

**COGNITION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF REALITY
BY MEANS OF METAPHORS**

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Key words and phrases: cognitive models, concept, concept sphere, representation, subjective experience.

Abstract: The role of metaphors in psycho-linguistic models is analyzed.

Cognitive models are the results of observations and to a certain extent the definite factor of observations [1]. The investigations of metaphor in the cognitive aspect proved the importance of metaphors in the psycho linguistic models, but it is useless to state that these models work is based only on a metaphor. The main problem is that metaphor keeps a reader in the limits of the conceptual schemes being used by an author himself. Metaphor is a mirror reflecting the conceptual world of a subject. We do not create new metaphors; we use those that have been obtained in the process of understanding. This helps the language to realize its basic function of communication.

In spite of a stable tradition, mentality can hardly be treated as a language or some kind of propositional form built on the language pattern so as a language can not be treated as a limited sign system. The analysis of linguistic thinking mechanisms break the language limits leading to these non-linguistic thought forms with which the linguistic mechanisms interact in real mental work [2, 3]. Thus, the way of understanding of non-linguistic thinking mechanisms is opened via the language level analysis. Specific character of narrative mechanisms is connected with interior temporal experience that can not be reduced to linguistic experience [4].

It is known that cognitive processing is distributed along many centers of mental activity being operated by intellect. None of these centers functions independently. Our experience of unique mind is the result of nervous coordination of hundreds of brain activity centers. In the limits of our conceptual systems and our language there is unconscious automatically activated metaphorical concept of locus (place) of mind, will, proposition that can not be separated from body and emotions [5; 6]. The spatial experience influences the conceptualization of extra-spatial and abstract objects [7; 8].

There is no a unique model. Every model is characterized with the peculiarities that are incompatible with each other, for example, multiple metaphorical models of love and ideas [8], or metaphorical models of anger [9]. The variety of metaphorical models allows speaking about different aspects of our experience. They are not true but they are useful in different situations, for different targets and characterize different perspectives. Also metaphorical models can hide very important aspects of experience of any domain. Our concepts are defined by metaphorical models and we can think using only the concepts we possess.

To recognize the metaphorical models and to know what they hide to recognize the situations in which they are useful it is necessary to get to know metaphorical system. «...*People do not only lie, - they interpret social reality*» [10]. Thus, it is impossible to say “neutrally”, even familiar talk suggests “power realization”, impact on the perception and structuring of the world by another person [11].

From cognitive point of view the speech impact can be described as “a complex of procedures with the world models of the participants of communication resulting in knowledge transfer from one participant to another“ [12]. The concepts and models being built are the metaphors reflecting the “real” nature of the world and being solely the human creations. They are the product of a thought that can reflect the reality. Cognitive models are the consequence of the reality observation but our interior representations of percepts can distort the reality. Metaphors are important but are not the only functional mechanism in psycho linguistic models.

The world model is the knowledge about the world organized in a definite way, typical for cognitive system or its model. On the one hand, the world model includes general knowledge about the world that can be considered “objective” On the other hand, the world model includes the knowledge of different type that can be called as “subjective”. Metaphors functioning in the discourse structure and reflecting the dominating perception modalities of a subject such as visual, tactile and audible ones accommodate multi-dimensional discourse space. Each of them creates its small virtual metaphorical model.

Each of the models is interpreted either positively or negatively. More than that, there is a way to connect with some other conceptual models: some additional meanings, reflector-psychological grounds of discourse perception. Metaphorical models are not isolated but due to a synesthesia they are connected with each other by means of conceptual “bridges” forming concept sphere of metaphorical world model. This model is based on a very powerful multileveled system of representations or cognitive structures realizing the basic operations of perception, exchange, actualization, and representation – all the complex of human world perception. It can have a multileveled structure and can be closed on one level and on the other level it can have direct access to reality.

The investigation of the subject conceptual model gives the reasons to believe that the existing above the individual generally available sphere of “mental” can serve as “a mediator” that allows speaking about “personal”, “individual” content of the subjective sphere opposed to “generally available” one.

The sphere of subjective consists not only of the outside world images but of presentations, recollections, meanings, intellectual and will acts, and emotions. All this is difficult to identify with outside objects because they exist “independently”. The subjective experience contains generally available knowledge that has become accessible to a subject. The existence of generally available knowledge allows the individuals to understand each other. Just metaphors allow finding the channel of connection with the knowledge structures. They identify the world with our mind on the one hand and our mind with the world on the other hand.

Metaphor is a novelistic way of representation; it is a multileveled source of new light poured on old topics. The metaphor target is initialization of conscious or subconscious returning into the core of its world model to feel the experience [13]. The analysis of metaphors in the structure of the conceptual world model of a subject gives the ground to state that metaphor has its typical features.

1 *Metaphor locates the knowledge about the object.* The perception level is characterized by data collection; the relative integrity of the picture being used as a ground for further mental interpretation. This level possesses not only linguistic but

cognitive significance. The level of spatial experience supposes localization of the knowledge about the subject: place, time, way of living, mind, emotions and etc.

2 *Metaphor is used as a filter.* Sensor data is processed in the context of our knowledge about the world. The level is characterized by abstracting, pattern recognition, prototypes comparison, and categorization. The categorization is connected with the formation of cognitive concepts and their stable associations. This is a standard way of coming information processing.

3 *Metaphor adapts new knowledge,* attracting new cognitive structures from the knowledge that a subject both has on the understanding level and on the conceptualization level of understanding. The understanding includes a person and the fact of the world being understood by him. It is possible to find out the functioning of conceptual and temporal metaphors in the discourse structure. Different views on the relations between a person and truth give birth to different metaphors of understanding.

4 *Metaphor incorporates into a new concept the features of the reality being already perceived* and reflected in the meaning of the re-comprehended name. It leaves the marks in the metaphorical meaning, which in its turn is incorporated into the world picture expressed with language. This level has specific categories regularly presented in the analyzed texts where speech impact is planned. These categories are regular and universal. Synesthesia is typical here. This level is served by basic and mythological metaphors.

The conceptual model analysis proved that metaphor is one of the most productive means for reality verbalization. Metaphor is a universal way of cognition and conceptualization of the real world. It successfully performs the role of a prism through which a person does the act of world view. Created by metaphors and metaphorical associations the fragments of the language world picture paint the conceptual world model bright and authentic national-cultural colors. The linguistic tradition always admits the universal nature of a metaphor as a means of re-comprehension of already known names at naming the world fragments and its targeting to fulfill lexical lacunas or to characterize and penetrate into the matter of the objects perceived.

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Познание и концептуализация реальности с помощью метафор

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Ключевые слова и фразы: когнитивные модели; концепт; концептосфера; репрезентация; субъективный опыт.

Аннотация: Анализируется роль метафор в психолингвистических моделях.

Erkenntnis und Konzeptualisation der Realität mit Hilfe der Metapheren

Zusammenfassung: Es wird die Rolle der Metapheren in den psycholinguistischen Modellen analysiert.

Cognition et conceptualisation de la réalité à l'aide des métaphores

Résumé: Est examiné le rôle des métaphores dans les modèles psycholinguistiques.
