Reconsidering Metaphor as Double Metonymy

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There has been a theoretical shift in the boundary between metaphor and metonymy in the existing literature. Accordingly, this paper elaborates on the idea of metaphor as double metonymy. Metaphor consists of metonymy in some way (e.g., Group μ 1981; Barcelona 2000). However, the distinction between metaphor and metonymy is still not entirely clear due to disagreements regarding semantic domains; metonymic construction occurs in the intra-domain, while metaphors occur in the inter-domain. In addition, this paper attempts to provide further evidence to support the idea of (some) metaphors as being double metonymy via the analysis and exploration of several linguistic examples in the literature.

This paper employs lexical concept and cognitive models (LCCM) theory for the analysis (e.g., Evans 2009). The benefit of this model is that it helps to elucidate the relationship between figurative language expressions and encyclopaedic knowledge in the course of understanding language. I focused on meaning construction, particularly the conceptual distance between the source and the target in the LCCM framework. I modelled meaning construction using LCCM models; as a result, I found that metonymic meaning construction occurs within a single domain, while metaphor is constructed via two metonymic cognitive models. That is, the metaphorical source and the target are not directly mapped onto each other; instead, the metonymic operation occurs in each source and target domain first, and the results of each operation then match each other metaphorically.

The paper contributes to the field of figurative language research: first, this study extends, for the first time, LCCM Theory to the domain of metonymy, and further explores how it is both similar to and distinct from metaphor. Second, the paper provides a theoretical architecture revealing the ways in which individual languages, albeit with divergent bodies of encyclopaedic knowledge process different types of figurative language expressions.

References

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