

Metaphor and Metonymy revisited
beyond the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor

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Metaphor and Metonymy revisited beyond the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor
Recent developments and applications

Edited by Francisco González-García, María Sandra Peña Cervel
and Lorena Pérez Hernández

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Metaphor and Metonymy revisited beyond the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor

Recent developments and applications

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Introduction to the Volume*

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Cognitive Linguistics (henceforth CL), as noted in Dirven & Ruiz de Mendoza (2010, p. 38), owes its breakthrough to the innovative work by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), which launched the Conceptual Theory of Metaphor and paved the way for the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (Lakoff, 1993). Interestingly enough, thirty years later, these two theories, referred to throughout this introduction as ‘the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor’ (henceforth CTM), still play a pivotal role in the development of more encompassing, dynamic models to further the study of metaphor and metonymy as well as in the application of these concepts to a relatively disparate range of fields, such as discourse analysis, translation, second language pedagogy and grammatical analysis, among others (see Bertucelli & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2010 for an updated overview). In addition, metaphor and metonymy, whether verbal or non-verbal, can prove of invaluable help to unveil a number of key aspects of the dynamics of discourse construction in the past (e.g. cemetery epitaphs), the present and the future (e.g. engineering patents as well as internet services and ICT products).

Although the twelve contributions in this volume proceed on the CTM assumption that “metaphor is a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system” (Lakoff, 1993, p. 203; see further Ruiz de Mendoza & Otal, 2002, pp. 27–42, 50–56 on the distinction between metaphor and metonymy in CMT), they can be seen as extending beyond and thus complementing CMT in a number of significant ways which, for current purposes, can be summarized as follows:

First, while CTM mainly gravitates around cognition and conceptual structure, a recurrent theme in the pages that follow is the vindication of a more dynamic, interdisciplinary approach to metaphor than that envisaged by Lakoff and his followers. Thus, by way of illustration, it is argued that metaphor and metonymy should be best examined from a semiotic, psychological and socio-cultural

* The papers in this volume were first published as a special issue of the *Review of Cognitive Linguistics* in 2011.

angle. This is the central point of Steen's (2008) three-dimensional model of metaphor and metonymy on which a new and improved version of the CTM is proposed (Steen, this volume). In a similar vein, Kövecses (this volume) argues for the need to invoke a number of *prima facie* competing theories of metaphor, including CTM, to provide a comprehensive explanatory account of the process of meaning construction required for a sentence such as e.g. *This surgeon is a butcher*. This plea for cross-fertilization is also evident in Boers' contribution, where suggestive ways of collaboration between pedagogy-oriented Cognitive Semantics and 'mainstream' applied linguistics are outlined at the levels of research methodology, pedagogical implementation and curricular integration. In much the same spirit, Stöver (this volume) proposes both the integration of Steen's (2008) three-dimensional model with psycholinguistic experimentation and an account of the conceptual differences emerging in second language acquisition.

Second, the extension of CTM that pervades this collection of papers not only re-analyzes metaphor and metonymy, but has also rethought the process of meaning construction at a discourse/textual level. A pioneering effort in this respect is the paper by Garrido (this volume), which underscores the dual nature of metaphor and discourse construction as bottom-up processes (since these arise from the connection of lower-units) and top-down processes (given that they result from the properties of higher units, domains in metaphor, discourse relations and their interaction). From a more applied perspective, Semino analyzes how a discourse metaphor originally introduced in a specialist publication is subsequently exploited mainly for pedagogical purposes in different texts belonging to also different genres. In this connection, Semino (this volume) concludes that the rendering of a technical metaphor suitable for the needs of non-expert audiences may well lead to an oversimplified and thus inadequate version of the metaphor in question. The contribution by Hidalgo Downing & Kraljevic Mujic illustrates the complexity of the interaction between multimodal metonymy and metaphor in the discourse of ICT advertising, while also showing that non-verbal metaphors abide by the same principles as verbal or linguistic ones (Forceville, 2006). The papers by Crespo Fernández and Sancho Guinda & Arinas Pellón examine the salient features of figurative language in two discourse types that remain largely unexplored in the CL literature, namely, obituaries and engineering patents, respectively.

Third, a substantive issue in CTM concerns the alleged universal nature of metaphor. Given that metaphors are experientially grounded, and that, accordingly, human bodily experience is basically the same all over the world, it naturally follows that Lakoff & Johnson (1980) regard conceptual metaphors as being more likely than not universal. As Dirven & Ruiz de Mendoza (2010, p.41) emphasize, the research by Boroditsky (2001) and Yu (1998) provides "evidence both for the adequacy of Lakoff & Johnson's universal claims at a fairly abstract level and for

the great, colorful variation of culture-specific realizations of these putative universal conceptual metaphors". Two papers in this volume lend further support to this claim from the standpoint of translation. The contribution by Samaniego Fernández hinges on the active role played by translators in the expansion of the target culture cognitive world enacted in the selection and rearrangement of information in the translation process. The paper by Rojo López offers empirical evidence for the language-specific nature of metaphor in the light of a contrastive analysis of the translation equivalents of metaphorical terms in English and Spanish.

Fourth, the contribution by J. Yoon on verb-noun compounds in Spanish illustrates the suitability of metaphor and metonymy to provide a principled account of the syntactic and, most notably, the semantico-pragmatic facets of productive grammatical phenomena in Spanish, and not just their functioning as literary or stylistic devices.

It is worth noting that the papers in this volume point to the viability of taking a functional-cognitive stance on the analysis of metaphor and metonymy in contrast to a purely cognitive one (see further González-García & Butler, 2006). This can be clearly seen in the relatively ample gamut of theoretical approaches invoked by the contributors to this volume. On the cognitive side, in addition to Cognitive Grammar in general and Cognitive Semantics in particular (Boers, this volume), reference is made to Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 2008) (Steen, Stöver, this volume), Fillmore's (1985) Frame Semantics (Rojo López, this volume), and Goldberg's (1995, 2006) Construction Grammar (Yoon, this volume). On the functional side, Systemic-Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1985/1987) figures prominently in the paper by Sancho Guinda & Arinas Pellón (this volume). In addition, the contribution by Garrido (this volume) also draws on language accounts that explicitly aim to bridge the gap between functionalist and cognitivist approaches, such as the Lexical Constructional Model (Ruiz de Mendoza & Mairal, 2008).

For ease of exposition, the twelve contributions in the present volume can be grouped under the following three headings:

- I. The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: revisions and recent developments.
- II. Metaphor and/or metonymy across different discourse/genre types.
- III. The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: current applications.

The first grouping, namely, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: revisions and recent developments", comprises the papers by Zoltán Kövecses, Gerard Steen, Hanna Stöver and Jiyoun Yoon. The first article, entitled "Recent developments in metaphor theory: Are the new views rival ones?", examines in some detail a number of theories in relation to their suitability to account for the process of meaning construction in the oft-cited metaphor *This surgeon is a butcher*. Specifically,

the theories surveyed are the theory of metaphor as categorization, the “standard” CTM, blending theory, the neural theory of metaphor, CTM as based on the idea of main meaning focus, Relevance Theory as well as a number of proposals in Ruiz de Mendoza (1988). Kövecses reaches the conclusion that all these theories, rather than a single theory alone, need to be invoked in order to account for the appropriate meaning specification of the sentence in question, which should be understood as the by-product of a four-stage process. First, two independent conceptual categories can be discerned: BUTCHERY and SURGERY. Second, by virtue of the similarity between the two, a metaphorical relationship is established between them. Third, the property of “incompetence” emerges in the concept of BUTCHERY in light of and against the background of the concept of SURGERY. Fourth, this property, once projected into the blend, will now characterize the surgeon. As Kövecses is careful to emphasize, in the blended space meaning arises from the dynamics of an interactive system, not from some conflict.

The article by Gerard Steen, “The contemporary theory of metaphor — now new and improved!”, further develops the three-dimensional model of metaphor outlined in Steen (2008). This author challenges the main assumption in CTM that language is a matter of thought rather than of language and then goes on to argue that metaphor needs to be approached by taking into account three dimensions: thought, language and communication. In this view, it is argued that the cognitive-linguistic framework cannot adequately capture the nature of the dynamic interaction between these three dimensions. Rather, what is needed is a three-dimensional model for metaphor, which takes on board the linguistic, conceptual, and communicative properties of metaphor as relatively independent and interacting aspects impinging on all kinds of processes in production, reception, interaction, acquisition, learning, maintenance, etc. Another reason why the ‘old’ CTM proves too limited to handle metaphor is because it fails to acknowledge the distinction between deliberate and non-deliberate metaphor, an aspect which pertains to the dimension of communication. On a higher level of granularity, Steen claims that, within the three-dimensional model of metaphor advocated in this paper, in which social factors are seriously taken into account, a functional distinction can be made between the following four classes of ‘metaphors in thought’: (i) official metaphorical models (e.g. ‘the mind as a computer’), (ii) contested metaphorical models (e.g. HIV/AIDS as ‘the plague’), (iii) implicit metaphorical models (e.g. ‘love is the drug’), and (iv) emerging metaphorical models (e.g. PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, and HAPPY IS UP). As Steen makes abundantly clear, the new contemporary theory of metaphor advocated here still retains the theoretical definition of metaphor as a cross-domain mapping in conceptual structure. Thus, what is actually suggested is that ‘metaphor in thought’ calls for a more sophisticated and indeed more encompassing model in which there is room for social

aspects in a wide range of contexts as well as the distinction between deliberate and non-deliberate uses of metaphor in communication.

“Awareness in metaphor understanding: The lingering of the literal” is the title of the contribution by Hanna Stöver. The second part of the title is an unambiguous reference to the phenomenon in which one is consciously aware of the literal meaning of a metaphorical expression, even if one knows that it is not part of the propositional meaning intended. This phenomenon is referred to in Carston (2009) as ‘the lingering of the literal’. One of the central claims in Stöver’s paper is that whether a communicator is conscious of an expression’s metaphoricity or not may have repercussions on the type of cognitive processing involved and therefore this aspect should not be neglected in a cognitive approach to metaphor. Stöver openly admits that progress has been made in this respect within Steen’s (2008) three-dimensional model, which attends to the deliberate or non-deliberate uses of metaphor in discourse from a communicative standpoint. However, Stöver argues for the need to complement these theoretical views with empirical evidence from psycholinguistics. In this connection, the work of Rubio (2008), whose conception of core features can be understood as being relatively close to what are generally regarded as literal meanings, is assumed to be a promising point of departure. Moreover, Stöver takes the integrative approach to the distinction between conscious and subconscious processing a step further when she suggests that the investigation of how conscious processes influence automatic mechanisms can greatly benefit from the consideration of the conceptual differences that surface in second language acquisition.

The contribution by Jiyoung Yoon, “Productivity of Spanish verb-noun compounds: patterns of metonymy and metaphor”, aptly illustrates the implementations of metaphor and metonymy to the morphosyntactic and semantico-pragmatic analysis of Spanish verb-noun compounds. In particular, the author identifies the following four productive patterns: (i) cases where only metonymy is involved (e.g. *limpiapapatos* ‘cleans-shoes (shoeshine boy)’), (ii) instances in which target-in-source metonymy is derived from metaphor (e.g. *guardaespaldas* ‘guards-backs (bodyguard)’), (iii) cases involving metaphor derived from target-in-source metonymy (e.g. *girasol* ‘turns around-sun (sunflower)’), and (iv) instances in which metonymy is derived from a metaphor which is in turn derived from another metonymy (e.g. *cumpleaños* ‘birthday’). Drawing on the usage-based Goldbergian (1995, 2006) formulation of Construction Grammar, Yoon concludes that the higher the degree of complexity of the cognitive operations involved in verb-noun compounds, the lesser the degree of predictability of the meaning of the compound for the language users who first hear them. However, once learnt, the meaning of the compound is stored as a whole unit in the mental lexicon of language users. A powerful generalization emerging from Yoon’s study is that the productivity of Spanish verb-noun compounds should be best understood in terms of

overarching constructions (i.e. form-meaning correspondences, Goldberg 1995, 2006).

The second grouping, entitled “Metaphor and/or metonymy across different discourse/genre types”, binds together almost half of the contributions in the present volume, namely, those by Elena Semino, Joaquín Garrido, Laura Hidalgo Downing & Blanca Kraljevic Mujic, Carmen Sancho Guinda & Ismael Arinas Pellón, and Eliecer Crespo Fernández.

Elena Semino’s article, “The adaptation of metaphors across genres”, offers a thorough, detailed examination of how a metaphor, originally introduced in a publication for specialists, was subsequently exploited for pedagogical purposes in different texts belonging to different genres. Specifically, the metaphor chosen for scrutiny here is a successful instance of what Zinken *et al.* label a “discourse metaphor”, namely, the GATE metaphor. As Semino explicitly tells us, this metaphor is particularly well-suited for the purposes of this paper because it has been used as a “key framing device” in a relatively ample range of genres produced by a considerable number of different writers for different audiences on the topic of pain mechanisms. Three examples of the GATE metaphor from different genres are singled out for discussion: (i) a neuroscience website for children, (ii) a book for chronic pain sufferers, and (iii) a book for primary care clinicians. The conclusion ensuing from Semino’s analysis is that while the GATE metaphor is flexible enough to be adapted in accordance with the needs of non-expert audiences, there exists the risk that the simplified version of a technical metaphor may be a detrimental rather than a facilitating factor for an adequate understanding of pain mechanisms.

The contribution by Joaquín Garrido is entitled “Motion metaphors in discourse construction”. His paper draws on the premise that motion metaphors (e.g. *The fog extended from the pier to the point*) occur at different levels, from prepositional phrases to discourse, including theoretical metaphors. Garrido lays the foundations for a bottom-up, top-down integrated approach to metaphor in discourse construction. A key assumption in this model is that discourse construction is compositional and its internal structure is shaped by discourse relations (Garrido, 1988, p.57). In this approach, lower units (e.g. constituents) are integrated into higher ones (e.g. turns in conversation, paragraphs in newspaper articles, or stanzas in poems). In discourse construction, as the author illustrates through the analysis of press and poetry examples, a motion metaphor may shape discourse structure, or discourse structure may result from a motion metaphor. This empirically demonstrates that metaphor and discourse constructions are bottom-up and top-down processes. Motion metaphors are thus regarded as taking place in a general connection process in terms of sentences (and their component units), discourses and texts. It is Garrido’s contention that the connection process for both metaphor and discourse construction adequately accounts for meaning

restructuring and discourse relations as well as their interaction in sentence and discourse structure.

Laura Hidalgo Downing & Blanca Kraljevic Mujic further explore the role of metaphor and metonymy in discourse in their paper “The interaction between multimodal metonymy and metaphor in ICT advertising discourse: Meaning creation as a complex discourse process”. Drawing on the distinction between metaphor and metonymy proposed in Ruiz de Mendoza & Díez Velasco (2002, pp. 491–496), these authors study the relationship between these two notions as resources for the creation of meaning in printed ICT advertisements. The evocative power of multimodal advertising is argued to arise out of the exploitation of metonymic chains, double metonymies and complex metaphors. Specifically, these complex metaphors basically serve to introduce new products (e.g. internet services and ICT services) through more familiar experiential domains (e.g. a green light, a lift, an electrocardiogram, the map of Europe, etc). These new products are presented to the audience by means of slight changes of already familiar metaphors such as *LIFE IS A JOURNEY* and *BUSINESS IS WAR*, reconceptualized from the perspective of the new ICTS as *LIFE IS A CYBERSPECE JOURNEY* and *E-BUSINESS IS WAR*.

In “How patent can patents be? Exploring the impact of figurative language on the engineering patents genre”, Carmen Sancho Guinda & Ismael Arinas Pellón examine the role of figurative language, with special focus on conceptual and grammatical metaphors, in the discourse of engineering patents. Drawing on a corpus-based analysis of US electro-mechanical patents mainly from a Systemic-Functional perspective (Halliday, 1978, 1985), the authors note the existence of a complex network of metaphorical schemata, most of them non-deliberate, which depend on the legal culture, the discipline and, to some extent, on the authorial voice. From a linguistic point of view, patents are analyzed in terms of (i) their ideational function—where the schema *INVENTIONS/DEVICES ARE LIVING ORGANISMS* is particularly frequent, (ii) their textual function, which encompasses a performative, directive-commissive, and expressive-evaluative function, and (iii) their interpersonal metafunction, which comprises four major metaphorical schemata as evaluative devices: the *PATH* schema, the *PART FOR WHOLE* schema, the *DESIRABILITY IS FACTUALITY* schema and the grammatical metaphor *PROCESS AS THING*. It is the dynamic interaction of these three functions, claim Sancho Guinda & Arinas Pellón, that binds patent writers together as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998).

“Euphemistic conceptual metaphors in epitaphs from Highgate Cemetery” is the title of the article by Eliecer Crespo Fernández. Within the cognitive model of CMT, this author demonstrates the feasibility of analyzing the metaphors observed in the epitaphs collected from Highgate Cemetery in terms of the cognitive mappings to which they may be assigned. Specifically, seven conceptual mappings are identified for the metaphors excerpted from the obituaries, which in descending

order of frequency can be listed as follows: DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A REST/A SLEEP, DEATH IS A JOYFUL LIFE, DEATH IS A CALL FROM GOD, DEATH IS A LOSS and DEATH IS THE END. A number of salient features of death-related figurative language emerge from the analysis carried out which run as follows: First, most of the conceptualizations observed in the gravestones carry a positive value-judgement of human mortality, as is evident in the choice of the source domains employed (i.e. a journey, a rest, a joyful life and a call from God), while those metaphors involving a negative value-judgement of death (i.e. DEATH IS A LOSS and DEATH IS A VOID) are not significantly frequent. Second, in accordance with religious beliefs, death is more likely than not construed as a freeing from earthly life in an eternal life in Heaven. Finally, the frequent use of consolatory metaphors is primarily intended to help the living cope with the pain of the loss of their loved ones, while also conveying their personal stance towards mortality.

The third grouping, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: current applications”, comprises the papers by Frank Boers, Eva Samaniego Fernández and Ana María Rojo López. The contribution by F. Boers, “Cognitive Semantics ways of teaching figurative phrases”, furnishes a critical assessment of the achievements and limitations of Cognitive Semantics for the teaching of figurative phrases. The review of a number of representative Cognitive Semantics-informed pedagogical proposals provides compelling empirical evidence their efficiency as facilitating factors in the comprehension and retention of the meaning of those phrases and, to a lesser extent, of their form (i.e. the specific lexical makeup, spelling, etc), too. In addition, the careful examination of the pedagogy-oriented works by Cognitive Semanticists undertaken in this article underscores a number of controversial issues that constitute avenues for further research. One of these is the utility of pictorials to help elucidate and remember the meaning of figurative phrases and their potentially negative side effects on learners’ recollection of linguistic form. Furthermore, a closer collaboration between Cognitive Semantics and ‘mainstream’ applied linguistics is argued to be desirable at three levels: (i) at the level of research methodology, especially concerning the rigorous design of experimental studies, the ecological validity of the comparison treatments, and the analyses and reporting of quantitative data; (ii) at the level of pedagogical implementations, particularly in terms of the selection of targets for learning and the convenience of spaced, distributed learning; and (iii) at the level of curricular integration, which calls for an adequate inclusion of Cognitive Semantics into the fields of language learning and language teaching.

In “Translation Studies and the cognitive theory of metaphor”, Eva Samaniego Fernández explores two of the central issues impinging on metaphor in Translation Studies (henceforth TS), namely, (i) the translatability of metaphor and (ii) metaphor translation procedures. In this connection, the author contends that given that

translation is a type of interlinguistic communication, TS can foster a better understanding of the role of the human capacity for communication on social cognition in the light of the connection between the specific empirical data and the cognition strategies at issue in the translation process. Samaniego Fernández emphatically vindicates the need for a multidisciplinary approach to TS, in which CL with many other disciplines should zero in on the reasoning processes (deductive, inductive, abductive, analogical, etc.) and the re-formulating processes (problem-solving, planning, knowledge representation, etc.) performed by translators. The investigation of real translation occurrences seems to endorse the pivotal role played by translators as creative and intelligent agents in the translation process. However, the author observes that the far-reaching implications of this finding are somewhat obscured by the prescriptive trend of metaphor translation in TS that, assuming that a translation implies some loss with respect to the original text, fails to acknowledge the influence of the translation on the target culture and the enriching effects of construal differences in translation on the target cultural cognitive world.

Finally, the contribution by Ana María Rojo López, “Distinguishing Near-Synonyms and Translation Equivalents in Metaphorical Terms: *Crisis* vs. *Recession* in English and Spanish”, is concerned with the translation of metaphor from a contrastive perspective. Specifically, the author concentrates on the metaphorical mappings observable in the English words ‘crisis’ and ‘recession’ and their translation equivalents in Spanish ‘*crisis*’ and ‘*recesión*’. The differences detected between the two pairs of terms in these two languages are shown to be connected with whether the concept is construed as having an animate nature or not, as well as with the impact of the concept on e.g. models about how to be successful in financial matters. Thus, by way of illustration, it is demonstrated that those images that unambiguously depicted a dynamic or a dangerous effect are more likely to be characterized in terms of ‘crisis’ than ‘recession’. In much the same vein as the paper by Samaniego Fernández, Rojo López intimates that translators should attend to these subtle conceptualization (or construal) differences between translation equivalents in order to cater for the needs of a particular audience.

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Recent developments in metaphor theory

Are the new views rival ones?

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Several scholars have proposed alternative views to conceptual metaphor theory (see, for example, Ortony, 1993; Barnden, 2006; Wilson and Carston, 2006, 2008; Vega, 2007; Gibbs, 2008). How are the modified, refined, and alternative theories related to each other and standard conceptual metaphor theory, and which theory provides the best account of the phenomenon of metaphor? The particular approaches I will consider in this paper include the theory of metaphor as categorization, standard conceptual metaphor theory, blending theory, the neural theory of metaphor, conceptual metaphor theory as based on the idea of main meaning focus, and relevance theory. I will present the various theories through the analysis of a single metaphorical sentence: *This surgeon is a butcher*. I will propose that conceptual metaphor theory as based on the idea of the main meaning focus gives us a good way of characterizing the emergence of the sentence's meaning. This characterization consists of a four-stage process. First, there exist two independent conceptual categories: BUTCHERY and SURGERY. Second, due to the similarity between the two, a metaphorical relationship is established between them. Third, the property of incompetence emerges in the concept of BUTCHERY in light of and against the background of the concept of SURGERY. Fourth, this property is projected into the blend, in which the property will now characterize the surgeon. I will point out that this approach is compatible with several other views, such as Ruiz de Mendoza's Combined Input Hypothesis and with aspects of relevance theory.

1. Introduction

The theory of conceptual metaphor has been undergoing modifications and refinements ever since its inception in 1980 (see Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff, 1993; Kövecses, 2002/2010). In addition, several scholars have proposed alternative views to conceptual metaphor theory (see, for example, Ortony, ed., 1993; Barnden, 2006; Wilson and Carston, 2006, 2008; Vega, 2007; Gibbs, ed.,

2008). Given this situation, it is important to see how the modified, refined, and alternative theories are related to each other and “standard” conceptual metaphor theory, and, ultimately, to raise the issue of which theory provides the best account of the phenomena of metaphor. One way of doing this is to look at examples of metaphor through the lens of different theories and examine the ways the accounts are related to one another. If we find a particular metaphorical example that has been studied by means of various theories, we can hope to get an idea of the differences between the various treatments.

A metaphorical example that gives us the chance of achieving such a goal is the sentence “This surgeon is a butcher.” The sentence has often been discussed in what we can collectively call cognitive approaches of metaphor by theorists of different persuasion. I will use this example to assess the various approaches in order to see how they are related. The particular approaches considered here include the theory of metaphor as categorization, “standard” conceptual metaphor theory, blending theory, the neural theory of metaphor, conceptual metaphor theory as based on the idea of main meaning focus, and relevance theory. All along, I will also be using various ideas by Ruiz de Mendoza.

The paper below is a significantly extended and (I hope) improved version of some ideas in Chapter 19 in the revised version of my book *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction* (Kövecses, 2010). In the description of the various approaches (in particular, the categorization view, “standard” conceptual metaphor theory, blending, Lakoff’s “extended theory,” and the “meaning focus” view) I borrow from that chapter.

In presenting the various views, my general strategy will be as follows. I will be characterizing the theories as objectively as possible (i.e., as the authors themselves characterize them) and I will be assuming that the theories are all valid as they stand. (This explains why I do not engage in any kind of criticism in the presentation of the particular views.) However, toward the end of the paper, I will ask which one or ones of the cognitive mechanisms (as characteristic of the theories) are needed to account for the construction of the meaning of the sentence. This strategy will allow me to offer a general assessment of the theories under discussion.

2. The categorization view of metaphor

In the categorization view of metaphor, an entity is assigned to a category that is exemplified by or typical of another entity also belonging to that category. In this view, metaphor is a class-inclusion statement (Glucksberg and Keysar, 1993). To say that “this surgeon is a butcher” means that I attribute a certain metaphoric property to a particular surgeon. The property that I attribute to him or her is an

attributive category. So what is this property that I attribute to this surgeon by making use of the word *butcher*? In other words, what is the attributive category that is exemplified or typical of butchers?

Glucksberg and Keysar suggest that butchers exemplify a “bungling, atrocious worker.” Let us say, more generally, that this is the attributive category of “incompetence.” What I assert when I use this sentence is that the surgeon is incompetent. I can produce this meaning by assigning this surgeon to the attributive category of “incompetence” by means of the entity *butcher* that exemplifies or is typical of incompetence.

3. “Standard” conceptual metaphor theory

Although no explicit account of this metaphor has been given in what we can take to be “standard” conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2002/2010), such an account lends itself in a straightforward manner. In it, there would be a source domain evoked by the word *butcher* and a target domain evoked by the word *surgeon*. This would yield the conceptual metaphor: SURGERY IS BUTCHERY. Since in standard conceptual theory, elements of the source correspond to elements in the target, we can set up a set of correspondences between the two domains as follows:

the butcher → the surgeon
 the tool used: the cleaver → the tool used: the scalpel
 the animal (carcass) → the human being
 the commodity → the patient
 the abattoir → the operating room
 the goal of severing meat → the goal of healing
 the means of butchery → the means of surgery
 the sloppiness, carelessness of the butcher → the sloppiness, carelessness of the surgeon

For reasons that will become clear below, this account would obviously be mistaken if proposed seriously; I only intend it to be a demonstration of what a mechanical application of simple source-to-target mappings as the main idea of the standard theory would involve.

As the last mapping shows, I suggest (together with Lakoff, 2008) that it is more appropriate to reformulate the property of butchers in the sentence as sloppy or careless (rather than incompetent). To get the intended meaning of the sentence (i.e., that the surgeon is sloppy or careless), it is the last correspondence that is crucial. While all the listed entities in the BUTCHER’s domain have counterparts in

the SURGEON domain, the correspondence maps the butcher's sloppiness or carelessness onto the surgeon. The crucial issue about this mapping is whether or not butchers are indeed inherently sloppy or careless (or in other views, incompetent). According to the categorization view noted above (and the closely related relevance theoretic perspective to be discussed below), they are; butchers are typical of the attributive category of incompetence. And the same would apply to sloppiness or carelessness. Of course, the problem with our hypothetical analysis is that when we look at the concept of BUTCHER on independent grounds (i.e., independently of surgeons), we do not find them inherently incompetent or sloppy or careless at all.

4. Blending

Blending theorists explicitly reject any suggestion that butchers are inherently incompetent (Grady et al., 1999). They claim, moreover, that even if it were an inherent characteristic of butchers, we would need to be able to explain *how* butchers acquire the meaning of being regarded as incompetent (Brandt and Brandt, 2005). For these reasons, blending theorists advocate a new way of analyzing the meaning of the metaphorical sentence along the lines of conceptual integration theory (e.g., Fauconnier and Turner, 2002).

In this view, in addition to the two input spaces of BUTCHERY and SURGERY that are connected by a set of mappings as above (except the last correspondence), we have a generic space in which there is a person who employs a sharp tool to a body for a purpose. There is also a blended space. This space inherits from the source input the butcher and the means of butchery and from the target input the surgeon, the patient, some tool, the operating room, and the goal of healing. Thus, in the blend there is a surgeon in the role of a butcher who uses a tool and the means of butchery for the purpose of healing a patient. But, of course, the surgeon who uses the means of butchery cannot do a good job in trying to heal a human patient. The blend set up this way leads to the interpretation of the surgeon as being ineffective, nonprofessional, and, ultimately, incompetent. We can represent the blending account of the sentence in Figure 1.

5. Lakoff's extended theory

I will call the combination of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980, 1999) conceptual metaphor theory and Lakoff's (2008) neural theory of metaphor "Lakoff's extended theory." Based on his neural theory of metaphor, Lakoff (2008) accounts for examples like "This surgeon is a butcher" by using the following abstract metaphor: A

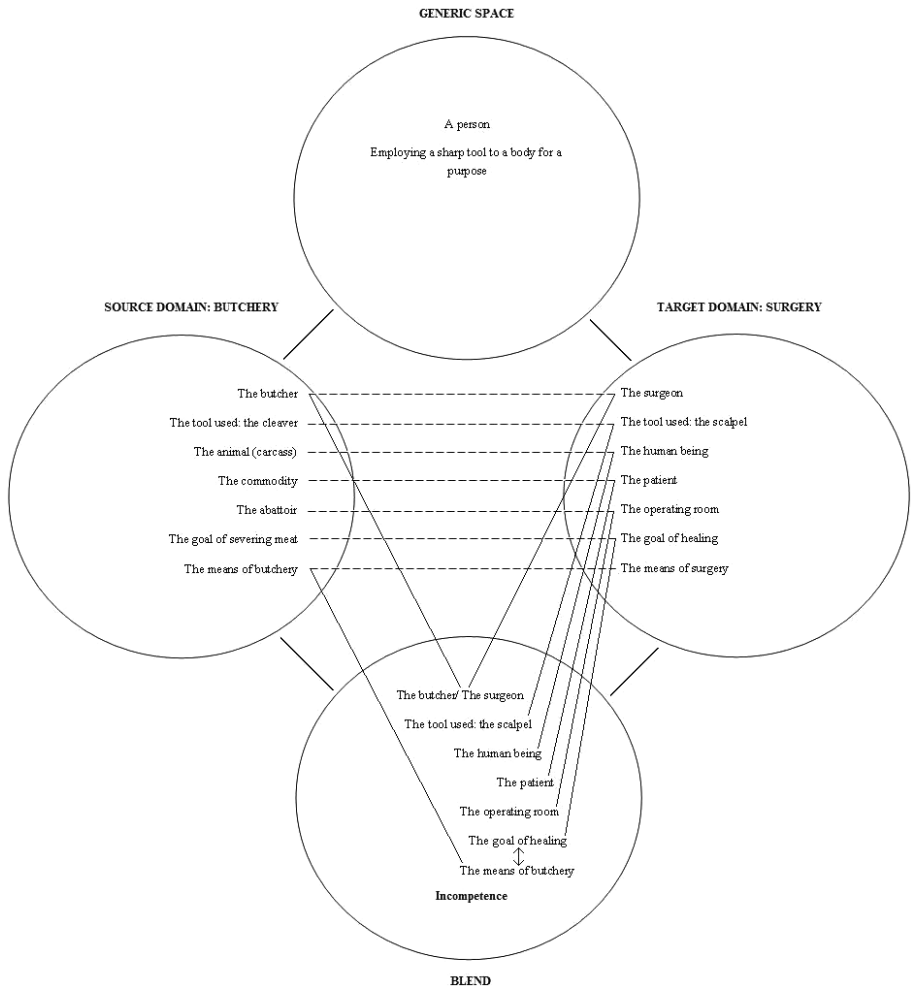


Figure 1. The SURGEON AS BUTCHER blend

PERSON WHO PERFORMS ACTIONS WITH CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS IS A MEMBER OF A PROFESSION KNOWN FOR THOSE CHARACTERISTICS. Thus, in statements like “This surgeon is a butcher,” a particular surgeon (this surgeon, my surgeon, etc.) who operated on a patient in a sloppy or careless way is assigned to the category of butchers by the predication expressed in the statement, and thus becomes a member of the category of butchers, who cut meat with force rather than care and precision. And since butchers cut meat this way, they are seen as sloppy or careless (or incompetent, in other theories). Thus, the source domain of BUTCHER has the characteristic of sloppiness or carelessness (or incompetence). This is, as Lakoff observes, based on a stereotype.

On this analysis, we would have a metaphorical blend. In the blend, the role of the butcher in the BUTCHER frame is filled with a particular surgeon and, as a result, the surgeon is viewed as being sloppy or careless. This account of the metaphor is similar to that offered by Glucksberg and Keysar, who suggest in understanding the metaphor we assign the surgeon to the category of butchers who exemplify careless, sloppy workers, and that thereby the surgeon will be characterized as sloppy and careless.

6. Conceptual metaphor theory as based on the idea of the main meaning focus

One version of conceptual metaphor theory is the one proposed by Kövecses (2000, 2002/2010, Chapter 10) that uses the idea of the “main meaning focus.” In Kövecses (2000, p. 82), I define the notion as follows:

“Each source is associated with a particular meaning focus (or foci) that is (or are) mapped onto the target. This meaning focus (or foci) is (are) constituted by the central knowledge that pertains to a particular entity or event within a speech community. The target inherits the main meaning focus (or foci) of the source.”
Kövecses (2000, p. 82)

In this characterization of meaning focus, the notion of “central knowledge” is crucial. Following Langacker (1987, pp. 158–161), I take central knowledge to be knowledge about an entity or event that is conventional, generic, intrinsic, and characteristic. For example, the meaning focus of the concept of BUILDING as a source domain is the “making of a strong building,” which maps onto the “creation/construction of a stable/lasting complex system” (Kövecses, 2000, pp. 82–83). Most of the conventional metaphorical expressions (such as *construct*, *strong*, *fall apart*, *foundation*, *framework*) that can be found in connection with this metaphor have to do with these aspects of BUILDING, which map onto the “creation of a stable/lasting complex abstract system (such as theory/argument/institution/life..., etc.) The correspondences between “building/making and creation/construction, “strength and stability/lastingness,” and “building and complex abstract system” are “central mappings.” Less central or noncentral mappings include, for example, the correspondence between the builders of the building and the creators of, say, a theory. (The issue of how the notion of meaning focus can be used to account for the transfer, from source to target, of elements that do not belong to the main meaning focus (or foci), such as fire exit, is discussed in Kövecses, 2005.)

However, in many cases, unlike the case of BUILDING and many additional ones, the meaning focus may not be fixed advance and inherent in concepts (but

may emerge along the lines described in relevance theoretic accounts of metaphor (e.g., Wilson, 2009). It may emerge, for instance, in contrastive contexts, when we compare one concept to another and find that a particular meaning focus arises in one of the concepts as a result of a contrast. In other words, meaning foci can result from the contrast of two concepts that are in a metaphoric relationship. A case in point is the contrast between a SURGEON and a BUTCHER. This more general idea of the main meaning focus is similar to what Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez (2003) refer to as “central correspondences,” or “central explicatures” in a perspective of metaphor that attempts to integrate relevance-theoretic findings into a conceptual metaphor theory framework.

Adopting the view that the main meaning focus can emerge as a result of contrasting two concepts in a metaphorical relationship, we can eliminate the problem associated with “standard” conceptual metaphor theory: the problem that, on that analysis, there is no account of *why* the feature sloppiness or carelessness (or incompetence) is mapped onto the surgeon. The view based on the main meaning focus of the source domain would maintain that the feature is mapped because it is one of the main meaning foci associated with butchers that derives from the contrast between a surgeon’s work and butcher’s work. Other possible meaning foci can also be found in the conventionalized lexical meanings of the word *butcher*. Take, for example, the senses of the word as defined by the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*:

- 1 a: a person who slaughters animals or dresses their flesh b: a dealer in meat
- 2: one that kills ruthlessly or brutally
- 3: one that bungles or botches
- 4: a vendor especially on trains or in theaters

Sense 3 clearly indicates that butchers are regarded, at least in relation to surgeons, as sloppy, careless, or incompetent. Given this conventionalized sense of the word and given that source domains map their main meaning focus (whose selection from several potential foci may depend on the context) onto the target, we can understand why the metaphorical statement, *This surgeon is a butcher*, means what it does. For other people, however, it is sense 2 that carries the main meaning focus. Such people may take the sentence to mean a surgeon who has (mostly accidentally) killed one or several patients as a result of an unsuccessful operation. In the discussion below, though, I analyze the other interpretation (“careless, sloppy, imprecise”) since this is the one that most scholars assume.

At this point, however, we need to identify the cognitive mechanism by means of which this meaning arises. This issue was already mentioned above in connection with blending theory. In the view of metaphor as based on the notion of main meaning focus, there is a metonymic relationship between the CATEGORY AS

a whole and the PROPERTY as a part. In such cases, the metonymy can be given as CATEGORY FOR ITS PROPERTY that is based on the idealized cognitive model, or frame, of CATEGORY-AND-ITS-PROPERTY (see Kövecses and Radden, 1998). That is, the word *butcher* is used in the sentence to metonymically indicate sloppiness, and so on. This kind of metonymy-based metaphor appears to be widespread. We can account for why we use certain concepts for certain properties in a large number of cases. These include concepts such as SURGEON, PIG, and BULL, all of which display different specific meaning foci by means of the same metonymy.

But more importantly, why do we see the movements of the butcher as “careless, sloppy, imprecise”? In all probability, the reason is that the actions performed by the butcher appear that way in contrast to the surgeon. This perception of the butcher derives from the comparison of the butcher’s actions with the “precise” and “refined” actions of the surgeon (cf. the phrase “with *surgical* precision”). In other words, we interpret the butcher’s actions in reference to the surgeon’s work. (The idea that the meaning of the sentence can be figured out if we compare the actions of the butcher with those of the surgeon is present in other analyses as well, such as Ruiz de Mendoza and Peña, 2005; Sperber and Wilson, 2008) Cognitively speaking, we conceptualize how the butcher works with the SURGERY frame in the background. This means that we interpret the butcher’s actions not in itself, independently of everything else (i.e., in terms of the BUTCHERY frame alone), but in relation to and in light of the SURGERY frame. By this means, we extend the primary meaning of the word *butcher* (“who slaughters animals and dresses their flesh”) to “careless and sloppy,” and, hence, “incompetent,” which will now constitute the (new) meaning focus of the concept of BUTCHER. This newly derived meaning will then be projected to, and will characterize, the particular surgeon as well. We can think of the projection of “careless and sloppy” to the frame (i.e., target domain) of SURGERY as an example of cross-domain mapping. But we can also think of it as a case of conceptual integration. It can be suggested that the projection goes to a new space, or frame, the blended space, where the “careless, sloppy work” of the butcher replaces the “precise and refined work” of the surgeon. In this way, the blend contains what the SURGERY frame contains, with the major difference that the particular surgeon will here be regarded as doing “careless and sloppy work” and, hence, “being incompetent.” The surgeon in the blend assumes the main meaning focus of the butcher. We can diagram this as in Figure 2:

What is blended here is the surgeon with the new meaning focus of the butcher (i.e., being careless and sloppy resulting in incompetence); that is, a characteristic feature of surgeons (doing precise work) is replaced by doing careless, sloppy work in the blend.

This blend and this solution will, however, be different from the solution by means of the blend noted above. In it, the essential elements of the blend were the

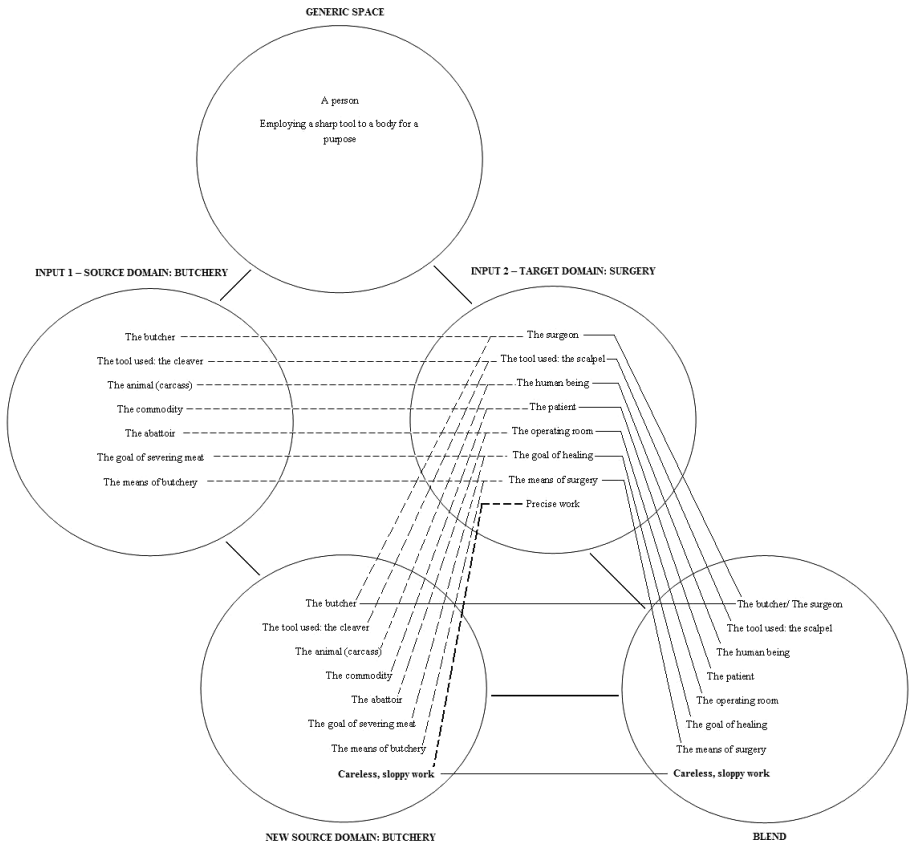


Figure 2. The new SURGEON AS BUTCHER blend in the “main meaning focus” view

means of butchery and the goal of surgery, as well as the conflict between the two, leading to the property of “incompetence.” But in the present suggestion, the property of “incompetence” gets into the blend from the input space of BUTCHERY. (Ruiz de Mendoza and Peña, 2005, offer an alternative explanation, called the Combined Input Hypothesis, which is compatible with the main meaning focus view to the extent that both accounts are based on the activation of multiple input spaces).

All in all, we can summarize the emergence of the meaning of the sentence in this view as resulting from a four-stage process. First, there exist two independent conceptual categories: BUTCHERY and SURGERY. Second, due to the similarity between the two, a metaphorical relationship is established between them. Third, the property of “incompetence” emerges in the concept of BUTCHERY in light of and against the background of the concept of SURGERY. Fourth, this property is projected into the blend, in which the property will now characterize the surgeon.

The view of metaphor as based on the main meaning focus of the source domain bears resemblance to the view proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza (1998). Ruiz

de Mendoza suggests that the conceptual structure created in blends comes about and conforms to what he calls the “Extended Invariance Principle” (Actually, Ruiz de Mendoza’s view includes additional elements, but for my purpose this is the relevant part.) This principle is different from Lakoff’s (1993) Invariance Principle in that it covers not only image-schematic structure but all generic-level structure. Thus, when it applies to a blend, the blend will also have the same generic-level structure as the source input(s). As Ruiz de Mendoza shows through the example of *digging one’s own grave*, unlike Fauconnier and Turner’s proposal (for what they call double-scope blends), blends essentially conform to the structure of the source (and not *both* to the source and target). What distinguishes this view from the idea of the main meaning focus is that unlike the Invariance Principle (in either version of it), it is the *cognitive function* of the source domain to carry over its meaning focus onto the target without having to conform to the target; that is, critical conceptual material in the blend will derive from the source. (For a fuller account of the notion, see Kövecses, 2000, 2002/2010). Thus, if the meaning focus of the source domain of *butcher* is that he does careless, sloppy work (relative to the *surgeon*), it will carry over this property to the target (and to the blend, as above). It is of course a further issue how and why the source domain acquires a particular meaning focus. I have attempted to answer these questions above.

7. How do these analyses fit together?

On the main meaning focus view, the specific cognitive mechanisms that are required for the construction of the meaning of the sentence “This surgeon is a butcher” include the following:

SURGERY IS BUTCHERY metaphor

A PERSON WHO PERFORMS ACTIONS WITH CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS IS A MEMBER OF A PROFESSION KNOWN FOR THOSE CHARACTERISTICS metaphor(ic blend)

THE WHOLE CATEGORY FOR A CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY OF THE CATEGORY metonymy

The generic space of SURGERY and BUTCHERY

SURGERY as conceptual background (to interpreting BUTCHERY)

We have two independently existing domains: SURGERY and BUTCHERY. There is resemblance between the two, which is represented by the generic space for SURGERY and BUTCHERY. The resemblance serves as the basis of the metaphor SURGERY IS BUTCHERY. Given the resemblance, SURGERY is first used as the conceptual background to BUTCHERY; this is why we think of the butcher as doing “careless, sloppy work.” This meaning focus for BUTCHER emerges as a result of

the metonymy the WHOLE CATEGORY FOR A CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY OF THE CATEGORY. The meaning focus is then applied to the SURGEON (this surgeon) in the blend. This is the version of meaning construction represented in Figure 2.

In another version of this view, the application of the meaning focus to the target of SURGEON results in the metaphoric blend of A PERSON WHO PERFORMS ACTIONS WITH CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS IS A MEMBER OF A PROFESSION KNOWN FOR THOSE CHARACTERISTICS. This is a metaphoric blend in which a semantic role (BUTCHER) in a frame (BUTCHERY) is filled by an entity value (this surgeon), and the entity that fills the role assumes the property (“careless, sloppy work”) associated with the role in the first frame (BUTCHERY). I have not represented this possibility diagrammatically.

The only difference between the two views is that in the former a property is mapped from the source to the blend, where the rest of the blend is provided by the target, whereas in the latter it is the value of a role (this surgeon) in the target that is projected into the blend, where the value (this surgeon) assumes the property (“careless, sloppy work”) of the source. We need all of these cognitive mechanisms in order to be able to account for how the meaning of the sentence “This surgeon is a butcher” emerges. However, both versions utilize the idea of meaning focus associated with the source (though Lakoff does not use the term).

The main driving force in the construction of the sentence’s meaning is provided by the notion of main meaning focus. This is what characterizes source domains and what is carried over from the source to the target domain (in the standard CMT view) or the blend (in the CIT view) by means of the cognitive mechanisms noted above. The idea of the main meaning focus is compatible with both. As a matter of fact, it is also compatible with the view of metaphor as an attributive category, though this latter view does not have the conceptual tools as considered above.

A theory that claims to *not* make use of the conceptual mechanisms mentioned above is relevance theory. In their analysis of the sentence “This surgeon is a butcher,” Sperber and Wilson (2008) regard the understanding of the sentence as an inferential process that does not make use of metaphor, metonymy, or blending. On their account, “The inferential path to an adequate understanding of (30) [i.e., the sentence “This surgeon is a butcher”] involves an evocation of the way butchers treat flesh and the construction on that basis of an ad hoc concept BUTCHER*, denoting people who treat flesh in the way butchers do. ... For a butcher, being a BUTCHER* is a quasi-pleonastic property. For a surgeon, on the other hand, it does imply gross incompetence ...” (Sperber and Wilson, 2008, p. 97). So a surgeon who cuts meat in the way butchers do can only be incompetent. (The relevance-theoretical view of metaphor is criticized by Ruiz de Mendoza, 2009, in his review of Vega, 2007). But of course it can be suggested that in this analysis a

category with a property (i.e., professional butchers who cut meat in a particular way) stands for all people who cut meat that way. This “stand for” relationship is a metonymic one: A CATEGORY WITH A PROPERTY FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH THAT PROPERTY. In other words, in my view even the relevance theoretical view is based on an important type of conceptual metonymy that helps the construction of the sentence’s meaning. I would also add that this metonymy is only possible given the similarity between butchers and other people, like surgeons; namely, that they both cut meat. Whether the similarity is metaphorical or literal is a further interesting issue that I do not go into here. We could conceive of the metonymy A CATEGORY WITH A PROPERTY FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH THAT PROPERTY as a metaphor. The particular metaphor that captures the same idea that the metonymy does is the one offered by Lakoff above: A PERSON WHO PERFORMS ACTIONS WITH CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS IS A MEMBER OF A PROFESSION KNOWN FOR THOSE CHARACTERISTICS. Which one is the case indeed (i.e., whether we deal with a metonymy or a metaphor) is beside the point here. The suggestion is that even the relevance theoretical model makes use of well-established conceptual devices that can all contribute to our comprehension of the sentence.

8. Conclusion

Which one is the best theory, then, to account for the meaning of the sentence? In light of the preceding discussion, the question does not make much sense. All the theories and approaches considered here contribute to an account of the meaning of metaphorical sentences such as “This surgeon is a butcher.” No single theory explains everything about the process of meaning construction required for the sentence. In this sense, the different theories fit together and complement each other in a natural way.

As we have seen, a number of cognitive mechanisms participate in the comprehension of the sentence. Due to the resemblance of the two independently existing concepts, a generic space is set up. A metaphorical relationship is established between the two, as mappings are set up between the elements of the source and the target. In addition, the source concept acquires a new meaning focus against the background of the target concept. The new meaning focus emerges from a metonymic relationship between a property of a source entity and the source concept as a whole. The new meaning focus (a property) of the source entity is blended with the appropriate target entity. The blend combines this target entity (surgeon) with the new property of the source entity (butcher). This can happen because we use metaphor(ical expressions) to convey the main meaning focus of the source to the target.

Thus, in comprehending the sentence, a variety of cognitive mechanisms produce a blended space with the appropriate representation of the sentence's meaning. This picture is the reverse of the situation suggested by the analysis of the sentence within the framework of conceptual integration theory. As Ruiz de Mendoza and Peña (2005, p. 257) emphasize on the basis of their Combined Input Hypothesis, the blend is static (it is a product, a result), whereas the rest of the meaning construction system is highly dynamic. This view is confirmed by the present analysis: a number of cognitive processes interact in a dynamic fashion, which results in a blended space with the appropriate meaning specification. In other words, the blended space is not the space where meaning for the sentence emerges or is created (as a result of some conflict), but it is the space with the appropriate meaning that is produced by a dynamic interactive system.

As the frequent references to Ruiz de Mendoza's work in this paper indicate, the main meaning focus view is compatible with several aspects of that work. The Combined Input Hypothesis is compatible with the view of the main meaning focus and the idea of central correspondences (or explicatures) is similar to the idea of central mappings (that convey the main meaning focus to the target). Moreover, as Ruiz de Mendoza's work also shows, both theories display certain similarities to relevance theory approaches to metaphor. The notion of central explicature has an obvious place in relevance theory, and so does the making of inferences about the source concept with the help of the target, whose counterpart can be found in the way we metonymically draw to the fore certain properties of the source with the target in the background of this process. Finally, the idea of the main meaning focus as definable by conventional central knowledge as well as by contextual factors is, I believe, compatible with the relevance-theoretic idea that "contextual implications" are deducible from encoded input concepts together with available contextual assumptions (Wilson, 2009). Other scholars are working on other compatible features of the cognitive linguistic view of metaphor and those of relevance theory (see Gibbs and Tendahl, 2006). These compatibilities and similarities between theories promise further refinements in our account of how we comprehend metaphorical sentences and they also show the necessity of cooperation among the various theories of metaphor understanding.

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The contemporary theory of metaphor — now new and improved!*

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This paper outlines a multi-dimensional/multi-disciplinary framework for the study of metaphor. It expands on the cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor in language and thought by adding the dimension of communication, and it expands on the predominantly linguistic and psychological approaches by adding the discipline of social science. This creates a map of the field in which nine main areas of research can be distinguished and connected to each other in precise ways. It allows for renewed attention to the deliberate use of metaphor in communication, in contrast with non-deliberate use, and asks the question whether the interaction between deliberate and non-deliberate use of metaphor in specific social domains can contribute to an explanation of the discourse career of metaphor. The suggestion is made that metaphorical models in language, thought, and communication can be classified as official, contested, implicit, and emerging, which may offer new perspectives on the interaction between social, psychological, and linguistic properties and functions of metaphor in discourse.

1. Introduction

The title of this article is a playful allusion to Lakoff's (1993) 'The contemporary theory of metaphor'. It is not meant to be disrespectful. On the contrary, Lakoff has made an essential contribution to present-day metaphor research. But his approach is not identical with 'the' contemporary theory of metaphor. There are other sellers on the market. And, to change metaphors, the game of metaphor research could do with some serious fun, too. Hence my own title.

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