

# Mystifying through Metaphors and Lexical Choice<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** The main aim of this paper is to look into the *Plan for restoring the Islamic wall in Barri del Carme* (València, 2002) to show how the authors of the plan use metaphors to mystify the reality and to illustrate the discursive resistance expressed by residents and residents' associations. We will shed new light on how conventionalized metaphors are commonly accepted as natural ways of naming a reality, and therefore function as a powerful device for constructing consensus. In contrast, image metaphors and less conventionalized metaphors are not pervasive in all kinds of discourses, are not natural ways of naming a reality, and can lead to discursive subversion.

**Keywords:** image metaphor, conventionalized metaphor, mystification, urban planning.

**RESUMEN:** El principal objetivo de nuestro trabajo es analizar el Plan de restauración de la muralla árabe del Barrio del Carmen (València, 2002) para mostrar en qué medida los autores del proyecto usan las metáforas para mistificar la realidad y la resistencia discursiva que los vecinos y las asociaciones de vecinos opusieron al proyecto. Mostraremos que las metáforas convencionalizadas son comúnmente aceptadas como formas naturales de designar la realidad y, por lo tanto, son un mecanismo poderoso para construir consenso, mientras que las metáforas menos convencionalizadas no perviven en todo tipo de discursos, no son formas naturales de designar la realidad y pueden llevar a una reacción discursiva.

**Palabras clave:** metáfora de imagen, metáfora convencionalizada, misificación, planeamiento urbanístico.

## 1. Introduction

For a long time metaphors were seen as a rhetorical device and more specifically as a matter of poetry. Today, however, many cognitive linguists and analysts of discourse recognize that metaphors structure our perception and understanding of reality, and that

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we define our reality in terms of different kinds of metaphors; and proceed to act on the basis of these metaphors. According to Fairclough (1992: 195) “When we signify things through one metaphor rather than another, we are constructing our reality in one way rather than another. Metaphors structure the way we think and the way we act, and our systems of knowledge and belief, in a pervasive and fundamental way”.

Most of our metaphors have evolved in our culture over a long period, but many are imposed upon us by people in power, and people who get to impose their metaphors on the culture get to define what we consider to be true (Lakoff; Johnson, 1980: 159-160). One of the most salient metaphors *we live by* is the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, which is why we often talk about arguments in terms of war. Although there is no physical battle, there is a verbal battle and the structure of an argument (attack, defense and counterattack) reflects this. Another salient metaphor *we live by* is the health metaphor, which is when we speak about abstract concepts in terms of body and health and, therefore, we map onto these concepts some properties of animates or human beings, thus personifying them in some way.<sup>2</sup> But the most interesting thing is that both metaphors, the war metaphor and the health metaphor, have been related to each other for a long time. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, for instance, medicine evoked military metaphors against disease to promote the idea that illness is an *enemy* to be *defeated* and to engage people in a common cause, namely, in a treatment focused on medications.

Sontag (1989), on the other hand, gathers an abundant supply of examples of the way we speak about illness in terms of war and shows how doctors, in their *crusade against cancer*, and in order to *kill the cancer, bombard with toxic rays and chemical warfare*. And vice versa, military *operations* are seen as *hygienic*, as a means to *clean out* fortifications, while bombs are portrayed as *surgical strikes* to take out anything that can serve a military purpose. According to Lakoff (1991), both metaphors, the war metaphor and the health metaphor, are still alive in our culture and have an important role in understanding complex matters such as foreign policy.

The health metaphor is also used to talk about social problems. Fairclough (1989: 120), for instance, has pointed out how disease metaphors are frequently used to speak about social unrest, portraying the healthy situation as the status quo situation and presenting other interests as attacks on the health of society as a whole. According to him, “the ideological significance of disease metaphors is that they tend to take dominant interests to be the interests of society as a whole, and construe expressions of non-dominant interests (strikes, demonstrations and “riots”) as undermining (the health of) society *per se*”. And he concludes that “different metaphors imply different ways of dealing with things: one does not arrive at a negotiated settlement with cancer, though one might with an opponent in an argument. Cancer has to be eliminated, cut out”.

In the following section we will show how disease metaphors are used in urban planning in Spain to hide a social change and to create consensus about it, namely the process of redevelopment of a neglected area – which is generally labelled as *gentrification* in English and as *sanitizing* in Spanish (“sanear”) and Catalan (“sanejar”).

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2. Kövecses (2002: 50) points out that “personification permits us to use knowledge about ourselves to comprehend other aspects of the world, such as time, death, natural forces, inanimate objects, etc.”

## 2. Metaphors in Urban Planning

### 2.1. Introduction

As linguists and as residents of an area of the old city which is undergoing a process of redevelopment or gentrification, we became interested in metaphors when we realized that they were often used to mystify the impact some redevelopment processes might have upon the affected residents. More specifically, the *Plan for Restoring the Islamic Wall in Barri del Carme* (València, Spain) allows us to show how the health metaphor functions as a powerful device in constructing consensus and masking reality. The project, which was supposedly aimed at restoring the Islamic wall and constructing some houses and public facilities, affected 200 people (40% of the population of the area) and included the demolition of 16 buildings and the re-use of 17 construction sites. However, the real goal of the plan was to redevelop a residential area into a tertiary one by getting rid of the residents. The affected inhabitants, who were neither consulted nor informed while the plan was being drafted, gathered in associations, organized debates and round tables, launched awareness-raising campaigns for the citizens, wrote press articles and proposed an alternative plan that was sustainable and respectful towards both cultural heritage and neighborhood. Eventually, in 2004, the plan was withdrawn and a new plan was put forward, which is respectful of most of the existing buildings, and spares the population. However, at the moment, the only activity that can be seen in the affected area is that of the real estate agencies, who buy entire buildings, try to throw the inhabitants out through ‘estate mobbing’ and resell these buildings for twice or three times the original purchase price.

In the following sections we will focus on how architects and urban planners try to create realities and mystify the impact their projects will have on the affected residents by means of metaphors. The data for this study consist of the urban project outlined by the technical specialists, opinion articles from newspapers published from 2003 to 2005, round tables where architects, urban planners, archaeologists and residents have discussed the project, and leaflets from campaigns organized by the residents’ associations. These discourses are analyzed through the combination of Critical Discourse Analyses (i.e. Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2003; Chouliaraki; Fairclough, 1999) and Conceptual Metaphor Theory as used in cognitive linguistics (i.e. Lakoff; Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994, 1999; Steen, 1999; Kövecses, 2002).

Our study differs from other research projects on metaphor in that we will adopt a language-in-use approach to metaphor, where metaphors occur naturally and language users become an integral part of the research. We will stress both how metaphors are used to present a particular ideology as well as the interactional aspects of metaphors to shed light on how more-or-less conventionalized metaphors are processed by speakers, since some scholars have pointed to the need to distinguish degrees of familiarity in metaphors processed by speakers (i.e., Giora; Fein, 1996; Low, 1999).

## 2.2. The Health Metaphor

Conceptual metaphors are grounded in, or motivated by, human experience. According to Boers (1999: 49), when there are various metaphors available to conceive an abstract concept, “the likelihood of a given source domain being used for metaphorical mapping may be enhanced when it becomes more salient in everyday experience”. The bodily source domain is one of those experiences, and one circumstance in which the awareness of one’s bodily functioning is enhanced is when one becomes ill.

In our case (the restoration of the Islamic wall in València), the health metaphor arises as a powerful device to persuade people of the advantages and disadvantages of the plan; and technicians and institutional representatives used this metaphor both to defend and attack the project. The pro-project technicians, for example, established a doctor-patient (and therefore, an expert/non expert) relationship with the affected environment to justify the urban *operation*. This way, the proposed plan is seen in example (1) as a therapeutic solution, namely as a *sanitizing* by means of *delicate urban surgery*, although it entails the demolition of several buildings and the expulsion of their neighbors:<sup>3</sup>

(1) a) La reordenación supone el *saneamiento* de una zona en declive social y económico mediante una *intervención delicada de cirugía urbana* que respeta y completa la edificación existente. (Project. *Modificación del PEPRI del Carmen en el ámbito de la muralla musulmana*, 2002)

b) The redistribution suggests the *sanitizing* of a district in social and economic decline through the *delicate application of urban surgery* that both respects and adheres to the existing environs.

The anti-project technicians also use the health metaphor, but this time, to make the affected residents aware of the consequences of the *operation*, namely, the expulsion of the affected inhabitants and the redevelopment of the neighborhood into a tertiary area. For them, the project is seen as a matter of *major surgery* (2), and more specifically as a *lineal metastasis* which entails *extirpation* and *amputation* of urban tissue (3).

(2) a) Pero es que además yo creo que viajan poco. Mejor dicho, viajan mal. Porque no son capaces de ver y de aprender lo que sucede en el resto de Europa donde ya hace algunos años se ha abandonado casi completamente las *operaciones de cirugía mayor*, la reestructuración contundente, una forma de intervenir que no es un caso aislado y que se ha aplicado de forma contundente todavía mayor si cabe en el Cabañal. (Fernando Gaja, anti-project, round table)

b) But, in addition, I think they travel little, or rather are bad travellers. They are incapable of seeing and learning from what is happening in the rest of Europe where, some years ago, the idea of *operations of major surgery* was almost completely

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3. The sample is written or spoken in Spanish or Catalan. We present the Spanish or Catalan version in section a) followed by the English translation in section b).

abandoned. That is to say, restructuring on an overwhelming scale, a widespread form of intervention that has been employed with drastic effects in the Cabanyal.

- (3) a) Que aunque no se diga, la estrategia aplicada se basa en la llamada hipótesis de la *metástasis de línea* que formuló hace tiempo ya Oriol Bohigas. Una reestructuración *traumática*, de *amputación* y *extirpación* de tejidos urbanos. (Fernando Gaja, anti-project, round table)

b) Although it is not acknowledged, the applied strategy is based on what is known as the *lineal metastasis* formulated in the 1950s by Oriol Bohigas, which consists of a *traumatic* restructuring, *amputation* and *extirpation* of urban tissues.

In example (4), the same anti-project representative maps the health metaphor onto the affected residents, who are referred to as *patients*.

- (4) a) Para los urbanistas más preclaros se trata de una *operación quirúrgica* que pretende matar al *paciente*". Ese *paciente* son el centenar de familias que tendrán que ser expropiadas de sus casas y la destrucción del tejido económico y social que mantiene vivo el barrio del Carmen. (Reported speech from the Newspaper *Pueblo*)

b) For the more enlightened and eminent urbanists it is about a *surgical operation* that tries to kill the *patient*. The *patient*, in this case, being the hundred families who would have their houses expropriated and would witness the destruction of the economic and social fabric that keeps the Barrio del Carmen [old town] alive.

Thus, groups with different interests share the health metaphor at a general level, but exploit it differently at the level of detail. Put in another way, recontextualization of medical discourse into urban planning discourse means that the planned urban intervention can be perceived, on the one hand, as a necessary measure to be taken, but also, on the other hand, as an operation that can *kill the patient* and the square. It depends on the metaphors used to define the plan.

### 3. Conceptual Metaphors and Image Metaphors

When one conceptual domain is understood in terms of another conceptual domain, we have a conceptual metaphor. These metaphors can be given by means of the formula *A is B* or *A as B*. They can be more or less conventionalized, but the boundary between an innovative (or creative) and a conventionalized metaphor is fuzzy. Many of the metaphorical expressions we have talked about so far are fixed by convention and are examples of conventionalized metaphors of what Lakoff; Johnson (1980) call *metaphors we live by*. This is the case of the linguistic metaphor *sanitizing*, which is used in urban planning to label the process of increasing the rents by getting rid of the residents or, in corporate discourse, to design the process of increasing gains by getting rid of employees, for instance. Although the real goal in both cases is the wish to increase gains, the aim is to present them as therapeutic solutions to a disease which is taken for granted.

Other metaphors like *extirpation*, *amputation*, *metastasis* and *kill the patient*, for instance, which are drawn upon to refer to the redevelopment of the area, are extensions of what we called the health metaphor; however, they are emergent metaphors, they are more creative and their use is limited to some texts, contexts or speakers. These emergent or active metaphors are more pragmatic, since they are highly dependent on the context and have to do with language use and users within specific contexts.

In addition to these cases, which are part of whole metaphorical systems, there are also metaphors that are not based on the conventional mapping of one conceptual system onto another, but rather on one mental image being superimposed on another by virtue of their similar appearance. They are therefore referred to by the scholars as (*one-shot*) *image metaphors*, since, through them, we bring into correspondence two rich images for a temporary purpose on a particular occasion. A popular example is when we say that a woman has an hourglass figure, which involves mapping the image of an hourglass onto the image of a woman, fitting the middle of the hourglass to her waist (Lakoff; Turner, 1989: 89-91). These metaphors have been described as a special *ad hoc* case. They stand alone and are not involved in everyday communication. Thus, language users will presumably make sense of them using processes specifically suited to this context, since such metaphors do not belong to their conventional repertoire.<sup>4</sup>

We have found some image metaphors in our data. The most salient and controversial one is, without a doubt, the use of an ecological disaster in Galicia, namely, the use of the word *chapapote* ('tar')<sup>5</sup> to refer to the buildings leaning against the Islamic wall, as in (5).

- (5) a) Esto solo se conseguirá con un cambio de imagen que se quite de encima el *chapapote* de la marca desarrollista y que busque el acuerdo de lo – necesariamente – actual con un pasado que hoy apenas se adivina. (Juan Pecourt, pro-project, Levante-EMV, 16-2-2003)
- b) This will only be achieved through a change of image which does away with the *tar* of the “developmental brand” and which strives for a link between the (necessarily) current moment and an ever-more distant past.

Another instance of what we see as an example of image metaphor is the use of the phrase *song of protest* in (5) to describe the residents' claims, therefore highlighting the idea that they are behind the times or are against progress.

- (5) a) Ha habido más reacciones: aguiluchos dibujados en las paredes que acechan a los vecinos, una falla que critica a la Administración con resonancias de *canción de protesta* de Ana Belén, llamadas al «No nos moverán» etc. (Juan Pecourt, pro project, Levante-EMV, 16-2-2003)

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4. For cognitive linguists (*one-shot*) image metaphors are isolated metaphors and therefore they do not play a central role in conceptual organization. But some scholars have pointed out their importance. Semino (2002), for instance, has analyzed a corpus of texts discussing the economic aspects of the European Union and has found out that isolated *one-shot* image metaphors are the norm.

5. The term “*chapapote*” refers to the oil spill that reached the coast of Galicia (north-west of Spain) and caused important environmental damage to the coastline.

b) There has been more reaction: drawings of hawks on the walls threatening the neighbors, a ‘falla’ [paper maché satirical figure] criticizing the administration with echoes of Ana Belén’s protest song, with its calls of “We shall not be moved”, etc.

Both metaphors are examples of what Steen (1999: 94) called *degrading metaphors*. But the most interesting one-shot image metaphors are those used in urban planning discourse to hide the destruction of the urban layout. It is well known that redevelopments of neglected areas often lead to demolitions of buildings and to the destruction of the urban layout by opening broader spaces. However, there is a strong regulation that forbids such destructive processes in the old cities, as these quarters are the history of the city and should be protected in order to preserve collective memory. Thus, urban planners try to avoid words such as *destruction* or *demolition*, and instead of these, they use metaphors like *esponjar* (‘*sponging*’). Example (6) is very interesting as the speaker, an anti-project representative, unravels these strategies of naming that aim at masking the reality.

(6) a) Que normalmente la confusión terminológica es síntoma de una confusión más grande. Las propuestas que se han hecho en Valencia, y también en Barcelona, de donde viene el modelo, se presentan a menudo como *esponjamientos*. No lo son en absoluto. A pesar de que se ha evitado la asunción de un término que las pueda identificar y definir, creo que este tipo de actuaciones se podrían agrupar bajo la denominación de *reestructuración*. (Fernando Gaja, anti-project, round table)

b) Normally, terminological confusion is symptomatic of more far-reaching confusion. The proposals for València, like those for Barcelona, where they originated, are often described as *spongings*. But they are absolutely not. Although these operations have proved resistant to a general identification and definition, I think that these types of projects can be labeled as *restructuring*.

The essence of a metaphor is that by mapping one concept (the topic) onto another (the vehicle) it necessarily highlights some meanings and hides some others, since metaphors set an equation between two meanings (the meaning of the topic and that of the vehicle) that resemble each other but are not identical. Thus, by using the word *esponjar*, for instance, architects and urban planners do not give an accurate picture of the topic, since this metaphor foregrounds the idea or process of opening spaces, which is congruent with the metaphor of the sponge, but hides the destruction of the historical urban layout and the expulsion of the residents that often precedes the opening of spaces. That, as such is not congruent with the meaning of the vehicle (the sponge). In other words, urban metaphors, like other metaphors, can hide aspects of reality by highlighting some contents and backgrounding some others. But in the area of urban planning metaphors matter more because they constrain our lives and can lead to dehumanized neighborhoods, to quarters without residents, mostly called *tertiary areas*.<sup>6</sup>

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6. See Caballero (2003) for further information on image metaphors in the discourse of architects, and Caballero (2002, 2005) for the use of metaphors to talk about space in the genre of the building review.

#### 4. Lexical Choice

Like metaphors, lexical choice can be a means of masking reality. When we, speakers, put ideas, objects or images into words, we usually make choices and choose the words that allow us to highlight some meanings and hide others. In other words, lexical choice has a primarily referential function, but when we choose one term instead of another we can be aiming at downplaying some of the properties of the term and highlighting some others.

In this section we will focus on the words used by both the affected residents and the authors of the plan to label the process of the residents leaving their houses and looking for new ones; and the process of demolishing buildings to open broader spaces. When we speak about *expel*, *expropriate*, *remove* and *evict* we are speaking about actions carried out by an Agent and undergone by a Patient. In our case, the Agent is the RIVA or office which plans the project and sets up the social, economical conditions, etc.; and the Patient is the affected resident, especially those who are led to leave their houses. Thus, the residents choose these lexical items to portray themselves as patients or victims of an action carried out by others, as in (7) to (9).

- (7) a) El RIVA (Ayuntamiento, Consellería de Obras Públicas y Consellería de Cultura) con la excusa de actuar sobre la muralla musulmana pretende la *expulsión* de más de un centenar de vecinos de sus legítimas casas. (leaflet)

b) The RIVA (comprising representatives of the Town Hall, the regional Department of Public Works and the regional Department of Culture) with the excuse of attending to the ancient Muslim city wall is planning to *expel* more than a hundred neighbors from their rightful homes.

- (8) a) La modificación del planeamiento del Carmen hará visitables 100 metros de muralla árabe / La COPUT *expropiará* 46 viviendas para la reordenación del barrio, pendiente desde 1991.

b) The modification of the plans for the Carmen neighborhood will unveil 100 metres of the old Muslim city wall/The COPUT [Department of Public Works and Transport] *will expropriate* 46 homes for the reconstruction of the old quarter, which has been pending since 1991.

- (9) a) El proyecto, en realidad, supone la terciarización de la zona al *desalojar* a los vecinos y sustituir sus viviendas por edificios oficiales que además nadie sabe cuál es su contenido. (leaflet, 7-5-2003)

b) In reality, the project involves the tertiarization of the area through the *eviction* of the neighbors and the substitution of the dwellings with official buildings with, in addition, unknown functions.

On the other hand, the representatives of the RIVA and the authors of the plan choose words that portray this moving from the owned house to another one as a voluntary act

carried out by the inhabitants, as if it were a freely-chosen decision. In (10) to (12) they use words such as *leave* and *move*, which are intransitive and have only one participant, in this context, the affected residents.

- (10) a) Teme usted que, de prosperar el derribo de la finca, tenga que *abandonar* el barrio? (Juan Pecourt, pro-project, Levante-EMV, 16-3-2003)
- b) Are you worried that the demolition of the building will mean you having to *leave* the area?
- (11) a) Vecinos del Carmen: *moverse*, pero sin perder (Juan Pecourt, pro-project, headline, Levante-EMV, 16-3-2003)
- b) Neighbours of the Carmen: *move* – without losing out.
- (12) a) Todavía le diré más. Familias que estaban alquiladas – incluso jubilados con poca capacidad económica – pidieron comprar la vivienda, pese a que se le ofrecía con un alquiler reducido. Esto es prueba de que entendieron que hacían un buen negocio con ello. No parece que fuera un drama la *mudanza*. (Juan Pecourt, pro-project, Levante-EMV, 16-3-2003)
- b) And I will add another thing. Families who were renting, and even those who were retired with few financial resources, asked to buy their houses, even though they were being offered a reduced rent. This proves that they knew they were being offered a good deal. The *move* does not appear to have been a big drama.

With regard to the process of demolishing buildings and opening broader spaces, the authors of the project sometimes use the word *emptying* (along with the metaphor “*esponjar*”), as in (13).

- (13) a) Y nos parece muy oportuno el *vaciar* esos interiores en los que más de un 80 por ciento o 90 por ciento es solar, actualmente, para precisamente entrar y salir a esos espacios y poder contemplar lo que fue la muralla musulmana. (César Mifsut, pro-project, round table)
- b) And it seems to us suitable to *empty* those interior courtyards, of which more than 80-90 per cent is taken up by construction sites, to allow access to these spaces and be able to view the old Muslim city wall.

The following example is very interesting as well, since an anti-project architect uses the word *emptying* as a synonym for *destruction* and *demolition*:

- (14) a) El crecimiento sin medida ni razón de un contexto de estancamiento demográfico no puede hacerse a costa de *vaciar* los tejidos urbanos más débiles. Es una obviedad decir que los *derribos* a gran escala *derriban* y *destrozan* la estructura de estos espacios acelerando los procesos de deterioro social y demográfico, el despoblamiento, el envejecimiento y la terciarización. (Fernando Gaja, anti-project, round table)

b) Unrestricted growth within the context of a demographic paralysis cannot take place at the cost of destroying the most fragile urban fabrics. It is self-evident that large scale *emptying* leads to the *demolition* and the *destruction* of the structure of those spaces and accelerates the process of social and demographic deterioration, depopulation, ageing and tertiarization. (Fernando Gaja, anti-project, round-table).

## 5. Final Remarks

If metaphors structure the way we think and the way we act, it is reasonable to assume that metaphors play a central role in the construction of social reality and therefore they can change reality and construct consensus or public opinion. However, there are some differences in the way we perceive metaphors. Conventionalized metaphors (called also *inactive metaphors* or *dead metaphors* (Goatly, 1997)) are commonly assumed to be natural ways of naming a reality, as they are pervasive in all sorts of discourses and languages. However, (one-shot) image metaphors are not perceived as natural ways of naming and they can lead to a discursive subversion. This is the case of the innovative metaphors *song of protest* and *tar* drawn upon to describe the protest actions carried out by the residents and the affected buildings, respectively. Both metaphorical expressions led to the reactions shown in (15) and (16).

(15) a) Al contrari, per part de l'equip redactor a la participació veïnal se li va anomenar *cançó de protesta*, a les accions de veïns [...] «aldarull al carrer» i davant la defensa legítima de les llars dels ciutadans se li va denominar *finques de xapapote*, i que no mereixien ser conservades. (Josep Montesinos, anti-project, affected resident, Levante-EMV, 28-2-2004)

b) On the other hand, the editing team dismissed the neighbors' actions as *songs of protest*, their legitimate right to defend their houses as "riots", and their buildings were described as *tar*, fit only for demolition and not worth preserving.

(16) a) Se ha llegado a utilizar el término *chapapote* para definir esas construcciones posteriores, término que quiere buscar un paralelo – desde nuestro punto de vista desafortunado – en otro problema totalmente distinto. (Press announcement from the Col·legi d'arqueòlegs de València)

b) The term *tar* has now come to be used to define those later constructions, a term that searches to find a parallel – and from our point of view, not an appropriate one – with a totally different problem.

And the same happened in the case of extension metaphors such as *delicate surgery*. While the term *sanitizing* is assumed as a natural way of naming the redevelopment of the affected area, the expression *delicate surgery* had a subversive effect and aroused a set of discursive reactions, as shown in (17), where the speaker makes a claim for a *minor surgery*, or in (3) (see above), where the plan was seen as a *lineal metastasis*.

(17) a) Somos conscientes de la mayor dificultad gestora, que no económica, que implica optar por la *cirugía menor* y el diálogo y compromiso de los vecinos. (Miguel Ángel Piqueras, anti-project, Residents' association «Amics del Carme», Levante-EMV, 21-02-2004)

b) We are aware of the major management challenge, -and not economic in nature-, implied in opting for minor surgery and dialoguing with the neighbors and gaining their support.

Example (18) is very interesting since, when the authors of the plan refer to the project in terms of surgery, they are taking up the role of an expert (the surgeon), while the affected residents are the patients and, therefore, are implicitly seen as non-experts. Thus, when the speaker in (18), an affected resident, subtly calls the authors of the plan *butchers* he is degrading them to the role of a non-expert.

(18) a) Se trata de trabajar con el *bisturí*, con el cincel, y dejar para otros menesteres el *cuchillo del carnicero* (Jorge Palacios, anti-project, Levante-EMV, 30-03-2003)

b) It is about working with the *scalpel*, with the *chisel*, and putting the *butcher's knife* aside for other tasks.

Summing up, instead of constructing consensus one-shot image metaphors like “*chapapote*” (tar) or less conventionalized metaphors such as *delicate surgery* can have a subversive effect since the reader does not remain indifferent to the images being mapped. However, conventionalized metaphors such as *sanitizing* are not contested or reactivated by the opponents to counterattack or show disagreement, as they are seen as natural ways of naming reality.

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