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COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC METAPHORS

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ABSTRACT

Today many metaphor researchers work in the framework of cognitive linguistics. The cognitive linguistics revolution began in 1980 with the publication of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's Metaphors We Live By. In their book, Lakoff and Johnson amassed an amazing number of examples showing that the way we talk about abstract domains appears to be systematically structured by the way we talk about certain more concrete domains. Thus, we talk about theories and arguments as if they were buildings: theories can have support and arguments can be demolished. These observations gave rise to the theory of conceptual metaphor which moved metaphor out of language into our conceptual organization. According to Lakoff and Johnson, linguistic expressions such as 'to demolish a theory' or 'the foundation of a theory' are not isolated expressions but parts of the conceptual metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS.

KEYWORDS

Metaphor, theory of metaphor, political language, literary language, and comparison language metaphor, figurative metaphor, individual genuine metaphor.

INTRODUCTION

Besides analysing the way we talk into conceptual metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson argued for a new theory of human conceptual organization which received the name of 'experientialism'.l Unlike many

other theories of concepts, experientialism does not ignore the role of human body and sensorimotor experience in shaping human cognition and language. We are not just minds floating in the air, but beings whose successful operation in the world depends on being able to manipulate the environment. Thought and language cannot be independent of our embodiment.

A concomitant constancy between old and new theories of metaphor is the derived attention to its social, affective, and aesthetic import as the corollary of its conceptual structure. When people are compared to lions or to mice, they are compared to animals with a higher or lower status, and this has the accompanying social effect of praising or criticizing them. In addition, when this happens perversely, it can produce irony and humour, and perhaps some admiration for the aesthetic wit of the usage, depending on the occasion and the perception of the producer's rhetorical intentions. But perfectly ordinary metaphorical expressions, such as time is money, also have social and affective implications, which are part and parcel of the stylistic effect of a metaphor. The mechanisms of these effects are now beginning to be studied by experimental psycholinguists (e.g. Gibbs, 1994) and by conversational analysts and applied linguists (Cameron and Low, 1999). Stylistic approaches, however, are typically more focused on the functional analysis of metaphor, effects on cognition being left to the behavioral sciences.

linguistic approach emphasizes the cognitive and systematic nature of metaphor and therefore highlights its ubiquity and conventionality. This is an encompassing, linguistic approach, which does not take metaphor as just a stylistic device in the rhetorical sense of the term. To many scholars the cognitive-linguistic approach has replaced older views of metaphor, which used to limit metaphor to the rhetorical phenomenon, that is, to those metaphors that are active and thereby draw attention to their deviance as well as the probability that they are deliberate.

The cognitive-linguistic view argues in particular that it has taken over from the conceptualization prevailing in the 1960s of metaphor as necessarily involving grammatical deviance, research showing that many metaphorical expressions in language are not deviant but the norm. Similarly, not all metaphors uncovered by the cognitive-linguistic approach require pragmatic inferencing, as was argued in the 1970s by Searle and Grice, but may be understood with reference to conventionalized semantic mappings. The best overview of these different positions is still provided by Ortony . [3:87]

Another series of issues that has been important in the history of metaphor is the debate over the questions whether metaphor is a matter of substituting a metaphorical expression for another, presumably literal one; whether it is a matter of comparison between unlike phenomena; or whether it is a matter of interaction between two distinct ideas. Recent developments in cognitive linguistics have come to take a liberal view of the notion of correspondences in metaphor as a cross-domain mapping. This now includes both pre-existing as well as perceived similarity between phenomena (comparison), and interaction between conceptual structures (interaction), as is for instance summarized in his cognitive-linguistic introduction to the field.[4:78]

This recent and broader view of metaphor in cognitive linguistics goes back as far as the classic position of

Aristotle, who also saw metaphor as based in correspondences. At the same time, the new view re-establishes contact with the widespread structuralist views of metaphor as based in similarity. It has led to new questions about the analysis of many metaphorical expressions. For instance, do we see time as money (metaphor) or do we see time via or through money (metonymy). Since metaphor has been the focus of many investigations over the ages, we begin by outlining the main ideas surrounding it. There has been much discussion on the nature of metaphor since Aristotle addressed it at the noun (name) level, saying that metaphor usually "happens" to the noun. Something that is ordinarily hard to understand may become lot clearer if a name is given to an alien entity. Genus to species, species to genus, species to species, and via analogy or proportion are Aristotle's four ways to create a metaphor; similarity is specifically stated. But in what is likely his later work, the main objective of rhetorical speaking is persuasion—which, from our perspective, is less significant. According to academics, the explanation for metaphor is circular because even the concept of metaphor is metaphorical. For example, Derrida (1982) came to the conclusion that metaphors could only be described in terms of other metaphors since any explanation must rely primarily on the physical, and hence on the metaphorical, since human thinking is essentially metaphorical. Over the years, researchers' interest in metaphors may have waned, allowing them to flourish "only" in stylistics as a fundamental "figure of speech," a trope, that trims everyday language and eliminates monotony with "picturesque" substitutes. However, upon closer examination, it became clear that metaphors are based on our common physical experience rather than being as similar to similes as they were in the western tradition ('Metaphor is an abbreviated simile'). When

examining metaphors, cultural stereotypes should be taken into consideration instead. For example, in Eskimo, metaphors involving snow elicit distinct connections than in any other African language (see the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and, more recently, the neo-Whorfian hypothesis). However, when seen from a different perspective, metaphors from decades or even centuries past may have undergone changes as well, and significant or obvious parallels may have been overlooked. [4:87]

We now know that this is not as simple as it may seem because the only similarities relevant to metaphor are those experienced by people, which differ based on culture and personal previous experience. Metaphors force us to wonder, compare, note similarities and dissimilarities, and then seek confirmation—or lack thereof—regarding the suggestions posed by metaphors. The explanation given for metaphors was that they are shortened or compressed similes without the like element. In completing the metaphoric picture, Mac Cormac adds that as all three are components of the process of knowing, similarity, difference, and resemblance are also relevant when metaphors are involved

CONCLUSION

A third historical issue has to do with the terminology for metaphor analysis. Cognitive linguistics and other cognitive scientific approaches of metaphor have introduced the distinction between 'source' and 'target' domains, the source domain including the knowledge of the metaphorically used concepts and words, while the target domain includes the knowledge of the non-metaphorically used concepts and words. These terms are now in competition with the traditional terminology, which calls the source

domain the 'vehicle' and the target domain the 'tenor'. Yet another tradition talks about the source domain vocabulary as the metaphor 'focus', while the target domain vocabulary is regarded as the 'frame'. Thus, in an expression like Time is money, time is called the tenor or a term from the target domain, and money is called the vehicle or a term from the source domain; and money is the focus, while time is …is called the frame. It is not clear which terminological tradition will prevail. The abstract entities are frequently made more explicit through metaphors, which make use of the concrete categories, whereas the concrete categories are much better defined and relatively well-separated from others (although boundaries are flexible and they often depend on the point of view, as members have various characteristics) (cf. Aristotle). As a result, metaphors construct a reality where odd aspects coexist with more familiar ones rather than describing it; this reveals a portion of our perception of both the outside world and ourselves. It is impossible to completely separate metaphor-related topics from those in poetics, rhetoric, aesthetics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and cognitive studies. We have attempted to portray metaphors from their inception thus far, who grounded her research on discoveries, has brought the glitter to modern studies on metaphor. Since then, metaphor has been argued by cognitive linguists to be essential to human language (cf. Evans and Green 2006). The fundamental tenet is that metaphors—metaphorical expressions—come from our physical experiences and provide context for analyzing metaphors within a synchronic framework. According to Mittelberg, citing Dirven, metaphors convey the ideas, emotions, morals, and other deeply ingrained cultural elements. Wolf concurs. Besides, metaphors are similarity-based; yet, they are founded on cross-domain correlations in human experience, which result in the similarities that are seen to exist between the two domains in the metaphor.

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