

# IN THE MIND'S EYE: MENTAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FLOODS BY THE BRITISH AND THE BULGARIAN MEDIA

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**Abstract:** *From a cognitive linguistics perspective, the present study is aimed at the analysis of manifestations of metaphorical mental conceptualizations of flooding events in terms of war in the language used by the British and the Bulgarian journalists and the extent to which the implementation of the cognitive metaphor FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR differs in the media representations of the two countries. The corpus used for the research consists of 19 articles extracted from the electronic databases of four newspapers – two for the British discourse (the Guardian and the Independent) and two for the Bulgarian discourse (Monitor and Standart). A total of 33 example sentences have been extracted from the corpus (21 from the British media and 12 from the Bulgarian media) and they have been coded with respect to the mappings between the source and target domain of the cognitive metaphor. The results of the research show that the media both in the UK and Bulgaria rely on metaphorical projection from the domain of war when flooding crises are reported, which confirms the notion that metaphorical projection is a universal structural element of cognition.*

**Keywords:** *conventional metaphor, cognition, conceptualization, mappings, media language*

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## Introduction

The famous Latin saying *Cogito, ergo sum* (*I think, therefore I am*), attributed to René Descartes, expresses the link between one's mental conceptualizations and their very existence. On the other hand, the connection between language and thought and whether the former determines, or at least influences the latter has been central to the Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis, which, with respect to its strong version, has been generally rejected by the scientific community, but as far as its weak version is concerned, within the cognitive linguistics enterprise, it is accepted that there is evidence which supports the claim "that language facilitates our conceptualising capacity" and that "cross-linguistic differences influence non-linguistic thought and action" (Evans & Green, 2006, p.98). While the extent to which our mental processes are influenced by language is an ongoing debate, concerning the language-thought relationship, it is language that encodes and reveals our thought processing mechanisms. As for the nature of language, it is often perceived as a set of signifiers and signified (Saussure, 1959, p.67), i.e. words, which, literally, refer to objects from the surrounding material world. For instance, an object, which is a piece of furniture with a back, a seat, and four legs for one person to sit on, is designated with the lexical item *chair*. Different versions of the same item can be denoted with different linguistic signs. If the chair is comfortable and has sides that one can rest their arms on it is labelled *armchair*. When it has three or four legs without a back or arms, then it is termed *stool*. Cognitive linguistics postulates that our conceptual perception of the world is derived from embodied experience (Evans & Green, 2006, p.365). People use the five senses to experience and learn about material objects. For example, a child sees, touches, smells, or even has a taste of the chair. Then, he or she hears the word *chair* used in context and connects the object that has been experienced with the senses to the word that have been heard and the information is stored in the mind. When the word *chair* is used by somebody else, a picture of the chair with all the connotations connected to that object in relation to its shape, colour, texture, scent or flavour is brought back. Thus, the child has formed an image schema related to the notion of chair. Image schemas "exist at a level of generality and abstraction that allows them to serve repeatedly as identifying patterns in an indefinitely large number of experiences, perceptions, and image formations for objects or events that are similarly structured in the relevant ways" (Johnson, 1987, p.28) They can be the basis for a metaphorical projection from one domain to another. When it comes to processing notions that are impossible to be experienced through the five senses because they cannot be seen, heard, tasted, smelled or touched, like for instance the nature of the character of a person or an organization, then in order to understand that notion and talk about it we might take a word that literally names a material object that can be experienced through the senses and use that word to refer to the notion that cannot be perceived through embodied

experiences. For the sake of illustration, let us take the noun *face*, as an example. Its first meaning does name a material object; or rather a part of it and that is “the front part of your head, where your eyes, nose, and mouth are”. Furthermore, it is used to label “the nature or character of an organization, industry, system etc. and the way it appears to people”, also “a steep vertical surface or side of a mountain, cliff etc.” as well as “the front part of a clock or watch where the numbers and hands are” (LDCE, 2003, p.559). The three meanings of the noun *face* are metaphorical in nature, and they show how metaphors are used as a way of understanding abstract concepts through the means of more specific, familiar ones.

### **Theoretical background**

Traditionally, metaphors have been considered as tropes and thus have been expatiated on in the field of rhetoric since ancient times. Metaphors have been considered implicit similes that can be represented with the formula “A is B”, as in *Achilles is a lion*, which is based on resemblance between a lion and the character *Achilles* from the *Iliad*. The resemblance is not in his physical appearance but rather concerns qualities that a lion has, like bravery, which are projected to the hero (Evans & Green, 2006, p.293).

Mark Johnson in his book *The Body in the Mind* states that “metaphor was thought to be either a deviant form of expression or a nonessential literary figure of speech” (1987, p.66). He lists the following standard theories of metaphor: a) literal-core theories; b) metaphorical proposition theories; c) the non-propositional theory. He states that according to the literal-core theories metaphor was treated as a mode of expression, which is rhetorically powerful or artistically interesting without having any unique cognitive content. Metaphorical proposition theories emphasize the creative side of metaphor, where the “new whole that is created constitutes an entirely novel unity in our experience”. However, the specific nature of that creative activity of metaphorical imaginations has not been supplied within the metaphorical proposition theories. According to Mark Johnson, Donald Davidson’s non-propositional theory of metaphor states that metaphors do not have any distinctive metaphorical meaning apart from their literal meaning but only intimate (not mean) something and cause us to notice or see something and thus perform an important cognitive function. However, that theory does not provide an account of the connection between the literal meaning of the sentence and what the hearer notices (ibid, pp.67-72).

In their seminal book *Metaphors we Live By* (1980, p.3) George Lakoff and Mark Johnson theorize that metaphors are not merely poetic figures of speech, but are rather a fundamental feature of our conceptual system, i.e. they encode our thinking patterns and are used as structuring elements of our cognition. If we take the domain of TIME, it is difficult to find a lot of examples where TIME

is referred to in a strictly literal way. Time is more often than not conceptualized in terms of MOTION or SPACE, like in *Christmas is approaching* or *We are moving towards Christmas*, or alternatively, *Christmas is not very far away* (Evans and Green, 2006, p.290). According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.15) the fact that humans walk in upright position and their heads are up, while their feet are down, gives rise to orientational metaphors where notions like happiness/unhappiness, consciousness/unconsciousness, health and live/sickness and death, having control/being under control etc. are conceptualized metaphorically on the vertical axis, where happiness, consciousness, health and live, having control etc. are considered UP, while unhappiness, unconsciousness, sickness and death, being under control etc. are considered DOWN. Similarly to how our physical experiences with orientation give rise to orientational metaphors, our experience with physical objects (especially our bodies) provides the basis for ontological metaphors, where events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., are viewed as entities and substances. Utterances, such as *Inflation is lowering our standard of living* and *We need to combat inflation* exemplify the INFLATION IS AN ENTITY metaphor (ibid, pp. 25-26). In addition to orientational and ontological metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson also delineate structural metaphors, such as RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS WAR, where we use one highly structured concept to structure another. The grounding of such structural metaphors is in systematic correlations within our experience. Rational argument is conceptualized in terms of physical conflict. Fighting is all-pervasive in the animal kingdom and humans have even institutionalized it as war. No matter if fighting takes place between animals or between a group of people its basic structure, which includes issuing challenges, attacking, defending, counterattacking, retreating, and surrendering, remains essentially unchanged. Instead of engaging in physical conflicts humans very often take part in verbal arguments which are comprehended in the same way as physical battles, i.e. there are territories to establish or to defend; one can either win or lose. In the case of a domestic argument between a husband and wife, every verbal means that they have at their disposal is used, like intimidation, threat, invoking authority, insult, belittling, challenging authority, evading issues, bargaining, flattering, etc. In the academic world, the diplomatic world or in the world of journalism a lot of the verbal means that are used in a domestic situation are not acceptable, but even in these situations RATIONAL ARGUMENT is understood and carried out in terms of war, since there are still positions that are held and defended (ibid p.61-63). With structural metaphors, the structure of the source domain is mapped onto the target domain. Kövecses (2002, p. 8) exemplifies that process through the conceptual metaphor SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE PLANTS. The authentic examples he has given, which are presented below, show how linguistic items from the source domain PLANT (*branch*,

*grow, prune, root, flourish, blossom, reap*) are used to conceptualize the target domain SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

He works for the local **branch** of the bank.

Our company is **growing**.

They had to **prune** the workforce.

The organization was **rooted** in the old church.

There is now a **flourishing** black market in software there.

His business **blossomed** when the railways put his establishment within reach of the big city.

Employers **reaped** enormous benefits from cheap foreign labour.

The mappings for that metaphor can be represented systematically, as follows:

Source: PLANT	Target: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
(a) the whole plant	the entire organization
(b) a part of the plant	a part of the organization
(c) growth of the plant	development of the organization
(d) removing a part of the plant	reducing the organization
(e) the root of the plant	the origin of the organization
(f) the flowering	the best stage, the most successful stage

While discussing the domains of conceptual metaphor Joseph Grady (1997, p.177) notes that domains can range from “the simplest and most schematic (e.g., vertical elevation) to the richest and most vivid (e.g., the domain encompassing food, cooking, and eating)”. He suggests that domains can be analysed by means of primary scenes (like image-schemas), because their structure is relatively simple and cannot be decomposed into more basic structures, while some domains can be quite complex. He lists the domain of war together with some other domains, such as cooking, eating, buildings and journeys as domains that are structure by primary scenes. He points out that “the correspondences which constitute foundational metaphorical mappings are not based on perceived isomorphisms between broad domains of experience, but between much narrower, more local, temporarily bound elements of experience”. These elements intervene in different life domains like cooking, traveling etc. As a matter of illustration, he discusses typical scene from food preparation, which involve lifting of heavy objects, moving from place to place and assessing quantities. All those activities are the basis for conceptual metaphor but are not restricted to a food “domain” (ibid, p.176).

## Corpus & Methods of analysis

The present study aims to identify in comparative terms the extent to which the cognitive metaphor FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR is present in the British and the Bulgarian media discourse on floods and whether there is congruence between the Bulgarian and the British media representation of floods concerning the available mappings between the source and target domain of the FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR metaphor. To that end a corpus of articles has been excerpted from the online databases of *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *Monitor* and *Dnevnik* with the help of *flood*, *swamp*, *inundated*, *battle*, *border*, *pour* as search strings, which covers the period from 11.02.2014 to 04.11.2017. The corpus consists of 19 articles (11 from the British media and 8 from the Bulgarian media) that showcase the implementation of that cognitive metaphor by the British and the Bulgarian media and a total of 33 example sentences have been selected and analysed - 21 from the British media and 12 from the Bulgarian media. The extracted sentences have been classified and arranged with respect to the mappings between the domains of war and flooding crisis and then the selected examples have been analysed qualitatively.

## Data Analysis

### FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR

Natural disasters with their devastating power have always been around since the dawn of humanity and have evoked a sense of threat and anxiety. Despite the advances in science and technology natural disasters, and flooding in particular, are very common phenomena, which without warning can wreak havoc even on the most developed countries' economies. Since flooding is a movement of water towards territories, which are normally dry, from a metaphorical point of view the moving waters could be envisioned as tourists or visitors, but in reality, due to the destructive force of that movement, the moving waters are conceptualized as intruders or invaders that need to be opposed and thus seen to be at war with us, which gives rise to the FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR metaphor. When we think about war, there are certain elements that are always present in the imaginary picture in the minds of most people. These include *battle*, *fight*, *frontline*, *battlefield*, *army*, *soldiers*, *mobilization*, *casualties*, *strategies*, *warning*, *defence*, *attack*, *withdrawal*, *winning or losing the war*, etc. There are always at least two belligerent countries that are opposing each other. A war is always associated with destruction, death and damage. All those elements from the major theme war are mapped to elements of the target domain – in that case a flooding crisis. Here are the mappings between the domains of war and flooding crisis:

***Mappings between the domains of war and flooding crisis***

Source domain: <b>war</b>	Target domain: <b>flood crisis</b>
enemy	flooding, rivers
battles	prediction, preparation and response to flood waters
battlefield	flood-prone or flooded areas
armies	government agencies and nongovernmental organizations
soldiers	government agency employees and volunteers
winning a war	floods are prevented, or there is minimum damage and no casualties
losing a war	flooding is not prevented and there are lots of casualties and lots of damage
strategies in a war	strategies for tackling flood crisis and flood prevention
effects of war	effects of floods

With a view to exemplifying the utilization of the cognitive metaphor FLOODING CRISIS IS WAR, let us take a look at a few authentic examples from the selected corpus:

***Flooding and a river are the enemies to be fought***

[1] The **fight** against **flooding** for a city like York will not end /h/. A multimillion pound scheme to help protect 300 residents 'homes and businesses from the risk of flooding in an area called Water End is the latest effort under way, backed by council and Environment Agency funding. (G<sup>1</sup>/11.02.2014); [2] Britain will take lessons in **combating flooding** from the Dutch after a formal agreement is to be signed by the two nations to share expertise. (I<sup>2</sup>/06.01.2016)

The noun *fight* in example [1] refers to a multimillion pound scheme, which aims at the prevention of flooding, but the term *fight* is very often associated with a battle between two armies. On the other hand, *combat* in example [2] has to do with the prevention of and response to emergency situations caused by flooding, but *combat* is, in reality, a war term meaning fighting, especially during a war. Here is a Bulgarian example [3] that expresses the same notion:

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1. "G" stands for *the Guardian*. – a. n.

2. "I" stands for *the Independent*. – a. n.

[3 BG ex.] Цяло Банско излезе вчера **да се бори** с река Глазне, която минава през града. (Yesterday, the whole of Bansko gathered **to fight** the Glazne River, which runs through the city.) (St<sup>3</sup>/ 10.11.2016)

The usage of ‘*бори (fight)*’ in example [3] stands for all the effort that involve building flood defences with sandbags, rescuing people trapped by the rising waters etc., but as aforementioned the term has strong ‘war’ connotations. The enemy to be fought in the example is flooding and the river.

### ***Government agencies employees and volunteers are soldiers***

There are always two sides in a war and they are fighting against each other by amassing armies which consist of soldiers. While the belligerent countries in a human conflict use human beings as soldiers, in the context of flooding the first opponent includes the government agencies together with the citizens of the city that are trying to stop the waters and help people in need, and the second opponent is the rising water that is trying to engulf a town, a city or a village.

[4] As at Burrowbridge, locals are angry at what they see as a lack of help from the authorities – not **the Environment Agency**, which is battling bravely to hold back the waters – but others who could be getting supplies in and out to the few left there. (G/11.02.2014); [5] **The military have been mobilised** to provide additional support where the gold commanders need it ... **The assets that are needed from across the nation** have been mobilised to the areas affected. (G/11.02.2014); [6] **Troops** have been helping to evacuate flood-stricken residents in the Thames Valley where water levels continue to threaten thousands of home. Fire crews in Surrey alone have rescued 150 people in the last 24 hours. (G/11.02.2014)

Example [4] limns the battle of the Environment Agency with the waters and the locals’ anger at the lack of help from the other authorities, while examples [5] and [6] dwell on the other participants in the battle with the flood that have been mobilized, scilicet the agency’s employees, the military, the troops and the fire crews, some of which happen to be real soldiers, who are now fighting not against human enemies, but against the elements. Let us take a look at a few examples from the Bulgarian media:

[7 BG ex.] **Доброволци, огнеборци, общински служители и много фирми** полагаха огромни усилия, за да не допуснат р. Глазне да прелее в града (**Volunteers, firefighters, municipal officials, and many companies** have made great efforts not to allow the Glazne River to flow into the city). (St/ 10.11.2016); [8] **Спец звеното ни** е отводнило 47 къщи до момента, като в момента се борят да изведат водата от други 5 сгради (**Our specialized unit** has drained 47 houses so far, currently fighting to bring water out of another 5 buildings). (M<sup>4</sup>/ 08.08.2016)

Similarly to the examples from the British media, the Bulgarian examples [7]

3. “St” stands for *Standart*. – a. n.

4. “M” stands for *Monitor*. – a. n.

and [8] include *firefighters* and *military unions*, but they also include *municipal officials* and *companies* that make up the army that is battling the flooding crisis.

### ***Flooded areas are battlefields***

No war is fought in a vacuum and no battle takes place in an empty space but on a battlefield. When two armies oppose each other they have units that are facing one another in combat on a battlefield. Those units form a line that is called *the front* or *the frontline* (also *front line*). Since the two terms are synonymous, they can be used interchangeably. The regions affected by the floods are envisioned as battlefields and the boundary of the flooded areas are seen as the frontline.

[9] Justin Bowden, national officer of the GMB union, said: “This report of hostility from the residents on the Thames is a direct result of the irresponsible attack by Eric Pickles [the communities secretary] and others on the EA. His incitement has led to the very people **on the frontline** who are actually helping to alleviate the situation bearing the brunt of people’s frustrations. (G/12.02.2014); [10] Union blames hostility towards **frontline EA workers** in Wraysbury on attacks by Eric Pickles and others. (G/12.02.2014)

The context of examples [9] and [10] is an article about the abuse some members of the Environment Agency have suffered by the local people in a flooded area, caused, supposedly, by the attack by the community secretary Eric Pickles and some other people. The employees of the EA are referred here as “the very people *on the frontline*”. As it was mentioned earlier *the frontline* is a war term denoting a *battlefield*. In that context it simply means that those members of the EA staff were carrying out their responsibilities in the most affected by the flood areas but the use of the war term *frontline* instead of *flooded areas* is an absolute proof of the ‘flooded areas are battlefields’ metaphor.

[11 BG ex.] Европа мудро определи мерките за подпомагане на държавите **на предната линия**, които първи поеха вълната от имигранти - Гърция и Италия, но също и България, Унгария и Испания (Europe has sluggishly defined support measures for **frontline** countries that have taken the first wave of immigrants – Greece and Italy, but also Bulgaria, Hungary and Spain). (St/08.09.2015); [12 BG ex.] Миграционните и бежанските потоци са се превърнали в първостепенен проблем, с който Европейският съюз трябва да се справи през следващите години. По отношение на този проблем Гърция се намира **на предната линия**, затова и жителите на гръцките острови са номинирани за Нобелова награда за мир заради щедростта и съпричастността, която проявяват към хората, които войната е прогонила от родината им. (Migration and refugee flows have become a major problem for the European Union to face in the coming years. With regard to this problem, Greece is **at the forefront**, so the inhabitants of the Greek islands have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for their generosity and sympathy with the people who have been driven by war out of their homeland). (St/20.02.2016); [13 BG ex.] И съвсем логично предвид увеличил се многократно брой на мигранти

към ЕС, САЩ са още по-активни. Даваме си сметка, че тази вълна е огромно предизвикателство за цяла Европа, но също и е и голяма тежест за България, която е **почти на предната линия** на тази вълна. (And quite logically, given the ever-increasing number of migrants to the EU, the US is even more active. We realize that this wave is a huge challenge for the whole of Europe, but it is also a big burden for Bulgaria, which is **almost at the forefront** of this wave). (St/07.09.2015)

Even though the Bulgarian examples [11], [12] and [13] do not refer literally to flood waters but rather to waves of immigrants, they also showcase the usage of the war term *frontline* in a similar manner referring to the clash between the waves of immigrants and the citizens of the affected countries and the European Union as a whole, which might be provoked by the cultural shock that the population of the aforesaid countries may experience.

### *Effects of floods are effects of war*

Wars are devastating. It takes months, years, or even decades for a country to recover from the dire consequences of war. For the surviving veterans of a war, the horrific memories of battles can haunt them for years. All those connotations about wars are hidden in the metaphors we live by every day.

[14] The floods have caused **widespread devastation** with some business owners facing tremendous financial hardship. (G/25.02.2014)

To begin with, example sentence [14] makes a mention of *devastation* as one of the consequences of the flooding crisis, a result that coincides with the results of any war and which in turn puts a strain on the budget of the belligerent countries.

[15] Its success, and that of similar schemes across the country, should be at the heart of the “complete rethink” of policy being officially promised **in the aftermath** of last month’s floods – which cost the country at least £5 billion – as climate change threatens to make them increasingly commonplace. (I/02.01.2016)

The meaning of the term *aftermath* from example [15], which is defined as “the period of time after something such as a war, storm, or accident when people are still dealing with the results” (LDCE, 2003, p. 649), reveals its strong war connotations, which include the huge loss of money that a country sustains as a result of a war.

[16] David Cameron has rejected calls by the Daily Mail and Ukip to raid the foreign aid budget to help **flood victims** in the UK. (G/11.02.2014); [17] Heavy monsoon rains have brought Mumbai to a halt for a second day as the worst floods to strike south Asia in years continued to **exact a deadly toll**. (G/31.08.2017); [18] At the weekend, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi flew over the state of Bihar, where **the death toll** is believed to have risen to 500. He pledged millions of pounds for relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and future flood mitigation. (I/30.08.2017); [19] Seals, moles, hedgehogs, badgers, mice, earthworms and a host of insects and

seabirds are among **the unseen casualties** of the floods, storms and torrential rains of the last few weeks, say wildlife groups. (G/23.02.2014); [20] The ordeal was repeated across parts of northern and central Bolivia, where irregular La Niña and El Niño weather patterns caused the worst floods in 60 years, **killing** dozens of people and 150,000 cattle, **destroying** more than 43,000 hectares of cultivated land and affecting 60,000 families. While the survivors have found themselves destitute, hungry, thirsty, and prone to fevers, infections and mosquito-borne diseases, the **psychological damage** has been equally acute. (G/08.12.2014)

In examples [16] to [20] war related vocabulary such as *victims*, *to exact a deadly toll*, *death toll*, *casualties*, *killing*, *destroying*, *psychological damage* that are typical when talking about the consequences of war are mapped to the consequences of a flooding crisis.

[21 BG ex.] Водната стихия **разруши** ски път в ски зона “Банско”, наводни кръчми в местността Пещерите и отнесе два моста. **За щастие пострадали няма**. (The water element **destroyed** a skiing road in Bansko ski area, flooded pubs in the Caves area and carried away two bridges. Luckily, no one was hurt.) (St/10.11.2016); [22 BG ex.] Реката може да отнесе половината град, потопаът **разруши** заведения, ски път, мостове. (The river can carry away half the city, the flood **destroyed** restaurants, a skiing road, bridges.) (St/10.11.2016); [23 BG ex.] От голямото наводнение на 6 август **загинаха** 22-ма души, а няколко хиляди семейства загубиха цялата си покъщина. (22 people **were killed** by the great flood on August 6, and several thousand families lost all their furniture.) (St/15.08.2016)

Examples [21], [22] and [23], which are taken from Bulgarian media, do not differ considerably in their usage of war related vocabulary such as *разруши* (*destroyed*) and *загинаха* (*were killed*), but the expressions are not as varied as the English ones. It is worth mentioning, though, example [21] contains the sentence: *За щастие пострадали няма* (*Luckily, no one was hurt*). It relates to the partial victory that was won. In spite of the destructions caused by the flood, no human lives were lost.

### ***War techniques and strategies are employed while tackling a flooding crisis***

If a country wages a war against another country without the necessary preparation for winning the war, which includes amassing a powerful army, finding allies, spending money on armament and training it properly, the likelihood of it winning the war is very little. Despite all the aforementioned preparation, the war might still be lost without an effective strategy.

Strategy, in warfare, is the science or art of employing all the military, economic, political, and other resources of a country to achieve the objects of war. The term strategy derives from the Greek *strategos*, an elected general in ancient Athens. The *stratego*i were mainly military leaders with combined political and military authority, which is the essence of strategy.

Because strategy is about the relationship between means and ends, the term has applications well beyond war: it has been used with reference to business, the theory of games, and political campaigning, among other activities. It remains rooted, however, in war, and it is in the field of armed conflict that strategy assumes its most complex forms (Cohen, 2022).

[24] The decision not to develop a **comprehensive strategy** to address increased flood risk came in October just a few weeks before the flooding in Cumbria before Christmas and the most recent flooding in Lancashire and Yorkshire. (1/27.12.2015)

The context for example [24] is an article about the Government's rejection to take the advice of its own climate change advisers seriously and take action to protect the increasing number of homes at high risk of flooding, which in turn led to a lack of adequate prevention and consequently to a £50 million spending on a repair scheme for those whose property had been damaged. The primarily war term *strategy* in the example refers to a feasible plan that should have been developed with the intention of preventing or at least lowering the damage caused by an anticipated flood.

[25] "The government must immediately reverse the ludicrous cut of 1,700 EA jobs, followed by an independent inquiry into what are the realistic funding levels necessary to ensure the EA has both **the capital budget to protect the country** from flooding and drought and a big enough **revenue budget** to maintain, service and run these vital **defences**," Bowden said. (G/12.02.2014)

Example [25] continues with the idea of the implementation of a plan that will ensure the protection of the country from flooding. The verb protect again has its war connotations, especially in the collocation "protect the country", since a country is usually protected from a foreign aggressor. The aggressor in that example, however, is a natural disaster – flooding or drought. Another war related term, which has been used in the example, is *defences*. In its military sense the term means "all the systems, people, materials etc. that a country uses to protect itself from attack" (LDCE, 2003, p. 411). In the context of flooding prevention those are structures that have been erected on the banks of rivers that will not allow them to burst their banks despite the increase in their levels.

[26] An Environment Agency spokesman confirmed that some of its staff had received verbal abuse while working in Wraysbury on Monday. "For a short while, we temporarily **withdrew** staff on the advice of the police," the spokesman said. "Our staff were back in Wraysbury yesterday and again today, working alongside members of the community and colleagues from other agencies as part of the continuing effort to deal with this exceptional period of weather and flooding." (G/12.02.2014)

Another term that has war connotations and is used in the context of a flooding crisis is the verb *withdraw* in example [26]. In the military sense the definition

from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English reads as follows: “If an army withdraws, or if it is withdrawn, it leaves a place” (LDCE, 2003, p. 649). In the example the *army* that was withdrawn due to the verbal abuse they had received consisted of Environment Agency staff.

[27] After talks with the cabinet office, real-time river levels, **flood maps** and more could all become available as free and commercially reusable data. (G/27.02.2014); [28] “We are **mapping** all the flooding zones to launch a project to build emergency shelters to make evacuation easy,” said Tagade. (G/31.08.2017)

Maps prove really useful during wartime, as they contain information that is helpful at the planning stages of military operations, which involve a lot of people. Similarly, the use of flood maps in examples [27] and [28] is reminiscent of the wartime strategy of using military maps.

[29] The effect could be to enable a range of startups and larger businesses to develop local **flood warning systems** using Environment Agency information, such as groundwater levels, real-time river levels and flood risk to homes. (G/27.02.2014); [30] Three other critical data sets, including **national flood defences and flood warning areas**, are not open - and so cannot be used by other developers without special permission. (G/27.02.2014)

The usefulness of warning system usage is analogous to that of map usage during wartime. By definition,

a warning system in military science is any method used to detect the situation or intention of an enemy so that warning can be given. Because military tactics from time immemorial have stressed the value of surprise – through timing, location of attack, route, and weight and character of arms – defenders have sought to construct warning systems to cope with all these tactics (Davis, 2019).

Since the *enemy* during a flooding crisis is the rising water, the development of local flood warning systems, which is mentioned in examples [29] and [30] is one of the best strategies for winning the war.

[31 BG ex.] От ранни зори кметството задейства **общинския план за защита при бедствия**. (Since early dawn, the City Hall has triggered **the municipal disaster protection plan**). (St/10.11.2016); [32 BG ex.] Местният съвет по сигурност и **щабът за изпълнение на плана за защита от бедствия** са в непрекъснат режим на работа. На всеки 30 минути те **докладват** на кмета Икономов спасителните и аварийно-възстановителните работи. Ситуацията е **овладяна**. (The Local Security Council and **the Disaster Response Plan Implementation Staff** are in a continuous mode of work. Every 30 minutes, they **report** to Mayor Ikononov the rescue and emergency repair work. The situation is under control.) (St/10.11.2016)

Examples [31] and [32] taken from a Bulgarian newspaper substitute the term *strategy* with *plan*, but the latter term basically has the same war connotations

as the term *strategy*. The verb *report* and the noun phrase *under control* from example (32) are war related in their nature, too.

[33 BG ex.] Преди да тръгне на проверка, той свика **работно съвещание на кризисния щаб** в община Бургас за ситуацията в районите, пострадали при жестокото наводнение преди десетина дни (Prior to the inspection, he summoned **a working meeting of the crisis headquarters** in the municipality of Burgas about the situation in the areas affected by the brutal flood ten days ago). (M/04.11.2017)

The term headquarters from example [33] has the following meaning with military connotations: “the place from which military operations are controlled” (LDCE, 2003, p. 750). The military reference in the example is mapped to the target domain of a flooding crisis by referring to the place where the strategies for prevention and response to floods are developed.

## Conclusions

All in all, through systematic analysis from the perspective of cognitive linguistic the present study reveals that war terms are widely used both in the English and Bulgarian representation of flooding crises. The source domain of war is applied to the source domain of floods. War terms like *fight, combating, battling, mobilized, the military, frontline, devastation, aftermath, death toll, casualties, killing, psychological damage, defences, withdrew, warning systems* are all mapped to the target domain flooding crisis. The analysis shows metaphorical projections from domain of war to the domain of flooding crisis with the following mappings: flooding and a river are the enemies to be fought, government agencies employees and volunteers are soldiers, flooded areas are battlefields, effects of floods are effects of war and war techniques and strategies are employed while tackling a flooding crisis. There are not any significant differences between the media presentations of floods in the British and Bulgarian newspapers apart from that fact that the British media make more frequent use of war related terminology when discussing a flooding crisis. The research confirms that metaphorical projection is a universal structural element of cognition.

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### **Appendix. Corpus of the study**

- G/11.02.2014 (1) – The fight against flooding in York (e.g.1)
- G/11.02.2014 (2) – UK floods: Cameron says ‘money is no object’ – as it happened; (e.g.4) (e.g.5) (e.g.6) (e.g.16)
- G/12.02.2014 - Environment Agency staff not sent to flooded area after ‘abuse’ from residents (e.g.9) (e.g.10) (e.g.25) (e.g.26)
- G/23.02.2014 - Wildlife casualties of floods grow amid fears over ‘polluted’ wetlands (e.g.19)
- G/25.02.2014 - Helping small businesses affected by the UK floods; Maize farmers must take some of the flood blame; (e.g.14)
- G/27.02.2014 - Environment Agency poised to open flood data to public (e.g.27) (e.g.29) (e.g.30);
- G/08.12.2014 - Bolivia after the floods: ‘the climate is changing; we are living that change’ (e.g.20)
- G/31.08.2017 - South Asia floods kill 1,200 and shut 1.8 million children out of school (e.g.17) (e.g.28)
- I/27.12.2015 - UK flooding: Government rejected warnings of high flood risk from own advisers (e.g.24)
- I/02.01.2016 – UK flooding: How a Yorkshire town worked with nature to stay dry (e.g.15)
- I/06.01.2016 - UK to take lessons from Dutch on how a low country can avoid flooding; (e.g. 2)
- I/30.08.2017 - At least 41 million people affected in floods in India, Bangladesh and Nepal, UN says (e.g.18)

- St/07.09.2015 - Коруцията подкопава демокрацията в България (Corruption undermines democracy in Bulgarian) (e.g.13)
- St/08.09.2015 - Не играйте по свирката на Орбан за бежанците (Don't dance to the tune of Orban on refugees) (e.g.11)
- St/20.02.2016 - Атина не може сама да удържи вълната бежанци (Atina cannot restrain the wave of refugees alone) (e.g.12)
- St/15.08.2016 - 100% компенсация за пострадалите в Скопие (100% compensation for the victims is Skopje) (e.g.23)
- St/10.11.2016 - Цяло Банско се бори с Глазне (The whole of Bansko gathered to fight Glazne) (e.g.3) (e.g.7) (e.g.21) (e.g.22) (e.g.31) (e.g.32)
- M/08.08.2016 - Пращаме 20 тона минерална вода към Скопие (e.g.8)
- M/04.11.2017 - Борисов свика кризисния щаб за пострадалите от потопа в Бургас (Borisov summoned the crisis headquarters for the flood victims in Burgas) (e.g.33)