



Research Seminar organised by the IILP-UJI

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Metaphor in the experience of illness

Monday 14 December at 11:00 CEST



Speaker: Elena Semino, Lancaster University
Respondent: Vicent Montalt, IILP Universitat Jaume I

Metaphor is well known to be a linguistic and cognitive tool that we use to think and talk about subjective, sensitive and complex experiences in terms of experiences that tend to be simpler and more intersubjectively accessible.

Illness is one of the experiences that are often talked about and conceptualized through metaphor. In this lecture, I discuss the metaphors used by people with three different health conditions: schizophrenia, chronic pain and cancer.

I show how people with all three conditions exploit metaphors creatively for a range of purposes, including emotional disclosure, reconceptualization and self-

empowerment. I also demonstrate how, in all three cases, the insights provided by metaphor analysis can lead to a better understanding of the lived experience of patients, with practical implications for better interventions and support.

I discuss particularly the ‘Metaphor Menu for People Living with Cancer’, which has recently been made available as a resource for patients. I finish with some observations about the use of metaphors in the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

[Elena Semino](#) is Professor of Linguistics and Verbal Art in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University, and Director of the ESRC Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science.

She holds a Visiting Professorship at the University of Fuzhou in China. She specializes in: corpus linguistics, medical humanities, health communication, stylistics, narratology and metaphor theory and analysis.

She has (co-)authored over 100 academic publications, including: *Corpus Stylistics* (Routledge, 2004), *Metaphor in Discourse* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), *Figurative Language, Genre and Register* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), and *Metaphor, Cancer and the End of Life: A Corpus-based Study* (Routledge, 2018).

This seminar will take place on December 14 at 11:00 on Blackboard Collaborate.

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