Interaction of Metaphor and Political Frames
in the Language Critique Activity "Unwort des Jahres"
(the Non-Word of the Year)

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Keywords: metaphor, frame, media discourse, language critique, German

Previous research has demonstrated that conceptual metaphors are omnipresent in various and sundry contexts from the interaction of many linguistic, cultural, historical, anthropological, social and political forces. Some linguists have endeavored to establish the connections between metaphorical language and cognition as social practices (Zinken 2007, Goatly 2007). Gibbs (2017: 124) indicated that "within this approach, the analysis of discourse not only uncovers important mental modals and representations, but also reveals how metaphor, among other linguistic devices, creates and reproduces dominant social schemas."

The German Language Critique Activity "Unwort des Jahres" (the Non-Word of the Year) was originally launched in 1991, which aims primarily to encourage ordinary people to use language critically and consciously. Under this guideline, the term is chosen from suggestions sent in by the public. Additionally, the term may be one that violates human rights or democracy, or may arouse discrimination against specific social groups or may be euphemistic or misleading. After serious reflections, a core panel which is composed of four linguists from different universities and one journalist will select one Non-Word from all the suggestions for the previous year and announce it annually in January. A wealth of metaphorical usages could be found in the Non-Words, for example, the Non-Word of 2013 "Sozialtourismus" (social tourism) refers to foreigners in Germany allegedly leeching on the welfare system.

The main concern of the paper was to study how metaphorical and political frames interact. Particular attention is paid to the chosen "Non-words of the Year" since 1991. Using an integrated qualitative discourse analysis (e.g. Spitzmüller/Warnke 2011, Larcher 2015), we analyzed all the 27 Non-Words and 54 related media texts. We started by depicting the literal and non-literal meanings of the Non-Words. Then we ascertained how these metaphorical meanings were discursively used in related texts and how emotions were stirred up within the frames.

The paper provides broad empirical evidence for what Gibbs (2017: 124) pointed out. And this study delves deeper into the question of how metaphor and frames interact. We firstly argue that the metaphors in the Non-Words occur in specific political backgrounds and these frame-based constraints could partly limit lexical choices in metaphorical language (Sullivan 2013). We secondly show that metaphors in political frames have implicit or explicit emotional components which could conversely affect the dynamic frame construction and reconstruction.

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