

Why do we speak metaphorically?

Aleksander Szwedek, Adam Mickiewicz University

The title question requires an answer not only why metaphORIZATION is necessary at all, but also why particular metaphORIZATION mechanisms were chosen.

The first problem refers to the choice between the brain/mind as a mere storage space for vocabulary, and the brain/mind as a powerful processing machine making inferences, comparisons, etc.

The second problem refers to the identification of the ultimate experiential basis, the ultimate source domain which is subject to no further metaphORIZATION.

On the basis of linguistic, neuroembryological and psychological arguments, I postulate a basic ontological distinction between the material and phenomenological worlds. Such a distinction allows to propose a typology of metaphors, different from that proposed by Lakoff and Johnson, into three types: metonymically based (feature-to-feature) metaphors, concrete-to-abstract metaphors, and abstract-to-abstract metaphors.

The second type, called *objectification*, that is conceptualization of abstract entities in terms of physical objects, seems to have been the leap in the development of abstract thinking.

The proposed typology explains also the phylogenesis of metaphORIZATION, and what follows, the development of abstract thinking.

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