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**"METAPHORS WE LIVE BY: THE INFLUENCE OF CONCEPTUAL
METAPHOR THEORY ON ABSTRACT UNDERSTANDING AND
COMMUNICATION"**

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Abstract: *The conceptual theory of metaphors (CMT), articulated mainly by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their seminal work "metaphors that we live" (2020), postulates that metaphorical constructions are not simply rhetorical devices, but fundamental frames that shape our understanding of abstract concepts and influence daily linguistic communication. In essence, CMT states that our conceptual system is inherently metaphorical, and these metaphors serve as cognitive instruments through which we make sense of complex and abstract domains, such as time, emotions and morality, by relating them to more concrete experiences. The theory emphasizes that metaphors frame our perceptions and experiences, guiding our reasoning and behavior in a deep way.*

Key words: *Conceptual Metaphor Theory, cognition, culture, language, mapping, abstraction, inference, communication, embodiment, perception*

One of CMT's fundamental ideas is the distinction between "conceptual metaphors" and the linguistic expressions that arise from them. Conceptual metaphors, such as the "argument is war" or "time is money", manifest through several linguistic expressions that report how we speak and interact with abstract ideas. This conceptual framing facilitates not only individual cognition but also collective cultural understanding, since shared metaphorical constructions form a basis for intersubjective communication. For example, when individuals discuss relations in terms of "investment" in them, they invoke the metaphor of the economy, which relationally frame emotional connections in terms of monetary value and risk, fundamentally forming perceptions and expectations regarding privacy and commitment.

The impact of CMT extends beyond mere language; It is crossed with cognitive processes, cultural norms and social communication patterns. Research has shown that linguistic metaphors affect the way we understand and process thoughts on health, politics and identity. For example, in public discourse on health crises, metaphors that frame the disease in martial terms can influence public feelings and political responses, often stimulating reactive attitudes that prioritize aggressive interventions on holistic understandings. In addition, metaphors integrated in daily communication reflect and reinforce social values, shape cultural paradigms and behavioral norms. The generalized use of metaphorical language in several domains reveals, thus, how deeply rooted are these

constructions in our cognitive architecture, affecting social attitudes and reinforcing cultural distinctions.

CMT also clarifies the cognitive implications of language use; By committing metaphors, people can unconsciously adopt the conceptual frameworks they imply. As such, the study of metaphors provides vital information on the ways in which abstract concepts are constructed socially and navigate collectively. For example, examining the metaphors used to discuss environmental problems can reveal underlying values regarding nature, risk and responsibility, highlighting the role of language in the mediation of our understanding of ecological challenges.

In summary, conceptual metaphor theory provides a robust theoretical framework to analyze how abstract concepts are mediated through language. By understanding the formative role of metaphors in cognition, culture and communication, we obtain a valuable vision of the complex interaction between language and thought, revealing how the concepts that may seem eligible are, in fact, anchored in our daily experiences and interactions., Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) provides a robust structure to understand the interaction between language and cognition, particularly how metaphorical structures can influence the cognitive processes involved in understanding abstract concepts. The survey by Gibbs Jr. (2017), among others, has elucidated the mechanisms by which metaphors serve as cognitive tools, improving our reasoning capabilities and decision - making processes. By framing abstract concepts in more tangible terms, metaphors facilitate cognitive processes that would otherwise be less affordable or understandable.

Gibbs Jr. postulates that metaphors are not just rhetorical devices; Instead, they are an integral part of how individuals process and organize their experiences of the world. For example, when we discussed time as if it were a feature - filar -the "spending", "economy" or "wasting" time - we employ a metaphor that shapes our understanding and evaluation of temporal experiences. This metaphor serves to frame the time in a way that facilitates reason about its scarcity and managing our activities accordingly. The cognitive implications of such metaphors extend beyond mere linguistic expression; They reflect and reinforce particular ways of conceptualizing experiences and making subsequent decisions.

The cognitive processes underlying the understanding of metaphor highlight the representational and inferential mechanisms that govern our involvement with metaphorical language. Through the CMT lens, it is evident that metaphors allow individuals to leverage their existing knowledge to make inferences on unknown or abstract domains. Based on understanding more concrete experiences, individuals can navigate complex ideas more easily. For example, the metaphor of an argument like a battle (as in "I won this argument" or "he attacked my point") allows individuals to understand their physical confrontation to articulate the dynamics of interpersonal disagreement, simplifying complex social interactions in more manageable cognitive structures.

In addition, the implications of metaphorical reasoning extend to cultural constructions, as shared metaphors within a culture can shape collective cognition. Cultural

“DUNYO TA'LIMI SIFATINI OSHIRISHNING ILG'OR USULLARI ILMIY JURNALI”

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contexts usually dictate which metaphors are predominant and how they are employed in everyday discourse, in turn, influencing community methods of reasoning and problem solving. In this sense, predominant metaphors in a society can reflect and shape social values and norms. For example, a culture that predominantly employs the "war" metaphor for health discussions can cultivate a more adversary approach to the disease, emphasizing conflicts and competition about cooperation and healing.

Gibbs Jr. also emphasizes that comprehension of metaphor involves a dynamic interaction between language processing and conceptual understanding, in which the cognitive load needed to decode metaphors can improve creative problem solving skills. By encouraging individuals to think outside conventional parameters, metaphors can stimulate cognitive flexibility, leading to more innovative and divergent thinking processes. This broader cognitive engagement is fundamental in many domains, such as education and communication, where the ability to reformulate problems metaphorically can lead to new solutions.

In short, the exploitation of how CMT influences cognition reveals that metaphors are not only decorative elements of language, but vital cognitive mechanisms that shape our understanding of abstract concepts. By acting as cognitive tools, metaphors improve reasoning skills and decision-making processes, with implications that resonate between individual, cultural and communicative domains. The relationship between metaphor and language is essential to understand how abstract concepts in human discourse are communicated and build. Everyday metaphors serve as linguistic tools that encapsulate cultural perspectives, thus influencing cognition both individual and collective. As highlighted by Kövecses (2015), metaphors are not simply decorative language elements; They are based on how we conceptualize complex ideas and sail through our social worlds. This perspective suggests that metaphors play a fundamental role in the configuration of our perceptions and values, deeply embedded within the tissue of daily communication.

Metaphors arise from our embodied experiences and are often based on specific physical realities to illustrate abstract ideas. This conceptual mapping allows people to articulate and reflect on intangible notions such as time, emotions and relationships. For example, in many cultures, time is understood metaphorically as a resource that can be spent, save or waste, as evidenced in phrases such as "I don't have enough time" or "you are wasting time." This metaphorical framework not only articulates the experience of time, but also reinforces a social emphasis on productivity and efficiency, which reflects cultural attitudes towards work and leisure.

In addition, metaphors not only facilitate understanding but also embody cultural values and norms. For example, the metaphor "life is a trip" that prevails in Western cultures underlines a perception of personal progression and narratives oriented to objectives. It embodies the cultural value imposed on individualism and the search for self-realization, in contrast to collective crops where they can master relational metaphors. For example, in many Asian cultures, the concept of time can be understood more cyclically, as seen in the traditions that emphasize harmony and collective well-being instead of linear

advance. Therefore, the metaphors used in a language encapsulate culturally specific ways of understanding life and experience, revealing the intricate connections between language, thought and culture.

Kövecses (2015) argues that ubiquitous metaphors in daily language are a reflection of shared cultural experiences. For example, the metaphor "argument is war" is a generalized metaphor in western contexts, shaping the way individuals participate in discussions. Phrases such as "defending a position" or "attacking an argument" illustrate how competitive and confrontation approaches to dialogue are normalized within that cultural framework. This metaphor not only influences the language used, but also affects cognitive processes related to reasoning and persuasion, which can neglect cooperative dialogue in favor of adverse interactions.

In summary, the exploration of Kövecses of situational and cultural contexts reveals that metaphors serve as cognitive tools modeled by the environments in which they occur and by the cultures from which they emanate. By understanding the dynamic relationship between the interpretation of the context and the metaphor, researchers can obtain insights on how abstract concepts are conceptualized and communicated through various spheres of human experience., The evaluation of computational perspectives on metaphor provides a significant way to explore the nuances of conceptual metaphors theory (CMT) within the context of contemporary technological advances. The work done by Veale et al. (2022) highlights how computational methods can serve as a tool to deepen our understanding of the use of metaphors in language, thus illuminating cognitive processes that support the understanding of metaphors. The integration of computational linguistics, automatic learning and natural language processing has allowed researchers to analyze large amounts of linguistic data more efficiently, revealing patterns and variations in the use of metaphors in different contexts and crops.

In addition, the ability to process and analyze language data computerly informs several research domains, including cognitive psychology, linguistics and artificial intelligence. The findings of Veale et al. To suggest that the understanding of metaphors is not simply a linguistic phenomenon, but that it is deeply intertwined with cognitive functions such as categorization, inference and contextualization. For example, when people understand metaphors, they get involved in a mapping process of a conceptual domain in another, which requires not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural and experimental ideas. Computational models clarify these interactions demonstrating how contextual signals influence the interpretation of metaphors, thus reflecting the underlying cognitive processes that are universal but culturally specific.

In addition, the ideas obtained through computational analysis advance our appreciation of dynamic interaction between culture and metaphor. Since metaphors are often based on cultural practices, artifacts and shared experiences, computer approaches can map these elements, revealing how abstract concepts are manifested in a specific language. Veale et al. (2022) show that the use of metaphors is not static; Rather, it evolves with changes in cultural paradigms and social values. By applying computer tools to large

language data corpus, researchers can observe trends and variations in the use of metaphors over time, thus enriching our understanding of how language reflects and shapes cultural identities.

In addition to improving linguistic analysis, the computing metaphor approach also raises implications for practical applications in education, cognitive therapy and artificial intelligence development. The ability to take advantage of great data sets to recognize and interpret metaphors could inform pedagogical strategies that encourage critical thinking and creativity in language learning. Similarly, the ideas of computer metaphors analysis can guide therapeutic practices helping people articulate complex emotions and abstract thoughts through metaphorical language.

Ultimately, the advances made through the computational exploration of the metaphors underline an evolving panorama in CMT, which suggests an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistics with science and cognitive technology. By taking advantage of the capacities of computational methods, research in this field can refine our understanding of the cognitive, cultural and communicative dimensions of metaphor in daily language, which leads to nuanced ideas that inform the theoretical and practical implications. By examining the intricacies of understanding the metaphor, it is necessary to synthesize the findings of Holyoak and Stamenković (2018), which offer valuable information about the cognitive processing of metaphorical language. His research points out that the understanding of metaphor is not a direct interpretation of literal language, but a complex interaction of cognitive mechanisms that reflect deeper semantic and conceptual structures. The authors outlined several theories on how metaphors are cognitively processed, focusing mainly on the interaction between abstract conceptual domains and more concrete experiences.

A prominent theory highlighted in its review is the theory of conceptual mapping, which postulates that metaphors serve as a bridge that connects disparate domains of knowledge. This bridge facilitates cognitive integration of the origin domain (concrete) with the target domain (the summary), allowing individuals to understand abstract concepts faster through tangible experiences. For example, understanding time as a linear progression ("time is money") allows individuals to structure their perception of time using family economic concepts. Holyoak and Stamenković offer empirical support to this theory through experimental data, showing that participants employ existing knowledge structures by interpreting metaphorical expressions, confirming that cognitive processing of metaphors is inherently dependent on prior knowledge and contextual clues.

On the other hand, the procedural theories of metaphor interpretation highlight the role of pragmatic reasoning and contextual integration. According to these theories, understanding involves the use of social and conversational context to obtain meaning of metaphorical expressions. Holyoak and Stamenković suggest that metaphors invite listeners not only to decode language but also to engage in inferential reasoning based on shared cultural knowledge. This approach raises critical questions about the variability of understanding in different cultural contexts, indicating that metaphor processing is not only

about linguistic constructions, but also on shared cultural values and experimental origins that shape how language is understood.

An additional complexity arises from the challenges represented by research methodologies in the study of metaphor understanding. Holyoak and Stamenković criticize the predominance of experimental laboratory designs, which may not have ecological validity and cannot capture the richness of the use of metaphor in everyday communication. Confidence in decontextualized sentences in experimental tasks can simply simplify the different ways in which metaphors are employed in real-world discourse, where context, tone, and interactive dynamics significantly influence understanding. In addition, the cognitive load involved in metaphors processing can vary greatly, depending on the background knowledge of an individual and cognitive flexibility, introducing variability that requires careful consideration in research design.

The variability in understanding metaphor also suggests the need for interdisciplinary approaches, integrating ideas of cognitive psychology, linguistic and cultural studies. Holyoak and Stamenković indicate that the understanding of metaphor processing effectively requires a more holistic perspective, which represents not only cognitive mechanisms, but also sociocultural contexts in which language is incorporated. This intersection between cognitive processes and cultural structures further complicates the discourse around the understanding of metaphor, highlighting the challenges related to generalization and the construction of universal theories.

Finally, the challenge of establishing a comprehensive understanding of the understanding of metaphor lies in the dynamic interaction of cognitive processes, contextual influences, and the evolutionary nature of language itself. The ideas of Holyoak and Stamenković provide a fundamental structure to contemplate these complexities, emphasizing that future research should navigate the intricate network of cognitive and cultural factors that shape metaphorical understanding in language. When summarizing the findings presented throughout this research, it is evident that the conceptual theory of metaphors (CMT) provides a crucial framework to understand the complexities of abstract concepts as articulated in daily language. The generalized nature of metaphorical language not only shapes individual cognition, but also reflects broader cultural ideologies. When examining how metaphors operate within several contexts, we clarify their role in framing our perceptions of intangible ideas such as emotions, morality and justice. These conceptual mapping create cognitive structures that facilitate understanding and guide our interactions with the world around us.

CMT implications extend far beyond linguistic analysis; They allow cultural practices and social discourses, demonstrating how language encodes beliefs and collective values. For example, the metaphorical conceptualization of time as a resource, demonstrated through expressions such as "spend time" and "savings time", reveal cultural attitudes towards productivity and urgency, significantly influencing social behaviors and expectations. In addition, the examination of metaphors related to the argument illustrates

how language not only communicates ideas but also shapes our approach to conflict and debate, underlining the role of CMT in the negotiation of social dynamics.

From a cognitive perspective, CMT emphasizes the importance of metaphor in the configuration of thought processes. Cognitive linguistics postulates that our understanding of the world is mediated through metaphorical constructions, which reinforces the idea that these linguistic devices are vital for our cognitive operations. The ability to map family experiences in abstract domains helps understand and retention, showing how the metaphors we use are fundamental for our mental models. This cognitive commitment to the metaphor highlights the interdependence between language and thought, which causes a reevaluation of traditional distinctions between linguistic expression and cognitive processes.

Despite the richly documented contributions from CMT to our understanding of language, culture and cognition, there are numerous ways for future research. An area worthy of exploration is the intercultural application of CMT, which examines how different cultures use unique metaphors that shape their conceptual landscapes. These research could provide invaluable information on how cultural diversity influences cognitive processes and communicative practices, offering a broader understanding of interaction between language and thought in global contexts. In addition, the role of emerging digital communication platforms in the configuration of contemporary metaphors use presents an intriguing domain for research, particularly as new forms of language evolve in response to technological advances.

In summary, conceptual metaphors theory not only enriches our understanding of abstract concepts in everyday language, but also underlines its deep implications for cognition, culture and communication. The findings presented here advocate a continuous interdisciplinary dialogue that surrounds CMT, promoting additional investigation that examines the complexities of metaphors and their ramifications in various domains of human experience.

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