

Inesa Šeškauskienė

The language of research: arguments in English and Lithuanian

The language of research usually abounds in words such as problems, questions, issues, ideas, doubts, arguments, presuppositions and the like. In many languages including English and Lithuanian, questions and problems can be raised, so can ideas or doubts. However, arguments in English are much less likely to be raised, they are more often put forward or built; in Lithuanian they are just given or put (pateikti, išdėstyti), presuppositions are usually made. The present investigation focuses on the collocates with the word 'argument/s' in academic (meta)discourse in English and Lithuanian. The materials have been collected from the Corpus of Academic Lithuanian (CoraLit) and the academic section of the BNC. An attempt has been made to also search for argument collocations in a corpus of medical and linguistic research articles in English and Lithuanian. The research has been based on the conceptual theory of metaphor and the assumption that each professional discourse operates its own set of metaphors. Academic discourse is usually assumed to adhere to the metaphors THEORY IS BUILDING, IDEAS ARE OBJECTS and RESEARCH IS A JOURNEY. However, cross-linguistic research usually reveals rather unexpected features of conceptualization. The present investigation seems to suggest that overlapping and differing collocation patterns with 'argument/s' in the two languages are the result of differing realization of the same metaphors in the two languages. Apart from the universal embodiment metaphor, both English and Lithuanian seem to employ the metaphor THEORY IS BUILDING, the conduit metaphor (IDEAS ARE OBJECTS) and RESEARCH IS A JOURNEY metaphor. At the same time both languages demonstrate quite a few language-specific features of their realization which have direct impact on their translation.