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CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF SKIN AND BEAUTY: ANALYSIS OF SKINCARE ADVERTISING IN ENGLISH AND LITHUANIAN

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The aim of the research is to identify and compare conceptual metaphors of skin and beauty in skincare advertisements in English and Lithuanian, find metaphorical similarities and differences, and determine the frequency of their use in advertisements for women's skincare products. The article discusses the premises underlying the emergence of the theory of conceptual metaphors, and analyses the characteristics of metaphorical language in advertising discourse. It explains how advertisers often propose new and creative metaphors, and apply creative manipulations of conventional metaphors. This section also provides a more detailed overview of advertisements targeting women, their influence on the perception of beauty. It examines which standards of female beauty help marketers sell products and what women (unconsciously) associate with beauty, thereby falling into the advertisers' traps.

The empirical part zeroes in on the analysis of examples of advertisements featuring English and Lithuanian conceptual metaphors. Based on the systematic nature and thematic focus of linguistic elements, skincare advertisements were collected and compared, and four conceptual metaphors were identified within the domain of reference skin / skincare /skin beauty: SKIN IS LIVING BEING, SKINCARE IS A BATTLE, SKINCARE IS A JOURNEY, SKIN BEAUTY IS GLOW. *The analysis of the collected examples suggests that conceptual metaphors are frequently used in both English and Lithuanian beauty advertisements for skincare products, accentuating certain features that advertisers wish to impart to the advertised products. Although English and Lithuanian belong to different language types (analytic and synthetic), the figurative meaning conveyed in skincare advertisements largely overlaps across the two languages. The frequency calculations of conceptual metaphors show that the most frequent ones in English skincare advertisements is* SKINCARE IS WAR, *while in Lithuanian ones it is* SKIN IS A LIVING BEING.

Keywords: *cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, skincare advertisements, source and target domains.*

Селмістрайтіс Л., Романова В. Концептуальні метафори шкіри та краси: аналіз реклами засобів догляду за шкірою англійською та литовською мовами.

Метою дослідження є виявлення та порівняння концептуальних метафор, пов'язаних зі шкірою та красою, в англійських та литовських рекламних оголошеннях засобів для догляду за шкірою, визначення схожостей та відмінностей відповідних метафоричних одиниць, а також частотність їхнього вживання у рекламі жіночих засобів для догляду за шкірою. У статті розглядаються передумови виникнення теорії концептуальних метафор у когнітивній лінгвістиці та аналізуються особливості метафоричної мови в рекламному дискурсі. У ній пояснюється, як рекламодавці часто пропонують нові та креативні метафори, а також застосовують творчі маніпуляції з традиційними метафорами. У цьому розділі також надається більш детальний огляд реклами, спрямованої на жінок, та її впливу на сприйняття краси.

Емпірична частина присвячена аналізу прикладів рекламних оголошень, що містять англійські та литовські концептуальні метафори. Виходячи з систематичного характеру та тематичної спрямованості мовних елементів, було зібрано та порівняно рекламні оголошення засобів для догляду за шкірою, в результаті чого в тематичній області «шкіра / догляд за шкірою / краса шкіри» було виокремлено чотири концептуальні метафори: ШКІРА – ЦЕ ЖИВА ІСТОТА, ДОГЛЯД ЗА ШКІРОЮ – ЦЕ БИТВА, ДОГЛЯД ЗА ШКІРОЮ – ЦЕ ПОДОРОЖ, КРАСА ШКІРИ – ЦЕ СЯЙВО. Аналіз зібраних прикладів свідчить про те, що концептуальні метафори часто використовуються як в англійській, так і в литовській рекламі косметичних засобів для догляду за шкірою, акцентуючи ті риси рекламованих продуктів, що рекламодавці бажають висвітлити. Хоча англійська та литовська мови належать до різних мовних типів (аналітичного та синтетичного), образне значення, що передається в рекламі засобів для догляду за шкірою, значною мірою збігається в обох мовах. Розрахунки частотності концептуальних метафор показують, що найчастішою концептуальною метафорою в англійських рекламних оголошеннях засобів для догляду за шкірою є ДОГЛЯД ЗА ШКІРОЮ – ЦЕ ВІЙН, тоді як у литовських – ШКІРА – ЦЕ ЖИВА ІСТОТА.

Ключові слова: *когнітивна лінгвістика, концептуальна метафора, реклама засобів для догляду за шкірою, вихідна та цільова сфери.*

Introduction

Advertisements are the easiest way to reach customers and attract their attention to a specific product. Retail, healthcare, services and beauty industries influence customers subconscious and imperceptibly affect the very idea of retail, healthcare, services, beauty, and they also create standards and stereotypes to attract customers and sell more products. Advertising uses basic psychological principles like attention, motivation, memory, association, suggestion, volition to influence the thoughts and behaviours of large populations of people. Marketers try to attract target customers as much as they can by using language as a tool of assurance and manipulation.

As the main purpose of advertising is to form a particular representation of concepts, a proper or a vivid image of the brand, the meaning of words that are

selected to represent the item are crucial. The aim of the research is to identify conceptual metaphors used in both Lithuanian and English women's skin beauty product advertisements, as well as to find differences and similarities in the perception of skin beauty concept in English and Lithuanian advertising. To achieve the aim the following objectives have been set: 1) to present an overview of the conceptual metaphor theory in the frame of cognitive linguistics; 2) to identify metaphorical expressions in English and Lithuanian women's skin beauty product advertisements; 3) to define target and source domains and relate them to conceptual metaphors; 4) to identify the differences and similarities of skin and beauty conceptual metaphors in English and Lithuanian women's skin beauty products advertisements. The study is based on women's skin beauty products advertisements of English and Lithuanian online stores Sephora, Drogas, Eurokos, Douglas, Lush, Notino. 50 English and 50 Lithuanian women's skin beauty product advertisements were selected to analyse the usage of conceptual metaphors in advertising and the perception of the target domains SKIN, SKINCARE and BEAUTY. The methods used to achieve the set aim and objectives are descriptive, comparative, qualitative and quantitative analyses. The novelty of the research is revealing the usage of conceptual metaphors in women's skin beauty product advertisements in English and Lithuanian languages.

Theoretical Background

Language serves as a sophisticated system for encoding and conveying complex and nuanced ideas. The present research is grounded in the principles of cognitive linguistics, which link linguistic phenomena to a broader spectrum of mental processes, including memory, attention, categorization, and related aspects of human cognition.

Cognitive linguistics is based on the belief that language is closely connected with all human mental and cognitive processes, with memorisation, with the extraction of data from memory, with the transfer of information from one brain to another. Therefore, cognitive linguistics is very close with neighbouring sciences, such as psychology, neurophysiology, philosophy and artificial intelligence. It mainly zeroes in on the theory of conceptual metaphor or cognitive metaphor, which is based on the understanding of one idea or conceptual domain in terms of another one.

The main postulates of cognitive linguistics were presented in Lakoff and Johnson's seminal work "Metaphors We Live By" (Lakoff & Johnsons, 1980). As

Romova and Varley observe, conceptual metaphors have a cognitive concept, which "serves as a kind of a reference point for concrete statements, which occur in the discourse and exemplify the particular conceptual metaphor" (Romova and Varley, 2017, p. 81). Zaltman complements the expressed ideas by stating that "Since all human beings rely on systems and address the same basic challenges in their environments, consumers around the globe use very similar container metaphors. For example, comparing anger to a hot fluid in a container appears in many cultures, giving this intangible emotion a physiological base" (Zaltman et al., 2008, p. 102). Even though the clear definition of conceptual metaphor theory was outlined, Kövecses dared propose a more technical definition later: "a systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience" (Kövecses, 2020, p. 2).

Conceptual metaphors serve not only as a means to render complex ideas, but they also function as scripts that can influence human behaviour in specific situations. Moreover, cultural differences among countries can significantly impact conceptual metaphors, as explained by Zinken et al. in two points: "1) Cultural elements have a profound effect on the human mind, leading to different perspectives and interpretations of the same concept; 2) Metaphorical interpretations are context-dependent and can be adopted, rejected, or modified based on communicative needs and social factors" (Zinken et al. 2003, p. 6).

Conceptual metaphor theory employs the strategy of mapping to depict or create metaphorical collocations. Mapping is a complex circuit that activates numerous other circuits, linking and binding various elements of a target domain to a source domain (Lakoff, 2009, p. 14). These mappings, which can be seen as ‘neural maps’ or ‘physical links’ in the brain, unconsciously establish connections between different domains, driven by our cognitive processes. Kövecses emphasises that mappings are mnemonic names for conceptual metaphors, represented by the form ‘target-domain is source-domain’ or ‘target-domain as source-domain’ (Kövecses, 2010, p. 248-249).

Lithuanian scholars have extensively researched conceptual metaphors in Lithuanian discourse, exploring various domains such as political discourse (Būdvydytė-Gudienė, 2015), legal discourse (Urbonaitė, 2022), religion (Vaivadaitė-Kaidi, 2018), and more. Since conceptual metaphor theory was initially developed in the English language, Lithuanian linguists have had to find ways to describe and apply this theory in the Lithuanian context, considering the changes that arise when comparing examples in two lexically distinct languages.

With each new research study, we gain insights into the differences in conceptualization within the Lithuanian language. It was realized early on that conceptual metaphors and their descriptions differ in the Lithuanian language. This can be attributed to differences in lexicon, the number of words used to describe specific domains, and the presence of collocations that are primarily non-metaphorical in the Lithuanian language when discussing a specific metaphor (Selmistraitis, Gadeikytė & Krawiec, 2024).

Conceptual metaphors are deeply imbedded in advertising. When a person perceives advertising material, he or she generates particular pictures that impact the consumer's behaviour and preference creation (Donzé, 2014, p. 63). As a result, advertising uses pictures and words to communicate with the target audience. Indeed, with their assistance, a person may think, communicate, create, dream, envision, and recreate them through various techniques, among other things. According to Sobrino, "advertisers must bear in mind that such creativity must not jeopardise the intelligibility of the message. All in all, advertising, artistic or not, has the clear and ultimate purpose of selling a service or a product" (Sobrino, 2017, p. 1).

There are two factors that make metaphor a successful persuasion tool, both in the context of advertising and more generally. The first is that a metaphor implicitly conveys the message and leaves it up to the perceiver to draw the ultimate conclusion, giving them some ‘ownership’ over the meaning-making process. It has been demonstrated that forcing the reader or listener to come to their own conclusion increases their sense of ownership of the message (Stayman & Kardes, 1992). The second reason is that the reader's emotional and occasionally sensorimotor responses are elicited by metaphor (Citron & Goldberg, 2014). In other words, metaphors have the ability to be internalised and embodied since they may be digested on a bodily level.

As the primary responsibility of a professional advertiser is to create an image through which the consumer will perceive the marketed goods, that image should efficiently express brand’s ideals and main concept to the costumer. In our society, there were always gender stereotypes and beauty standards that advertising cannot simply ignore. According to Greenfield (2018), "though society has seen some uplifting changes in the perception of women, advertising still focuses on outdated concepts of beauty. Because beauty advertisements present such idealized and unrealistic expectations, women experience increasing anxiety about their bodies. […] Beauty advertisements inspire several negative effects that ultimately cause

women to feel dissatisfied and lacking" (Greenfield, 2018, p. 20). Making such frequent comparisons with false expectations is harmful to women's ideas of themselves since research reveals that individuals immediately compare themselves to everyone they encounter.

When it comes to various women's beauty products, all that needs to be emphasized or convinced is that the product is anti-aging, anti-wrinkle, or helps keeping skin's youth. In fact, Nouri explains why women care so much about having a beautiful skin: "Since the Biblical times, women have sought to hide their age and appear younger using cosmetics. In fact, the Egyptians possessed most of the cosmetics that we use today and followed formulas for the prevention of dreaded wrinkles and blemishes. […] Similarly, in ancient Greece, a bread and milk poultice constituted a typical anti-aging ritual. In 17th century England, where Queen Elizabeth was the ideal beauty, women went to extremes to keep their skin pale, including applying white lead paint to their faces" (Nouri, 2017, p. 4-5).

Advertising convinces women that, perhaps, a secret ingredient such as collagen will regenerate, restore or rebuild skin cells once it is put on a woman's skin. However, it is just a regular trick of advertising to attract women for buying a product. This fact is confirmed by Jablonski, as she states: "Many products on the beauty market today claim to stimulate production of these materials to keep skin looking young. But there is only so much that creams, treatments, and "cosmeceuticals" can do to change the appearance and composition of skin, especially when people have caused irreparable damage through their incautious behaviour in the sun" (Jablonski, 2013, p. 125).

Another popular belief is that beautiful, young skin glows. According Erdman et al., "a 'glow of health' has long been considered by medicine traditions as a clinical sign of good health and wellness, and radiant skin and hair are universal indicators of good health" (Erdman et al, 2014, p. 110). It is quite noticeable, that words such as 'glow', 'radiance' and 'lightening' often appear in creams aimed at the female buyer.

Skincare product advertisements are usually placed in journals or on websites targeting a specific audience, in this case, women. When it comes to selling women's cosmetic products, corporations like to employ intellectual analogies. The use of conceptual metaphors makes it simpler to transmit the intended notion or association to the woman purchasing the goods – they are like an attempt to convey the qualities of a product through an image of context.

Methodological notes

To achieve the objectives of the study, a mixed-methods research design was adopted, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative component employed descriptive and contrastive analyses, grounded in the framework of conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The descriptive method was utilized to identify and systematically describe the conceptual metaphors underlying women's skincare advertisements, focusing on the mapping between source domains and target domains. Contrastive analysis was subsequently applied to detect cross-linguistic similarities and differences in metaphorical structuring between English and Lithuanian advertisements, revealing how cultural and linguistic factors shape metaphorical conceptualization of skin and beauty.

The quantitative component of the study served to determine the frequency of metaphorical expressions, thereby identifying dominant source–target domain mappings and the relative salience of specific conceptual metaphors within each language. This combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses enables both a detailed understanding of metaphorical conceptualizations and an empirical measure of their prominence.

The corpus consisted of 100 advertisement texts, comprising 50 English and 50 Lithuanian ones, all related to women's skincare products. The analysis proceeded in several stages. First, metaphorical expressions were identified based on their deviation from literal semantic construal and their role as instantiations of broader conceptual metaphors. Next, target domains – including skin, skincare, and beauty – were delineated to capture the semantic field of interest. Lexical items representing source domains were highlighted in bold to facilitate the mapping analysis.

Subsequently, the metaphorical expressions were grouped according to conceptual metaphor categories, and representative examples from both languages were provided for each category. This allowed for a systematic cross-linguistic comparison, identifying patterns of metaphorical convergence and divergence. Finally, the frequency of expressions instantiating each conceptual metaphor was calculated and presented in diagrams, providing a quantitative complement to the qualitative analysis and highlighting the relative cognitive prominence of specific metaphors.

By combining conceptual metaphor analysis with frequency-based quantification, the study provides a robust account of how skin and beauty are

cognitively construed in English and Lithuanian advertising discourse, consistent with the principles of cognitive linguistics.

Results and discussion

The collected data showed that metaphorical expressions in English and Lithuanian women skin beauty product advertisements can be related to the following four conceptual metaphors:

1. SKIN IS A LIVING BEING.
2. SKINCARE IS WAR.
3. SKINCARE IS JOURNEY.
4. BEAUTY IS RADIANCE.

All examples analysed and provided in the empirical part of this study were drawn from online advertisements available on the official websites of selected beauty retailers. Given the volume and brevity of the advertising extracts, individual source references are not provided for each example. Instead, the complete list of data sources is included in the section *Sources of Empirical Data*.

1. SKIN IS A LIVING BEING.

In this type of conceptual metaphors, SKIN (a target domain) is perceived as an object, commonly as a LIVING BEING (a source domain). Sometimes skin gets sick, it may suffer due to diseases, may have its own sores, wounds, illnesses, and needs to be treated like a living being. Skin is usually treated with specific methods or technology.

While examining English advertisements, it has been observed that the verbs *breath*, *thank*, the nouns *hydration*, *nutrition* and the adjective *alive* are used to express that skin is similar to a living being. In English advertisements, skin – like all living beings – needs ability to breath (examples 1 and 2):

(1) "Let your skin *breathe.*"

(2) "This exfoliating face scrub rids skin of makeup which gives your skin room to *breathe.*"

Skin also requires food / nutrition (3), water / hydration (4):

(3) "A rich cream that *feeds* skin with plumping hydration and antioxidant-packed Japanese purple rice for a dewy, healthy glow."

(4) "A cool *drink* of water *for thirsty skin*, this hydrating serum visibly replenishes the complexion and improves the look of skin texture and tone."

Meanwhile in Lithuanian advertisements, the verbs *kvėpuoti* (*breath*), *dėkoti* (*thank*), the nouns *drėkiklis* (*hydration*), *mityba* (*nutrition*) and the adjective *gyva* (*alive*) are used to express that skin is similar to a living being. In Lithuanian advertisements, skin requires ability to breath (5):

(5) "Leisk savo odai *kvėpuoti*." (Translation to English (further in the text EN): Let your skin breeth.)

Skin also needs food / nutrition (6), water / hydration (7), rest / energy (8, 9):

(6) "Drėkinamojo kūno balzamo-gelio su apelsinų ekstraktu sudėtyje esantis mangų vaškas *maitina odą*, suteikia jai žavesio, šilko švelnumo ir nuostabaus minkštumo." (EN: The mango butter in this moisturizing body balm-gel with orange extract nourishes the skin, giving it a radiant glow, silky smoothness, and wonderful softness.)

(7) "Ieškote riebumo pojūčio nepaliekančio drėkiklio, kuris numalšintų jūsų odos *troškulį*?" (EN: Are you looking for a moisturizer that doesn't leave a greasy feeling and will quench your skin's thirst?)

(8) "Veido serumas padeda atkurti *pavargusią*, pirmųjų brandumo požymių turinčią odą." (EN: This facial serum helps restore tired skin showing the first signs of aging.)

(9) "Diena po dienos oda pastebimai atsinaujina ir *atsigauna*." (EN: Day after day, the skin visibly renews and revitalizes itself.)

2. SKINCARE IS WAR.

In this conceptual metaphor WAR is the source domain, and SKINCARE is the target domain. The skin is affected in many ways, such as stress, biological aging, harmful UV rays and pollution. These are rivals or enemies in this skincare war. The advertisers often use conceptual metaphors to describe the difficulty of skincare, as it is an imaginary battlefield, where the skin is fighting against, should be prevented or protected from an enemy.

In English advertisements, the verbs *fight*, *target*, *reduce*, *protect*, *defend*, *prevent*, and the nouns *protection* are used to express that skincare is similar war. Skin fights wrinkles / fine lines / pores/ dark sports (10), UV rays (11), pollution (12):

(10) "A brightening serum that *combats* the look of dark spots caused by sun, acne, or pregnancy, visibly even skin tone, and helps improve skin's glow."

(11) "Stop Signs™ Technology prevents signs of aging by *combating* a full spectrum of modern environmental aggressors including UVA/UVB and other skin irritants."

(12) "A daily moisturizer that hydrates for up to 24 hours while soothing and *protecting* skin from pollution and free radicals."

In Lithuanian advertisements, the verbs *kovoti (fight)*, *saugoti (protect)*, and the nouns *apsauga (protection)* are used to express that skincare is similar to war. Skin fights UV rays (13), pollution (14), aging (15):

(13) "Odos *apsauga* nuo UV spindulių SPF 30." (EN: Skin protection against UV rays, SPF 30.)

(14) "Itin galingas dviejų antioksidantų, vitamino C ir ginkmedžio derinys padeda *apsaugoti* odą nuo neigiamo laisvųjų radikalų poveikio." (EN: The powerful combination of two antioxidants – vitamin C and ginkgo – helps protect the skin from the harmful effects of free radicals.)

(15) "Šio kremo sudėtyje yra 8,5 proc. koncentracijos patentuoto ypač aukštos kokybės ląstelinio komplekso „Premium Cellular Complex" ir 5 proc. hialurono rūgšties, kasdien *kovojančių* su visais senėjimo požymiais." (EN: This cream contains an 8.5% concentration of the patented, exceptionally high-quality "Premium Cellular Complex" and 5% hyaluronic acid, which work daily to combat all signs of aging.)

3. SKINCARE IS JOURNEY.

Target domain SKINCARE is often portrayed as a process or routine, like some kind of a journey one must embark on in order to take good care of skin. A journey is usually portrayed as difficult, long, uneven, heavy. This is a reason why brands love to advertise their product as an auxiliary tool which helps to ease the journey, make it pleasant, use less of the time, make it quieter, simpler, faster. The goal of every journey is believed to be the destination. The destination in this case is a goal, and the goal of a skincare is a beautiful, healthy skin.

In English advertisements, the nouns *way*, *routine*, *route* and the adjectives *rough* and *bumpy* are used to express that skincare is similar to a journey (16, 17):

(16) "Helps you buff your *way* to beautiful, softer and fresher skin, transforming your scaly legs from reptilian to radiant!"

(17) "It is the quickest and easiest *route* to getting smooth and well-buffed skin."

Meanwhile in Lithuanian advertisements, the nouns *kelias* (*road)* and *rutina* (*routine)* are used to express that skincare is similar to journey (18, 19):

(18) "Palengvina jūsų *kelią* į gražią, švelnesnę ir gaivesnę odą, paversdama pleiskanojančias kojas į spindinčias!" (EN: It helps you achieve beautiful, softer, and fresher skin, transforming flaky legs into glowing ones.)

(19) "Lengvesnė veido odos priežiūros *rutina*." (EN: A simpler skincare routine.)

4. BEAUTY IS RADIANCE.

Skin's beauty is often portrayed as radiance. Advertisements with conceptual metaphor BEAUTY IS RADIANCE also include conceptual metaphors SKIN IS A LIVING BEING. However, the difference is that SKIN IS A LIVING BEING advertisements emphasise only the skin itself as a separate entity, while BEAUTY IS RADIANCE advertisements emphasise the desired result which is beautiful skin that glows. Consequently, the beauty of skin becomes radiance.

While examining English advertisements, it has been observed that the nouns *glow*, *radiance*, the verb *brighten* and the adjective *glowing* are used to express that skin's BEAUTY is a RADIANCE. The appearance of radiance is caused by vitamins (20), retinol (21), thermal water (22), acids (23, 24):

(20). "A serum that features a concentrated cocktail of niacinamide, vitamin C, licorice root extract, and Barbados cherry to visibly *brighten* skin."

(21). "A lightweight, bi-phase serum with retinol that quickly hydrates and visibly plumps skin while helping to leave it calmer, visibly *brighter*, and more even-looking over time."

(22) "A natural face mist with thermal water to prep skin, immediately tighten pores & set makeup for dewy, *glowing* skin."

(23) "An AHA and PHA peel pad to eliminate pore-clogging residue and dead skin cells for smoother, more *radiant-looking* skin."

(24) "A color-correcting, medium-coverage skin tint formulated with *brightening glow* serum, hyaluronic acid and SPF 40 that delivers an immediate, visibly healthy glow."

Meanwhile in Lithuanian advertisements, the nouns *radiance* or *purity*, the adjectives *glowing* or *bright*, and the verb *brightening* are used to express that skin's beauty is radiance. The appearance of radiance is caused by vitamins (25), retinol (26), acids (27):

(25) "Glicerinas ir vitaminas E padeda sumažinti tamsius ratilus po akimis ir paakių pabrinkimą, suteikdamas odai natūralaus *spindesio*." (EN: Glycerin and vitamin E help reduce dark circles under the eyes and puffiness around the eyes, giving the skin a natural glow.)

(26) "Oda tampa švelni ir *skaisti*. Kaukėje esantis retinolis puikiai tinka visų tipų odai." (EN: The skin becomes soft and radiant. The retinol in the mask is ideal for all skin types.)

(27) "Priemonėje esanti hialurono rūgštis skatina odos kolageno sintezę, suteikia jai *spindesio*, užtikrina optimalią priežiūrą, standina ir atgaivina odą" (EN: The hyaluronic acid in this product stimulates collagen synthesis in the skin, gives it a radiant glow, ensures optimal care, and firms and revitalizes the skin.)

The comparative analysis revealed, that both Lithuanian and English languages share the same conceptual metaphors in skin beauty advertisements. However, their frequency is different. In English beauty advertising discourse, the frequency of conceptual metaphors is as follows: SKINCARE IS WAR (38% of all metaphorical expressions), SKIN IS A LIVING BEING (30%), BEAUTY IS RADIANCE (24%), SKINCARE IS JOURNEY (8%). In Lithuanian the sequence of conceptual metaphors according to their frequency is as follows: SKIN IS A LIVING BEING (40%), SKINCARE IS WAR (30%), BEAUTY IS RADIANCE (24%), SKINCARE IS JOURNEY (6%). The comparison of Lithuanian and English data shows that in English beauty advertising the most popular conceptual metaphor is SKINCARE IS WAR, and in Lithuanian it is SKIN IS A LIVING BEING.

Conclusions

The findings suggest that representations of skin beauty in contemporary advertising are largely standardized across linguistic contexts. Both English and Lithuanian advertisements rely on a shared set of conceptual metaphors – SKIN IS A LIVING BEING, SKINCARE IS WAR, SKINCARE IS JOURNEY and BEAUTY IS RADIANCE – indicating a convergence in how beauty is conceptualized. This uniformity supports the notion that global marketing strategies can be applied with limited localization. However, such convergence may also reflect the dominance of globally circulating beauty discourses rather than genuinely universal perceptions.

The prominence of SKINCARE IS WAR in English advertising suggests a more problem-solution-oriented and interventionist framing, whereas the dominance of SKIN IS A LIVING BEING in Lithuanian advertisements points to a comparatively

holistic and maintenance-oriented perspective. Although BEAUTY IS RADIANCE occupies a similar position in both datasets, the relatively marginal role of SKINCARE IS A JOURNEY indicates that process-based narratives are less central in persuasive strategies.

Differences are also evident in how metaphors are linguistically instantiated. English advertisements tend to operationalise SKIN AS A LIVING BEING through hydration, reinforcing a biologically reductionist view of skin as dependent on external inputs. In contrast, Lithuanian advertisements emphasize rest and energy, suggesting a broader, more systemic understanding of skin health. Similarly, while both contexts construct environmental factors and UV radiation as adversaries within the SKINCARE IS WAR metaphor, English advertisements foreground wrinkles as the primary "enemy," thereby intensifying age-related anxieties. Lithuanian advertisements, by contrast, shift attention toward aging and odour, indicating a different hierarchy of concerns.

The metaphor BEAUTY IS RADIANCE is consistently linked to scientifically framed ingredients in both contexts, reflecting the growing authority of scientific discourse in beauty marketing. However, the variation in specific ingredients (e.g., thermal water or Moringa oleifera in English versus active ingredients more broadly in Lithuanian) suggests differing degrees of product specialization and market maturity.

Overall, the observed differences highlight the continued relevance of localized cultural meanings. These findings suggest that conceptual metaphors function not only as cognitive tools but also as strategic resources that are selectively adapted to align with culturally specific expectations and persuasive norms.

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