Metaphor

- Structure of reality built up through embodied interaction
  - Categories created based on perceptual capacities, needs/goals, etc.
  - Frames or cognitive domains are categories of categories--bundles of associated information
Metaphor

– New concepts may be understood partially in terms of existing
  • Schemas grow to include new objects which are not prototypes but close enough to get the same label
    1. axe for ‘guitar’
    2. woman for females 18-25

• Underlying conceptual shift
Metaphor

- Conceptual shift also in case of more complex frames
  - Frames don’t always have labels
  - Associated entities have labels
  - Metaphor - extending a frame to include another concept or frame
Metaphor

• Metaphor (Lakoff)
  – Understanding one concept in terms of another
  – Not just poetic
  – Language provides evidence for how our conceptual system is organized
Metaphor

• Argument is war
  1. Your claims are **indefensible**
  2. He **attacked every weak point** in my argument
  3. You disagree? Okay, **shoot**!

– Language used to talk about arguments is same as that used to talk about wars
Metaphor

• Characteristics of metaphor
  – Structure
    • Target domain - what is actually being talked about
    • Source domain - the domain used as a basis for understanding target
      – Ex. War is source domain for understanding argument in Argument is War metaphor
Metaphor

– Highlighting and Hiding
  • Source may highlight certain aspects of target, hid others

– Ex. Conduit metaphor
  • Ideas (or meanings) are objects
  • Linguistic expressions are containers
  • Communication is sending
  1. It’s hard to get that idea across to him
  2. I gave you that idea
  3. It’s difficult to put my ideas into words
  4. His words carry little meaning
  5. The meaning is right there in the words
Metaphor

- Conduit metaphor hides important aspects of meaning
  - Linguistic expressions are containers for meaning entails that words have meanings independent of contexts and speakers
    1. *We need new alternative sources of energy*
      » President of Mobil Oil
      » President of Friends of the Earth
    2. *Please sit in the apple-juice seat*
  
- Ideas are objects entails boundedness
  - Classical vs. prototype theory of categorization
Metaphor

- Pervasive metaphors affect how we think about a concept
  - Time is money
    1. You’re wasting my time.
    2. This gadget will save you hours.
    3. That flat tire cost me an hour.
    4. You don’t use your time profitably.
  - In modern society strong association between time and money
    - Hourly wages, interest on loans, rent, hotel rates, etc.
Metaphor

- “corresponding to the fact that we act as if time is a valuable commodity, we conceive of time that way”

- Time can be spent, wasted, budgeted, invested…
Metaphor

• Mapping is partial
  – A theory is a building
    1. They constructed this theory from the ground up.
    2. The theory was torn down brick by brick by its opponents.
    3. His early results form the building blocks for his theory.
    4. His theory was ornate and needed buttressing.

1. *This theory has no windows
2. *The tenants of this theory are behind in their rent
Metaphor

- Types of metaphors
  - Structural
  - Orientational
  - Ontological
Metaphor

– Structural
  • Provide rich highly structured, clearly delineated source domain to structure target domain
    – Theory is a building
    – Argument is war
    – Anger is a heated fluid in a container
      » He’s boiling mad and about to burst
Metaphor

– Orientational
  • Organizes whole system of concepts with respect to one another.
  • Give spatial orientation to a concept
    – *Happy is up*; sad is down
  • Not arbitrary - body/experientially based
    – Sadness --> drooping posture, mouth
    – Happiness --> erect posture, smile lifts mouth
  • Not necessarily universal or predictable
Metaphor

– Examples

  • Happy is up; sad is down
    – That boosted my spirits
    – I’m feeling down
    – I’m depressed

  • Conscious is up; unconscious is down
    – Wake up
    – He fell asleep
    – He’s under hypnosis
    – Basis: waking state is standing/higher
Metaphor

– Examples

Control/force is up; subject to control down
  – I am on top of the situation
  – He’s at the height of his power.
  – He is under my control
  – He is low man on the totem pole

– Basis ???
Metaphor

– Examples

Control/force is up; subject to control down
– I am on top of the situation
– He’s at the height of his power.
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– Basis: physical size typically correlates with physical strength and victor in a fight is typically on top.
Metaphor

– Examples

• Good is up; bad is down
  – Things are looking up.
  – We hit a peak last year, but it’s been downhill ever since
  – He does high quality work.

– Basis???
Metaphor

– Examples

• Good is up; bad is down
  – Things are looking up.
  – We hit a peak last year, but it’s been downhill ever since
  – He does high quality work.

  – Basis: Happiness, health, life, control --things that principally characterize what is good--are all up
Metaphor

– Examples

• More is up; less is down
  – The number of cancer cases is going up/down
  – My income rose/fell last year.
  – He’s underage
  – Turn the heat down.

  – Basis: If you add more of a substance or more physical objects to a container or pile, the level goes up
Metaphor

– Overall systematicity to orientational metaphors
  • Happy, health, alive, control are all up

  • Predominant metaphor for happiness is *up*
    – Minor metaphor: happy is wide
    – *I’m feeling expansive*
    – *Bursting with happiness*

  • Happy is *up* maximally coherent with related metaphors
Metaphor

- Same source domain can be employed to refer to different targets via different experiential bases
  - Happy is up
  - More is up

- Superficial incoherence as a result of different experiential bases for same metaphor
  - Unknown is up; known is down
  - Unfinished is down; finished is up
Metaphor

• *Inflation/depression is increasing*

• Interpretable because one More is Up is more dominant
• Stronger physical basis
Metaphor

– Ontological Metaphors

• *Ontological - related to being/existence*
• A kind of metaphor whereby abstract, unwieldy or fuzzy concepts are viewed as objects with human scale and interaction potential

– *Inflation is lowering our standard of living*
– *Buying land is the best way of dealing with inflation*
– *Inflation makes me sick*
Metaphor

– Some purposes of ontological metaphors
  • Referring
    – We are working towards peace
    – The honor of our country is at stake in this war.
  • Quantifying
    – It will take a lot of patience to finish this book.
    – You’ve got too much hostility
  • Identifying aspects
    – The ugly side of his personality comes out under pressure
    – I can’t keep up with the pace of modern life
Metaphor

• Identifying causes
  – He did it out of anger

• Setting goals/motivating actions
  – He went to New York to seek fame and fortune
  – I’m changing my way of life so I can find true happiness
Metaphor

- Elaborated ontological metaphors
  - The mind is an entity
  1. The mind is a machine
     - *We’re still trying to grind out the solution to this equation.*
     - *The wheels are turning now*
  2. The mind is a brittle object
     - *Her ego is very fragile*
     - *He broke under cross-examination*
Metaphor

- Container metaphors
  - Land areas
    - Geographical entities often fuzzily bounded
      - Woods, clearing, mountain range, California
    - We view as bounded containers
      - We went into the woods
      - There’s gold in them thar hills
Metaphor

- Container metaphors
  - The visual field
    - The visual field
    - The ship is coming into view
    - He’s out of sight now
  - Events, actions, states
    - Are you in the race Sunday?
    - Halfway into the race I ran out of energy
Metaphor

- Container metaphors
  - Events, actions, states
    - In washing the window, I splashed water all over the floor
    - How did Jerry get out of washing the windows?
    - How much window washing did you do?
    - I put a lot of energy into washing the windows
    - I get a lot of satisfaction out of washing windows.

- He’s in love
- I’m slowly getting into shape