

## **The Role of Context in the Travel of Metaphorical Idioms**

The goal of my dissertation is to determine the possible shifts in meaning of the selected metaphorical idioms in relation to their travel from one variety of English into other varieties. Most of the metaphorical idioms (i.e. idioms based on the systematic conceptual mapping of a source domain onto a target domain), which originated in one variety of English, have gradually been adopted by other varieties of English without any overt problems of understanding to speakers of these varieties. However, this assumption rests unchallenged only when the notion of context is restricted to the bodily/experiential context, which is considered to be relatively universal by the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). However, as the Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, in press) suggests, there are in fact more kinds of context (situational, discourse, conceptual-cognitive and bodily), which determine the production and understanding of metaphorical idioms. Thus, the production of metaphorical idioms might take place under totally different contextual conditions than their adoption into different varieties of the language. This, in turn, might stand behind the subtle changes in meaning and usage of metaphorical idioms in different varieties of English. The project takes advantage of the possibilities of language corpora (COCA, BNC and ICE), which are a powerful tool for cross-linguistic and cross-contextual comparisons.

Kövecses, Z. (in press). *Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the Flesh*. New York: Basic Books.