

## Celebrities Representation in Print Media Discourse: A Cognitive Approach

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper studies the cognitive aspect of the magazine's cover lines, which are employed to represent and present celebrities to the public. The present study aims to identify the conceptual metaphors and the cognitive function they fulfill in print media discourse, particularly the celebrity magazine category. Lakoff and Johnson 1980 is the model adopted for analyzing the data under study. The results of this paper revealed a scarcity of metaphorical language in magazine cover lines in general. Additionally, most conceptual metaphors have been spotted as confined to limited metaphor patterns and types. These are found geared towards unveiling facts related to a celebrity's private life. They are intended to arouse the readers' curiosity and encourage them to buy the issue.

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## 1. Introduction

Generally speaking, the prevalent view of metaphor is that it is the main characteristic of language, particularly poetic language. Consequently, metaphor study has been situated within literary studies for a long time, in which the emphasis was on language alone. The word metaphor is taken from the Greek word 'metaphora', and the study of metaphor is associated with the ancient Greek Philosopher Aristotle. In his book 'Poetics,' he defined metaphor as a device that assigns a name to something that is a part of something else. The transference can occur between species, genus, and species or between species based on analogy. (Lan Chun, 2003: 5-6). In Greek, the word metaphor also means 'transfer' or 'transport'. This means that a metaphor is the process of transferring an expression's image, meaning, or quality to another expression (Classe, 2000, p. 941). Accordingly, the cognitive side of metaphor has generally been ignored by most scholars, and all attention has been given to the linguistic aspect instead.

Nevertheless, the new theory has been altered during the last decades. Its basic idea is that metaphors are not only linguistic constructs in which words, phrases, or sentences denote things. They are conceptually structured mappings by which people attempt to grasp a particular conceptual domain in terms of another, unlike the classical theory, which states that the role of metaphor is to attract attention to unnoticed similarities between entities. CMT (Conceptual Metaphor Theory) asserts that

metaphors reveal how we interpret one experience in terms of another, making it primarily a matter of cognition. According to Lakoff, metaphors do not originate from language itself but rather from how we conceptualize one mental domain through the lens of another. (Lakoff, 2003, p.246).

Accordingly, the language of magazines is also metaphorical since it reflects how we think. However, every magazine component covers, for instance, the chosen image, how it is framed, punctuation, and the use of color and layout elements, all intended along with wording to persuade the reader to purchase the publication. The present study investigates conceptual metaphors in the cover lines of celebrity magazines, for the previous studies focused mainly on the political discourse in newspapers. It aims to reveal how magazines utilize language to represent famous figures. The paper seeks to answer the following questions.

1. How are celebrities conceptualized in magazine article lines?
2. What conceptual metaphors do the magazines use to talk about celebrities?
3. What are the basic source/target domains used in the metaphorical mapping when handling celebrities' news?
4. Do magazine writers rely upon negative source domains to construct conceptual metaphors?
5. What are the types of conceptual metaphors employed by the magazine's cover line writers?
6. What functions do metaphors serve?
7. Do text producers overuse conceptual metaphors in writing cover lines?

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory**

Lakoff and Johnson introduced the term "conceptual metaphor" for the first time in 1980 in their influential book entitled *Metaphors We Live By*. They argued that metaphor is more than just language; it reflects our daily experiences, thoughts, and actions. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980/2003, p.3). Put differently, the Conceptual metaphor theory shows how our conceptual system is organized. In this respect, Lakoff and Johnson define the term metaphor in the following way: "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another." (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980 p. 5) as cited in (Geeraerts and Cuyckens, 2007 p.188). That is to say, there are many abstract and complicated ideas in life that not everyone can understand. As a result, more tangible and widely understood notions are frequently used to explain abstract and complex ideas. That is to say, metaphor is not employed to refer to individual linguistic conventions but to denote patterns of conceptual associations in human minds.

Given this, In the field of Cognitive Linguistics, metaphors are considered crucial to cognitive processes rather than simply being linguistic phenomena. This view suggests that metaphors play a fundamental role in shaping how we conceptualize and understand abstract ideas. (Geeraerts and Cuyckens, 2007:188-190) Conceptual metaphors are used in everyday language and are not limited to poetry. That is to say, even though we are probably unaware of it, we use conceptual metaphors everywhere, every day. Since conceptual metaphor is not a matter of language, it is neither a

comparison nor a trope. Instead, it embodies our mind and thought, which is cognition. This means that our thought and action is the primary ingredient of conceptualization (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; 2003, p. 117)

## 2.2. Domains

Conceptual metaphor is the transfer of meaning from a certain domain to another, or it can be seen as how we conceptualize one mental domain using another domain. There are two basic domains, the target domain and source domain, and the kind of process where a target domain is understood in terms of a source domain is known as 'conceptual metaphor.' (Evans, 2007, p.34-35) Kövecses (2002, p.4) defined the term "domain" as any coherent organization of experience. He adds that the immediate subject matter makes up the target domain. (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p.265). Given this, the target domain here is a subject matter that must be understood using the source domain. (ibid p.253). Moreover, target domains are abstract, lacking physical characteristics, and thus are unintelligible, as in LIFE, ARGUMENTS, EMOTION, MORALITY, THOUGHT, HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS TIME, etc. Kövecses stated that the target domain is inferred as the coherent organization of experience, which is conceptualized through another domain, the source domain. Accordingly, source domain concepts used to understand target domains are more concrete, like JOURNEY, BUILDINGS, PLANTS, WAR, HUMAN BODY, FOOD FORCES, etc. Kövecses points out that the formula A IS B can be used to define metaphor, where a source domain (b) helps to understand the target domain (a). The basis of this comprehension is a set of mappings between the components of a and b. This collection of mappings is what it means to know a conceptual metaphor (2002, p.33). Lakoff and Johnson introduce some examples to illustrate the concept of conceptual metaphor:

- Ideas are (people, food, money, commodities, and resources).
- Love is (madness, a physical force, a journey, and a patient)
- Physical and Emotional States are (entities within a person).
- Life is (a gambling game, a journey, a container) (2003 p.46-51)

## 2.3. Mappings (projections)

The core concept of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) is that of mapping. This idea, derived from mathematics, involves systematic metaphorical connections between closely related concepts. The so-called systematic projection can be described as mapping the elements of one conceptual domain onto elements of another, including the objects and properties that characterize that domain and the events, relationships, and scenarios that characterize it. That is to say, conceptual metaphor theory deals with the mapping processes of inferences from the source domain to the target domain. In addition to systematicity, the one-way nature of conceptual metaphors is one of the features Lakoff, Johnson, and cognitive linguists highlighted most prominently. The word weather can be metaphorically utilized about certain economic and political conditions. However, it is not feasible to use a reverse metaphor, either linguistically or conceptually (such as mistakenly comparing a real storm to a recession). (Geeraerts and Cuyckens, 2007 p.188-190)

To illustrate the notion of mapping, let's examine the correspondence between ARGUMENT and WAR, two very common domains in many everyday expressions. In this case, a correlation in our typical day-to-day experiences gives rise to the mappings. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p.47). Consequently, human knowledge of war is projected onto the knowledge of arguments in the conceptual metaphor "ARGUMENT IS WAR.". As a result, this conceptual metaphor is the source of many common metaphorical expressions we encounter. For this reason, we discuss winning and losing arguments as well as how to present, defend, and adjust our positions. Similarly, a line of reasoning may defeat one or more surrenders. Moreover, people might adhere to an unjustifiable plan, strategy, or tactic. Moreover, disagreements could be crushed or shot down. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4). Another example of metaphor is LOVE AS JOURNEY. Here, the two domains, LOVE and JOURNEY, are metaphorically linked by a number of unique correspondences or mappings. The table below provides illustrations of these mappings.

**Table 1.** The mapping of the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY

Source: JOURNEY	Mappings	Target: LOVE
TRAVELLERS	→	LOVERS
VEHICLE	→	LOVE RELATIONSHIP
JOURNEY	→	EVENTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP
DISTANCE COVERED	→	PROGRESS MADE
OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED	→	DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED
DECISIONS ABOUT DIRECTION	→	CHOICES ABOUT WHAT TO DO
DESTINATION OF THE JOURNEY	→	GOALS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Conceptual metaphors are said to have their roots in how people interact with the external world daily. That is to say; conceptual metaphors have what is known as 'experiential basis'. Orientational metaphors, for instance, arise from ideas related to the way people perceive the world similarly to their senses. The human body and sense of spatial orientation are fundamental to this group of metaphors. Orientations are the basic ideas that emerge from this concern, such as (IN-OUT, FRONT BACK, NEAR-FAR, and UP-DOWN) (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 57). These indicate either the body posture (UP-DOWN), viewing the body as a container (INOUT), or relating our body to the space surrounding us (FRONT-BACK) .

For example, the conceptual metaphor (HAPPY IS UP) can be justified by claiming that the upright body position indicates self-assurance, health, and contentment., whereas the bent body posture shows completely the opposite (ibid p. 15). So, if we are confident, we tend to keep our heads up high. One more example is that of (CONTAINER), which comes from the concept that the human body is seen as a physical entity isolated from the outside world by the skin. In fact, this process is commonly known as embodiment, indicating that the traits of the human body are projected onto objects and concepts in our surroundings. Lakoff and Johnson argue that basic ontological metaphors are based on correlations in our experience (ibid p. 58). Therefore, saying "I've had a full life" or "my life is empty" stems from the fact that the metaphorical concept "LIFE IS A CONTAINER" is associated with individuals' minds as well.

#### 2.4. Conceptual metaphors types

Conceptual metaphors can be classified into three types according to their function: ontological, structural, and orientational. Kovesces divided conceptual metaphor on the basis of certain criteria, which include function, conventionality, level of generality of metaphor, and nature. (Kovesces, 2002, p.33-34).

##### 2.4.1. Structural Metaphors

A structural metaphor can be defined as a metaphor in which some concept is understood in terms of another structured and well-defined concept (Knowles and Moon, 2006:31). Structural metaphors like (RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS WAR) offer the most extensive basis for such development. In fact, structural metaphors enable us to go beyond merely orienting concepts, referencing them, quantifying them, etc. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980/2003, p.61); take the following sentences as an illustration:

-They're at a crossroads.

-John doesn't think this relationship is going anywhere.

For instance, the concept of time is structured in accordance with the notion of motion and space. As such, in the conceptual metaphor of time is motion, time is conceptualized as follows: time is understood in terms of the following basic elements: physical objects, locations, and motion. There is a previous experiential experience that leads to this kind of figuring out the concept of time. That is to say, the present time represents the same location as a religious observer. The mappings of the metaphorical concept (time is motion) are illustrated below:

Time is a thing.

The passing of time is motion.

Future time is in front of the observer, and past time is behind the observer. (Kovesces, 2010, p.37)

##### 2.4.2. Orientational Metaphors

Concerning orientational metaphors, they arrange a whole system of concepts with respect to spatial orientations. Kovesces argues Orientational metaphors serve mostly for evaluation. These correlate with one another into cohesive clusters; Kovesces adds that he refers to the orientational metaphor as a "coherence metaphor." He defines "Coherence" as the tendency for specific target concepts to be conceptualized consistently. (Kovesces, 2002, p.40) Hence, concepts like those of states or emotions are directed towards an imaginary space, for example :

IN or OUT - UP or DOWN - FRONT or BACK - DEEP or SHALLOW - CENTRAL or PERIPHERAL

Metaphors like, MORE is UP and LESS is DOWN are linguistically used in the following way:

-She has got a high mark.

In fact, The basis of the orientational metaphor lies in human bodily structure and how it interacts with the physical world. Human bodies consist of a front and back, as well as inferior and superior parts, allowing us to move vertically and navigate various spaces. Moreover, the human body can be placed near or far with respect to some other entity. (Evans, 2004, p.178)

#### *2.4.3. Ontological Metaphors*

Ontological metaphors help us understand and communicate ideas and situations even if they are unclear or abstract as if they possess tangible physical characteristics. (Knowles and Moon, 2006, p.31). An ontological metaphor can be described as the transformation of an abstraction, whether an idea, emotion, or activity, into a physical object and dealt with like an entity or a tangible thing. Individuals frequently engage with objects and substances in everyday life, forming the foundation for many ontological metaphors. In other words, humans perceive and categorize limitless abstract actions, concepts, and feelings as concrete or material objects. Recognizing our experiences as objects or substances makes it possible for us to mention them, classify them, group them, and quantify them, allowing us to think about them logically. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; 2003, p.25). Ontological metaphors are classified into four types:

##### *a. Container Metaphors*

A container metaphor is a case in which a thought or a concept is depicted as a container. This means that it consists of an inside part and an outside, and it thus has the ability to include something else. Every individual is considered to be a container with a defined boundary and a directional aspect. "We place our own orientation onto physical objects bounded by surfaces." (ibid, p.25)

E.g.: Is Sam in the school team?

In the sentence above, the school team is metaphorically constructed as a container with certain participants, events, and the activity of playing within it.

##### *b. Entity Metaphors*

Entity metaphor is a concept structured as a concrete or tangible object.

E.g.: Your mind isn't operating today.

In the example above, the concept of mind is depicted metaphorically as a broken machine.

##### *c. Substance Metaphors*

Substance metaphor is a concept delineated as a substance or material.

E.g.: There is good music in this opera.

In this example, 'music' is metaphorically viewed as a substance included in the opera, which in turn is structured as a container.

##### *d. Personification*

Personification is a form of ontological metaphor that assigns human traits to an object or concept (Kovecses, 2010, p.39). It is described as a broad category that includes a diverse set of metaphors, each highlighting various characteristics or perspectives of an individual". (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; 2003, p.34)



E.g.: disease is eating up his body.

In the sentence above, a nonhuman abstraction (disease) is given a human attribute (eating). It's important to mention here that these three groups are related to each other. In fact, structural metaphors and orientational metaphors might also serve ontological functions, and ontological metaphors rely on having structured source domains. Moreover, Lakoff and Johnson, in the afterword to the new edition of their book, dismiss their previous categorization, calling it 'artificial.' They argue that all conceptual metaphors are both structural and ontological. They add that numerous conceptual metaphors are orientational in nature. (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, p.264–265) as cited in (Knowles and Moon, 2006, p.31-32)

## 2.5. Celebrity definition

Anybody who has gained widespread recognition—whether via merit, accident, or ill fame—is referred to as a celebrity. People who have gained fame through their work in the entertainment and art industries are more commonly referred to as stars, as cited in Leslie (2011, p.17). According to Turner, celebrities are people whose personal lives entice greater media attention than their careers. These are people who feel that there is a discrepancy between the publicity their lives receive and the attention that is typically given to their work. Celebrities are people who are known for their well-knownness.

Generally, the great and the good are often associated with celebrities, but as Rojek points out, we also celebrate their ability to exceed boundaries, their freedom in acting extravagantly, their wasteful use of power, beauty, money, and luxury, and their existence in a world distinct from our own appears to permit them to engage in activities that we can only fantasy. Rojek provides a celebrity typology. He argues that some people—like members of royalty—are famous from birth, some people—like athletes and sports stars—achieve fame via great achievements, and some people—like Big Brother contestants—are made famous by the media. Others analyze the fame as a kind of manufacturing process. Celebrities are people who make money for other people. Being famous is like being "a cog in a machine"; it's something that a larger system demands, not something you create for yourself. (Brockington, 2009, p.6-8)

**Table 2.** Leslie's (2011, p.23) celebrity taxonomy of celebrity

Category	Category Specific Examples
<b>1. Politics, Government</b>	rulers, military figures, politicians
<b>2. The Arts</b>	writers, artists, musicians
<b>3. Science, Medicine</b>	scientists, physicians
<b>4. Entertainment</b>	film and television stars, sports figures
<b>5. Academic</b>	philosophers, teachers, scholars
<b>6. Business</b>	entrepreneurs, captains of industry
<b>7. Religion</b>	popes, preachers, religious leaders
<b>8. General Public</b>	reality show participants, newsmakers

A person only achieves fame when the general public recognizes them as having exceptional qualities. Well-known people are called celebrities. They are products and outcomes of image-making (representations) in the mass media, consumed by sizable audiences interested in both their private and public lives and promoted or presented in specific or striking ways to facilitate such consumption. Due to the cultural, symbolic, political, and economic influence the celebrities command, which is continuously upheld and reinforced by representations in the media, they have a social role. They are both actual people with unique talents, and the information spread by the media about these talents gives the impression that these abilities should be appreciated. Celebrities set standards for success, wealth, behavior, and appearance. They also serve as role models for others to follow. This elaborated definition highlights two aspects of celebrity culture. First, the public's awareness of certain people's actions makes them celebrities, and second, the mass media facilitates this public awareness. In fact, celebrity culture is only conceivable in the era of mass media. This means that celebrities need the media to talk about them and spread their pictures. Celebrities are created through this process of communication, information sharing, and public exposure.

It follows that a celebrity is a product, at least in part, of the media's constant portrayal of that person's attributes and that there would be no celebrity culture in the absence of media culture. The person is undoubtedly portrayed in a particular way by the media in order for her or him to become well-known and consumed. The media promotes a celebrity for us to buy, but it also promotes products we wish to buy. It focuses audiences' attention upon certain aspects of the famous personality, wealth, attractiveness, and power, as things worth enviously pursuing and daydreaming about. The methods used to promote celebrities and products are the same: they both emphasize importance, effectiveness, and commendation for the products they endorse. In addition, celebrities are commodities that the media promotes and portrays as significant or alluring. Put another way, just like any other commodity, celebrities are both the subject and the products of promotional campaigns. These are goods that need to be marketed and sold. Renown is a manufactured good that is produced for the general public's consumption in and through the mass media. (Nayar, 2009, p. 10-11)

While there's no denying that other media have contributed significantly, movies and television certainly have a major role in creating the celebrity phenomenon. In fact, a whole new industry that supports and thrives on celebrity culture has emerged. Furthermore, it's difficult to find an issue of a broadsheet newspaper without a "personality" on the front cover these days because even the most upscale ones are becoming increasingly celebrity-driven. (Pringle, 2004, p.10). Thus, in my opinion, celebrities serve a much more significant purpose in people's lives than just providing voyeuristic entertainment; rather, they aid in the public's personal and societal development. People use celebrities as mentors and role models. People very likely sympathize with specific types of celebrities, maybe those who do resemble them or that they hope to look like. These celebrities live parallel lives that people can relate, aspire, and emulate as they switch up their hairstyles, outfits, partners, homes, and children. Along the way, the media exalts them, learns everything there is to know about them, and presents it to the public. For a long time, people have adored celebrities and looked for opportunities to glimpses into their private lives provided by invasive media. Celebrities would never be able to attract hordes of devoted followers and command



the kind of fees they do if they were not so valuable to millions of people in human society. (Pringle, 2004, p.5)

## 2.6. Magazines

The term "magazine" has its roots in French and means "storehouse.". Magazines consist of stories, advertisements, and many other items that the editors think their readership will find interesting. Similar to books, magazines are typically published by publishing houses. However, magazines don't last as long as books do. This is a main feature of the publication and is caused by the content. Because magazines are meant to be used for a limited time and have very different content from books, magazines' external designs are different from those of books. (Kipphan, 2001, p.5) Magazines are categorized into five main types: Consumer magazines, business (trade) magazines, newsletters, literary reviews and academic journals, and comic books. The most popular type, which constitutes the present study's data, falls within the consumer category. Consumer publications are defined as those types of magazines that provide readers with entertainment, guidance, and information relevant to their free time. (McKay, 2000, p.205). People in their personal, non-business lives are the target audience for consumer magazines. They are available for subscription as well as in-store on newsstands and magazine racks. These publications are known as consumer magazines. Since readers purchase and use goods and services that are offered for sale through retail establishments and may be promoted in those publications, all publications pertaining to hobbies or special interests, like cars, boats, sports, and needlework, would fall under the category of "consumer magazines." These publications are all connected by the advertisements they run, which encourage readers to purchase the advertised commodity. For instance, *Time*, *People*, *Essence*, *Vanity Fair*, *Details*, and *Spin*. (Turrow 2009, p.351-353)

### 2.6.1. Celebrity Magazines

The basic elements of any celebrity magazine include cover story, captions, and cover image. Regarding cover stories, all publications feature fashion layouts using the images of specific female celebrities. These are photos of celebrities that depicted them in everyday settings; the majority of these images were identical from one magazine to the next. The magazine caption is utilized as a means to identify or recognize the occasion where the photo has been taken. The third element is the process of choosing a suitable cover image. Choosing a current or trendy personality for the cover is not only a smart business move but also shows that the magazine is aware of current trends in celebrity culture. Eye-catching cover photos are typically accompanied by a brief statement outlining "the issue" that will be covered within. Certain magazines share cover similarities, particularly when a celebrity has garnered significant public attention. However, the stories within are typically distinct in terms of approach and tone. One or two shorter photo-based pieces showcasing other celebrities who might be deemed "runners-up" in a competition to be featured on the magazine's cover could accompany a cover story.

The fact that celebrity magazines promote their featured stars rather than criticize them is not surprising at all. Nobody enjoys criticism, especially when it's aimed at a most-liked celebrity. It is important to keep in mind that a celebrity can represent the

hopes and aspirations of a large portion of the populace. This is because readers might interpret criticizing a celebrity as criticizing them. A lot of people can really relate to the celebrities they endorse. People purchase their products, go to concerts, watch movies, and buy music. A solid bond is built between them that is hard to break. The 21st century is the age of celebrity. The magazines are aware of this and hardly ever offer criticism. When they do, it's usually a minor one that relates to moral or social standards. A wide cross-section of well-known celebrities whose pictures are found on the pages of these magazines frequently serve as models for advertisements. Occasionally, a reader will learn about the activities of popular celebrities, but the majority are promoting a product. (Leslie, 2011, p.50-57)

#### *2.6.2. Magazines Front Cover*

The goal of the magazine cover is to convince readers that the media text they are considering will be worth the time, money, and effort. (Peterson, 2005: 135) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.9 ). Every component of magazine covers, including the chosen image, how it is framed, the wording, punctuation, and typography of call-out lines, as well as the use of color and layout elements, all are intended to persuade the reader that the content of the magazine is captivating, intriguing, and appealing. This is particularly true for magazines sold at newsstands, where the covers of the same editions sent to subscribers are somewhat different. (Foges, 1999, p. 24) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.10), Owing to the fact that subscription has already accomplished the goal of persuading a reader to purchase the publication. Magazine designers understand that a magazine's cover must more or less instantly sell the magazine's content and brand in a setting where customers of the newsagent may be lingering and where shelves brimming with hundreds of titles—including every competitor in a particular field—are present (Holmes, 2000, p. 162) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.10). The commercial nature of the media genre and its commodity status are strongly associated with magazine covers. In order to draw readers into the consumerist ideology that permeates the magazine as a whole, covers present an image that the magazine wishes to promote about itself—an identity that will cause it to be recognized, differentiated from its competitors, bought, read, or even leafed through.

Given this, the magazine's cover is its most important component. It needs to draw in a sizable readership and market itself to audiences in order to sell those audiences to sponsors (McCracken, 1993, p.14- 18) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.10). It has been reported that publishers occasionally choose their cover image first, then choose which features to commission to complement it (Holmes, 2000, p. 163) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.10). Experts in the field believe that a magazine loses a great deal of its identity when it takes out its cover. In order to save money on shipping, magazine distributors frequently send back only the cover of unsold titles to publishers, destroying the entire magazine in the process. Even though it has been detached, a magazine's cover can still say a lot about its content. (Renard, 2006) as cited in (Aqani, 2012, p.10).

The magazine cover lines and the front cover image are considered the most powerful marketing devices. This is because of their persuasive nature of encouraging readers to purchase a certain magazine rather than another when faced with front cover shelves vying for their attention. This is primarily accomplished through linguistic tricks, though visuals like graphics, layout, and graphology also have an overwhelming effect.

The magazine's front cover plays a significant role in influencing readers' various expectations when they buy and read the publication. (Mcloughlin, 2000, p.6)

### *2.7. Previous Studies*

Certain research papers tackled conceptual metaphors in print media, mainly that of newspapers. The first study was conducted by Umar Ahmed (2018), who investigated the rule of metaphor in the construction of media discourse by examining constituent metaphors used to describe Nigerian women in newspapers. The models adopted for analysis consist of Lazar's (2005) feminists CDA and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CM theory and presupposition. The second paper is that of Sanday Salem et al. (2022), who studied the role of CM in the representation of the Syrian human crisis in British newspaper articles. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) and Van Dijk's (1995) ideological square were employed to analyze the data. In another study conducted by Dita Trckova (2011), the researcher dealt with the functionality of conceptual metaphors in newspaper discourse. It aimed to investigate the cognitive and social functions that metaphor achieves in newspaper discourse on natural catastrophes to uncover the multi-functionality of figurative language. The models of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) and CDA were used for that purpose. The last research paper was written by Natasa Stojan and Sonja Novak Mijc (2019). Their paper studied conceptual metaphors in political discourse. It examines the use of source domains among Croatian, American, and Italian politicians. They adopted the model of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) for analyzing the data.

Most of the studies mentioned above are interested in the political discourse of newspapers. The present paper is going to deal with a different and unique discourse, which is that of magazines (Consumer magazine type). It studies the language that is used to describe a category of people that have an overwhelming effect on our societies, that is, celebrities. The paper can be of great importance to text producers in general and cover lines writers in particular by clarifying the linguistic tactics for a successful front cover, which has the power to convince the readers to buy the publication.

## **3. Method**

### *3.1. Data collection*

The magazine chosen is US Weekly, which is one of the most popular American magazines. It has national coverage and distribution and enjoys a wide readership. (Leslie, 2011, p. 146). The magazine falls within the category of celebrity magazine, in which the focus is on celebrity alone, not fashion or lifestyle, as the main interest of the magazine. It specializes in celebrity news plus entertainment. The kind of celebrities dealt with in this paper are of the first category of Leslie's celebrity taxonomy (2011, p.23)

To that end, forty-six cover lines have been chosen to be analyzed. Magazine cover line is an important element because, according to Swann (1991, p.133), it is the job of cover lines to sell the general concept of the publication as it takes great effort on the part of the editors, designers, and publishers to create outstanding covers that will attract the readers. In addition, it forms a significant part of a magazine's identity. US Weekly magazine is published seasonally and is available both in print and online versions. The magazine issues of 2022 have been selected as sample data of the recent

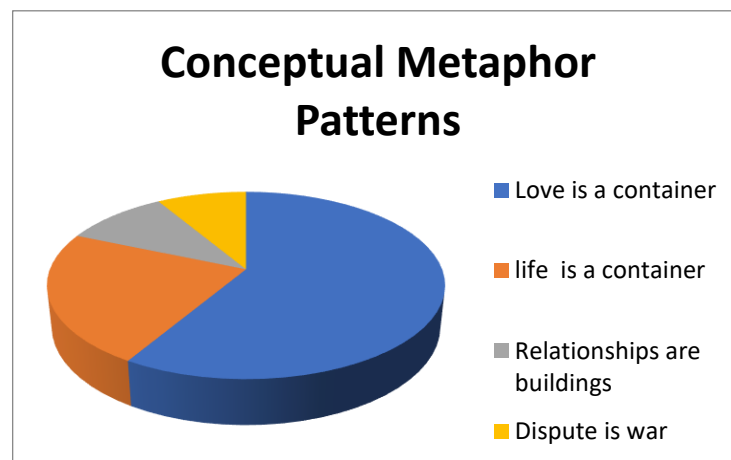
study and are retrieved from the following website:  
<https://www.magzter.com/US/a360media-LLC/Us-Weekly/Celebrity/All-Issues>

### 3.2. Model of analysis

The present paper adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods for analyzing the data under study. The quantitative method has been devoted to describing the study's statistical results. To show how conceptual metaphors manifest themselves in the magazine's lead article lines as part of the human cognitive system, the data have been analyzed by adopting a qualitative approach. Following Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive approach (1980-1991), the metaphors have been described in terms of their target and source domains. Furthermore, different types of metaphors have been identified.

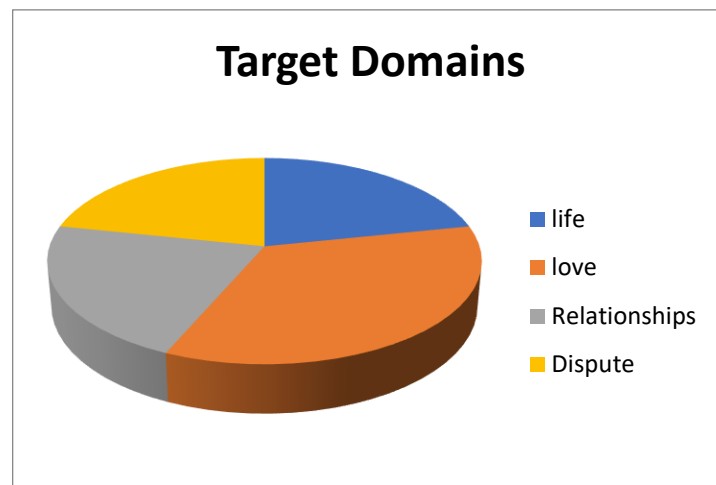
## 4. Result and discussion

It is important to mention here that each cover line contains one or more conceptual metaphors and, at other times, has none. Also, the subjects of most of the cover lines are love life, problems, disputes, family life, and untold stories. Certain domains pervade the cover lines of US Weekly magazine. These are life, love and relationships. Obviously, text producers attempt to cope with their leaders' interests, which are the private lives of their favorite celebrities. There is a heavy reliance upon the classic conceptual metaphor patterns. This is because classics are universal and thus comprehensible to most people around the world. These patterns include life as a container five times, love as a container eight times, dispute as war five times, and relations as buildings four times.



**Figure 1.** The frequency of the main conceptual metaphor patterns in the data

The cover's main role is selling the issue. This means that the text writers are requested to utilize language to grab readers' attention and motivate them to buy their publication. To this end, they intentionally use celebrities since the public is curious about their personal lives rather than their professional lives. The target domains used are life five times, love eight times, relationship five times, and dispute 5times.



**Figure 2.** The frequency of the main target domains in the data

For instance, in cover line (3), the *Queen hits back*, and the growing conflict between Prince Harry and Queen Elizabeth is introduced as a battle or fight. The cover line has the root of the structural metaphor *dispute, which is war, in which the argument aroused as a result of Prince Harry's accusations to the royal family constitutes the target domain*, and the terminology of fight represents its source domain. Here, the text producer depicts the chaos happening in Buckingham Palace as being a state of fight in which the Queen punched back Harry due to a prior attack on his part. This violence was a consequence of a series of allegations against the monarchy in which the Queen felt compelled to act fast to put an end to this farce. Other examples of conceptual metaphors are explained in the following lines. *Pregnant and in love again. Montag shares her emotional journey* (13): the ontological metaphor of container appears in this cover line. Here, the abstract notion of love is thought of as a container that a person can get inside it or fall into it. The American reality television celebrity Heidi Montag is living a new love story again. She has stepped into Love Castle once more.

-*Inside Taylor's mysterious world* (17)

The text producers employ the ontological metaphor of *life is a container* where the target domain is the private life of the American singer Taylor Swift, and the source domain is that of a container. The magazine excites the readers by alluring them with the idea of indulgence in the news of their idol, and this satisfies their curiosity about how celebrities live.

- *A broken relationship with her sons*(15)

The bad relationship between the American pop singer Britney Spears and her sons is depicted as a thing that one can bend and break. *Relationships are things*, and the ontological metaphor is used to feminalize the fans of her family affairs. The source domain here is a thing, while the target domain is an abstract one, that is, the relationship.

**Table (3) conceptual metaphors found in the data and their types**

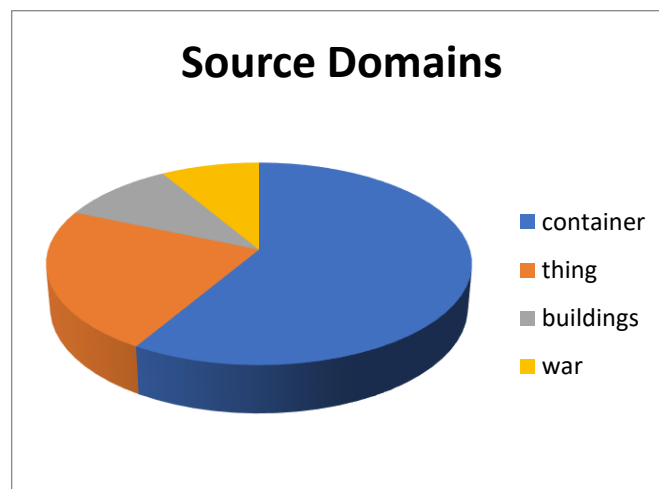
No.	Cover Line	Conceptual Metaphor Pattern	Metaphor Type
1	It's all falling apart	Relationships are buildings	structural
2	Gone too soon /Heartbroken wife	Death is departure	structural

		States are objects	ontological
3	Queen hits back	Dispute is war	structural
4	Under pressure	Lack of control is down	orientationa l
5	Finally taking control	Actions are objects	ontological
6	How we fell in love/ Inside Hollywood's.....	Love is a container	ontological
		Love is a container	ontological
7	Britney's explosive tell-all/sends shock waves	Abstracts are substance	Ontological
		Abstracts are forces	structural
8	Breaking point/ A nightmare behind closed doors	Relationships are buildings	Structural
		Problems are nightmares	Structural
9	Jada's ultimatum to save 25-year marriage	Abstracts are animates	ontological
10	It's all falling apart/ can the marriage be saved?	Relationships are buildings	Structural
		Abstracts are animates	ontological
11	Top of her class	Good is up	orientationa l
12	Inside Tom's private world	Life is a container	ontological
13	Pregnant and in love again	Love is a container	ontological
14	Inside the make-or-break Jubilee showdown/royal kids steal the show	Dispute is a container	ontological
		Actions are objects	
15	A broken relationship with her sons	Relationships are objects	ontological
16	No way back/ Collapse of their relationship/ Meghan bullying investigation buried by palace	Problems are impediments	Structural
		Relationships are buildings	Structural
		Actions are objects	ontological
17	Inside Taylor's mysterious world	Life is a container	ontological
18	Wilde under attack for monster behaviour on set/ Styles refuses to make peace with Jason Sudeikis	Dispute is war	Structural
		Abstracts are substance	ontological
19	In love and ready to wed	Love is a container	ontological
20	Meghan's awkward clash with royal aide revealed	Dispute is war	Structural
21	Pregnant and in love again/ How she took control to protect her family/ inside their preparation	Love is a container	Ontological
		Actions are objects	Ontological
		Life is a container	ontological
22	Inside their explosive off camera chemistry	Life is a container	ontological
23	Trapped in toxic love triangle/ Intimate texts leaked	Love is a container	Ontological
		Abstracts are substance	Ontological



24	In love and out of hiding/ Inside their hot dates at \$85m Malibu love nest	Love is a container Life is a container	Ontological Ontological
25	He couldn't face the dark cloud hanging over them	Problems are objects	ontological
26	Inside GMA stars' secret affair/ Taken off air by bosses and fighting for their jobs	Love is a container Dispute is war	Ontological Structural
27	Inside her scary postpartum dash to ER	States are containers	Ontological

Source domains are mainly ontological. The most frequent are building 4 times, war 4 times, object 7 times, and container 15 times. Such metaphors are drawn upon in an attempt to give abstract concepts physical properties and thus achieve an understanding of particular linguistic expressions.



**Figure 3.** The frequency of the main source domains in the data

To illustrate, in cover line (1), *It's all falling apart*, the main cover line about Kim Kardashian has its roots in the structural metaphor 'life is building'. Kim lives in a state of chaos and sadness due to recent incidents in her life, such as her ex-boyfriend humiliating her by having a cozy moment with Miley Cyrus, as well as her husband's latest public breakdown, babbling about dirty family secrets. So, with all these troubles and shocks, Kim's life is just like a decaying building; though it looks quite beautiful and strong, it is fragile and goes down over the heads of its residents.

It is noteworthy that the conceptual metaphors used do not tackle the celebrities' appearance and personality. In fact, this shows the good ethics of the magazine's editor, focusing not on trivial details that can largely shape the young's mind and affect their beliefs and thoughts badly regarding what matters most in life and the principles followed in appreciating others. In other words, the text producers do not encourage growing a superficial generation in which the outlooks of people are the standard that determines the value of a person, so to speak. The magazine cover lines focus on the life of the celebrities, that is, the private one, while the physical appearance has been discarded altogether. This shows the high sense of responsibility felt by the magazine's editorial board towards their society and the awareness of the overwhelming effect of journalism upon people's ethics, especially the future generation. Also, there is no

mention of celebrity wealth and looks, though the photo of a hot personality is used on the front cover to catch the audience's eyes and make a purchase. Moreover, text producers pay attention to the wording of the front cover since it reflects the intellectual level of the magazine's editorial content. That is to say, the cover reveals the magazine's personality and labels its possessor. However, at the end of the day, celebrities are all media that have the power to give fame to someone and vice versa. The mass media produces celebrities by talking about their talents and circulating the images. Thus, fame is a manufactured commodity done by continuously exposing qualities to the audience.

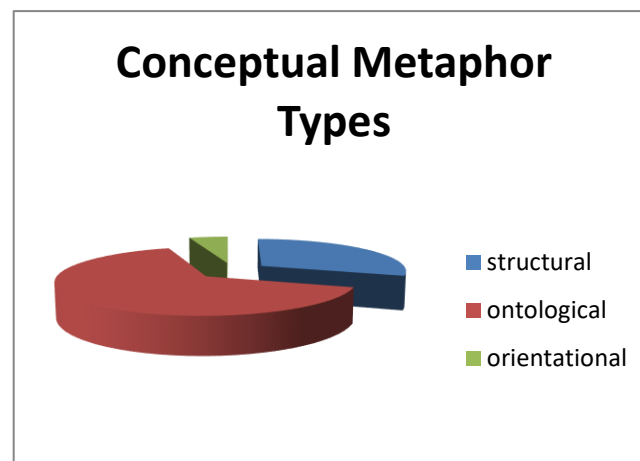
It can be noticed that there's no overuse of conceptual metaphors in the cover lines since 21 of them are written in simple, clear words that contain no conceptual metaphor at all. That is, only 25 of them contain metaphors. The magazine editors keep the wording of the front cover as simple and direct as possible in order to achieve readability and understanding of its content because magazines, as is the case with you, *Us Weekly* magazine, is one of the most popular magazines around the world. Thus, it is necessary that the language is easy to grasp to eliminate any element or source of misunderstanding that may arise from cultural differences caused by the use of certain conceptual metaphors.

Additionally, using minimum conceptual metaphors keeps a cover line simple and forward. In other words, uncomplicated language makes it easier for passers-by to get a glimpse of the magazine cover than a complex one. What is more, cover line writers need not bother themselves and overthink their words. This is due to the fact that cover lines are not persuasive per se. Celebrity images always accompany them to promote the publication. Secondly and most importantly, conceptual metaphors that people use in their speech or writing come naturally, that is, as an unconscious process. In other words, conceptual metaphors embody our minds and thoughts, which have their roots in everyday interaction with the exterior world. For this reason, the dearth of conceptual metaphors in the data under analysis does not reflect a particular strategy that the text producer adopts to attain an expected outcome.

Considering the use of conceptual metaphor types, it has been found that cover line writers rely heavily upon the ontological type 26 instances as a major means to convince the reader that the content of the magazine is interesting. These include containers and things as their source domain in particular. The structural type comes second through its realization in front cover headlines 12 instances. The wide use of the structural and ontological metaphor is ascribed to the fact that the subject matter or the nature of the news is to be delivered, which in turn imposes certain mappings. That is to say, the cover lines of *US Weekly* magazine deal mostly with the private lives of famous people, particularly their love relations and married lives.

Consequently, these topics require certain types of conceptual metaphors to best convey the message intended by the magazine's editorial board. This justifies the absence of an orientational metaphor type in the front cover and the pervasion of the structural and ontological instead. There are only two instances of orientational metaphor type in the cover lines (4) and (11): Top of her class: here, a young member of the excellency of the royal family of England, that is, Princess Charlotte of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge who is known for her popularity at school is taking the buzz in the media. She is smart and enjoys reading very much. The orientational metaphor good is up is used to describe the young Princess's school level. And since desirable things in life

are mostly associated with the horizontal pole in the human mind, the word top expresses the lofty position the little princess earned in her school life.



**Figure 4.** The frequency of the basic conceptual metaphor types in the data

Given this, employing ontological metaphors comes from the need to materialize abstraction, such as experiences, ideas, or emotions, into an object or physical entity. Doing so makes it possible to refer to our experiences and reason about them. Similarly, the text writer uses structural metaphors because an idea can only be expressed in terms of another. Put differently, some concepts are structured by means of another well-defined concept. Such relationships make it easy for us to grasp a huge number of linguistic expressions and thus create more effective communication.

Regarding the nature of the conceptual metaphor that the text producers used to talk about celebrities, it has been found that the front cover of all issues lacks unfavorable content that may, in one way or another, abuse or distort celebrities' public image. This direction of thought comes upstream from the fact that the magazine cover represents the identity it seeks to promote about itself, which differentiates it from other competitors or rivals. Hence, the editorial board, in general, and the cover line writers, in particular, make every effort to reflect a bright image of their publication and its intellectual content. Similarly, celebrities are so popular and adored by millions of people who imitate them and aspire to resemble them. In fact, print media can utilize this obsession for its own good. This means that since celebrities set up norms for looks and behaviour, they can serve as a good means of advertising products.

Furthermore, celebrities are commodities per se, for the media represents and promotes them in a very similar way to any other commodity to be consumed by the general public. That is why magazines choose celebrities as models to appear on the cover page as a marketing tactic. Besides, celebrities are powerful nowadays, and it is a bad idea to direct criticism at a star or celebrity because, for many people, celebrities exemplify their dreams and desires. Thus, magazines mostly praise and extol them and scarcely make a condemnatory statement.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study has examined the use of conceptual metaphors to represent celebrities in magazine lead article lines. A cognitive approach has been adopted to verify research questions for that purpose. The model followed for analyzing the data under study is Lakoff and Johnson's (1980). The analysis revealed that the magazine's

representation of celebrities is based on three major metaphor Themes: The description of life as a container, love as a container, relationships as building, and dispute as war. However, the metaphor of love as a container and life as a container are pervasive in the magazine's cover. The percentages they scored are 12%, 20%, 10% and 12% respectively. It is noteworthy that the cover line writers extensively use the target domain of love, life, dispute, and relationship as a means to promote and sell the issue since the readers are mainly interested in celebrities' private lives. They achieve the following percentages: 20%, 12%, 12%, and 12%. The source domains employed to conceptualize them are building 10%, container 37%, war 10%, and object 17% in an attempt to provide a physical entity that will bring about immediate comprehension on the reader's part. Concerning the conceptual metaphor type, a great presence or pervasive occurrence of the ontological metaphor type can be noticed, with a scoring percentage of 65%. The structural type came second with a percentage of 30%. Heavy reliance upon those two types can be justified by the nature of topics in which celebrity magazines concern themselves, which is the personal life of famous people.

It is worth noting that the text producer avoids criticizing or attacking celebrities; instead, they concentrate on spotting light on their good qualities as the former can serve as a brilliant marketing tool due to the attention they command of the public, which is celebrity endorsement. Furthermore, it has been found that magazine cover lines, in general, and the conceptual metaphor found in particular, do not in any way depict neither the looks nor the personality of the celebrities. This, in fact, shows the editor's devotion with regard to the considerations related to the magazine's intellectual level and reputation. Simply put, there is a high sense of devotion and responsibility towards their communities, which constantly urges them not to present or promote any shallow content.

All in all, the data showed no overuse of conceptual metaphor since the cover lines carrying conceptual method have only achieved a percentage of 54%. The reason behind this is ascribed to the nature of conceptual metaphors in the first place. That is to say, conceptual metaphors are patterns of conceptual associations in our minds that we use every day while mostly unaware of.

Based on the previously mentioned facts, it can be argued that the cognitive function of the conceptual metaphors the text producers adopt when dealing with celebrity news is to excite the reader and create curiosity. Generally speaking, celebrity magazines focus on the private lives of famous people, especially their love life, which the general public is interested in. Accordingly, they intentionally employ general, ambiguous cover lines to make the audience wonder and be eager to know more, which is an effective strategy for promoting the publication. For example, they are curious about the kind of container (love) and the survival and death of the falling building (divorce). The cover lines and image are designed to be persuasive selling instruments. One final point to be mentioned here is the repetition of certain cover lines like *falling apart*, *inside*, and *in love*. It may be due to the fact that cover line writers find certain cover lines more effective than others since people are mainly curious about others' lives and want to know all about a certain love story or the daily routines of celebrities as well as the details and reasons of a certain breakup.

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## Appendix A: Elements of a magazine cover



## Appendix B: Celebrity Magazine Circulation, 2008 by Larry Z. Lesile (2011: 146)

### Magazine Title Subscriptions Single Copy Total

<i>People</i>	2,127,384	1,472,149	3,599,533
<i>TV Guide</i>	2,942,230	155,391	3,097,621
<i>US Weekly</i>	1,011,018	796,669	1,807,687
<i>Entertainment Weekly</i>	1,701,153	50,437	1,751,590
<i>Star Magazine</i>	571,525	617,096	1,188,621
<i>In Touch Weekly</i>	64,419	834,492	898,911
<i>National Enquirer</i>	271,275	620,100	891,375
<i>OK! Weekly</i>	341,759	490,417	832,176
<i>Life &amp; Style Weekly</i>	10,189	461,989	472,178