OF METAPHOR IN THE REPRESENTATION OF MENTAL IMAGES IN THE LANGUAGE OF TOURISM PRINT ADVERTISING: LAKOFF AND JOHNSON'S MODEL OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores how metaphors enhance tourism print advertising by creating compelling visual mental images. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) model of conceptual metaphor, it examines how metaphorical language shapes these mental images and contributes to effective communication of tourist destinations' appeal. Through content analysis and frequency count of metaphorical constructions in a variety of global tourism print advertisements, the study has demonstrated that 68.4% of the examined advertisements have manifested structural metaphors that are used to communicate beautiful mental images of certain tourist destinations, while 31.6% have employed the so-called ontological metaphors. These metaphors are crucial in terms of the communication of visually appealing mental imagery that intends to excite potential tourists' positive emotions to drive them to take action (visiting a given tourist destination). Despite its reliance on Lakoff and Johnson's model, which may not be universally accepted, the study underscores and stresses that metaphors significantly improve the understanding of abstract concepts related to tourism destinations. Structural metaphors, particularly, excel in portraying unique qualities that distinguish destinations. Limitations in this article include the study's focus on a single theoretical framework and the written language of tourism print advertisements. Future research should explore alternative theoretical perspectives and consider broader contexts to gain deep insights into effective tourism advertising strategies. Simply put, this research primarily reveals how metaphors, especially structural ones, play a pivotal role in creating memorable images of tourist destinations, essential for effective tourism advertising.

**Keywords:** metaphor; cognitive linguistics; tourist destination; imagery;

### **ABSTRAK**

*Studi ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana metafora meningkatkan iklan cetak pariwisata dengan menciptakan gambaran mental visual yang menarik. Berdasarkan model metafora konseptual Lakoff dan Johnson (1980), model ini*



*mengkaji bagaimana bahasa metaforis membentuk gambaran mental ini dan berkontribusi pada komunikasi efektif mengenai daya tarik destinasi wisata. Melalui analisis konten dan penghitungan frekuensi konstruksi metaforis dalam berbagai iklan cetak pariwisata global, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa 68,4% dari iklan yang diteliti telah mewujudkan metafora struktural yang digunakan untuk mengkomunikasikan gambaran mental yang indah dari destinasi wisata tertentu, sementara 31,6% telah mewujudkannya. menggunakan apa yang disebut metafora ontologis. Metafora-metafora ini sangat penting dalam hal mengkomunikasikan gambaran mental yang menarik secara visual yang bertujuan untuk membangkitkan emosi positif calon wisatawan untuk mendorong mereka mengambil tindakan (mengunjungi tujuan wisata tertentu). Meskipun studi ini mengandalkan model Lakoff dan Johnson, yang mungkin tidak diterima secara universal, penelitian ini menggarisbawahi dan menekankan bahwa metafora secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman konsep abstrak terkait destinasi pariwisata. Metafora struktural, khususnya, unggul dalam menggambarkan kualitas unik yang membedakan tujuan. Keterbatasan dalam artikel ini mencakup fokus penelitian pada kerangka teori tunggal dan bahasa tertulis iklan cetak pariwisata. Penelitian di masa depan harus mengeksplorasi perspektif teoritis alternatif dan mempertimbangkan konteks yang lebih luas untuk mendapatkan wawasan mendalam mengenai strategi periklanan pariwisata yang efektif. Sederhananya, penelitian ini terutama mengungkap bagaimana metafora, terutama metafora struktural, memainkan peran penting dalam menciptakan gambaran destinasi wisata yang mudah diingat, yang penting untuk periklanan pariwisata yang efektif.*

**Kata kunci:** *metafora; linguistik kognitif; tujuan wisata; perumpamaan;*

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is a growing industry in the modern world. Various factors account for the rapid advancement in this field of tourism. Technology plays the most important role in terms of providing highly sophisticated tools that enable travelers to research, plan, and book their trips in the easiest and quickest way. In addition, advertising is a very profitable tool in this kind of business in the sense that advertisers get to create awareness of a certain destination and get to upgrade its profile and status to encourage and attract tourists to visit it (increasing the economic activity in it). One of these sorts of advertising is the so-called print advertising. It has become a popular tool for promoting tourism products and services. It is believed to be effective in terms of reaching out to a wider range of customers such as families and couples, and it enables advertisers to produce more detailed information about a certain tourist destination than other forms of advertising. The key force of creating successful advertising lies in the use of a specific kind of language that appeals to customers' emotions; a language that resonates with their needs and creates an emotional connection so as to increase engagement and mutual trust among interlocutors (advertisers and customers). One of the best linguistic tools that advertisers make recourse to in the production of highly attractive messages and information about a given destination is the use



of the so-called metaphor which is simply the idea of understanding a particular concept through another concept. Metaphor, as a figure of speech that increases imagery, is regarded as an effective way to promote and publicize tourist destinations. It plays a vital role in the construction of beautiful images about certain target destinations as they allow for the transmission of a great wealth of messages by the use of a short length of words. The investigation of metaphor usage in the language of tourism print advertising is a great opportunity to get further insights into the effectiveness of employing metaphor as a tool to make messages emotionally appealing, memorable, and familiar. This research article is one among other attempts which have addressed the use of metaphor in the field of advertising in general and tourism print advertising in particular. It specifically explores the use of metaphor in the context of tourism print advertising. It examines the cognitive basis in terms of how metaphor effectively generates memorable and vivid images that catch customers' attention. It precisely investigates the aspect of how metaphor-based images are constructed, and how they can have an impact on consumers' thoughts, perceptions, behaviors, and decisions. Consequently, this research article could be regarded as a reference for understanding the power of using metaphor in the written language of tourism print advertising and its contribution to the communication of effective and meaningful images of a certain tourist destination.

## **B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

"Metaphors We Live By" by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, as a theoretical framework in this research article, is a landmark book in the discipline of cognitive linguistics. It explains how metaphor, as a conceptual structure, shapes people's understanding of the world around them. It argues that metaphors are not just figures of speech, but are fundamental to how we understand and interact with the world. The book examines the various kinds of metaphors that people make use of to make sense of the world, from physical metaphors to conceptual metaphors. Ultimately, it argues that the use of metaphor helps people understand the world in ways that go beyond the literal meaning. Metaphor is found to be the most widely used figure of speech in everyday language as well as in literary works for it is a part of the so-called conceptual system of humans. It is a figure of speech in which one concept that describes a particular idea is used to describe another for the sake of analogy and comparison (the definition of Merriam-Webster dictionary). Lakoff and Johnson, (1980), posit that metaphors are not randomly constructed, but they are an inherent system of conceptualization in the human mind. Therefore, they do have a critical role when it comes to how people perceive the world around them. Lakoff and Johnson argue that "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another." (Lakoff and Johnson,1980). For Lakoff and Johnson, (1980), metaphors are not simply rhetorical, artistic, or creative devices, but they are central in the process of communicating people's experiences which are sometimes difficult in terms of being communicated literally. People's conceptual system is metaphorically shaped. For example, in "Argument is war", the abstract notion of argument is described through the use of war (his or her claims are



indefensible, he or she destroyed or attacked someone's arguments...). The act of argumentation is structured by the use of the idea of war. The structure of metaphor defines the thought itself. The notions of war and argumentation are structured because they are conceptually similar; so, the speaker or writer uses the domain of war to delineate the domain of argumentation. "Time is money", as another example, demonstrates that time and money do have structural similarities. These similarities lead to the constitution of expressions such as (He or she is wasting someone's time, he or she does not have time to give to someone, how does he or she spend his or her time these days? That flat tire cost her or him an hour; he or she invested a lot of time in it...) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) introduced a classification of three main categories of conceptual metaphor, namely orientational, structural, and ontological. Conceptual metaphor is also described as a generative metaphor, it enables the comprehension of one notion in terms of another. Within the field of cognitive linguistics, the conceptual domain from which metaphorical expressions are derived, for understanding another conceptual domain, is labelled as the "source domain." Conversely, the conceptual domain being interpreted in this manner is labelled as the "target domain." For instance, the source domain of "journey" is commonly utilized to describe the target domain of "life". Conceptual metaphors constitute an intrinsic part of the shared language and cognitive frameworks within a given culture. These metaphors display systematic correlations between the structure of the source domain and the structure of the target domain. Conceptual metaphors emerge as linguistic conventions from collective cultural understanding, experiences, and knowledge (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). There are three overlapping categories of conceptual metaphor as it was stated earlier. The so-called orientational metaphor is predicated on geometrical relationships such as on/off, in/out, up/down, and front/back. It assigns a notion a geometrical orientation; for example, "Delighted is up". Since the notion of happiness is given an upward orientation, this leads to an English statement such as "She/he is feeling up today". These metaphorical constructions are not arbitrary because they are grounded in the physical and cultural world that humans experience all the time, "His or her spirit rose", "The fact of thinking about her gives him a lift", and "She or he is feeling down means that he or she is frustrated". The physical basis from which communicators draw these meanings resides in the fact that a drooping posture conventionally aligns with frustration, resentment, and depression; whereas an erect posture resonates with a state of joy and happiness. An unconscious person is down, a conscious one is up; life and good health are associated with the direction up; death and disease are associated with the orientation down. Diseases physically force people to lie down; while, health and bodily might are equated with vibrancy and activity (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Structural metaphor is the second type. It is a metaphorical system in which one complex system (typically abstract) is equated to another (usually a more concrete concept). For example, "Argument is war," this statement structures what people do and how they understand what they are doing when they argue. Argument is metaphorically structured, performed, and grasped in terms of war (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The third type is called ontological



metaphor in which something abstract is projected into something concrete, for example, "Mind is a machine", his or her mind is not operating, his or her mind broke down; so, this example borrows meaning from a physical world to help describe an intangible entity. Both concepts (mind and machine) have structural similarities; thus, they are metaphorically structured (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). As it was stated before, Lakoff and Johnson have made it clear that people understand concepts in terms of others through the mental organization of human experiences. Comprehension depends on knowledge of the physical world; connecting pre-existing knowledge to new presented one to make mental associations. Metaphors can control the shape of images which are visualized by the so-called human mind. For instance, "Her eyes were on fire", shows a deeper and more expressive picture than "She really looks mad". One of the major functions of language is conveying emotions and the use of metaphor is among the major linguistic techniques which are employed in order to communicate them. Emotions are defined as conscious mental responses to external stimuli (language, music, interaction, films...) such as anger, excitement, surprise, jealousy, love, fear...etc. Kovecses, Zoltan, (2000), says that "Metaphor is essential to the understanding of most aspects of the conceptualization of emotions and emotional experiences." The figurative linguistic expressions that speakers and writers use to talk about their emotions derive from a largely shared conceptual system. Kovecses argues that metaphor is not only employed to describe certain emotions but also to offer those of others (Kovecses, Z, 2000). Metaphors are very important in discourse; they have been identified as cogent powerful linguistic devices. It must not be surprising when readers come across a large body of metaphorical language in tourism print advertising discourse. Sylvia, S, (2017) affirms that conceptual metaphors work collectively to evoke appealing imagery. The appeal to imagination and taste creates sensory fusions that could potentially increase tourists' desires for consumption. The tourism industry could take advantage of tourists' unfamiliarity with a given destination by metaphorically constructing imaginary pictures of a dream holiday in order to effectively attract them. Tourism print advertisers typically use structural metaphors to suggest a similarity between a service and a concept so as to enhance imagery, draw attention, elicit positive feelings, and accelerate the comprehension process of complex abstract information. Metaphors help consumers visualize beautiful, appealing, and intelligible images. Metaphorical language activates the human imagination. It is highly impactful in the sense that it triggers the effect of pleasing and entertaining those target customers (writers-online-Co-UK). The author Zoltán Kövecses, as one of many scholars who addressed the concept of metaphor, has inferred that metaphors are rooted in our conceptual system and influenced by our bodily experiences. He expands on Lakoff and Johnson's ideas by examining cross-cultural variations and universality in metaphor use (Kövecses, 2002). In addition, the authors George Lakoff and Mark Turner, in their work, have extended the theory of conceptual metaphor to literary metaphors. They have demonstrated the importance of how our cognitive processes shape our interpretation of poetry and other literary forms. They argue that our understanding and interpretation of poetic metaphors are



deeply rooted in the same cognitive processes that govern everyday language, this shows that literary metaphors are an integral part of our conceptual system (Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

Marketers have been using metaphorical expressions for a long time in order to enhance the desirability and appeal of their products and services. Metaphors are creative tools for representing complex concepts. They require listeners or readers to make a direct vivid comparison between two things; they increase the intensity of imagery in receivers' minds. The purpose of using metaphor in advertisements is to create a desirable association between a product or a service and a given concept. For instance, "Your feet are rockets in our shoes", this ad conveys the idea that a person will run faster by wearing the advertised sneakers. So, this metaphor links the given product (sneakers) with images of high speed and remarkable power which are mainly associated with the concept of a rocket. Although there is a significance of using metaphor in persuasive promotional discourses, there have been a few systematic investigations of metaphorical expressions in tourism print advertising language. There are merely two notable studies, according to the executed search, that have examined the use of metaphor in tourism print advertising. These two studies were undertaken by two scholars, Djafarova Elmira and Andersen Hans Christian (2008). The two researchers approached the frequent kinds of metaphors and their dominance in British tourism ads (published in 1970 and 2005). The authors found that there is a decrease in the use of metaphors in tourism ads between the two points of time that they considered. Nevertheless, they confirmed that the use of metaphor is still persistent in tourism print advertising language. It effectively serves a variety of functions such as grabbing customers' attention and making them think beyond the literal sense by inviting several associations between a tourist destination and a given concept. The two researchers also regard the use of metaphor as a resource of misinformation; it is usually used in a deliberate way to present a tourist destination as more attractive than it really is. Mattiello, (2012), examined the use of metaphorical language in tourism-related texts on the web, the author's findings reveal that there is a variety of metaphorical expressions in tourism advertising language; they are basically employed to intensify the persuasive effect of the communicated information (Jaworska, S, 2017). Charles Forceville states metaphors in advertising convey complex messages efficiently, enhancing consumer understanding and engagement. Visual and verbal metaphors help bridge abstract concepts with tangible experiences (Etchegoyen, 2023). Prospective tourists are often impacted by the metaphorically presented images in certain advertisements. Language in advertising is regarded as a gadget for communicating opinions, evaluations, ideas, and images to potential tourists. Tourism print advertising language is based on selling dreams and adventures which cannot be possible without the use of figurative language. Figurative language is capable of drawing a fantastic world of adventure as long as it is not limited by describing factual realities which are familiar to human cognition. Figurative language is a tool which is used for reinforcing visual images of tourist destinations. Metaphor, as a fundamental element of the so-called figurative language, makes readers draw parallels between the target domain (the advertised



service or product) and the source domain (the concept to which it is compared). Metaphors are significant for understanding communicated information in tourism print advertising language. It influences a customer's opinion and diverts his/her attention to specific features of an advertised service. For instance, "Kuala Lumpur is the heart of Asia", displaying the importance of Kuala Lumpur city for tourists is delineated by being likened to a more well-known but different object "heart". The heart is believed to be the main organ in the human body; it pumps blood to all other organs. It is a symbol of life without which humans cannot survive. It is also a source of emotions, especially love. Therefore, the reader (potential tourists) can conclude from this expression that Kuala Lumpur is the center of Asia and is the most important and beautiful destination that he or she should visit in order to have an authentic experience. It is theorized that a proficient use of metaphor can turn the target readers' attention to those qualities of a given product or service which the advertiser seeks to point at. In this way, advertisers by using metaphor can direct readers to have the desired perception or conceptualization of a particular tourist destination (Djafarova, E and Andersen, H, C, 2008). Metaphors enhance imagery in tourism print advertising language. The examination of certain advertisements has revealed some functions which are performed by employing the so-called metaphor in tourism print advertising language. It boosts the process of imagining unfamiliar destinations; advertisers use metaphors for better communication of certain features of a tourist destination. For example, an advertisement text for Dominica, "Forget lounging on the beach, this island is pure craft territory! Fight your way through tangled jungles, leap crystal rivers and cool off under plunging waterfalls." The advertiser makes an analogy between an unfamiliar tourist destination and a famous computer game and movie "Tomb Raider" and eventually drives tourists to make associations between those shared characteristics of the two entities (Dominica and Lara Croft territory). Consequently, the potential customers become able to constitute a visual image of that destination which offers adventurous activities. Economizing space is an important property of the use of metaphor in tourism print advertising language. Metaphors are typically short expressions, but they can communicate a lot of information as a result of the great amount of symbolism and powerful images that they generate. They are attractive, compelling, and visually appealing in terms of the communication of beautiful mental images to consumers. They condense enough information about a product or service (Djafarova, E and Andersen, H, C, 2008). Tourists' comprehension abilities are always taken into account when advertisers are crafting the language of their ads. Target tourists are expected to decode the intended meanings of a given metaphor in order to form their own interpretation. This interpretation depends very much on their knowledge of the world, their inferential skills, and their physical experience. The meaning which is expressed by the use of metaphor can change readers' attitudes towards a given product or service. The following example illustrates the power of metaphor, in this statement, "Sri-Lanka: Pearl of the orient", the target customer is expected to visualize the attributes of a pearl and to associate them with the tourist destination (Sri-Lanka). He or she is forced to associate the



qualities of a pearl such as beauty, shape, glow, pureness, and color with the described destination (Sri- Lanka). The previous metaphor increases the target tourists' ability to beautifully imagine those qualities associated with Sri-Lanka (being compared to a pearl which is conventionally known for its exquisite beauty). Another example, "Cortina is the queen of Dolomites", this metaphor suggests that Cortina, as a tourist destination, is the best in the Italian Alps (Djafarova, E and Andersen, H, C, 2008). Additionally, Barbara Stern argues that metaphorical language in advertising enhances the narrative and the emotional appeal, making advertisements more relatable and impactful for consumers (Stern, 1990).

In their article whose title is "Toward the Perspective of Cognitive Destination Image and Destination Personality: The Case of Beijing", Karen, L, Xie and Jin-Soo Lee (2013) argue that Beijing is portrayed as an exciting modern city which flourishes with a diverse cultural heritage. The most frequently displayed attributes are associated with appealing modernity, adventure, and cultural landmarks. The study found that Beijing tends to have a special personality in the sense that it is characterized by both traditional and modern values. To promote such aspects, advertisers used a set of lexical items to describe this destination such as "vibrant and modern city", "rich cultural heritage", and "diverse cultural attractions". The research article suggests that Beijing has a destination image that combines the traditional aspect with the modern one. The authors came to the conclusion that Beijing's fame, as a tourist destination, is the outcome of the unique combination of modern and cultural elements through the use of an appealing language which creates a unique destination experience in tourists' minds (the generation of cognitively attractive images). W, Suryasa (2016), in the research article "Figurative Language Found in Print Advertisement", which is carried out through qualitatively and quantitatively analyzing twenty print advertisements, found that figurative language was employed in several manners to construct and forge powerful and persuasive messages. The study also found that the most common type was the so-called metaphor, which represented 40% of all metaphorical expressions. Metaphors were intended to create powerful visual images and trigger strong emotions that influence tourists' decision-making processes. Simile was the second most common type of figurative language, representing 30% of the analyzed data. Similes were meant to construct a comparison between the advertised service (tourist destinations) and other objects or concepts in order to build a vivid and memorable image. Personification was the third most used form which only represented 15%, to help in the process of creating a sense of exaggeration, conviviality, and connection with the target customers. The study also displayed that the use of other forms of figurative language such as puns, hyperbole, and irony was not as common as the previous figures of speech. In general terms, the study found that figurative language is an effective linguistic tool that advertisers make use of for creating persuasive and memorable images of certain destinations. Furthermore, the author Jonathan Charteris-Black contends that metaphors in political advertising help to shape public opinion and reinforce ideologies. They create persuasive messages that resonate with voters' emotions and cultural values



(Charteris-Black, 2004). Eva Karpinski, on the other hand, argues that metaphorical language in advertising creates emotional connections between the consumer and the product, leading to increased engagement and brand loyalty (Karpinski, 1990).

In the research article entitled "Visual Metaphor in Advertising: Is the Persuasive Effect Attributable to Visual Argumentation or Metaphorical Rhetoric?", Jeong, S. H, (2007), through the use of a mixed-method (quantitative and qualitative) found that visual metaphors had a significant persuasive influence on customers. The author argues that the use of visual metaphors augmented the likelihood of getting the offered service consumed (increasing consumers' purchase intent). The study also found that the persuasive effect of visual metaphors was attributed to two main defining variables (visual argumentation and metaphorical rhetoric). The qualitative interviews showed that visual metaphors allowed for a deeper understanding and thinking of the communicated message. Consumers confirmed that visual metaphors are more interesting, inviting, tempting, and appealing than other kinds of metaphors. Simply put, the study concluded that the use of visual metaphors has a powerful and profound persuasive effect on consumers as long as they let customers think beyond the literal sense which increases the likelihood of spending more time reflecting on the intended message (increasing its memorability). The authors of the previously cited studies found that the use of metaphor in advertising makes the advertised products (tourist destinations) more attractive and memorable and allows one to emphasize their unique features. Additionally, the authors found that the use of metaphor helps create a positive image and is used to forge an emotional connection with potential customers. Moreover, the authors argued that the use of metaphor improves message effectiveness by increasing consumers' engagement and comprehension of visual images which are intended to be communicated. The use of metaphor generates mental messages (images) that are much more meaningful and emotionally appealing than literal messages. Metaphor has also been found to be effective in increasing the persuasiveness of communicated messages and in conveying abstract concepts. It increases the cognitive processing of the intended message, which leads to the likelihood of message recall (vivid imagery). In accordance with the previous view, the researcher Raymond W. Gibbs Jr confirms that metaphors in advertising enhance cognitive processing by linking new information to existing knowledge, thus making advertisements more understandable and memorable (Gibbs, 2008). To further accentuate the previous idea, Gerard J. Steen has concluded after analyzing metaphor use in advertising that metaphors are strategically employed to convey complex ideas and persuade consumers effectively to make a purchasing decision for a given service or product (Steen, 2007). The results suggest that the use of metaphor helps communicate strong messages to the target audience. Overall, the use of metaphor in tourism advertising is an efficient linguistic device for promoting a given tourist destination to potential travelers. This research highlights the cutting-edge understanding of how metaphors shape the communication of beautiful mental images of tourist destinations, using Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor model. By exploring structural and ontological metaphors, the study reveals their



effectiveness in creating vivid imagery. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, the analysis of 19 global tourism print ads showcases the prevalence and impact of these metaphors. The findings underscore that metaphors simplify complex ideas, evoke emotions, communicate beautiful mental images and enhance the appeal of destinations. This research sets a high standard in cognitive linguistics, offering deep insights into how metaphorical language enhances tourism advertising.

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

Constructionism is an epistemological stance which is embraced within this study. It emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through interactions, experiences, and interpretations. Constructionism also emphasizes that individuals bring their existing beliefs, ideas, convictions, experiences, and cultural backgrounds into the process of building knowledge. It confirms that each person may relatively and differently interpret and understand a given information based on his or her unique perspective or context.

As an epistemological stance, constructionism suggests that reality is not an absolute truth but is subject to interpretation and is influenced by social, cultural, and historical factors. In research, constructionism encourages researchers to investigate how knowledge is constructed and how different perspectives shape understanding. It emphasizes the importance of studying the processes through which individuals or groups create and interpret knowledge. Researchers who use a constructionist approach may engage in methods such as interviews, observations, or discourse analysis to examine certain knowledge within specific contexts (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

The epistemological stance which is embraced in this study is called social constructionism. It is based on the premise that meanings are constructed through the experiences of individuals. It is described as research epistemology which is predicated on the fact that meanings are constructed by people. These so-called meanings are contextually constructed on the entities that surround people (Lincoln and Denzin, 2000). Hackley, (2003), points out that social constructionism describes the act of marketing (an example of social reality) as a complex literary phenomenon (Djafarova, E, 2008).

In general, social constructionism provides a conceptual framework for understanding the constructed realities that people create. Social constructionists typically adhere to certain key points: knowledge is socially constructed and language plays a significant role in its construction. Language constrains what people can describe and conceptualize. Noam Chomsky said, "The structure of language determines not only thought but reality itself." Language does not only describe the world as it is but also creates it (Thought Co.com/social constructionism).

The theoretical perspective which is employed in this study is called interpretivism. In the interpretivist perspective, the researcher assumes that reality is mentally and subjectively constructed (Crossan, 2003) (Djafarova, E, 2007). This perspective views knowledge as a process of interpretation rather than a collection of facts. Interpretivism is a theoretical perspective that emphasizes the



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importance of understanding the subjective meanings, experiences, and interpretations of individuals.

Max Weber states that interpretivism emphasizes understanding the subjective meaning of social action. Weber argued that to comprehend social behavior, researchers must interpret the meanings individuals attach to their actions (Weber, 1947). Moreover, Clifford Geertz considers that interpretivism in anthropology involves thick descriptions to understand cultural contexts. Geertz emphasized the importance of interpreting the symbols and meanings within a culture (Geertz, 1973). Interpretivism focuses on the social construction of reality and on the process of understanding how people give meaning to their lives and to their experiences.

The relationship between constructionism, as an epistemological stance, and the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, is one of similarity. Both constructionism and interpretivism share the belief that knowledge is created through individuals' interactions with their environments and experiences, and not through an objective external reality (positivist view). This means both perspectives involve a focus on active participation in the creation or construction of knowledge, as well as the importance of understanding the meanings that people attribute to their experiences. Additionally, both constructionism and interpretivism emphasize the importance of context in the construction of knowledge.

The two aspects of research serve as a conceptual framework for understanding the nature of knowledge, structuring the whole research, and shaping its methodology processes (data collection, analysis, and interpretation). The constructionist and interpretivist aspects typically align with the so-called qualitative methodology which is a research approach that is centered on subjectively understanding a certain phenomenon. It involves gathering detailed information about a subject through observation, interviews, and surveys. Qualitative research does not often involve statistical analysis, but instead relies on interpretation, reflection, and description.

Content analysis, as a qualitative methodology technique, is based on analyzing and interpreting the meaning or content of textual or audiovisual data. It involves identifying patterns, themes, or categories within the data and making inferences or interpretations based on these patterns. Content analysis can go with both quantitative and qualitative approaches depending on the research objectives and the nature of the data being analyzed. Qualitative methodology is a general and broad approach used to describe and explain different aspects of social life.

Content Analysis is employed in this study to analyze the use of metaphor in tourism print advertising (written texts). This study makes use of both content analysis, as a qualitative research tool, and frequency count, as a quantitative research tool, to analyze the written language of tourism print advertising in various countries. The researcher closely looks at the frequency of some types of metaphors based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) model of conceptual metaphor. Tourism print advertisements are selected based on the fact that they contain the figure of speech named metaphor (data collection).



Due to time and space constraints, this research article does not analyze a huge number of written data. Individual advertisements are selected from various global tourism print publications. The process of analysis is based on the idea that the gathered data is analyzed in an interpretive way to meet the research objectives. As for the methodology limitations of this study, the sample size could not be large enough and therefore may not be representative of broader texts of tourism advertisements (lack of external validity). Bias could threaten the validity and reliability of this study as well. To improve generalizability, this research article aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of nineteen distinct tourist prints encompassing diverse tourist destinations around the globe (multiple contexts) and makes recourse to peer validation through an independent assessment to improve the reliability parameter.

In the next section, the author presents the findings of this study on the power of metaphor in the language of tourism print advertising, adopting Lakoff and Johnson's model-based cognitive perspective of conceptual metaphor. Before delving into a meticulous analysis of the so-called metaphorical language in some selected ads, the author would like to provide an overview of the consulted literature and the methodology of this research.

Lakoff and Johnson's model views metaphor as a fundamental cognitive mechanism that shapes people's understanding of abstract concepts by getting them mapped into more concrete domains (concepts). Metaphor involves conceptualizing one domain in terms of another, highlighting similarities and correspondences between them. It is not merely a linguistic device, but a pervasive and inherent aspect of human thought and reasoning. Metaphor plays a crucial role in structuring people's understanding of the world and influencing their perceptions, attitudes, and communication.

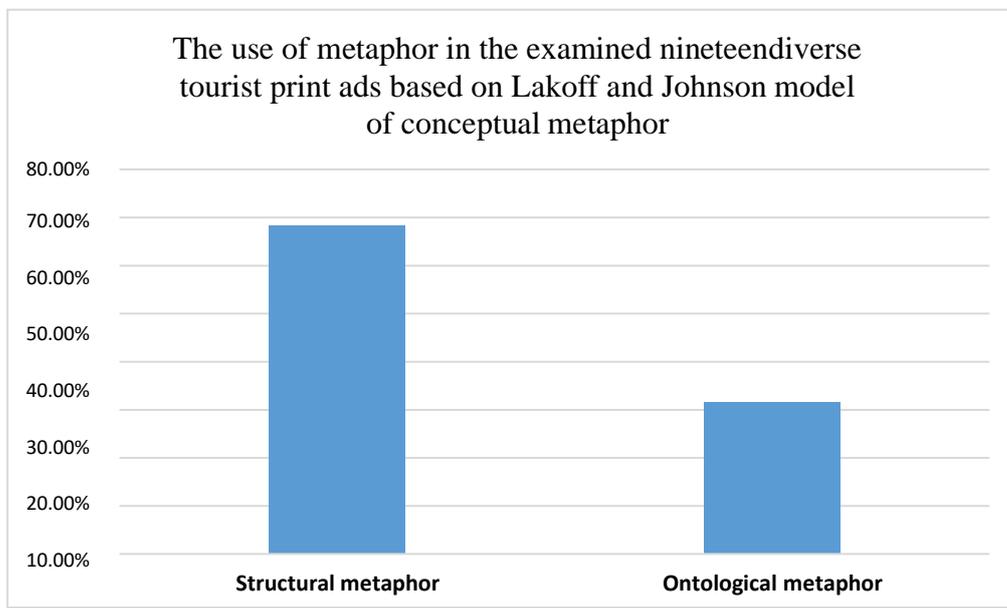
The literature review has demonstrated that metaphor in tourism print advertisements makes the advertised products (tourist destinations) more attractive and memorable. It helps create positive visualizable images and is used to create an emotional connection with potential customers. It also improves message effectiveness by increasing consumer engagement and comprehension to convey desired and familiar meanings. It generates mental messages (images) that are much more meaningful and emotionally appealing than literal messages. Metaphor has also been found to be effective in increasing the persuasiveness of communicated messages and in tangibly conveying abstract concepts. It increases the cognitive processing of the intended message, which leads to the likelihood of message recall (vivid imagery).

Building on this literature foundation, the author has employed a mixed-method approach (qualitative and quantitative methodology) to investigate the use of metaphor in the written language of tourism print advertising based on Lakoff and Johnson's model of conceptual metaphor. This study involves a systematic analysis of representative samples of written advertisements in order to gain deeper insights into the most recurring type of metaphor (orientational, structural, and ontological) and how it communicatively operates within the language of tourism print advertising.



The forthcoming stage involves a rigorous and systematic analysis of a set of carefully selected advertisements to scrutinize their content, structure, and communicative strategies in terms of the use of metaphorical expressions.

#### D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION



After carrying out a meticulous analysis of nineteen distinct tourist print advertisements promoting various tourist destinations around the world, it was found that thirteen of them manifested structural metaphors, while six advertisements manifested ontological metaphors and zero advertisement manifested orientational metaphors. The findings revealed that approximately 68.4% (13 out of 19) of the analyzed ads employed structural metaphors, while around 31.6% (6 out of 19) used ontological metaphors. Advertisers tend to use structural metaphors as a result of their ability to convey complex ideas and facilitate clear communication of essential aspects, qualities, and experiences. This type of metaphor resonates with the preference for visually appealing imagery, attracting the customer's attention, and eliciting positive emotions or perceptions, which are fundamentally critical in advertising practices. The use of structural metaphor constructs evocative and memorable images by comprehensibly and beautifully describing the unique qualities of each tourist destination. The results, obtained through content analysis (Lakoff and Johnson's model of conceptual metaphor) as a qualitative research tool and frequency count as a quantitative research tool, demonstrate the significant presence of metaphor-based messages in tourism print advertisements. The use of metaphor has been proven to be highly effective in intelligibly conveying beautiful images of a variety of tourist destinations. The subsequent phase of this research article includes a meticulous analysis and examination of the use of metaphorical



language in those nineteen distinct tourists print advertisements represented in the bar chart.

### **1. Advertisement number one:**

“The beauty of Philippines. A world you didn't think still existed. But it does, right here in the island paradise of El Nido. Where Tropical nights rain stars. Dazzling blue waters beckon to the pristine white sands bleached even whiter by the sun. And coconut trees bend to listen to the waves. Where life is an idyll and smiles are dreamy. On the Philippines Airlines, the sun shines through on every flight. Forget all worldly concerns and bask in the sunlight of the warm smiles and caring ways of our flight stewardesses, Trish and Michelle. It's almost like paradise”?

This print tourist ad uses structural metaphor to create vivid and beautiful images of El Nido, a paradise-like tourist destination in the Philippines. The ad starts by describing the beauty of the Philippines and emphasizing that it is a world that many people did not think that it still exists. To emphasize the beauty of El Nido destination, the ad uses a variety of expressions such as "tropical nights rain stars", "dazzling blue waters", "pristine white sands", and "Coconut trees bend to listen to the waves", which create a lush, tropical image in the reader's mind. The ad uses metaphor to describe the flight experience on travel airlines of the Philippines, likening it to "paradise". The phrase "The sun shines through on every flight" creates the image of a sunny, happy atmosphere on well-equipped planes which offer comfort and welcoming hospitality. Overall, the ad's use of metaphor effectively communicates the message of a beautiful and paradise-like tourist destination in the Philippines. The metaphor used in this tourist ad is called structural metaphor. It compares the experience of traveling to the Philippines to the utopian concept of paradise. The two notions (domains) of the tourist destination and the paradise are intended to be structurally similar to evoke visualizable images which are associated with tranquility, peace, and beauty.

### **2. A collection of four advertisements:**

“Cornwall Beckons...Enjoy the beauty and grandeur of this land of legends and dreams. Fine selection of cottages and houses throughout Cornwall. Accurately described in our free colour brochure”.

“Antigua. With around 365 beaches (one for every day of the year) Antigua is pure beach-bumheaven! So slip on your shades, smooth on the sun cream and get down to some serious testing”.

“A taste of the Tropics. Enjoy the best of both worlds; a classic transatlantic crossing on board Oceania and the lilting rhythms and fine beaches of a series of Caribbean gems”.



“Fun in France. Enjoy the essence of Paris in Saint-Germain-des-Pres”.

Metaphors are a powerful tool for communicating beautiful images of a tourist destination. In the four tourist print ads provided above, metaphors are used to create vivid and memorable images of those described tourist destinations. In the first ad, Cornwall is described as “a land of legends and dreams” to construct an image of a place which offers mysterious and fantastical experiences. This is a structural metaphor as it uses the structure of a journey to Cornwall to represent the idea of a journey into a land of legends and dreams. The metaphor emphasizes the beauty and grandeur of Cornwall so as to encourage potential travelers to visit it. The second ad compares the beaches of Antigua to “pure beach-bum heaven” to draw a picture of a paradise-like beach in tourists' minds. This second metaphor is structural as well. The third ad, "The best of both worlds" compares and merges two distinct experiences; a classic transatlantic crossing on board Oceania and the enjoyable views of Caribbean gems. It implies that one can simultaneously and harmoniously experience the pleasures of both worlds. This type of metaphor is ontological as it blends two dichotomous experiences to create a sense of appeal. The fourth ad uses the concept of "essence" to convey the idea that one can capture the true spirit of Paris by visiting Saint-Germain-des-Pres. This ontological metaphor implies that this particular neighborhood has got the most beautiful tourist sites in Paris. In general terms, the use of metaphor in these four tourist print ads is effective in communicating the intended messages and creating beautiful images in the readers' minds about each tourist destination.

### 3. A collection of three advertisements:

“Feast your senses. Come and see what’s going down in the dynamic melting pot that is Cornwall’s vibrant creative scene. From cutting-edge, internationally acclaimed artists to theatrical performances on the beach and everything else in between, Cornwall’s cultural life is racing. Come and feel the creative buzz”.

“Tamar Valley. Listen to the birdcalls, lapping water and sounds of the woods. Winding its way from a wide-open estuary through dense woods, rolling pastoral landscapes, seep-gorged valleys, and brooding moorland, the valley flanking the River Tamar is the ultimate tranquil retreat”.

“Far West and beyond. It may be out on a limb, but the intoxicating mix of arts, history and dazzling natural environment in this far corner of Cornwall means there is no way you’ll pass by. Walk in the footsteps of prehistoric man on the exposed and atmospheric moors”.

The first ad makes use of the metaphor “dynamic melting pot” to communicate the image of Cornwall’s vibrant and culturally diverse environment. In this ad, the so-called structural metaphor is manifested in the phrase "dynamic melting pot" to imply that Cornwall's cultural life is full of activity, energy, and



vibrancy. There is also an ontological metaphor represented in the phrases "feast your senses", "come and see", "come and feel", and "creative buzz", which make use of sensory and physical experiences to describe the experience offered in the promoted tourist destination. The metaphor which is represented in the first tourist print ad is structural. It compares the experience of a holiday in the described destination to a dream that comes true. The purpose is to encourage tourists to turn their dreams into reality by traveling to that destination. The second tourist print ad also involves a structural metaphor which resides in the phrase "long tail of coastal provinces". The concept of "long tail" is metaphorically made use of to depict the geographical landscape of Vietnam's coastal provinces. It implies that the coastal provinces stretch in a long, narrow manner, taking after the shape of a tail. This metaphorical description emphasizes the elongated nature of the coastal provinces in order to attractively indicate Vietnam's natural beauty and favorable climate.

#### **4. A collection of three advertisements:**

"The world is your oyster with a Golden Holiday Loan from forward trust".

"Without doubt, this is the closest country to Britain that can truly be described as eastern. It is perched on the brow of Africa and it is a land of strange sights. Morocco".

"Athens itself is a Mecca for sightseers and nearby beaches provide a pleasant contrast".

The first tourist print ad demonstrates an ontological metaphor in the phrase "the world is your oyster". The metaphorical expression implies that the world, just like an oyster that holds a precious pearl inside, holds an unending number of possibilities. It alludes to the fact that by taking a Golden Holiday Loan from Forward Trust, people would have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of tourist experiences. They would get access to enjoy the various opportunities and treasures that the world offers. In the second tourist print ad, the phrase "perched on the brow of Africa" reflects a structural metaphor. It pronounces Morocco's prominent and strategic location on the African continent. It indicates that Morocco has a charming location that gives Africa a remarkable beauty. The metaphorical expression also conveys the idea that Morocco is an exotic and mysterious tourist destination. The third tourist ad contains a structural metaphor manifested in the concept of "Mecca". This notion is metaphorically employed to describe Athens as a tourist destination that attracts a larger number of tourists, just as Mecca is the holiest city in Islam and a major destination for Muslim pilgrims. The metaphor implies that Athens is a highly popular and sought-after tourist destination which is full of historical and cultural attractions.

#### **5. A collection of three advertisements:**

"Epirotiki's Caribbean and Mediterranean Luxury Cruises are a Godsend. The



immortal Olympians really knew how to live sumptuously - that's why we named our most luxury liners after the Gods themselves. Epirotiki Lines”.

“Relax under the friendliest sun in the Mediterranean. Malta ‘glad to see you’ island playground”.

“The happiest place on Earth – Disneyland”.

A structural metaphor, as it was stated in the review of literature section, involves mapping the structure of one domain into another. The first tourist print ad above contains a structural metaphor that maps the domain of luxury cruises (Epirotiki's Caribbean and Mediterranean Luxury Cruises) into the domain of ancient Greek mythology (the Gods). The depiction of luxury cruises as Gods implies their power, grandeur, opulence, and sumptuous lifestyles. In the second tourist ad, the statement "Relax under the friendliest sun in the Mediterranean" reflects an ontological metaphor which resides in the fact of attributing or associating the abstract concept of friendliness with the notion of the sun (a physical entity). The sun is described through the use of the notion of friendliness. This metaphorical expression is intended to evoke a sense (image) of warmth and welcoming hospitality. The third tourist ad contains an ontological metaphor which is manifested in the phrase "The happiest place on Earth". The abstract concept of happiness is assigned to the physical space of Disneyland in order to highlight the idea that Disneyland is a place where people experience full joy, happiness, and excitement.

## 6. A collection of two advertisements:

“Pangkor and its little sister Pangkor Laut are two of Malaysia’s top island destinations, the latter home to one of the world’s most luxurious resorts”.

“Naples, Italy. Vast, vibrant and erupting with life, lively Naples curls around its sweeping bay in the shadow of mighty Mount Vesuvius”.

The first tourist ad manifests a structural metaphor in the phrase "Pangkor and its little sister Pangkor Laut". It makes use of the metaphorical framework of kinship (siblinghood) to describe the connection between Pangkor and Pangkor Laut. This connection establishes a structural relationship between the two destinations to suggest a similarity between them in terms of their luxuriousness and attractiveness. The second tourist ad reveals an ontological metaphor typified in the statement "Lively Naples curls around its sweeping bay in the shadow of mighty Mount Vesuvius". It uses the abstract concept of vibrancy to describe the Italian city of Naples. The use of the word "lively" and the verb "curls" to describe Naples’ geographical location around the bay is intended to communicate that the city is full of activity, wonders, and tourist marvels for travelers who are looking to explore and experience nature.



## **E. CONCLUSION**

The results of this research article suggest that metaphor is an effective tool for communicating images of tourist destinations. The use of metaphor is associated with increasing memorability, attention, and persuasion. Metaphors do have a strong influence on consumers' perception of the intended message in terms of recall and retention. After conducting a meticulous analysis of nineteen distinct tourist print advertisements promoting various tourist destinations around the world, it was found that thirteen of them manifested structural metaphors, while six advertisements manifested ontological metaphors. These findings indicate that approximately 68.4% (13 out of 19) of the analyzed ads contained structural metaphors, whereas around 31.6% (6 out of 19) contained ontological metaphors. Advertisers make recourse to structural metaphors because they offer a concise and comprehensible means of conveying complex ideas (abstract notions). They facilitate clarity in terms of communicating fundamental aspects and experiences. Structural metaphors resonate with the preference for the communication of compelling visualizable images of certain tourist destinations. They visually appeal to customers in the sense that they effectively help in the creation and construction of captivating imagery that attracts consumers' attention. Moreover, these metaphors tap into pre-existing mental frameworks to make familiar associations that evoke specific emotions or perceptions. Structural metaphor is found to be much more effective in terms of communicating highly intricate thoughts and conveying unique qualities of a certain destination that make it stand out. It is one of the most important types of metaphor which are defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (orientational, ontological, and structural metaphor). It constructs evocative and memorable images of the target tourist destination. The previously consulted studies have consistently demonstrated that the use of metaphor is a powerful tool for effectively communicating vivid and memorable tourist images. The findings of these studies have constructed a tremendous wealth of evidence which supports the claim or premise that metaphors are effective means of capturing tourists' attention. The authors of the previously cited studies found that the use of metaphor in tourism print advertising makes the advertised services (tourist destinations) more attractive and memorable and allows advertisers to emphasize their unique features. The use of metaphor generates mental messages (images) that are much more meaningful and emotionally appealing than literal messages. Metaphor is also effective in increasing the persuasiveness of communicated messages and in clearly delineating abstract concepts. It increases the cognitive processing of the intended message, which leads to the likelihood of message recall (vivid imagery). The results generally suggest that the use of metaphor helps communicate strong messages to the target audience. To develop further based on the existing knowledge, the current research article, as another attempt to investigate the notion of metaphor within the realm of advertising, validates the claim that metaphor is an effective linguistic technique to communicate beautifully visualizable images of tourist destinations. The study displays that metaphor tends



to be omnipresent in the written language of tourism print advertising. It reveals, based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) model of conceptual metaphor (theoretical framework), that structural metaphors are much more commonly used to convey captivating images of the beauty of certain tourist destinations. Structural metaphors more compellingly and eloquently enable individuals (advertisers) to conceptualize and beautifully describe the various qualities of a given tourist destination. Structural metaphors effectively construct mental imagery that evokes a sense of admiration, excitement, and desire to explore the advertised tourist destinations. This research article contributes to the growing body of literature about the use of metaphor in the field of advertising in general and tourism in particular. It emphasizes that metaphor plays a vital role in shaping the tourists' perceptions and emotional responses to certain descriptions of tourist destinations. The use of appropriately constructed metaphors allows advertisers to visually engage potential travelers in imagining themselves living the experience of enjoying the thrilling adventure of the advertised tourist destinations. Furthermore, this research article provides insights for understanding how metaphors associate between different domains to draw beautiful images and to emotionally engage tourists in processing the intended message of certain tourist destinations. This research article reinforces the notion that metaphors are highly effective in communicating tourist images. It specifically underscores the predominance of structural metaphors in promoting beautiful images of tourist destinations. Advertisers, through the use of metaphor, can evoke mental imagery, establish emotional connections, and eventually get individuals excited about exploring the offered tourist destination. The current study does not only contribute to the existing literature but also offers valuable insights for practitioners in tourism communication by stressing the importance of metaphorical language in persuasive and engaging discourse. The use of metaphor in tourism print advertising is powerfully effective in improving message recall (retention), comprehension, viewpoints, and interest in the advertised service. In conclusion, this research article has demonstrated that the use of metaphor as a powerful linguistic tool enhances imagery and memorability of the communicated messages of certain tourist services and products. By applying Lakoff and Johnson's model of conceptual metaphor, the study investigated the prevalence and types of metaphors used in the language of tourism print advertising worldwide. Through a comprehensive analysis of nineteen diverse tourist print ads, the study aimed to identify the most frequent type of metaphor and its impact on effectively communicating attractive and appealing images of various tourist destinations. The findings revealed that approximately 68.4% (13 out of 19) of the analyzed ads employed structural metaphors, while around 31.6% (6 out of 19) used ontological metaphors. Advertisers made recourse to structural metaphors as a result of their ability to convey complex ideas and facilitate clear communication of essential aspects, qualities, and experiences. These metaphors resonated with the preference for constructing visually appealing imagery, attracting customers' attention, and eliciting positive emotions or perceptions, which are fundamentally critical in advertising practices. The results, obtained through content analysis (Lakoff and Johnson's model) as a qualitative research



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tool and frequency count as a quantitative research tool, demonstrated the significant presence of metaphor-based messages in tourism print advertisements. The use of metaphor has been proven to be highly effective in intelligibly conveying abstract and intricate notions (beautiful images) related to tourist destinations. As it was stated before, the most frequent type of metaphor is the so-called structural metaphor (understanding one domain of knowledge or experience in terms of another as they are metaphorically structured). This type of metaphor constructs evocative and memorable images by comprehensibly and beautifully describing the unique qualities of certain tourist destinations. While this research article heavily relies on Lakoff and Johnson's model of conceptual metaphor, which may not be universally accepted in the academic sphere, it serves as a starting point for further investigations in the future. Future research should consider alternative theoretical perspectives and account for other contextual factors present in the language of tourism print advertisements, such as visual presentations and the target consumers. Addressing these limitations will contribute to gaining more reliable and valid insights into this subject matter. In general terms, this study underscores the significance of metaphor (structural metaphor) in effectively promoting tourist destinations by creating compelling and memorable imagery. It opens avenues for future research and encourages a deeper understanding and examination of the use of metaphor in advertising in general and tourism print advertising in particular.



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