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# ОСОБЕННОСТИ АССОЦИАТИВНОГО ПОЛЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОГО ДИСКУРСА БАРАКА ОБАМЫ

**АННОТАЦИЯ.** В данной статье рассматриваются концептуальные метафоры в экономическом дискурсе Барака Обамы за 2009 г. Главными аргументами в пользу выбора данного периода является то, что а) 2009 г. стал годом серьезных изменений в экономике после кризиса 2008 г., и экономическая тема была основной на повестке дня и б) 2009 г. был первым годом президентства Обамы, и юрист по образованию Барак Обама должен был вновь и вновь возвращаться к экономической проблематике, показывая свою осведомленность в этой теме и формируя четкую позицию по целому ряду моментов. Анализ концептуальных метафор позволяет сделать вывод о том, что предпочтительными сферами-источниками для порождения метафор американским президентом стали FLUID (жидкости), DISEASE (болезни), MACHINE (механизмы и машины), CLEANING (чистота или наведение чистоты), TRAFFIC (движение транспорта), BUILDING (сооружение разных объектов), PERSONIFICATION (олицетворение неодушевленных объектов) и WAR (военные действия). В результате стало возможным рассмотреть не только ассоциативное поле экономического дискурса Обамы, но и сделать некоторые наблюдения над его подходами к решению экономических вопросов, стоящих перед ним как перед лидером важнейшего в геополитическом плане государства. Проработка материала также позволила уточнить когнитивные и прагматические функции метафоры в политической коммуникации.

**КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА:** концептуальные метафоры; экономический дискурс; политическая риторика; экономические метафоры; политическая метафорология; ассоциативные поля; языковая личность; политические коммуникации.

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Economy is an inevitable topic to any American president. They discuss it in various ways in order to work out different policies, but they share one common goal, which is to change a current economic situation and make their country great. Language is not merely a vehicle to describe the world, but a tool to get things done and change the world in some way [Austin 1962]. Political language certainly demonstrates such a function. Politicians use language to motivate people, to persuade people, and to manipulate people's consciousness. In foreign affairs, political language may even drive a wedge between nations [Mukhortov, 2015]. Therefore, the study of politician's language can reveal how they view political issues and how they use language to achieve their goals.

Metaphor in presidential discourse "is not only a rhetorical device which helps a president sound eloquent, but also a conceptual tool which can reveal a president's thinking patterns and underlying mindset in various communication settings" [Ji Xiaoxiao 2016: 239]. Economic metaphors used by heads of states can give us a general picture of how they comprehend economic issues and how they make people perceive those things. Knowing that economy is a most complicated sphere of life, they use metaphor as an effective means of simplifying its processes and nuances. As Edelman [1972: 83] argued, "myth and metaphor permit men to live in a world in which the causes are simple and neat and the remedies are apparent".

Politicians tend to describe and define the actual political situation by using conceptual metaphors, associating positive trends with themselves and negative ones with the opponent. For example, in the 2016 US presidential campaign, Democratic presidential nominee

Hillary Clinton coined a phrase "trumped-up trickle down" to lambast her opponent Donald Trump's economic policy. Hillary Clinton said that Trump's economic plan was "trickle-down economics" which best serves the interests of the rich alone. The term 'trickle-down economics' is used to show that if rich earners gain much, then their benefits will filter through to people of all walks of life, be it the well-off or the needy. It is, in fact, an economic conceptual metaphor MONEY IS A FLUID which describes money or assets as a type of fluid, just like water. Hillary Clinton is playing on Donald Trump's last name and the fact that he is exorbitantly rich, hereby, associating trickle-down economics with such rich people as Trump. This creates a vivid image showing that Trump and people like Trump can benefit from such an economic policy, the middle class and the poor would stand aside. By emphasizing that such sort of trickle-down economics led to the 2008 economic downturn, Hillary Clinton suggests that Trump's economic plan would fail as well. It is obvious that Hillary Clinton uses the conceptual metaphor to create a negative image of her opponent and get more support from his voters.

Different problems make politicians use different language. Economy is no exception. This paper has scrutinized nine speeches by Barack Obama and laid special emphasis on the way he addresses economy. The speeches analyzed are: First Inaugural Address on 20 January 2009, First Presidential Weekly Address on 24 January 2009, Remarks on the Economic Crisis and Executive Compensation on 4 February 2009, First Presidential Prime Time Press Conference on 9 February 2009, State of the Nation Address to a Joint Session of Congress on 24 February 2009, Speech to the Hispanic

Chamber of Conference on Education on 10 marches 2009, Post G20 Economic Summit Remarks and Press Conference on 2 April 2009, A New Foundation on 14 April 2009, Speech on Job Creation and Economic Growth at the Brookings Institution on 8 December 2009. These speeches come from the website: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/barackobama/speeches.htm>.

It should be noted that conceptual metaphors provide us with “a partial understanding of what communication, argument, and time are and that, in doing this, they hide other aspects of these concepts” [Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 12]. The highlighting-and-hiding feature of conceptual metaphor reveals certain aspects of a phenomenon but leaves others hidden. Therefore, every conceptual metaphor can only reveal the speaker’s partial understanding of an issue. To see the whole picture of how the speaker understands an issue requires researchers seeking out conceptual metaphors relate to the issue as many times as possible. The study locates eight source domains generating economic conceptual metaphors in Obama’s speeches. They are FLUID, DISEASE, MACHINE, PERSONIFICATION, TRAFFIC, CONSTRUCTION, CLEANING, and WAR. The diversified source domains and related economic conceptual metaphors will show how Obama chooses conceptual metaphors for different economy-related issues and how he understands economy.

The FLUID source domain is commonly used for speaking about money or credits. Since credits are like fluid, they can flow in and out, freeze, evaporate, become bubbles, and even dry up. It is obvious that the main feature of fluid is changeability. Therefore, the conceptual metaphor MONEY IS FLUID which is generated from the source domain FLUID, on the one hand, shows the changeable feature of money movement, on the other hand, suggests its uncontrollability. Although Barack Obama repeatedly said that his economic plan is going to “put money into people’s pockets”, it seems that this promise is nothing but a bubble made by the politician. According to *CNN Money* (2016), under Obama, the annual economic growth has been about 2%, while a typical American family earns almost exactly the same as 20 years ago which indicates that a wage growth has been very low. As usual, it is easier said than done, especially with politicians.

Below are some examples to illustrate how the FLUID source domain acts in generating metaphors:

(1) We also need a strong and viable financial system *to keep credit flowing* to businesses and families alike (4 February 2009).

(2) We still going to have to make sure that we are attracting private capital, *get the credit markets flowing* again because that’s the *lifeblood of the economy* (9 February 2009).

(3) Our immediate job is to stop the downward spiral. And that means putting money into consumer’s pockets. It means *loosening up credit* (9 February 2009).

(4) Our economy suffers even more, and *credit dries up* even further (24 February 2009).

(5) The Challenge is clear. The Global economy is contracting. Trade is shrinking. Unemployment is rising. *The international finance system is nearly frozen* (2 April 2009).

(6) And together, I believe that we must put an end to *the bubble-and-bust economy* that has stood in the way of sustained growth and enabled abusive risk-taking that endangers our prosperity (2 April 2009).

(7) *Five trillion dollars of Americans’ household wealth evaporated* in just 12 weeks as stock, pensions, and home values plummeted (8 December 2009).

(8) For even though we’ve reduced the *deluge of job losses* to a relative *trickle*, we are not yet creating jobs at a pace to help all those families who’ve been *swept up in the flood* (8 December 2009).

(9) Sometimes it’s hard to break out of *the bubble* here in Washington and remind ourselves that behind these statistics are people’s lives, their capacity to do right by their families (8 December 2009).

(10) This is also why we’re moving aggressively *to unfreeze markets* and *jumpstart lending* outside the banking system, where more than half of all lending in America actually takes place (14 April 2009).

The conceptual metaphor MONEY IS FLUID can be seen from the metaphorical linguistic expressions “*to keep credit flowing*”, “*get the credit markets flowing*”, “*loosening up credit*”, “*credit dries up*” etc. Besides the conceptual metaphor MONEY IS FLUID, Barack Obama also uses FLUID source domain to describe the actual loss of jobs in the market. From example (8), it can be seen that FLUID source domain here generates a conceptual metaphor THE JOB LOSS IS THE MOVEMENT OF FLUID. The words “deluge”, “swept” and “flood” here create a fearful picture for an audience. On the one hand, these words make an audience realize how serious the problem of job loss is, on the other hand, they will stir fear and uncomfortable feelings in an audience since they will make people “see” the flood and disaster caused by it. This emotive and persuasive function of the conceptual metaphor is largely related to the scare tactics which is often used by politicians to manipulate mass consciousness.

The next source domain used in Obama's economy-related speeches is DISEASE. Below are some examples to illustrate how the DISEASE source domain acts in generating metaphors:

(1) It (economic recovery and reinvestment plan) is not merely a *prescription* for short-term spending — it's a strategy for long-term economic growth in areas like renewable energy and health care and education (4 February 2009).

(2) This is a *prescription* for economic decline, because we know the countries that out-teach us today will out-compete us tomorrow (24 February 2009).

(3) And I'm excited about the ability not just to help *heal* this economy but also to make progress on a sustainable model of economic growth that relies less on a cycle of bubble and bust-something that I've spoken about back home (2 April 2009).

(4) As a consequence of the world recession, as a consequence of *the contagion from the financial markets* debilitating the economies elsewhere, Caterpillar is now in very bad shape. So if we want to get Caterpillar back on its feet, if we want to get all those export companies back on their feet, so that they are hiring, putting people back to work, putting money in people's pockets, we've got to make sure that the global economy as a whole is successful (2 April 2009).

(5) Perhaps what helped was my willingness to acknowledge that — and it's hard to deny — that some of this *contagion* did start on Wall Street (2 April 2009).

(6) So this is not a *panacea*, but it is a critical step, and I think it lays the foundation so that, should the actions that we've taken individually and collectively so far not succeed in boosting global demand and growth, should you continue to see a *freezing of credit* or a *hemorrhaging of jobs* around the world, I think we've created a good foundation for this leadership to come back together again and take additional steps until we get it right (2 April 2009).

Obama in examples (1), (2), and (3) describes his economic plan as a doctor's prescription to heal the economy. The conceptual metaphors THE ECONOMIC PLAN IS A PRESCRIPTION TO THE ECONOMY, THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT, and THE GOVERNMENT IS A DOCTOR reveal a fundamental idea of the Democratic Party in America, government's intervention in and regulation of the economy. Treating economy as a patient means some treatment has to be given by the doctor, i.e. Obama and his administration. Obama in his speech "The foundation" on 14 April 2009 has explicitly expressed that "gov-

ernments should practice the same principle as doctors".

From examples (4) and (5), it can be seen that financial problems or failures are treated as a contagion, which indicates a spread of disease and is frequently used in financial field to show infectious financial failures. The conceptual metaphor THE FINANCIAL FAILURE IS A CONTAGION shows people's aversion to the financial failure caused by some financial organizations in Wall Street. Actually, this aversion is shared by most Americans since the eruption of the subprime mortgage crisis in 2008.

The phrase "*a hemorrhaging of jobs*" in example (6) shows the coexistence of two conceptual metaphors THE JOB LOSS IS THE MOVEMENT OF FLUID and THE JOB LOSS IS A DISEASE. The conceptual metaphor THE JOB LOSS IS THE MOVEMENT OF FLUID has already been discussed before in this paper. The conceptual metaphor THE JOB LOSS IS A DISEASE reveals the seriousness of the problem and the urgency to solve it in order to save the life of economy. Besides, the conceptual metaphor THE JOB LOSS IS A DISEASE correlates to the conceptual metaphors THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT, THE ECONOMIC PLAN IS A PRESCRIPTION TO THE ECONOMY, and THE GOVERNMENT IS A DOCTOR. The job loss is described as a serious bleeding inside the body of the economy. Therefore, a prescription and a treatment from a doctor are needed in order to heal the economy.

The source domain MACHINE is a common one in Obama's economy-related speeches. Machine has all kinds of parts which have to be kept in order and in balance. Since machine is man-made, it can be operated, checked, regulated and fixed by people. The fact that he applies MACHINE source domain to economic issues, on the one hand, reveals his confidence in fixing the economy and a fundamental principle of the Democratic Party, which holds that the economy should be regulated, and on the other hand, it reveals a thinking pattern of the Americans as a whole.

The machine metaphor originates from the mechanical worldview in Classical Economics during the late 18th century, which is influenced by Newtonian Physics. The introduction of Newtonian Physics in America has influenced the lives of the first Americans, who often equated "Newtonian metaphoricity with the machine metaphor" [Akrivoulis 2008: 17]. As Akrivoulis states, "This Newtonism imaginary depicted 'man' as a physical object in a society obeying the same laws of attraction and repulsion as the celestial system or functioning like the highly ordered parts of a machine" [Akrivoulis 2008:

17]. The fundamental understanding of social organizations in terms of machine has prevailed in economy language of America. This can be demonstrated by the repeated phrases used in political language, such as “the engine of prosperity”, “the market as a mechanism”, etc. Let us give a few examples of how the MACHINE source domain can generate metaphors:

(1) That is why I have proposed an American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan to immediately *jumpstart job creation as well as long-term economic growth* (24 January 2009).

(2) Now is the time to *jumpstart job creation, restart lending*, and invest in areas like energy, health care, and education that will grow our economy, even as we make hard choices to bring our deficit down (24 February 2009).

(3) But while the cost of action will be great, I can assure you that the cost of inaction will be far greater, for it could result in *an economy that sputters along* for not months or years, but perhaps a decade (24 February 2009).

(4) And if we do — if we come together and lift this nation from the depths of this crisis; If we put our people back to work and *restart the engine of our prosperity...* (24 February 2009).

(5) First, we are creating a new lending fund that represents the largest effort ever to help provide auto loans, college loans, and small business loans to the consumers and entrepreneurs who *keep this economy running* (24 February 2009).

(6) This is a responsibility that's fallen to our generation. Meeting it will require *steering our nation's economy* through a crisis unlike anything that we have seen in our time (10 March 2009).

(7) Even before this particular crisis, much of our growth for a decade or more had been *fueled by* unsustainable consumer debt and reckless financial speculation, while we ignored the fundamental challenges that hold the key to our economic prosperity (8 December 2009).

(8) I want *America's prosperity to be powered* by what we invent and pioneer-not just what we borrow and what we consume (8 December 2009).

(9) And I think what we've learned here, but if any body had been studying history they would have understood earlier, is that *the market is the most effective mechanism* for creating wealth and distributing resources to produce goods and services that history has ever known, but that *it goes off the rail* sometimes; that if it's completely *unregulated*, that if there are no thoughtful frameworks to channel the creative energy of the market, that it can end up in a very bad place (2 April 2009).

From examples (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), the metaphorical expressions such as

*“jumpstart job creation”, “an economy that sputters along”, “steering our nation's economy”, “fueled by”* explicitly show the potential of the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS A MACHINE. It can also be noted from example (9) that the MACHINE source domain is related to the TRAFFIC source domain. If the financial market was treated as a machine or a car, it may sometimes “go off the rails”. Therefore some rules of road should be formed and applied. Then the economy can be revived through financial organizations obeying basic orders and rules. Below are some examples to illustrate how the TRAFFIC source domain acts in generating metaphors.

(1) It is time to put in place tough, new *commonsense rules of the road* so that our financial market rewards drive and innovation, and punishes shortcuts and abuse (24 February 2009).

(2) So the recovery plan we passed is the first step in *getting our economy back on track* (24 February 2009).

(3) And a crisis like this reminds us that we just have to put in some *common-sense rules of the road*, without throwing out the enormous benefits that globalization have brought in terms of improving living standards, reducing the cost of goods, and bringing the world closer together (2 April 2009).

(4) It is time to lay down tough new *rules of the road* for Wall Street to ensure that we never find ourselves here again (14 April 2009).

(5) Because our economic future depends on a financial system that encourages sound investments, honest dealings, and long-term growth, we've proposed the most ambitious financial reforms since the Great Depression. We'll set and enforce clear *rules of the road*, close loopholes in oversight, charge a new agency with protecting consumers and address the dangerous, systematic risks that brought us to the brink of disaster (8 December 2009).

There is no denying that the repeatedly used “*rules of the road*” is a product of the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRAFFIC RULES. Economy is treated as a machine or a car. It may break, and then it has to be fixed. It may “go off the rails”, and then some new regulations are needed as to restore order for the well-functioning traffic. Treating economic regulations as traffic rules justifies and warrants Obama's administration's intervention in the economy because it is a duty of the transportation department to make new rules of the road in order to make heavy traffic return to normal. For the audience, it sounds reasonable for the government to make regulations since the traffic problem needs to be solved. In fact, before 23 May 2016 there had been 20642 regulations

since Obama became President in 2009, and even more regulations are being considered in 2016, in which 144 are expected to cost government \$ 100 million a year [James Gattuso and Diane Katz 2016]. It seems that Obama's rules of the road are not "some" but "excessive and costly", and "the unparalleled increase in regulatory burdens spells a decline in economic freedom and individual liberty" [James Gattuso and Diane Katz 2016]. It is obvious that how to balance between insufficient regulation of economy and excessive one is a tricky matter for all heads of states.

The CLEANING source domain is used by Obama to talk about the necessity to clean the mess made by certain financial organizations. Examples of this are:

(1) Because even if we manage this plan flawlessly, there will be no real recovery unless we *clean up the credit crisis* that has severely weakened our financial system (24 February 2009).

(2) And when we learn that a major bank has serious problems, we will hold accountable those responsible, force the necessary adjustments, provide the support *to clean up their balance sheets*, and assure the continuity of a strong, viable institution that can serve our people and our economy (24 February 2009).

(3) The United States is also partnering with the private sector *to clean out the troubled assets*, the legacy assets that are crippling some banks, and using the full force of the government to ensure that our action leads directly to loans to businesses large and small, as well as individuals who depend on credit (2 April 2009).

It can be seen that "*to clean up their balance sheets*", "*to clean out the troubled assets*", and "*clean up the credit crisis*" are mainly related to the financial situation of a banking or a private sector. The CLEANING source domain generates two conceptual metaphors THE BAD FINANCIAL SITUATION IS A MESS and TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL SITUATION IS TO CLEAN UP THE MESS. If bad financial situation in banking or a private sector is treated as a messy room which needs to be cleaned up thoroughly.

Personification is a common figure of speech used by politicians who relate human features to some nonhuman entities. As Lakoff and Johnson [1980: 34] put it: "personification is a general category that covers a very wide range of metaphors, each picking out different aspects of a person or ways of looking at a person". The conceptual metaphors based on the PERSONIFICATION source domain help us understand political issues in terms of our own experiences as a human being. Therefore, when Obama applies the conceptual metaphor

THE ECONOMY IS A PERSON, the audience feel obliged to take care of it. To revive the economy is to make it safe and sound. Examples of the conceptual metaphor are:

(1) But at this particular moment, with the private sector so weakened by this recession, the federal government is the only entity left with the resources to *jolt our economy back into life* (9 February 2009).

(2) We are going to have to make sure that we are attracting private capital, get the credit markets flowing again, because that's the *lifeblood of economy* (9 February 2009).

(3) The concern is that if we do not restart lending in this country, *our recovery will be choked off* before it even begins (24 February 2009).

It can be seen that the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS A PERSON is correlated to the other conceptual metaphors, viz. THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT, THE JOB LOSS IS A DISEASE, THE ECONOMIC PLAN IS A PRESCRIPTION TO THE ECONOMY, and THE GOVERNMENT IS A DOCTOR. The metaphoric linguistic expression "*to jolt our economy back into life*" suggests that economy like patient is in a coma or at death's door. The economy is characterized as a sick and weakened patient, therefore some treatments are urgently needed to take care of it and bring the dying back to life. From these conceptual metaphors, it can be noted that Obama believes that the government should act like a doctor, who is in charge of a patient's health. Obama's stimulus legislation The Recovery Act clearly shows an active doctor role of Obama's administration.

The BUILDING source domain is frequently used to associate with economic recovery. Examples of this are:

(1) The state of our economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act—not only to create new jobs, but to *lay a new foundation for growth* (20, January 2009).

(2) Now is the time to act boldly and wisely to not only revive this economy, but *to build a new foundation for lasting prosperity* (24 February 2009).

(3) But it also means taking steps that not only advance our recovery, but *lay the foundation for lasting, shared prosperity* (10, March 2009).

(4) And although it will take time, I am confident that we will *rebuild global prosperity* if we act with a common sense of purpose, persistence, and the optimism that the moment demands (2 April 2009).

(5) It was founded upon a rock. We cannot *rebuild this economy on the same pile of sand*. We must build our house upon a rock. We must *lay a new foundation for growth and prosperity*—a foundation that will move us from an era

of borrow and spend to one where we save and invest; where we consume less at home and send more exports abroad (14 April 2009).

(6) *It's a foundation built upon five pillars that will grow our economy* and make this new century another American century : Number one, new rules for Wall Street that will reward drive and innovation, not reckless risk-taking; number two, new investments in education that will make our workforce more skilled and competitive; number three, new investments in renewable energy and technology that will create new jobs and new industries; number four, new investments in health care that will cut costs for family and business; and number five, new savings in our federal budget that will bring down the debt for future generations (14 April 2009).

(7) And because our economic future depends on our leadership in the industries of the future, we are investing in basic applied research, and working to create the incentives to *build a new clean energy economy* (8 December 2009).

From examples (1), (2), and (3), it can be seen that Obama repeatedly uses “*lay the foundation for*” suggesting that his economic plan could fundamentally solve the current problem and pave the way for future development. In fact, after mentioning it in his inaugural address, Obama repeats the phrases many times and then he explicitly describes his economic plans as a new foundation built upon five pillars in his “New Foundation” speech at Georgetown on 14 April 2009, which can be seen from examples (5) and (6). In this speech, he mentions a parable to illustrate the importance of building a strong foundation:

*Now, there's a parable at the end of the Sermon on the Mount that tells the story of two men. The first built his house on a pile of sand, and it was soon destroyed when a storm hit. But the second is known as the wise man, for when “the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock* (14 April 2009).

With the same religious background, the audience will be easily influenced by the parable. The difference between the economy before and after his presidency is as clear as the difference between a house upon a pile of sand and a house upon a rock. The house upon a rock is the future for Americans made by his administration. It is obvious that Obama applies the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS A BUILDING in his speech to visualize economy in terms of a sturdy building upon a rock with five strong pillars. The five strong pillars are actually five parts of his agenda or five steps to revive the economy, which can be seen from example (6).

The last source domain to be discussed is the WAR source domain. Below are some examples to illustrate how it acts in generating economic metaphors:

(1) But all of this also means that you can continue to expect an unrelenting, unyielding, day-by-day effort from this administration to *fight for economic recovery on all fronts* (14 April 2009).

(2) Having concluded that it was too late for me to request a recount —I *tasked my team with mapping out a plan to tackle the crisis on all fronts* (8 December 2009).

(3) Now, even as we worked to address the crises in our banking sector, in our housing market, and in our auto industry, we also began *attacking our economic crisis on a broader front* (8 December 2009).

The conceptual metaphor TO DEAL WITH ECONOMIC CRISIS IS TO FIGHT A BATTLE is to treat an economic crisis as an enemy who has to be defeated. Where there is a war, there is an adversarial relationship between the enemy and us. In Obama's economic talk, economic crisis is the enemy, and his administration is us. The war against economic crisis is a duty and just. In fact, WAR metaphor reflects a permanent human nature. It is almost inevitable for human being to use WAR metaphor in all kinds of communications, from trivial routines to magnificent politic events. WAR metaphor used by Obama in his economy-related speeches has been viewed positively because everyone knows how bad an economic crisis is. The conceptual metaphor is also an exhibition of Obama's bravery and determination to fight with the financial crisis.

In conclusion, it must be noted that a diversity of source domains for creating conceptual metaphors in Obama's economy-related language shows his understanding of economy not only as a whole, but also in its various respects. The economic conceptual metaphors in his economic discourse not only functions as a cognitive tool to understand the economy, a persuasive vehicle to influence the audience, but also as a pragmatic tool to put into effect his economic plan and to justify interventions of his government in other economies.

There are eight source domains discussed in the paper: FLUID, DISEASE, MACHINE, PERSONIFICATION, TRAFFIC, CONSTRUCTION, CLEANING, and WAR. The conceptual metaphors THE ECONOMY IS A PERSON, THE ECONOMY IS A PATIENT, THE ECONOMY IS A MACHINE, and THE ECONOMY IS A BUILDING show Obama's basic understanding of economy as a whole. The conceptual metaphors THE ECONOMIC PLAN IS A PRESCRIPTION TO THE ECONOMY, THE GOVERNMENT IS A DOCTOR and THE ECONOM-

IC REGULATIONS ARE TRAFFIC RULES justify the regulations of economy made by the government. The conceptual metaphors THE JOB LOSS IS THE MOVEMENT OF FLUID and THE JOB LOSS IS A DISEASE shows the emotive and persuasive function of metaphor used by Obama to influence his audience. The conceptual metaphors TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL SITUATION IS TO CLEAN UP THE MESS and TO DEAL WITH ECONOMIC CRISIS IS TO FIGHT A BATTLE reveal his determination and bravery to fight with financial failures and economic crisis in order to revive the economy.

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#### ASSESSING IMPLICATIONS OF METAPHOR USE IN BARACK OBAMA'S ECONOMIC DISCOURSE

**ABSTRACT.** *The paper seeks to analyze conceptual metaphors in Barack Obama's economy-related speeches in 2009. The choice of the period for analysis is determined by the following facts: this is the very first year of Obama's presidency and the first year after the 2008 economic crunch, which required of the president, who has a Law degree, sophisticated knowledge in economics and consistency in his economic policy. It is argued that the conceptual metaphors stem from the source domains of FLUID, DISEASE, MACHINE, CLEANING, TRAFFIC, BUILDING, PERSONIFICATION, and WAR, and reflect Barack Obama's notions of economy from the perspective of his figurative language. This helps us get better insights into the US president's rhetoric and reveals cognitive and pragmatic functions of metaphor in political communication.*

**KEYWORDS:** *conceptual metaphor; economic discourse; political rhetoric; economic metaphor; political metaphorology; associative fields; language personality; political communication.*

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