Reseñas / *Book reviews*

Metaphor in Socio-Political Contexts (Manuela Romano, ed.), Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2024, VI + 334 pages. ISBN: 978-3-11-100125-8. Precio 146,12€). *Reviewed by Ignasi Navarro i Ferrando, Universitat Jaume I.* https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6475-3034

This collective work explores metaphor in socio-political discourse through a socio-cognitive lens, offering the reader (i) insight into metaphor as a potent ideological instrument; (ii) a focus on exploring the role of metaphor in emerging (multimodal) discourses and genres of contemporary digital communication; and (iii) a defence of empirical and corpus-based evidence, essential for creating more accurate connections between cognition, linguistic factors, and social meaning.

The book addresses the need for a comprehensive approach to studying framing in social media communication, offering insights into the complex, layered nature of institutional realities and group interactions within communities. The book highlights the social role of metaphors as conceptual representations of social and institutional realities (Searle, 1995), along with their linguistic forms that help shape these realities. The various contributions in this collection significantly add to the growing body of research in the social sciences, revealing the diverse discursive strategies used to influence public acceptance of ideologies and institutional structures, even when they may not benefit citizens. Some papers also explore counter-discourses promoting resistance and opposition. Overall, the work serves as a vivid reflection of the ongoing struggle for ideological dominance in today's social media landscape, marked by competing ideologies and social forces.

Additionally, the book underscores the importance of human cognition in these processes, supporting a triangulation between discourse, society, and cognition (Romano and Porto, 2016). It consistently applies corpus-based discourse methods and a critical, usage-based socio-cognitive approach to language and metaphor. Several papers recognize the significant role of metonymy in social cognition, especially as metonymic usage often emphasizes perceptual aspects of identity. A notable achievement of the book lies in its focus on the dynamic

relationship between metaphor and social discourse, particularly the creative and constructive aspects of ideological frame-building. The work also explores the interplay between metaphorical convention and creativity, examining their framing effects on audiences. The impact of these effects—whether they are accepted, resisted, or contested—has become an increasingly important area of study for discourse analysts and psycholinguists, especially in today's world of ideological conflict and debate.

Furthermore, the research within this work analyses a broad spectrum of media genres and modes, illustrating how metaphors construct ideological frames. These range from conventional forms, such as news, interviews, political debates, and cartoons, to more informal social media discourses like microblogs, *Tumblr*, and *Twitter*, and even extend to artistic forms like street art and sculpture. This diversity highlights the significance of multimodal metaphors in contemporary social discourse.

The book is organized into an introductory chapter followed by three sections, (I) *Construing reality through metaphor*, (II) *Contesting the world through metaphor*, and (III) *Performing ideology through multimodal metaphor*, amounting to 13 contributions. The studies provide empirical research linking metaphor to the interpretation of ideology, persuasion, and protest.

Manuela Romano's introductory chapter offers a fresh and compelling perspective on metaphor as an interactional and context-dependent phenomenon. She provides key insights into its role in communication and societal transformation while presenting an overview of the extensive research on metaphor in social and political discourse over the past two decades. The chapter highlights the convergence of Cognitive

Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis into what Romano calls "Critical Socio-Cognitive Discourse Analysis," which integrates social and linguistic aspects with cognitive dimensions. She traces the evolution of metaphor from a primarily embodied, individual, and cognitive mechanism to a dynamic, communal, historical, and social process. Romano explores how ideology is constructed through metaphorical framing and socially situated variables, emphasizing that metaphor shapes ideological frameworks across diverse genres and modes. She advocates for establishing clear connections between linguistic elements and socio-political meanings through empirical, mixed-method approaches, using authentic data. Additionally, she underscores the importance of defining explicit procedures for identifying and classifying verbal and multimodal metaphors. While the book's objectives are ambitious, its contributions successfully meet these theoretical and methodological challenges.

Part I, *"Construing Reality Through Metaphor,"* examines how specific interpretations of social reality are construed (Chapters 1–5). In Chapter 1, Cuenca and Romano analyse Spanish digital media, confirming that similes and metaphors are conceptually, cognitively, and discursively distinct. Similes tend to be more specific in their source and mapping, with differences primarily influenced by whether the sources are conventional or creatively constructed. Chapter 2, by Filardo-Llamas and Roldán-García, explores how *Tumblr* users activate frames for gender construal in discourse related to cultural knowledge. The authors identify the most frequently used frames in shaping queer identity and highlight their pedagogical role in reshaping contemporary perspectives on gender. In

Chapter 3, Koller examines the ideological and discursive strategies used in British news portrayals of refugees. Her findings indicate that left-leaning publications reference refugees more frequently and with greater diversity while right-leaning outlets use more emotionally charged language. Koller argues that the British press often represents refugees as vulnerable and relatable, fostering a sense of community acceptance. Chapter 4, by Peterssen and Soares da Silva, investigates how far-right populist leaders Santiago Abascal (Spain) and Jair Bolsonaro (Brazil) employed metaphorical narratives about the COVID-19 pandemic on social media. The authors illustrate how polarizing metaphors reinforce inter-group divisions, promote exclusionary and extremist ideologies, and construct nationalist, conservative identities through self-legitimization and the delegitimization of the "Other." The contrasts between Spanish and Brazilian socio-political contexts are reflected in the different source domains and metaphor usage frequencies. Finally, Chapter 5 focuses on the discursive functions of metaphor and the mapping strategies that fulfil these roles. Đurović and Silaški highlight creative, innovative, and idiosyncratic mappings that make metaphor a powerful tool for social action.

Part II, *"Contesting the World Through Metaphor,"* explores how metaphorical models and construals can challenge and counteract various emerging social phenomena. In Chapter 6, Musolff examines the intersection of conspiracy theories and cognitive models, such as war, highlighting how their blending may contribute to violent and anti-social behaviours. He argues that countering these narratives in discourse is essential for dismantling war-based metaphorical frameworks. Chapter 7, by Porto, investigates the role of metaphor in shaping societal perspectives on health, the environment, and education within digital social media. She explains how reframing these topics by rejecting conventional metaphors and introducing innovative alternatives can foster new attitudes and values that replace pre-existing social norms. In Chapter 8, Tay, Yin, and Yu analyse the persistence of metaphor variations in blame discourse. They track the emergence of novel metaphors, identifying critical points in their lifespan and patterns of decline.

Part III, *"Performing Ideology Through Multimodal Metaphor,"* explores how ideological expressions take shape across different media and modes through metaphor. In Chapter 9, Asenjo and Muelas-Gil examine Irish Catholic and Protestant murals, highlighting similarities and differences in the metaphorical representation of women. Chapter 10, by Forceville, provides a practical guide to recognizing and interpreting visual metaphors. He emphasizes the importance of cultural, intertextual, and temporal contexts, as well as the interaction between metaphorical and non-metaphorical elements in cartoons. In Chapter 11, Górska investigates how Poland's recent socio-political history influences the metaphorical interpretations of visual public art. Finally, in Chapter 12, Hart analyses the ideological and persuasive impact of metaphorical framing in protest discourse. He demonstrates how these metaphors can legitimize or delegitimize both government authorities and protesters, shaping public perception and narrative control.

Overall, the book successfully fulfils its goals by offering a valuable resource on various aspects of

conceptual representations of ideology, contestation, and protest across linguistic and other media. It significantly contributes to the existing literature on social reality, discourse, and their cognitive interpretations. Moreover, the book broadens perspectives on how these representations influence everyday life in modern society. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in exploring the role of figurative language and discourse in shaping ideology and social reality.

REFERENCES

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