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Metaphors in Photography Language

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Abstract

Metaphors have been the focus of many studies that embrace a wide range of aspects and diverse fields of knowledge given the colossal diversity of work now being undertaken (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987, 1993; Ortony, 1993; Kövecses, 1990, 2003, 2005, 2010; Gibbs, 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). They are no longer restricted to literature or poetry as an ornamental device, but they are present in everyday language including the technical fields. Numerous studies have been carried out on metaphor in different specialized discourses. However, little attention has been paid to the photography genre so far. The present paper, thus, focuses mainly on the use of verbal metaphor in the language of photography as one of many fields of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The aim of this research is to investigate metaphors used to construct photographic concepts in the photography blogs which constitute the data of this study. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) has been used to identify metaphoric expression. The analysis of these metaphoric expressions was based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The data analysis indicates that there is a great variety of conceptual metaphors present in photography blogs, projected through conceptual mapping from different source domains into the target domain, such as PHOTOGRAPHY IS A WAR, PHOTOGRAPHY IS HUNTING, PHOTOGRAPHY IS A GAME, A CAMERA IS A GUN, A CAMERA IS A PERSON, among others.

Keywords: metaphor, photography, lexicon, ESP.

Resumen

Las Metáforas en el Lenguaje Fotográfico

Las metáforas han sido el centro de atención de muchos estudios que recogen un amplio rango de aspectos y diversos campos del conocimiento, dada la colosal diversidad de la labor elaborada hasta ahora (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff,

1987, 1993; Kövecses, 1990, 2003, 2005, 2010; Ortony, 1993; Gibbs, 2008; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Las metáforas no están restringidas a la literatura y la poesía como un recurso ornamental, sino que están presentes en el lenguaje cotidiano, incluyendo los campos técnicos. Numerosos estudios se han llevado a cabo sobre la metáfora en los diferentes discursos especializados. No obstante, poca atención se ha prestado al género fotográfico hasta el momento. El presente artículo, por tanto, se centra principalmente en el uso de la metáfora verbal en el lenguaje fotográfico como uno de los muchos campos del Inglés para Fines Específicos (IFE). El objetivo de este estudio es investigar las metáforas utilizadas para construir los conceptos fotográficos en los blogs sobre fotografía que constituyen el corpus de este trabajo. El Procedimiento de Identificación de Metáfora desarrollado por el Pragglejaz Group (2007) fue utilizado para identificar las expresiones metafóricas. El análisis de esas expresiones metafóricas se ha basado en la Teoría Conceptual de la Metáfora (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). El análisis de los datos indica que existe una gran variedad de metáforas conceptuales en los blogs sobre la fotografía, proyectadas a través de mapas conceptuales de diferentes dominios fuente hacia el dominio meta, como por ejemplo LA FOTOGRAFÍA ES UNA GUERRA, LA FOTOGRAFÍA ES UNA CAZA, LA FOTOGRAFÍA ES UN JUEGO, UNA CÁMARA ES UN ARMA, UNA CÁMARA ES UNA PERSONA, entre otras.

Palabras clave: metáfora, fotografía, léxico, IFE.

1. Introduction and theoretical framework

1.1. Introduction

Since the publication of the groundbreaking theory of conceptual metaphor by Lakoff & Johnson (1980) many researchers have devoted themselves to investigating diverse aspects of metaphor within this framework such as cultural metaphors (Quinn, 1991; Kövecses, 2005, 2006), poetic metaphors (Lakoff & Turner, 1989), multimodal metaphors (Forceville, 2008a; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009), pictorial or visual metaphors (Karroll, 1994; Forceville, 2008a; 2008b) translational aspects of metaphor (Schäffner, 2004; Dickins, 2005; Sjørup, 2011), epistemological aspects (Haack, 1994), and semantic aspects (Levin, 1977; Kittay, 1990), among others. One of the research lines has been the study of metaphor in different specialized genres. Thus we find works on, for instance, metaphor in economic and financial discourse (Charteris-Black, 2000; Resche, 2001; Charteris-Black & Musolff, 2003; White, 2003), business discourse (Koller, 2004), political discourse (Chilton & Ilyin, 1993; Musolff, 2004, 2011; Charteris-Black, 2005, 2009,

2013), medical discourse (Mungra, 2007), engineering discourse (Riejos & Mansilla, 2013), or legal discourse (Hibbitt, 1994; Vegara, 2014). Hence, we have chosen to limit our scope to English for Specific Purposes (hereafter ESP), focusing on the language of photography, as one of the numerous fields of ESP. So far, little attention has been paid to this topic. Even so, we do find some studies on photography and its language as for example Sontag (1977), Jay (1984), Assfalg (1999), Navab (2001), Landau (2002), Keats (2010), Makiewicz (2012), or Pollen (2013). That said, none of these or other authors, to our knowledge, have studied verbal metaphors in the blogs of photography, as Sontag in her book *On Photography* (1977) discusses the role of photography in present day society, Jay speaks of *The photographer as aggressor* (1984), Navab (2001) examines the aggressive nature of photography language, when Landau (2002), Assfalg (1999) and Keats (2010) study different metaphors conveyed through photographs, and Pollen (2013) explores briefly the metaphorical connection between the camera and the gun. The lack of empirical studies on the lexis of photography indicates that there is a clear need for research in the area. This study is therefore intended to shed light mainly on verbal metaphors in photography blogs. To accomplish this we have compiled a sample of texts from photography blogs, focusing on identifying metaphoric language in authentic real-world discourse, that is, as produced by writers in this specific context. The linguistic metaphor data were collected using the Metaphor Identification Process (MIP) proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The analysis of the metaphors found was based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

This paper is structured into several sections. We begin with an overview of the theoretical background of this study. This is followed by a section on data and a section on the methodology used in this study. Then we focus on the analysis of conceptual metaphors found in photography blogs. After discussing the results obtained, we present some concluding remarks about metaphor use in the photographic domain and some suggestions for further research.

1.2. Metaphor

Metaphors have attracted the attention of philosophers (Aristotle, 335 B.C., 332 B.C.; Kant, 1790; Nietzsche, 1883), linguists (Richards, 1936), rhetoricians (Cicero, 55 B.C.), semioticians (Peirce, 1980), and poets (Horace, 19 B.C.) for a long time; more than any other of the traditionally recognized

figures of speech. As Berger (2002: 32) points out, “this seemingly simple linguistic trope has proven to be a touchstone for intense debate regarding the nature of language and of thought”. Likewise, Black (1993: 19-20) suggests that the subject is inexhaustible due to the extraordinary volume of papers and books produced. Indeed, scholars from all around the world continue debating on this complex cognitive phenomenon so far (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Ortony, 1993; Gibbs & Steen, 1999; Stern, 2000; Glucksberg, 2001; Ricoeur, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2005; Haser, 2005; Gibbs, 2008, 2011a; Semino 2008; Hintikka, 2013; Zwicky, 2014).

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), original work on cognitive metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), was subsequently developed by Lakoff and his colleagues (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Kövecses, 1990, 2003, 2005, 2006; Gibbs, 1994; Gibbs et al., 1997; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Dirven & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2010; Gibbs, 2011b; Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2011) as Contemporary Theory of Metaphor or CTM (Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez Hernández, 2011: 2), which has assumed paramount importance and become a predominant approach used in numerous studies (Gibbs, 2008; Koller et al., 2008; Kövecses, 2010). In opposition to the traditional view of metaphor as a rhetorical figure restricted to literature and poetry Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3) argued that metaphor is not a matter of language but primarily a matter of thought. According to this theory, metaphor involves conceptualizing one thing in terms of another. As Gibbs (2008: 3) points out, “metaphor is not simply an ornamental aspect of language, but a fundamental scheme by which people conceptualize the world and their own action”. Hence, metaphor was described as a “conceptual mapping” from the source domain (more accessible to sense perception) onto the target domain (more abstract) at the cognitive level (Lakoff, 1993: 203), where the source refers to the traditional *vehicle* and the target to the traditional *tenor*. This can be observed in metaphoric expressions such as “waste time”, “spend time” or “save time” in which we conceptualize time in terms of money, which can be wasted, spent or saved just like money. Therefore, conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY.

There have been numerous attempts to classify metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) distinguished three types of metaphors: structural, orientational, and ontological metaphors. Structural metaphors are those in which one concept is metaphorically expressed in terms of another as is the case with the previously mentioned metaphor TIME IS MONEY or ARGUMENT IS A WAR. Orientational metaphors do not structure one concept in terms of another,

instead they organize a whole system of concepts with respect to one another. They are called in this way because most of them have to do with spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral, as in HAPPY IS UP/SAD IS DOWN. These metaphors are based on our physical experience. Finally ontological metaphors, which are based on experiences of physical objects and substances, have a physical world entity in the source and an emotion, activity or idea in the target. For example, the experience of rising prices can be metaphorically seen as an entity via the noun *inflation* (“*Inflation is lowering* our standard of living”).

Having said that, metaphors are present in all aspects of language, they organize our reality helping us to understand it, while at the same time they are a product of this reality. As a result, metaphors are not limited to literature or to poetry anymore; they belong to the ordinary language and are also present in technical fields (Vivanco, 2001: 57). Accordingly, if metaphors reflect our understanding of reality, they also reflect our understanding of engineering (“caterpillar tractor”, Vivanco, 2001); biology (“army ants”, Gotwald & William, 1995), economics (“growth”, White, 2003), medicine (“heart attack”, Hodgkin, 1985), computing (“World-Wide Web”, “desktop”, Maglio & Matlock, 1998), photography (“shoot”, “aim”, “load”, Pollen, 2013) and so on, which are different parts of our reality. As Gibbs (2008: 3) affirms, “there is now a huge body of both theoretical and empirical work from many academic disciplines that clearly demonstrates the ubiquity of metaphor in both everyday and specialized language”. Thus, research on metaphor is now multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, which can be demonstrated by the sheer number of scholarly works on metaphor in different academic fields (Gibbs, 2008: 4).

Being “the omnipresent principle of language” (Richards, 1936: 92), metaphor is also a “fundamental cognitive ability that allows us to talk and think about abstract concepts and phenomena” (Boers, 2000: 1) and “the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning” (Lakoff, 1993: 244). With regard to ESP, some fields seem to be abstract domains in which we should expect to find its use ubiquitous, such as law (Hibbitts, 1994; Vegara, 2015), economics (White, 2003; Resche, 2013), or computing (Jamet, 2008), among others. As Twardzisz (2008: 251) states “it would be odd if metaphor did not make itself present in more specialized contexts, as they need a source for the vocabulary that one uses in talking about intangible experience”. Abstract domains require the use of figurative language, which will also hold to some

extent for the field of photography. Due to its diverse nature, being very closely related to art, science and technology at the same time, photography presents a wide variety of vocabulary with numerous metaphors using mapping from the concrete concepts to the abstract ones. The different tools in *Photoshop* could be an example: “brush”, “healing brush”, “pencil”, “mixer brush”, “eraser”, “paint bucket”, “lasso”, “sponge”, “pen”, etc.

This entails the idea that metaphors do not create new language items but new meaning using already existing forms. In fact, they are considered to be one of the most prolific ways of creating meanings (Vivanco, 2001: 57). In this sense “metaphor tends to resemble catachresis”, which in general refers to “a situation in which a sign, already assigned to a first idea, is assigned also to a new idea, this latter idea having no sign at all or no other proper sign within the language” (Ricoeur, 2003: 72). Thus, metaphor helps us to understand new ideas by assigning to them qualities found in familiar or simple objects (Berger, 2002: 4).

1.3. The discourse of photography

There are many studies on photography focusing on its different aspects, such as history (Newhall, 1964; Rosenblum, 2007), photography as a research method (Collier & Collier, 1986), and its artistic aspect (Scharf, 1974). Yet, few researchers have devoted themselves to investigating its language, including metaphors. In this section, we shall review the main trends in studying photography discourse together with its metaphors, in order to provide a theoretical background of the language of photography as well as its metaphors.

We have previously introduced authors such as Sontag (1977), Jay (1984), Navab (2001), Landau (2002) or Pollen (2013), who do cover the topic succinctly. The main idea developed by these authors, is the fertile connection between the shared language and practices of the camera and the gun. For example, Navab (2001) examines the violent terminology embedded in the language of photography. The author compares the process of taking a picture with planning of a crime using the following monologue:

I had been roaming the streets looking for something to shoot. I loaded, then waited and watched. Once I had caught my subject in view I aimed and took a shot. I worked alone in the dark room developing the negatives. I stopped it, then fixed it. Then I cropped, dodged and burned the positive until I was satisfied (Navab, 2001: 69).

She affirms that surprisingly we do not notice the violence in photography lexicon:

Both participants and observers in photography use the metaphors as if they were innocuous, as if to take a shot, to point and shoot, to frame, to burn, and to dodge somehow transcend their meaning when they are applied to photography. Whereas in other disciplines a concerted effort has been made to strip biased terminology from the discourse, photography has had no such luck (Navab, 2001: 70).

Consequently, Navab suggests the language of photography can be “re-pictured”, or re-made, by shedding the violent terminology overused in its discourse. Instead of “taking a photograph” why not “making a photograph”, instead of “aiming” or “pointing” and “shooting” why not “focusing” and “releasing”, which more accurately describe the process, and avoid the predator-like feeling of the photographer and the vulnerability of the subject (Navab, 2001: 14).. According to her, “making more mindful choices” would “dissipate much of the tension that often arises” (2001: 14).

One of the reasons for aggression-related lexicon in the language of photography is the close relationship between the camera and the gun, which can be easily recognized through language. A camera is often conceptualized in terms of a gun, which consequently gives rise to other conceptual metaphors, as we will see later on. Not only do they share the language, but also the history. Therefore, Landau (2002: 147-148) notes that “the technologies of the gun and camera [...] evolved in lockstep”. For instance, the breech-loading guns and the Kodak camera used the same sort of chemicals in their cartridges, the so-called dry-plates cameras were based explicitly on the mechanism of the Colt revolver, and cinema cameras would later draw elements of their design from the machine gun, as it is the case of Akeley camera (Figure 1), which was modeled on a turret-mounted machine gun (2002: 165). Several rifle cameras were designed in the 19th century, such as the photographic gun of Etienne Jules Marey (Fig. 2), to photograph flying birds (Jay, 1984:12). The influence between the camera and the gun can also be seen in the first slogan of Kodak cameras: “You pull the trigger, we’ll do the rest” (Landau, 2002: 165) which was eventually changed to “You press the button, we do the rest”.



Figure 1. Akeley Camera¹.



Figure 2. Marey's photographic gun².

If supposedly using a gun involves violence or aggression, which projects into the language, this brings us to the question of whether this applies to photographers. Jay develops this idea in his article “The photographer as aggressor” (1984), tracing its history back to the first photographers. According to him, “the most dominant characteristic of the photographer since the 1880s has been his/her aggression” (1984: 1). Sontag in her *On Photography* (1977: 14-15) also describes the process of taking pictures as an aggressive act: “there is an implicit aggression in every use of the camera”; “it is mainly a social rite, a defense against anxiety, and a tool of power”; “like guns and cars, cameras are fantasy machines whose use is addictive”; “to photograph someone is a sublimated murder”. This negative image of the photographer is explained with his/her “willingness, and even desire, to violate any and all social conventions of good behavior in order to take a picture” (Jay, 1984: 1).

Jay explains that in its early days the profession of photographers was “considered an honorable one; it was useful, enjoyable, and educational. Its applications to both the arts and the sciences were growing, and its public image was held in high esteem” (1984: 2). Yet, the situation changed as a result of the evolution to the hand camera and the appearance of the amateur photographer, the so-called “camera fiends” who were “kodaking” everything and everywhere creating a major social nuisance because “with the snapshot camera, anyone at any time could be the victim of an embarrassing or even incriminating picture” (1984: 3). Nowadays, these photographers have gained a dubious reputation under the metaphorical name of *paparazzi*, hunting for “great” pictures while chasing celebrities and allegedly invading their privacy.

As a result, this aggressive nature of the photographer and the close relationship between a photographic camera and a gun throughout history are reflected in the language of photography, which includes plenty of aggression-related vocabulary, not to mention the metaphors, as we will see later in the study. Eventually, the link between a camera and a gun is closer than we might imagine. Therefore, it is interesting to note that not only do we find linguistic metaphors, but also visual metaphors are present in photography discourse. The close evolution of both resulted in many cameras being modeled on guns; hence, the visual similitude between the two items. If we look at Figure 1 and Figure 2 above, we will see the reason for the frequent identification of a camera and a weapon, as the similarity between both is apparent. Indeed the physical similarity between them is explicit, especially in some types of cameras such as photo-snipers, or in general in the cameras with telephoto lenses which resemble guns in their design.

Pollen (2013: 124), in her review essay on the exhibition *Shoot! Existential Photography* which took place in The Photographer’s Gallery in London, also points to the visual connection between a camera and a gun and the resulting violence existing in photography:

The latter part of the show features a range of more recent work by artists who have brought visual imagery and violence together even more explicitly. Steven Pippin, Rudolf Steiner, and Jean-Francois Lecourt use firearms to trigger their photographs (they shoot at the camera), Niki de Saint Phalle adopted a rifle as a paintbrush in her projectile paintings, and Christian Marclay assembles a montage of film footage of shoot-outs to expose the false glamour of Hollywood gun culture.

Furthermore, this bond can also be reinforced with the idea of power. Weapons are powerful; so are cameras. Sometimes a camera can be even more powerful than hundreds of bullets as it can catch important moments and evidence. American writer David Campbell gives an example of a video⁴ by NBC cameraman Kevin Sites who filmed an American marine shooting a wounded and apparently unarmed Iraqi insurgent inside a mosque during combat operations in 2004 in the battle for Fallujah in Iraq, which caused a scandal. After that, Australian cartoonist Jon Kudelka published a cartoon referring to this event suggesting the similarity between shooting images and people⁵, something we identify through the common language used.

It should also be noted that, although the conceptualization of a camera in terms of a gun, is perhaps the most common metaphor in the photography discourse, some authors also recognize the analogy between the camera and the human eye. Orson Welles⁶ once said: “A film [or a photograph] is never really good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet”. Indeed, very often a camera is compared to an eye, and as a result conceptualized in terms of an eye, as we will see later. Leonardo da Vinci was the first to establish this parallel, even though he was talking about the *camera obscura* (Lat.) or dark chamber, which can be considered the first step into the birth of photography. He compared the hole of the dark chamber to the crystalline lens in the eye, and the wall opposite the hole which showed the image, to the retina (Frutos Esteban, 2008: 3). Nowadays, the modern camera’s aperture functions as a crystalline, and its sensor operates as the retina; its diaphragm functions as an iris.

In conclusion, we could affirm that little attention has been paid to the photography language so far. Yet, the existing work might serve as a base to better comprehend the metaphors prevailing in this particular genre. It should be noted, however, that the scope of this paper is limited, thus the main focus will be on verbal metaphors found in photography blogs, although, at some points, we will touch upon pictorial metaphors as well.

2. Data

The data were obtained from the analysis of a corpus of photography blogs, gathered by means of an Internet search. The details of the corpus composition in terms of the name, the number of texts and the number of words from each blog are summarized in Table 1. Our sources have been

twenty blogs on the subject (see Appendix 1), dated between 2007 and 2014. They were selected following three criteria: first, they had to be written in English by native speakers, second, they had to be written by both men and women, and third, blogs were selected that contained as much text as possible⁷. Once the blogs were identified, their contents were manually downloaded into text files. Each blog and each post has been tagged with its own reference, which will be used throughout this paper, so as to provide the source of the items. The taggers consist of the initials of the blog and the date of a publication of the post on the Internet. For instance the reference BM_090710 means that the item has been extracted from the blog called “Beyond Megapixels” from the post published on July 10th 2009. However, posts such as “Digital Photography School” or “Picture correct” do not have the exact date of publication and in these cases we use their initials with the name of the post, as in “PC_Contrast_in_Photography”.

Blog title	Number of texts	Word counts
Best Family Photography Tips	20	20231
Beyond Megapixels	60	48673
Candidcameraman	25	21642
Canon learning digital center	20	28564
Digital Camera World	35	10653
Digital Photography School	20	22976
Fashion Photography Blog	15	19746
Joanna Strauss Photography	15	13980
John Paul Caponigro	15	17965
Light Stalking	20	19870
PhotoFocus	25	25165
PhotoShelter	20	8671
Photography Life	25	28760
Picture correct	30	37086
Pop Photo	40	52097
Portrait Photographer	15	11980
Rockstar Photography blog	20	12875
Roesch Photography	50	67356
Scott Kelby	15	30760
Shooting strangers	15	24980
Total	500	524030

Table 1. Composition of the corpus.

3. Methodology

Once the corpus was compiled, we proceeded to identify metaphors, following the metaphor identification principle of the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The procedure was as follows.

1. Read the text to understand the general meaning.
2. Determine the boundaries of the lexical units.
3. Establish the contextual meaning of each word and consider if it has a more basic meaning in other contexts, that is, related to bodily action, or more precisely, historically older.
4. If there is a more basic meaning, decide if the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
5. If so, the lexical unit is metaphorical (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 3).

We did not make use of any software on the grounds that this is an initial study intended to verify the presence of metaphors in photographic discourse and to study the metaphors found. Hence, we collected 160 metaphors of different categories. The resulting sample was then analyzed and classified under conceptual mappings according to Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

We followed the Pragglejaz Group (2007) and Steen et al. (2010), and used the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (Rundell & Fox, 2002) to make decisions about lexical units, contextual meanings, basic meanings, and distinctness of contextual and basic meanings. The reason for using this type of dictionary is that it is “recent and corpus-based” (Steen et al., 2010: 776). This is important for our study as we were attempting to identify metaphors in contemporary texts. Also it “includes notes specifically addressing the issue of metaphor, implying that there was an awareness of the importance of this during the process of analysis” (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 16). The *Oxford English Dictionary* was consulted for supplementary information about etymology.

4. Analysis

As stated before, metaphors are present in all aspects of language and the language of photography is not an exception. It presents a great lexical diversity: from technical vocabulary, which is constantly increasing with technological and scientific developments, through artistic vocabulary, which results from the close relationship between photography and painting, to everyday language. All these components present metaphorical uses, which

range from obvious, innovative metaphors to others whose degree of lexicalization makes them almost unnoticed. For instance, expressions such as “to take a picture”, “to export a picture”, “to drain the battery”, “the camera is dead”, “to take a look”, “to develop negatives”, became so repetitive in the popular use that their metaphoric nature is hardly perceived, at least in the eyes of the majority. “Shutter curtains”, “pancake lens”, “fisheye lens”, “shoe”, “barn doors”, or “beauty dish”, on the other hand, are commonly used by the photography community while their photographic meaning is unknown to the speakers of general English. These concepts acquired new meaning in the language of photography, because, as we have mentioned before, metaphors do not create new forms but new meaning using already existing language items. Thus, “shutter curtain” or simply “shutter” refers to a mechanism inside the camera that opens and closes exposing the digital image sensor to light coming through the lens. It owes its name to the similarity with the window shutter or the window curtains which are used to let or not to let the light into a room. Concerning “pancake lens” and “fish-eye lens”, the former is a term for a lightweight and compact lens with a very short, flat and thin shape similar to a pancake; the latter is an ultra-wide-angle lens (almost 180°) that produces strong visual distortion intended to create a wide panoramic image. Historically, the fish eye lens was created by meteorologists to capture the formation of clouds watching the skies. Its name comes from its capability of simulating the “fish-eye” view of the world. “Shoe” refers to a receptacle on a camera that provides a point of attachment for accessories. It can be “hot” or “cold”, depending on a presence of an electronic connection between the camera and the accessory mounted⁸. Regarding “barn doors” and “beauty dish” they are important lighting devices in photography. The former attaches to the lamp and directs the beams of the light making it narrower or wider depending on how “open” or “closed” the angle of the “doors” over the lamp is. The latter consists of two dishes facing each other: the light is reflected from one into the other and onto the subject. The result is softer light to enhance the beauty of the subject. It is very popular in beauty photography – make-up ads for example, usually involving extreme close ups; hence, the relation between the words “dish” and “beauty”. Another example is “diaphragm” which in photography refers to a mechanism placed inside the lens responsible for regulating the amount of light that passes through the lens into the camera. However, it may also refer to thoracic diaphragm – a thin sheet of muscle under the lungs, a thin, semi-rigid membrane that vibrates to produce or transmit sound waves in acoustics, a

type of contraceptive, and a type of wall, among some other meanings. “Golden hour” is also a very common metaphor found in photography discourse. It refers to the first and last hour of sunlight during the day when a specific photographic effect is achieved due to the quality of the light. But it has different meaning in medicine: an hour immediately following traumatic injury in which medical treatment to prevent irreversible internal damage and optimize the chance of survival is most effective. These examples, amongst others, show how metaphors are used to fill gaps in the lexis, creating new concepts using already existing forms.

Now, based on the analysis of metaphoric expressions, a rich set of correspondences between the source domains and the target domains of photography is identified. Different source domains are used to conceptualize photography: WAR, HUNTING, GAME, PHYSICAL DIMENSION, PATH, CRAFT, or RELATIONSHIP, as depicted further in Figure 3.

4.1. Photography is war

Conceptualizing photography as war is perhaps the most prevalent metaphor in photography discourse, where the photographers are warriors and soldiers and their cameras, guns or weapons. The war source domain projects battles, aggression, and violence. Photographers “attack” following their “plan-of-attack” and using their “secret weapon”, they “expose” themselves, they “combat” in “battles” where they have “allies”, they “shoot” and “machine gun”, they “invade” people’s privacy and “defend” themselves.

- (1) My newest *ally* in the retouching *battle* is Perfectly Clear. (PF_141002)
- (2) [...] her “secret *weapon*” for travel photography. (RP_120712)
- (3) In these scenarios, a good *plan-of-attack* is to create a silhouette. (PF_150412)
- (4) Like cleaning lenses, your first *line of attack* should be air. Use a blower to shake dust off your sensor. (BM_080107)
- (5) As you can see in this photo below, I’m *combating* bright light [...]. (PF_141011)
- (6) Today, we just *machine gun* everything that walks by, convince ourselves that we’ll find the “gems” in post. (PF_130729)
- (7) Before you accuse me of *invading* their privacy and I start to *defend* my

view, I will concede. You're right. I should have shown the family the photo and offered to send them a copy or pay them a few dollars. If they didn't like the photo, I would have deleted it. (PF_150302)

- (8) Sometimes I would try to *steal* a shot without being too *intrusive*, most times I just stand there wishing [...] to just approach them and ask for their portrait. (SS_131221)

It is interesting to point out that in example (6) the author is aware of the metaphoric connotation of a photograph as a gem, which is enclosed in inverted commas; however, the metaphor “machine gun” is not perceived. This is an example of how people don't recognize the violence in many photographic terms or expressions, as Navab (2001: 70) noted: “The worst violence is that we do not even notice the violence in them”. Also, the example (8) shows the aggressive nature of a photographer, who, as suggested by Jay (1984), invades the privacy of people being photographed and prefers to “steal” a photo and be “intrusive” instead of asking permission.

The war domain is extraordinarily explicit in photography. For example, we find the military vocabulary in a post in “Beyond Megapixels” where the author treats the readers as cadets in order to provide them with tips about photography.

- (9) And with this, we begin with the 100 Steps to Improve Your Photographs (IYP) series. All right *Cadets!* Time for your first lesson! Before you can become a *sharp shooter*, you need to know how to use your *gun* (which here is your camera).[...] Tip 1: Hold your *gun* properly, or you'll *shoot* your foot! [...] This ends lesson one. Learn, practice and grow. And then we move on to the next lesson. And this particular *Sergeant* welcomes your comments and suggestions on this drill! *Dismissed!* (BM_090502)

In this extract “cadets” are representing budding photographers who are learning, when “sergeant” represents a professional photographer who is teaching them.

The main tool used by photographers is a camera, as the main tool used by soldiers is a gun. As we have explained before there is a close relationship between these two objects, historically, visually, and linguistically. Indeed, the similarity between a camera and a gun is apparent, since both photographers and soldiers “load”, “aim” or “point”, “shoot”, “fire” or “release shots”, using “tripods”, “monopods” and “triggers”, “hitting” “the target”, or

sometimes “misfiring”. The metaphor A CAMERA IS A GUN can be exemplified with the following extracts from our sample.

- (10) *Aim*, and *SHOOT!* And keep *shooting* till you *hit* the *target*. (BM_090502)
- (11) Whatever you do, keep *firing*. (PP_140921)
- (12) You’d be amazed how much shake you can create just by *firing off* a shot. (BM_100327)
- (13) In the days of film, you either *loaded* the camera with color or black-and-white film. (PF_150302)
- (14) I’ve used the *triggers* for over 1,200 *shots* and they have only *misfired* once. (BM_081014)

As noted previously, photography discourse includes plenty of aggression-related lexical items due to the aggressive nature of the photographer and the close relationship between the photographic camera and the gun. The analogy between taking photos and shooting explains that one of the most common terms is “to shoot”, used for both a camera and a gun.

- (15) *Shoot* what speaks to you. (CC_140103)
- (16) *Shoot* what excites you. Every shot should have a trigger. (BM_130902)
- (17) Always be ready to *shoot*. (BM_130902)
- (18) I have to *shoot* a baby. Okay, that came out wrong. I don’t have to *shoot shoot* a baby, I have been asked to photograph my friend’s newborn. (BM_090904)

The role of the context in many of the examples included here is crucial, because of the ambiguity of numerous words used in photography discourse. In the last example the author is entirely aware of this double meaning, using reduplication.

It is also interesting to note that often many photographers are conscious of the similarities between a camera and a gun since they compare these two objects, as in the following examples.

- (19) Sound triggers obviously use a loud sound to trigger the flash (*like the firing of a pellet gun*). (BM_050709)
- (20) In older models, a spring is used to raise the mirror which causes the very distinct sound of an SLR shooting. It literally sounds *like a silenced machine gun* when High Speed shooting mode is selected. (BM_030709)

Related to the word “to shoot”, we find terms such as “a point-and-shoot”, “a shooter” or “a snapshooter”, “a shoot” or “a photo-shoot”, “a headshot”, “a shot”. The following are some examples.

- (21) Whether we own a DSLR, *a point-and-shoot*, or simply a cell phone with a decent camera [...]. (BM_131022)
- (22) There are three basic categories photographers find themselves in: *Snapshooter*, Hobbyist, and Professional. (RP_110528)
- (23) Never leave *a shoot* without at least one shot that makes you proud. (PF_141005)
- (24) If you’re an executive then you either have or should have a corporate *headshot* to feature on webpages, facebook, or for your biography. (BM_090324)
- (25) I just crossed the street when I saw this woman suddenly run from the shade and into the rain – and with the biggest smile. I quickly crouched down and fired a couple of *shots*. (SS_100328)

Other words commonly used in the language of photography which may also bear an aggressive connotation are: “to capture”, “to freeze”, “to catch”, “to eliminate” and “to ruin” (see examples below):

- (26) Photography is about *capturing* the moments of life. (PF_141012)
- (27) This shot was taken WITH a flash, at ISO 200, f/2.8, 1/60. It’s fine. It *froze* the action, *captured* the band, *caught* the crowd enjoying the music. (BM_130409)
- (28) Photography is all about illumination and *elimination*. (LS_110819)

We also find many adjectives that carry negative meaning such as “killer”, “dead”, “aggressive”, “abusive”:

- (29) This photo walker knows how to roll. Notice the tripod and the *killer* sunset? He rocked it. (PF_141003)
- (30) We have all seen beautiful portraits *ruined* by *aggressive* retouching. How can we tell if a portrait crosses the *abusive* retouching line? It’s simple, if the person’s own mother doesn’t recognize them, you’ve gone too far. (PF_141002)

4.2. Photography is hunting

The same pattern of A CAMERA IS A GUN is used in another source domain, which is HUNTING. Both WAR and HUNTING are domains where weapons and violence are used, toward either people or animals. Therefore, photography is often conceptualized in terms of hunting, where photographers “hunt” for great pictures, “chasing” their subjects and waiting for the perfect moment to “capture” or “shoot” outstanding images:

- (31) When you look at the beautiful wildlife photos in a magazine such as National Geographic, it’s easy to be tempted to try your hand at getting out there and *shooting* some wild animals too. (BM_100323)
- (32) Moments like animals mating, courting, hunting their prey, feeding their young, moving in huge herds [...] are treasures meant to be *captured* (in your camera that is!). (BM_090509)
- (33) Activist & photographer Taslima Akhter *captured* this most *haunting* photo as the slow excavation moved forward to find any survivors [...]. (PS_131217)
- (34) You can’t possibly use a tripod in portraiture because you’re moving around too much, and reframing, and *chasing* kids. (PF_141008)

Because of the ambiguity which exists when using certain terms in photography, sometimes writers have to ensure that the readers receive the message correctly and avoid any possible misunderstandings as in the example (32) where the photographer remarks that the animals should be captured with cameras not snares.

Alongside the verbal metaphors described above, we find a visual metaphor of a photographer as hunter, which can be found in wildlife photography, a genre of photography that resembles hunting to a great degree, where photographers shoot and capture animals with their cameras. This analogy between a photographer and a hunter can be seen through their behavior (hiding, being quiet, being patient) and physical appearance (camouflage). Both hunters and photographers need to follow different techniques in order to shoot animals in the wild, either with a camera or a gun, hence they need to choose the location and the position carefully, to camouflage their presence and to attract the subjects. This metaphor is expressed through language as well:

- (35) *Camouflage* and *hides* are a great way of *getting close to a subject*, but you need to know where to set it up. (DW_130211)

- (36) There are various ways you can keep yourself *hidden* from view: from impersonating a bush by wearing a *ghillie suit* to a full-blown tent-like *hide*. (DW_140924)
- (37) Backyard birds are small, and unless you can *attract* them close with feeders, you'll be looking at a focal length in the region of 300-500mm for frame-filling shots. (DW_130211)
- (38) We'll show you a series of simple *techniques* that will help get you closer to the animals you want to photograph and never *miss a shot*. (DW_130211)
- (39) Wildlife photography requires *patience* and finely tuned *approach*. (DW_140924)
- (40) When photographing mammals, *position* it so the wind is blowing towards you to carry your scent away. (DW_140924)
- (41) Don't move the lens too much and *keep quiet*: most wildlife has excellent hearing. (DW_140921)
- (42) You need the *time* and *patience* to wait for the right shot. (DW_130211)
- (43) The subjects are *elusive*, and the *techniques* require *precision*. (DW_130703)
- (44) You need to *know* enough about your subject to be able to photograph it without it being aware of your presence. (DW_130703)

Curiously, the majority of these tips could be used by both photographers and hunters given that they share the language in both two domains.

4.3. Photography is a relationship

The conceptualization of a camera as a person generates numerous expressions in the sample. To begin with, a camera has an “eye” in order to “see” or “look” as in the example (45), or rather A CAMERA IS AN EYE, as it works analogically, being composed of an “iris”, also called “diaphragm” or “aperture” equivalent to a pupil, and a sensor or film sensible to light in the same way as the retina. The image of the object “seen” is inverted in both cases, which is processed subsequently by the brain in the case of an eye or software in the case of a camera. Thus, we understand a camera in terms of a human eye.

- (45) I took the X100 home. I looked it squarely in the *eye* again. It *looked* back at me. (SK_040226).

Furthermore, it has a “body”, which is the camera itself excluding the lens, a “brain”, which refers to the software built in the camera in order to process the information, and a “memory” as a means to retain it, just like a person. In addition, it has a “life”. which resembles people’s life when it “works” fulfilling its tasks, it “lives”, having a “home”, which refers to a camera bag, then it “retires” until it “dies” and even goes to “heaven” as illustrated by the following examples:

- (46) I wrote the article when my trusty Nikon D700 reached the end of its *life*. (PF_150311)
- (47) This way, they can *survive* a good amount of abuse before they *die* a more natural, slightly less painful and horrifying death. (BM_080806)
- (48) How much abuse your camera can take before you have to *retire* it to DSLR *heaven*. (BM_080806)

We also find occurrences of romantic relationship metaphors. It seems that photographers have feelings toward their cameras, as they first “fall in love” with them, then sometimes get bored and yearn for new cameras and as a result they start “cheating on them” till they finally “fall out of love” and find new ones. These relationships between the photographers and the cameras are conceptualized as a relationship or even marriage:

- (49) When I first *fell in love* with the f/2.8, DSLR’s weren’t widely available. (BM_100921)
- (50) So I *fell out of love* with the D700. It’s a great camera – amazing, really. It’s a classic case of “it’s not you, it’s me”. (BM_090421)
- (51) My review of the Canon EOS 40D. I never thought I’d say this but I really liked *cheating on* my Nikon. (BM_090209)

Other examples of metaphor in which cameras are treated as people are cases when they are given names, as in the example (52) where Nikon D700 is called “James”, example (53) where the photographer addresses his camera as “mister”, and the example (54) where a camera has a “master” or a “commander” and “slaves”:

- (52) I was stomping around looking at *James* (which is what I decided to name the D700). (BM_090421)
- (53) And I said to it...Now *mister* – I like you□ you are small, you are

discreet, you are deadly silent and you are good to my back. But, if we are to *get on*, you are going to have to work faster and more reliably. (SK_040226)

- (54) You create this kind of lighting wirelessly using *masters* and *slaves*. A *master* (also called a *commander*) is a controller that attaches to your camera's hot-shoe and sends signals to an off-camera, accessory flash or flashes (*slaves*). (PO_111031)

Cameras are also conceptualized as people in the expressions “bad boys” and “siblings”.

- (55) These cameras are all about speed and brains. They don't quite match the resolution of their “semi-pro” *siblings*, but make up for that in agility and ability and accuracy. (RP_120807)
- (56) I don't know about you but I would need to work about a year and not eat in order to get one of these *bad boys*. That is 365 days of starvation and quite possibly homelessness, and the only thing I'd have left to my name is this camera. (BM_071103)

4.4. Photography is game

Sometimes photography is conceptualized in terms of a game in which photographers are “players” and cameras are “toys” used to “play around” and to “have fun”. A simple plastic film camera such as Holga, for example, is being referred as a toy camera, because of its limitations. Not only do they play with cameras but also “play around with directional lighting”, “play around with the flash exposure”, “play around with the contrast”, “play around with the post processing” or “play with more advanced effects”. Consequently, sometimes PHOTOGRAPHY IS A GAME.

4.5. Photography is a craft

Apart from warriors, soldiers and hunters who “shoot” and “capture” photographs, photographers are also regarded as creators, craftsmen or builders, although to a lesser extent, who “build an image”, “crop” and “resize” it, who “create an image” or “craft a great photo”. Their main tool is a camera used to “manipulate” the image and their workplace is a “photoshop”, where additional work is effectuated on the “imported” images, using other tools like “brushes”, “magic wands”, “lassos”, “pencils”, “rubbers”, “rulers”, “sponges”, “pens” and so on, in order to “sharpen”,

“render”, “stylize”, “crop”, “trim” images, conceptualized as objects, and once they are ready to “save” them and “export”.

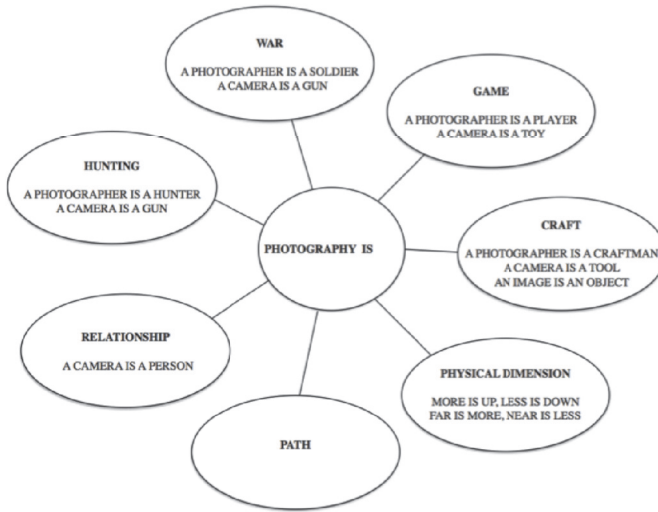


Figure 3. Conceptualization of photography.

4.6. Photography is a path

The process of creating a photograph could be understood as a path with “few steps” or “many steps” depending on the “goals”, starting with an idea or a “goal” to “pursue”, choosing the location and the object, “going through the trouble of setting up aperture and shutter speed”, using “shortcuts” in post processing, to “achieving pleasing results”, or possibly “going too far” as the following example shows:

- (57) How can we tell if a portrait crosses the abusive retouching line? It’s simple, if the person’s own mother doesn’t recognize them, you’ve *gone too far*. Thankfully there are many retouching programs that help us *achieve* pleasing results. (PF_141002)

As a result, depending on the photographer’s skills, knowledge and dedication “a masterpiece”, a “gem”, “a real keeper” or simply a regular “snapshot” or “thoughtless snap” may be accomplished.

4.7. Photography is a physical dimension

The language of photography is spatially oriented. For example, MORE IS UP, and LESS IS DOWN. On account of this, a photograph can have a “high” or a “low” contrast where high is more and low is less. Also, depending on the amount of light used to create an image, it can be “overexposed”, commonly called “burnt”, or “underexposed”, which gives way to two opposite styles in photography: “low-key” or “high-key” photography. The former is a style that utilizes intensely reduced lighting, while the latter seeks to overlight the subject. Similarly, there are metaphors based on horizontal orientation FAR IS MORE, NEAR IS LESS. Therefore, a picture has a “depth of field”, which can be either “shallow” or “deep”, the first referring to the case when only some details are included and the rest is “out of focus” whereas in the second one everything is “in focus”. Likewise, an image can be “long” or a “close-up”. Other metaphors in photography that deal with spatial orientation are those related to flash, which can be “built-in”, “off camera flash”, “on camera” or a “pop-up flash”.

Finally, there are also metaphoric expressions which do not fit the schema, and thus are not included in the figure above, but that are worth mentioning. For example, it is interesting that the photography discourse has plenty of metaphors based on inter-sensorial transfer or synesthesia, which refers to linking different senses by way of metaphoric speech. We could mention, for example, a visible “noise” present in the pictures or “warm” and “cool colors”. In like manner, photographers use “soft” and “hard light” to create images which also can be described as “soft”, “smooth”, “sharp”, or “abrupt”. Similarly we could affirm that an image is sometimes understood as a container as in examples (58) and (59):

(58) A low-key image is just one that *contains* predominantly dark tones.
(LS_110829)

(59) A better composition but to me there's still too much dead *space* in the photo. (BM_1205)

Lastly, we find several animal metaphors when talking about lenses, which can for instance be perceived as “puppies” photographers “play with”, or as “beasts”, depending on their size and impressiveness: A small 16-35mm wide angle lens is called “puppy”, while 70-200mm Telephoto Zoom Lens is referred to as a “beast”.

5. Conclusions

The present article has attempted to develop research into metaphor in the discourse of photography in order to shed light on this particular variety of specialized languages. It was designed to verify the presence of metaphors in photography blogs. As a result, this research has shown that the language of photography does make use of metaphors as in other specialized languages. Thus, a rich set of correspondences has been identified between the source domains and the target domain. This study has found that photography is conceptualized in terms of a WAR, HUNTING, GAME, CRAFT, PATH, PHYSICAL DIMENSION or PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP where the photographer is treated as a WARRIOR, SOLDIER, CADET and SERGEANT, or as a HUNTER, PLAYER, CRAFTSMAN and BUILDER and where the camera is understood as a GUN, PERSON, EYE, or TOY, among other metaphors. It has also shown that photography discourse presents plenty of aggression-related lexicon and employs synesthesia by means of a metaphor.

We hope this study can enrich our understanding of metaphor in specialized discourse and offer a contribution to the body of research in photography discourse, which has received little attention so far. Since the scope of this paper is limited, further research is needed to address the issue. Thus, I would suggest a deeper analysis of multimodal metaphors, developing a larger corpus and analyzing other text-types such as forums, magazines or manuals. It would be also interesting to carry out a study particularly on pictorial metaphors, having only mentioned a few of them here, as the main purpose of this study was to research verbal metaphors in photography blogs. Finally, a piece of research on frequency of metaphors in photography discourse also could be conducted.

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NOTES

¹ URL: <http://www.digitalfx.tv/2009/09/11/what-does-a-1917-35mm-camera-and-the-red-have-in-common/> [16/11/2015]

² URL: <https://mentalmuseum.wordpress.com/2009/02/05/the-photographic-gun/> [16/11/2015]

³ URL: <http://www.kudelka.com.au/2014/08/dont-shoot/> [16/11/2015]

⁴ URL: http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6496898/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/us-probes-shooting-fallujah-mosque/#.VMjqWGIG-hI [16/11/2015]

⁵ URL: <http://www.kudelka.com.au/2014/08/dont-shoot/> [16/11/2015]

⁶ URL: <http://izquotes.com/quote/195610> [16/11/2015]

⁷ Regarding the last point, it should be noted that there are many photography blogs, which consist mainly of photographs. Their authors aim to show their creations to the world, to receive feedback from other photographers or publicize themselves as professionals. These blogs were excluded as they don't provide us with enough linguistic data.

⁸ Originally there was no electronic connection between camera and accessory mounted, which is the case of the cold shoe, and the shoe just held the flash in place, so in order to have the camera trigger the flash a separate cord was needed. Nowadays the majority of the cameras have a hot shoe, with electronic connection for the accessories, which are usually external flashes.

Appendix 1

Primary sources for the study

Nº	Name of the blog	Reference	URL
1	Best Family Photography Tips	BP	http://www.best-family-photography-tips.com
2	Beyond Megapixels	BM	http://www.beyondmegapixels.com/
3	Candidcameraman	CC	http://candidcameraman.com
4	Canon learning digital center	CL	http://learn.usa.canon.com/resources/blogs
5	Digital Camera World	DW	http://www.digitalcameraworld.com
6	Digital Photography School	DP	http://digital-photography-school.com
7	Fashion Photography Blog	FP	http://www.fashionphotographyblog.com
8	Joanna Strauss Photography	JS	http://www.joannastraussphotography.com/
9	John Paul Caponigro	JC	http://www.johnpaulcaponigro.com/blog
10	Light Stalking	LS	http://www.lightstalking.com
11	PhotoFocus	PF	http://photofocus.com
12	PhotoShelter Blog	PS	http://blog.photoshelter.com
13	Photography Life	PL	https://photographylife.com/
14	Picture correct	PC	http://www.picturecorrect.com
15	Pop Photo	PO	http://www.popphoto.com/
16	Portrait Photographer	PP	http://portrait-photographer.blogspot.com.es
17	Rockstar Photography blog	RF	http://howtobecomearockstarphotographer.com/blog/
18	Roesch Photography	RP	http://roeschphotography.blogspot.com.es
19	Scott Kelby's Photoshop Insider	SK	http://scottkelby.com
20	Shooting strangers	SS	http://www.dannyst.com/