# Cognitive Linguistic Approach to the Integrated Theory of Metaphor

*Enfoque lingüístico cognitivo de la teoría integrada de la metáfora*

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## RESUMEN

Los diversos aspectos de la metáfora y su aplicación están en la agenda de este debate. Este artículo tiene recursos para docenas de estudios de metáforas europeas y americanas y presenta los resultados de su descripción analítica. Como resultado, este análisis describe una variedad de temas de actualidad. Uno de ellos es el desarrollo de una teoría de la metáfora que integrará varios enfoques (lingüísticos, cognitivos, comunicativos y pragmáticos) al estudio de la metáfora, reproduciendo el cambio de un enfoque cognitivo-lingüístico al análisis del lenguaje figurativo. Se han introducido varias teorías sobre el aspecto cognitivo de la materia.

**Palabras clave:** Metáfora, teoría de la relevancia, teoría híbrida de la metáfora, teoría integrada de la metáfora.

## ABSTRACT

The various aspects of metaphor and its application are on the agenda of this debate. This article has resources to dozens of European and American metaphor studies and presents the results of their analytical overview. As a result, this analysis depicts a range of topical issues. One of them is the development of a theory of metaphor that will integrate various approaches (linguistic, cognitive, communicative, and pragmatic) to the study of the metaphor, reproducing the change of a cognitive-linguistic approach to the figurative language analysis. Several theories about the cognitive aspect of matter have been introduced.

**Keywords:** Hybrid theory of metaphor, integrated theory of metaphor, metaphor, relevance theory.

## INTRODUCTION

At the present stage, the problematic field of metaphor research covers a wide range of matters related to the study of the language nature, it is functioning, and the typology of metaphorical units – a field of inquiry that is still relatively unexplored. The past few decades have seen an explosion in the study of metaphor within cognitive science, where scholars from linguistic, philosophical, and psychological disciplines have put forward diverse theories on metaphorical thought and language. Many of these theories hold that metaphor is pervading in life, not only in ordinary language but also in our thoughts and experience. Among these theories, the most important and influential one specific to metaphor interpretation has been proposed by Fauconnier and Turner namely, conceptual blending theory (Fauconnier, G., & Turner: 1998, pp. 133-187).

Particularly noteworthy is the effort to study the process of perception and understanding of metaphorical units during the communication process. The language is considered by the authors as a socio-historic phenomenon reflecting social events and the structure of the society (Solnyshkina & Gafiyatova: 2014, pp. 220-224). The researchers' interest is the use of common and individual patterns of figurative language, its applications in corpus studies, and language acquisition. The key figures in developing theories of metaphor in XXI century are Lynne Cameron (Open University, UK), Robyn Carston (University College London, UK), Alice Deignan (University of Leeds, UK), Zsófia Demjén (University College London, UK), Dedre Gentner (Northwestern University, Illinois, USA), Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. (University of California, Santa Cruz, USA (retired 2018)), Rachel Giora (Tel Aviv University, Israel), Matthew S. McGlone (the University of Texas at Austin, USA), Sam Glucksberg ( Zoltán Kövecses (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary), Jeannette Littlemore (University of Birmingham, UK), Andreas Musolff (University of East Anglia, UK), David L. Ritchie (Portland State University, Oregon, USA), Elena Semino (Lancaster University, UK), Gerard Steen (the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Markus Tendahl (Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany), Deidre Wilson (University College London, UK).

## METHODS

Interacting conceptual structures are divided into the source domain and target domain. According to the conceptual theory of metaphor, the source domain is the one, scenarios, and frames of which correlate with the target domain elements, thus, the "outcome" of metaphor is a mapping scheme. However, the interaction between the two domains results in creating a new one. The idea of generating new conceptual structures from given ones was developed by G. Fauconnier and M. Turner and resulted in creating "conceptual blending theory" (Fauconnier, G., & Turner: 1998, pp. 133-187).

The theory of conceptual blending is considered a continuation of the conceptual theory of metaphor. It is based on the interaction of two partial temporary conceptual structures - mental spaces (Fauconnier, G., & Turner: 1998, pp. 133-187). Mental spaces are formed in the online mode, and the structure of the mental space depends on the intentions of the author. Cross-space projection brings together the elements of two mental spaces (Minikeeva et al.: 2019, pp. 281-285). In the process of interaction, there are common elements that relate to the third – generic– space. The most significant difference between the theories of conceptual integration is the presence of the space called a blended one. This space is a new conceptual structure or knowledge (Fauconnier, G., & Turner: 1998, pp. 133-187). There is a selection of components that are projected into blend depending on the intentions of the writer. Moreover, the possibility of interaction of not only two but more spaces. Since the theory of conceptual blending focuses on the dynamic structures that arise in the process of discourse development, the blend as a conceptual structure can subsequently become an input mental space and participate in the creation of a new blend.

The study of metaphor from the position of the theory of conceptual integration allows exposing the mechanism of meaning formation, highlighting not only the interaction itself but also the result of the

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interaction. The productivity of the metaphor is expressed in content and it is called emergent metaphors. Emergent characteristics are called such signs that appear in the blend under the interaction of mental spaces, but in the mental spaces themselves are not available.

## RESULTS

This paper draws on dozens of European (Netherlands, United Kingdom, Hungary, and Germany) and American metaphor studies and presents the results of their analytical overview. The conceptual theory of metaphor seems to be of interest in the area of Russian linguistic study. Linguists conclude that the terms concept and language image are not synonymous, because the concepts they designate are not identified but only intersect (Galiulina et al.: 2019, pp. 481-485). The trajectory of domestic studies of metaphor is defined by the theory that has been reinterpreted from various perspectives. It is a pivot point for the descriptor metaphor theory by A. N. Baranov (Baranov: 2014). Moreover, the invariance hypothesis, the theory of conceptual integration (Fauconnier & Turner: 2008), claims about primary and compound metaphors, coherence model, connectivity theory of metaphor, interaction theory, modeling of metaphor in discourse (Ritchie: 2013, p. 230). These studies are done within the framework of cognitive linguistics, which is proposing the clarifications and reinterpretation of theses of conceptual metaphor so it contributes to its further evolution. Contemporary conceptions of metaphor studies also include the career of metaphor theory, the relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson: 2008, p. 105), the neural theory of metaphor (Lakoff: 1993), the attributive categorization view/model, hybrid theories of metaphor, metaphor as an anomaly, the gestalt-interactionist theory of metaphor, and theory of metaphor as embodied schema.

Contemporary research programs of metaphorical language are signified by these conceptions. Besides the conceptual metaphor theory (or the new contemporary theory of metaphor) is being amplified but changed its status from unambiguous to diverging. The need for an integrated theory of metaphor is identified in critical literature (Gibbs Jr: 2008).

Recent studies on the theory of metaphor have reported as paradigm pluralism. According to Gerard Steen, diversity of metaphor allows structuring the field of research based on multiple parameters. Recent literature studies report on the importance of comparative analysis of fiction (Garipova et al.: 2019, pp. 486-490). The predominant ones are the field of research and multi-disciplinary dimension (see Table 1) (Steen: 2011, pp. 26-64).

| Field of research | Behavioral angle | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Linguistic (semiotic) | Psychological | Social |
| Language | The linguistic forms of metaphor | Individual processes and products of metaphor use | Shared processes and products of metaphor use |
| Cognition (thought) | The conceptual structures of metaphor | Individual processes and products of metaphor use | Shared processes and products of metaphor use |
| Communication | The communicative functions of metaphor | Individual processes and products of metaphor use | Shared processes and products of metaphor use |

**Table 1.** Studies of metaphor: Dimensions and approaches

When we look at the old contemporary theory (Lakoff: 1993), there were two dimensions, metaphor in language and metaphor in thought, which have been at the center of discussion in several disciplines. The addition of communication distinguishes from the disciplines with distinct approaches (see Table 1). The

Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana; ISSN 1316-5216; ISSN-e 2477-9555
Año 25, n° Extra 7, 2020, pp. 244-250
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cognitive approach should be completed by a social approach to metaphor in language and metaphor in thought, reflecting a central concern of those applied linguists, sociolinguists and discourse researchers who have analyzed the variable aspects between metaphors, language and thought across situations of use and groups of people (Steen: 2011, pp. 26-64).

The characteristics of the complete integrated theory of metaphor are the result of the extension of the research field, which should have regard to various dimensions and approaches. The positive potential of the theory of metaphor allows providing evidence in the methodology of metaphorical units, contexts (Steen: 2011, pp. 26-64). Multiple approaches to analyze metaphor, its ambiguous nature establishes the miscellaneous results (Semino et al.: 2018, pp. 625-645). There is a hybrid theory of metaphor (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez: 2011) and a new hybrid model (Stöver: 2010) that are integrated conceptions of metaphor.

The foundation of the integrated theory is the principle of integration of the conceptual theory of metaphor and the relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson: 2008, p. 105). Tendahl's 'hybrid theory of metaphor' is a combination of cognitive-linguistic with relevance-theoretic ideas, as a starting point. Stöver's model corporates the notion of conceptual metaphors in modified form, accounting for metaphor in thought. As previously assumed by relevance theory, some metaphors originate in language and others originate in thought (cognitive linguistics). Stöver's model can account for both (Stöver: 2010).

According to the conceptual theory of metaphor, metaphor arises from mental mapping from the source domain to the target domain in the mind of people with the view that we conceptualize the world metaphorically which reflects the way of thinking. Gibbs and Tendahl emphasize the important role of mapping in metaphor since mapping can access contextual assumptions of utterances and is responsible for linking physical and psychological senses of concept attributes. Through mapping, it helps us recognize conventional metaphors and novel metaphors. If the attribute of the source domain does not typically map into the target domain then we can recognize the metaphor as a novel one. Relevance theory just pays attention to the inference of novel metaphor interpretation. Besides, only cognitive linguistics studies the motivation for individual metaphors, class of metaphorical statements, and metaphorical inference patterns (Gibbs Jr: 2008). Cognitive linguists explain that the recurring sensorimotor patterns motivate the use of metaphorical language, and many novel metaphors arise from complex blending processes (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez: 2011).

Tendahl's model of metaphor approves the integration of two approaches (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez: 2011). The conceptual region of words, according to the theory, should be expanded first when recalling a word. The completeness of mastery of the sense of the word is understood the prevailing, essentially final means in the full weight of cognitive and communicative intralingual and inside the cultural valences that is formed as a result of different and diverse uses (Salakhova et al.: 2019, pp. 102-104). The conceptual region consists of several components which are contextual information of the word, lexical concept, factual knowledge, as well as phonological and morphological knowledge, and free slots. The free slots need to be filled via the activation of connectors to external knowledge structures. The conceptual region provides lexical information and procedural information for constructing an ad hoc concept. Thus, a conceptual region is a preparation stage for building an ad hoc concept. And the external knowledge varies from context to context in different situations. In this sense, there exists a complementary relationship between cognitive linguistics and ad hoc concepts within the scope of relevance theory in that the ad hoc concept embraces external knowledge in the conceptual region in mind (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez: 2011).

Tendahl's model lacks enough empirical work to ascertain whether there is a difference in processing effort between category-crossing and category modification metaphors. Conventional metaphors, literal expressions, metaphors of crossing category, or its modification all work similarly. The explanation provided is that is a relevance-sorting process of the lexical concept and profiling against external knowledge domains (Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez: 2011).

Stöver proposes her new hybrid model of metaphor with a modular mental architecture. Different representation formats should be processed separately and thus would not interrupt each other. It is

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assumed that the metaphor understanding mechanism is an inner assumption within the modular framework of the mind. Within the modular mental architecture, we can distinguish the logic facts between subjects' intuitions, and we avoid putting together all the representational formats in order not to generalize them. The framework has a special processing mechanism that can arrange a specialization at the propositional level, specifying accuracy of thinking, and thus it can purely discharge associative processes (Stöver: 2010). This view contradicts the relevance theory as relevance theory does not view metaphors as a separate category requiring specialized language processing. Besides, to account for the metaphor understanding and metaphoricity, cross-domain mappings can do it (Stöver: 2010). Cross-domain mappings can account for the metaphors with accompanying effects using source - to - target mapping. The new hybrid model of metaphor provides powerful support for the metaphor interpretation and forces the metaphor research into a new direction to a complementary relationship.

## DISCUSSION

From the above analyses, it is noted that relevance theory offers a genuine alternative to a cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor. But some deficiencies need to be solved by the cognitive linguistic approach. And cognitive linguistics offers insights into emergent properties. Tendahl and Gibbs argue that the neural theory of metaphor with conceptual metaphor can account for the emergent properties (Tendahl & Gibbs Jr: 2008, pp. 1823-1864). The integration of the blending structures becomes the emergent structure that contains more meanings and elements than original structures. It is the conceptual blending structure that provides explanations for the emergent properties. It is noted that there are three kinds of processes resulting in the emergent structure, namely, composition, completion, and elaboration (Fauconnier & Turner: 2008). Through a series of complex blending and projection of the elements and spaces, the metaphor blend is formed and it fuses elements and associates the source input and the target input to make interpretations. As a result, the emergent properties emerge in blending spaces.

It is believed that the integration of both of these two approaches can shed new light on the metaphor study.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has analyzed how the relevance-theoretic approach and cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor study complement each other and explained the advantages of these two approaches which can solve problems cooperatively in metaphor interpretation. But as mentioned above, there are stills some problems in these two approaches and it is needed to find some solutions to give better accounts for these problems. Both the cognitive-linguistic and relevance-theoretical approaches can offer new ways of accounting for metaphor and the complementary perspective can provide frameworks for literary metaphors that can complement some aspects which cannot be explained solely.

**Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana; ISSN 1316-5216; ISSN-e 2477-9555**
**Año 25, n° Extra 7, 2020, pp. 244-250**
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