# Metaphor-based zeugmas in web-based promotional tourism discourse: A formal-functional study

Nazi Iritspukhova

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

nazi.iritspukhova110@hum.tsu.edu.ge

The study systematically examines the lexico-grammatical and pragmatic properties of metaphor-motivated zeugmatic constructions in a specialised discourse of web-based tourism promotion (Iritspukhova, 2023). Drawing on the English-language texts from the official destination websites of Georgia, the UK, and the USA, it employs Wmatrix (Rayson, 2008) for lexico-grammatical and semantic tagging, and adopts a mixed-method research design (Creswell and Clark 2017), combining quantitative data inspection and qualitative discourse analysis.

A broad operational definition of metaphor-based zeugma is proposed, informed by the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980): a construction is considered as a metaphor-based zeugma if a number of words (governed terms) are mediated by a lexical unit, or two semantically related words, (a governing term(s) that establishes a figurative meaning with at least one element while exhibiting a literal meaning related to the other members from the list, or sets up figurative meanings with all members albeit in varying degrees of figuration. The meanings of the governing term should be semantically distinct, albeit stand in a comparison relationship with each other.

Based on this operationalisation, four structural types of zeugmatic constructions were identified:

1. **Classic zeugma**, involving the governing element(s) and the governed elements (e.g., **feel** *the wild wind* <u>and</u> *unlimited freedom[1]*);
2. **Zeugma with signalling**, where the metaphorical governing element is reinforced by additional cues (*Our museums* <u>and</u> **even** *stories* are **encased with** gold);
3. **Zeugma with repetition of the governing term** in relation to each governed element (**get** as *close* to the action as possible <u>without</u> **getting** *wet)*;
4. **Dual-governing Zeugma**, featuring a juxtaposition of two semantically related governing elements (**Small** in *size* <u>but</u> **big** on *personality,* Wales...).

These findings challenge the traditional views of zeugma as a form of ellipsis (Lanham, 1991), demonstrating that governing elements actively engage in producing zeugmatic effects. The study also questions Tartakovsky and Shen's (2023) recent claim on the breach of syntactic iconicity in zeugmas, showing that new types of zeugmas (3 and 4) do not disrupt syntactic coherence while still producing zeugmatic effects. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that the

---

[1] **the governing term**, *the governed terms*, and <u>the connecting element/s</u>.

placement and repetition of governing elements influence the syntactic and semantic coherence of promotional discourse, revealing a lexico-grammatical strategy for enhancing rhetorical persuasion.

Lexicogrammatically, the study reveals systematic patterns in the selection of governing elements. Verbs emerged as the most common governing terms, aligning with general tendencies in zeugmas (Lussky 1984), and a distinctive role of verbs in promotional tourism discourse (Manca 2016). Conjoining/connecting elements also exhibit distinct functional roles: while the conjunction 'and' remains the most popular choice, 'but' is identified as a tactical way of obscuring negative realities of the promoted destination, while the construction 'as...as' enhances the descriptive quality of the message.

Functionally, metaphor-based zeugma emerges as a strategic rhetorical device, employed predominantly in the introduction and conclusion of the arguments to reinforce key messages (Koller 2003). The analysis further suggests that metaphor-based zeugma may serve as another manifestation of deliberate metaphor (Steen 2011, 2023) since it has the potential to increase the awareness of metaphorical links signalled by the pragmatic effect aroused by the construction.

By systematically analysing how zeugmatic constructions operate at the intersection of lexis and grammar, this study contributes to corpus-based lexico-grammatical research. The findings provide empirical evidence on the syntactic and semantic patterns of zeugma in a specialised discourse of tourism promotion (Dann, 1996; Gotti, 2006; Cappelli, 2006; Ruiz-Garrido and Saorin-Iborra, 2012), demonstrating how governing elements, conjunctions, and positional properties interact to shape meaning (Iritspukhova, in press).

**References**

Cappelli G. (2006) Sun, Sea, Sex and the Unspoilt Countryside. How the English Language Makes Tourists out of Readers, Pari Publishing, Pari (GR), Italy.

Creswell, John W., and Vicki, Clark L. 2017. Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Dann, Graham. M. S. 1996. The language of tourism: a sociolinguistic perspective. Oxford: Cabi International.

Gotti, Maurizio. 2006. The Language of Tourism as Specialized Discourse. In: Palusci, Oriana / Francesconi, Sabrina (eds.), Translating Tourism Linguistic / Cultural Representations, Trento, Editrice Università degli Studi di Trento: 15-34.

Iritspukhova, Nazi. (2023). "Metaphor and English Promotional Tourism Discourse: Systematic-narrative Hybrid Literature Review and Future Research Areas." In Anglica. An International Journal of English Studies 32 (2): 93-113.Iritspukhova, N. in press. Metaphor-Based Zeugmas in Web-Based Promotional Tourism Discourse: A Formal-Functional Study. Pragmatics.

Koller, Veronika. 2003. "Metaphor clusters, metaphor chains: Analyzing the multifunctionality of metaphor in text." *Metaphorik.de* 5: 115–134.

Lanham, Richard A. 1991. A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lussky, Ernest A. 1984. "Misapplications of the Term Zeugma." The Classical Journal 48(8): 285–290.

Manca, Elena. 2016. Persuasion in tourism discourse: Methodologies and models. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Rayson, P. (2008). Wmatrix: a web-based corpus processing environment, Computing Department, Lancaster University. http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/Wmatrix/.

Ruiz-Garrido, Miguel. F., and Saorín-Iborra, Ana. M. 2012. Language for Tourism. The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Tartakovsky, Roi, and Shen, Yeshayahu. 2023. "The Storm Sank My Boat and My Dreams: The Zeugma as a Breach of Iconicity," Metaphor and Symbol 38(2): 162-173.