Cross-Cultural Metaphors
Investigating Domain Mappings Across Cultures

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"The generalizations governing poetic metaphorical expressions are not in language, but in thought: They are general mappings across conceptual domains. Moreover, these general principles which take the form of conceptual mappings, apply not just to novel poetic expressions, but to much of ordinary everyday language. In short, the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another."

(George Lakoff, *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor*, 1992)
1. Introduction

Rüdiger Zimmermann

Since Lakoff/Johnson's (1980) groundbreaking study we have witnessed a rising awareness of the role of metaphorical language in everyday communication, in language change (Sweetser 1990, Blank 1997), and, though less, in politics (Chilton 1996). It is therefore small wonder that foreign language pedagogy, always keen on applying theoretical innovations, has been glad to jump on the bandwagon, especially after Kövecses/Szabó 1996 (for a short overview cf. Cameron/Low 1999: section 8).

Our overall impression of these almost enthusiastic attempts is that they focus heavily on awareness raising, with hardly any discussion of how this might affect the relation between cognitive and instrumental teaching objectives. Despite several studies of detail, e. g. on metaphors of teaching (Cortazzi/Jin 1999) or metalinguistic metaphors (Mühlhäuser 1995) in other cultures, fairly little has come to our knowledge in terms of larger scale studies of cross-cultural metaphorical mappings (despite van Brabant 1986 and Kövecses 1995).

In this seminar course (winter semester 2001/02), we therefore made an attempt to integrate teaching and (elementary) research from the perspective of the potential transferability of idioms and, secondarily, metaphorical word meanings: If so much in metaphorical mapping processes seems to be anchored in basic human experience, it ought to possible to tell more cross-cultural idiomatic correspondences and similarities from idioms based on rather culture-specific mappings (cf. chapter 2).

Our teaching and research project therefore engaged in an effort to probe into these issues in an explorative fashion. The methodological guidelines and all the reflection that went into them at different stages are outlined in chapter 3.

The analysis of the data proceeded from two perspectives:
- by domain mappings across languages (chapter 4), also looking at differences of lexical selection from identical overall mappings and at aspects of
grammatical structure (in line with Zimmermann 1999/2002, esp. section 4.2; now also Barcelona 2001, section 1.4);
- by (dis)similarities in the language groups established and beyond them (chapter 5).

The discussion in chapter 6 sums up the main theoretical, methodological and technical insights we have gained from our study. The results obtained are presented, more or less, as the student teams analysed and formulated them. Since this seminar course made very high demands on the workload of students, especially in terms of the time needed for the interviews, their transcription, and the final presentation of results (in addition to the presentation of a theoretical background topic in class), it is not surprising that not all teams were able to maintain the stamina necessary for doing full justice to the data. The data obtained contain, therefore, considerably more relevant information on cross-cultural metaphorical mappings than is made explicit in what follows.

All of us would like to thank again our informants, mostly (fellow) students, but also colleagues from several institutes of our university, for giving us so much of their time. Despite all its minor and major shortcomings, this seminar course, which expanded into a (too short) project seminar as we went along, met with unusually positive reactions by students and the two teachers alike (for the student reaction, cf. the evaluation synopsis in appendix 5). Perhaps not the least important reason for this was that the writer of these lines can hardly remember a seminar course about whose final results he knew so little when he first started it.
2. Motivation and Theoretical Background

Corinna Delschen & Sabine Fechner

2.1 Motivation

Metaphors are "pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 3) as well. They are used permanently in everyday communication, politics, education, science etc. Most universal and basic concepts of the world we live in are comprehended via metaphorical mappings, such as time, state and quantity. They derive from our concrete daily experience and our knowledge of the world and are projected onto abstract concepts, thus acting as a pattern for the formation of such. For instance, the conceptual metaphor MORE IS UP (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 23) mirrors a mapping process, in which quantity is associated with vertical movement, such as prices are high, the demand of fresh vegetables is rising or I’m feeling up.

Most of our cognitive processes, the way we think, act, perceive, and view the world, are based on metaphorical concepts which structure and influence our language: "Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 3). Of course, these concepts and metaphorical processes vary to a certain extent from culture to culture, from society to society, and range from universally applicable to language-specific metaphorical mappings.

Within this context, our study deals with the fact that metaphorical mappings are likely to vary in universality, that is, some may represent potential 'metaphorical universals', and others might be highly culture- and language-specific. The central research question is, on the one hand, which source-target mappings are common in all or at least many languages of the world and are therefore potentially transferable, and, on the other hand, which mappings are less transferable due to the physical, social or cultural experience they are based on: "For example, in some cultures the future is in front of us, whereas in others it is in back" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 14).
Although much of what we say and express is metaphorical, a majority of metaphors is used unconsciously and automatically. Most people are not aware of the metaphorical character of much of their simple vocabulary, since many metaphorical expressions are so deeply embedded in our everyday communication, thought and culture. That is, they have acquired a high degree of conventionality, so their metaphorical use remains virtually unnoticed.

The widespread use of metaphorical expressions justifies their mentioning especially in foreign language acquisition. The lack of awareness of metaphorical concepts and lexical strategies often lead language learners to render a metaphorical expression in their foreign language (L2) by using a corresponding counterpart of their native language (L1). Thus, the meaning of a word or sentence is often translated literally by activating the mother tongue concept due to a lack of knowledge of all possible meanings a word or expression may have. The concept from the L1 is simply translated into the L2.

However, many word meanings are not to be taken literally but have indeed an extended meaning of a rather figurative nature, such as the English he behaves like a bull in a China shop as contrasted to the German equivalent er benimmt sich wie ein Elefant im Porzellanladen. Both animals refer to a person who behaves in a very clumsy way, due to the similarity of the concepts, that is 'specific big animal' and 'clumsy person'. Of course, the similarities and associations between concepts are divergent in different cultures and societies, as the example illustrates. Some metaphorical processes are apparently not productive in the L2 due to a discrepancy between L1 background and L2 reality (cf. Zimmermann 2002).

If an L1 speaker is uncertain about an appropriate expression, he will quite often signal this vagueness by using hedges, such as it's like, it's as if or sort of/kind of (Channell 1994: 11, 16f., 165f.). This may make the L2 speaker aware of the lack of knowledge. Considering the literally translated L2 user's expression he behaves like an elephant in a China shop instead of he behaves like a bull in a China shop, it is assumed that this 'metaphorical' expression may be as transparent as to be understood in its gist of meaning by the L1 speaker and accordingly corrected within the situation and context of the utterance.
All kind of subject matter is mainly comprehended metaphorically. Since "metaphor is the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning" (Lakoff 1992: 2), teaching should make L2 learners aware of certain lexical strategies and impart how to effectively influence the underlying cognitive processes. Furthermore, learners should be encouraged to make use of metaphorical language, "to produce and comprehend metaphors as tools of communication and thought" (Stight 1979: 474).

Raising consciousness of the widespread use of metaphors fosters the communication and understanding between L1 and L2 speakers. The acquisition of a foreign language can be supported by learning about the metaphorical basis of conventionalised metaphorical expressions, which native speakers are usually not aware of. Metaphors help to understand a fairly abstract or unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, structured one. Moreover, the awareness of metaphorical expressions in a foreign language can create an even deeper empathy, sympathy and interest for the L2 culture. Besides this affective and emotional side, metaphorical language can be applied as an instrumental teaching objective in which the use of metaphorical expressions are seen as lexical strategies.

Therefore the motivation for this comparative metaphorical study is to investigate the varying degrees of potential transferability of metaphorical mappings in the languages of the world. It is also a didactic study focusing on cross-cultural mappings as potential lexical strategies, that is to develop a certain awareness of those lexical strategies in another language in order to support a more idiomatic and active language use.

2.2 Theoretical Background

Metaphors are not merely rhetorical or poetic figures of speech, as it has often been suggested in classical approaches claiming that metaphor in this research paradigm was solely a matter of language. Within this context, metaphor has been put sharply into contrast to 'literal' language "without much
reference to surrounding discourse context" (Cameron/Low 1999: 78). Our study, however, is based on a cognitive or constructivist approach, which was pioneered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980, asserting that metaphor was far more than a rhetorical or poetic device but rather pervasive throughout everyday language, thus being a matter of mind. Metaphors reflect our understanding of life as well as the way knowledge is structured and organised in our memory.

The word-forms of a language, whether written or spoken, are mostly arbitrary. A language is a conventionally established system that consists of abstract forms (types) referring to classes referents (Blank 1997: 148). Nevertheless, the underlying concepts that exist in our language are highly motivated, since we need categories and distinctions to make sense of, exchange information about, and perceive our human universe. Without these conventionalised concepts and prototypical categories, with which language provides us, communication would be highly problematic, if not impossible at all. Nevertheless, we are not restricted to these prototypes (cf. Dürbeck 1975).

Metaphor is the use of one notion to understand or describe another. In other words, it is the application of elements from one context of experience to another one. We thus transfer the meaning from one concept to another on the basis of perceived similarities, which are anchored in the ubiquitous concepts determining our thoughts and their structure, e.g. for all people in our culture more is connected with upward movement, as mentioned in the beginning.

As far as terminology is concerned, it is important to note that "the word metaphor has come to be used differently in contemporary metaphor research. The word metaphor has come to mean a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system. The term metaphorical expression refers to a linguistic expression (a word, phrase, or sentence) that is the surface realisation of such a cross-domain mapping (this is what the word metaphor referred to in the old theory)" (Lakoff 1992: 1).

Human cognition is largely dependent on metaphors. Without them the possibilities to communicate in our world would be cognitively limited, since the outward structure of the words we use literally is minimalistic in so far as we
use metaphorical expressions to extend the repertoire of possibilities to express ourselves. Thus by using metaphorical expressions we fill in lexical gaps and largely extend our cognitive capacities. By doing so, complexity is reduced and the context is made more abstract. Moreover, metaphorical expressions contribute to the construction of the reality surrounding us.

The basic contexts and situations based on cultural experience are called *source domains*. These are clear, simply structured, and concrete (e.g. WAR), whereas the more abstract and complex contexts, to which the words are applied, are called *target domains* (e.g. ARGUMENT). This systematic identification of source and target domain is expressed by the term *metaphorical mapping*. It links two different domains, thus structuring our experience, reasoning and everyday language.

As part of cognitive and metaphorical processes, such mappings arise more or less automatically and unconsciously, and thus affect the way we experience, think and interact within our environment. The correspondence between the domains ARGUMENT and WAR, for example, "arises from a correlation in our normal everyday experiences" (Lakoff/Johnson 1999: 47). This shared understanding influences and reflects our interpretation of reality.

"Mappings are asymmetric and partial" (Lakoff 1992: 35), which draws attention to the structural similarities between two different entities while hiding or suppressing certain other aspects. Mappings have a conventional character, being a fixed part of the human conceptual system. Accordingly, in the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, our knowledge about war is mapped onto the knowledge about arguments. In this mapping process the source domain WAR reconceptualises the abstract meaning of ARGUMENT. Numerous other everyday metaphorical expressions exist which are derived from this conceptual metaphor. Thus, we talk about *winning* and *losing* an argument, about *defending*, *attacking* or *giving up a position*. A line of reasoning can *defeat* one or one *surrenders*. People may have a certain *strategy*, *tactic* or *plan*, which might be *indefensible*. Moreover, arguments can be *shot down* or *demolished*. (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 4ff.)
As demonstrated by these examples, the social and cognitive, and therefore more abstract experience of arguing with another person or a group of people is reflected and structured by the more basic concept of WAR, although the actions themselves are different in nature: "It is in this sense that the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor is one that we live by in this culture; it structures the actions we perform in arguing [...] , what we do and how we understand what we are doing when we argue" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 4f.). Nonetheless, the source domain does not necessarily have to be logically connected to the target domain. Taken literally, many metaphorical expressions would express a kind of absurdity, contradiction and falsity - i.e. arguments cannot be shot down in a literal sense - whereas others presuppose a context-bound interpretation holding as well a regular, true literal sense, e.g. to kick the bucket. Accordingly, there is sometimes a literal counterpart or individual literal constituent, which may or may not be interpreted literally depending on the context.

With regard to our project, the importance of cultural influences on how we form our metaphorical concepts has to be developed further. The general formation of metaphorical concepts is discussed beforehand. The concepts of our mind highly depend on the way we comprehend the world around us and on how we interact with our environment. These interactions form the basis of a repertoire of practical and empirical knowledge that is unique to us. The way we perceive certain situations and things plays an important role in how we define everyday reality. Consequently, our conceptual system is based on the experience we make when interacting with the people and things surrounding us. This very experience, of course, is determined by culturally variable circumstances.

Lakoff/Johnson (1980: 3) claim that this "conceptual system is metaphorical in nature", alluding to the fact that we often understand and encounter a specific thing or situation in terms of another - as already shown in their example of ARGUMENT IS WAR. Accordingly, we use metaphorical concepts for thinking and acting and, subsequently, for communication. The fact that metaphorical thinking is used in language is a source of evidence for
the existence of metaphorical concepts in our minds. Therefore, it is essential to differentiate between metaphorical concepts in our minds on the one hand, and metaphorical expressions which are linguistic realisations of these on the other.

The experience that leads to the formation of our metaphorical concepts can be different in nature. They either relate to our physical or to our cultural environment. The physical environment refers to all static things around us (objects) as well as to living things (animals) and - most of all - to our own body. The cultural environment, however, includes the various kinds of interaction between human beings and - more importantly - our personal philosophy of life. It is, above all, tradition and customs that control these ways of interacting and thinking.

Lakoff/Johnson (1980) also challenged the approach of linguistic relativity, the so-called Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis named after the linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, who worked in the early 20th century (cf. Dürbeck 1975: 5ff.). In their view, it is language which ultimately determines the world view of its speaker; only the words spoken give shape to the concepts of our mind. Accordingly, the concepts are highly dependent on the language we speak and therefore on our cultural background.

Lakoff and Johnson would probably agree on the fact that the way metaphorical concepts are formed varies from culture to culture, sometimes even from subculture to subculture. However, compared to culturally variable concepts, some tend to be more universal than others. The next sections comment on the more universal concepts as opposed to the culturally variable ones. Our conclusion tries to link both and orders them on a scale according to their potential universality or cultural variability.

2.3 Universal Metaphorical Concepts

Certain physical principles are invariable with regard to cultural influence. They do not change from one place to another but are basic and fundamental parts of reality. We can draw a "distinction between experiences that are 'more' physical [i.e. universal; our comment], such as standing up, and those that are
'more' cultural, such as participating in a wedding ceremony" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 57).

Orientational metaphors, for example, tend to be based on universal concepts that are derived from the fact that human beings are shaped as they are and perceive the world in a similar way, namely by using their senses. Within this group of metaphors, the body itself and our sense of spatial orientation plays an important role. The central concepts emerging from this concern orientations like UP-DOWN, IN-OUT, FRONT-BACK, NEAR-FAR (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 57), expressing either the posture of our body (UP-DOWN), seeing our body as a container (IN-OUT) or correlating the body and the space around us (FRONT-BACK). Since these concepts also represent metaphorical concepts, we can assume that they are used universally. Exceptions may be found but will be discussed later.

The metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP, for example, can be supported by the assumption that an erect posture means self-confidence, well-being and happiness, while a bent position means the opposite (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 15f.). If we feel confident, we show a tendency to keep our head up high. This is universal as it represents the natural human reaction to emotion. However, as emotion is not as sharply delineated as our physical posture is, we choose to think in orientational metaphorical concepts to conceptualise emotion.

The concept WARM-COLD can serve as another example. AFFECTION IS WARMTH is grounded in our physical perception that we prefer a warm surrounding to a cold one (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980). We disapprove of the cold appearance of a dead body but like the warmth of an embrace. Besides, the metaphorical concepts of containers should be considered. They are grounded on the fact that our body represents a limited physical object separated from the surrounding world by our skin. Accordingly, we employ concepts like IN-OUT – based on the image of a container – and apply them to certain other concepts, even though those do not show boundaries as clear-cut as those of our body. This process is often referred to as embodiment, hinting at the fact that the properties of our body are projected onto things and ideas around us. Such "basic ontological metaphors are [therefore] grounded by virtue of
systematic correlations within our experience" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 58). We say *I've had a full life* or *my life is empty* and have the concept *LIFE IS A CONTAINER* in mind. In addition, embodiment can produce concepts that are based on human movement, e.g. *LIFE IS A PATH*, realised in language in expressions such as *it's been a long way*.

The concepts introduced as the more universal ones are understood more directly than others. They can be called 'emergent concepts' as they are based on direct experience that is based on direct interaction with the physical world. They "allow us to conceptualise our emotions in more sharply defined terms" (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 58). They are potentially transferable from one culture to another, although they emerge out of experience that is itself bound to cultural circumstances. This will be discussed in the next section.

### 2.4 Culturally Variable Concepts

It would be misleading to separate the more universal concepts completely from the culturally variable ones. This is because even the more universal concepts are formed in a cultural-specific environment. They are also influenced by cultural factors, even though not as much as others. Lakoff and Johnson therefore claim that "all experience is cultural through and through [...] we experience our 'world' in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself" (1980: 57). They continue by stating that our concepts are based on cultural presuppositions which have a tendency to be either more physical, i.e. universal, or more cultural.

In order to underline this, we go back to the orientational concept UP-DOWN. As discussed above in connection with HAPPY-SAD, the metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP is rather universal. However, if we take the system RATIONAL-EMOTIONAL, it is not as obvious which attribute is assigned to which orientation. The way we understand the concepts is now based on two separate and different experiential bases both referring to the metaphorical concept of UP-DOWN (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 20). Whether RATIONAL IS UP or EMOTIONAL IS UP now depends on the cultural and personal
presuppositions of the particular person and the cultural environment. In our Western industrial society, the tendency is definitely towards the concept RATIONAL IS UP as we need a rational way of thinking and handling our emotions to be successful in our society. This leads us to the fact that material value is very important in Western industrial societies. We attach a high value to resources as they serve the purposeful end of material enrichment. Furthermore, they can be quantified by being given a certain materialistic value.

This becomes obvious by looking at the metaphorical concept TIME IS A RESOURCE. Expressions such as we run out of time underline the existence of a concept influenced by certain values of a society, while in other parts of the world this may be seen differently. Cultural values are therefore coherent with the metaphorical system.

Metaphorical concepts like TIME IS A RESOURCE are called structural metaphors as they allow us to use a highly structured and definite concept like RESOURCE to structure a less definite or abstract one like TIME (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 65). Generally speaking, structural metaphors have a higher degree of cultural variance than orientational or ontological ones.

If we also take into account geographic circumstances, all metaphor types may vary locally. How we experience our world is strongly influenced by outer physical and social characteristics of the region we live in. Topography, climatic zones and therefore different kinds of vegetation and animal life affect our mental concepts as much as the structure of our society. It also makes a considerable difference whether we have an urban or a rural background. While concepts based on buildings and transport are likely to be more readily available to an urban person, a rural person would prove to be more inclined to incorporate concepts of landscape and animal species. Urban people, for instance, would rather take the concept of a machine to express strength, while others might prefer a strong and huge animal like a bear for this.

In reality, however, traditional metaphorical expressions which once emerged in the countryside have survived even in the speech of people living in a city. These expressions are still determined by historical aspects, although they may have been subject to a change of meaning. Even if the linguistic
expression survives, its conceptual background can have changed (cf. Blank 1997: 347f). Only if new mappings occur, the thesis above can be applied, otherwise traditional expressions are most likely to have survived.

Considering this, any concept – spatial, ontological or structural – can additionally be filled with variable forms of objects and circumstances with respect to geographically and socially variable principles. Through this, metaphorical concepts shift towards cultural specification (indicated by a horizontal arrow in the diagrams below).

In conclusion, one may say that a shift of the more universal concepts towards cultural variability is always noticeable depending on how the concepts are expressed in cultural terms. No clear-cut boundary can be drawn between universal and cultural concepts only. Nevertheless, the different ways of how the concepts emerge make it possible to hypothetically arrange certain concepts with regard to their degree of universality. The following diagrams try to exemplify this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural metaphors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGUMENT IS WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME IS A RESOURCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>universal</td>
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<tr>
<td>culturally variable</td>
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</table>
In our project, we have tried to develop models of how certain concepts vary in different parts of the world on the basis of how they are realised in a particular language. The basic concepts that have been discussed above form a basis for the selection of idioms and metaphorical word meanings to be used in our empirical study.
3. Methodology

Kirsten Frank, Gero Kunter & Barbara Pfisterer

3.1 In Search of a Data Collection Procedure

The first step in the design of our data collection was a clarification of the central question of the study. Our purpose was to gather metaphoric expressions from various languages of different cultural backgrounds in order to examine to what extent the used mappings differed or showed similarities. This question called for particular considerations about the overall structure of the research, and we had to take into account the available resources as well as the special character of the data we wanted to collect.

Resource Considerations

The scope of our data collection was restricted by time and workload that derived from the setting within a one-term seminar. We also had to take into account the availability of both researchers, who were all students with additional obligations, and informants at Marburg University. The latter were to be recruited partly from among the university staff and partly from among fellow students.

Requirements on the Data

The decision on how to collect valuable material for our investigation was guided by several requirements on the data. For one, the data needed to be rather explicit, i.e. they had to be elicited by means of a specific data collection procedure. Since it is difficult to predict whether idioms and other metaphorical expressions will be used spontaneously in discourse with any significant frequency, we had to choose a method that focused rather strictly on their elicitation. The use of procedures of low explicitness, e.g. unstructured interviews, taped spontaneous conversations or written texts, would have not provided data rich enough for our purposes and were ruled out for being too cumbersome, time- and work-consuming and indeed ineffective.
It was equally necessary that, since we intended to do a cross-language analysis, our data sets could be gained with equal ease in different languages. As we could not provide a researcher for each of the languages that we intended to examine whose command of that language would suffice to lead an interview with the informants, this and related procedures also had to be discarded from the beginning.

The issue of the researchers' involvement in an empirical study and the informants' awareness of being 'observed' is often a crucial point in linguistic research. In our case, however, we expected no negative impact of these aspects on our data. On the contrary, we regarded the informants' awareness as an advantage in the activation of metaphorical mappings, and we intended our researchers to assist in this activation process.

**A Structured Questionnaire**

In *Second Language Research Methods*, Seliger and Shohamy (1989) investigate the advantages and disadvantages of different data collection procedures. They allocate the methods on a continuum of low and high explicitness (cf. figure 1).

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low explicitness</th>
<th>High explicitness</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Heuristic</td>
<td>Deductive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diaries</td>
<td>Metalinguistic tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record reviews</td>
<td>Structured interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>Semi-structured Questionnaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unstructured Interviews</td>
<td>Grammatical judgments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations</td>
<td>Structured questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open observations</td>
<td>Discrete point tests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Figure 1: Example of data collection procedures typical of research types (from Seliger/ Shohamy 1989: 159)*
We final opted for a structured questionnaire which, however, was to be guided by a high degree of interaction between informants and researchers. This form made a comparison of mappings between different languages possible in the first place as it allowed us to guide the test persons towards specific metaphorical mappings. It also offered the possibility to ensure that a similar amount of data from each language was to be collected. The length of the answers and the amount of items could also be controlled.

The communicative side of an interview was crucial for the design of our study. The interviewer would have to ensure that the meaning of the respective idiomatic expressions was clear to the test persons; we also hoped that the interviewer would be able to assist the informants in the activation of certain domain mappings by supplying additional idiomatic examples. A further advantage of this procedure was that, as the questionnaire would be filled in by the informants, the data would be available in a transcription right from the beginning, a point that we expected to be of some importance for languages that use writing systems different from ours, like Chinese and Farsi.

The data collection process was to be done in two stages. The first stage was to serve as a test run during which ambiguities, design faults or unexpected problems of the questionnaire were hoped to become clear. After an evaluation of the test run, we planned to revise our questionnaire and to alter it according to these observations. The data that was intended to serve as the basis for our analysis was to be received during a final run, using the revised version of the questionnaire.

### 3.2 Design of the Data Collection

**Preliminary Considerations**

Above all, our intention was to select ‘test items' which would be promising for the data collection. The class first decided from which domains these items were to be taken. It was necessary to agree on the question whether to take items which are based on a particular source or target domain.
Taking the items from a target domain would mean to choose one concept and search by what kind of source domains it is expressed. The question for our informants would be e.g.: How do we express PROBLEMS in idioms and metaphorical expressions? This way of dealing with metaphors is more difficult since the information is not retrieved easily either from our mental lexicon or from dictionaries. The domain PROBLEMS does not automatically trigger a whole category of idioms that have the figurative meaning of 'dealing with problems', e.g. *something is hard to swallow*.

Choosing the items from a source domain, however, seemed to be easier for us as researchers as well as for our informants, item. One can even look up these concepts in dictionaries. Taking the example of the German word *Hand*, we are able to relate this concept to idioms like *um jemandes Hand anhalten* (to propose to someone) or *Hand und Fuß haben* (to make sense). By adopting this approach, the transferability of certain idioms is easier to verify in the languages under investigation. Consequently, we decided to concentrate on several source domains.

The next step was to find source domains that were well established and traditional in as many cultures as possible. We had to find universal metaphorical concepts with a strong cultural aspect. Considering structural, orientational and ontological metaphors, we evaluated which of the various metaphors were the most promising for our data collection. Since orientational and ontological metaphors are rather universal, we concentrated our study mostly on structural metaphors. Structural metaphors are not as opaque as some basic metaphorical expression mentioned earlier. On the contrary, it would be more transparent to us if we were mapping one structure onto another as in the example of ARGUMENT IS WAR in the previous chapter.

For that reason, we selected several preliminary source domains which offered us a variety of idioms and which potentially showed cultural influence on language. The students of the seminar took care of the following source domains in order to find promising items in group work:
• WEATHER & LANDSCAPE
• AGRICULTURE (including ANIMALS)
• TRANSPORT & JOURNEY
• WAR
• EMBODIMENT, which was further divided into PERCEPTION and FOOD.

These source domains are very essential and universal, given that they reflect the human body, life on earth, human inventions and interactions with each other; however, they are all culturally variable. In our data collection, we were especially interested in the variability of the structural metaphors in the languages and cultures we had chosen.

Selection of Items

Each student workgroup had to follow certain criteria while obtaining the items of the respective source domain for our data collection. The items were divided into idioms and basic metaphorical expressions that illustrate the process of the metaphorical mapping. While the idiom is composed of a fixed combination of words, the basic metaphorical expression might consist of simply one word in free combination with other words. A hot debate, for example, demonstrates that hot is used metaphorically, meaning 'intensive'. However, it can also be combined in a hot temper. This is a metaphorical mapping where words of the source domain TEMPERATURE are transferred to the target domain INTENSITY. In order to find items having these kinds of metaphorical mappings in most languages we applied the following criteria.

First of all, we looked for items that still have a connection between their literal and their figurative meaning. It was necessary to make sure that our items were not expressions that we were not able to comprehend by our own intuitive assessment. According to Fernando/Flavell (1981), such metaphorical expressions are 'pure idioms', i.e. they are opaque. Thus, even native speakers have trouble understanding their meaning at first sight. Fernando/Flavell
illustrate that there is "a continuum from totally transparent to the totally opaque" (1981: 28) as shown in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal</th>
<th>Metaphors</th>
<th>Idioms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Transparent</td>
<td>(ii) Semi-Transparent</td>
<td>(iii) Semi-Opaque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut wood</td>
<td>skate on thin ice</td>
<td>burn one's boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break eggs</td>
<td>kill two birds with one stone</td>
<td>tarred with the same brush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pink shirt</td>
<td>add fuel to the fire</td>
<td>the boot/shoe is on the other foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bring in</td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>jump down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rely on</td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>someone's throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Continuum of transparency of metaphors (from Fernando/Flavell 1981: 28)

What we needed was metaphorical expressions that were semi-transparent or semi-opaque. It is a rather subjective judgment to which category a given phrase belongs, i.e. it is up to the native speakers' and non-native speakers' intuitive assessments. Since native speakers have the tendency to find opaque idioms rather semi-opaque or semi-transparent because they know their meaning, we also consulted the non-native speakers of German in our seminar. This procedure may have helped to exclude items that do not trigger any related items in other languages.

It is promising when the same or a similar idiom exists in several languages. Since we had native speakers of German, Czech and Chinese in our class, we were able to check with these languages, including English and Romance languages. The procedure of selecting the items was lead by our intuitive assessment. The chosen idioms had to be familiar and more or less frequent in colloquial language. This should prevent the selection of items that were only used in literary work.
More valuable items are those which seem readily available for cultural transferability. However, we also selected items that seemed to be culturally bound which would confirm our theory, or to find interesting items from other languages that show cultural differences, yet might have structural similarities. On the whole, the predictability of an item was the most significant criterion.

**Selection of Languages**

For our data collection, it was vital for us to have a wide range of languages for examination. However, we had to consider the availability of informants at our university. In the beginning, we also considered languages such as Hindi, Estonian, or Indonesian. But since our ambition was to find at least two informants from each language - ideally one female and one male person being competent in German or English - we had to give up these three and other languages because we could not find enough informants.

The languages to be investigated were divided into larger groups according to geographical, political, historical, or cultural connections and similarities, even though some languages which were grouped together are very different from a typological point of view. Following is a list of the language groups, individual languages belonging to the respective groups are given in brackets:

- Scandinavian languages (Swedish, Finnish)
- Romance languages (French, Spanish)
- Slavonic languages (Russian, Czech, Serbo-Croatian)
- South East Mediterranean languages (Greek, Turkish)
- Middle Eastern languages (Farsi, Arabic)
- East Asian languages (Japanese, Chinese).

With this diversity of languages, we hoped to get a representative variety of results with respect to the universality of metaphorical mappings.
3.3 Questionnaires

**Design of the First Questionnaire**

As we tried to expand the range of available informants to the furthest, we prepared an English as well as a German version of the questionnaire, thereby allowing the informants to choose their preferred language\(^1\). In the case of some informants, in particular those who were university staff members, we thought it appropriate to give them some information about our project before contacting them directly. In a short letter we introduced ourselves, explained our intentions, and asked them for help (cf. the letter to informants in appendix 1). This procedure turned out to be quite helpful, as there was great support from these informants.

The questionnaire itself is preceded by an introductory part in which the nature of our project is explained, stated that the data will be collected anonymously and that the informants are not tested in any way, and consequently do not have to fear an evaluation of their knowledge or abilities (cf. the instructions given prior to the actual questionnaires, which are provided in appendices 2 and 3). We consider it important to emphasise this point in order to prevent the possible restrictive effects that might appear when informants feel to be under pressure. For this reason, a precise explanation of the aim of the experiment is also given in the introductory part. In order to ensure a friendly and productive atmosphere, the informants are also encouraged to ask questions whenever they feel insecure or face problems with an item.

The test run questionnaire contains an exercise section following the same structure as the later questions, familiarising the informants with the procedure of the interview. Each item is introduced by a short dialogue, contextualising and thereby helping to understand its meaning. This dialogue was based on everyday conversation, which did not primarily intend to explain the meaning

---

\(^1\) The English versions of both the test and the main run questionnaire are provided in appendices 2 and 3. The German versions can be obtained from the following website: [http://staff-www.uni-marburg.de/~callies/metaphor](http://staff-www.uni-marburg.de/~callies/metaphor).
but aimed at emphasising that the expression is used in natural interaction. Then follows a paraphrase of the respective idiom or basic metaphorical expression. This is also kept short and simple to support a better understanding of the item. As some of the informants might encounter problems with idioms in a foreign language (e.g. unknown vocabulary), it is essential for a reliable analysis of the data that a correct understanding of the test items is ensured.

After the meaning of the expression has been established, the informants are supposed to discuss the following five aspects for each item (using the example to hide one's head in the sand):

1. Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your own writing system).
2. Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?
3. Can you write down your words for HEAD, SAND and HIDE as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?
5. Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about AVOIDING OR POSTPONING A DIFFICULT DECISION in your language? Please give English translations.

By means of this set of questions, we were able to retrieve the following kinds of data:

- similar expressions which use a similar idea or image in the informant's native language
- other metaphors using the same source domain
- other metaphors with the same target domain, which might also involve items taken from a different source domain

For the first run, we chose to examine twelve items from six different domains: one idiomatic expression and one application of the underlying
concept in the metaphorical use of a basic word. The following items were chosen for the test run questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERCEPTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I see what you mean</td>
<td>1. die Zusammenhänge sehen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. to look facts in the face</td>
<td>2. den Tatsachen ins Auge schauen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEATHER, TEMPERATURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. a warm welcome/reception</td>
<td>3. ein warmes Lächeln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. to warm someone's heart</td>
<td>4. warm ums Herz werden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAR</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. to defend a theory</td>
<td>5. eine Theorie verteidigen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. to bury the hatchet</td>
<td>6. das Kriegsbeil begraben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUILDING, TRANSPORT, JOURNEY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. the road to nowhere</td>
<td>7. auswegslos sein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. to see the light at the end if the tunnel</td>
<td>8. Licht am Ende des Tunnels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. bread and butter</td>
<td>9. seine Brötchen verdienen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. trouble is brewing</td>
<td>10. da braut sich was zusammen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGRICULTURE AND ANIMALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. a fruitful idea</td>
<td>11. auf fruchtbaren Boden fallen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. like a bull in a china shop</td>
<td>12. wie ein Elefant im Porzellanladen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Items in the first questionnaire

**Administration of the Test Run**

It was agreed in class that two interviewers, ideally one male and one female person, should conduct each interview. We expected this to be helpful in case informants from very different cultural backgrounds might feel more comfortable when being interviewed by a female and/or male researcher. One interviewer was to guide the test person through the interview by reading out the items, instructions and questions and was supposed to help the informant
with additional remarks should any kind of uncertainty arise. The other interviewer had the role of an observer taking notes with respect to the time and place of the interview, the atmosphere, the spontaneity with which the answers were supplied, whether additional information about the background and motivation of an idiom was provided by the informants, as well as any other noteworthy observation.

In order to gain a basis for the evaluation of the test run, we intended to have at least two interviews for each language. However, due to time constraints this was not possible for all groups.

**Evaluation**

The most important point that was mentioned while evaluating the test run concerned the time it took to conduct the interviews. Some interviews lasted three hours, which seemed to be too much for the informants as well as the interviewers, who had to do more than one interview. The reason for the length of the interviews was obviously the number of domains from which we had taken the items as well as the amount or the items, which was obviously too large. In the test run we wanted to try out how effective the answers would be by taking such a wide range of items. For the main run we decided to restrict the number of the domains to six and using only one item for each domain.

It also turned out that the informants needed more space for notes on the questionnaire, especially those with another writing system. Contrary to our expectations, the short dialogue in which each item was presented, proved to be a hindrance, since it rather had a restrictive effect on the informants' imagination. It illustrated only one possible usage and was therefore constraining the meaning too strongly. Other items originally having been selected by the seminar in order to learn about cultural differences did not turn out to be very effective because in some languages we simply did not get any result for that item. In the case of *to bury the hatchet* we expected to find
similar metaphorical expressions with weapons in other languages, but this did not prove to be the case.

Another point we needed to improve on was that the interviewer needed more examples to illustrate and explain the individual items. It was proposed that additional supportive items should be found which could be used for that purpose.

**Main Run**

In order to improve on the clarity of the layout of the questionnaire, each item was placed on a separate sheet of paper, providing more space for each answer. The number of domains and items which were examined was reduced to six, while the basic metaphorical expressions were no longer part of the questionnaire. We decided to examine idioms only in the final run. This restriction was made because of two reasons: a) as an attempt to limit the interview one hour, and b) because of the difficulty to activate very basic metaphorical mappings with our informants. For instance, the metaphorical meaning of warm in a warm welcome (item 3 in table 2 above) was not always recognised and therefore the informants did not look for anything figurative in their language.

The short dialogues were left out completely, the informants were only given a short paraphrase with the meaning of the item. In case that some informants may encounter difficulties with an item, the new supportive items could be used to stimulate the informants' imagination with respect to the mapping we intended to activate. These supportive items were divided into primary and secondary items. We chose only those idiomatic expressions as primary items for which we expected positive results in most of the languages (cf. appendix 4).

We also decided to use items different from the first run in the final run. The items were now taken from the following domains:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target domains</th>
<th>Source domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) EMOTIONS ARE</td>
<td>PARTS OF THE BODY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) PROBLEMS/IDEAS ARE</td>
<td>FOOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) DANGER IS</td>
<td>DEEP WATER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRENGTH IS</td>
<td>WATER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) PROBLEMS ARE</td>
<td>HOT OR DANGEROUS OBJECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) PROBLEMS ARE</td>
<td>OBSTACLES ON ONE’S WAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) STRENGTH IS</td>
<td>FIRM, UPRIGHT POSITION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Source and target domain mappings in the main run

The sequence of questions to the informants remained the same in general, and the interviews were conducted in the same manner as in the first run with one interviewer and one observer.

Evaluation of the Main Run

On the one hand, most of the changes to the test run questionnaire indeed improved the interviews during the main run. The supportive items were useful for the interviewers, helping to trigger other items when the interviewee could not think of an equivalent for the primary item. The interviewers felt more confident in their role because they were prepared to give other metaphorical expressions in which the source domain was used. In the same way, the interviewee did not feel too pressured to find the one and only item, quite on the contrary, he or she was able to be flexible and associate more freely. This change helped making the interview more interactive between researcher and informant. Yet, in some situations, the purpose of the interviewer was not quite clear to the interviewees. Since the questionnaire was on paper, the informants felt that their job was to fill in the blanks, and felt more under pressure or disturbed than stimulated by the presence of the two interviewers. However, this probably depends on the personality of the informants and was only the case with very few interviewees.
On the other hand, some of the problems we experienced during the test run arose again. Despite the fact that we had shortened the questionnaire to half of its former length, some of the interviews still consumed too much time. Another aspect that we realised too late was that most of the items had negative connotations. Since the target domain of many idioms was PROBLEMS or DANGER, there was a bias towards idioms expressing problems or negative emotions. Moreover, the last section of the questionnaire asked for other idioms of that target domain so that the same question occurred several times.
4. Domain Mappings - General Results
Kathrin Abe, Nadja Kesper & Matthias Warich

The domain mappings which were elicited during the interviews have been analysed in three steps. First of all, we examined to which degree the idiomatic expressions supplied by the informants show correspondences to the German and/or English items given in the questionnaire (cf. section 4.1). Answers are allocated on a scale given below:

| full correspondence | partial correspondence | no correspondence |

![Figure 1: Degrees of correspondence](image)

The data include

- idioms with complete overlap, i.e. the same metaphorical mapping as in English and/or German is present and the same or at least similar lexical items are used;
- idioms with partial overlap, i.e. the same mapping occurs but this is expressed using different lexical items;
- idioms which show a different domain mapping altogether.

In a second step, we looked at those idioms that use the same source domain as the English and/or German questionnaire items, but differ in the target domain, i.e. idioms that use lexemes from the same semantic area as our test items, but express different ideas (cf. section 4.2).

The third step was to analyse those idioms which are based on a source domain different from the test items, but use the same target domain. The target domains of the questionnaire items were categorised into three groups (EMOTIONS, PROBLEMS/DIFFICULTIES/DANGER, STRENGTH). We then intended to find parallels in the source domains that the different languages employed to express these ideas (cf. section 4.3).
4.1 Same or Similar Metaphorical Mappings

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: PARTS OF THE BODY</td>
<td><strong>to break someone’s heart</strong></td>
<td>92% (22 informants)</td>
<td><strong>to break the heart</strong> (Russian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target: EMOTIONS</td>
<td><strong>jemandem das Herz brechen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>to tear the heart</strong> (Greek)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical mapping</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td><strong>a thorn in the heart</strong> (Japanese)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but different lexical item(s)</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td><strong>this hurts my feelings</strong> (Arabic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical expression</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td><strong>to break someone’s soul</strong> (Spanish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data summarised in table 1 speak for a high transferability of the mapping exemplified by this item, since the concept of expressing EMOTION via PARTS OF THE BODY is used in nearly all of the languages examined in the study. Answers like to tear the heart are included under ‘same mapping’ in table 1 even though the expression is semantically stronger than break. To break someone’s soul has been classified as a borderline case since it is uncertain whether the soul can be considered part of the body.

Generally speaking, the data collected in the interviews are certainly much more valuable and call for closer inspection and analysis than could be done in the course of this project. Selected examples of metaphorical expressions in different languages are mostly given in their English near-translations provided by the informants. German items have been translated into English. [eds.].

---

2 Generally speaking, the data collected in the interviews are certainly much more valuable and call for closer inspection and analysis than could be done in the course of this project. Selected examples of metaphorical expressions in different languages are mostly given in their English near-translations provided by the informants. German items have been translated into English. [eds.].
### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source:</strong> FOOD</td>
<td><strong>Target:</strong> PROBLEMS</td>
<td><strong>something is hard to swallow</strong></td>
<td><strong>etwas ist schwer zu verdauen</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical mapping</td>
<td>83% (20 informants)</td>
<td><em>something is hard to digest</em> (Czech)</td>
<td><em>something is hard to swallow</em> (Swedish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but different lexical item(s)</td>
<td>8% (2 informants)</td>
<td><em>something is hard to chew</em> (Japanese)</td>
<td><em>it does not flow on my larynx</em> (Arabic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td>4% (1 informant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td>8% (2 informants)</td>
<td><em>not being a tasty bite</em> (Spanish)</td>
<td><em>to wolf something down</em> (Chinese)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occurring less often than item 1, this second item can still be considered highly transferable. The mapping of PROBLEMS or IDEAS being FOOD is common to all languages we investigated.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: DANGER, Target: WATER</td>
<td>to keep one's head above water, sich über Wasser halten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical mapping</td>
<td>21 % (5 informants)</td>
<td>to stay above water (Spanish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to keep the nose above water (Swedish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to keep oneself on the surface (Finnish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but different lexical item(s)</td>
<td>17 % (4 informants)</td>
<td>to try not to sink (Turkish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to swim out from problems (Serbo-Croatian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical expression</td>
<td>4 % (1 informant)</td>
<td>hardly that I survive (Greek)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td>17 % (4 informants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.3 per cent of the informants gave answers that contained other domains, which will be dealt with in more detail in section 4.2. Compared to the first two items, this domain mapping seems to be only partially transferable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source:</strong> DANGER</td>
<td><strong>to burn one's fingers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target:</strong> HOT OBJECTS</td>
<td><strong>sich die Finger an etwas verbrennen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical</td>
<td>58 % (14 informants)</td>
<td>to burn oneself (Russian)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mapping</td>
<td></td>
<td>to burn one's fingers on something (Finnish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but</td>
<td>12 % (3 informants)</td>
<td>to be on glowing coal (Finnish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different lexical item(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td>12 % (3 informants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td>4 % (1 informant)</td>
<td>to run from the ashes into the fire (Swedish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 per cent (5 informants) gave an answer containing another domain. 70 per cent of the informants gave an answer containing the same or a similar mapping, indicating a rather high transferability of this mapping.
Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: OBSTACLES ON ONE’S WAY</td>
<td>to be on a bumpy road einen steinigen Weg vor sich haben</td>
<td>71 % (17 informants)</td>
<td>to walk a thorny/steep path (Turkish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target: PROBLEMS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a stony path (Swedish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical mapping</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 % (2 informants)</td>
<td>the way to paradise is paved with cactuses (Arabic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a path/road bent like a curve (Chinese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but different lexical item(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 % (4 informants)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 % (1 informant)</td>
<td>to walk on an even or flat road (Russian)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With roughly two thirds of the answers showing the same mapping, a rather high domain transferability can be suggested.
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: <strong>STRENGTH</strong></td>
<td><strong>to help someone back on his feet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target: <strong>FIRM, UPRIGHT POSITION</strong></td>
<td><strong>jemandem auf die Beine helfen</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same metaphorical mapping</td>
<td><strong>62 % (15 informants)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>to help somebody to stand on his feet</em> (Greek)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>to help someone on his legs</em> (Finnish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same mapping but different lexical item(s)</td>
<td><strong>8 % (2 informants)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>to throw a hand, to give someone a hand</em> (Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>to pull someone up on his hands</em> (Turkish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No metaphorical expression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td><strong>25 % (6 informants)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline cases</td>
<td><strong>8 % (2 informants)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>to hold someone a rope</em> (Spanish)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Same Source Domain - Different Target Domain

**Source Domain: PARTS OF THE BODY**

There are twelve answers that contain different target domains. Only one mapping occurs twice and expresses the concept of clumsiness:

- **Russian**: *his hands are at the wrong ends* (to be all fingers and thumbs)
- **Spanish**: *tienes las manos de mantequilla* = 'your hands are made of butter' (butterfingers).

Other mappings which occurred only once include

- **Spanish**: *tener un nudo en el estómago* = 'to have a knot in the stomach' (to be nervous and shaky)
- **Chinese**: *hands dance, feet shake* (to be in an unexpected positive situation)
- **Arabic**: *there are four fingers between truth and lie* (there is no absolute truth)
- **Farsi**: *someone has a crooked hand* (to be a thief).

**Source Domain: FOOD**

Sixteen answers contain a different target domain. One mapping occurs several times expressing the concept of FOOD (in this case *bread*) as a necessity of living:

- **Russian**: *to earn one's bread*
- **Finnish**: *that's our daily bread*
- **Greek**: *someone has taken away my bread* (to dismiss someone).

Other mappings include

- **Spanish**: *es un patata caliente* = 'a hot potato' (a hard problem)
  *es una manzana podriza* = 'a rotten apple'
  *pasar un mal trago* = 'to take a bad gulp' (to experience a difficult time; to face bad news)
- **Turkish**: *to talk like a pumpkin* (to bore someone)
Farsi: to try to take two melons with one hand (to do something that is impossible)
Russian: to hang noodles on someone's ears (to lie to somebody)
Chinese: boil wine, talk heroes (to talk about current things).

**Source Domain: DEEP WATER**

There are thirteen answers that contain different target domains. Three mappings express the concept of HAPPINESS or SATISFACTION IS WATER:
French: être heureux comme un poisson dans l'eau = 'to feel like a fish in fresh water' (to be in one's element)
Czech: to feel like a fish in fresh water.

Other mappings occur only once, e.g.
French: être a l'eau = 'to be in water' (to be up the spout)
Russian: time runs like water (time passes very quickly)
Russian: to pour water on one's mill (to strengthen one's own position)
Spanish: echar a alguien un jarro de agua fria 'to pour someone a jar of cold water' (to give someone a piece of one's mind).

Problematic cases are
Greek: he doesn't give his angels any water (to be mean, stingy)
Spanish: nunca digas de este agua no beberé = 'never say you'll never drink from this water' (never say never).
In these cases, WATER refers to drinking water.

**Source Domain: DANGER/ HOT OBJECTS**

Nine answers contain different target domains. Cross-linguistic correspondences can be observed in the following items:
Russian, Czech and Japanese: to strike while the iron is hot
French, Spanish and Czech: to lay one's hand into the fire for someone (to vouch for someone).
Other mappings occurred only once, e.g.
French:  *to see nothing but fire* (to be blinded)
Arabic: *a big fire is caused by small sparks* (big problems start as small ones).

**Source Domain: OBSTACLES ON ONE'S WAY**

No answers with different target domains were given.

**Source Domain: STRENGTH IS FIRM/ UPRIGHT POSITION**

The mapping exemplified in item 6 (*to help someone back on his feet*/ *jemandem auf die Beine helfen*) might possibly be so strongly linked to the target domain that it prevents other target domains or mappings from occurring with the given source domain. There are, however, answers that expressed the closely related mapping of WEAKNESS as a LOWERED/WEAK POSITION:
Japanese: *to pull away someone's legs* (to get someone into a difficult situation)
Czech: *to throw someone logs under the feet* (to cause problems for someone).

**4.3 Same Target Domain - Different Source Domain**

In this section it will be examined whether the target domains alluded to by the questionnaire items occur with different source domains. The target domains in the questionnaires have been divided into three major parts for this purpose:
1. EMOTIONS
2. PROBLEMS/DIFFICULTIES/DANGER
3. STRENGTH
EMOTIONS

In the first part there were eight different answers containing different source domains, e.g.

French:  
- être sur un nuage = ‘to be on a cloud’ (to be on cloud nine)
- avoir le moral a zéro = ‘to have one's mood at zero’ (to be in a bad mood)

Czech:  
- I burn with desire, the passion is burning me

Farsi:  
- someone grows wings (to be very happy).

PROBLEMS/DIFFICULTIES/DANGER

The given target domains PROBLEMS/DIFFICULTIES/DANGER can occur with an almost endless variety of different source domains, some of which occurred more than once in the interviews. Nevertheless, it is hard to make out any regularities among them. This variety will be illustrated by means of the examples below.

Arabic:  
- the world is black in my eyes (to be pessimistic)

Farsi:  
- to try to take two melons with one hand (to do something that is impossible)

French:  
- to see in all colours (to go through a difficult time)
- to walk through the desert (to go through a difficult time)
- to have a knife on one's throat (to be in a desperate situation)

Japanese:  
- to have a headache (to have problems)
- to be locked from eight sides (to be in a desperate situation)
- to have a stone in one's stomach (to be depressed)

Chinese:  
- to let someone wear small shoes (to cause someone problems)

Russian:  
- this does not go into the gate (a matter is too big to handle)
- to stay on the crossroad (to be unable to make a decision)

Greek:  
- to walk uphill (to have many problems)
- I have to jump over the cliff (to master a problem)
STRENGTH

The target domain of STRENGTH is realised by predatory animals in many languages. Although three of the answers are not metaphors but similes, they are included below since this shows that predatory animals are used in the particular languages to express the notion of strength.

Arabic:  like a lion
Spanish:  somebody is a bull
Turkish:  like a bear, like a strong lion
Chinese:  breathe in and grab the mountain and river (to be very strong and powerful)
5. Domain Mappings by Language Groups
Syke Fischer & Sebastian Wolff

5.1 Main Characteristics of the Languages Under Investigation

In the following, we will give a very brief historical and general typological overview of the languages we investigated. Naturally, each language has its own history. In addition to their genetic and typological relations, some languages are connected with each other through geographical closeness, but reactions to influences resulting from any kind of contact, e.g. geographical, political or economical, have been manifold: some cultures have deliberately removed loanwords from their language and some have regarded them as interesting and useful in order to distinguish 'two shades of blue'.

Swedish branched off from Germanic and after that from Nordic. Scandinavian languages all have a common ancestry in the old Scandinavian languages and were influenced from Western Europe. Despite a certain contact with Celtic languages in the west and with Slavonic languages in the east, very few influences are detectable from these (Comrie 1987: 160f.). Swedish has moved from a synthetic to an almost-analytic language in inflection, but has retained many word-formation processes. One of its grammatical characteristics is the definite article -en as a nominal suffix (from Common Scandinavian), cf. en dag vs. dagen 'a day' vs. 'the day'. Its basic word order is SVO (Bussmann 1996: 467).

Finnish is an Uralic Language. It is one language of a group of closely related and to some extent mutually intelligible languages, known collectively as Balto-Finnic. Around 4,700,000 people in Finland speak Finnish, about 300.00 Swedish. Finnish has a rich vocalism; its morphology is agglutinating (Comrie 1987: 595) and the basic word order is SVO (Bussmann 1996: 166). For almost a thousand years, it has borrowed vocabulary form Swedish (Comrie 1987: 612).

In the branch of the Romance languages we will start with French. It descended directly from Latin, and it is spoken by up to 70 million speakers in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, and by smaller groups of speakers in
other parts of the world. It is not at all a single homogeneous entity, since two separate linguistic regions developed: in the north of France the langue d'oil and in the south the langue d'oc (Provençal). The sound inventory, morphology and syntax of modern French diverge from Latin the most of all the Romance languages (Bussmann 1996: 173). Modern French is almost analytic in inflection, but it has maintained several word-formation processes, i.e. derivation, and post-modifying compounding.

**Spanish** is the most widely spoken Romance language with over 300 million native speakers: it is mainly spoken in Central and South America and Spain. As a Romance language it also descended from Latin. In the 3rd century, its prolonged contact with Germanic and later Arabic certainly affected its evolution, but at no time was there any indication of a serious risk that the mass of the population would cease to be Romance-speaking. Castilian, an obscure dialect of the central Cantabrian seaboard, became a national, a world language. One can find a few words of Celtic origin, some of Germanic, and up to 4,000 words can be traced back to Arabic. Spanish verbs are highly synthetic in structure (Bussmann 1996: 444f.), and word-formation is very productive. Both these Romance languages can be expected to produce similar kinds of metaphors because of their geographical closeness and their shared Latin origin.
The Indo-European family tree, reflecting geographical distribution

(chart taken from Comrie 1987: 299)
Slavonic languages are also included in our study. **Russian**, to begin with, is a member of the East Slavonic branch of Indo-European languages with approximately 150 million native speakers (Bussmann 1996: 412). The morphology of Russian is fusional, i.e. synthetic (Comrie 1987: 337). It has a rich and productive word-formation.

Another member of this language group is **Czech** with approximately nine million speakers (Bussmann 1996: 110). In the Middle Ages, the kingdom of Bohemia controlled a much vaster area than just the lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia and Moravia). Some Bohemian kings were Holy Roman Emperors. Therefore, Czech is heavily influenced by German. It uses a modified Latin alphabet and can be categorised as a West Slavonic language, it is synthetic and uses a rich word-formation (Comrie 1987: 322).

The line that divided Europe into east and west, Orthodox and Catholic, runs through that part of the Balkans, where **Serbo-Croatian** is spoken today by 17 million speakers (Comrie 1987: 394). Parts of the territory were under Venetian, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish dominance - just to give a short glimpse of the turbulent history of the area. West South Slavonic was the basis for Slovene and Serbo-Croatian. In matters of religion it was influenced by Rome, Constantinople and later by Moscow. The Turks occupied Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina from the 15th to the 19th century. When this dominance was finally removed in 1878, Croatia became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which took over Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was not until 1918 that the different groups were united into one state. In 1850 the Literary Accord between Croats and Serbs was signed in Vienna. It justified the use of Stokavian, a Herzegovinian dialect, as the literary language and gave rules for writing it. Now Serbo-Croatian is the major language in the ex-Yugoslav states. In broad typological terms the picture is similar to that of Russian: the morphology is fusional with a productive word-formation (Comrie 1987: 399). Because of this turbulent history, one will expect influences from Turkish on Serbo-Croatian, and in addition to that, influences from German.

**Greek** constitutes a separate branch of Indo-European with about ten million speakers (Bussmann 1996: 199). In the Hellenistic period, Greek spread
widely in the Mediterranean. In its later stages, it shows numerous linguistic features that are also found in other languages of the Balkans. Greek has been a fusional language throughout all stages of its development; in Middle and Modern Greek, though, there is also a distinct tendency in the direction of analytic expressions (Comrie 1987: 410). The major source of loanwords into Classical Greek was Latin, but other influences can be found from Venetian, Slavonic, Albanian, and, above all, Turkish lexical items and phrases, and recently French and English. Because of these influences, one could expect similarities with Turkish in particular.

**Turkish** is one of the Turkic languages, mainly found in Turkey and Central Asia (Comrie 1987: 619). Turkish has about 45 million native speakers (Bussmann 1996: 499), some outside Turkey, e.g. in the Balkans, especially Bulgaria, but also Yugoslavia and Greece (Comrie 1987: 620). The most important dialect is called Anatolian Turkish, the language of the courts and the administration, which was influenced by Farsi and Arabic. In the 20th century Turkish fought a 'War of Liberation' for 'purification' of the language from Arabic and Farsi vocabulary. Turkish is an agglutinating language, its basic word order is SOV (Comrie 1987: 620ff.). It will be interesting to look at Turkish with respect to influences from Persian and Arabic.

From the Iranian languages we had **Farsi** informants. Farsi descended from Indo-European to Iranian, to South West Iranian to Farsi (Comrie 1987: 523) and has today about 50 million native speakers (Bussmann 1996: 357). It was the culturally dominant language of the eastern Middle East, from Iran to Central Asia to north-western India (Comrie 1987: 523). Its vocabulary was strongly influenced by Arabic from the beginning of the Islamic period, which could also be observed in our interviews. It uses analytic constructions with nominal and verbal inflection, its basic word order is SOV (Bussmann 1996: 357).

**Arabic** is the largest Semitic language with approximately 150 million native speakers (Bussmann 1996: 31). It is the major language throughout the Arabic world, i.e. in Northern Africa and in the Middle East. Arabic is learned as a liturgical language e.g. in Pakistan, India and Indonesia. It shares features
especially with Hebrew. The development of the modern Arabic dialects and the development of the Romance languages from a Latin prototype show many remarkable similarities, e.g. general grammatical simplifications. The fact that the Arabic script is used in many languages, e.g. Farsi, Urdu, Pashtu, and some Turkic languages, facilitates the assimilation of a tremendous number of Arabic loanwords. The basic word order is VSO, in the dialects often SVO (Comrie 1987: 667). There might be lexical similarities between Arabic and Farsi, Arabic and Turkish and Arabic and Romance languages such as French or Spanish.

**Chinese**, a member of the Sino-Tibetan language group, has five major dialects: Mandarin, Wú, Yúe, Hakka and Min. With over 600 million native speakers Mandarin is the most widely spoken language in the world (Bussmann 1996: 73). It is a tone language and has a highly constrained syllable structure. Its simplicity of word structure (one word has one or two morphemes) makes it a typical analytic and isolating language. There are no morphological categories such as tense or aspect and number or person of the subject or categories such as gender and case for nouns (Comrie 1987: 817).

**Japanese**, similar to Turkish, has borrowed a large number of Arabic, Farsi (through the herb trade), Korean and, above all, Chinese words (Comrie 1987: 817). It is spoken by over 120 million native speakers. Japanese has borrowed even those words which had already an existing lexical or semantic equivalent in the language. Synonymous words are often associated with different shades of meaning and stylistic value – allowing a greater range of expression. Japanese utterances are very much context-dependent and considerations have to be made in reference to addressee honorification and to subject/object honorification. Its morphology is agglutinating, the basic word order SOV (Bussmann 1996: 245).

**5.2 Metaphorical Mappings within the Language Groups**

In this second section, the focus is on metaphorical mappings within the language groups. We will analyse differences and similarities within each group, showing the closeness or the disparities of the groups. Finally, it will be
discussed in section 5.3 how the findings of the mapping analyses can possibly be related to the characterisation of languages.

Our **Scandinavian language group** consists of Swedish and Finnish. Metaphorical mappings occur with all items in both languages, and in most of the cases the given item is similar or even fully equivalent to the German item. Especially item 1, *to break someone's heart*, showed the same metaphorical mapping and lexical items as in German. Swedish, however, uses *to swallow* instead of *to digest* in the second item, but the metaphorical mapping remains the same. The German or English expressions tend to translate easily into Swedish and Finnish with the same meaning. Thus, Swedish and Finnish employ the same vocabulary and the same mapping processes in all items. As a result we could not observe any differences internally in this language group.

Unexpectedly, a comparison between Spanish and French in the **group of Romance languages** shows many differences, because the items *to keep one's head above water*, *to burn one's fingers on something*, and *to be on a bumpy road* are not found as metaphorical expressions in either of the two languages. The items *to keep one's head above water* and *to burn one's fingers on something* are problematic in French and in Spanish; thus no results are given and no comparisons can be made. The items *to break someone's heart* and *to be hard to swallow*, on the other hand, show that the same metaphorical mappings exist in both languages, they even use the same lexical items. *To help someone back on his feet* is expressed differently in French and Spanish as compared to German. Help is given to people by *holding out a hand* or *pulling a thorn out of somebody's foot*, but it is not represented by a *firm and upright position*, as indicated in the original questionnaire item. In this language group, we found only few metaphorical mappings, but when the mapping occurs, source and target domains are similar or even equivalent, as is the case with item 1, *to break someone's heart*.

Czech is the most 'productive' language of the **Slavonic language group**, which consisted of Russian, Czech and Serbo-Croatian in our study. Czech displays more metaphorical mappings than the other two languages, because our informants provided us with many more additional items from the
same source and target domains than any other language in this group. Some of the metaphors do not seem to be transferable into any of the three languages because there are no correspondences to the English examples, e.g. *to keep one’s head above the water*. Although the informants mentioned many additional items, involving the concept of WATER, this item is the least transferable into all three languages.

Serbo-Croatian shows only some equivalent mappings and only few additional items for all six mappings. Again, *to break someone’s heart* proved to be the most transferable item. It is represented in all of the three languages and is transferred with the same mapping and the same lexical items. An interesting difference could be observed with the item *to be hard to swallow* which is substituted in this language group by *to digest*.

In the **South East Mediterranean language group**, the items *to break someone’s heart* and *to be hard to swallow* are easily transferable into Greek and Turkish, too. Compared to the other items, these seem to be the only corresponding processes observable. The key concepts (HEART, DIGEST, ROAD, etc.) are used as they are in German and English but, in addition, different concepts are applied expressing the same thing. Here, the metaphorical mappings differ from the English and German expressions. In Greek, for example, people expressed the metaphor *to be on a bumpy road* by *a road full of thistles*. The concept of THISTLES is used instead of STONES, and in Turkish, people face *a road full of thorns*. Here, another substitution, i.e. THISTLES to THORNS, occurs, but both are obviously very closely connected, and the meaning is virtually the same. The concept of BUMPY is substituted by THORNS and THISTLES, functioning as THE OBSTACLE IN SOMEONE’S WAY.

In the **Middle Eastern language group** one important feature is common to Farsi and Arabic. Metaphorical mappings occur in both languages, but some difficulties arise when transferring the metaphors into the languages. Both Farsi and Arabic use many images and different concepts Europeans cannot specifically relate to, but the metaphors convey the meaning we were looking for. To explain this specific problem, let us consider an example: One Arabic informant does not *burn his fingers*, but he *gets burned in the process of*
eating soup, and therefore he will be afraid of hot butter. It seems difficult for us to combine those apparently quite different images, but obviously everyone has experienced hot soup and knows the dangers of hot liquids. Although different concepts are used, it can be clearly stated that the same overall metaphorical mappings occur in both, Farsi and Arabic. Another example can be observed in item 6, to help someone back on his feet, where in both languages the act of helping is expressed by taking someone's hand instead of helping somebody on his feet.

Finally, in our East Asian group, consisting of Chinese and Japanese, the item to break someone's heart is also easily transferable into Chinese, whereas in Japanese it corresponds only partially, because the heart hurts and is not broken. Another difficulty occurring in Japanese is the 'translation' of single words. Heart, for example, has two different lexemes each denoting a completely different meaning on either the abstract or concrete level, making it more difficult to come up with matching metaphors. The item to be on a bumpy road is transferable into both languages, and there does not seem to be any problems conveying the notion of PROBLEMS as OBSTACLES. Despite the great cultural differences and distances between Japan, China and the western world, there are surprisingly many correspondences in the metaphorical mappings. It is noteworthy that many of the additional items display a certain culture-specificness, e.g. to sit firm and upright as the Thai mountain. Some of these are opaque, but most of them are formed in a similar way as the mappings used in the German metaphors.

5.3 Discussion of Results

Within the language groups we have set up, the metaphorical patterns are all rather homogenous. They show similar deviancies with respect to individual German and/or English items, they have basically the same metaphorical mappings and they mostly use similar vocabulary to express these.

When comparing the different language groups, it becomes obvious that the results are more heterogeneous than within the groups themselves. The
assumption that items 1 and 2 are likely to be transferred to all languages cannot be upheld, although these are the items with the highest potential for transferability. As a result, it has to be noted that universal mappings may exist, but they may also differ due to the individual experience of each informant, sometimes in larger terms, sometimes only slightly. A larger number of informants and of items could have eliminated this problem in order to finally verify or falsify the thesis of universal mappings across languages.

As a last point, we would like to look at some assumptions regarding the historical and cultural inter-connections between individual languages. We find, for instance, a close relation of Finnish, Swedish and Russian history - is this also mirrored by our results? The use of digest instead of swallow can be found in Swedish and Russian, but not in Finnish. There is no possibility to draw a conclusion about Finnish and Russian on the basis of using similar metaphors, which may have emerged because of their historical connections.

Other historical and cultural contacts worth considering are those between Turkish, Serbo-Croatian and Greek. The data provided by our Serbo-Croatian informants are sparse, thus we cannot draw exact conclusions. But the Turkish and Greek expressions are quite similar, both use thorns or thistles as OBSTACLES. We could say then that on the one hand, it is not possible to draw wider conclusions on the basis of our evidence, more information would be necessary to do this. On the other hand, it can be assumed that the historical background of the languages certainly has influenced them, but that this is difficult to track down. Language as a complex system is influenced by many aspects: geographical proximity to other languages, sympathy or antipathy for or against loanwords, political influence, mobility and social prejudice.
6. Discussion
Anja Böhle & Gerald Friedrich

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this discussion is to reflect on and to evaluate the whole project and the different stages of its realisation. This will include a closer look at the preparatory steps, the design of the questionnaires, the conducting of the interviews, and the insights gained from the collected data. In the concluding part, suggestions will be made as to how the set-up of the course could be changed to make it more effective. The outcome of this report is intended to contribute to future comparative empirical studies on metaphor.

6.2 Methodology

Research Design

The crucial point in a study of this kind is first to decide on the scope of the experiment and the kind of data that needs to be gathered. As described in chapter 3, the aim was to compare metaphorical mappings in different languages. This was done by means of a data collection, which had the form of a structured interview supported by a questionnaire. In order to manage the data collection within the time that students are expected to invest for one seminar course, two or three of the most representative languages from six language groups were chosen. Looking at a rather wide range of languages with only very few informants from each language means that the study used a qualitative methodology. Since the participants of the seminar had no previous experience in this field of research, and the number of available informants was limited per language, a quantitative study would not have been possible.

3 Larsen-Freeman and Long distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methodologies: "The prototypical qualitative methodology is an ethnographic study in which the researchers do not set out to test hypotheses, but rather to observe what is present with their focus, and consequently the data, free to vary during the course of observation. A quantitative study, on the other hand, is best typified by an experiment designed to test an hypothesis through the use of objective instruments and appropriate statistical analyses" (1991: 11).
Since this investigation was a pilot study, it had a twofold interest. One point of concern was to gather explicit data that yielded information about the languages examined. The other idea was to learn about the process of conducting such an empirical study. Future investigations may pay less attention to the second point because they can possibly refer to the findings of reports like this.

The questionnaire did not only investigate the transferability of one metaphorical mapping into different languages, it also searched for further metaphorical mapping processes in those languages, using either the same source or target domains of the idiomatic expressions.

**The Questionnaire**

From the beginning, a structured interview guided by a questionnaire seemed the most promising method of data collection. Questionnaires are a reliable means for obtaining and administrating large amounts of data. A professionally designed questionnaire is also helpful to make the informants take the interview seriously. It proved to be a good idea to create the questionnaire as clearly and concisely as possible because we intended the interview not to take longer than one hour. It was also necessary to provide the questionnaire in English and German, because informants with a competence in either one of those languages could be interviewed understanding every task clearly.

In order to avoid straining the informants' patience, the questionnaire should not comprise more than ten items, each of these containing subsidiary questions investigating further into the source and target domains. Those questions have explorative character and are open-ended, thus it was not certain how many and what kind of data would be gained in the end. The findings concerning those factors will be summarised in the next section.

It was easier for the informants to find metaphors from a specific source domain than from a target domain. The results were to be compared to English and German metaphorical mapping processes and it was hoped that traces of
the degree of cultural relatedness of the examined languages would be found. Bearing in mind the shared characteristics of each language to a certain language group, some surprising discoveries concerning cultural contact and influences were expected.

An aspect of the second questionnaire still requires improvement: the informants were given the same question three times. Three of the items alluded to the same target domain, i.e. PROBLEMS. The repetition of the same question was tiring for the informants and the professionalism and credibility of the questionnaire suffered from this. Therefore, future questionnaires should be examined more carefully as a whole. This problem arose despite the good combination of the individual items, for together with the other items there turned out to be an overlap in the target domains. The mistake here was that attention had only been paid to the source domains according to which the items were classified but not to the target domains. One should either only ask for those source and target domains from which many responses are expected or to chose items from different source and target domains to avoid overlapping in future studies.

To avoid symptoms of fatigue on the side of the informants, it would be good to have all idioms translated first and then subsequently proceed to additional source-target mappings. Some informants found the source and target domain questions very hard and lost interest in giving precise answers to finish in time. Nothing speaks against searching for further competent informants who can concentrate on the last two sub-questions and find more examples if necessary. When more energy is put into the research of further source and target domain mappings, the evaluation of those data might be more fruitful.

The Interview

The main run had to be conducted under time-pressure during the last three weeks of the term. Although the questionnaire was shorter now (containing only six items), in both runs we had exactly the same number of
informants. Nevertheless, more informants would have been useful in the final run. It was also helpful to have two persons doing the interview, because in many cases one person proved to be on better terms with the informant and was given more of the informant's attention while providing the supportive items. Two interviewers also have more ideas than one, and the atmosphere becomes less formal, taking pressure off the informant. In all cases a relaxed and friendly atmosphere during the interviews was an important prerequisite for a satisfactory outcome.

Whenever possible, the interviews were conducted by one male and one female interviewer. It was hoped that the informant should be able to communicate successfully with at least one of the persons and female informants had always one interviewer from their own sex. In the groups in which two female interviewers worked, the results were also satisfactory. A high percentage of informants were female, especially in the final run. Purely male interview groups were avoided, because more female students took part in the seminar.

Note-taking was important, but more so during the test run, when many ideas for improving the questionnaire were collected in the interviews. However, the fact that a person took notes seemed to intimidate some informants and some even wondered whether there was not a hidden objective to the interview, e.g. testing their personality or intelligence. Those interviewees who felt observed and tested secretly were affected in their ability to concentrate on the task. In those rare cases it was better to stop taking notes, because the interview data are more valuable for the researcher than the notes. In the main run it was only necessary to take notes when problems arose or when the informants made interesting remarks. The interviewers had to be very alert during the interview and the meaning of new metaphors had always to be written down in non-metaphorical words to prevent opaque and thus later unusable data.

Many informants had to think hard for sub-questions d) and e), the questions for additional source-target mappings, which is understandable, because the required "imageful expressions" did not come to mind readily.
Some informants asked to use a dictionary to find more examples for that purpose. They were not allowed to do so because only such answers that the informants were able to give on their own by activating their mother tongue competence were to be taken into account.

Sometimes there did not seem to exist comparable metaphors in the informants' languages from a given source or target domain, or at least they did not find any, but other informants from their language did so. This shows that it is very desirable to find more informants from a language, because otherwise results cannot be compared on an objective basis. Many informants have lived in Germany for a while and their mother tongue competence, especially the semantic mapping processes, were not easily activated. Another problem which cannot easily be controlled, also occurred. Informants who had been living abroad for a long time without close contact to speakers of their mother tongue could have difficulties to differentiate between metaphors from their mother tongue and those from German or English. Therefore, informants had to be asked for their mother tongue competence prior to the interview and whether he or she has been living abroad for a long time.

The translation part which seemed to be most promising, however, was also quite demanding, especially for the non-European informants, since they had to put themselves into a different cultural position in order to understand some of the given idioms - if necessary with help from the interviewers - thus transferring the image into their culture and thinking of an appropriate and similar expression.

**Competence of Informants**

Although it was thought in the beginning that the informants' awareness and educational background was of minor importance, their competence, personality and background were influential factors for the results. Both Czech informants studied linguistics and this seemed to have a positive influence on the results, because many source and target domain mappings could be found in their questionnaires. Also one Russian and one Serbo-Croatian informant had
some experience in linguistics. Informants who had studied linguistics before proved to be very valuable for the interview. Their responses to additional source-target mappings came more quickly and on average, they found four times as many examples as other informants. They were also willing to work harder at the more demanding questions.

In the evaluation, the answers have always to be analysed with regard to the informants' language background. For instance, the numerous metaphors drawn from the Czech questionnaires cannot be seen as an indicator for a high creativeness of Czech concerning the use of metaphors, but as a sign of the informants' efforts to add valuable contributions to the project. The inclusion of informants from different backgrounds concerning age, education and sex allocated as representatively as possible would guarantee an objective basis for a comparison of metaphors. It would be best to find linguistically untrained as well as trained informants from one language for the interview.

In the main run, three Spanish informants could be interviewed which provided a deeper insight into the source and target domain mappings of Spanish. The fact that many answers were found for the target domain EMOTIONS in all three interviews gives the researcher a higher certainty to assert the existence of a high number of metaphors in Spanish concerning the target domain EMOTIONS.

6.3 Results

Source and Target Domain Analysis

The first item, to break someone's heart, shows the highest domain transferability of this investigation. Over 90 per cent of the informants found an identical or very similar metaphorical mapping in their respective mother tongue. In virtually all of the examined languages the perception of emotional pain is expressed through the damaging of the heart. Apart from this particular mapping process, both target and source domains were widely used in other
combinations. The target domain occurred in twelve different mappings, the source domain in eight different mappings.

The same holds for item 2, *something is hard to swallow*. This item has the second highest correspondence rate with respect to similar or identical mapping processes in the informants' native languages with over 80 per cent. The use of *hard to digest* instead of *hard to swallow* in the Slavonic languages confirms the close relatedness of these. Greek and Turkish also use *to digest* here, but it is not always clear whether it is used in a truly metaphorical sense. Both, Finnish and Swedish, use *hard to digest* and *hard to swallow*. Apart from answers using the same source and target domains (FOOD and PROBLEMS), 16 answers display the same source but different target domains.

With over 70 per cent of the informants finding a corresponding mapping process (OBSTACLES ON ONE'S WAY as PROBLEMS) in their native languages, item 5 (*to be on a bumpy road*) shows the third highest degree of transferability. Greek and Turkish informants mentioned *a road full of thorns* and *a road full of thistles*. One French informant named *to pull a thorn out of somebody's foot* as an additional mapping for item 6. Here, it seems that the use of the concept of thorns for the target domain DIFFICULTIES is coincidental. Thorns are present in all environments, as is the experience of stepping onto them. The concept might be traced back to Arabic influences, but the chain of transfer Turkish-Arabic-Spanish-French seems quite long. Slavonic languages do not use a *bumpy road*, but, in a positive sense, a *straight road*. In all languages the source domain OBSTACLES IN ONE'S WAY is linked to the target domain PROBLEMS/A DIFFICULT SITUATION. It is interesting to see that no answers containing a different target domain are given. A possible explanation for this could be that the source domain is so closely linked to this particular target domain that no other target domains are possible.

The concept of STRENGTH as a FIRM, UPRIGHT POSITION (*to help someone back on his feet*) is identified by 62 per cent of the informants to be existent in their mother tongues, although a relatively large group of 25 per cent shows no reaction at all to this concept. This item might again provide clues for historically supported connections between Arabic and Spanish: *to
take somebody's hand is used in Arabic, to give somebody a hand or to take somebody under the arms in Farsi, to pull somebody up by his hands in Turkish and to give somebody a hand in Spanish. Another important factor confirming the assumption is that French, linguistically closely related to Spanish, does not use this idiom. It is also noteworthy that in a number of cases STRENGTH is expressed through the comparison to strong animals.

The item to burn one's fingers is not known to many informants in the given form and therefore shows only a low correspondence rate. Farsi, Turkish and Greek associate the event of getting burned with the process of eating (to burn your tongue/hands). However, 58 per cent of the informants gave metaphorical expressions in their mother tongue which have the mapping of DANGER as HOT OBJECTS. Nine answers take up the same target domain but used a different source domain.

In contrast to the researchers' expectations, item 3, to keep one's head above water, does not appear in most of languages in the given form and it is the one with the lowest degree of transferability. Only 21 per cent of the informants found similar mapping processes in their mother tongues. This surprising fact could not be foreseen and it seems that many cultures do not know this idiom. Thirteen answers contain a different target domain. WATER is often associated with problems, for example debts. Similar idioms occur, if only in a different form. In some cases, informants also provide different metaphorical mappings from the domain WATER, e.g. with a more positive target domain: to feel like a fish in the water (to feel happy and free).

Despite a limited number of informants and items, the results of this investigation have shown some general tendencies that would be worth pursuing in future investigations. This study provides evidence that there is a high probability of the existence of universal metaphorical mappings. The mapping exemplified in item 1 (to break someone's heart), for example, could be a case in point. Another aspect requiring further investigation is the potentially low degree of transferability of item 3. Only one fifth of the informants knew a similar metaphorical mapping in their mother tongue. A possible explanation may lie in the observation that many answers attribute
positive qualities to WATER, rather than negative ones. In cultures in which water is not as abundant as in Europe, it may not be perceived as a problem or danger. Instead, other phenomena might be more closely connected to danger in those cultures.

Another interesting aspect is the total lack of certain domains in cases where there is a very strong connection between a source and a target domain. The example of an Iranian informant shows how cultural differences influence metaphorical mappings. Whereas in most European languages bumps, stones or steep slopes make a road difficult to pass, the Iranian informant gave the example of cactuses complicating travelling. The same informant also introduced the rather disturbing example of landmines as a fairly recent addition to metaphorical mappings, e.g. a field full of mines and to have one's foot on a mine.

Language Groups

A first explorative investigation seems only sufficient to draw some preliminary conclusions and to formulate general assumptions about the question whether the grouping together of individual languages according to geographical, political, historical, or cultural connections and similarities seems plausible.

Finnish and Swedish have been grouped together, even though they are very different from a typological point of view. This has been done because many similarities in metaphoric mappings were expected due to a close cultural contact between Finland and Sweden. The results confirm this assumption. The Slavonic languages show the most similarities, which has also been expected. The combination of Greek and Turkish can be justified because of many resemblances of the metaphors. We can also find some evidence for cultural contacts between the South East Mediterranean and the Middle Eastern languages, e.g. to give somebody a hand. The grouping of Chinese and Japanese is understandable, because they are both East Asian languages, and Chinese has also influenced Japanese to a great extent. The further culturally
distant languages are from one another, the more obvious the culture-boundedness of the metaphors gets. For example, a Farsi informant provided the metaphor *you can't prevent from stepping onto the carpet any more* (with the meaning 'you can't avoid something unpleasant happening'), another Farsi example is *to try to take two melons with one hand* (with the meaning 'to do something that is impossible'). Chinese has also a culture-specific idiom, i.e. *to sit firm and upright as the Thai mountain* (with the meaning 'to be strong and powerful').

Apart from cultural factors, other language exhibit idioms with new ideas for culturally independent concepts, e.g. *to hang noodles on somebody's ears* (Russian, with the meaning 'to lie to somebody') and *the mouse could not get into the hole because it was carrying a brush with its tail* (Farsi, with the meaning 'to try to do difficult tasks in spite of weakness').

### 6.4 Discussion of the Course Set-Up

The experience of the seminar has shown that the course was more demanding in some respects than traditional seminar courses in linguistics. This was due to the students' participation in various working groups which turned out to be rather time-consuming if the work was to be done thoroughly. In terms of an evaluation of the course, this did not only raise the purely pragmatic question of how many credits should be granted for successfully completing the course. It also raised the question whether the course could be taught in future in such a way that the workload for the participating students during the time of the semester would be less heavy.

A number of possible options have already been suggested in the last meeting of the course. In an attempt to solve the problems of time pressure and workload, three alternative course set-ups have been discussed in more detail. All of these alternative approaches have in common that they want to solve the problem of a high workload by increasing the amount of time available for the teaching of the course.
One possible alternative course set-up could be to run the course on a two-semester basis. This would more than double the available time because the semester break could also be used to conduct interviews. The time gained would allow covering the theoretical background in greater detail, the questionnaires could be more refined, and more data could be collected and analysed. The results would probably be much more reliable and meaningful.

The cons of a two-semester approach are as numerous as the pros and should be taken seriously. Students, for example, might not be able to participate in the second half of the course because of possible time conflicts in the second term. Apart from these practical concerns, it has to be considered that a two-semester course might fail to attract students' interest. The average student might be more interested in obtaining credits easily and go for an alternative linguistics seminar that is taught as a one-semester course.

The potential of a two-semester course, however, should neither be underestimated. If the outcome of a two-semester course was a report that had chances of being published, a number of students might look at this as a first step into a career in linguistics. It might also prove fruitful if students could use their findings for a teacher's or MA thesis, or even a doctoral dissertation. A course of that type would naturally attract students at the end of their studies who specialise in linguistics.

A second alternative set-up would be a one-semester course taught four hours per week instead of two. This would bring a similar time gain and avoid the problems posed by an additional second term. In the beginning, the theoretical background could be dealt with intensively using the two weekly sessions. That way the empirical work could begin much earlier. This would allow for a third questionnaire design if necessary, and a larger number of informants to be interviewed.

The third option of an alternative course set up could be to have a one-semester course that is preceded by a weekend seminar. A majority of the students stated that they would be in favour of such an additional weekend if that would help solving the problem of time pressure for the rest of the course. An introductory weekend seminar starting on Friday and lasting till Sunday
could easily amount to 12-16 additional hours. This is a considerable amount of
time if one keeps in mind that the available time for a seminar per semester is
roughly about 21 hours. 21 hours equal 14 meetings per semester of 90
minutes duration. The weekend seminar could be used to cover most of the
theoretical background and begin with the design of the questionnaires for the
test run. This would reduce the number of working groups during the semester
considerably.

The seminar in the past semester was a great chance for the students to
have some first hand experience of how linguistic data is gathered and
analysed. This experience was certainly worth putting more effort into it than
into traditional seminar courses. The alternative course set-ups discussed above
show how participation for the students could be made easier. The most
practical solution would indeed be the weekend seminar. The two other options
are also imaginable, but they are less likely to be realised in smaller linguistics
departments. Both, the two-semester and the four-hour-per-week course,
would mean a considerable limitation for the professor teaching it. The
weekend seminar would cause the least problems of integrating the course into
the schedule for teachers and students alike.
7. Conclusion: A Fruitful and Symbiotic Integration

Marcus Callies

So, which are the major gains and insights from the efforts we have made, students and teachers alike may ask themselves at the end of the day. The major findings of the project certainly lie in the field of research methodology, especially as to the design and administration of data collection, and may be a useful starting point for future studies in the field. A structured interview guided by a 'questionnaire' was chosen to be the principal data collection method due to theoretical considerations and outward constraints put on the project. The intention was to gain sufficiently explicit data and to achieve a high degree of interaction between informants and interviewers, which seems to have been a good choice, since the student interviewers reported an increasing degree of interactiveness in the main run of the data collection.

This was partly achieved by the use of supportive items. Not only did these help to trigger the equivalent items we were looking for ("Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image?"). They also raised the informants' awareness of certain source-target mappings which was essential if the investigations for additional metaphorical expression were to be successful ("Are there other imageful expressions in your language using concepts from the area of X?", "Are there other imageful expressions in your language to talk about Y?").

The motivation for embedding the metaphorical expressions into short dialogue sequences as exemplified in the test run was to provide an oral mode of speech and to illustrate their use in everyday communication. Thereby, it was hoped to avoid any allusions as to any possible literary conceptions of the notion of metaphor on the informants' side, since metaphors are traditionally seen as purely figurative language. Although the contextualisations did not turn out to be very helpful and may have had a too restrictive effect on the informants' imagination, this is not to say that the use of contextualisations might not prove to be a useful option in future projects. What it means, however, is that this method needs careful consideration.
However, there is always room for improvement. Despite the fact that the number of items was reduced to six the interviews still consumed a large amount of time and the interview on the whole was a rather demanding task for the informants. Reports from the interviewers suggest that highly educated and linguistically trained subjects did considerably better in the interviews and had fewer problems to provide additional examples.

Another aspect that could be improved on is the selection of items. It was too late when we realised that most of the idioms chosen were from a negative emotional and cognitive sphere. The target domains mostly referred to PROBLEMS or DANGER. Therefore, the items should be more balanced in future projects.

With respect to the cross-cultural transferability of specific domain mappings, the rather explorative character of the study and the very limited amount of informants per language implies that we can merely draw some preliminary conclusions and make assumptions about the potential universality of source-target mappings. What we can do, however, is to state which mappings proved to be good candidates for transferability in our project and which might therefore be promising items for future research.

The source domains that were selected are very essential and universal, given that they reflect the human body, life on earth, human inventions and interactions with each other; however, they all are potentially culturally variable. Given that the informants provided us with additional mappings ranging from 12-16 per source domain, the selected domains proved to be good candidates for cross-cultural mappings in our project, thereby justifying further consideration in future research.

Possibly the most valuable item was to break someone’s heart/jemandem das Herz brechen. The high occurrence of equivalents in the languages that were investigated - 96 per cent of our informants were able to give expressions using the same metaphorical mapping in their respective languages - suggests that the mapping EMOTIONS are PARTS OF THE BODY is highly transferable and that this concept is common in other languages, thus being a candidate for a ‘metaphor universal’.
The mapping of PROBLEMS/IDEAS is FOOD (something is hard to swallow/etwas ist schwer zu verdauen) is also a very common concept in all the languages we analysed, with 91 per cent of the informants providing equivalent expressions. All other source-target mappings also turned out to be to a higher or lesser degree with 70 to 79 per cent of informants' providing same or similar mappings (to be on a bumpy road/einen steinigen Weg vor sich haben; to burn one's fingers/sich die Finger an etwas verbrennen; to help someone back on his feet/jemandem auf die Beine helfen).

The item with the lowest rate of overlap was to keep one's head above water/sich über Wasser halten. But given that 38 per cent of the informants could think of expressions containing the same or at least a similar mapping, even this item could be classified as partially transferable and is frequently present at least in many European languages.

Further research is left with two approaches to obtain more explicit evidence with respect to the cross-linguistic transferability of specific domain mappings:

- narrowing down the comparative scope of the investigation to maybe a handful of European languages. Then, apart from translations and interviews, an alternative data collection method could be the ranking of given potential equivalents of the informant's respective native language to German and/or English idioms or basic metaphorical expressions.
- focussing on only a few individual source domains, e.g. WATER, FOOD or PARTS OF THE BODY and eliciting a larger number of metaphorical expressions, possibly by giving even more variable supportive items. A prior thorough contrastive analysis of idioms in the languages under investigation would certainly help the selection of potentially valuable domains.

Last but not least, a major aspect has been the fruitful and symbiotic integration of teaching and student research by means of a project seminar. Such a course stands out from more traditional classes. Apart from the fact that students have gained a close cross-cultural perspective on language and communication, maybe the most exciting but also challenging experience has been that they were directly involved in an empirical research project. They
participated in the design and administration of the data collection. They contributed to the selection of items, recruited informants, acted as interviewers, evaluated each step of the project and also analysed the results of the interviews. Despite the high demand in terms of workload and group work, the prospect of a final project report may have provided an additional motivational impetus. It almost certainly did so for the teachers...
References


Lakoff, George and Johnson, Mark (1980), Metaphors We Live By. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.


Informantenbefragung

Sehr geehrte Frau Kollegin, sehr geehrter Herr Kollege,


Deshalb bitte ich Sie, vor allem auch im Namen der Studierenden, um Ihre Hilfe. Wir bitten Sie also, uns mit Ihrer Kompetenz als MuttersprachlerIn zur Verfügung zu stehen.


**Am Ende des Seminars wird ein Projektbericht verfasst, den wir Ihnen bei Interesse gern zuleiten. Auch darüber hinaus stehen wir Ihnen gern für Gespräche zur Verfügung.**

Bei eventuellen Unklarheiten, die Ihre Zustimmung in Frage stellen könnten, nehmen Sie bitte Kontakt mit mir auf.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

PS. Soweit Sie Institutsmitglieder sind, habe ich vorab die Zustimmung der Fachvertreter eingeholt, an Sie heranzutreten.
Appendix 2: Test Run Questionnaire (English Version)

PHILIPPS-UNIVERSITÄT MARBURG
FACHBEREICH FREMDSPRACHLICHE PHILOLOGIEN
INSTITUT FÜR ANGLISTIK UND AMERIKANISTIK

Data Collection 2001/ 2002

You are taking part in a research project of the Institute for English and American Studies. Your participation in this data collection will be kept anonymous and the data gained will only be used for research and teaching purposes. Please do not speak with other students about the content of this data collection because they may also be test candidates.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to be a part of this project.

Please read the following instructions carefully. This data collection is not intended to be a (foreign language) test. What we are interested in is your competence in your respective native language, especially in the field of imageful language.

In the course of the interview you will be given short dialogue sequences. Your task is to answer a few questions as to the expression set in bold letters. In case you have any questions or comments or problems of understanding please do not hesitate to interrupt the interviewer and ask questions.

Example:

A: "I'm afraid to go to the doctor right now. I think I'll wait a bit longer."
B: "I think you shouldn't hide your head in the sand."

HIDE ONE'S HEAD IN THE SAND
to avoid/postpone a difficult decision, not wanting to admit something

DEN KOPF IN DEN SAND STECKEN
einer Sache aus dem Weg gehen, etwas nicht wahrhaben wollen

Questions:
1. Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

2. Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?
3. Can you write your words for **HEAD, SAND** and **HIDE** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

4. Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **HEAD, SAND** and **HIDE**? Please give English translations.

5. Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **AVOIDING OR POSTPONING A DIFFICULT DECISION** in your language? Please give English translations
Data Collection

1.
A: "What do you think about the paper I gave you to read?"
B: "It has a rather complicated structure. I see what you mean in your first chapter, but I don’t understand the rest of it."

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN – I understand what you mean
DIE ZUSAMMENHÄNGE SEHEN – die Zusammenhänge verstehen

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for SEE and MEAN as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts SEE and MEAN? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about UNDERSTANDING WHAT SOMEBODY MEANS in your language? Please give English translations.

2.
A: "I’m quite optimistic that our sales will rise again after this slight depression."
B: "You should look facts in the face - your company is broke!"

TO LOOK FACTS IN THE FACE – to admit, to realise something unpleasant
DEN TATSACHEN INS AUGE SEHEN – sich etwas eingestehen, etwas zugeben
Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **LOOK, FACTS** and **FACE** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **LOOK, FACTS** and **FACE**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **ADMITTING SOMETHING UNPLEASANT** in your language? Please give English translations.

3. 
A: "Did you have a good time with your host family?"
B: "Yes, very much so. I was given a warm welcome."

**A WARM WELCOME/RECEPTION** - a friendly welcome/reception

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **WARM** and **WELCOME** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?
Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **WARM** and **WELCOME**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **A FRIENDLY RECEPTION** in your language? Please give English translations.

4.
A: "Has your cat had her kitten yet?"
B: "Yes. It really **warms my heart** when I see them playing."

**TO WARM SOMEONE'S HEART** – to affect someone's feelings positively

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **WARM** and **HEART** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **WARM** and **HEART**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **AFFECTING SOMEONE'S FEELINGS POSITIVELY** in your language? Please give English translations.
5.  
A: "What do you think of David's performance in the discussion?"
B: "Although his opponents had good ideas he defended his theory well."

TO DEFEND A THEORY - to stand up for / to support a theory
EINE THEORIE VERTEIDIGEN - hinter einer Theorie stehen und dies auch äußern

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for DEFEND and THEORY as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts DEFEND and THEORY? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about SUPPORTING A THEORY in your language? Please give English translations.

6.  
A: "Why are you criticising me all the time? You're never wrong, are you?"
B: "I admit that I made mistakes, too. We should bury the hatchet and be friends again."

TO BURY THE HATCHET - cease to quarrel
DAS KRIEGSBEIL BEGRABEN - einen alten Streit beenden

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).
Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **BURY** and **HATCHET** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **BURY** and **HATCHET**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **CEASING TO QUARREL** in your language? Please give English translations.

7.
A: "I need some advice. Can you tell me what is wrong with our relationship?"
B: "It seems to me that it's on **the road to nowhere**."

**THE ROAD TO NOWHERE** - a hopeless situation, without future prospects
**AUSWEGLOS SEIN** - hoffnungslos und ohne Zukunft sein

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **ROAD** and **NOWHERE** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **ROAD** and **NOWHERE**? Please give English translations.
Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about \textit{a hopeless situation} in your language? Please give English translations.

\begin{center}
8.
A: "It looks like we'll never finish our university studies."
B: "I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. There's only one more year to go."
\end{center}

\textbf{TO SEE THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL} – a sign of progress, hope that things will get better
\textbf{LICHT AM ENDE DES TUNNELS SEHEN} – ein Zeichen der Hoffnung, daß die Dinge besser werden

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for \textbf{LIGHT, END, TUNNEL} and \textbf{SEE} as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts \textbf{LIGHT, END, TUNNEL} and \textbf{SEE}? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about \textit{a sign of progress and hope} in your language? Please give English translations.
9.  
A: "Mr. Jones rents out motorbikes on the island of Mallorca.  
B: "Uh, so tourism is his bread and butter."

**BREAD AND BUTTER** - source of income  
**SEINE BRÖTCHEN VERDIENEN** - den Lebensunterhalt verdienen

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **BREAD** and **BUTTER** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **BREAD** and **BUTTER**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about one's **SOURCE OF INCOME** in your language? Please give English translations.

10.  
A: "Anne has two boyfriends at the moment but they don't know of one another."  
B: "Uh, two at once? It seems as if trouble is brewing."

**TROUBLE IS BREWING** - an unpleasant situation is starting to develop  
**DA BRAUT SICH ETWAS ZUSAMMEN** - eine unangenehme Sache entwickelt sich

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).
Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for TROUBLE and BREWING as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts TROUBLE and BREWING? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about AN UNPLEASANT SITUATION DEVELOPING in your language? Please give English translations.

11. A: "So what did you think of my proposal?"
B: "Your suggestion helped us solve some problems. It was a fruitful idea."

A FRUITFUL IDEA – a good, rewarding idea

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for FRUITFUL and IDEA as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts FRUITFUL and IDEA? Please give English translations.
Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **A GOOD, REWARDING IDEA** in your language? Please give English translations

12.
A: "I think it was a beautiful wedding ceremony, don't you think?"
B: "Well, yes, apart from John's Uncle Greg, who behaved like a bull in a china shop."

**LIKE A BULL IN A CHINA SHOP** - to behave in a clumsy way
**WIE EIN ELEFANT IM PORZELLANLADEN** - sich ungeschickt benehmen

Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

Can you write your words for **BULL** and **CHINA SHOP** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concepts **BULL** and **CHINA SHOP**? Please give English translations.

Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **BEHAVING IN A CLUMSY WAY** in your language? Please give English translations
Appendix 3: Main Run Questionnaire (English Version)

Data Collection 2001/2002

You are taking part in a research project of the Institute for English and American Studies. Your participation in this data collection will be kept anonymous and the data gained will only be used for research and teaching purposes. Please do not speak with other students about the content of this data collection because they may also be test candidates.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to be a part of this project.

Please read the following instructions carefully. This data collection is not intended to be a (foreign language) test. What we are interested in is your competence in your respective native language, especially in the field of idiomatic and metaphorical language. There are no hidden objectives whatsoever.

In the course of the interview you will be given some phrases of idiomatic and metaphorical language. Your task is to answer a few questions as to the expression set in bold letters. In case you have any questions or comments or problems of understanding please do not hesitate to interrupt the interviewer and ask questions.
1. **to break someone’s heart** - to hurt someone deeply

**Questions:**

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

c) Can you write your words for **HEART** and **BREAK** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using concepts from the area of **PARTS OF THE BODY**? Please give English translations.

e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **EMOTIONS** in your language? Please give English translations.
2. **to be hard to swallow** - to be hard to understand, to accept

**Questions:**

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

c) Can you write your words for **HARD** and **SWALLOW** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using concepts of **FOOD** or **DIGESTING/EATING FOOD**? Please give English translations.

e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **PROBLEMS** in your language? Please give English translations.
3. **to keep one's head above water** - to struggle with financial/economic problems

**Questions:**

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

c) Can you write your words for **HEAD** and **WATER** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concept of **WATER**? Please give English translations.

e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **DANGER** in your language? Please give English translations.
Questions:

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

________________________________________________________________________

b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

________________________________________________________________________

c) Can you write your words for **BURN** and **FINGERS** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

________________________________________________________________________

d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concept of **HOT OR DANGEROUS OBJECTS/FIRE**? Please give English translations.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **PROBLEMS** in your language? Please give English translations.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
to be on a bumpy road -
having a hard time solving a difficult problem or situation

Questions:

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).

b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?

c) Can you write your words for BUMPY and ROAD as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?

d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concept of OBSTACLES ON ONE'S WAY? Please give English translations.

e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about PROBLEMS/DIFFICULT SITUATIONS in your language? Please give English translations.
6. **to help someone back on his feet** -
to help someone getting out of a difficult situation

**Questions:**

a) Is there a similar expression in your native language using a similar idea or image? Please write it down (in your writing system).


b) Can you please translate the expression word-by-word, writing it down?


c) Can you write your words for **BACK** and **FEET** as you pronounce them in your language, using Roman letters?


d) Can you think of other imageful expressions in your language using the concept of **FIRM, UPRIGHT (PHYSICAL) POSITION**? Please give English translations.


e) Can you think of other imageful expressions to talk about **STRENGTH** in your language? Please give English translations.
Appendix 4: Supportive Items (English)

1. EMOTIONS ARE PARTS OF THE BODY

a) my heart bleeds for someone - to feel very sorry for someone

b) one's heart sinks into one's boots - to lose confidence, to get frightened

c) to take a load off one's mind - to feel relieved, to feel emotionally better

in reserve:

d) it made my hair stand on end - to feel frightened or shocked

e) to rub salt into the wound - make a painful experience even more painful for someone

2. PROBLEMS/IDEAS ARE FOOD

a) to find something a tough nut to crack - to find it hard to solve a difficult problem

b) to have to swallow hard - to resolve a difficult problem or situation

c) to grasp the nettle - to tackle a difficulty boldly

3. DANGER IS DEEP WATER / STRENGTH IS WATER

a) to be up to one's neck in it - to have serious financial problems, to be in big trouble

b) to be in deep water - to be in a dangerous or serious situation, to be in trouble

c) to pull the rug from under someone's feet - to get someone into trouble

in reserve:

d) grist to the mill - to bring advantage to someone, to support someone's point of view
4. PROBLEMS ARE HOT OR DANGEROUS OBJECTS

a) to pull someone's chestnuts out of the fire - to get someone out of trouble

b) to tackle/take on a hot issue - trying to solve a difficult or unpleasant problem or situation

5. PROBLEMS ARE OBSTACLES ON ONE’S WAY

a) to smooth someone's path - to help someone solve a problem

b) to put a spoke in someone's wheel - to cause problems for someone

6. STRENGTH IS FIRM, UPRIGHT POSITION

a) to stand on one’s own two feet - to be independent, to manage one's own affairs without help

b) to lose one's head - to panic in a crisis or difficult situation
Appendix 5: Seminar Evaluation

Allgemeine Fragen

1 = trifft völlig zu
5 = trifft gar nicht zu
Bewertung der Veranstaltung

Unterrichtsformen gut
allgemein gut
Referate gut
Frontale Unterricht gut
Diskussionen gut
Gruppenarbeit effektiv
Referat sinnvoll
Worksheets sinnvoll
Abschlussklausur sinnvoll
Hausarbeit sinnvoll

1 = trifft völlig zu
5 = trifft gar nicht zu
Bewertung des Dozenten

1 = trifft völlig zu
5 = trifft gar nicht zu

Unterricht gut vorbereitet
Inhalt gut vermittelt
Darstellung gut auf deutsch
Darstellung gut auf englisch
Unterricht gut gestaltet
Handouts gut
Beispiele gut
Folien gut
Tafelanschrieb gut
Diskussionsbereitschaft
Eingehen auf Studium
Interesse am Lernfolg
Ansprechbarkeit
Betreuung der Arbeiten
Gesamteindruck