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EDITOR: Annalisa Baicchi

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SUMMARY

In the short foreword to her book, Annalisa Baicchi explains that her volume “Figurative Meaning Construction in Thought and Language” “brings together a selection of cutting-edge research studies that were delivered at the 2nd International Symposium on Figurative Thought and Language (November 2015)” (p. vii). The adjective “figurative” in this case refers to several tropes, including metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, and irony. In her introductory chapter, Baicchi underlines that “[f]igurativeness is not merely a device for the embellishment of communication — but it is, first and foremost, the pivot around which our thinking ability revolves” (p. 1). This of course evokes Lakoff and Johnson’s claims about metaphor in their groundbreaking book “Metaphors We Live By” (1980: 4), who write, among other things: “we have found a way to begin to identify in detail just what the metaphors are that structure how we perceive, how we think, and what we do.” Baicchi refers to their book, among others, and discusses what she calls their Embodiment Hypothesis, which states that the way our bodies are constructed constitutes the way we think and speak (p. 2). She then briefly explains what each of the chapters is about.

The book is divided into four parts: “Figurativeness and theory” (three chapters), “Figurativeness and constructions” (four chapters), “Figurativeness, pragmaticity and multimodality” (two chapters), and “Typology of figures and cognitive models” (three chapters). The first part is subtitled “Addition, identification and structure”.

In the first chapter of the book, “Metaphor thoughtfully”, John Barnden theorizes about what it means that we understand the world via metaphors and that our thoughts are embodied. Among other things, he discusses the hypothesis that people may have different metaphorical understandings of how electricity works and that this may lead them into different conclusions about how to solve problems with electricity. He suggests that a person might not verbalize their metaphorical understandings of phenomena such as electricity; instead, they might just use them in their internal reasoning. That the metaphors which people use in reasoning are not necessarily always expressed in speech or writing is one of the main ideas in this chapter.

In their chapter “Separating (non-)figurative weeds from wheat”, Mario Brdar, Rita Brdar-Szabó, and Benedikt Perak discuss the identification of metaphor. They suggest that instead of focusing on metaphors to begin with, we could start from identifying non-metaphorical language in order to separate it from metaphorical expressions in texts. They explain in detail how this could be done in terms of understanding concepts and their structures, utilizing Wikipedia as a source for concept structure and analyzing corpus data. They also consider metonymy but come to the conclusion that this should be dealt with in a different way. They recommend that more metonymical sense developments be added to FrameNet.

Zoltan Kövecses’s chapter “A multi-level view of metaphor and some of its advantages” also deals with the identification of metaphor, but the questions are different—how to recognize the source and target domains and how to name a metaphor. Kövecses’s main topic in this chapter is the different levels of metaphor, which he captures by comparing image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces, suggesting that these offer different degrees of specificity in categorizing metaphors. He says that the level of specificity in the naming of metaphor should be judged from case to case, depending on whether we want to talk about general-level thought structures or specific instantiations of metaphor.

The second part of the book begins with Angeliki Athanasiadou’s chapter “Intensification via figurative language”, in which she focuses on irony and sarcasm, expressed via metaphor and metonymy. The idea is that one can intensify one’s message through the use of figurative language. This is enhanced by familiar grammatical constructions such as A is B and the like-comparison construction.

Christiano Broccias’s chapter “Falling to one’s death in multiple landscapes: From blending to typology” discusses in detail the expression “he fell to his death”. His questions are: (1) whether the construction codes motion in multiple landscapes, (2) whether it can be classified as a resultative phrase, and (3) whether it can be analyzed as a metonymic phrase. This chapter continues a discussion which Broccias has already started earlier, disagreeing with Iwata (2014a, 2014b). Broccias’s answers to the above questions are, roughly, (1) yes, (2) yes, and (3) no.

In the next chapter, Sabine de Knop discusses “Metaphorical adjective-noun phrases in German journalese”. She explains specific instances of these in great detail, showing how they can be variously motivated and interpreted. She divides the possibilities into three: cases where the adjective is literal and the noun is metaphorical, cases where the adjective is metaphorical and the noun is literal, and cases where the combination of adjective and noun is metaphorical. Furthermore, she discusses cases where pictures give more conceptual information.

Francisco González-García closes this part of the book with his chapter “Metonymy meets coercion: The case of the intensification of nouns in attributive and predicative constructions in Spanish”. There, he discusses constructions where a noun is preceded by such adjectives as “muy”, indicating a quality. Consider, for example, the following (p. 159):

(1) Y la cuestión es que Gaga es muy/bastante/completamente/totalmente Madonna
‘And the thing is that Gaga is very/quite/completely/totally Madonna’

He provides the reader with an entire taxonomy of metonymies that occur in the “X es muy N (=A) construction in Spanish” (Table 2, pp. 165-166) and discusses these in great detail.

The third part of the book consists of two chapters. The first one is written by Herbert L. Colston

and Ann Carreno and titled “Sources of pragmatic effects in irony and hyperbole”. This is a psycholinguistic study where the authors measure whether a person using a hyperbole in an answer to an accusation makes others think that the person is guilty or not guilty. They consider three different kinds of situations in order to explore pragmatic effects.

Marcin Kuzak’s title “Metaphorical interplay of words and gestures in the Catholic liturgy” expresses his topic rather well. He recognizes such metaphors as GOD IS UP and DOING RIGHT IS BEING AWAKE, among others. Although his chapter is relatively short, the data seem rather rich, and he concludes by saying that there would be several options for developing the study.

The last part of the book, “Typology of figures and cognitive models”, begins with Bogusław Bierwiaczonek’s suggestion to add two terms to the current list of figures of speech. Bierwiaczonek’s “Figures of speech revisited: Introducing syntonymy and syntaphor” distinguishes two kinds of syntonymy. In category syntonymy “a lower term denotes a category which stands for the whole category C to which it belongs”, whereas in paragon-based syntonymy “a lower term — stands for an axiologically marked subcategory of C to which it belongs” (p. 230). He gives the examples “cow” for bovine quadruped and “Mozart” for musician, respectively. Under the term “syntaphor”, Bierwiaczonek discusses “analogy between closely related concepts” (p. 235). As an example of this, he provides the reader with a table presenting various meanings of the lexeme “pin” (table 1, pp. 236-238).

In their chapter “Cutting and breaking metaphors of the self and the Motivation & Sedimentation Model”, Simon Devylder and Jordan Zlatev discuss the two concepts of cutting and breaking metaphors of the self, on the one hand, and the Motivation & Sedimentation Model, on the other. More specifically, they illustrate the latter through the former, questioning “Lakoffian” types of analyses and the certainty with which many people label and categorize metaphors. Their idea is to let the metaphorical categories “arise” from the data. They use different annotators to analyze the data to check agreement and provide a plot suggesting which metaphors occur more often than they would be expected to occur.

The last chapter of the book, by Francisco J. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Alicia Galera Masegosa, is titled “The metonymic exploitation of descriptive, attitudinal, and regulatory scenarios in meaning making”. . As suggested by its title, the chapter explains how metonymy can be used to understand pragmatic constructions, for example, the construction “What’s X Doing Y?”.

EVALUATION

The title of this volume, “Figurative Meaning Construction in Thought and Language” is very well-chosen, since each of the words in it is relevant. The book is about tropes (“figures”); it is about meaning; it is about constructions; and it is both about thought and language. However, it was difficult for me to see any coherence throughout the book. It seemed rather that the different chapters were taking part in different discussions. A good example of this is Broccias’s chapter, in which he continues a previous discussion with Iwata (2014a, 2014b).

At the same time, it was evident that several of the chapters represented the outcome of discussions among the various authors and even people outside this circle. For example, Bierwiaczonek refers to a discussion between himself and Günter Radden in his footnotes (pp. 235-236). Also, the authors refer to one another’s work in their chapters. For example, González-García often refers to de Mendoza Ibáñez and his co-authors’ analyses (e.g. p. 158). It thus seems that the volume is the result of fruitful interaction between specialists.

The experience of reading this book very much resembles sitting at a (small) cognitive linguistic conference and listening to various kinds of papers. Clearly, it is a conference with very enthusiastic participants. However, to achieve more coherence, the editor could have restricted the topics somewhat and/or invited more authors to discuss topics similar to the ones published here. For example, since Radden seems to disagree with Bierwiazzonek's terminological suggestions, it would have been interesting to read his chapter on why the terms *syntonymy* and *syntaphor* might not be needed.

Let us then consider the titles of the four sections of the book. The first one, "Figurativeness and theory", in fact applies to more chapters than the three subsumed under it. Several of the authors consider theoretical aspects of metaphor. For example, in their chapter Devylder and Zlatev challenge the conceptual metaphor theory and develop their own Motivation & Sedimentation Model. The subtitle "Addition, identification and structure", however, covers the three first chapters. "Addition" refers to Barnden's idea that in the understanding of metaphor, "information might also be transferred from target to source" — resulting in 'addition of metaphor'" (p. 3). If one takes the subtitle at face value, it is easier to understand the words "identification" and "structure", since the second chapter indeed is about identification of metaphor, and the third one about metaphor structure.

In the second part of the book, "Figurativeness and constructions", it is rather clear that the constructions at hand include "falling to one's death", adjective-noun phrases, and "nouns in attributive and predicative constructions in Spanish", but it is not so easy to see how they relate to Athanasiadou's chapter "Intensification via figurative language". Baicchi explains this by underlining the cooperation of figurative processes which "contribute[s] to creativity and novelty" and also "foregrounds emphatic and intensified constructions" (p. 5).

In my view, Athanasiadou's chapter could also have been subsumed under the title of the third part of the book, "Figurativeness, pragmaticity and multimodality". However, this section actually comprises the psycholinguistic study and the multimodal metaphors of Catholic liturgy.

Last comes the section "Typology of figures and cognitive models", in which Bierwiazzonek suggests the new terms *syntonymy* and *syntaphor*, Devylder and Zlatev consider cutting and breaking metaphors, and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Alicia Galera Masegosa explain metonymic chains. All of these chapters fit under the section's rubric, but it would also have been possible to group together chapters that discuss metaphor or chapters that discuss metonymy. That the chapters have overlapping themes of course creates harmony in the book, despite my statement that I would have liked the volume to be more coherent. To say this differently, there is coherence in the book, but the specific groupings of the chapters did not seem intuitive to me. To give a further example, Broccias's title contains the word "typology", but it is not categorized under "Typology of figures".

The book could have been improved with additional editing. It was relatively easy to find typos in this book. For example, there are several extra hyphens in Barnden's list of references, which suggests that the typesetting had changed from one stage to another, without these being removed. Barack Obama's name is misspelled on page 187 as Barak Obama, and one author misspells the name of another, so that Brdar-Szábo becomes Brdar-Shábo (pp. 241, 249).

Had I been the editor of this book, I would probably have asked one of the authors to rewrite a page where he constantly refers to de Mendoza Ibáñez and his colleagues' works, so that it almost becomes a list of where he agrees with them, with plenty of the information coming within

brackets (p. 158). I also noticed a mix of German and English: the word "mausig" ('mousy') was translated as "mausy" on page 143.

Since this book is ripe with ideas that experts like to discuss, I would recommend it to anyone interested in studying figurative language and especially to anyone interested in metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, synecdoche, or irony. Who knows, it may be exactly this book whose contributions will give rise to important new insights in the future. At the same time, I would probably not recommend this book as a course book.

Lastly, I was left wondering if anyone has previously presented the idea that our thoughts are not only metaphorical à la Lakoff and Johnson but that metonymy, hyperbole, synecdoche, and irony are also part of the "pivot around which our thinking ability revolves", as suggested by Baicchi (p. 1). It would be interesting to read a chapter or even a book which would combine these aspects in a single theoretical vein of thought. The title of such a volume could be "Tropes We Live By". Perhaps that could even have been the title of this book.

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ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Dr. Heli Tissari from the University of Helsinki is especially interested in metaphors. She has published many articles on words and expressions for emotions in the history of the English language. Her work is mainly corpus linguistic. She has also collaborated with Ulla Vanhatalo in introducing the Finnish version of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage to Finnish scholars. This work has led to her coauthoring a couple of recent articles on Finnish words for emotions. In the future, she would like to focus more on the development of concepts in language and also write a couple of articles on words and metaphors for virtues.