

THESIS SUMMARY

Alexandra Nagy-Béni

Visual variations of violence

**The metonymic framing of violence in the featured images of online news
about Africa**

Supervisor:

Réka Benczes, DSc

Professor

Department of Communication and Media Science

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I. Research background and justification of the topic

Different news articles about the same topic often offer a variety of perspectives: an article written about a certain type of violence might emphasize the perpetrator's role in the action, while another might show the sufferings of the victims, and yet a third might focus on the wider consequences for the environment. In communication and media research, these different perspectives are known as "frames", which, when used in news media are capable of influencing the opinion of the readers in multiple ways. The present thesis introduces a method for effectively detecting frames in news images via metonymic relationships.

One of the key concepts of the dissertation is metonymy, the meaning of which is rooted in the cognitive linguistics tradition. Metonymy, one of the most common cognitive and cultural processes (Kövecses, 2006), refers to a relationship in which there is substitution: we use X to stand for Y (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Radden & Kövecses, 1999). In the sentence "let's do a headcount", "head" stands for the whole person, so a human being is replaced with one physical attribute: the head. These substitution-based relationships are everyday in our language use, and their interpretation is automatic.

In the complex world around us, in which it is impossible to pay attention to every little detail, metonymic thinking simplifies mental processing as it allows us to focus on the most relevant and accessible nuance in the given situation, and through it to arrive at the whole concept (Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2020). The rhetorical function, which is based on this very property of metonymies, namely that they highlight certain features of a given phenomenon, while relegating others to the background, makes metonymy an effective framing device. The concepts of *frame* and *framing* prove to be very productive, since several fields of science, from sociology to cognitive linguistics and media science, use the term. Although the cognitive linguistic interpretation cannot be neglected, this thesis uses framing in the sense of *media framing*, as it is proposed in the media science discourse.

Relying on the most frequently cited definition, to frame is "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p.52). To give a regrettably current example, the leading Hungarian news portals, for example, present the Russo-Ukrainian War through a kind of military frame, emphasizing the role of the perpetrators, i.e.,

mostly soldiers (Nagy-Béni & Szabó, 2023). The problem is defined in the light of the actions of the perpetrators (problem definition), which causes a lot of damage and suffering (causal interpretation), which suggests that these acts of violence should be condemned (moral evaluation) and stopped as soon as possible. This example highlights the multifaceted meaning arising from highlighting even one element of the perceived reality. These processes are at the centre of framing theory.

Despite the fact that scholars agree that frames are often mediated by figurative language types, such as metaphors and metonymies in texts that offer a particular interpretation of events (among others, Charteris-Black, 2004; Catalano & Waugh, 2013; Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016; Catalano & Musolff, 2019), no definition has yet been offered as to what we mean by *metonymic framing*. This niche is even more evident in the literature on visual metonymies.

As early as 2009, Forceville pointed out that the examination of non-verbal metonymies is more suitable for revealing their inherent power and nuanced, unnoticed effects than the analysis of their verbal counterparts. Although the ubiquity of (verbal) metonymy logically implies the frequent occurrence of nonverbal manifestations, visual metonymies have so far been pushed into the background behind verbal counterparts (Benczes, 2019).

This does not mean that there is no discourse on visual metonymies at all, in fact this discourse is becoming more and more active. One of the most productive “sites” of visual metonymies is the world of advertising (see Qui, 2013; Pérez-Sobrino, 2016; Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2020; Chatti, 2022; Hidalgo-Downing & O’Dowd, 2023). Others have identified visual metonymies in children’s books (Guijarro, 2019; Puspitasari, 2022) and in political campaigns (Goehring, Renegar & Puhl, 2017; Benczes, 2019; Tasić & Stamenković, 2022). The puzzle is more about the exact steps along which visual metonymies can be identified, because authors do not offer details about the process and aspects of analysis and identification.

Recognizing this deficiency, Chatti (2022), for example, adapted the Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure (VisMip) proposed by Šorm and Steen (2018) to accommodate visual metonymies, but the result is a list of five vague steps, treating metonymies as one visual element (among other visual elements). Hidalgo-Downing and O’Dowd (2023) developed an ad-hoc annotation procedure, which, among other things, is also suitable for identifying visual metonymies and, although transparent, considers the world of advertising, so it could not be fully adapted to the present research due to genre differences.

Examining publications that detected visual metonymies in news images (news genre being the communicative context of the research, see Catalano & Waugh, 2013; Catalano & Musolff, 2019; Vezovnik & Šarić, 2020), it can be concluded that the methodological solutions are even more obscure, because the process and aspects of analysis and identification are not discussed. All this leads to the conclusion that anyone who devotes themselves to the analysis of visual metonymies is hitting a difficult road. Tóth (2017) mentions that it is their implicit nature that makes the identification of metonymies much less clear and unambiguous than identifying metaphors, for instance. Overall, with regards to analysing visual metonymies in online news images, it was necessary to set up an own protocol to account for this niche.

In addition to the methodological shortcoming, it is important to point out another gap, namely that although the mentioned studies all imply that visual metonymies are effective framing tools, visual metonymic framing has not yet been defined. The dissertation also reflects on this deficiency by providing the following definition, which relies on the metonymy concept of the cognitive linguistics tradition and the framing concept of the media science tradition:

Visual metonymic framing is the selection and visual accentuation of some aspects of the perceived reality via making one conceptual entity which provides mental access to another conceptual entity within the same idealized cognitive model¹ salient, with the aim of providing interpretation patterns and/or positioning an event, situation in a communicative context.

The dissertation examines the theoretical and methodological potential inherent in visual metonymic framing in the light of the news genre, more specifically, violent news about Africa. The chosen topic, violence, can be defined as “a behaviour that is intentional, unwanted, nonessential and harmful” (Hamby, 2017, p.168). Violence and negativity are considered to be among the most enduring news values, thus the connection between violence and the news genre seems inseparable (Harcup & O’Neill, 2001; Bednarek & Caple, 2017; Hall, 1973/2019).

The case that provides the focus of the research and thus makes it possible to test the developed analytical framework is related to Africa and news about Africa. For a long time, the continent appeared in Western news reports through the frames of underdevelopment, exoticism, poverty, instability, hunger and violence (Hawk, 1992; Mengara, 2001; Tsikata, 2014; Bunce, 2015).

¹ The term *idealized cognitive model* (ICM) is used as a synonym for *conceptual frame*, which is a structured mental representation of our knowledge of the world (Kövecses & Benczes, 2010).

However, since the last decade, several researchers see a new narrative on the rise concerning reports on Africa, which builds on a more positive frame set (Nothias, 2014; Ojo, 2014, Obijiofor & MacKinnon, 2016; Zhang & Matingwina, 2016; Bunce, 2017). Despite the fact that the so-called changing narrative is echoed in several studies, certain frames and topics appear to be stable and stagnant over time. One such dominant and recurring theme in the news is violence.

The investigation into the metonymic framing of violence in the featured images of online news about Africa is guided by two research questions. The first research question starts from the fact that violence is always a complex event, therefore the sequence of events can be interpreted through the metonymies of the Complex event ICM.²

RQ1: Which SUBEVENTS are used to visually represent the COMPLEX EVENT of violence?³

One of the basic assumptions of metonymic models is that some members of the category are more salient than others. Regarding the Complex event ICM, the INITIAL OR FINAL OVER MIDDLE principle introduced by Radden & Kövecses (1999) state that the initial or final phase may be seen as being more important than the central phase. In addition, when it comes to covering violent acts in the news, it is important to note that the editorial guidelines of the sampled news websites, that are BBC and CNN, state that explicit depictions of violence are only possible in the most justified cases. Since the explicit part of a violent act can be linked to the central phase in the Complex event ICM, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H1: The INITIAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT and FINAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymies are more preferred than the CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymy in the visual depiction of violence.

The second research question is based on the fact that violence is not only a complex event, but more specifically a complex action, therefore the visual representation of violence (across its different types) is best understood through the metonymic relations of Action ICM.

RQ2: Which metonymic relationships of the Action ICM are used to visually represent different types of violence?

² The names of the ICMs are capitalized based on Kövecses & Radden (1998) and Radden & Kövecses (1999).

³ Conceptual metaphors and metonymies are formatted in small capitals according to the traditions of cognitive linguistics (Kövecses, 2005).

Radden and Kövecses (1999) collected the principles that govern the choice of vehicle and target in default cases of metonymy. One such principle states that the characteristics of our human-centric world are reflected in our language and thinking, resulting in a preference for HUMAN OVER NON-HUMAN. Furthermore, events that have a “human” face are considered to be newsworthy. Bednarek and Caple (2017) call this phenomenon the news value of personalization, which is just as important for visual elements as for textual ones. It follows from all this that the second research question is supplemented by a hypothesis expecting an anthropocentric result.

H2: Regardless of the type of violence, the AGENT FOR ACTION and PATIENT FOR ACTION metonymic relationships are more preferred than the INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION, RESULT FOR ACTION and PLACE FOR ACTION metonymic relationships in the visual depiction of violence.

Overall, the objectives of the dissertation can be summarized along three main aspects. To formulate the first goal, it is necessary to position the research itself within scientific discourse. The present thesis is written from a communication and media science background. Although the approach draws a lot from the tools and concepts of cognitive linguistics, it is important to state that the author of the thesis is not a cognitive linguist. Therefore, the results are primarily interpreted from a media science perspective, not overpowering the cognitive linguistic aspects.

It follows that the first main aim of the dissertation is to highlight the compatibility and productive applicability of cognitive linguistic tools and concepts in media science research. Quite precisely, the thesis uses the concepts and toolkit of Conceptual Metaphor and Metonymy Theory (CMMT) to understand framing in online media, more precisely in visual online media. During the process, the following sub-goals were set:

- to define metonymic framing,
- to define visual metonymic framing,
- to reveal whether the principles determining vehicle choice and thus influencing our thinking and language use are visually projected, and
- to advise an analytical framework that facilitates the application of the Violence ICM (motivated by the Action ICM and Complex event ICM).

Therefore, the research is located at the intersection of cognitive linguistics, visual communication and media framing, and its general purpose is to reflect on the challenges of visual metonymy research.

Consequently, the second main aim of the dissertation is to enrich the literature of visual metonymy on both theoretical and practical levels. From a theoretical point of view, the thesis wants to assign further validity to the importance of research on visual metonymies, and from a practical point of view it aims to methodologically support such research. The dissertation is ambitious in terms of setting up an analytical framework that helps to investigate the visual representation of any violent act through uncovering the underlying metonymic relationships.

The third main goal is to test, critically evaluate and present the potential of this model. To do this, the substitutions that can be found in the depiction of violent events are analysed on the sample of African news. The choice is justified by the fact that literature on the representation of Africa in the news reveals that the continent has been historically intertwined with violence. In this way, it is a suitable case study that made it possible to achieve the above goals. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the outlined approach and method go beyond this specific case, as it can be applied to better understand the visual representation of any violent event. And the news of violence has always played a central role in the everyday news flow, which is unlikely to change in the future, thereby guaranteeing the relevance of the research.

II. Methodology

A metonymy-based image analysis was conducted on the featured images of the sampled news articles to answer the research questions and examine the hypotheses. Given that the thesis seeks to understand a phenomenon within a real-world context, the approach of the research is qualitative.

The analysis of the images was preceded by the categorization of the news items based on the type of violence, such as homicide, sexual abuse etc. Then, the images were examined from two perspectives: firstly, focusing on the sequentiality of events using the Complex event ICM, and secondly exploring the metonymic relationships of violence as an Action ICM on the basis of relationality. Thus, the analysis followed the following steps:

- 1) Categorization of the units based on the type of violence.
- 2) Metonymy-based analysis of images:
 - a. Sequentiality: identification of the SUCCESSIVE SUBEVENTS FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymies of the Complex event ICM, which included:
 - INITIAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT: images that depict either perpetrators ready to act or victims in their state before a violent act,
 - CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT: images that depict characters in the midst of action,
 - FINAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT: images depicting the aftermath of violent acts, such as injured people or ruins.
 - b. Relationality: identification of the metonymic relationships of the Action ICM, which included:
 - AGENT FOR ACTION: images that depict perpetrators of violent acts, such as murderers or soldiers,
 - INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION: images that depict a tool that can be used as an aid to inflict a violent act, such as weapons,
 - PATIENT FOR ACTION⁴: images depicting the targets and victims of the violent act,

⁴ This metonymic relationship is not included in the linguistic examples presented in the theoretical overview of the dissertation. However, following Peirsman & Geeraerts (2006), it was necessary to include it in the Action ICM when transferring it to the visual modality. The authors interpret the term *patient* in a broad sense, where appropriate they consider that the result can also be the patient of the action. At the same time, the dissertation interprets the PATIENT FOR ACTION relationship as one relating to the target or endurer of the action and applies it exclusively to human entities.

- PLACE FOR ACTION: images depicting the location of the violent act on a map or street view (without the appearance of agents and/or patients⁵),
- RESULT FOR ACTION: images depicting the aftermath of an act of violence, such as ruins.

Within this step (2b), more than one metonymic relationship could have been detected in the same image, since it often arose, for instance, that the violent ACTION was accessible through both AGENT and INSTRUMENT (e.g., in an image depicting an armed soldier). Another common occurrence is the coexistence of PATIENT FOR ACTION and RESULT FOR ACTION relationships (e.g., an image depicting a victim among the ruins). Therefore, the metonymic relations of the Action ICM are not separate, distinct categories, but rather complementary and co-occurring characteristics.

The model was validated on a sample of 289 units of analysis. The investigation covers the period 2011-2020. The news items forming the sample of the study were collected from BBC Africa and CNN Africa. The choice of the media outlets is validated by several aspects. Firstly, BBC and CNN are among the most influential English-language news websites worldwide and have had a longstanding hegemonic position in global news provision. In this case, influence is measured in the number of readers, in which respect the ranking of SimilarWeb is relevant. SimilarWeb offers web analytics, and one of its features compares the leaders of different industries. For the sake of this research, I relied on their ranking category titled “News and Media”, which attests the leading role of the chosen news websites. I do not claim that the examination of these two news portals represents all media coverage, but I trust that they will demonstrate trends that promote research into a broader range of media. Secondly, the focus on Africa’s media representation – albeit unspoken – has always predominantly reflected on Western media portrayals. Therefore, the investigation of a leading British and American news portal is valid from this point of view. Thirdly, both BBC and CNN have separate columns and staff for publishing news about Africa (BBC Africa and CNN Africa). The targeted search option thus facilitated the sampling process.

⁵ The PLACE FOR ACTION metonymic relationship was coded only in cases where there were no people (agents, patients) depicted in the images, so the given image specifically focuses on the scene of the act of violence. This provision is important because otherwise this metonymic relationship could be coded for each image, since each image is made in a specific location, but this method of procedure would make the results redundant and would not provide analytical value.

The sampling was conducted in three steps in a semi-automated manner. As Figure 1 demonstrates, the first step resulted in the gathering of the population, which contained all eligible links. A python selenium script was used to gather (crawl) all links from 2011 to 2020 for the following URLs: cnn.com/africa, bbc.com/news/world/Africa relying on the database of Wayback Machine. The second step entailed the reduction of the full sample to a representative one. This was accomplished through the random sampling of 100 URLs on a yearly basis for both websites (i.e., 100 articles/year/website). Lastly, the sample was cleaned manually so that it contained only those elements that regard some form of violence (and also align with the definition of violence).

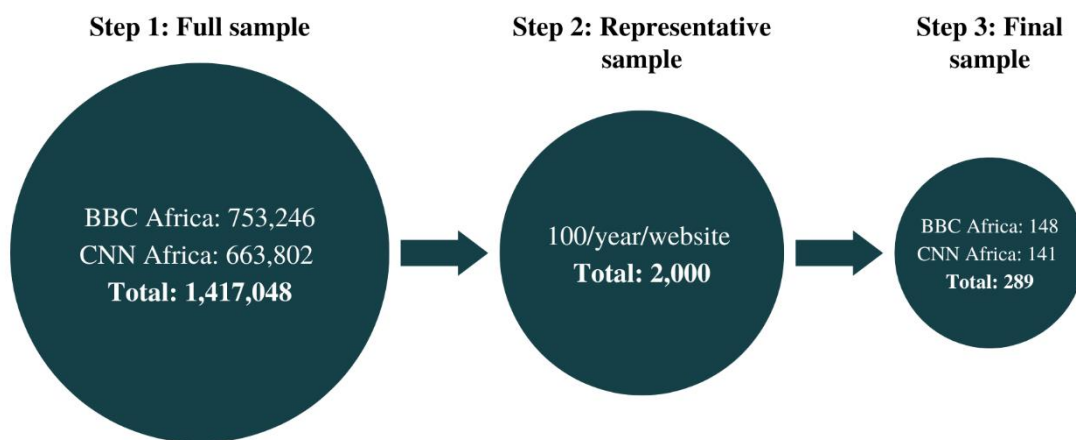


Figure 1 Steps of the sampling process highlighting the reduction in the number of URLs

To facilitate the analysis and the coding of featured images based on the sub-metonymies of the Complex event ICM and the metonymic relationships of the Action ICM, using the two, the different acts of violence were outlined in the form of scenarios (thus providing the subscenarios of the Violence ICM). These structured scenarios, outlined in Table 1, are based on the idealized cognitive models that are highly schematic.

Type of violence	Initial phase	Central phase	Final phase
Armed conflict	Groups of agents intend to physically harm each other while also harming civilian patients.	Harm is inflicted on patients by agents repeatedly, over a period of time in (a) certain place(s) with (an) instrument(s) and vice versa.	Both civilian patients and agents are harmed physically and/or psychologically, while human rights are violated. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted.

Assault	Agent intends to physically harm patient, thus producing injury.	Physical harm is suddenly inflicted on patient by agent with (an) instrument(s) in a certain place.	Patient is physically and/or psychologically harmed and injured by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Child abuse	Adult agent intends to treat underaged patient in a cruel or violent way.	Underaged patient is mistreated by adult agent over a period or in a one-off action in a certain place.	Underaged patient is psychically and/or psychologically harmed by adult agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Genocide	Group of agents intend to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group of patients.	Patients are fatally harmed and/or caused serious bodily or mental harm by agents repeatedly, over a period of time in (a) certain place(s) with (an) instrument(s).	Group of patients are fatally harmed and/or caused lasting bodily and mental harm by agents. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patients.
Homicide	Agent intends to fatally harm patient.	Harm is inflicted on patient by agent in a single action with an instrument in a certain place.	Patient is fatally harmed by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Human trafficking	Agent intends to limit patient's movement and/or free will by selling patient or making money from work patient is forced to do.	Patient is harmed by agent by using force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labour or commercial act in (a) certain place(s).	Patient is physically and/or psychologically harmed and exploited by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patients.
Kidnapping	Agent intends to abduct or carry away patient by force or fraud often with a demand for ransom.	Harm is inflicted on patient by agent by unlawfully seizing and carrying patient off.	Patient is detained and physically and/or psychologically harmed by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Slavery	Agent intends to force patient by physical threats to work for little or no pay.	Patient is deprived from power and control by agent and physical harm is inflicted on patient by forcing patient to work for agent in a certain place against patient's will.	Patient is physically and/or psychologically harmed and deprived of human rights by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Sexual abuse	Agent intends to coerce and exploit patient sexually.	Harm is inflicted on patient by agent in a certain place by making patient take part in sexual activities against patient's will.	Patient is physically and/or psychologically harmed by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.
Terrorism	Group of agents intends to harm or threaten	Civilian patients are threatened by agents by	Civilian patients are fatally harmed by agents.

	group of civilian patients to achieve political, economic, religious or ideological goals.	causing death or bodily harm in (a) certain place(s) with (an) instrument(s).	The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patients.
Torture	Agent intends to cause severe physical pain as a form of punishment or as a way to force patient to do or say something.	Severe physical harm is inflicted on patient by agent repeatedly, over a period of time in (a) certain place(s) with (an) instrument(s).	Patient is severely harmed physically and/or psychologically by agent. The act of violence is non-essential and unwanted by patient.

Table 1 The scenarios of the different types of violence

Finally, it must be mentioned that metonymy can often be analysed in conjunction with metaphor or by activating a metaphorical connection on a practical level.⁶ Several studies have examined this interaction, which is often referred to as “metaphtonomy”, the most significant of which are Pérez-Sobrinó (2016) and Kashanizadeh and Forceville (2020), who extended the typology of Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2000) to visual and multimodal advertisements. Due to the frequent coexistence of the two phenomena, it is important to reflect on the question of whether this interaction can be seen in action in another visual genre: online news images. This was examined in the form of a case study on the images coded under the PATIENT FOR ACTION metonymic relationship.

⁶ In contrast to metonymy, metaphor is “understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5), that is, a metaphoric relationship can be understood as A IS (LIKE) B, while a metonymic relationship is better viewed as A IS RELATED TO B. Although the two concepts are perceptibly separated at the level of definition, in practice the line between the two is much more blurred. The combination of metaphor and metonymy (sometimes referred to as “metaphtonymy”) involves the incorporation of a metonymy in either of the two metaphorical domains: the more concrete source domain and the more abstract target domain. In the conceptual metaphor of LIFE IS A JOURNEY, JOURNEY is the source domain through which the more abstract target domain, LIFE, becomes tangible and comprehensible (Kövecses & Benczes, 2010).

III. The findings of the dissertation

To summarize the findings of the dissertation, the following observations can be made. The first research question aimed to reflect on the sequentiality of the events. The results revealed that the INITIAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT and FINAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymies greatly outweigh the CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymy. This finding is typical to such an extent that the central phase did not appear at all in three violence categories, and in those categories where it did appear, it was nowhere more preferred than the initial and final phases. Consequently, the results support the first hypothesis, according to which the INITIAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT and FINAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymies are more preferred than the CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymy in the visual depiction of violence.

This finding can be traced back to the premise of metonymic models, according to which certain elements of the categories are more salient than others: in this case, the INITIAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT and FINAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT sub-metonymies are more salient than the CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT sub-metonymy. Furthermore, regarding the news genre that is the focus of the analysis, it can be said that the explicit depiction of violence is the rarest case for ethical and technical reasons. And this editorial guideline collides with the use of the CENTRAL SUBEVENT FOR COMPLEX EVENT metonymy, which, based on the scenarios, would capture the climax of the violent act.

The second research question investigated the relationality of metonymies used in the visual representation of events. The obtained results highlight that the AGENT FOR ACTION and PATIENT FOR ACTION metonymic relationships are responsible for more than half of all the metonymic relations detected in the images. Although the proportion of RESULT FOR ACTION and INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION relationships in themselves is not negligible, overall, an anthropocentric result (driven by AGENT FOR ACTION and PATIENT FOR ACTION) emerged. This is further confirmed by the finding that 10 of the 11 violence categories are dominated by the two human-centric metonymic relationships, and even in the remaining category they closely follow the metonymic relationship with the highest ratio. Therefore, the second hypothesis, which stated that regardless of the type of violence, the AGENT FOR ACTION and PATIENT FOR ACTION metonymic relationships are more preferred than the INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION, RESULT FOR ACTION and PLACE FOR ACTION metonymic relationships in the visual depiction of violence, was also supported.

It seems that we are biased towards human-centred storytelling, because we interpret the things and phenomena around us in terms of what they mean to us, focusing on how we can interact with them. From this point of view, it can also be said that we as humans view the world in a “self-centred” way (Littlemore, 2015). When we encounter an object, our first thought is what it means to us and what we can do with it. So, when we see a chair, we automatically perceive it as something we can sit on. Translated into the language of this research: violent acts are also interpreted and visually represented in terms of what they mean to the people involved in them or affected by them.

This bias is present to such an extent that in the literature of news values (see Bednarek & Caple, 2017) it is considered crucial to lend a “human face” to the news stories, thus increasing the degree of reader involvement. What better way to do this than to harness the power of images? Thus, reflecting on the statement of Radden and Kövecses (1999), it can be concluded that the characteristics of our human-centric world are not only reflected in our language and thinking, but also in its visual projections.

Based on the findings, it can be said that the visual representation of violence in online news is a very fertile ground for the analysis of metonymic framing, since the display of violence is limited in several aspects, so news portals are forced to depict the events through substitutions. The analysed sample suggests that the majority of the substitutions strive to humanize the events, giving way to the emotional involvement of the readers (via the HUMAN OVER NON-HUMAN principle and the news value of personification and impact). This is highlighted by a metaphor-metonymy interaction detected in the sample (EMOTIONAL CLOSENESS IS (CLOSE-UP SHOT FOR) PHYSICAL CLOSENESS), which involves the readers in the story through the close-up shot used in most images coded under the PATIENT FOR ACTION metonymic connection. Furthermore, the preference for the initial and final phases highlights that we can relate to the extremes of the scale of events better than to the middle phase (via the INITIAL OR FINAL OVER MIDDLE principle and the news value of impact), because the ends are more tangible. What’s more, these trends span categories of violence.

Summarizing the theoretical and practical relevance of the dissertation, firstly, the new definitions (metonymic framing and visual metonymic framing) and the related thought processes should be highlighted. On the one hand, they point to the close connection between cognitive linguistics and media science, and on the other hand, they streamline the interpretation of visual metonymies in media discourse. Secondly, the practical relevance of

the thesis is embodied by the developed analytical framework. The goal was to provide a methodology that can be used to adequately interpret the obtained data, but at the same time it can be adapted to the analysis of other cases (so it is not too case-specific). A model that exploits visual metonymic framing to such an extent has not been created before. In light of the above, the novelties of the thesis can be listed as follows:

- **Introduction of a novel definition of visual metonymic framing:** despite the fact that scholars agree that (visual) frames are often mediated by figurative language types, such as metaphors and metonymies in texts that offer a particular interpretation of events (among others, Charteris-Black, 2004; Catalano & Waugh, 2013; Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016; Catalano & Musolff, 2019), no definition has yet been offered as to what we mean by *metonymic framing*. This niche is even more evident in the literature on visual metonymies. The dissertation reflects on this deficiency by defining both metonymic framing and visual metonymic framing.
- **Development of a novel model for the visual metonymic framing of violence:** although the discourse on visual metonymies is increasingly active, the puzzle is posed by the lack of clearly defined steps along which visual metonymies can be identified in news images. Focusing on violence as a timeless news value, the dissertation advances an analytical framework that lays the foundations for application of the Violence ICM (motivated by the Action ICM and Complex event ICM).
- **Identification of a novel metaphor-metonymy interaction in news images:** the metaphor-metonymy interaction has so far been primarily investigated in advertisements, at least as far as the visual or multimodal scene is concerned (Pérez-Sobrino, 2016; Kashanizadeh & Forceville, 2020). Although not the focus of the thesis, the identification and discussion of metaphor-metonymy interaction in the light of news images is a novel result.

I trust that the method can be suitable for examining the visual representation of any violent act, given that the analytical framework is specific enough to identify the Violence ICM, but at the same time flexible enough to be extended to the interpretation of visual representations of violence universally. And this could perhaps not be more necessary than it is now (at the time of finalising the dissertation), when our societies are plagued by several wars. It is particularly important to examine through which interpretive frameworks the media portrays these violent events. Thus, the presented model, allowing for the investigation of the narratives

(and their implications) that are prioritized by visual substitutions in online news, is highly relevant and novel. After all, violence, conflict and negative events have always been considered newsworthy, they have always represented news values, and this will certainly remain so in the future as well.

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