



## Women's representations in advertisements: conceptual explorations

### *As representações das mulheres em propagandas: explorações conceituais*

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**Abstract:** Unlike traditional visions show, metaphors are present not only in literary language, but also in everyday, scientific and philosophical languages. It is through the metaphors that we conceptualize the world and understand the most abstract concepts that we have. Based on this premise, this study investigates the conceptual metaphors found in advertisements of women's magazines, based on the theories: the theory of conceptual metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2002), considerations of Kovecses (2002) about this theory and particular character of metaphors in advertisements, as proposed by Velasco-Sacristán (2010) and Ungerer (2003). The purposes of this research are to examine how the metaphors conceptualize the product advertised and how they reveal the social representation of women. The research was done through analysis of four advertisements taken from the magazines: *Nova* (Dec. 2008), *Marie Claire* (Oct. 2008), *Cláudia* (July 2009) and one advertisement taken from a website, published in 2020. The results show that conceptual metaphors are tools used by propagandists in the creation of advertisements based on stereotypes, representations and ideologies of particular group to which the advertisement is intended. Such resources tend to persuade the reader to purchase the product released.

**Keywords:** metaphor; conceptual metaphor; advertisements.

**Resumo:** Ao contrário do que mostram visões tradicionais, a metáfora não está presente somente na linguagem literária, mas também nas linguagens: cotidiana, científica e filosófica. É por meio das metáforas que nós conceptualizamos o mundo e compreendemos a maioria dos conceitos abstratos que temos. Com base nesse postulado,

o presente estudo investiga as metáforas conceituais presentes em propagandas de revistas femininas, tendo como pressupostos teóricos: a teoria da Metáfora Conceptual, proposta por Lakoff e Johnson (2002), as considerações de Kovecses (2002) acerca dessa teoria e o caráter particular das metáforas em propagandas, como proposto por Velasco-Sacristán (2010) e Ungerer (2003). Os objetivos dessa investigação são verificar o modo como as metáforas conceitualizam o produto divulgado e em que medida elas revelam a representação social da mulher. A pesquisa foi realizada através da análise de duas propagandas, retiradas das revistas: *Nova* (dez. 2008) e *Marie Claire* (out. 2008). Os resultados mostram que as metáforas conceituais são ferramentas utilizadas pelos propagandistas na elaboração das propagandas, com base em estereótipos, representações e ideologias de determinado público-alvo ao qual a propaganda é destinada. Tais recursos tendem a persuadir o leitor a adquirir o produto divulgado.

**Palavras-chave:** metáfora; metáfora conceitual; propagandas.

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## 1. Introduction

This research investigates the conceptual metaphors present in women's magazine advertisements in order to verify how they conceptualize the product, whose domain is correlated to other domains, and to what extent they reveal the social representation of women, their stereotypes, and underlying ideology. In modern advertising, the role of metaphor cannot be underestimated because products are never conceptualized within just one domain; this conceptualization is established by pictorial elements – instantiations of conceptual metaphors – and by linguistic elements with which such metaphors often interact.

The choice of the conceptual metaphor, inserted in the cognitivist paradigm, is due to the fact that, in this perspective, the metaphor is not seen as a linguistic phenomenon, but as a thought process; not being an exclusive attribute of verbal language, metaphor can manifest itself in nonverbal language, which is clearly the case with advertising. With its own organization, the message of advertising imposes, in lines and between lines, ideologies and values; presents a speech you wish to persuade and seduce. To achieve its communicative purpose, it makes use of numerous resources and strategies, being the metaphor one of the most effective.

Metaphor, as this research understands it, reveals our conceptualization of the world and is present in everyday discourses to philosophical and scientific discourses. It is omnipresent in our communications, reflecting the ideology of a particular group of people, which attests to its cultural character and is therefore rooted in social practices and discourses; It is a mental and abstract representation that takes place not only in verbal language but also in many other areas of human experience, since the system that governs our way of experiencing the world, our way of thinking and acting is metaphorical.

## **2. Theoretical assumptions**

### **2.1 Cognitive perspective of metaphor: Theory of conceptual metaphor**

In 1980, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson presented a new paradigm in the work entitled “Metaphors We Live By,” translated as “Metáforas da vida cotidiana” (2002). In this new paradigm the metaphor ceases to have the status of a simple figure of language and has its cognitive value recognized.

The new paradigm proposed by Lakoff and Johnson presents metaphor as a central phenomenon in language and thought, being present in all types of language, including scientific language, which was considered impossible within the logical-positivist current. For them, we understand the world, culture, and ourselves through metaphors, for beyond emotional concepts such as love or anger, basic concepts such as time, quantity, etc., are understood metaphorically. The central thesis of this theory is that metaphors exist in our mind, and most abstract concepts are metaphorical. The language is secondary. Thought and reason are superior to language.

According to Sardinha (2007), the main concepts of this theory are:

- Conceptual metaphor: a way of conceptualizing something in the world. Example: GOOD IS UP.
- Metaphorical expression: linguistic expression that shows a conceptual metaphor. Example: He got high marks. It is an expression that comes from the conceptual metaphor: GOOD IS UP.
- Domain: related to people’s knowledge and experience. There are two types of domain: source and target. The source domain

is the concrete domain from which we conceptualize something metaphorically. The target domain is abstract, that is, the one we wish to conceptualize. “The same source domain can serve multiple target domains” (SARDINHA, 2007, p.31).

- Mappings: the relationships established between domains.
- Splits: the various inferences that can be made based on a conceptual metaphor.

The types of conceptual metaphors are:

- Structural: those that are products of complex mappings.  
Example: TIME IS MONEY.  
Don't waste any more time on this subject.  
I can't invest more time in this project.
- Orientational: These are those that give a concept a spatial orientation.  
Example: GOOD IS AHEAD.  
He is ahead of business.  
We have to move on.
- Ontological: are those that make abstract concepts concrete, but without establishing mappings. This embodiment manifests itself in terms of an entity (something countable).  
Example: TIME IS A CONTAINER.  
I'm back in three days.  
You finished the job in a short time.
- Personification: These are ontological metaphors whose entity must necessarily be a person.  
Example: A THEORY IS A PERSON.  
The theory says that...
- Primary: Metaphors related to physical aspects of the human body, present in many cultures.  
Example: INTIMACY IS NEARBY.

We can also highlight other important aspects of this theory. The theory of conceptual metaphor postulates that there are no absolute truths, because metaphors are cultural, that is, a reflection of the ideology of a certain group of people built on a given culture. Even basic metaphors,

such as primary and orientational metaphors, may differ from one culture to another. Another important factor, which we have already highlighted above, is that metaphor is a mental and abstract representation that materializes in speech and writing through metaphorical expressions. Conceptual metaphors are still conventional, that is, unconscious, for they are so pervaded in our culture that we do not realize our use of them.

According to Kövecses (2002) the conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains where one domain is understood in terms of another. This understanding of one domain in terms of another involves a series of mappings (matches) between the target domain and the source domain. These mappings derive from a central mapping, which is responsible for the main meaning of source domains and target domains. About the source and target domains, Kövecses (2002) states that each source domain is designed to fulfill a specific function in characterizing multiple target domains, that is, each source domain is associated with a particular meaning that is mapped toward a target domain. This meaning is conventionally fixed and accepted within the discourse of a particular linguistic community. The target domain receives the main meaning of the source domain. Usually, the source domain is an intense situation, such as actions, events, or states.

Another important point to note is that conceptual metaphors can be realized not only in verbal language, but in many other areas of human experience, after all, the system that governs our way of experiencing the world, our way of life, thinking and acting is metaphorical. Kövecses (2002) calls these manifestations achievements of conceptual metaphors. Some examples of these achievements are:

- Drawings, paintings, sculptures and constructions: According to Kövecses (2002), children often make drawings where it is possible to perceive an embodied conceptual metaphor. A common metaphor made by children is INANIMATED OBJECTS ARE PEOPLE.
- Advertisements: The main manifestation of conceptual metaphors is in advertisements. Part of the selling power of an advertisement depends on the effective choice of a conceptual metaphor that the photo and / or words used in the advertisement evoke in people. An appropriately selected metaphor can positively affect the disclosure of a particular product. Kövecses (2007) cites as an example of the metaphor: ITEMS FOR SELLING ARE PEOPLE, the way

washing machines are generally presented in advertisements: as good friends, which is a kind of personification. The metaphor A WASHING MACHINE IS A FRIEND evokes in people the same attitudes and feelings they have with their good friends.

- Foreign policy: The use of conceptual metaphors is very common in politics. According to Kövecses (2002), in American politics, for example, both political thought and its discourse are, in most cases, structured by the following metaphors: Politics is War, Politics is Negotiation, Society is a Person, Society is a Person and PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS A RACE.

As we have stated, many conceptual metaphors correlate with human experiences. However, correlations are not necessarily similarities, as the traditional view of metaphor explained. According to Kövecses (2002), the selection of source domains depends on human factors that reflect non-objective, non-literal and non-pre-existing similarities between a source domain and a target domain. This process is called the experiential basis of the metaphor or motivation of the conceptual metaphor. Thus, conceptual metaphors can be motivated but not predicted, as they were in the traditional view of metaphor.

We consider that the theory of conceptual metaphor has brought great innovations to the study of metaphor, mainly because it includes the importance of context, culture and, above all, of cognition, in the understanding of metaphorical expressions. Everyday language often uses metaphorical expressions that are understood as signs of the thinking of a person who often uses metaphors unconsciously, after all, this process is inherent in his own thinking. Thus, the analysis of metaphorical expressions present in everyday discourse allows us to realize that we rely on models of the concrete world to conceptualize abstract phenomena and that the linguistic metaphor is only realized because there are metaphors in our conceptual system, which demonstrates the centrality of these metaphors in everyday life and their influence on the way we think and act in the world.

Kövecses (2002) also makes an important contribution to the theory of conceptual metaphor when considering conceptual metonymy. According to him, metonymy, like metaphor, also has a conceptual nature, and conceptual metonymies are revealed by metonymic linguistic expressions. Lakoff and Johnson (2002) understand metaphor and metonymy as ways of conceptualizing our experiences and they state

that both have a cognitive mapping, although in different levels. In metaphor, there is a mapping between two domains: the target and the source domain. In metonymy, instead, there is a mapping in the same domain, among items of this domain.

According to Kövecses (2002), some metaphorical relationships may be motivated by metonymies such as EFFECT by the CAUSE or metonymies such as The WHOLE by the PART. Kövecses (2002, p. 157) justifies this statement by presenting the following example: in the metaphor ANGER IS HEAT the source domain of HEAT comes from the metonymic relationship EFFECT BY CAUSE. The body heat produced by anger can be viewed as a metonymy. Thus, we have the following conceptualization: ANGER produces BODY HEAT (metonymy); BODY HEAT becomes HEAT (generalization); HEAT is used to understand ANGER (metaphor).

Espíndola (2011) cites as examples of metaphor and metonymy, based on Lakoff and Johnson's (2002) conception, the following situation: if we use the linguistic expression "I read Lakoff and Johnson" meaning that I read the book of these two authors, it is instaurated a situation in which this linguistic expression updates the metonymy AUTHOR BY THE WORK, with the mapping in the same domain as there is a relation between the author and his work. Thus, a linguistic element (author) is used to refer to another linguistic element (work) from the same domain. On the other hand, when we use the expression "The trip of life", which updates the conceptual metaphor "LIFE IS A TRIP", we are approaching life (target domain) by using the cognitive mapping of some aspects of the source domain (trip).

According to Kövecses (2002), studying metonymy becomes important within the study of metaphor by the fact that many conceptual metaphors have a metonymic base, as we saw above. However, metaphor and metonymy differ in several respects, such as: metonymy is based on proximity, while metaphor is based on similarity; metonymy involves a single domain while metaphor involves two distant domains; while metonymy is widely used to provide mental access to a single target with a single domain, metaphor is used to understand a complete system of entities in terms of another system. Lakoff and Johnson (2002) state that metonymy is especially similar to metaphor when considering both as a matter of language and not only as a poetic or rhetorical feature.

## 2.2 Metaphor and metonymy in advertisements

For Ungerer (2003), a discursive genre where it is possible to perceive the interaction between metaphors and metonymies is the advertisement. In advertising, advertised products are usually metonymically represented by an image or brand of the product itself. Imperative verbs are often used to convince or induce the consumer to purchase the product.

In advertising the metaphor can be identified by the link between the product domain and other domains. More sophisticated and up-to-date advertisements, while not using imperative verbs to persuade consumers and are more indirect, also fulfill the purpose of the discursive genre of selling the advertised product, making links between domains established by the images in the advertisements. According to Ungerer (2003), this link between the product and the provocation of consumer desire is established by what he calls “grasping metonymy”.

The grasping metonymy is related to DESIRE, which is a basic emotion of the human being. The movement of capturing (grasping), in this sense, is a physiological movement that accompanies the DESIRE, that is, when something is desired, especially by children, the automatic movement of grasping or putting the hand on the desired object happens, as if with this gesture it would be possible to capture it and carry out that desire. Ungerer (2003) states that this action of capturing can be placed in the set of psychological manifestations of emotions. Thus, grasping metonymy can be considered a physiological metonymy, broadening the concept of metonymy adopted by more traditional views.

Ungerer (2003) explains that DESIRE has an inherent potential action that is proposed as the last element of the AIDA form (Attention – Interest – Desire – Action). This formula is recommended to advertisers as a practical guide in creating advertisements, and it may also be used in their interpretation. Grasping metonymy is an essential component of advertising, but it is often implicit, expressed neither linguistically nor visually.

According to Ungerer (2003) this metonymy is linked to the value metaphor which is a metaphor capable of providing many advantages in terms of conceptual support. One of these advantages is the range of source domains it offers to target domain mappings, and these source domains are usually made up of positive aspects that can be naturally brought to the target domain without requiring any effort.

Value metaphor and grasping metonymy are the basis of advertising. In any advertisement the primary metonymy is: THE



DESIRED OBJECT FOR DESIRE. This metonymy becomes one of the elements of the value metaphor: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS A VALUABLE OBJECT, which summarizes all the metaphorical links established by a value metaphor. As stated by Ungerer (2003), the grasping metonymy, which represents our desire to take something, creates the need to justify this desire, and this justification lies in the value metaphor. Thus, the value metaphor is conceptually motivated by the grasping metonymy, which in turn makes the object in question attractive, thereby activating the grasping metonymy, even though this metonymy is not explicitly presented.

Velasco-Sacristán (2010) states that there are metaphors of different types in advertisements and presents the ideological metaphor as the most suitable for the analysis of interaction between metaphor and metonymy. According to the author, the ideological metaphor can be defined as one that considers social processes and determines interpretation, being found in various types of influential discourses, such as advertisement. There is a specific kind of ideological metaphor: the gender metaphor. Gender metaphors take place in speech in a verbal, nonverbal or multimodal manner, and can provide insights into discriminatory discourses against men and especially women, usually implicitly. Such metaphors can also give rise to sexist interpretations. They are used by propagandists to introduce a gender value system that often activates and reinforces negative 'sexist' values. In so doing, the advertiser does not abandon the interpretation process, having a degree of control over the reader / listener's interpretation and shifting to him/her the responsibility for interpreting the advertisement. Velasco-Sacristán (2010), researchers argue that the use of metaphor as disguise or concealment, especially to mislead or avoid responsibility for what is said in persuasive types of speech, may be an indicator of so-called 'implicit communication'.

Velasco-Sacristán (2010) and Ungerer (2003) share the idea that metaphor and metonymy are conceptual resources of extreme importance in the creation of advertisements. Both consider the value of grasping metonymy and present definitions of metaphors that are directly related to the context of advertising. Since the value metaphor is the base metaphor of all advertisement and ideological metaphors directly related to gender advertising, in our work we will consider the contribution of both researchers, establishing a relationship between gender metaphor and social representation of women.

### **2.3 Discourse, ideology and social representation**

Social organizations have always been maintained and established through the process of communication, because it is where knowledge and values are transmitted. The human being participates in these social organizations playing the role of an agent of the cultural communication process and building himself, and his own subjectivity.

Communicating, then, implies establishing a relationship between two interacting elements, making use of the different existing languages: verbal and nonverbal. Verbal and nonverbal languages are marked by people's way of being and worldview. Thus, we can say that language is then the product of ideology.

Fiorin (2007) states that reflection on language is a complex process, since language should be considered a social institution through which ideologies circulate, as well as being the most effective mediation instrument between people and nature and among people themselves. It is through discourse that speakers express their thoughts and act upon the world. According to Fiorin (2007), discourse is related to linguistic elements while speech is the externalization of discourse. More than the junction of many words, discourse is structured, consisting of syntax and semantics.

According to Fiorin (2007), syntax is more autonomous with respect to social formations, unlike semantics, which is more dependent on social factors. Thus, it can be said that "there is in the discourse the field of conscious manipulation and that of unconscious determination" (FIORIN, 2007, p. 18). Syntax is then part of the field of conscious manipulation, whereas semantics is part of the field of unconscious determination, that is, the ideological determination.

The concept of ideology is extremely important in the work of Bakhtin and his Circle. According to Miotelo (2008), Bakhtin goes against the perspective defended by Marxists, linguists, psychologists and theorists in general, who address ideology in a mechanistic, subjective, idealistic way. For him, ideology is a living and dialogical event that lives not only in the individual consciousness of men but is built on concreteness. He builds a conception of ideology that brings the official ideology closer to the ideology of everyday life. The official ideology is that considered by Marx as false consciousness, because it conceals social reality. Already the ideology of everyday life is born in chance, in social proximity, and is relatively unstable. For Bakhtin and his Circle, both ideologies will form a complete and unique ideological context, in a dialectical and concrete relation.

Bakhtin also states that all language is made up of signs and every sign is ideological because it reflects the worldview of a particular person or social group, and it is a concrete part of reality. For him, the sign is ideological because it has dual materiality, that is, it is physical-material and socio-historical at the same time. The word functions as an agent and a social memory; it is a neutral sign that can fulfill any kind of ideological function. Thus, Miotello (2008, p. 171) states that ideology, for Bakhtin, could be characterized “as the expression, organization and regulation of the historical-material relations of men”.<sup>1</sup>

According to Van Dijk (2003), ideological discourse has a general basic strategy that is nothing more than a polarization that applies semantically by contrast, that is, discourse tends to speak of our positive and negative aspects of others, making use of style figures and coherence to make this approach possible. Therefore, it is always necessary to examine the meanings that the figures of language organize in order to know their ideological implications. And here lays the focus of the present paper: on the use and function of metaphors.

Still considering this ideological principle, another important factor to note is the way information is presented: the positive information regarding us, the group itself, tends to be topicalized and explicit, as well as the negative aspects of the other group, while negative information relating to our group or positive information related to the other group tends to be implicit, not topicalized, hidden and diffuse. Other aspects must also be considered in the marking and emphasis of ideological meanings, such as accentuation, intonation and nonverbal languages, in addition to the general schematic forms of discourse, such as narrative or argumentative structures.

Van Dijk (2003) recalls that ideologies influence what and how we say something, but we also modify them with the information we receive all the time. The social function of ideologies is to control and coordinate the social practices of a group, forming the basis of the social representations of that group. They operate indirectly in the production and composition of discourse, “first through group attitudes and knowledge in the face of special social domains, and then through

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<sup>1</sup> In the citation, the word “men” was used to refer to humanity as a generic term that considers both women and men as human beings part of a society. In our point of view, we consider the use of this generic term as a lexical choice that brings a gender ideology. Thus, we optioned to use the term “people” to refer to humanity.

the group members' individual discourses through mental models of social events and situations" (VAN DIJK, 2003, p. 77).

Van Dijk (2003, p. 80) states that "discourse is the most important social practice, the only one that expresses itself directly and, therefore, has the capacity to disseminate ideologies. A theory of ideology without a theory of discourse is incomplete."

In the language approach proposed in this paper we will adopt the definitions of ideology proposed by Van Dijk and Bakhtin, since both have points in common. Van Dijk, like Bakhtin, argues that ideology is embodied in discourse. Both propose a study of ideologies that consider discourse, cognition and society, with ideology having a socio-historical and physical-material existence at the same time.

Since discourse is a social practice that disseminates ideologies, we can say that it is also responsible for disseminating and constructing social representations that guide the way we act in the world.

According to Jodelet (2001, p. 23), social representation "is a form of knowledge, socially elaborated and shared, with a practical objective, that contributes to the construction of a common reality to a social group". For the author, social representation is practical knowledge.

Social representations are present in speeches and are brought through mediatic words and images, "crystallized in conduct and material and spatial organizations" (JODELET, 2001, p. 18). Institutional organizations and the media interfere with the making of representations, influencing and even manipulating society at large. Representations rely on varying values and are linked to more complex systems of thought (ideological, cultural or scientific) as well as to the particular and affective experience of individuals. They give specific definitions to the objects they represent, and these definitions are those that will be shared by the members of the same group, thus, creating a vision that will guide daily actions and exchanges within that group and may meet the vision of other groups. These are the functions and social dynamics of representations.

Moscovici (2005) states that discourse is the main vector of social representations, because it is through it that the phenomenon of social representations is perceived and elaborated. According to him, there are no social representations without language, just as there is no society without social representations. Language is the highest way to modulate human adventures.

Thinking about women's representation nowadays we can say that it has changed a lot, considering women's role and representations in the last centuries. In the 21s, women have conquered more space and respect in society, occupying high professional positions and playing different roles. However, there is still prejudice against them and social representations people build can be influenced by sexist stereotypes. In addition, the media also plays a fundamental role in building women's representations. What was done, in the 20s, through cinema, is now done through advertisements, which influences people's subjectivity. So, according to Moreno (2008, p. 30), "women are being subtly and effectively colonized. Not by force, nor with repression, but with the production of this infinity of images that seduce, occupy and shape our imagination".

In women's magazines we see pages and pages approaching beauty, diet and fashion, whose purpose is to attract the reader and, at the same time, justify the advertisements for cosmetics and the various products advertised for the production and maintenance of beauty. The products are always advertised by beautiful and famous women, which gives credibility to the product and arouses the desire to identify the woman-consumer with the ideal woman accepted by society.

Moita Lopes (2003, p. 19) points out that "all discourse comes from someone who has his specific identity marks that locate him in social life and that position him in the discourse in a unique way as well as his interlocutors". Thus, the social identity of each person is defined in and by the speeches in which he/she is inserted or in which he participates, being built on discursive practices. Vieira (2005, p. 235) affirms that "the feminine identity is a social product and a reflection of the look of the other", that is, the identity of the woman is not only constituted of the image that she makes of herself, but it is also constituted in the image that — other women have of her. After all, as Vieira (2005, p. 235) explains, "identity is socially constructed by discursive practices, whose discourse is the product of the culture that built it". Moreno (2008, p.45) then suggests the following social representation for the current woman:

The woman portrayed in the media has to be married or aspire to marriage, have children or aspire to motherhood, be or look young, be vain, cared for. Be white, heterosexual, monogamous, faithful, behaved, decide more with emotion than with reason, be sensitive and delicate, be more concerned with taking care of others than with any other issue, even if you work and have great professional responsibilities or policies.

The worst result of all this is that today we have thousands of unhappy and low self-esteem Brazilian women, who do everything to become beautiful and seductive, buying products, acquiring attitudes and appearances; products and models where the submission of women is understood and implicitly recommended. Moreno (2008) states that today we live in a potentially abundant society, due to technological advances and the phenomenon of globalization. However, this society privileged by technology presents serious aggravating factors, such as inequality and social exclusion. If the person does not fit the molds and parameters proposed by this modern society, he/she finds himself/herself excluded, devalued.

The advertising industry is effective, powerful; assisted by artists and researchers at the service of consumer society. It creates a scenario that sells relief and happiness. It pasteurizes tastes, destroying cultures and diversity. It is not an easy task to resist its calls...

### **3. Corpus analysis**

For the analysis, we work with the concept of conceptual metaphor, theorized by Lakoff and Johnson (2002), and re-studied by other researchers, notably Kövecses (2002). In addition, we focus on the particular character of advertising metaphors and on issues of value and gender, according to Ungerer (2003) and Velasco-Sacristán (2010).

Considering that metaphor is part of a mental process that precedes linguistic or visual manifestation, being inherently conceptual; considering also that the relationship between a source domain and a target domain occurs in a systematic mapping correlation, Santibáñez (2009), based on Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Kövecses (2002), proposes a basic methodological model to distinguish how mapping works in the linguistic expressions of conceptual metaphors. We adopted this model for the analysis of advertisements, warning that, in our case, we work mainly with nonverbal metaphors, often supported by linguistic material. The author's model has six steps:

- (1) obtaining language expressions;
- (2) distinction of conceptual domains;
- (3) elaboration of the conceptual metaphor;
- (4) description of the situational logic of the source domain;
- (5) characterization of source domain aspects;
- (6) matching or mapping between domains.

The first three steps encompass the steps of identifying the conceptual metaphor; the last three, their interpretation. Step (4) concerns the observable characteristics of the source in the linguistic or visual occurrence of the analyzed object; step (5) covers the basic characteristics of the source domain among possible others; step (6), the last one is perhaps the most important, because it seeks to understand how the conceptual metaphor is obtained and to map this interpretation between the domains.

Our analysis model will contain only steps (2) – (5), which we renumbered because, in advertising, metaphors are more often expressed visually than linguistically. Eventually, we will focus on metaphorical linguistic expressions.

Since there is the presence of more than one metaphor in advertisements, we will raise only the central metaphor present in pictorial language, and, if appropriate, also examine the secondary metaphor (s) manifested in verbal language. Since these are advertisements for women's magazines that, according to our hypothesis, have gender metaphors, we will observe the presence or absence of such metaphors. Finally, we will interpret the metaphors in relation to social representation of women.

We also consider that all advertisements always have a metaphor and a base metonymy, which are the value metaphor and the grasping metonymy, as proposed by Ungerer (2003). According to the author, all metaphorical links in advertising can be subsumed by:

- a) Value metaphor: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS A VALUABLE OBJECT;
- b) Grasping metonymy: GRASP THE DESIRED OBJECT BY DESIRE.

It is important to state, before presenting the analysis of the advertisements, that this article is part of our Master's thesis, in which we analyzed six advertisements taken from three different Brazilian women's magazine: *Nova*, *Marie Claire* and *Claudia*. Here we presented three from these six advertisements analyzed in the dissertation and a new one that was not taken from these magazines but is an advertisement produced for women in the current year. By presenting these four analyzes we intend to approach how the woman is represented in society, considering the advertisement genre and its social role and the use of conceptual metaphor and metonymy as linguistic resources.

In such a vast universe of women's magazines, we chose *Cláudia* magazine for its long standing in the market and for having been a

pioneer in the women's press; *Nova* magazine for including, among other themes common to most magazines, controversial themes related to women's behavior, especially in the field of sexuality, and *Marie Claire* for bringing, through her slogan: "Elegant is to be smart", a proposal that, at first view, tries to subvert the standard concept that prevails in most women's magazines. However, we can say that what happens is that *Marie Claire* presents structure and themes that are very common to any women's magazine, maintaining a very similar relationship with the other magazines in terms of the subjects covered (with emphasis on beauty, health, consumption); the slogan "Elegant is being smart" is legitimized only by interviews and reports.

Thus, we can point out some similarities among the magazines:

- The three magazines present on their covers perfect and, generally, famous women, to attract the attention of men, as an object of desire, but mainly to hold the attention of women, who seek to match the image they see on the cover and, thus, become the object of men's desire and be envied by many other women.
- The predominant profile, both in the covers and in the advertisements, is white women, with light eyes and blond hair, if not blond, at least straight hair, in the age group ranging from 25 to 35 years old, heterosexual, beautiful, sensual, thin, famous, contemporary, financially successful and happy.
- All transmit the ideologies of consumption, offering advice through "booklets" or "manuals" that guide the behavior regarding beauty, sexual and professional success, among others.
- The three magazines contain, in general, advertisements for fashion, perfumery, shampoos and conditioners, creams in general, absorbents and deodorants, cars, watches and jewelry, nail polish, clothes and lingerie, cell phones, makeup, shoes and bags and sometimes, food products and household appliances. These advertisements are rooted in values such as happiness, love, youth, fame, individualism, beauty and sensuality. Most advertisements demonstrate that there is no happiness out of comfort, prompting the reader to consume.

However, we can also point out some divergent points:



- Although the three magazines are, in general, aimed at women in today's society, in specific terms they are aimed at different women, for example, *Nova* magazine is more focused on single women, who work outside the home and worry a lot with their professional life and sexuality. *Claudia* magazine is more focused on adult women, usually married, as it emphasizes issues such as family, children and home. *Marie Claire* magazine is more comprehensive and is aimed at women – single or married – with a certain financial stability, which allows for certain luxuries, such as culinary refinements, designer clothes and trips abroad.
- Since these magazines are aimed at different women, often the advertisements shown in one and the other are different. And the difference is not so much in the product disclosed itself, but in the way it is disclosed. The lingerie advertisements in *Nova*, for example, are much more daring than in *Claudia* and *Marie Claire*.

Thus, we can conclude that these three magazines have converging and diverging features. What they have in common is the fact that they all try to convince the reader to seek and assume the image of the ideal woman that is proposed to her. The different ideologies are directly related to the magazine's target audience, as mentioned above. *Nova* magazine, for being aimed, in general, at young and single women, brings the ideology of free women. And this freedom is directly related to sex, which is the central concern of women's lives. *Claudia* and *Marie Claire*, while also addressing issues related to sex, do so in a more subtle way, for an older woman, who is more mature or simply, more discreet. *Claudia* brings the ideology of women realized personally and professionally. And that personal side implies beauty, love, happiness and family, an aspect that is not focused on *Nova*. As for *Marie Claire*, it has characteristics and target audience similar to *Claudia*, bringing, however, some reports on current topics, which are of general interest. It brings the ideology of a woman being personally and professionally fulfilled, as in *Claudia*. However, this woman belongs to a high social class, and is an elegant and intellectual woman. This can be confirmed in detail by means of first quality paper, excellent photos, advertisements for imported products and brands, cultured language and the absence of invasion of artists' privacy. But what we see is that, in general, magazines tend to be restricted to fashion, beauty, behavior and sex.

These common and different characteristics from the magazines are also reflected in advertisements. Although it is not uncommon to find the same advertisements in the analyzed magazines, there is a tendency for product diversity. For example, it is unlikely that an advertisement involving “family” nucleus will be found in *Nova*. In addition, we also noticed a different treatment when presenting the same product depending on the magazine. For example, a food product advertisement in *Nova* may be linked to sensuality, while in *Claudia* it is associated with the health of family and children.

### ADVERTISEMENT 1

TV LCD 32"147"107" LG60F8

**ELA É ATRAENTE.**

A nova Scarlet LG 60 é bonita de frente, de costas, por dentro e por fora. Afinal, foi projetada para surpreender você em todos os sentidos. Ela vem com máxima resolução de imagem Full HD, alto-falante invisível, desenvolvido pelo projetista Mark Levinson, e auto-ajuste de imagem, que se adapta à luz do ambiente, reduzindo o consumo de energia. E tudo isso com a menor espessura do mercado. Ou seja, a união perfeita entre beleza e conteúdo. Visite a loja mais próxima e confira a Scarlet LG 60.

Ou acesse o site [www.lg.com.br/scarlet](http://www.lg.com.br/scarlet).

**scarlet**

**LG**  
Life's Good

Para obter a máxima qualidade de imagem sem distorção é necessário usar digital de alta qualidade em formato widescreen. O uso de equipamentos em potência inferior ao do fabricante e o uso inadequado pode prejudicar a imagem. O mesmo vale para a ilustrativa. SAC: 0800 5410 para capitais e regiões metropolitanas e 0800 787 5454 para outras localidades.

Marie Claire Magazine, Oct. 2008.

### 1 CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR: SCARLET LG 60 TV IS A WOMAN

Conceptual domains	Situational logic of the source domain	Aspectual characterization of the source domain for basic properties
<p><b>Scarlet LG 60 TV</b> (target)</p> <p><b>Woman</b> (source)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the prettier a woman, the more attractive she is;</li> <li>• the more attractive a woman, the more desirable she is;</li> <li>• the thinner a woman, the prettier she is;</li> <li>• the desirable woman is beautiful from every angle;</li> <li>• the desirable woman is beautiful inside and out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman is beauty;</li> <li>• Woman is attraction;</li> <li>• Woman is desire;</li> <li>• Woman is thin;</li> <li>• Woman is central;</li> <li>• Woman is an admiration object.</li> </ul>

Mapping between the two domains
<p>(a) Just as a beautiful woman from every angle attracts and arouses men’s desire, the Scarlet LG 60 TV, being beautiful from every angle, attracts and arouses consumers’ desire.</p> <p>(b) Just as a beautiful woman inside and out is an ideal woman, the Scarlet LG 60 TV is the ideal and perfect TV.</p>

### 2 GENRE METAPHOR

- WOMAN IS A PERSON IN THE FOREGROUND.
- PHYSICAL APPEARANCE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE WOMEN EXERT ON MEN.
- WOMAN IS A SEXUAL OBJECT THAT CAN BE OWNED.

### 3 VALUE METAPHOR: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS A BEAUTIFUL OBJECT

This metaphorical combination activates the grasping metonymy:  
**SCARLET TV BY DESIRE.**

By making use of women’s image, the advertiser uses features such as beauty, charm and attractiveness to configure the identity of the product, the TV set. They relate to the stereotype of the innovative woman, who is above all seductive. Visually, the woman is in focus and surrounded by men, as if with her seductive power attracting the attention

and eyes of the opposite sex. Thus, like TV, which is presented in five angles, which practically exhausts the possibilities of vision, the woman is also observed from front and back by the two male figures that surround her. Choosing to feature women prominently in advertising is justified for two reasons: for the male audience it calls their attention because it shows how desirable and beautiful a woman is as a quality TV, with the same properties, what seems to be the intention of the propagandist, who seeks to lead the consumer to do such mapping; for the female audience, it draws attention by presenting a beautiful, desirable woman who occupies a central position, exercising her power of seduction.

The slogan SHE IS ATTRACTIVE brings a purposeful ambiguity – present in the pronoun “she” – in which both woman and TV can (and should) have the characteristic of being attractive. The attractiveness of women and TV is enhanced by the red color of the dress, the TV and the slogan letters and TV name, which serves as an identifying appeal as foreseen in the metaphor. As Dondis (2007, p. 64) states, “red means danger, love, warmth and life”. Red catches the reader’s eye, mesmerizes him, highlights the most important thing in advertising.

#### ADVERTISEMENT 2



*Nova Magazine*, Dec. 2008.

### 1 CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR: THE SEX TOYS ACCESSORIES ARE A DOMINATING WOMAN

Conceptual domains	Situational logic of the source domain	Aspectual characterization of the source domain for basic properties
<p><b>Sex Toys accessories</b> (target)</p> <p><b>Woman</b> (source)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sensual woman is a dominating woman;</li> <li>• A dominating woman subdues the man;</li> <li>• A dominating woman plays the role of police;</li> <li>• A sensual and dominating woman makes your sexual fantasies come true;</li> <li>• A woman who fulfills your sexual fantasies wears accessories for doing it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman is desire;</li> <li>• Woman is sexual fantasy;</li> <li>• Woman is domination.</li> </ul>

<b>Mapping between the two domains</b>
<p>Just as in a relationship between police (woman) and thief (man) the dominator is the one who uses strategies, in a sexual relation the dominator is the woman (police) who wears sexual accessories.</p>

### 2 GENRE METAPHOR

- WOMAN IS A PERSON IN THE FOREGROUND.
- WOMAN IS AN ATTRACTIVE AND DOMINATING OBJECT.

### 3 VALUE METAPHOR: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS AN EXOTIC AND SENSUAL OBJECT

This metaphorical combination activates the grasping metonymy:  
THE SEX TOYS ACCESSORIES BY DESIRE.

In this advertisement, the woman is attractive, provocative and sensual, only exalted by her body. The extreme appreciation of physical characteristics, the search for the perfect body and sensuality are also characteristics of the current woman. The advertisement shows how women can dominate the situation, that is, the sexual relationship, if they wear the advertised product.

The women's, identities are negated as evidenced by the erasure of her face; buttocks, arm and legs are the focus. She is an object that can bring pleasure to men, but, first of all, it gives pleasure to herself through sexual fantasies, embodied in police and thief "jokes". In this scenario, the woman plays the role of the police: standing with her legs slightly apart in a safe position, completely dominating the scene, she has the tools of domination, such as whip and handcuffs, but mainly her body. The man has the role of thief, since he is imprisoned, totally dominated by the handcuffs that bind him to the bed, playing the role of the one who is subdued. The text "*Police and thief. You grow up. The games continue*" establishes a relationship with the name of the online store "Sex Toys", in colorful letters, format and layout that refer to children's universe, in a clear dialogue with "the games", although they are sexual games. In this regard, it should be emphasized that the verb "play" is used in Brazil also to mean "*to practice copulation or to have another kind of libidinous relationship*" (cf. HOUAISS, electronic document) and the man, the accessories and the bed, near the dim light of the room, reinforce the sensuality, because it highlights mainly the semi-naked bodies, which attract the reader's eye. The computer, which also gets some prominence for visibility, suggests modernity and perhaps internet-loving relationships; in a way, it invites the reader to access the store's website, whose address appears on the bottom right, with the advantage of "*being the store closest to your bed*".

### ADVERTISEMENT 3

The advertisement features a young girl with curly hair and green bows, smiling and holding two chicken nuggets. In front of her is a white plate filled with several golden-brown chicken nuggets. To the right, there is a promotional text in Portuguese: "Chikenitos apresenta a linha Superitos. Um jeito gostoso e nutritivo de alimentar o seu super-herói." Below this text is the Chikenitos logo and a small paragraph: "50% proteína saborosa. Fácil de preparar e do tamanho ideal, além de manterem a linha Superitos com sabor incrível. Forno e panela. Experimente. Assim Superitos com ele vive como esse herói em levar mais diversão para o seu filho." At the bottom, there are several boxes of Superitos products, including "Salsinha", "Molho de Alho", "Molho de Tomate", "Kibitos", "Pizzas", and "Chikenitos Original". A small cartoon dog is also visible near the product boxes.

Revista *Claudia*, July 2009.

### 1 CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR: THE SUPERITOS LINE IS A DEDICATED MOTHER

Conceptual domains	Situational logic of the source domain	Aspectual characterization of the source domain for basic properties
<p><b>Superitos line</b> (target)</p> <p><b>Mother</b> (source)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good mother is dedicated to her children;</li> <li>• The more a mother is dedicated to her children, the better the children are;</li> <li>• A dedicated mother provides her children with healthy food;</li> <li>• A dedicated mother makes her children happy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mother knows her children’s needs;</li> <li>• A mother is attentive to her children’s needs;</li> <li>• A mother is worried about feeding her children well;</li> <li>• A mother is worried about the quality of the food her children eat.</li> </ul>

Mapping between the two domains
<p>(a) Just as a good mother is dedicated to her children, Superitos is a food aimed at children;</p> <p>(b) Just as dedicated mother seeks to offer her children nutritious food, Superitos offer children a nutritious food option;</p> <p>(c) Just as a dedicated mother makes her children happy, Superitos makes children happy because they are funny.</p>

### 2 GENRE METAPHOR

Although the advertisement does not seem to present any gender metaphor, due to the fact that it brings the image of a child, we can affirm that there is a sexist discourse that underlies it, where there is prevalence of the male gender. There is a prejudice against the social representation of women as the only responsible for the care of the children.

### 3 VALUE METAPHOR: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS A GOOD OBJECT

This metaphorical combination activates the grasping metonymy:  
 SUPERITOS BY THE DESIRE

In this advertisement, the expressions “your superhero” and “your son” insert the woman-mother into the context by means of the possessive pronoun; it is this woman that the message is aimed at. It is a case in which the (visual) image of the woman is absent, although she keeps present by indirect means.

Taking two pages, the advertisement presents a significantly larger figure in the first, compared to the images in the second. It is a girl, between 4 and 6 years old, with healthy and happy appearance, confirming the text on the next page. The shiny skin, healthy teeth, pink mouth, the girl's balanced weight reveal a healthy being; added to this is the air of happiness that dominates her face, manifested by the look and open smile. In the foreground and making a semicircle, Superitos stands out crisp and golden, dominating the scene and the girl's two hands. The scene leads the reader to identify the food with the physical and emotional state of the character. An interesting piece of information is the other foods: rice, beans (the base of the Brazilian menu) and tomatoes, natural foods, which Superitos approach, valuing this aspect of the product, naturalness, an increasingly strong value in the discourse of health professionals. Thus, although industrialized, the product gains this positive trait. It is not mentioned, for example, that this food can be fried or contains preservatives, which would contradict the positive image that one wants to build. This obscuration of negative aspects is one of the characteristic features of advertisements. After all, to seduce the consumer – function of an advertisement – to alert to the negative points of a product would be a disastrous strategy.

On the second page, the images also validate the text, as the figures represent children linked to sports and characters from the children's world. Dialoging with the expression "superhero", the images of the boys present in their clothes an S inserted in a red circle, in a clear allusion to the clothes of Superman, an American character from the 1940s, associated with positive values, such as strength, justice, ethics, among others. Just like Superman, all the characters that are shown in the product packing can fly and for this, they use, respectively, boots, backpack, skates and snowboard. They are also superheroes. And everyone, like the girl in the photo, smiles healthily. In this way, an identification is built with the values HEALTH and HAPPINESS, which the product provides. It is this game of seduction and convincing that should lead the mother reader to purchase the product, a game manifested in the basic conceptual metaphor as presented above.



**ADVERTISEMENT 4**



Available at: [www.instagram.com/dakotacalçados](http://www.instagram.com/dakotacalçados). Access on: Jan. 30, 2020.

**1 CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR: DAKOTA SHOES ARE A WOMAN**

Conceptual domains	Situational logic of the source domain	Aspectual characterization of the source domain for basic properties
<p><b>Dakota Shoes</b> (target)</p> <p><b>Woman</b> (source)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the prettier a woman, the happier she is;</li> <li>• the thinner a woman, the prettier she is;</li> <li>• the more famous a woman, the more desirable she is;</li> <li>• the more attractive a woman; the upper she is;</li> <li>• a desirable woman is beautiful and smiling;</li> <li>• a desirable woman is happy and famous.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman is beauty;</li> <li>• Woman is attraction;</li> <li>• Woman is desire;</li> <li>• Woman is thin;</li> <li>• Woman is famous;</li> <li>• Woman is smiling;</li> <li>• Woman is an admiration object.</li> </ul>

<b>Mapping between the two domains</b>
<p>(a) Just as a beautiful and famous woman is happy, Dakota shoes can make women feel themselves more beautiful and happier</p> <p>(b) Just as a beautiful, happy and famous woman is up, Dakota shoes are the ideal and perfect shoes, capable of letting women up.</p>

## 2 GENRE METAPHOR

- WOMAN IS A PERSON IN THE FOREGROUND.
- WOMAN IS AN ATTRACTIVE AND BEAUTIFUL OBJECT THAT CAN BE OWNED.

## 3 VALUE METAPHOR: THE DESIRED OBJECT IS A PRETTY OBJECT

This metaphorical combination activates the grasping metonymy:  
 DAKOTA SHOES BY DESIRE.

As we observed in the first analyzed advertisement, the image of a beautiful, famous and attractive woman is used as a tool to configure the identity of the product, the Dakota Shoes. They relate to the stereotype of the happy woman, who is seductive, smiling, beautiful, young, thin and famous, as if these were the essential features to achieve happiness. Visually, the woman is in focus, in a high position (on top of a building). Thus, just like high heel shoes can make a woman taller and consequently more elegant and seductive, being a famous and beautiful woman, by wearing these shoes, is something good (up) that will make women feel happy. This advertisement was mainly produced to call women's attention, as it discloses female shoes. For this, it brings the image of an "ideal" woman; a desirable woman that attracts (men, people in general) not only because of her physical characteristics but also because of her psychological ones. She is the kind of woman that all the women want to be: beautiful and happy. But, as expressed in the advertisement slogan BEING PRETTY IS BEING HAPPY, happiness is completely related to beauty – as if it was not possible to be happy without being beautiful – and Dakota Shoes are part of this beauty package.

The analysis of our corpus confirmed the hypothesis that advertising is a discursive genre rooted in conceptual metaphors that create and maintain social representations. As our corpus consists of three advertisements taken from women's magazines and another one produced for women – although not taken from women's magazines, we can state that the four selected advertisements have gender metaphors, which relate to women and their stereotypes. We also find, in all advertisements, value metaphors and grasping metonyms, which are directly related to the advertisement's purpose that is selling a product, presenting the

advertised product as an object of value and desire. The analysis was made considering the verbal and nonverbal language and the underlying metaphors of these languages having as main objective to offer a new reading proposal of advertisement discursive genre.

#### **4. Final considerations**

Based on the analysis, we can conclude that metaphors are powerful tools used by advertisers to promote their product and achieve the main purpose of an advertisement: selling the product. The use of these metaphors is often based on stereotypes, social representations, and ideologies of a particular target audience. Such features tend to persuade the reader to purchase the advertised product.

Regarding the analyzed corpus, we found common characteristics in the advertisements:

- Use of indirect seduction strategies to lead to consumption. As stated by Ungerer (2003), more sophisticated advertisements make use of this type of strategy, working more effectively than advertisements that use direct persuasion strategies.
- Regarding the discourse of the analyzed advertisements, we see that it creates and maintains social representations. Advertisements build the identity of an innovative and laid-back woman and add to her ideological values such as power, seduction, independence; but these values can only be fully achieved by consumption. Thus, a circular relationship is established: the product is intended for a woman with this profile, while, in order to achieve this profile, the woman must acquire the product. Ultimately, the product is the guarantee of female fulfillment, according to the constructed social representations.
- All advertisements, especially the first, second and fourth ones – point to a woman whose profile deviates from the traditional woman who incorporates values instituted by a patriarchal system, especially submission.
- In all of them, the woman appears in focus, in the foreground. However, in the first and second advertisements, the man appears in the background. Women dominate the situation

by attracting the attention and eyes of everyone around them, especially men. In the second advertisement, for example, sexual power is assumed by women, subverting a role that has traditionally been attributed to men. She wields the power of seduction, of sexuality. In this case there is a hyperbolization of female attributes.

Each advertisement has its own style, which is marked by the advertiser's verb-visual choices. However, all propose to the reader a responsive attitude, that is, the reader needs to understand the ambiguities and associations present in the advertisement. He/She is called to this metaphorical game to create a product image. The style of an advertisement reflects a world view, relating to the ideology that permeates the subject. In the case of women's magazines from which we draw our corpus, they reflect the time, context, and social representation of contemporary women. A time marked by the incessant pursuit of beauty and the perfect body, in a context of consumerism and sensuality, in which women turn more to care for themselves, their bodies, their personal and professional lives and their sexuality.

The theory of conceptual metaphor, proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2002), brought us great contributions. First, the understanding of metaphors within a cognitive paradigm that places them as present in thought and everyday life. Then, the realization of the importance of these metaphors in the understanding of abstract concepts and cultural and universal manifestations, since, being rooted in the cultural context of the participants of the interaction, they weave the threads that interweave individual, society, culture, language, cognition and emotion. Finally, this theory provides a reflection on the metaphor in its different contexts of use and its relation to the ideologies and representations of a given social group. Understanding metaphors within a cognitive paradigm is to realize their importance and existence in verbal and nonverbal contexts, in language and mind, in daily life and in various contexts where their use is necessary. Therefore, it is to understand our own nature and the social space in which we live.

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