Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics

Class 6 - Metonymy and Metaphor

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Revision from 1st Year

Poetic Metaphor
Semantic relation of similarity

X is like Y

The moon is a beacon of our love
Revision from 1st Year

Poetic Metonymy

semantic relation of contiguity

X stands for Y

She phoned me!
Revision from 1\textsuperscript{st} Year

Conceptual Metaphor
semantic relation of similarity

Do you have the time?

You’re just soooo cool!
Revision

Conceptual Metonymy

semantic relation of contiguity

The ham sandwich wants the bill

Would you like a glass?
Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Metaphor and Metonymy are fundamental to human thought
Conceptual Metaphors and Metonymies are fundamental to grammar

1. Conceptual metaphors – systematic conceptual relations in a language

2. Conceptual metaphors – systematic relation of concrete concept to abstract concept

These two points are the basis of the theory!
Cognitive Semantics

Remember Lakoff?

Him and some mates proposed a radical theory in the 1970’s and 1980’s

It was called Cognitive Linguistics

It is called this because it is believed that cognizing (remember that this is another way of saying categorizing) is believed to be the grammar.

In other words,

1. Grammar is meaning, not form

   and

2. Meaning (and thus grammar) is based on prototype sets not truth conditional sets

Do you understand the implications of (1)?

Do you remember the distinction of (2)?
La métaphore conceptuelle

structure conceptuelle = grammaire linguistique
Le Temps...

Comment comprenons-nous le temps ?
On ne peut pas le voir, le sentir, l’entendre...

L'heure arrive où le père doit passer de l'autre côté
Pâques arrive bientôt donc j'ai préparé quelques petites choses

La raison pour laquelle on est seule à Noël est quelquefois une raison triste.
Demain on va se voir à midi pour un match

Sur ta copie d'écran on voit que le 22 janvier est avant le 26 janvier qui lui-même avant le 13 février qui est lui même avant le 16 février

La manucure prestige avec french, quant à elle, si le rendez-vous est avant 9h ou après 19h cela vous coutera 95€
Le TEMPS c’est l’ESPACE

En anglais comme en français et probablement, toutes les langues du monde, on conceptualise le temps en termes d’espace.

Mais, on croit que tous concepts abstrait sont compris avec l’aide des métaphores

Systématiquement, on prend nos expériences du monde concret pour parler de notre monde abstrait

C’est une grammaire culturelle qui nous aide à comprendre et à communiquer
Exercice

In groups, look at the languages you speak between you

Can you find other examples of the TIME is SPACE metaphor?
Metaphors – Conceptual Structure

- At 2pm
- Before Christmas
- Over the holidays
- In 2 hours
  etc.

None of you probably thought about this before

Metaphors determine how you think!
Metaphors determine how you see the world!
"Univerversal" Perception Based Metaphors

1. In language aquistion, we use things that are more experientially basic to understand things that are more experientially complex.

2. As language evolved, languages around the world wove this fact into their grammars.
Culture Specific Metaphors

most conceptual metaphors are language / culture specific

which is cool because difference between the metaphors can help us understand differences between cultures

and even, maybe,

differences between the way different peoples think !!!!
L’AMOUR... c’est un VOYAGE ?
L’AMOUR c’est un VOYAGE

Regarde à quel point nous en sommes arrivés
Nous sommes à la croisée des chemins
Nous avons fait un long chemin ensemble et maintenant nous allons suivre des chemins distincts
Nous ne pouvons plus revenir en arrière
Je crois que notre mariage ne mène nulle part
Où en sommes nous?
Notre amour est dans une impasse
Notre mariage tourne vide
Notre mariage passe un mauvais cap
etc..

C’est une conceptualisation importante en anglais, mais compréhensible en français.
En français...

L’AMOUR, c’est la FOLIE
Je suis fou d’elle. Il m'a fait perdre l'esprit.
Il est constamment à délirer sur elle. Elle a perdu la tête.
Il a failli perdre la raison par amour. Je ressens un amour insensé pour Harry.

L’AMOUR c’est la MAGIE
Elle m'a jeté un sort. Le charme est brisé. J'étais comme envoûté.
Elle m'a hypnotisé. Elle m'a mis en état de transe.

L’AMOUR c'est la GUERRE
Il est connu pour ses nombreuses conquêtes.
Elle s'est battue pour le conserver, mais sa maîtresse a fini par gagner la bataille.
Ses avances l'ont fait fuir. Elle l'a poursuivi avec acharnement.
Petit à petit, il gagne du terrain. Il a conquis sa main. Il l'a subjuguée.
Elle est assiégée par des prétendants. Il a dû les mettre en fuite. Il a dû enrôler ses amis.
Il a fait de sa mère une alliée. Leur couple est une mésalliance caractérisée.
Latin vs. Germanic

Many cultural stereotypes are actually encoded in metaphors
Exercise

In groups, translate into French

*She is in love*

*She fell out of love*

*She loved him but felt trapped*

*She could not breath and needed more space*

*I feel so good in this with you*

*I feel I can shelter in our love no matter what*

*I don’t want to get into a relationship right now*

*I need to get out of this marriage*

1. Do you see a systematic relation between a concrete concept and an abstract concept. What are the concepts?

2. A conceptual metaphor can be understood as cultural grammar, a way of seeing the world. Does French have this conceptual metaphor?
Metaphors – some things to think about

1. Similarity - They compare different concepts (categories)

2. Mapping - They use concrete concepts (source) to make it easier to understand abstract concepts (target)

3. Grammar – The mapping systematic

4. Construal – Since it is a comparison, a metaphor highlights and background different aspects of the target concept

This makes it an essential communicative tool
Conceptual Metaphors – Concrete => Abstract

**Source concept** - BUILDINGS
The concrete experientially basic phenomenon

**Target concept** – ARGUMENT
The abstract experientially complex phenomenon

*ARGUMENTS ARE BUILDINGS*

(1) Their argument was bulldozed in parliament
(2) There was absolutely no basis to your hypothesis / theory / argument / opinion (etc.)
(3) He demolished our argument / theory / opinion (etc.)
(4) The foundations of her argument (etc.) are shaky
(5) They built up this complex multi-storey theory / argument (etc.), but it all came down when in the end
Exercise 1 - Starting with Source concept BODY

Work in groups on English

a. Think of body parts (eyes, hands, back etc.). Look in the dictionary for help if you want. List all the body part lexical metaphors you can think of.

To get you started

(1) Eye someone up,
(2) you have my heart,
(3) she is quite a handful... etc.!

b. Which examples are metaphors and which are metonymies?

c. Are there patterns emerging? Are these lexical metaphors and metonymies or is there an underlying logic / grammar of conceptual relations?
Exercise 2 – Starting with Target Concept

Target Concept - Pet Names

a. What are some pet names in the languages you speak
   Write them down in a list

b. Do you see any re-emerging metaphors?
Remember - Conceptual Metaphors

Point 1 – Concrete to Abstract

Source domain
The concrete experientially basic phenomenon

HEAD

Target Domain
The abstract experientially complex phenomenon

LEADER OF A PEOPLE – STATE- INSTITUTION

The source concept is used to describe / understand the target concept

HEAD is LEADER
Remember - Conceptual Metaphors

Point 2 – Systematic

When a language systematically uses a given source domain to explain a given target domain, we say this is a Conceptual Metaphor (as opposed to a lexical metaphor).

It is argued that these conceptual mappings, systematic associations between one concept and another, are a result of underlying cultural logic.
but

there is a 3\textsuperscript{rd} point to conceptual metaphors and it is the most important

as we mentioned before, they shape how we see the world

we call this \textit{construal}
Conceptual Metaphors – Construal

Metaphors do not only explain abstract things in terms of more concrete things

Every metaphor (poetic, lexical or conceptual) construes or profiles certain elements of the target concept and not other elements. We call this:

Highlighting and Backgrounding

The ability to do this is called construal
Conceptual Metaphors – Construal

Compare the literal with instances of 3 known conceptual metaphors for LOVE

1. I am uncertain I want to continue the relationship (LITERAL)
2. I need some room to move, I feel suffocated in this relationship (CONTAINER)
3. We’ve come to a crossroads in our relationship, and I’m unsure of where we are going (JOURNEY)
4. We’ve been together so long, but I feel things are falling apart (PARTS OF A WHOLE)

Each metaphor highlights different aspects of the concept LOVE
Exercise 3. Source concept Animal

Work in groups on English

a. List all the metaphors with source concepts as ANIMALS.
To get you started
(1) Don’t be such a bitch!
(2) Come here pet, you’ll be OK
(3) Look at those two turtledoves

b. Are there any conceptual metaphors emerging?
c. Are there any metonymies?
d. How do the metaphors construe the target concept?
Conceptual Metonymy

This is much more straightforward
Conceptual Metonymy

Examples:

AGENT for ACTION

to father a child, to tutor a student, to author a new book

INSTRUMENT for ACTION

to ski down the hill, to hammer the nail, to saw off a branch

OBJECT for ACTION

to blanket the bed, to dust the room, to scale the fish, to pepper the dish

BODY PART for ACTION

to tiptoe into the room, to elbow s.o. out of the way, to head the ball, to hand in the essay
Let's get back to construal

Both metaphor and metonymy construe the world

It's not just difference between languages and cultures

we make construal choices every time we speak...
Framing - Construal

A metaphor does more than explain a complex concept in terms of a simple concept; it highlights certain aspect of the target.

*It’s not that I don’t love you anymore; we have just gone different ways.*

Construal and Politics

Metaphors are used to construe political positions and to advertise products

*Pro choice – Pro life – ?Pro abortion*

*Tax avoidance – Tax minimisation – social contribution*
Construal and Politics

Trump and flood

I googled the two words

“a flood of Mexicans, illegal immigrants”

“Heroin keeps flooding in”

“the Mexican government of flooding the United States with rapists”

“Is that the “flood of immigrants” I keep hearing about?”

People don’t flood!

Every politician does this, indeed many (if not most) arguments between people are debates over different construals of the same thing!
Construal and News

Journalists are rarely unbiased...

Their choice of words often involves using metaphors

Unlike poetic metaphors, we do not even notice these “daily” metaphors but they influence how we understand things through their construal

Let us look at a randomly chosen news item from the BBC
Greek drama fails to stir bruised Germans - By Steve Rosenberg BBC News, Berlin

The European Union's weakest economy is drowning in debt - but Europe's strongest economy is not rushing to throw a lifeline.

"Who's to blame for the crisis?" asks today's edition of the tabloid Bild. "It's Greece!"

Another paper, Die Welt, poses this question in an internet poll: "Is it right for the EU to help Greece out of the mess?" Around 90% of respondents have answered "No".

Why are Germans so reluctant to assist? After all, Germany embraced the European project, the whole idea of a European Union. Whatever happened to solidarity? What is wrong with bailing out a fellow member state in need?

From the point of view of the German public, everything.

First, it is a question of principle. Germans are generally frugal, they are used to living within their means. Many here ask: Why should they have to bail out a country like Greece, which has been so profligate and racked up massive debt? What is more, Germany has enough problems of its own right now, trying to nurse its own economy back to health.
Economy fears

According to the latest GDP figures, the German economy failed to grow at all in the final quarter of 2009. Investment is weak and unemployment rising. Germany's Economy Minister, Rainer Bruederle, has warned that the recovery is still fragile.

If Berlin steps in to provide Greece with loans or guarantees, Germany risks having to pay more interest on its own national debt. And it is the German taxpayers who will have to foot the bill.

Add to that predictions in the newspapers that an aid package for Greece could bump up prices in Germany - on everything from oil and gas to jeans - and you can see why Germans are worried.

And not just the public, but the politicians, too.

In Brussels this week Chancellor Angela Merkel said eurozone countries would "stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Greece". But she may have given the cold shoulder to the idea of an EU bail-out.
Eurozone weaknesses

Berlin believes the onus is on Greece to put its house in order, cut costs and slash debt. There is suspicion, too, that any package of financial assistance to Greece may be unconstitutional under German law and break EU rules, too.

But there is also concern about what could happen if Germany does not step in to help.

If Greece defaults on its debts, that will almost certainly hit German banks. And it could spark a domino effect across Europe - with other shaky economies crashing, too. That would be a disaster for the eurozone.

For now, Berlin is hoping that pledges of solidarity and words of support will be sufficient to steady markets and to prevent the Greek economy from unravelling.
Rev. Martin Luther King

“I have a dream” speech

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."
But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so, we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."