



CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20525870>

Abstract: Conceptual metaphor theory is an important approach in modern linguistics that explains how people understand abstract ideas through metaphorical thinking. The theory was developed mainly by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who argued that metaphors are not just stylistic expressions, but also a part of human cognition. This article reviews the main principles of conceptual metaphor theory and its place in modern linguistics. A comparative-descriptive methodology was used in conjunction with examples from everyday language. The findings show that metaphors affect communication, thinking, and cultural understanding. The article also discusses the importance of conceptual metaphors in language learning and discourse analysis.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor; cognitive linguistics; metaphor theory; language and thought; cognitive processes; discourse analysis; modern linguistics

Introduction

Metaphor has traditionally been viewed as a literary device used in poetry and artistic language. However, modern linguistics considers metaphor to be a fundamental part of human thought and communication. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) explains how people understand abstract concepts through more familiar experiences. The theory was introduced by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their famous work *The Metaphors We Live By* (1980). They argue that people use conceptual metaphors in everyday life without realizing it. For example, phrases such as "time is money" or "life is a journey" show how abstract ideas are understood through concrete experiences (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Conceptual metaphor theory is currently widely studied in cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, psychology, and language education.

Methodology

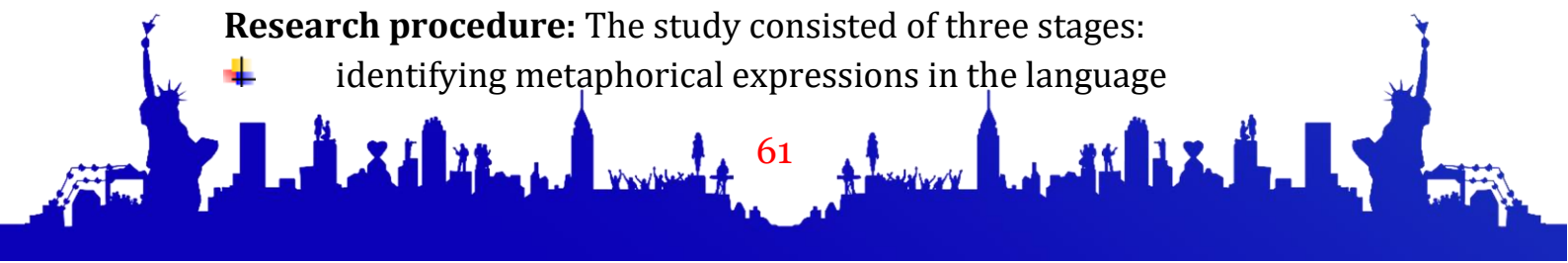
This study uses a comparative and cognitive methodology. In contrast to traditional linguistic analysis, the study focuses on how metaphors work in real communication and human thought.

Data collection: The data collected for the study were:

- ✚ academic books and linguistic articles
- ✚ samples of spoken and written English
- ✚ media texts and everyday conversational expressions

Research procedure: The study consisted of three stages:

- ✚ identifying metaphorical expressions in the language





- ✚ analyzing the relationships between the source and target domains
- ✚ explaining how metaphors affect comprehension and communication

Unique aspect of the methodology: A human-centered approach was introduced by analyzing metaphors in everyday communication instead of just literary texts. This allowed the study to be more practical and linked to real language use.

Results: The study found that conceptual metaphors are common in everyday communication. People often use physical or concrete experiences to understand abstract ideas. For example:

1. "Time is money" associates time with economic value.
2. "Life is a journey" presents life as a movement towards goals.
3. "Argument is war" explains disagreement through conflict-related vocabulary.

The study found that metaphors differ across cultures because cultural experiences influence conceptual understanding. According to Kövecses (2010), some metaphors are universal, while others are culture-specific. The findings confirm that metaphor is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a cognitive process related to human thinking.

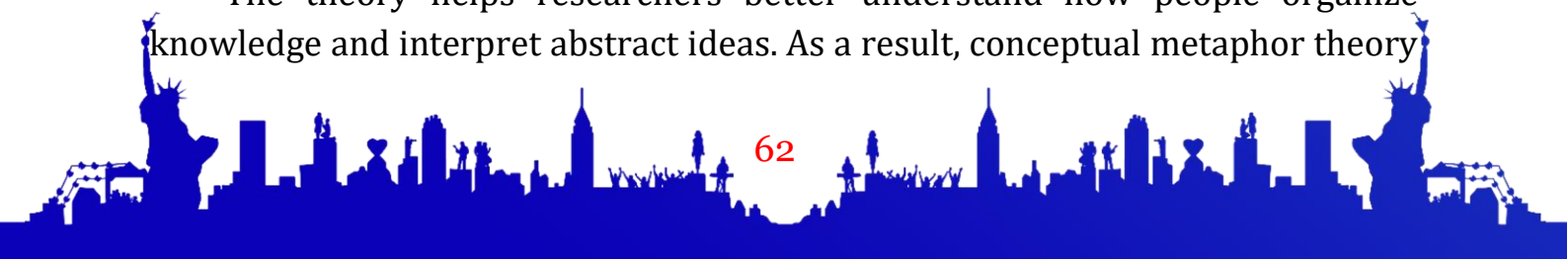
Discussion

The theory of conceptual metaphor has changed the traditional understanding of metaphor in linguistics. Instead of seeing metaphor as a mere decoration in language, modern researchers see it as part of cognition and conceptualization. The theory is important in language teaching because metaphors help students understand abstract vocabulary and expressions more effectively. It is also useful in discourse analysis, the study of political language, and media communication. However, some researchers argue that not all language can be explained solely through conceptual metaphors. Social, contextual, and psychological factors also influence meaning and interpretation. Despite these limitations, the theory of conceptual metaphor remains one of the most influential approaches in modern cognitive linguistics.

Conclusion

In conclusion, conceptual metaphor theory plays an important role in modern linguistics by explaining the relationship between language, thought, and human experience. The study shows that metaphors are not only stylistic devices, but also cognitive tools used in everyday communication.

The theory helps researchers better understand how people organize knowledge and interpret abstract ideas. As a result, conceptual metaphor theory





continues to make significant contributions to cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and language education.

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