

# Saving the euro – a multimodal analysis of metaphors depicting the Eurozone crisis<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Much of the research into the topic of financial crises has centered mainly on verbal metaphors whereas visual and multimodal aspects of the phenomenon have remained rather underrepresented. Within the theoretical framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis pertaining not only to verbal (Charteris-Black & Musolff, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2004) but also to pictorial and multimodal discourse (Forceville, 1996 & 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009), in this paper we focus on both linguistic and pictorial realisations of the euro currency which pertain to the broader topic of the Eurozone crisis. Closely modelling our methodology on Bounegru and Forceville (2011), we analyse seven covers of the weekly magazine *The Economist* published in the period 2010-2012 which relate to the Eurozone crisis and belong to the LIQUID and MOVEMENT domains respectively. The purpose of our investigation is to answer the following two questions: (1) how do verbal and visual modes of metaphorical representation contribute to the creation of a particular conceptualisation of the euro currency, and (2) what are some of the evaluative components rendered from the selected multimodal representations? In order to address these questions, we attempt to establish how conceptualisations of the euro are used by the media so as to describe the impact of the Eurozone financial crisis by the use of suggestive pictures accompanied by textual messages and symbols.

**Keywords:** critical metaphor analysis, economic discourse, monomodal and multimodal metaphors, eurozone crisis.

## Resumen

*Salvar el euro – un análisis multimodal de las metáforas que describen la crisis en la Eurozona*

Mucha de la investigación sobre el tópico de la crisis financiera se ha centrado principalmente en las metáforas verbales mientras que el aspecto visual y multimodal del fenómeno ha permanecido inexplorada. Dentro del marco teórica del Análisis Crítico de la Metáfora (Charteris-Black y Musolff, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2004) junto con el del discurso pictórico y multimodal (Forceville, 1996 y 2008; Forceville y Urios-Aparisi, 2009), en este artículo nos centramos en la materialización lingüística y pictórica del euro en relación con el ámbito más amplio de la crisis de la Eurozona. Tomando como modelo el enfoque metodológico de Bounegru y Forceville (2011), analizamos siete portadas de la revista *The Economist* publicadas entre 2010 y 2012 que se centran en la crisis en la Eurozona y pertenecen a los dominios LÍQUIDO y MOVIMIENTO respectivamente. El objetivo de nuestra investigación es responder las siguientes preguntas: (1) cómo contribuyen los modos de representación metafórica verbal y visual a la conceptualización del euro y (2) cuales son algunos de los componentes evaluativos utilizados en las representaciones multimodales seleccionadas? Para dar respuesta a estas preguntas, intentamos establecer cómo las conceptualizaciones del euro se usan en los medios de comunicación para describir el impacto de la crisis financiera de la Eurozona a través de las imágenes y de los mensajes textuales y símbolos que las acompañan.

**Palabras clave:** análisis crítico de metáforas, discurso económico, metáforas monomodal y multimodal, crisis de la eurozona.

## 1. Introduction

We live in a world where “[t]he majority of newspapers and magazines add visual images concerned with the contents of newspaper and magazine articles with the aim of helping readers have a thorough understanding of topics and contents of newspaper and magazine articles” (Yang & Zhang, 2014: 2564). This is especially true of magazine front covers, which aim, by carefully and convincingly combining the verbal and the visual into persuasive messages, to inform readers about the latest events as well as to influence their line of reasoning about such events, in accordance with the worldview magazines wish to represent and defend. Therefore, it is possible to speak of the language of magazine front covers as a special type of multimodal discourse, having important multiple functions of attracting, informing and persuading potential readers, as well as helping them to understand the message, at the same time slanting this message in such a way as to influence this understanding to suit the policy of the publication.

The focus of this paper is on the multimodal analysis of the front covers of *The Economist* magazine, at the time when the financial turbulence in the Eurozone had erupted in the late 2009. The debt crisis taking place in several Eurozone member states which were unable to repay or refinance their government debt and had to be rescued by “the Troika” has triggered a myriad of representations, the media’s being just one of them. More precisely, we tackle the topic of the Eurozone crisis or the European sovereign debt crisis, as it is alternatively called, examining, in line with the main postulate of multimodality, that there are different modes used to create meaning, verbal and non-verbal ones, both linguistic and pictorial realisations of the euro currency, which relate to the broader topic of this crisis. We will try to establish how the Eurozone crisis is communicated on the covers of *The Economist* magazine, in an attempt to unpack both verbal and pictorial modalities of metaphor and other cognitive devices such as metonymy and image schemas used on these covers.

The purpose of our investigation is to answer the following two questions: (1) how do verbal and visual modes of metaphorical representation contribute to the creation of a particular conceptualisation of the euro currency, and (2) what are some of the evaluative components rendered from the selected multimodal representations? In order to address these questions, we attempt to establish how the conceptualisation of the euro, realised by means of several monomodal or multimodal mappings, is used by the media so as to describe the impact of the Eurozone financial crisis by the use of suggestive pictures accompanied by textual messages and symbols.

Our paper is structured in the following way: after a brief account of the theoretical framework underlying our analysis, given in Sections 2 and 3, we deal with our data collection and the method of analysis in Section 4. The focus of Section 5 is on the analysis of the covers which make up our data collection. Here we provide and discuss the most common monomodal or multimodal metaphorical mappings found on the selected covers pertaining to the Eurozone crisis, which centre around the two respective domains – LIQUID and MOVEMENT. In Section 6 we summarise our findings and point out the significance of the choice of metaphors used on magazine covers.

## 2. Theoretical background

The theoretical underpinnings are based on Cognitive Theory of Metaphor and Metonymy (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999; Charteris-Black & Musolf, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2004; Benczes, Barcelona & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2011) on the one hand, and, on the other, the theory of multimodal discourse (Forceville, 1996 & 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009; Bounegru & Forceville, 2011), in which the meaning is created through some modes of communication other than the verbal one. Although Cognitive Theory of Metaphor, and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in particular, have been widely and critically assessed over the last thirty years (see e.g. Kövecses, 2008; Gibbs, 2011), our application of CMT stems from the original Lakoff and Johnson's views (1980) in which the claim is made that metaphors are a property not of words but of concepts and that, as such, they enhance understanding of particular concepts and ideas. In cognitive linguistic terms, one conceptual domain – the target – is understood in terms of another conceptual domain – the source – where a “conceptual domain” refers to “any coherent organization of experience” (Kövecses, 2002: 4).

While rather neglected at the very onset of cognitive linguistic research, metonymy has gradually begun to be considered an equally important cognitive device for influencing the way we think. Many authors have claimed that it is “a cognitive phenomenon that may be even more fundamental than metaphor” (Panther & Radden, 1999: 1), a view which has been reiterated in a number of further volumes on metonymy and metaphor (e.g. Dirven & Pörings, 2002; Barcelona, 2003). Although disagreements still arise among cognitive linguists concerning many unresolved issues surrounding metonymy as a cognitive mechanism, it has now been widely accepted that “metonymy plays a crucial part in the motivation of numerous conceptual metaphors” (Benczes, Barcelona & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2011: 2). Metonymy also refers to mappings between conceptual domains, but unlike metaphor which entails a mapping between two conceptual domains, where the source is used to structure the target, metonymy, on the other hand, is according to the standard cognitive linguistic view understood as a conceptual projection whereby one domain is partially understood in terms of another domain included in the same experiential domain (Barcelona, 2000). It is, therefore, often understood as an intradomain phenomenon, but unlike metaphor, where mapping is symmetrical, in metonymy mapping is asymmetrical, a more salient entity provides mental

access to a less salient domain or entity within the same domain (Barcelona, 2011: 12; see also Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Radden & Kövecses, 1999).

In addition to metaphor and metonymy, image schemas also play a vital role in understanding and structuring the concept of the Eurozone crisis, thus adding to “conceptual interaction” (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 1997) and frequently the parallel activation of these three cognitive instruments. A theory of image schema was developed by Johnson (1987), who defined it as “a recurrent pattern, shape, and regularity in, or of [...] ongoing ordering activities” (1987: 29), such as our actions, perceptions, and conceptions. More specifically, an image schema is a spatial abstraction that arises from everyday bodily experience (see also Lakoff, 1987; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 1997). Among a number of image schemas provided by Johnson (1987: 126), pertinent to our multimodal analysis of the Eurozone crisis are the VERTICALITY, PATH and CONTAINER schemas, all characterised by a number of structural elements and a basic logic which refers to “a set of relations between elements and the inferences based on them” (Peña Cervel, 1998: 452). Thus the VERTICALITY schema “emerges from our tendency to employ an UP-DOWN orientation in picking out meaningful structures of our experience” (Johnson, 1987: xiv) and is based on an underlying dichotomy, with the positive pole perceived as UP and the negative pole perceived as DOWN. More importantly, image schemas “can then be metaphorically extended to structure nonphysical, nontactile, and nonvisual experiences” (Rohrer, 2007: 35-36), such as the Eurozone crisis and the euro currency. The foundation for the comprehension of such an abstract domain as the Eurozone crisis is orientational metaphor based on spatial orientation MORE IS UP/LESS IS DOWN, where the image schema of VERTICALITY is conflated with the concept of QUANTITY.

The PATH image schema consists of a source or starting point, a destination or an end point and a direction. An internal logic of this schema is that if you go from a source to a destination along a path, then you must pass through each intermediate point on the path (Lakoff, 1993). Movement is an important notion of the PATH image schema, here viewed as the movement of money (the euro), conceptualised as a liquid substance. This in turn gives rise to the FLOWING MOVEMENT image schema and the MOVEMENT OF MONEY IS THE FLOW OR MOVEMENT OF LIQUID mapping, also “based on our daily experiences with water running from a tap, with blood, etc.” (Silaški & Kilyeni, 2011: 67).

Finally, the CONTAINER image schema, with its three structural elements – an interior, an exterior and a boundary – is organised around this basic logic: the boundaries prevent what is outside from affecting the entity or entities found within the container or a bounded region; everything is either outside or inside the container; if container A is in container B and B in C, then A is inside C (Lakoff, 1989: 116). More importantly, though, as our analysis will corroborate, image schemas, predominantly used in the construction of visual metaphors and metonymies, tend to co-occur on the same cover. They hinge on viewing the Eurozone crisis as the state or condition in which the EU member countries may find themselves, the STATE OF CRISIS thus being conceptualised as a CONTAINER which has its inside, outside, and the boundary between them. The euro, in turn, is perceived as LIQUID which in time of crisis may be emptied, spilled or poured from the container, now relating to the thus conceptualised EU member countries. On the other hand, this, on an abstract level, leads to comprehending economic recession and crisis as a downward movement, activating the UP-DOWN vertical orientation and intertwining the MOTION and PATH schema with that of VERTICALITY.

### 3. Multimodal metaphors on magazine covers

In analysing magazine covers, which typically consist of a photograph or illustration, accompanied with a headline and other verbal elements, we focus on cognitive devices pertaining to the Eurozone crisis which are not, or *not exclusively*, verbal, but rather visually, i.e. pictorially manifested. If, according to Lakoff and Johnson, “[t]he essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (1980: 5), then it is possible to reason, as Forceville (2009a) does, that if verbal metaphors are “manifestations” rather than “reduplications” of thought, one of these manifestations may be non-verbal or pictorial, which in turn should contribute to the completeness of a theory of metaphor. Unlike monomodal metaphors, such as the prototypical verbal metaphors, multimodal metaphors, as defined by Forceville, are “metaphors whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes”, where adverbs “exclusively” or “predominantly” are particularly relevant since, according to the author, “non-verbal metaphors often have targets and/or sources that are cued in more than one mode simultaneously” (2009b: 24). Since magazine front covers can hinge on only

two modalities, the metaphors in our analysis also belong to either monomodal metaphors, i.e. either verbal metaphors or pictorial/visual metaphors, or to multimodal metaphors, composed of both the verbal and visual modalities (Bounegru & Forceville, 2011). In addition, it is worth emphasising that the motivation for mapping the source domain onto the target domain in multimodal metaphors goes well beyond the notion of embodiment which is so widely used in CMT to provide concreteness to the source domain. Rather, as Forceville claims, knowledge about source domains is also a matter of cultural connotations “that are metonymically related to a source domain [and] are often more important for potential mappings to a target than its embodied aspects” (Forceville, 2009b: 28). Our analysis of *The Economist* magazine covers related to the Eurozone crisis will also show that the source domains of the multimodal metaphors are grounded both on our physical experience and cultural contexts.

Pictorial and multimodal metaphors used on the cover, the most prominent part of a magazine, are forms of mass communication and thus should bring about a strong impact on the readership. The importance of effective magazine covers may be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, they serve as an introduction to the articles featured inside and should be as attractive to readers as possible so as to make them buy the magazine. In this sense, a magazine cover functions metonymically in relation to the whole text contained inside, thus having to be strong and salient enough as a part to represent the whole. But, as Cortés de los Ríos (2010: 84) points out, dealing with the cognitive devices to communicate the economic crisis on the covers of *The Economist*, “the magazine cover is not simply a visual and verbal summary of what is considered the most important current topic; it is also an important form of self-advertising”. In this sense, a magazine cover serves not only as an advertisement, but also as a means of structuring the reality or rather “the presentation of a selective view of reality” (McCracken, 1993: 14).

Secondly, since pictures (often combined with text) have a stronger rhetorical effect and much more persuasive power than words alone, the choice of pictorial metaphors for a magazine cover seems only natural, having in mind the basic property of metaphor to represent an abstract, hard-to-understand concept in terms of a more concrete and easier-to-understand concept. Namely, pictorial and multimodal metaphors in particular “require[s] the text’s recipient to construct a meaningful reading by processing verbal and visual elements together” (Koller, 2009: 49), which

boosts the persuasive power of the cover. In addition, as Forceville claims, pictorial metaphors have “a more sensual and emotive impact on viewers” (2008: 475) than those purely verbal. For that same reason, they may have “greater international appeal, since they do not (exclusively) rely on language codes” (Forceville, 2008: 475).

Finally, and this is of special importance when it comes to pictorial metaphors depicting the Eurozone crisis on the covers of *The Economist* magazine – they may have a strong influence on the readership regarding their understanding of the crisis, since, although most frequently metaphorically structured in words alone,<sup>2</sup> it may be better perceived by using powerful pictorial elements which pertain not only to its multifarious causes and effects but also the ideologies subtly hidden behind the metaphorical veil.

#### 4. Data collection and methodology

The data collection for our analysis consists of seven covers of the weekly magazine *The Economist* published in the period 2010-2012 and collected from [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com). The selected time frame more or less coincides with the timeline of the Eurozone crisis, which began in the late 2009, whereas the ending seems not to be in sight yet, despite various attempts to return the Eurozone countries to healthy and sustainable growth. *The Economist* magazine was chosen as the source of data for several reasons. Firstly, all the selected covers combine visual and verbal manifestations of metaphors. More precisely, in each selected cover the euro currency, or its symbolic form, is explicitly present either pictorially (in the form of coins or banknotes) or verbally (the word “euro” appears in the text accompanying the picture), or both. All the covers profile the euro currency by way of suggestive pictures together with textual messages and symbols to describe the impact of the Eurozone crisis. Secondly, in all the covers the image manifests a metaphor, even though it is not always automatically related to the Eurozone crisis, but needs to be communicated by way of verbal/textual or contextual cues. Finally, all the covers display various roles of the verbal (the text) and the visual manifestations (the image). Hence, we are also interested to demonstrate that all the metaphors, monomodal and/or multimodal, pertaining to the Eurozone crisis as a target, exhibit some evaluative components, which stems from the metaphor role on the selected



magazine covers – to alert readers and make them convert the depicted and perceived similarities between diverse concepts and the euro crisis into action.

Also, as expected, our classification of the covers, based on the identification of the source domain, has not been facilitated by the existence of a very complex cognitive apparatus. Quite on the contrary, metaphors, metonymies, and image schemas of pictorial and/or verbal type frequently intertwine on the same cover and are all rife with rich cultural references. “As in verbal metaphors, it is connotations rather than denotations of source domains that get mapped in metaphors, and these may substantially differ from one (sub)cultural group to another” (Forceville, 2009b: 29). Therefore, in line with the method of analysis used in Bounegru and Forceville (2011: 213), who provide clear instructions for the identification of metaphors in multimodal discourse (more precisely, political cartoons pertaining to the global financial crisis), in the next section we discuss monomodal and multimodal cognitive devices pertaining to the Eurozone financial crisis, trying to determine their contribution to the structuring of the European sovereign-debt crisis.

## 5. Analysis

As established by Bounegru and Forceville, there are several domains which, by means of the euro currency pictorial and verbal modes of presentation, cognitively represent the Eurozone crisis: the LIQUID domain, the MOVEMENT domain, the FIRE domain, the FOOD domain, etc. An analysis of the seven covers belonging to the LIQUID and MOVEMENT domains will be presented here since the two domains comprise consistent and most prevalent sets of metaphors, both monomodal or multimodal, frequently structured by the same metaphor/metonymy-image schema interplay.

LIQUID and MOVEMENT verbal metaphors have long been employed to structure varied concepts in business and economics, such as money, banks, companies, markets and their movements (see e.g. O’Connor, 1998; Charteris-Black & Ennis, 2001; Charteris-Black, 2004; Alejo, 2010; Silaški & Kilyeni, 2011; Herrera-Soler & White, 2012). This stems from the physical property of water to be fluid (which in turn results in the economic concept of LIQUIDITY) and move (the concept of FLOW). Yet, the

conceptualisation of the rates of change in market value via “bodily knowledge of the speed of movement” (Charteris-Black, 2004: 168) is not grounded only in the movement in/of the water, but also in the movement on the ground or in the air. The LIQUID and MOVEMENT domains are shown to be prevalent in the structuring of economic crisis via verbal metaphors as well (see White, 2004; Rojo López & Orts Llopis, 2010; Silaški & Đurović, 2011; Arrese, 2015), where the overall intensity of water movements – the effects of the global financial crisis, the magnitude of these effects, and, most importantly, the fact that the crisis is getting out of control – are best communicated by *turbulence*, *whirlpool*, *flood*, *waves* and other metaphorical expressions. The global economic crisis has also become a fertile research ground in multimodal metaphor analyses (Cortés de los Ríos, 2010; Bounegru & Forceville, 2011; Đurović & Silaški, 2013), where multimodal metaphors tend to buttress the same purpose as their purely verbal renderings – highlighting the scale and destructive power of the crisis as well as influencing judgments by persuasion. In a subsequent multimodal analysis of seven covers of *The Economist* we focus on verbal and visual instantiations of the two domains, LIQUID and MOVEMENT, to show how the interrelationship of the identified metaphors, metonymies and images schemas contribute to the creation of a particular conceptualisation of the euro currency and the Eurozone crisis in general, and to reveal the evaluative character of the selected multimodal renderings.

### 5.1. The LIQUID domain

The first cover presented in Figure 1 and belonging to the LIQUID domain was published in the 25th June 2011 issue of *The Economist* and tends to convey the impact of Greece’s default on the entire Eurozone. The visual metaphor depicts a businessman who is looking at the hole of a magnified kitchen sink. The image of the businessman rests on the metonymy BUSINESS SUIT/BRIEFCASE FOR BUSINESSMAN (via CLOTHES FOR THE PERSON relationship, resting on the DEFINING PROPERTY OF CATEGORY FOR CATEGORY cognitive principle). The sink is cognitively viewed as a CONTAINER via the IN-OUT relation, when states, such as indebtedness, financial crises, etc. are conceptualised as CONTAINERS. On the other hand, the euro is pictorially represented with a banknote on the verge of falling into one of the kitchen sink holes, which together with the image of the kitchen sink adds to the identification of the MONEY IS A LIQUID metaphor. All this is pictorially reminiscent of the

idiom “go down the drain”, meaning “being lost or wasted” and in the light of the verbal message “If Greece goes...”, accompanying the visual part of the cover, is suggestive of enormous bail-outs to Greece regarded by many EU leaders as a waste of money. The size of the magnified sink as opposed to that of the businessman and more importantly, the implied huge amount of money that goes down the sink, point to “an axiological clash” (Cortés de los Ríos, 2010: 91), where the value of “big” does not prototypically connote a positive but rather a negative value. The cover may perhaps not be rightly interpreted unless verbally cued, which makes it an example of multimodal metaphor. The half of the conditional sentence “If Greece goes...”, implying a very likely possibility and, when cued pictorially, making reference to “going down the drain”, underlines fear and panic on a looming Greek default and a likely situation that awaits other crisis-hit EU economies.



Figure 1. *The Economist*, 25th June 2011: “If Greece goes...”.

The second cover (Figure 2), dating from 15th January 2011, unless cued verbally, would otherwise serve to depict any life-threatening situation. However, when backed by the verbal “The euro crisis: time for plan B”, it is clearly put into the context of the Eurozone crisis, and fares as a multimodal metaphor. The pictorial mode of the cover is based on the EURO CRISIS IS THE WATERFALL metaphor, which rests on THE EUROZONE CRISIS IS THE MOVEMENT IN THE WATER (the MOVEMENT and the VERTICALITY image schemas), and the CONTAINMENT metaphor. In light of the verbal message, the cartoon characters stand as a metonymical reference to the EU leaders and policy makers, who should steer the canoe

away, i.e. the EU (pictorially represented via the CONTAINER metaphor) from the steep waterfall they are dangerously approaching. The metaphor is suggestive of the non-working policies propagated by the EU leaders represented on the cover as seven cartoon characters (portraying seven EU member states: Portugal, Belgium, Spain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, and Germany) desperately trying to prevent the imminent plunge over the waterfall, i.e. the EU debt crisis. In addition, the verbal “Time for plan B” implies the previous, ineffective plan A which, in turn, should hint at who is to blame for the worsening of the Eurozone crisis and for being incapable of saving the euro from collapsing.



Figure 2. *The Economist*, 15th January 2011: “The euro crisis: time for Plan B”.

The third cover presented in Figure 3 belongs to the 20th November 2010 issue of *The Economist* and rests on a number of pictorial metaphors, the central being a sort of replica of Géricault’s *The Raft of the Medusa*, which depicts a moment from the aftermath of the wreck of the French naval frigate *Méduse*. The raft with a sail containing a circular constellation of stars resembling the one on the EU flag – metonymy THE EU FLAG FOR THE EU (which rests on the MEMBER OF A CATEGORY FOR THE ENTIRE CATEGORY metonymy) – as a metaphor for the EU belongs to the CONTAINER schema, which is visually and conceptually placed into another CONTAINER, the crisis and debts, represented by stormy waters, giving rise to THE EURO CRISIS IS DROWNING (which belongs to a wider class of the WATER/LIQUID metaphors). The crisis-ridden people in the EU, reminiscent of the people surviving a shipwreck on the raft, are portrayed in

such a way as facing away from the viewer, to another direction, to the open and troubled sea. The verbal metaphor “Saving the euro” appears to refer to Steven Spielberg’s famous movie *Saving Private Ryan*. The flags of Spain, Greece, Ireland and Portugal metonymically stand for their respective countries and visually demarcate the economies that need help the most, lest they drown and take the whole EU (via raft with the EU flag) with them. The rescue mission is administered by the obvious rescuers, the European Central Bank, via the image of a helicopter clearly marked by the acronym ECB, and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, a visual symbol of Germany (the PRESIDENT FOR A COUNTRY metonymy) – Germany being the biggest creditor of these crisis-hit EU economies and thus their only hope in financial terms. The rescue mission is carried out from the air, which connotes UP, and in turn metaphor POWER/DOMINANCE IS UP. Hence this visual part of the cover may also covertly express the criticism of Germany’s (frequently viewed as Mrs Merkel’s) role as the sole judge who decides which financial behaviour would be approved and which would not, or in view of the verbal cue, who decides on the way the euro should be saved.



Figure 3. *The Economist*, 20th November 2010: “Saving the euro”.

## 5.2. The MOVEMENT domain

The MOVEMENT domain, frequently utilised as the source domain that provides a rich knowledge structure for understanding complex economic phenomena, is represented in our data collection with four covers.

The first cover in this category (Figure 4) dates from 5th November 2011 and depicts Parthenon as a metonym for Greece. In the light of the target concept, PLACE (Greece) FOR EVENT (the Eurozone crisis) metonymy, the cover would hardly be classified as a multimodal metaphor unless integrated with the verbal modality “Greece” with all three letters ‘e’ from the word being substituted with the euro symbol, which also stands in a metonymical relation to the EU and the Eurozone countries. Cognitively speaking, the cover, on the one hand, conveys the idea of the VERTICALITY schema and the BAD IS DOWN metaphor; on the other hand, the image of the euro in a steep fall through the air (the MOVEMENT schema) connotes the great speed and imminence of fall, thus underscoring the disastrous effects of the devaluation of the euro on the Greek economy in the light of the possibility of Greece leaving the Eurozone and abandoning the euro. The cover conveys the following message: if Greece, i.e. Greek economy, visually cued as Parthenon, goes down, which is in turn cued by the euro symbol falling through the air, this would have serious repercussions for the rest of the Eurozone and Europe in general. The verbo-pictorial metaphor hinges on the notion that “very rapid changes are typically conceptualised with reference to ways of moving in the air, i.e. with the greatest of ease” (Charteris-Black, 2004: 166), which is rooted in our knowledge and physical experience that there is very little resistance to movement in the air.



Figure 4. *The Economist*, 5th November 2011: “Gr€€€”.

A visual solution similar to the previous cover is exploited on the second cover belonging to the MOVEMENT domain dating from the 28th July 2012 issue of *The Economist* (Figure 5), this time pertaining to a zoomorphised pictorial representation of Spain and its financial troubles, together with that of the caption “Spain”. Spain is pictorially represented as a bull, branded with the euro symbol, and stuck by coloured barbed sticks on its neck and flanks, connoting Spain in great financial woes. If we assume that the caption is not necessary for the identification of the source and the target, then this cover qualifies as a monomodal metaphor. However, unlike the previous cover where the effects of the EU financial crisis are portrayed by the euro symbols rapidly falling off the word “Greece” marking this cover as a multimodal metaphor, here the letter “S” starts to fall through the air (a combination of the two image schemas, VERTICALITY and MOVEMENT). Thus, when the caption is accounted for, the metaphor “verges towards the verbo-pictorial variety” (Bounegru & Forceville, 2011: 215). The intensity of the trouble is reiterated by the image of the bull branded by the euro symbol on its body, which should indicate that the financial fall of Spain via the letter S standing for Spain would lead to the fall of the entire Eurozone, and by the verbal remainder “pain”, which unequivocally shows what Spain and other Eurozone countries will be left with if Spain falls, literally and metaphorically. The use of similar visual solutions by means of the selected cognitive patterns, VERTICALITY and MOVEMENT image schemas, in both covers, pinpoints the intention of the metaphor creators to underline that Spain’s financial situation is just as threatening as that of Greece.



Figure 5. *The Economist*, 28th July 2012: “Spain”.

The third cover of the 26th November 2011 issue of *The Economist* (Figure 6), similarly to the previous two, combines two image schemas, those of MOVEMENT and VERTICALITY, and unequivocally refers to the Eurozone crisis. The cover depicts the image of a plummeting comet, whose two parts, the nucleus and the tail, are symbolically represented by the 1-euro coin and remnants of the 20-euro banknote respectively, both metonymically standing for the Eurozone countries. The image of the 20-euro banknote against the dark black background leaving a blazing trail is suggestive of the threat of imminent disaster. Equally effective in communicating the potential break-up of the Eurozone is the image of the 1-euro coin-comet head moving swiftly downwards which, unless averted, will crash with far-reaching consequences. The aspect of saving the euro and preventing the dissolution of the Eurozone is verbally cued by the question “Is this really the end?”, which should convey the need to act immediately so as to stop the ominous downward spiral of the Eurozone, block its shattering and consequently save the single currency. Since the meaning of the caption is neutral (and may have different referents) and the image on the cover – the euro-comet hurtling towards a collapse used as a source domain – unambiguously conveys the idea of the Eurozone crisis (a target domain), we regard this magazine cover as an example of a monomodal metaphor. By representing the Eurozone crisis as the fall of the burning euro comet and its very rough landing (THE EUROZONE CRISIS IS PLUMMETING/WAY OF MOVING IN THE AIR metaphor), the focus is placed on the speed, extent and direction of the movement which, since it stirs panic and instills fear, asks for immediate acting. Yet, likening the Eurozone crisis and a potential break-up of the euro to the natural phenomenon of a comet underscores the unpredictable and uncontrollable character of the crisis. Thus, laying its stress on the inevitability of the disaster backed up visually and verbally, the selected magazine cover may seem as a means of lifting the burden from the shoulders of all those involved in the crisis – the ones who have initiated it as well as the ones who should take the measures to cushion the catastrophic effects of the crisis.





Figure 6. *The Economist*, 26th November 2011: "Is this really the end?"

The cover in Figure 7 dating from the 16th July 2011 issue of *The Economist* may be communicated as 'THE EUROZONE CRISIS IS FALLING OFF THE CLIFF', which encompasses two metaphors: ECONOMIC CHANGES ARE WAYS OF MOVING ON THE GROUND and the BAD IS DOWN (the VERTICALITY schema). Both metaphors are brought together to highlight the dire consequences of the Eurozone crisis and the imminent danger of the collapse of the euro as a single currency, pictorially rendered by the 1-euro coin, as a metonym for the Eurozone countries. The risk of the euro moving quickly downwards is particularly grave as this would drag down the Eurozone's third-biggest economy, Italy, metonymically represented by the topographical image and as if about to sever from the rest of the continent. The path of the motion of the euro symbol indicates that the single currency itself is at risk, which is verbally cued by "On the edge" together with the sub-caption "Why the euro crisis has just got a lot worse", thus making the unity with the image of Italy on the verge of breaking off from the rest of Europe. The imminence of Italy's fall and the diminutive size of this country as compared to that of the euro symbol are suggestive of the disastrous consequences of the crisis hitting such a big EU economy. The choice of colours also adds to the gravity of the whole situation: the red background symbolising the enormity of debts against the image of the rest of Europe in black serves to portray the depressing, dismal plight of the Eurozone countries' economies. Hence the entire cover serves to reflect the magnitude of the Eurozone crisis in

wealthier members of the EU “family”, whose precarious financial position exposes the single currency to risk, visually and verbally cued on the cover as being on the brink of fall.



Figure 7. *The Economist*, 16th July 2011: “On the edge. Why the euro crisis has just got a lot worse”.

## 6. Discussion

The above multimodal analysis of the magazine covers inevitably entails an attempt to detect some of the evaluative components rendered from the selected multimodal representations. Overall, given the common denominator, which stems from the implied meaning of the selected covers – warning about the impending danger of dissolving the monetary union and abandoning the euro – all the above metaphors can be labelled as “destruction metaphors” (Bickes, Otten & Weymann, 2014: 429), whose primary pragmatic function is to warn readers and spread fear among them. Furthermore, “[i]n a state of anxiety, the reader is more likely to accept and approve the determined rescue measures of the government. In a scenario in which the Eurozone is about to collapse, all action taken seems to be justified to the reader” (Bickes, Otten & Weymann, 2014: 429-430). Anxiety and fear, as our analysis shows, are communicated by the complex verbo-pictorial cognitive mechanisms, which are always encoded in a visual mode and sometimes in a verbal mode as well. On the basis of our analysis it may be said that the spatial concepts, those of VERTICALITY, MOVEMENT, and CONTAINER, together with the structural metaphors, are more prevalent in the visual than the verbal mode, which is in line with Forceville

and Urios-Aparisi's (2009: 13) conclusion that "[n]on-verbal and multimodal metaphors may make salient certain aspects of conceptual metaphors that are not, or not as clearly, expressible in their verbal manifestations". Also, the pictorial representations of the image schemas always communicate a negative evaluation of the Eurozone crisis and the euro currency and add to the overall persuasive character of the covers, channeling the way the readers understand and react to this event.

In addition, metonymy is an equally important cognitive device for communicating the meaning of the covers, and many metaphors mentioned above are actually metonymy-based. Metonymies are mainly represented visually, and less frequently verbally. As expected, many visual representations are deeply culturally entrenched, which, in view of the target domain, the Eurozone crisis, has strong evaluative character. This, for instance, relates to Figure 4 which makes reference to Greece via a symbol of Parthenon, linked with the ancient Greece. We may reason that this symbol, metonymically motivated, seems to convey the message that Greece is the originator and cause of the EU's financial woes, with the underlying message that the country which is the cornerstone of modern Europe and the EU is at the same time the one that is heading towards breaking up the euro as one of the most important symbols of the European identity. Hence the media representation of multimodal metaphors trades on the capacity of metaphors to help to form opinions and provide a window on "the beliefs, attitudes and feelings of the discourse community in which they [metaphors] occur" (Charteris-Black, 2004: 13).

## 7. Conclusion

Our aim in this paper was to analyse how visual and/or verbal modalities of metaphor, metonymy and image schemas hinging on the LIQUID and MOVEMENT domains as cognitive instruments used on the front covers of *The Economist* magazine contribute to the structuring of the concept of the European sovereign debt crisis in order to make it more fathomable to the readership. We have hopefully shown that the interplay of the metaphors such as THE EURO CRISIS IS THE WATERFALL, THE EURO CRISIS IS DROWNING, THE EUROZONE CRISIS IS PLUMMETING, THE EUROZONE CRISIS IS FALLING OFF THE CLIFF with metonymies (e.g. MEMBER OF A CATEGORY FOR THE ENTIRE CATEGORY)

and image schemas (VERTICALITY, PATH-MOTION, CONTAINER) helps to convey the Eurozone crisis and to buttress its negative character. The interrelationship of these pictorial and/or multimodal cognitive tools points out their power and their ability to impart desired messages to the target audience, stemming from a strong emotional impact of this interrelationship. We have hopefully offered evidence for the potential of metaphor, be it verbal, pictorial or multimodal, “to construct representations of the world that impinge on human understanding of various aspects of social and political life and for its vital role in forming and influencing human beliefs, attitudes and action” (Charteris-Black, 2004: 28).

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## NOTES

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<sup>2</sup> For the conceptualisation of the global financial crisis via the ORGANISM and the NATURAL FORCE metaphors, see Silaški and Đurović (2010) and Silaški and Đurović (2011) respectively. Also see Arrese (2015) for a comprehensive account of studies that investigated the role of conceptual metaphors in the structuring of the 2008 economic crisis.