Conceptual Metaphor "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English online Newspapers

Nguyen Luu Diep Anh[1*]

[1] University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang, Da Nang City, Vietnam
*Corresponding author's email: nldanh@ufl.udn.vn
* https://orcid.org/0009-0009-3649-5248

ABSTRACT

The study explores the conceptual metaphor of "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English, aiming to understand perceptions of media in these linguistic contexts. Using the theory of conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, alongside descriptive and semantic analysis methods, the research establishes and analyzes the mapping from the source domain of "TRAP" to the target domain of "MEDIA." By examining metaphorical expressions in press texts, the study uncovers underlying cognitive models, including media as trickery and media as a scam. Survey data reveals similar frequencies of metaphorical expressions in both languages, with 110 instances in Vietnamese and 90 in English, indicating a shared understanding of the metaphor. The analysis highlights significant parallels and distinctions in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English, underscoring its universal cognitive and linguistic significance. Both languages employ similar conceptual metaphorical expressions, yet exhibit subtle differences reflecting distinct cultural perspectives.

Introduction

The study of conceptual metaphors has attracted significant global interest due to their impact on various fields, including media. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), initially proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), posits that metaphors are not merely linguistic expressions but fundamental cognitive mechanisms that shape our understanding and perception of the world. Metaphors allow us to comprehend abstract concepts by mapping them onto more concrete experiences. The prevalence of metaphor is demonstrated through various studies. For instance, Geary (2012) observes that approximately every 10 to 20 words we speak may contain a metaphor, and we use about six metaphors per minute. Kövecses (2005) suggests that a

significant portion of conceptualization in the media involves metaphors. Despite this growing interest, there is a notable gap in understanding how specific metaphors, such as "MEDIA AS A TRAP," are used and interpreted across different languages and cultures. While metaphors play a crucial role in shaping media narratives and influencing public perception, existing research often overlooks the detailed mechanisms through which these metaphors operate in different linguistic contexts.

A trap, encountered universally in life, symbolizes unforeseen challenges and problems with the potential to confuse or harm us. Recognizing and avoiding traps is crucial for preventing unintended consequences. This research employs cognitive linguistics, particularly the theory of conceptual metaphor, to analyze "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English online newspapers. The study elucidates the mapping mechanism between the source domain "trap" and the target domain "media," revealing the hierarchical structure of metaphorical expressions.This investigation enhances understanding of linguistic perspectives across different discourses by delving into diverse interpretations of media in Vietnamese and English contexts. Specifically, it analyzes metaphorical expressions from the data based on dimensions of frequency, mapping mechanisms, and perceptual characteristics.

The research investigates the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English contexts. It aims to scrutinize the mapping from the source domain "trap" to the target domain "media," offering a comparative analysis between the two languages. By delving into diverse interpretations of media in both languages, this investigation enhances understanding of linguistic perspectives across different discourses.

This study holds significance for professionals in journalism, language instruction, and media by highlighting how metaphorical language shapes media narratives. By raising awareness of the effectiveness of employing metaphors in propaganda articles, media expressions become vivid and distinctive, making communication messages deeper, more attractive, and more engaging to readers. Despite linguistic distinctions, the fundamental understanding of "trap" is unlikely to differ between the Vietnamese and English-speaking communities studied significantly.

Literature Review

Conceptual Metaphor

Over the past forty years, cognitive linguistics has emerged as a significant field of study, providing scholars with powerful tools to explain the nature of language and language learning. Through human mental and cognitive processes, people perceive their surrounding environment, including objects (Le, M.T.; Nguyen, T. B., 2023). The study of metaphors has evolved substantially from its classical origins. The Western tradition, dating back to Aristotle, long considered metaphor as a rhetorical and literary device, with literal meanings used by specialists for persuasion or imaginative expression. However, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) challenged this view, asserting that metaphors play a fundamental role in ordinary conceptual systems. They proposed that conceptual metaphor involves understanding one domain of thought through another, creating a perceptual model of the mind's inner workings. Although

Lakoff states that "metaphor is fundamentally conceptual, not linguistic, in nature" (1993, p. 244), most evidence for conceptual metaphor is based on linguistic data.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), conceptual metaphors replace abstract concepts with more concrete ones, aiding in the comprehension of abstract target domains through specific source domains. Kövecses (2002) further elucidates that the source domain provides a rich knowledge structure for the target concept domain through mappings between their attributes. These metaphorical mappings, crucial for conceptual expression, rely on shared human knowledge and experience, establishing correspondences between elements of source and target domains in the mapping structure. Pham, T.G. (2023) explains that the mapping mechanism works by mapping elements of the source domain onto the elements of the target domain so that the target domain can be comprehended through the source domain based on a set of mappings. Understanding a conceptual metaphor involves knowing this set of mappings that applies to a given source-target pairing. In conclusion, conceptual metaphor is a form of conceptualizing the world, a cognitive process that functions as a representation and formation of new concepts, which is essential for the acquisition of new knowledge (Tran, V.C. (2007)). Kövecses (2005) argues that cross-cultural variation in the conceptualization of a concept results from different experiences in cultural and social aspects. Although humans around the world share many bodily experiences, their ideologies and political-social beliefs vary greatly, leading to culture-specific characteristics of metaphors. According to Ly, T.T. (2015), similarities among metaphors are fundamental; they differ mainly in the aspects that are activated, which greatly depends on cultural variations.

This paper aims to analyze the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English, focusing on the mapping from the source domain TRAP to the target domain MEDIA. For instance, the expression "Quảng cáo phóng đại thực phẩm chức năng là hại người tiêu dùng" ("Exaggerated advertising of dietary supplements is harmful to consumers") metaphorically describes TRAP as "exaggerated," a concept further explored in this paper.

Media and Trap

Media, as depicted in "Media - Theory and Basic Skills" by Nguyen Van Dung and Do Thi Thu Hang (2018), is a multifaceted concept encompassing diverse interpretations and viewpoints. It delineates an ongoing process wherein individuals exchange information, ideas, emotions, skills, and experiences to cultivate mutual understanding, shape perceptions, influence behavior and attitudes, and cater to the evolving needs of individuals, groups, communities, and society. Additionally, the Oxford Advanced Dictionary characterizes media as the primary channels through which large populations access information and entertainment, including television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet.

The definition of 'trap' provided by the Oxford Advanced Dictionary illustrates it as a clever plan designed to trick somebody, either by capturing them or by making them do or say something that they did not mean to do or say. Likewise, The Cambridge Dictionary portrays 'trap' as a dangerous or unpleasant situation from which it is difficult or impossible to escape."

The category of "trap" can be observed in smaller metaphorical groups and suggests common attributes typical of the source domain. In this study, to explain the attributes of the concept of the source domain as a trap, the author divided the term "trap" into two main groups. "Trap" is understood as a set of concepts including: (1) Tricks such as exaggeration, abetting, fabrication, storytelling, misrepresentation, manipulation, and trapping; (2) Fraud such as cheating, lying, deceiving, and so forth.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How is the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" conceptualized in Vietnamese and English?

2. What are the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English?

Methods

The research paper delves into the metaphor "Media is a Trap," exploring its implications across Vietnamese and English online newspapers. To ensure thorough analysis, we gathered 110 Vietnamese and 90 English samples from various reputable sources such as Dan Tri, Nhan Dan, Thanh Nien, Tuoi Tre, Tien Phong, among others, as well as international sources like The New York Times, CNN, The Guardian, Forbes, NBC News, and The Washington Post. Employing cognitive linguistics as our theoretical framework, we conducted descriptive and semantic analyses, supplemented by statistical and classification methods to explore the nuances of the metaphor. Statistical methods were utilized to survey and analyze quantitative data, providing insights into the mapping mechanism and perceptual semantics of the metaphor. Classification methods were employed to categorize metaphorical expressions according to the conceptual category of "trap," thereby reconstructing the metaphor system to align with research goals.

To address potential subjectivity in metaphor identification, we followed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), a systematic approach outlined by the Pragglejaz Group. This involved four key steps: (i) gaining a general understanding of the semantics by reviewing all media discourse; (ii) identifying words or phrases that seemed out of place within the context; (iii) examining these marked elements using dictionaries to assess their coherence within the context; and (iv) categorizing them as metaphors if they did not align semantically with other words or phrases. These identified words or phrases, causing initial semantic conflict, were labeled as "metaphorically-expressed words," and the discourse containing them was categorized as "metaphor expressions."

Data processing occurred in stages, initially identifying conceptual metaphors related to "Media as Trap" and further subdividing them into derivative metaphors. Subsequently, similarities and differences between Vietnamese and English metaphors were analyzed to explore cognitive characteristics across languages.

Results/Findings

It is clear from the survey that the concept of 'MEDIA AS A TRAP' is a prominent metaphor that regularly appears in Vietnamese and English online news reports. According to the rule of partial mapping, the attributes from the source domain "trap" are activated and mapped onto the target domain "Media", causing the target domain to bear some properties of the source domain. From 200 news articles in Vietnamese and English online newspapers, the conceptual model MEDIA AS A TRAP can be visualized through the mapping structure in Table 1.

Table 1.

Mapping structure of Conceptual metaphor MEDIA IS TRAP

SOURCE: TRAP	Mapped onto	TARGET: MEDIA
Deceivers	⟶	social media platforms
distorting or manipulating reality for a particular purpose	⟶	presenting a skewed or exaggerated version of events to suit a certain agenda or attract audience attention
a trickster crafts elaborate schemes to deceive others	⟶	media professionals may craft compelling narratives that evoke certain emotions or shape public opinion
creating addictive behaviors	⟶	keeping users constantly engaged and seeking more interaction
luring someone into a situation they may not fully understand or benefit from	⟶	using enticing visuals or exaggerated claims to lure consumers
hiding their true intentions or methods from their targets	⟶	omitting important information or using misleading visuals or language to manipulate consumer perceptions

Based on the mapping structure of the conceptual metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP in Table 1, we establish the cognitive metaphor models of Media, with the source domain being Trap, as follows.

Table 2.

Metaphorical Expression Statistics of Conceptual Metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP

The shared attributes between the source and target domains	Metaphorical expressions	Vietnamese	English	Total number of metaphorical expressions
		Occurrences	Occurrences	
manipulation or deception, influence, impact	Exaggerate	15	5	**200**
	Abet	9	2	
	Expose	3	6	
	Fabricate	7	6	
	Embroider	10	0	
	Makeup	3	0	
	Distort	6	0	
	Lead	4	0	
	Fascinate	2	0	
	Trap	17	10	
lack of honesty, integrity, transparency, breach of trust	Fraudulent	4	8	
	Dishonest	6	0	
	Lying	7	10	
	Fake	5	0	
	Deceitful	5	11	
	Deceptive	5	32	
	Mislead	2	0	
Total		**110**	**90**	

The concept of Media can be understood through the concept of Trap thanks to metaphorical mapping. A trap is cleverly designed to catch and deceive, and when we use it as a metaphor for media, we see media as something that can ensnare and mislead us. In the metaphorical model, MEDIA IS A TRAP, the underlying mapping is the trickery, fraud, scam, which then evoke Trap. The model appears simultaneously in both English and Vietnamese news broadcasts. By leveraging the mapping structure outlined in Table 1 for the conceptual metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP, we can understand different cognitive metaphorical models of media, with Trap serving as the source domain, as follows.

Table 3.

The cognitive metaphor models of MEDIA IS TRAP

Cognitive metaphor models	Vietnamese		English	
	Occurrences	(%)	Occurrences	(%)
Media is Trickery	76/110	69	29/90	32
Media is a Scam	34/119	31	61/90	68
Total	**110**	**100**	**90**	**100**

The conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" draws parallels between the domain of "TRAP" and that of "MEDIA". Through the analysis of 200 metaphorical expressions, the paper identified two cognitive models: (1) "Media is Trickery" and (2) "Media is a Scam". These

models encompass terms such as press, social media, fake news, rumors, advertising, and media. In Vietnamese, the predominant model is "Media is Trickery" (69%), followed by "Media is a Scam" (31%). Conversely, in English, the predominant model is "Media is a Scam" (68%), followed by "Media is Trickery" (32%).

The conceptual metaphor "Media is Trickery"

> (1) *Nhưng có vẻ mọi chuyện đã bị **báo chí phóng đại**, Triệu Vy từng đăng tải những bức hình của cô và Châu Tấn lên Weibo để chứng minh tình bạn của hai người không hề sứt mẻ. (But it seems that everything has been exaggerated by the press, Trieu Vy once posted pictures of her and Chau Tan on Weibo to prove that their friendship is not broken)*

Both "trickery" and "media" involve manipulation or deception. Trickery relies on deceit or cunning to achieve an outcome, while media, especially in sensationalized reporting, manipulates facts or exaggerates events to capture attention or create a narrative. Trickery influences perception through deceptive means, similar to how the media shapes public opinion by presenting information. In the provided example, the term "phóng đại" suggests the media may have exaggerated the situation involving Triệu Vy and Châu Tấn to attract attention or create a sensational story, implying manipulation or distortion of details to fit a particular narrative.

> (2) *Chấm dứt tình trạng **quảng cáo "tiếp tay"** cho các nội dung xấu độc trên mạng (End advertising "abetting" malicious content online)*

In the example, the metaphor "tiếp tay" describes the media's role in facilitating harmful online content. "Tiếp tay" translates to "abet" indicating involvement in promoting actions or behaviors. Both "trickery" and "media" influence perceptions and behaviors; trickery involves deceitful tactics, while the media shapes public opinion through the content they promote. Just as aiding and abetting in trickery shares responsibility for consequences, the media is accountable for the content they support. If they promote harmful content, they are complicit in its spread. The use of "tiếp tay" suggests the media's complicity in supporting harmful online content, implying they may have knowingly or unknowingly aided its dissemination.

> (3) *Loạn **livestream bóc phốt***: Hậu họa khôn lường

In the given example, the metaphor "bóc phốt" is used to describe the action of the media in exposing or revealing scandalous or damaging information about someone. "Bóc phốt" can be translated as "to expose" or "to reveal someone's secrets" in English, often with a negative connotation. In the example provided, the use of "bóc phốt" suggests that the media has engaged in the exposure of scandalous or damaging information, possibly through investigative reporting or sensationalized coverage. This metaphorical usage implies that the media's actions in revealing such information may have unforeseen and significant consequences, both for the individuals involved and for society as a whole.

> (4) *Ronaldo tố **truyền thông bịa đặt**, tuyên bố phơi bày sự thật (Ronaldo accuses the media of fabrication, claims to expose the truth)*

In the Vietnamese phrase "bịa đặt," which translates to "fabrication" in English, the metaphor is deeply rooted in the concept of deception or trickery. When Ronaldo accuses the media of

"bịa đặt," he is essentially alleging that they are engaging in dishonest practices, such as spreading false information or manipulating the truth. This metaphorical usage suggests that the media's actions are akin to a deceitful scheme or a fraudulent act. By associating the media with the concept of "bịa đặt," Ronaldo is suggesting that they are engaging in deceptive practices that hurt their trustworthiness and honesty. This metaphorical framing not only highlights Ronaldo's distrust or dissatisfaction with the media but also emphasizes the seriousness of the accusations being made.

> (5) *Đó là những gì **truyền thông thêu dệt** về vợ chồng ông chủ cà phê Trung Nguyên cho đến khi hai người đưa nhau ra tòa trong những ngày qua (That's what the media was weaving about the Trung Nguyen coffee owner and his wife until the two took each other to court in recent days).*

The metaphor of "thêu dệt" (embroidering) in the example refers to the act of fabricating or embellishing stories, especially in the context of media coverage. In this metaphor, the image of embroidering is used to convey the idea that the media weaves together narratives about the husband and wife of the Trung Nguyen coffee owner, implying that these stories might not be entirely truthful but rather embellished or manipulated for various purposes. The mechanism of attribute transfer from the concept of "trickery" to the concept of "media" in this metaphor relies on shared attributes between the two domains. Both "trickery" and "media" share attributes related to manipulation, fabrication, and the shaping of narratives.

> (6) *Nam diễn viên 68 tuổi cũng cho hay ông và vợ chỉ "tạm thời xa cách" và điều này tạo cơ hội cho **báo chí dựng chuyện** (The 68-year-old actor also said he and his wife were only "temporarily separated" and this provided an opportunity for the press to make up stories).*

The metaphor of "dựng chuyện" in this example refers to creating or inventing narratives, particularly in media coverage. It suggests that the media may fabricate or exaggerate stories about the separation between the 68-year-old actor and his wife, implying these stories might lack truth and be sensationalized for various purposes. Both "trickery" and "media" involve deception and manipulation: trickery deceives through various means, while media coverage may manipulate facts or create sensationalized stories to attract attention. By linking these attributes, the metaphor suggests that media coverage can employ similar tactics of manipulation and fabrication. It indicates audiences should approach media reports critically, recognizing that not all stories are truthful or objective.

> (7) *Triệu Thị Hà nói rằng phát ngôn của cô đã bị **báo chí xuyên tạc**, trong khi phía ban tổ chức cũng cho rằng cô đã vu khống họ (Triệu Thị Hà stated that her statements had been distorted by the press, while the organizing committee also accused her of fabricating them).*

The metaphor "xuyên tạc" in this context refers to distortion or falsification, implying that the media has misrepresented the statements made by Triệu Thị Hà. "Xuyên tạc" carries connotations of deceit, manipulation, and dishonesty. Just like someone who tricks others by pretending to be trustworthy, the media can use its reputation to spread false or wrong information. When the media changes facts or doesn't tell the truth, it makes people doubt if

they can trust it to give them accurate information, similar to how people stop trusting someone who tricks them when they find out the truth. By recognizing these shared attributes between trickery and media, the metaphor of "xuyên tạc" effectively conveys the idea that the media is not always objective or truthful in its reporting and may engage in deceptive practices similar to those employed by tricksters. This highlights the importance of critical thinking and verifying information from multiple sources in consuming media content.

(8) *Thật nực cười là Trump cho rằng những người ủng hộ Dân chủ hay nghiêng về phe Dân chủ, với hơn 75 triệu người đã bỏ phiếu cho Biden, lại không có khả năng phân tích độc lập và đều bị* **truyền thông dắt mũi** *(It's quite ironic that Trump believes those who support the Democrats or lean towards the Democratic side, with over 75 million people who voted for Biden, are incapable of independent analysis and are all led by the media).*

In Vietnamese, "dắt mũi" means to control or manipulate someone. In the context of the sentence provided, it implies that the media is manipulating or controlling the actions or opinions of those who support the Democratic Party or lean towards it, especially after Joe Biden won the presidential election with over 75 million. Trickery often involves controlling or distorting information to achieve a desired outcome. Likewise, the media can control the flow of information by choosing what to report, how to report it, and what narratives to prioritize, which can shape public perceptions and behaviors. By leveraging these shared attributes between trickery and media, the metaphor "dắt mũi" shows how the media might be influencing or tricking people who support the Democratic Party into thinking or acting a certain way.

(9) *Vì sao thanh thiếu niên bị* **mạng xã hội "mê hoặc"**? *(Why are teenagers "fascinated" by social media?)*

In the context of the question "Vì sao thanh thiếu niên bị mạng xã hội 'mê hoặc'? the Vietnamese term "mê hoặc" translates to "fascinated" in English. It suggests being deeply absorbed or even obsessed, like being addicted. Both being tricked and using social media too much can make you lose control. If you use social media a lot, you might spend too much time online, forget about other things you need to do, and find it hard to stop. By comparing these ideas, it's like saying social media platforms, just like tricksters, can draw you in, control you, and keep you stuck in their digital world. This shows why people worry about the negative effects of spending too much time on social media on both individuals and society.

(10) *Bệnh nhân* **'sập bẫy'** *quảng cáo của phòng khám có bác sĩ nước ngoài (Patients 'trapped' by clinics with foreign doctors)*

In Vietnamese, "bẫy" means "trap" in English. The phrase "sập bẫy" in the example ("Patients 'fall into a trap' of advertisements from clinics with foreign doctors") suggests that patients were tricked by ads from clinics with foreign doctors, which implies they were deceived or manipulated. Trickery involves tricking someone into a situation they might not fully understand or benefit from. Media ads often use attractive pictures or exaggerated claims to attract customers. Recognizing parallels between trickery and media, the metaphor of "bẫy" illustrates how persuasive marketing tactics can mislead individuals.

*(11) King says foreign **media exaggerate** unrest in Bahrain (King nói truyền thông nước ngoài phóng đại tình trạng bất ổn ở Bahrain)*

In this case, "exaggerate" implies manipulation or misrepresentation, akin to "trickery." By associating "trickery" with foreign media, the metaphor suggests their reporting involves manipulation or deception. This transfer of attributes occurs due to shared qualities between "trickery" and "media," both involving spreading information and sometimes changing it to fit a certain narrative. "Trickery" involves intentional deception, while media manipulation come from things like having a particular point of view or trying to make a story more exciting. By applying "trickery" to media, the metaphor implies manipulation or deception in foreign media's reporting on Bahrain unrest, whether intentional or not.

*(12) The president is now claiming that the **media fabricated** a conflict between himself and his intelligence chiefs (Tổng thống hiện đang tuyên bố rằng các phương tiện truyền thông đã bịa đặt một cuộc xung đột giữa ông và các giám đốc tình báo của ông.)*

In the phrase "the media fabricated a conflict between himself and his intelligence chiefs," "fabricated" means making up something that isn't true. It suggests that the media purposely lied or manipulated the situation, like trickery or deceit. Just as a trickster manipulates circumstances or information to achieve a desired outcome, the media, when accused of fabrication, is perceived as manipulating information to shape public perception or advance a particular agenda. Both trickery and media fabrication can influence how events are perceived. Just as a trick can distort reality or create false impressions, fabricated media stories can shape public opinion and influence attitudes towards individuals or events.

*(13) How Western **Media Abet** Israeli Crimes? (Truyền thông phương Tây tiếp tay cho tội ác của Israel như thế nào?)*

The concept of "trickery" typically involves deceit, manipulation, and misleading actions. This metaphor transfers the negative connotation associated with "trickery" to the term "media." Both "trickery" and "media" can change how people see things and what they do, even though they're in different situations. Just like someone using trickery tricks others for their own benefit, the metaphor suggests that the media, especially Western media in this case, may be engaging in actions that manipulate or mislead the public regarding Israeli actions or policies. Basically, the metaphor "Western Media Abet Israeli Crimes" suggests that media outlets, particularly those in the Western world, are perceived as complicit in facilitating or supporting actions by Israel that are considered unethical or unlawful by some observers.

The conceptual metaphor "Media is a Scam"

*(14) Rất khó để phát hiện **gian lận trong quảng cáo** trực tuyến (It is difficult to detect fraud in online advertising)*

"Scams" and "media" both involve lying, tricking, and not being honest. Scams are about tricking people to get something for themselves, often by making fake promises. Similarly, online ads, which are a type of media, can lie or trick to make people buy something for the advertiser's benefit.. When people encounter "scam" in relation to online ads, they apply scam attributes to media, especially online ads. This helps them understand the challenge of

distinguishing honesty from deceit in online advertising, similar to detecting scams elsewhere. This metaphorical mapping suggests that online ads might be as tricky as scams, so it's important to be careful and think twice before believing everything you see in ads online.

> *(15) Ông Trump vẫn phát biểu trên Twitter rằng: "Dù một số hoạt động **truyền thông gian dối** và thiếu trung thực, nhưng vẫn có nhiều phóng viên tuyệt vời khiến tôi tôn trọng và đưa những tin tức tích cực khiến người Mỹ tự hào." (Mr. Trump still states on Twitter that, "Although some media activities are deceitful and lack honesty, there are still many excellent journalists whom I respect and who deliver positive news that make Americans proud.)*

Scams involve deception to mislead individuals, and the concept of "deception" in media suggests a similar manipulation of information. This shared attribute facilitates linking the concept of "scam" to certain practices within the media industry where dishonesty or misleading content may exist. Scams typically breach trust or lack integrity, prioritizing personal gain over ethical standards. Similarly, when media outlets engage in deceptive practices or fail journalistic integrity by presenting biased or fabricated information, they're seen as lacking integrity. This shared attribute forms common ground between scams and certain aspects of media. By leveraging these shared attributes, the metaphor of "deception" effectively conveys dishonesty within media, highlighting the importance of integrity and transparency in fostering trust between media organizations and their audience.

> *(16) **Quảng cáo 'láo'** có thể sẽ bị xử lý hình sự ('False' ads could face criminal penalties)*

The Vietnamese phrase "Quảng cáo 'láo' có thể sẽ bị xử lý hình sự" uses "láo" as a metaphor for deceptive or fraudulent advertising, translating to "fake," "deceptive," or "misleading" in English. Both scams and deceptive advertising involve misrepresenting information. Scams use false promises to trick individuals, while deceptive advertising presents false claims to persuade consumers. The metaphorical transfer of attributes from "scam" to "media" likely draws on shared characteristics such as deception, manipulation, and erosion of trust. This underscores the media's responsibility to uphold ethical standards and integrity in communication with the public.

> *(17) Phạt nghiêm nghệ sĩ tiếp tay **quảng cáo lừa dối** (Severely penalize artists who abet deceptive advertising)*

Both scams and misleading media can have significant impacts on their respective audiences. Scams can result in financial loss, emotional distress, or damage to reputation for the victims. Similarly, misleading media can shape public perceptions, influence decision-making based on misinformation. Both domains raise ethical concerns regarding the responsibility of those involved. Engaging in scams or deceptive advertising is widely regarded as unethical behavior, as it involves exploiting others for personal gain. Likewise, ethical considerations are crucial in media practices, as journalists and media organizations are expected to adhere to principles of truthfulness, accuracy, and fairness. By drawing parallels between the attributes of "scam" and "media," the metaphor in the given example underscores the critique of artists who participate in deceptive advertising. It implies that just as scams deceive and manipulate individuals,

misleading media practices can similarly deceive and manipulate the public, highlighting the responsibility of media professionals to uphold ethical standards and truthfulness in their work.

> *(18) If you run into a scam, you should always report it to the listing source to immediately remove the **fraudulent advertisement**. (Nếu bạn gặp phải một trò lừa đảo, bạn nên luôn luôn báo cáo nó cho nguồn danh sách để ngay lập tức loại bỏ quảng cáo gian lận).*

In this example, "fraudulent" describes the advertisement as deceitful or misleading, akin to illegal scams. Just as scams erode trust by deceiving victims, media sources are expected to be trustworthy. When media content is fraudulent, it violates this trust. Scams harm individuals, causing financial and emotional distress. Likewise, fraudulent media content can influence public opinion, spread misinformation, and harm individuals or society..

> *(19) At both the national and state level, this campaign has been disfigured by **deceitful advertising** and ruthless distortion. (Ở cả cấp quốc gia và tiểu bang, chiến dịch này đã bị biến dạng bởi quảng cáo gian dối và bóp méo tàn nhẫn).*

In example (19), "deceitful" describes the advertising and distortion in the campaign as dishonest and manipulative. This implies intentional deception aimed at manipulating the audience. The context is a political campaign characterized by "deceitful advertising and ruthless distortion," suggesting a connection between the concept of a "scam" and the "media." Negative traits of a "scam," like deceitfulness and manipulation, are associated with the "media" due to shared deceptive practices in political advertising. Public perception of the media reinforces this association. If there's widespread distrust in the media's integrity, negative attributes linked to scams become easier to attribute to the media.

> *(20) Twitter bans deepfakes and **deceptive media** ahead of US elections. (Twitter cấm deepfake và phương tiện truyền thông lừa đảo trước cuộc bầu cử Mỹ)*

The metaphor of "deceptive" in the example, "Twitter bans deepfakes and deceptive media ahead of US elections," connects general deception with media manipulation. Here, "deceptive" suggests the media content is misleading or false. By linking attributes of "scam" and "media," the metaphor extends negative associations with scams to media, emphasizing the harm of manipulative content. It underscores the importance of platforms like Twitter taking action, especially during elections, to combat such content.

Similarities and Differences of the Conceptual metaphor of "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English

The research highlights significant parallels and distinctions in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English.

Both the English and Vietnamese languages employ metaphorical mappings for "MEDIA IS A TRAP," with corresponding expressions. To be more specific, they both use terms like "phóng đại/bịa đặt/tiếp tay/bẫy" and "exaggerate/fabricate/abet/trap" to illustrate how the media can lure audiences and shape public opinion. Additionally, terms like "deceptive/lừa đảo" and "deceitful/gian dối, fraud/gian lận" are used to convey the dissemination of false information, potentially harmful to individuals or society.

Survey data reveals a similar frequency of "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphorical expressions in both languages, with 110 instances in Vietnamese and 90 in English, indicating a shared understanding of the metaphor. This metaphor can be broken down into two underlying cognitive metaphors: Media as Trickery and Media as a Scam. In describing various facets of media, both Vietnamese and English employ similar metaphorical expressions related to "Trap," highlighting qualities such as manipulation, deception, impact, and breach of trust.

In both languages, the metaphor vividly evokes a sense of being ensnared or manipulated by the media. Vietnamese employs 17 metaphorical words, while English uses fewer, at 9. Nevertheless, "Trap" is a recurring term in both languages, underscoring its significance in conveying the idea of media as trapping or deceiving. Vietnamese accentuates "trap" and "exaggerate," whereas "deceptive" appears most frequently in English (32 times), compared to only 5 times in Vietnamese. This variance suggests nuanced cultural perceptions or linguistic preferences in understanding the relationship between media and manipulation, despite the shared metaphorical foundation.

Overall, the "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphor showcases striking similarities between English and Vietnamese, underscoring its universal cognitive and linguistic significance. While both languages employ similar conceptual metaphorical expressions to depict the dynamic nature of media, they also exhibit subtle differences reflecting distinct cultural perspectives.

Discussion

Analyzing the attribute transference between the "source" and "target" spatial domains in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" across Vietnamese and English news articles reveals that reporters' and editors' perceptions of traps are influenced by their background knowledge and personal experiences with various forms of deception and trickery. By decoding the mechanisms involved in forming and mapping this metaphor, it becomes clear that "TRAP" is consistently associated with concepts such as deception, fraud, deceit, manipulation, and the dissemination of information. The data analysis identifies a total of 200 instances of the metaphor "Media is a Trap," indicating its prevalence as a common metaphorical expression. Notably, linguistic expressions representing the concept of "Trap" in both Vietnamese and English exhibit similarities, with both languages employing metaphorical terms related to deception, fraud, deceit, manipulation, and information dissemination to conceptualize the media.

Using the metaphor of "Trap" to conceptualize the abstract concept of media allows for a vivid depiction of various aspects of media. While the structure and expression of the "Trap" metaphor in Vietnamese and English share some similarities, not all Vietnamese metaphorical expressions have direct equivalents in English. Vietnamese has 17 metaphorical words, while there are only 9 in English. In the metaphorical concept of MEDIA AS A TRAP, Vietnamese people demonstrate cunning and professionalism in knowledge about hunting, gathering, and conquering prey. In the chase, conquest necessarily requires certain tactics to attract and captivate the emotions of the opponent. Thus, the skillful tactics in Media can include exaggeration, assistance, exposure, fabrication, weaving, storytelling, deception, or using

trapping methods. Furthermore, with experience in living terrain and the ability to craft hunting tools, Vietnamese people have the basis for forming unique metaphorical expressions such as setting traps, getting trapped, collapsing traps, getting caught in traps, trapping, a trap, etc.

The findings of this study align with the theoretical framework proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who asserted that metaphors are fundamental to ordinary conceptual systems and not merely rhetorical or literary devices. Our analysis corroborates their claim that metaphors involve understanding one domain of thought through another, as seen in the consistent mapping of "trap" attributes onto media-related concepts. Kövecses (2002) further elaborates that metaphorical mappings rely on shared human knowledge and experience, establishing correspondences between elements of source and target domains. This study supports Kövecses' view by demonstrating how both Vietnamese and English speakers utilize the concept of "trap" to depict media, despite cultural differences. However, the cultural-specific characteristics of metaphors, as argued by Kövecses (2005), are evident in the greater variety of metaphorical expressions in Vietnamese compared to English. This reflects the different cultural experiences and practices related to hunting and trapping, which influence the richness of metaphorical language. Ly (2015) highlights that while metaphors may share similarities, the specific aspects activated can vary greatly due to cultural influences. This study's findings resonate with Ly's assertion, showing that Vietnamese metaphorical expressions often include nuanced tactics and strategies derived from hunting practices, which are less prevalent in English metaphors.

The study's results contribute to the broader understanding of conceptual metaphor theory by illustrating how metaphors function as cognitive tools for comprehending abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. The frequent use of the "trap" metaphor in both languages underscores its effectiveness in conveying complex ideas about media manipulation and deceit. Moreover, the cross-cultural analysis reveals that while certain metaphorical concepts are universal, the specific linguistic expressions and the richness of metaphorical language can vary significantly due to cultural contexts. This supports the notion that metaphorical thinking is both universal and culture-specific, shaped by shared human experiences and distinct cultural practices. In conclusion, the metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" provides a powerful framework for understanding media's role in shaping perceptions and manipulating information. The study's comparative analysis of Vietnamese and English expressions highlights the interplay between universal cognitive processes and cultural specificity in metaphorical language.

Conclusion

This study marks a notable progression in conceptual metaphor theory within cognitive linguistics, particularly concerning media analysis. It illustrates the metaphorical interpretation of the abstract concept of media as a tangible entity, likening it to a trap due to shared trap-like attributes. This facilitates the extension of other concepts onto it.

By examining the "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphor in both Vietnamese and English, the study identifies and analyzes two metaphorical models: "Media is Trickery" and "Media is a Scam." These models reveal the prevalence of trap-related terminology in discourses, providing valuable insights into the cognitive processes of English and Vietnamese speakers and

significantly contributing to the understanding of the cognitive foundations of both languages. However, the study acknowledges its limitations, indicating avenues for further research in cognitive linguistics.

Within the scope of the article's research, the author does not cover all source domains but only chooses one source domain as a "trap" for analysis. In the concept of the source domain, "trap" contains negative attributes, bad things, and tricks. Hopefully, in future studies, the author will explore other metaphors with positive meanings such as "Media is a soldier" or "Media is Health" in languages to provide a more balanced view and make it more interesting for people to perceive the media, enriching language and thought comprehension, and fostering effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

This paper holds substantial value for both teaching and research, serving as a crucial reference source. It enhances understanding of how Vietnamese and English speakers perceive the objective world through communication and supports translation, teaching, and research efforts within language departments at universities and colleges.

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Biodata

Nguyen Luu Diep Anh currently serves as the Deputy Director of the Center for Information Technology & Learning Resources at University of Foreign Language Studies, the University of Da Nang. She is also pursuing a PhD in Linguistics at University of Education, the University of Da Nang. Her interests encompass media, English language teaching at all levels, and communication/linguistics.