

Process of cross domain mapping psychology essay



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The conceptual metaphor theory studies the cognitive process of cross-domain mapping. Discuss the mechanism of metaphoric mapping. In particular, you should address the difference between linguistic metaphors and conceptual metaphors; (b) the relationship between primary metaphors and compound metaphors; and (c) the relationship between conceptual metaphors and the embodied experiences

Metaphor ‘ is the phenomenon whereby we talk and think about one thing in terms of another, as when a difficult enterprise is described as a ‘ battle’.’ (Semino, 2008, p. 1) That being said, metaphor is a form of figurative language and it was viewed as a characteristic of language and words, rather than a vehicle of thought, experiences and act, like it is viewed in nowadays. The way metaphor is ‘ characterised is by the schematic form of A is B, as in Achilles is a lion’ (Evans and Green, p. 293). In this example a word or a phrase are applied to something which is not accurately applicable, and metaphor is created.

However after the 1970s, Cognitive linguists argued that metaphor is a central feature of human language. In the field of Cognitive Linguistics, where our conceptual system is examined it has been found that ‘ our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.’ (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 3) This statement hence implies that everything we do, or think we do it in a way that it is metaphorical. According to Lakoff through the way we conceive one mental domain in relation to another, metaphor has now obtained the meaning of “ a cross domain mapping in the conceptual system”. The aim of this essay is to introduce conceptual metaphor theory: a framework which

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studies the cognitive process of cross-domain mapping, and the mechanism of metaphoric mapping, as well as conceptual metaphors and the difference they have with linguistic metaphors. Also, the relationship primary and compound metaphors have as they are both derived subsections of conceptual metaphors, and lastly the relationship conceptual metaphors have with embodied experiences.

Cognitive Linguistics Enterprise

The field or better enterprise, of Cognitive linguistics arose firstly in the early 1970s. It basically revolves around the symbolic and interactive functions of language as well as the systematic structure the language has. Cognitive linguistics enterprise has two key commitments and it also has to do with cognitive semantics and cognitive approaches to grammar. It basically examines the embodied mind and the connections the mind has with language.

‘ Cognitive linguists like other linguists attempt to describe and account for linguistic systematicity, structure and function. Nevertheless the difference from Linguistics is that for cognitive linguistics, language reflects patterns of thought; therefore, to study language is to study patterns of conceptualisation.’ (Evans and Green, 2006, p. 20) Thus, Cognitive Linguistics deals mostly with the relationship the mind and the language share as cognitive linguists believe that through language peoples’ thoughts and experiences are revealed.

Taking into further consideration the two key commitments in Cognitive linguistics which were introduced by George Lakoff and both distinguish

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Cognitive linguistics, as they make the individual enterprise it is. As it is stated by Evans and Green the 'Generalisation Commitment' which is a commitment to the characterisation of general principles that are responsible for all aspects of human language and the 'Cognitive commitment' which provides a characterisation of the general principles for language that corresponds with what is already known about the mind and brain from other disciplines. (Evans and Green, p. 27) Both of these commitments mark the study of cognitive linguistics and they are followed by all cognitive linguists. Their importance is really great as they are the starting point and the foundation for all the methods and theories that are engaged by the two main studies of cognitive linguistics, cognitive semantics and cognitive grammar: two fields of cognitive linguistics which study the mind and grammar. What is more, in Cognitive linguistics the relationship between language, mind and experience through the embodied cognition is also one of the key facts and research within cognitive linguistics. The main argument of cognitive linguistics is that the human mind and conceptual organisation are functions of the ways in which our species-specific bodies interact with the environment we inhabit.

Cognitive linguistics disagree with Noam Chomsky and his theory of Generative Grammar as given the 'Generalisation Commitment' which argues that areas of language like polysemy or metaphor share central organising theories, several areas of language are indeed foregrounded.

Metaphor is a key subject of study in Cognitive Linguistics as cognitive linguistics study the relationship of language and the mind, how our thoughts are connected with our language. Metaphors 'are not just a stylistically
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attractive way of expressing ideas by means of language, but a way of thinking about things.' (Ungerer and Schmid, p. 118) Hence, metaphor is a key subject in cognitive linguistics as metaphor reflects the way we think and also create a new meaning in several areas of our language.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

As it has been stated in the title, Conceptual Metaphor Theory studies the cognitive process of cross-domain mapping, which simply means that it studies the mental course or development of metaphor. It is a framework which was firstly introduced by Lakoff and Johnson in 1980. Through this framework metaphors are created and distinguished as parts of language and speech.

The basic principle of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is that metaphor is not only a literary feature of language but the way individuals think is metaphorical in general. There are some key aspects which underlie Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the way this framework emerges in Cognitive Linguistics. ' In short, Conceptual Metaphor Theory is concerned with the mapping of inferences from source to target' (ofx, p. 191)

Firstly, the fact that conceptual metaphor is unidirectional, which means metaphors have one specific direction from source to target and it cannot change. This notion of unidirectionality affirms that metaphors usually move from the more concrete to a more abstract way of thinking. For instance:

Secondly, is motivation for source and target. As it was stated above mappings are unidirectional and this raises the question if there is a specific pattern which can direct and point out the domains which typically operate
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as source and target domains. Kovecses argued that ' the most common domains for metaphorical mappings include domains relating to the HUMAN BODY (the heart of the problem), ANIMALS (a sly fox)' and much more, and concerning the target domain he found that ' the most common target domains is for example the ones which consider EMOTION (she was deeply moved), THOUGHT (I see your point)'. Therefore, target concepts seem to be more mental, whereas source concepts can be characterized as more solid or physical. According to cognitive linguistics our basic knowledge of A is B and our natural way to experience and join the concepts creating metaphors.

Moreover, metaphorical entailment is another key aspect of Conceptual Metaphor theory. Conceptual metaphors sometimes provide extra information through the metaphoric mappings which are called entailments.

What is more, the fact that conceptual metaphors interact with each other, they cost the creation of complex metaphor systems, something which was found also by Lakoff and Johnson. These complex metaphor systems ' are collections of more schematic metaphorical mappings that structure a range of more specific metaphors like LIFE IS A JOURNEY' (Evans and Green, p. 229) Due to this Lakoff created a system, called the Event Structure Metaphor, illustrating metaphors which interact in the understanding of expressions. Taking the example above of the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY we can acknowledge that this metaphor can create several articulate examples as it is structured from the event structure metaphor.

Additionally, another key aspect of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory is the conceptual nature of metaphor. As it was stated before, in Cognitive

linguistics metaphor is an indication of someone's thoughts and experiences. Many conceptual theorists claim that conceptual metaphor is based in our basic experiences.

Last but not least a significant idea in Conceptual metaphor theory is related to hiding and highlighting as several metaphors can hide or highlight certain information. An example is given in Evans and Greens with the metaphor AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY as this metaphor ' highlights the progressive and organisational aspects of arguments while hiding the confrontational aspects' (Evans and green, p, 304). For example: She will follow step by step her recovery instructions. This metaphor is keen on highlighting the continuity and development the arguments has. In this way metaphors can highlight the importance of the concept.

Another really important notion of conceptual metaphor theory is the theory of image schemas. The theory of image schemas is part of cognitive semantics and it is also related to metaphor as image schemas are dealing with an individual's bodily experiences and they are ' derived from interaction with and observation of the world'.(Evans and Green, p. 182)

Image schemas work as a ' supporting structure for human thought' (Oakley oxf p, 214) as the basic correlations help us understand the events and actions taking place in the world around us relating some aspects of life like presence and existence. Culture-dependent evaluations differ from culture to culture as they describing the characteristics of it. According to Oakley, in a few words, an image schema ' is a condensed redescription of perceptual experience for the purpose of mapping spatial structure onto conceptual structure'. (Oakley oxf, p. 215) Therefore, image schemas help us improve
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our knowledge and understanding of metaphor as according to Lakoff and Johnson they can 'function as source domains for metaphoric mapping.' (Evans and Green, p. 300) For example, 'our image-schematic concept COUNTERFORCE arises from the experience of being unable to proceed because some opposing force is resisting our attempt to move forward.' (Evans and Green, p. 301) According to Lakoff what is really remarkable is that peoples' abstract thoughts which are enabled by metaphor, have an image-schematic and therefore embodied basis. What is more, Invariance is also an important principle of image schemas concerning some restrictions in metaphors as not all the source domains can serve

and it is a principle which explains the gaps

invariance principle basically explains all the gaps in conceptual metaphor theory

like why DEATH can't be described metaphorically as a TEACHER but instead is described as a DESTROYER

All of the above are key aspects of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory as they mark the way target and source domains work in order to create conceptual mappings.

The mechanism of metaphoric mapping

Mapping is a greatly important feature of Conceptual metaphor theory as it marks the way metaphors work by joining source to target domains. 'The mapping scope of a metaphor is best understood as a set of constraints regulating which correspondences are eligible for mapping from a source

concept into a chosen target concept. The mapping scopes of metaphors reflect our conceptual experiences in dealing with the world around us' (Ungerer and Schmid, p. 119). That being set, according to Langacker our thoughts and experiences are organised in several domains. Domains are based on our knowledge and understanding of language and the meaning of the words. Without understanding a domain we would not be able to make any usage of the terms that apply to it. In cognitive linguistics, source domain and target domain are the two main roles that metaphors can have. Source domain is the domain of the metaphorical expressions we use and the target domain is the one that we are trying to comprehend. The figure below indicates the basic elements that substitute the mechanism of metaphorical mapping: the source and target concept, the mapping between them and the mapping scope.

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Figure 1

Therefore, mapping is a set of connections between essential features of the source and target domain as in order to understand a conceptual metaphor you have to be aware of the set of mappings which apply to the particular source and target combination. This mechanism of metaphoric mapping is stimulated by image schemas, discussed above as a key subject of the conceptual metaphor theory.

A primary tenet of this theory is that metaphors are matter of thought and not merely of language: hence, the term conceptual metaphor. The

metaphor may seem to consist of words or other linguistic expressions that
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come from the terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain, but conceptual metaphors underlie a system of related metaphorical expressions that appear on the linguistic surface. which are pre-linguistic schemas concerning space, time, moving, controlling, and other core elements of embodied human experience.

is largely metaphorically constructed, and thereby reflects a cognitive bias unique to humans that uses embodied prototypical processes (e. g. counting, moving along a path) that are understood by all human beings through their experiences

Moreover, metaphoric mappings are used in order to help us understand metaphors and the structure of our thoughts. Mapping scopes have three major components: image schemas, basic correlations and culture-dependent evaluations. Metaphoric mapping also has some major source and target concepts used.

Figure 2 Major source and target concepts of metaphorical mappings

Source as well as the target concepts are the foundational metaphors as they show the direction of the metaphor and all of them are the starting points for the other linguistic expressions to follow. For instance the target concept of TIME is based to the metaphor: TIME IS MONEY. This metaphor is a conceptual metaphor and it not only conceptualizes the development of the metaphoric expression but they also show how they are linked as they all follow the conceptual structure that the conceptual metaphor illustrates.

According to Lakoff and Johnson in cognitive linguistics we conceptualize the notion of TIME in terms of MONEY, showing that we understand the fact that <https://assignbuster.com/process-of-cross-domain-mapping-psychology-essay/>

time is something valuable. The conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY shows that people can acknowledge the importance of time and the fact that they measure their time as something significant in their lives. What is more, the metaphor TIME IS MONEY serves as a core expression giving the direction and meaning to the linguistic expressions that will follow. For instance:

TIME IS MONEY

I don't have time to see you.

Is he really worth your time?

It took ages to dye my hair.

All of this linguistic expressions following TIME IS MONEY show an acknowledgement of the mapping structure, and the way the mapping works in terms of target and source. In Cognitive Linguistics metaphors are establishing a theoretical link, amongst a source and a target concept.

What is more, there are different mapping scopes, as cognitive metaphors achieve different cognitive functions: Firstly 'lean mapping between specific concrete source concepts and concrete target concepts is primarily used to highlight individual aspects of the target concept'. For instance giving a characterization to person as George is a lion. Secondly rich mapping

The mechanism of metaphoric mapping establishes and the difference between linguistic metaphors and conceptual metaphors as conceptual metaphors are the ones who give the concept and the direction of the linguistic expression that will follow.

The difference between linguistic metaphors and Conceptual metaphors

Taking everything into account, as it was stated above in Cognitive linguistics, metaphor is something which exists in our everyday life and it is vital as well as fundamental. It is not just figurative language used in several poems or books but on the contrary, it is used on a regular everyday basis as our mental system grasps several concepts metaphorically. Hence, the way we think or express ourselves can be considered metaphorical.

Linguistic metaphors as well as Conceptual metaphors are both a way of communicating in language. The difference that they share though is that conceptual metaphors are considered to be the foundation and the way the A is B mapping works. Linguistic metaphors are the ones that follow.

Conceptual metaphors are the metaphors that conceptualize what we think and how we think as they are drawing the direction from source to target domain. They can be described as the whole idea or the metaphor which establishes the linguistic expressions that will follow afterwards and the train of thought which are constructed about as all of the expressions share something in common.

‘ Within Cognitive Linguistics the term metaphor is understood to refer to a pattern of conceptual association, rather to an individual metaphorical usage or a linguistic convention.’ (Grady, OXF, p. 188) According to Grady in Cognitive Linguistics

What really distinguishes metaphorical linguistic expressions between conceptual metaphors is the fact that all the metaphorical linguistic

expressions come from language and they can, for instance imply on the term of life which is derived from the domain of journey. The corresponding conceptual metaphor that they make manifest is LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Conceptual metaphors are showed in capital letters in order to demonstrate the fact that is not used in language but instead they underlie all the metaphorical expressions listed underneath a conceptual metaphor which are the linguistic metaphors. Conceptual metaphors have two different domains. ' The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called source domain, while the conceptual domain that is understood this way is the target domain. Thus, LIFE, ARGUMENTS, LOVE, THEORY and others are considered target domains, while JOURNEYS, WAR, BUILDINGS, and others are source domains.' (Kovecses, p. 4)

We try to understand the target domain through the use of the source domain.

As it was stated in the above paragraphs, in cognitive linguistics metaphor is something which exists in our everyday life and it is vital as well as central. It is not just figurative language used in several poems or books; on the contrary it is used on a regular everyday basis, when people think or speak.

Conceptual metaphors can be described as the whole idea or the metaphor which establishes the linguistic expressions that will follow afterwards and the train of thought which are constructed about as all of the expressions share something in common. For instance:

The relationship between primary metaphors and compound metaphors

As it was examined by Murphy in 1996 Conceptual Metaphor Theory carries a problem concerning the target domain and its structure, ' which limits the metaphorical mappings and entailments that can apply, and at the same time that the target domain is abstract in the sense that is not clearly delineated'

According to Grady there are two types of conceptual metaphor: primary metaphor and compound metaphor. Both primary and compound metaphors are constituents of conceptual metaphor. Primary metaphors differ from compound metaphors but at the same time they share a relationship.

According to Grady ' primary metaphors relate two ' simple' concepts from distinct domains. In contrast, compound metaphors relate entire complex domains of experience.' (Evans and Green, p. 307) Therefore, the idea that rises is that they are both conceptual metaphors, instead primary metaphors link different concepts from different domains rather than linking entire domains like compound metaphors do.

Lakoff and Johnson and Grady and Johnson claim that humans from very early on form experiential correlations, which they call " primary metaphors". As instances of such basic metaphors AFFECTION IS WARMTH, DIFFICULTIES ARE BURDENS, and KNOWING IS SEEING, among others, have been proposed. A feeling of warmth is often concomitant with an affectionate embrace. The above authors see primary metaphors as the atomic building blocks of more complex metaphors. (oxford book. Chapter 10 metonymy panther and Thornburg) p. 245

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The relationship between conceptual metaphors and embodied experiences

Conceptual metaphors are greatly linked with our embodied experiences as our experiences help us in order to understand and conceptualize metaphors.

‘ An important observation about conceptual metaphors is that many of their source domains reflect significant patterns of bodily experience.’ (Gibbs Jr, 2003, 1192) For instance when we talk about love as LOVE IS A JOURNEY, we refer to the notion of love as an experience we feel, and it has a starting point, an ending or a destination. We experience the idea of love and through metaphors we express our experiences.

Therefore our experiences and memories help us in order to construct conceptual metaphors in our minds.

Conclusion

All in all, to conclude, metaphors are part of our way of expressing ourselves, thoughts, as well as experiences, in our everyday life. Through conceptual metaphors which mark the destination and the theme of the linguistic expressions, people express their thoughts and experiences.