

Images that Shape our Minds: Metaphors in Public Leadership

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Overview

1. Introduction
2. Metaphors: definition
3. Types of metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson)
4. Types of metaphors (Bečka)
5. Metaphors in public leadership in general
6. Metaphors in Czech public leadership (community level)

Introduction

- Traditionally: rhetorical and poetic device (Aristotle)
- Metaphors We Live By (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 1980) – “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life” (1980:3)
- Language – influences the way we think (concepts - metaphorical)

Metaphor: definition

- Trope (figure of speech: rhetorical and poetic devices)

= Transfer of meaning based on similarity

the place was a beehive of activity, ladder of success, glass ceiling

x simile "like" cool as a cucumber

x metonymy – resemblance (of shape – crown, drink a glass of water)

Metaphor: definition, description

- Lakoff, Johnson:

“Human thought processes are largely metaphorical” + influence of culture

- Metaphorical concepts:

Argument is war

x dance

- *He won the argument.*
- *His argument was indefensible.*
- *He attacked every weak point in my argument*

Types of Metaphor (Lakoff, Johnson, 1980, 2003)

- Conceptual metaphors (primary m.)
Argument is war, Time is money
– everyday life, science (*black hole*),
politics

Types of Metaphor (Lakoff, Johnson, 1980, 2003)

- Orientational
(*High status is up; low status is down*)
He 's climbing the ladder.
She fell in status.
- Ontological (*The Mind is a machine*)
My mind does not operate clearly
Personification: *Life has cheated me*
- Structural (*Theories are buildings*) *T. is shaky.*

Types of Metaphors (Traditional Czech Linguistics – Bečka, 1971)

- Structure: m. of substance (*diamonds of the night*), of activity (*river's song*), of quality (*heart of stone*), of determination (*his undertaker's work*), extended metaphores of larger units
- Poetic m., literary m., publicity and journalism m., popular m., phraseologisms
- Jiřina Stachová – metaphors in science 1970

Metaphors in Public Leadership

- J. F. Kennedy, W. Churchill, M. L. King
- Metaphores can hide aspects of reality
Labor is a resource (economy, politics)
labor = natural resource, commodity
x meaningful, dehumanizing
- neutral-sounding statement hides the reality
of human degradation

Metaphors in Public Leadership (Czech Local Government)

- *give the green light to the project*
- *iron curtain*
- *pick up the idea (take up – chopit se)*
- *she said the basic skeleton (structure)*
- *Olomouc – sleeping the sleep of the Sleeping Beauty*

Conclusion

- Metaphores are important for our thinking, for our cultural identity
- Important to think about what they hide in the public debate

A blue-tinted photograph of a vast ocean under a cloudy sky. The text "Thank you!" is centered in white.

Thank you!