

REVIEW

Raymond W. Gibbs Jr.:
Metaphor Wars: Conceptual Metaphors in Human Life

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In cognitive linguistics (CL), the study of conceptual structures seeks to understand the fundamental characteristics of conceptual organization grounded on perceptual experience with the external sensory (exteroception) and internal bodily (interoception) world of experience (Evans, 2019). Moreover, conceptual structure is embodied because humans' construal of reality is experientially mediated and dependent on the species-specific traits of the physical body. Accordingly, conceptual structures can be arranged in terms of mappings that bridge together different domains, which can be the result of embodied experiences, or a more complex development of conceptual structures derived from more concrete ones (Evans & Green, 2006).

One of the main conceptual operations that come out of these mappings has to do with the thesis of the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT). In this view, a conceptual metaphor is defined as a "systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience" (Kovecses, 2010: 14). Such correspondences are understood as mappings because they relate one source domain onto another target domain (Semino & Demjén, 2017). In addition, metaphors are said to be pervasive in lexicon and syntax because speakers make an extensive and unconscious use of them in order to comprehend abstract concepts in terms of more concrete domains through ordinary reasoning in everyday language (Lakoff, 2002). From the perspective of the brain, metaphorical thought is related primarily with mapping circuits "linking distinct brain regions, allowing reasoning patterns from one brain region to apply to another brain region" (Lakoff, 2009).

CMT has developed as an approach for the identification of underlying metaphors in instances of language in different fields, from scientific texts to literary works. Consequently, a robust body of empirical evidence from the cognitive linguistics movement and its associated fields has risen to explain how conceptual metaphors underlie meaningful dimensions of language, thought, and culture (Evans, 2019; Semino & Demjén, 2017; Kovecses, 2017; Lakoff, 2014, 2009, 2008, 2002, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In *Metaphor Wars: Conceptual Metaphors in Human Life* (2017), Raymond Gibbs intends to both explore the up-to-date empirical basis in linguistics and psychology for CMT and examine the controversies and arguments against this theory. In seven chapters, Gibbs densely embarks on a rhetorical journey through metaphor analysis, identification, and inference. He concludes by presenting the psychology and multimodality of metaphors.

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the range of study of CMT. Under the title of "What are metaphor wars?" Gibbs presents instances of literary and political passages for the reader to connect to the pervasiveness of metaphors in common uses of language. Therefore, the immersion into the nature of these elements is implicit. Then, the author declares that beyond literature and political discourse, metaphors have the potential to account for the structure of thought itself, by relating embodied experiences of the world with complex abstract constructions. Finally, he dedicates an extensive portion of the chapter to acknowl-

edge how CMT has not yet reached consensus among some scholars who criticize how conceptual metaphors are inferred and identified with criteria that are not sufficiently clear, and how social manifestations of language are not delved into by this theory. Thus, the first chapter engages in scholarly discussions on the reliability of the CMT endeavor which may require some theoretical background in the field, a stylistic move that could potentially leave a novice reader with doubts at the start of the book.

In chapter 2, Gibbs expands on metaphor analysis by considering some of the most widespread source and target domains, i.e., LIFE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS A UNITY, and LOVE IS A NATURAL FORCE. Here, the author thoroughly explains how these metaphors manifest systematicity, diversity, and psychological universality. Gibbs goes beyond and explicates the neural theory of language by emphasizing how the image-schema features of meaning emerge from bodily experience that result in neural mappings. Furthermore, the chapter describes the analyzability of polysemy, proverbs, idioms, and discourse in CMT. To conclude, Gibbs demonstrates to the critics how CMT analysis is not detrimental to creativity but rather the foundation from which novel assemblies of language can derive and account for the human conceptual system, a capacity that linguistic expressions do not necessarily have.

Chapter 3 represents a fundamental tool for beginner CMT analysts as it provides insights on the procedural alternatives that CMT offers for metaphor identification, and how the analysts' metaphorical expertise and computer-assisted resources are to a greater or lesser extent useful throughout the process. The author describes how the metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and the MIP by Vrije Universiteit work. In this regard, Gibbs warns about the challenges that analysts may face in relation to the assessment of metaphoricity of instances of language. However, he also emphasizes how the scaffolded guidelines that MIP and MIPVU provide analysts with can support decision making by contrasting dictionary definitions (conventional meanings) and contextual meaning (usage-based meanings). Furthermore, the chapter includes the automatic concrete overlap algorithm (COO) and the corpus-based paraphrasing. In this case, the author highlights the reliability that the latter tools can offer but holds back in their capacity for metaphorical assessment and, therefore, their inferential accuracy.

In the fourth chapter, Gibbs focuses on the inference of metaphors from language and the different views that deal with the metaphor mechanisms. He claims that cross-domain mappings and categorization are two different processes that are the consequence of the balance between interactional motivation and cognitive economy. Thus, metaphor inferences significantly rely on appropriateness and conventionalization processes. In addition, this chapter finishes with an overview of the criticism towards CMT in relation to its neglect of social constraints and their influence in metaphor. However, Gibbs presents consistent support to defend that conceptual metaphors are indeed shaped by sociocultural contexts

at the individual and collective levels and, therefore, their inference necessarily should consider an ostensive view of language that encompasses isolated mappings, sentence constructions, and text level discourse.

Chapter 5, “Psychology of conceptual metaphors in verbal metaphor use”, provides an extensive number of psychological experiments about online processing. Gibbs portrays the stages that an ordinary speaker undergoes from perception, going through understanding, and ending in verbal use of particular metaphors. Alongside with it, the author further extends his ideas demonstrating how metaphorical thought has a close connection with embodied experience by recurring to the DESIRE IS HUNGER metaphor studies. In this sense, Gibbs argues that embodiment triggers metaphors and their resulting verbal production, but the process can also go backwards, i.e., verbal production activates metaphors that may have a manifestation in the body.

Chapter 6 explores conceptual metaphor and multimodal experience. In this closing chapter, Gibbs intends to expand the spectrum of metaphor study to other modes of communication in order to consolidate the premise that metaphors reflect the structure of thought and emerge from embodied experience. Moreover, Gibbs explains how such modes illustrate the dynamics of creativity, cognition, and attitudes. He includes paintings, pictures, sculptures, comics, advertisements, press reports, gestures, dancing, music, among others, to support his claims on metaphoricity. Thus, the author argues that the analysis of multimodal experience through CMT adds up to the empirical basis of bodily action.

In the closing section, chapter 7, Raymond Gibbs concludes that conceptual metaphors are psychologically real. Hence, he restates the relation between embodied experience and its implications in conceptual mappings as well as the importance that CMT has in the understanding of how human experience is construed.

Conclusion

Metaphor Wars offers a complete immersion into experiments and analyses that can be appealing to lay readers. Such experiments encompass a wide range of different genres to depict the pervasiveness of metaphors in language. Also, Gibbs provides explanations on how metaphors emerge from embodiment and are shaped by contextual forces. In addition, he diligently and reflexively directs his attention to the procedures in the identification of metaphors employed by CMT analysts, anticipating issues that beginner scholars may encounter when trying to justify their research moves. Notably, this critical and informed evaluation of different procedures can be a must-read for analysts who intend to nurture a mature and holistic attitude in the field of CMT. Apart from that, Gibbs permanently discusses opposing views and controversies that the CMT theory entails by providing linguistic and psychological evidence to support the experience basis and universality of metaphors.

Lastly, it is important to caution the reader on the overall organization of the book. In this sense, introducing the reader to scholarly discussions on controversies around CMT in the introductory chapter could discourage practical readers who seek to comprehend the nature of conceptual metaphors fully in the first 50 pages of the book. Similarly, given the extension of each chapter, around 50 pages each, there could be some difficulties for analysts who try to revisit specific sections of the book because it does not contain subheadings in the index nor numeration in the subsections of each chapter.

In conclusion, Raymond Gibbs takes the reader through a journey of theoretical discussions, familiar examples, robust empirical evidence, and methodological considerations in conceptual metaphor theory. His work is the result of his vast experience in research that continues to widen the scope of metaphor studies proposed by Lakoff & Johnson more than four decades ago.

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