THE EXAMINATION OF CONCEPT OF «MORALITY» IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE FROM A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

The presented paper deals with the concept of morality in a political context. The aforementioned concept was examined within a cognitive linguistic framework and from a cognitive pragmatic perspective. After familiarising ourselves with the literary sources concerning the present topic, newspaper articles relating to politics and published on Transcarpathian Hungarian news portals were analysed. The aim of the analysis was to demonstrate the role of context in conceptualisation. In the course of the research, the authors were also curious about whether or not the concept of morality is understood differently in our everyday lives and when talking about politics, and which related concepts appear when talking about morality in a political context. In order to give answer to questions, fifteen newspaper articles on political topics were put under investigation. The articles involved ideas such as criticising and blaming the Ukrainian society and Hungarian minorities as well as power and social relations. In the course of the research, passages of the articles regarding concepts of morality were identified. As a second step, metaphorical linguistic expressions were systematized and compared with previous research findings to shed light on the relationship between conceptualization and context. The theoretical background of the research was mainly based on the works of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Zoltan Kovecses, Albert Widdowson. In order to identify which linguistic expressions were metonymic and/or metaphorical, the Metaphor Identification Procedure VU was followed, which is an improved method of the metaphor identification procedure developed by the Pragglejaz group (2007). The results of the study confirmed Lakoff’s (2002) theory that people’s conceptions of morality are related to patterns of political thinking. In addition, the views of cognitive pragmatics that moving from context to language, its influence on our conceptualisation can be demonstrated were also supported.
Background to the study and its aims. Our daily lives whether we accept it or not involve moral decisions that we often do not make consciously, yet they undeniably define our lives. Morality or immorality is part of a person, family or the whole society. Since the dawn of civilized society, we can speak of morality because even the ancient philosophers were already trying to specify the meaning and structure of this concept. There was already talk of moral decay at that time, just as we often say today that we live in an immoral society. But here arise a number of questions:

What exactly is morality?
What cognitive processes does help to conceptualize this concept?
Does the context influence the concept of morality?

In the present study, we will attempt to get a closer picture of the concepts related to morality in political texts by examining the material of the Hungarian press in Transcarpathia. The main goal of the study is to shed light on the role of context in the interpretation of morality.

Review of the academic literature. According to the definition of a Hungarian monolingual\(^1\) dictionary, morality is:

A set of norms that obligatorily determine human behaviour and actions that are considered right from the point of view of society, and which vary from age to age and community to community.

From the point of view of the rules of morality, it is good human behaviour.
In love-life, behaviour connected to sexuality.
The totality of religious moral norms.
In folklore, bad temper, stubbornness, obstinacy.

From point of view of cognitive linguistics, the notion of morality is approached from a very different perspective\(^2\). A visual pattern of force dynamics plays an important role in understanding the concept and its structure. Lakoff and Johnson\(^3\) point out that the ‘moral strength’ complex metaphor is the most influential in the process of interpretation, which can be broken down into the following primary metaphors: being good is upright, being bad is being low; doing evil is falling; evil is a force (either internal or external); morality is strength\(^4\).

According to the interpretation of force dynamics, there are two different forces in the source domain, one of which is an evil force (internal or external) and the other is the ego, which wants to remain as it was, that is, moral. If the ego resists, there is no effect, so the ego remains moral. Otherwise, the evil takes over and the ego becomes immoral. No comprehensive systematic study of the cognitive model of the concept of morality

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has been published in Hungarian literature so far. However, the general rules of cognitive linguistics can certainly be used in the process of interpreting this concept as well.

The conceptualization of a concept, that is, the creation of its meaning in our minds are different cognitive processes. It may occur as a result of e. g. categorization, creation of conceptual domains/frameworks, metaphor, metonymy, conceptual integration, figure and ground, image-schema, etc. These cognitive mechanisms, of course, do not function consciously, and without them, it would be impossible for us to interpret the different entities of the world around us. The function of conceptual processes is to help us create our conceptual domain as well as to develop and change it by interpreting new experiences. However, the meaning is not equal to the totality of conceptual domains and frames but depends on the way of conceptualization too. The conceptual domain of a person is a modal system, one of the characteristics of which is that bodily experiences, cultural factors, and contextual effects play a central role in the process of interpretation.

Pragmatics is often referred to as the science of context, but this concept has been researched much more extensively in linguistic disciplines, and each of them formulates its essence and function in accordance with its own theoretical framework.

Since the advent of conceptual metaphor theory, there have been a number of critiques of the theory, one of which is that metaphor research ignores real discourse, i. e., it infers conceptual metaphors based on non-contextualized linguistic examples. Among others, Kövecses responded to this critique, explaining that from the point of view of cognitive linguistics, context can be seen primarily as a variation of metaphor, a source of linguistic creativity, and introducing the concept of context-induced creativity, while naming the metaphors created by context effects as context-induced metaphors.

Distinction is made between global and local contexts. The global context includes the physical environment, social factors, the cultural context, memories gained during distinctive historical events (or even personal life experiences) and the differential concerns and interests. These components can occur at the level of a wider or narrower community, as well as at the level of the individual. Here one can think of environmental factors due to the geographical location of a country (wildlife, climate, topography, etc.), social system, and cultural habits of individuals belonging to the same community, historical events that can codify our conceptual system in memory.

The local context includes elements of the immediate physical setting, knowledge about the participants in the discourse, the immediate cultural context, and the immediate linguistic context. It is often difficult to accurately separate the different factors, the global and local context must be thought of as a continuum, the elements of which exert their effects together.

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7 Kövecses Z. A new look at metaphorical… P. 661.
Figure 1 is an excellent illustration of the factors that play a significant role in metaphorical conceptualization.

**Context from the point of view of cognitive linguistics**

Cognitive linguistic research is characterized by inferring the context from the linguistic material examined. It tries to recreate the circumstances, factors that influenced the formation of the examined metaphorical linguistic expression, i.e., use context as a means to shed light on the motivation of the metaphor. It approaches the context from the direction of language.

Pragmatics somewhat modifies the context perception of cognitive linguists. First, they assume that the context is distinguished from the situation and their central concept is relevance. Their basic hypothesis is that the context is not in the world outside of us, but in our minds. The context is not predetermined; its creation requires the constructive activity of the individuals involved in the situation. According to Widdowson, context is not what we perceive of a situation, but what we consider relevant. There are elements of a situation that, although perceived but not considered relevant in our process

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8 Ibid. P. 683.
of interpretation. Relevance is thus created by those involved in the situation\textsuperscript{12}. Based on his theory of context, he distinguishes between sentence and statement, the latter being not only context dependent but also determined by it\textsuperscript{13}. From the point of view of pragmatic researches, what matters is not what elements make up the context, but the way in which participants in the situation select the elements from which they construct the context.

Different theories thus agree that context is the internal mental representation of external circumstances. Theories also show similarities in idea that prior knowledge and the common background knowledge of the participants involved in the interaction are of great importance in the interpretation of linguistic terms. Without these, communication will fail. The main difference between the theories is that while cognitive linguistics departs from language to context, pragmatic research moves in the opposite direction and claims that participants in the interaction construct linguistic material relying on context.

**Methodology and research results.** In order to answer the research questions, 15 political newspaper articles were selected. The source of newspaper articles is mainly the internet news portals such as http://www.karpatalja.ma and http://karpataljalap.net. The articles were selected randomly into the study corpus without prior reading, only by their title. When selecting the newspaper articles (press products), we made sure that they were analytical, not just descriptive, in which the author primarily expressed his/her personal opinion on a topic. The articles (press products) are primarily writings classifying and qualifying Ukrainian society and Hungarian minority, and analysing power and social relations (see Appendix 1).

In the course of the research, we identified in the text of the articles the parts where the concepts related to the morality corresponding to the given context appear in some form, and then we tried to reveal the connections between conceptualization and context by systematizing them and comparing them with previous research results.

In his work «Moral Politics», George Lakoff (2002) deals in detail with the concept of morality, including the conceptual metaphors behind political reasoning. The world-renowned professor of cognitive linguistics divides the American people into two groups: conservative-minded and liberal-minded. In his work, he sets forth that the family plays a prominent role in understanding the concept of morality. According to him, the type of a person’s family determines the perceptions of morality. According to this, Lakoff distinguishes two basic moral models: a) the strict father and b) the nurturant parent models. Conservative-minded people rely largely on the former in the conceptualization process of the concept of morality, while liberal-minded individuals rely on the latter.

Different ideologies are associated with different values. For conservative-minded people, Lakoff lists the values of order, discipline, humility, strictness, hard work, responsibility, authority, while liberal (progressive) values are: trust, fairness, freedom, opportunity\textsuperscript{14}.

The concept of people’s morality is related to the scheme of political thinking and manipulation of the masses. It is well known that, for example, during (pre-election or

\textsuperscript{12} Widdowson H. G. Discourse analysis… P. 19.
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post-election period) elections, parties, their representatives or individuals (politicians) want to win the sympathy and vote of citizens, and thus their support. The sympathy of people of both the conservative and liberal camps can be won with values that match their thinking. Conceptual metaphors, metonymies, or even blending associated with the above mentioned moral models can often be found in political speeches.

During the period of elections, those Hungarian people are considered to be moral who votes for a Hungarian party and a representative of a Hungarian party. But what is a moral or immoral politician like? What are the relevant concepts that we associate with morality when we look at them in a political context? I am looking for answers to these questions in newspaper articles analysing Ukrainian social relations.

First of all, let us look at the conceptual metaphors by which we conceptualize the concept of politics in the corpus that we have just mentioned (Table 1).

### Table 1

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<th>Conceptual Metaphor</th>
<th>Metaphorical language expression (example)</th>
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| A politika harc ('Politics is fight') | «... ütkőképes gárda ...» ('... battle worthy force ...')
| | «... nem adjuk fel ('do not give up'). Magyar érdekvédelmi szervezetként küzdünk ...» ('... We are fighting as a Hungarian advocacy organization ... ') |
| A politika üzlet ('Politics is business') | «... s az újonnan alakult parlamentben is jelentős befektetéseket kíván az erőviszonyok elrendezése ...» ('... and in the newly-formed parliament, too, the balance of power will require considerable investments ...')
| | «... családi vállalkozás” ('family enterprise ... ’)
| | «... virágzik a füzetett tüntetők toborzása mint üzletág ...” ('... the recruitment of paid protesters is booming as an industry ... ’) |
| A politika uralkodás ('Politics is reigning') | «... az uralkodó elit tagjai ...» ('... the elite members of the ruler')
| | «... jobbágyként kezelt magyarok ...» ('... Hungarians treated as serfs...') |
| A politika háború ('Politics is war') | «... Ukrajnát éri támadás” ('... Ukraine is under attack') |
| A politika rablás ('Politics is robbery') | «... arcában kisebbség bitorolja a többség jogait és tervszerűen kifosztja azt ...» ('... the barefaced minority usurps the rights of the majority and purposefully loots it ...') |
In this conceptual domain, politics is always closely linked to power. Anyone who succeeds in political life has the power and can use it as an instrument of positive or negative influence. Considering politics, we can classify politicians, the politics they practice, society, and its members who either agree with or are outraged by certain decisions and actions of politicians. Accordingly, we may judge the politicians as moral and immoral figures.

In most of the articles, negative concepts have been found, i.e. the characteristics of immoral figures and their immoral behaviour dominate. In the following, these are listed according to whom they qualify.

Politicians are characterized by: «scandalous, disparaging behaviour, irresponsibility, avoidance of work, selfishness (does not take into account the interests of others, propagates only his own primitive values), domination over others, hostility, bias, violence, unscrupulousness, fraud, theft, underworld elements, pretence (pretending to be moral), evil, impudence, they do not serve as an example of openness and morality, they can be bribed/paid, aggression, waste taxpayers’ money, deceive people (fooling common people), swindlers, spongers».

The most common concepts related to politics that can be related to the values of those involved in political life are: «nationalism, ideological value orientation, moral values intertwined with ideology, radical anti-nationalism, injustice, corruption, chaos, notoriety, manipulation».

External circumstances determine the lives of members of society who are in fact the victims of decisions of politicians. Due to the free right to vote, members of society can have a voice in political life, they can prevent turf wars, but only if they have a need to do so. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of the Hungarian society in Transcarpathia. The authors of the articles argue that one of the main factors in the development of a

* «Durak» is a Russian card game.
healthy set of values is social and family upbringing, thus supporting Lakoff’s\textsuperscript{16} assumption that people’s moral perceptions can be traced back to the family model.

With all this in mind, the characteristics/typical norms of behaviour that qualify \textit{individuals} in the political and social context of Transcarpathia have been collected: «ready to support immorality, weakness, loyalty, preservation/abandonment of identity, sense of duty to the nation, no resistance (submission), credulity, lack of social awareness, irresponsibility, barbarism, awareness/ignorance, desire for profit, greed, degradation, glorification of the criminals in power, corruptness, narrow-mindedness, primitiveness, no ideologically motivated protests, deception of our neighbour, indifference, passivity, alienation, compromise with power, improvident, no ambition, greed, ignorance, Judas (traitors), seduction, lack of discipline».

The concepts listed above revolve around the right/wrong exercise of power, influence, money, national identity, national consciousness, which can be clearly linked to the political context. Based on this, we can support our hypothesis that the context determines how we conceptualize a certain concept, in this case the concept of morality. The results of a questionnaire survey conducted by Lechner in 2011\textsuperscript{17} also prove this, as it turned out that according to the respondents interviewed in Transcarpathia, a moral person is: «honest, fair, considerate, sensitive, helpful, well-educated, modest, respectful, well-mannered, trustworthy, law-abiding, good-natured, has faith, fair, non-ostentatious, sincere, empathetic, courteous, benevolent, kind, faithful, selfless, adheres to the principles of truth, upright, religious, adheres to basic norms, moves within legal limits».

The immoral person, on the other hand, is «unscrupulous, liar, offensive, dishonest, uncharacteristic, self-deprecating, ostentatious, dishonest, sinful, hypocritical, thief, adulterous, disrespectful, malicious, evil, shameless, offensive, selfish, does not take care of one’s family, flirts with another spouse, disloyal, untrustworthy, guided by selfish interests, lawless, greedy, tyrant, free-spoken».

Comparing the list of concepts, the differences are clear. In the articles on politics, for example, we did not find any mention of the sanctity of the family, of religious values. However, the general concepts do not clearly outline the concepts related to power, influence and money.

It is also clear from the corpus of inquiry that although each newspaper article was born in the external political context outlined above, we can still find differences in the concepts that dominate each article. The conceptual framework/cultural model marked in the title defines the additional cognitive mechanisms, conceptual metaphors, metonymies that help us in our conceptualization activities. Moreover, it is characteristic that throughout an article or paragraph the reader moves within a conceptual system (often indicated in the title) or an idealized cognitive model.

... Lviv megyében a 2012-es választások legelterjedtebb technológiáját \textit{Aranyakalnak} nevezik. A tehetős jelölt egy-két év alatt dolgozza meg a maga járásait. A nevét viselő jótékonysági alapítványon keresztül szponzorálja a templomot, a kultúrház tatarozását, számítógépeket vesz az iskolának. A krőzusok egyike még a havat is eltakarítatta a hegyi


Ilona Lekhner, Andrij Petrushynec

In Lviv County, the most popular strategy for the 2012 elections is called ‘Gold fish’. The wealthy candidate develops his districts in a year or two. Through the charitable foundation that bears his name, he sponsors the church, renovates the culture house and buys computers for the school. One of the moneybags has even had snow cleared from mountain roads.

Ez a polittechnológia az olyan halászatra emlékeztet, amikor réseket vágnak a nádásban. A halakat néhány napon keresztül bizával vagy borsóval etetik be. Majd eljön az a bizonyos X nap, s a halász ügyesen kifogja az írtásokból a pontyokat. A látvány lenyűgöző. Eljön a nap, amikor mindnyájan úgy érezzük majd magunkat, mint azok a bizonyos pontyak a sütőben, akiket rászoktatnak az ingyen borsóra …* (‘This strategy is reminiscent of fishing by cutting through the reeds. The fish are baited with wheat or peas for a few days. Then comes the day X, and the fisherman cleverly catches the carp from the reeds. The spectacle is stunning. The day will come when we will all feel like those carp in the oven who have been hooked on free peas’).

... Ennek ellenére az ukrán politikai elit egészét mint osztályt szemlélve az embernek az a merész érzése támad, mintha annak a «sovereignty», az «human rights», a «foreign policy» egy étlap kínálatát jelentenek, amelyet küvőről akarnak rájuk tukmálni. Ha a Földön lenne még édenkert, az ukrán csinovnyik bizonyára elsőként nyújtanák be a jelentkezési kérelmeket, azonnal hozzálátva a faültetéshez a csupa gődő autópályák mentén abban a reményben, hogy ha az angyal felügyelőség nem is nyitja meg a határokat a paradicsomi almák és nektárok exportja előtt, legalább az ingatlansárlást engedélyezni fogja ott**. (‘... Nevertheless, looking at the whole Ukrainian political elite as a class, one gets the strange feeling that ‘sovereignty’, ‘human rights’, ‘foreign policy’ are a menu of food that outsiders what to force down on their throats. If there were still a Garden of Eden on Earth, the Ukrainian officials (chynovnyky) would surely be the first to apply, immediately starting to plant trees along the potholed motorways in the hope that, if the angelic inspection does not open the borders to the export of apples and nectars from paradise, it will at least allow the acquisition of immovable property there …’).

This serves as proof that the context is always constructed and shaped by those involved in the situation, in this case the authors and analysts.

In a number of cases, it has also been proved that a statement cannot be interpreted without common background information.

... Mezsigorje ... mi mindent jelent ez a szó az ukrán szívnek! A fényűző rezidencia a korupció szimbóluma. Mezsigorje majdhogynem a rezsim fő bűntette. Mezsigorje az évszázad lopása. Máris meg van ígére, hogy a haladó erők győzelme után Mezsigorjét visszaadják az ukrán népnek. Igaz, a népnek csak azt lehet visszaadni, ami az övé volt. Mi legyen akkor Viktor Fedorovics családi birtokával? ...*** (‘... Mizhhiria ...how warm this word is to the Ukrainian heart! A luxurious residence is a symbol of corruption. Mizhhiria is almost the major crime of the regime. Mizhhiria is the theft of the century. It is already promised that, after the victory of the rising power, Mizhhiria will be returned to the Ukrainian people. True, the people can only be given back what was once theirs. What shall then happen to Viktor Fedorovich’s family estate? ...’)

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* Választásos 2012 – Játsszunk durákat hamiskártyásokkal.
** Hatalomról Ukrajnában és az ukrán hatalomról.
*** A «saját» és a saját.
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... A jelenlegi vezetői garnitúra magát mint hatékony csapatot reklámozza, ez a hatékonyság azonban a régi szovjet típusú hatékonyságot jelenti. Ez a kalapács hatékonysága, amellyel széget lehet beverni, vagy, az ütés erejétől függően, beindítható egy gép, szémtorzsolhatók az ujjak. Ennél összetettebb tevékenységhez – tudományos fejlődésre, ötletek generálására, az információs tér irányítására s végül társadalomtervezésre – azonban nem alkalmas ez a megközelítés ...* (*... The current leaders promote themselves as an efficient team, but this is the old Soviet efficiency. It’s the efficiency of hammer that enables you to hammer in a nail, or: depending on the force of the hit, to start a machine, to crush fingers. However, this approach is not suitable for more complex activities such as scientific development, idea generation, management of the information space and, ultimately, social planning. …’).

Those who does not know what the highlighted terms mean, have never heard about their history, does not understand its historical significance, does not know how they can be related to political power and society. However, in the continuation of the articles, it is possible to follow well the way in which the author constructs in the reader the fragment of knowledge that has been activated in his mind, thus making the information interpretable for the readers.

Summary. In the course of the study, the views of cognitive pragmatics were supported, according to which:
- moving from context to language, the effect of context on our conceptualization can be identified and demonstrated;
- the context determines the way we construct the meaning for ourselves;
- in the process of interpretation, we pay attention to the elements that are relevant to us in a given situation.

Our initial research questions have been answered, but further studies are needed to draw general conclusions.

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* Hatalomról Ukrajnában és az ukrán hatalomról.


КOGНІТИВНЕ ЛІНГВІСТИЧНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ПОНЯТТЯ «МОРАЛЬ» У ПОЛІТИЧНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ

Розглянуто концепцію моралі в політичному контексті з погляду когнітивної прагматики у політичному дискурсі. Ознайомлено з літературою за темою, проаналізовано тексти газетних статей політичної тематики, опубліковані на угорських порталах новин Закарпаття з метою представлення ролі контексту у процесі концептуалізації. Поставлено за мету відповісти на запитання: чи по-різному ми трактуємо поняття «мораль» у нашому повсякденному житті та з позиції політики і які супутні поняття з’являються з позиції моралі в політичному контексті? Для цього було проаналізовано 15 політичних статей – це передовсім ті, що класифікують і критикують українське суспільство й угорську меншину, аналізують владу та соціальні відносини. У ході дослідження в тексті статей було виділено частини, де фігурують відповідні цьому контексту поняття, пов’язані з мораллю. На другому етапі систематизовано метафоричні мовні вирази та розкрито зв’язки між концептуалізацією та контекстом порівняно з результатами попередніх досліджень.


Ключові слова: когнітивна лінгвістика, когнітивна прагматика, контекст, мораль, концептуалізація, політичний дискурс.