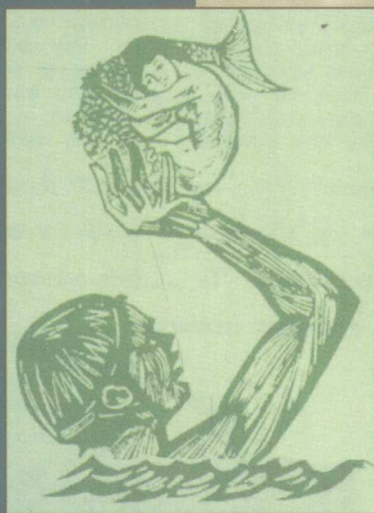


# 认知语言学 与 意义理论

——隐喻与意义理论研究（英文版）



苏立昌 著

METAPHOR  
SEMANTIC THEORY AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:  
COGNITIVE EXPLANATIONS

南开大学出版社

# Metaphor

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The idea of writing the book on Semantic Theory and Cognitive Linguistics popped up when I was in Louisville in the summer of 2004. I was then a visiting scholar studying under Dr. Robert N. St. Clair, a distinguished professor and well known scholar of cognitive linguistics at the English Department, University of Louisville. While attending the linguistic courses and collaborating with Dr. St. Clair, I had the chance to read the books on metaphors and cognitive linguistics, and became interested in the working principles of metaphors, and the mapping, blending and mental space theories stipulated by G. Lakoff, Fauconnier, Langacker and others. Though a scholar of formal linguistics, I was fascinated by the explaining power of the above theories, particularly the social scripts theory proposed by Robert N. St. Clair in his book *Social Scripts Theory* (2004). The cognitive and socio-linguistic theories proposed by Denial Rigney in the book *The Metaphorical Society* and the social theories elaborated by Goffman in the book *The Representation of Self in Everyday Life* and *Frame Analysis* occurred to be illuminating and revealing, and convinced me in one way or another that these cognitive and social theories might provide better accounts for lots of the linguistic puzzles, such as the relationship between language and mind.

One motive for me to write this book comes from the realization that the cognitive theories, the cognitive and social theories on metaphors in particular, have not been fully discussed in a single volume of a book. My effort in

writing this book will benefit the readers who are interested in the field, and cater for their curiosity for the latest theories of cognitive linguistics on metaphors.

Another important reason for me to start this book is my desire to elaborate the interrelationships of the existing theories, in the hope of sharing with the readers a better understanding of the theories in the study of metaphors and cognitive linguistics as well as the working principles of the theories and the terminologies relating to them.

I have to confess that the enormous encouragement and help from Professor St. Clair have directly contributed to my decision to write the book. My understanding of the *Social Scripts Theory* is mainly from his teaching and reading of his books. I had the good fortune to get his permission to read a lot of his works in manuscripts, which greatly enriched my knowledge and facilitated my understanding of the basic working principles of his theories. Our discussions on the theories gave me more confidence in taking this venture of the book.

Honestly to say, the cognitive theories on metaphors and cognitive linguistics are numerous. It is impossible for a small book of few hundred pages to cover all the related theories in this field. Nor could the depth of the theories in the book be fully explored. However, I hope that the discussion in the book, particularly the social perspective research in the theoretical studies of metaphor, will become a good aid to those who expect to know more about the theories of metaphors and cognitive linguistics.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Chinese Culture Program organizers from both Nankai University and University of Louisville that offered me the opportunity to get acquaintance with a number of cognitive scholars who ushered me into the field of cognitive linguistics and aroused my interest in the field.

My particular thanks go to my supervisor and collaborator, Distinguished Professor and leading scholar in the field of cognitive and sociolinguistics, Dr. Robert N. St. Clair who selflessly departed his knowledge to me and provided me with first-hand materials of the related fields, many of which are his works in manuscripts. His talent, insight, and extreme passion for knowledge fascinated me and converted me into a faithful follower of cognitive linguistics besides my early interest of formal linguistics. It is him who helped me design the layout of the book when I came up with the idea of writing a book on cognitive theories of meaning and metaphors and authorized me the right of using the published and unpublished materials of his. Without him, the book would never come into being.

I am also deeply indebted to editors of Nankai University Press, particularly Ms. Zhang Tong who helped me sort out all the necessary arrangements and had the book published.

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# Part

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# I



# A SURVEY OF

## METAPHOR AND COGNITIVE THEORIES OF MEANING

Dr. Robert N. St. Clair

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Much has happened within linguistics during the last two decades. A new generation of cognitive scientists has emerged and they have provided a different model of what language is and how it functions cognitively. Lakoff (1987) refers to these investigators and theorists as the second generation of the cognitive sciences. In order to better understand what their contributions were and how this book on Semantic Theory and Figurative Language by Professor Su of Nankai University conveys the significance of this new paradigm, one must first go back to the first generation of the cognitive sciences and consider just what their theoretical contributions were and why a change in theory was necessary. In the process of discussing these changes, the significance of this book for linguistic theory will become evident. What Professor Su is discussing in this book is the second generation of the cognitive sciences and their implications for a cognitive model of meaning in linguistics. His work differs from other noted scholars in that he has presented a sociological perspective on cognitive linguistics. Most models of cognition never go beyond the psychological parameters of their investigation. They

discuss language and the mind, but never language and the social mind. Professor Su provides a cognitive model of the sociology of language.

## The First Generation of the Cognitive Sciences

As noted earlier, there are two ways of doing cognitive linguistics. The first generation was associated with generative grammar and the second with cognitive grammar and cognitive linguistics. Both models of language (generative grammar and cognitive grammar) were embedded among other sciences known as the “cognitive sciences.” Hence, just as there are two generations of cognitive linguistics, there is also a paradigm shift referred to as the first and second generation of the cognitive sciences.

The Cognitive Sciences	The cognitive sciences are the computer sciences, mathematics, psychology, linguistics, neurolinguistics, and anthropology. The cognitive sciences were essentially disciplines that were enamored of the ability of computers to emulate cognitive process. It was used to simulate a computer model of the mind. This is the metaphor of the brain as a computer. The linguistic theory of transformational grammar was tantamount to a theory of cognitive rules, the software of the mind. In this model, the brain represents the hardware and language functions as the software for the computational mind.
First Generation	Transformational grammar was the linguistic model associated with the first generation of the cognitive sciences.
Second Generation	Cognitive linguistics is a paradigmatic shift, a redefinition of linguistics associated with the second generation of the cognitive sciences. Grammatical models associated with this paradigm are known as cognitive grammars.

The first generation of the cognitive sciences emerged from the Hixon Symposium after the Second World War. Scholars from different disciplines met at the California Institute of Technology to discuss the implications of a new theory that the human mind functions as a computer. Some of the noted scientists from psychology, neurology, linguistics, and mathematics discussed their perspectives on this new paradigm. What marked all of these scientists as a group was their belief that the brain is comparable to the computer and what they wanted to discover was the software of the mind, the programs that make humans perform as they do. This paradigm dominated the cognitive sciences for decades. It led to several new disciplines such as computational linguistics, mathematical models of language, mathematical models of the mind, and formal linguistics. These scholars are referred to as the first generation of the cognitive sciences. Their philosophical theories were based on the belief that the mind and the body function independently of each other (the Cartesian Paradigm) and that language is essentially a symbolic code that refers to state of affairs in the world. Noam Chomsky even referred to his formal model of language as Cartesian Linguistics (Chomsky, 1966).

### **The Second Generation of the Cognitive Sciences**

Thirty years after the creation of the cognitive sciences, a model of language began to emerge. This new model came from the realization that language is largely metaphorical and that metaphor plays a major role in how human beings think (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). This new approach was called cognitive linguistics, but it was not the same kind of approach to language used by Noam Chomsky and his students at MIT. This new kind of cognitive linguistics was based on the second generation of the cognitive sciences. Its new leaders were interested in how human beings think and the role that language plays in cognition. Fauconnier (1994, 1997) and his colleagues (Fauconnier and Sweetser, 1996; Fauconnier and Turner, 2002) demonstrated that the concept of mental spaces was needed to account for

linguistic mappings of counterfactuals. He referred to these as source and target mental spaces. This same model accounted for metaphorical blends in which inputs from two semantic domains (the surgeon and the butcher) were placed in a third mental space where they were blended. The result was a metaphorical expression (The surgeon is a butcher). New structures emerged from these blends that were not present in the original inputs which led Fauconnier and Turner (2002) to investigate the creative nature of these cognitive blends. Language in this new framework is not a formal linguistic code, but a way of organizing concepts. What followed from this new insight was an interdisciplinary conference on metaphor (Ortony, 1996), and new linguistic models by Langacker (1991, 1996) on cognitive grammar. The framework used in this book is based on the paradigm of the second generation of cognitive linguistics, the concept of the embodied mind. Actually, there are two different trends within this new approach to the cognitive sciences. One of them is more concerned with how thought is embodied (Johnson, 1987; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff and Núñez, 2000) whereas the other is concerned with cognitive mappings and blending in the theater of the mind (Fauconnier, 1985, 1997; Fauconnier and Turner, 2002). Overlapping these two trends is the work of Ronald Langacker (1991; 1997) with his model of cognitive grammar. Before discussing the second generation of cognitive linguistics, it is important to review some of the features that characterize the first generation of the cognitive sciences.

### **Why Metaphors Are Important to Cognitive Linguistics**

Since the time of Aristotle, metaphor was referred to as novel instances of poetic language. This way of looking at language persisted for over two millennia. Metaphor was seen to be a matter of language, not thought. It was argued that everyday language had no metaphor. That was the domain of literal language. This traditional view is wrong. Metaphor is not about language, it is about thought. Metaphors are about how human beings



conceptualize their worlds and function within them. Metaphors are about concept and concepts are important because they structure what human beings perceive, how they get around in the world, and how they relate to other people. The generalizations that are captured by metaphor are not in language, but in thought. They have to do with conceptualizing one mental domain with another. They have to do with cross-mappings from one domain to another. Everyday abstract concepts such as time, states, change, causation, and purpose are metaphorical. Hence, this is why Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have argued that the human conceptual system is largely metaphorical. This is because the way in which human beings think and the way that they act are largely metaphorical. Not surprisingly, human beings communicate through language by means of conceptual systems that are essentially metaphorical. Consider, for example, the conceptual metaphor of the ARGUMENT IS WAR

Your claims are indefensible.

He attacked the weak point in my argument.

I demolished his argument.

His criticism was right on target.

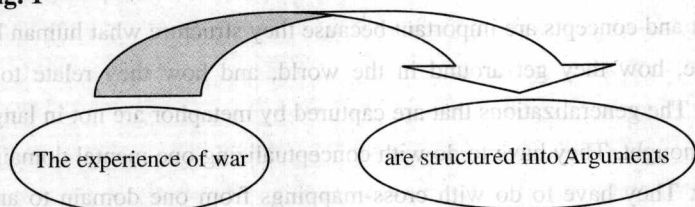
I have never won an argument with him.

He shot down all of my arguments.

The ARGUMENT IS WAR METAPHOR is one that plays a central role in European cultures and it structures the actions that we perform in arguing. The essence of a metaphor is to understand and to experience one kind of conceptual domain in terms of another and these concepts are metaphorically structured.



Fig. 1



Since the concept of war is metaphorically structured, then the activity of arguing shares this metaphorical structure.

Lakoff and Johnson want to make a distinction between conceptual metaphors and related metaphors based on that concept. In order to characterize these differences, they state conceptual metaphors in the form of capitalized letters ARGUMENT IS WAR. They also want to point out that these metaphorical concepts belong to a semantic domain that is structured within a system of thought.

From Conceptual Metaphor to Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions	
The Experience	War
The Conceptual Metaphor	ARGUMENT IS WAR
Metaphorical Expressions	Your claims are indefensible. He attacked the weak point in my argument. I demolished his argument. His criticism was right on target. I have never warned an argument against him. He shot down all of my arguments.
Metaphorical Correspondence	The structure of an argument corresponds to the structure of war.
Metaphorical Entailment	The experience or the concept of war is used to structure the concept of war as an argument. The linguistic expressions about arguments correspond to the conceptual metaphor of war. Similarly, one's way of acting and interacting with others during an argument correspond to the concept of war.

## Oriental Metaphors

Metaphors of space play an important part in language. These are orientational metaphors that account for how human beings position themselves in the world. They are metaphors that mark verticality (up and down), symmetry (left and right), horizontalness (front and back), and proximity (near and far). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have provided some interesting examples of how these orientational metaphors structure emotions, feelings of control, and quantity.

### HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

That boosted my spirits.

My spirits rose.

You are in high spirits today.

That gave me a lift.

He is feeling depressed.

My spirits sank.

I am feeling rather low today.

She fell into a depression.

### CONSCIOUSNESS IS UP; UNCONSCIOUS IS DOWN

Get up!

Wake up!

I am already up.

He rises early in the morning.

He fell asleep.

He dropped off to sleep.

He is under hypnosis.

He sank into a coma.

He is under anesthesia.