

Classical and Romantic Views of
Metaphor
in Modern Linguistic Theory

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Classical and Romantic Views of Metaphor in Modern Linguistic Theory

From Aristotle to the present, the Western world has struggled over the issue of the phenomenon of metaphor and its place in language as a whole. Is metaphor a deviant misuse of language, or is it an ordinary, ubiquitous element of all verbal communication? Conspicuously or inconspicuously, metaphor invades much of human discourse (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson would argue *all* of discourse), including this very sentence. How varying accounts of modern linguistic theory address metaphor--as an exceptional, marginal instance of language use or as a standard, central one--is the issue this paper will explore.

In his masterful overview of the history of the discussion of metaphor, Terence Hawkes presents a helpful dichotomy: the classical view versus the romantic view (Hawkes 1980: 92). More recently, the cognitive linguist Tony Veale has supported this division of the understanding of metaphor into two camps, which he labels the Literalist and the Figuralist camps. "Other naming schemes jump readily to mind:" he acknowledges in his "Survey of the Metaphor Field," "the Reductionists versus the Holists, the Anomalists versus the Naturalists, or more colourfully, the Defenders of Orthodoxy versus the Semantic Agnostics" (WWW Metaphor Home Page at Hitachi Dublin Laboratory). This schema is most straightforward in the time span from Aristotle through the mid-twentieth century, but admits interesting complications (or wrinkles, metaphorically speaking) as the modern field of pragmatics begins, a field largely owing to Paul Grice's seminal William James lectures of 1967. The last two decades have seen the continued

conflict between the spin-offs of the classical and romantic views, with neo-Gricean pragmaticists rallying to the neo-classical side, cognitive linguists, heeding George Lakoff's vision, rallying to the romantic side, and Relevance theorists seemingly straddling the fence. In brief, the classical line views metaphor as an aberrant linguistic device, fit for use in restricted contexts such as poetry, and decorative rather than indispensable. In the romantic view, metaphor is central to language and even central to existence, since we perceive reality by means of metaphor. Metaphor is not detachable from language; on the contrary, language itself is "vitaly metaphorical" (Hawkes 1980: 92).

The Greek philosopher Aristotle was the first major proponent of the classical view; thus it is not surprising that our modern English word "metaphor" is of Greek ancestry. *Metaphora* is composed of *meta* ("over") and *pherein* ("to carry"). Advancing a tentative definition of metaphor (a word that is notoriously averse to being defined satisfactorily), Hawkes proceeds from this etymology to describe metaphor as "a particular set of linguistic processes whereby aspects of one object are 'carried over' or transferred to another object, so that the second object is spoken of as if it were the first" (Hawkes 1980: 1). It should already be clear that this definition is faulty. "Object" must be understood in the broad sense, including abstract entities, such as ideas and occurrences. (For example, "death," "love," and "journey" are, strictly speaking, not objects, but they do appear widely in metaphors as either the source of transferred aspects or the recipient of transferred aspects.) Another problematic phrase is that of "linguistic processes" since modern linguists (pragmaticists in particular) acknowledge that

more than linguistic processes are involved; cognitive processes of inference or analogy complete the process that linguistic processes start.

Definition aside, Aristotle essentially banished metaphor from the rest of "logical" language in the Western mentality by subdividing language into a) logic, b) rhetoric, and c) poetry. The aim of logic is clarity, the aim of rhetoric is persuasion, and the aim of poetry, which draws heavily on metaphor, is distinctiveness of expression. As such, metaphor is a departure from ordinary modes of language, a sort of added spice. The anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (ca. 86 B.C.) lists six appropriate uses for metaphor:

- (a) for vividness
- (b) for brevity
- (c) to avoid obscenity [i.e. euphemism]
- (d) for magnifying
- (e) for mini[mizing]
- (f) for embellishing (Hawkes 1980: 13-14)

In other words, language can exist without metaphor, albeit in a less comely (and perhaps obscene!) form.

In later centuries, metaphor was not merely a superfluous decoration, but a vice. It was accused of charming the ear, clouding the perception, and, in Dr. Johnson's words, violently yoking "the most heterogeneous ideas...together" (Hawkes 1980: 31). Thomas Sprat's praise of the members of the seventeenth-century Royal Society best illustrates the hostility towards figures of speech:

[The members]...reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity and shortness, when men delivered so many things, almost in an equal number of words. They have exacted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking: positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as

they can. (*History of the Royal Society*, 1667)

Hawkes points out (as Lakoff and Johnson no doubt would have) that even Sprat's commendation of trope-less language employs metaphor: "swellings," "purity," "shortness," "naked," and "clear" (Hawkes 1980: 55). The truth is that metaphor can not be avoided, within poetry or without.

Until the appearance of Du Marsais' *Des Tropes* in 1730, the field of rhetoric consistently regarded figures of speech (including metaphor and metonymy) as "providing a certain 'ornatus' to language, a semantic decor, so to speak" (Nerlich "A Brief Historical Flashback" WWW). Du Marsais' 1730 treatise was revolutionary in its conception of tropes in that it addressed tropes not as strictly the language of rhetoric, but as normal language. In his view, metaphor is a natural product of our imagination and passions, two human faculties that would become increasingly valued as the Age of Enlightenment with its adoration of reason waned.

The tide overwhelmingly turned with the advent of English Romantic theorists such as Wordsworth and Coleridge. Seeing no difference between the language of prose and poetry, they found the language used by the common man to be "vitaly metaphorical" (Hawkes 1980: 43). The language of poets belongs to all mankind, and so do "poetic" devices, including metaphor.

Percy Shelley, a later voice among the Romantics, proposed that "Reason respects the differences and imagination the similitudes of things" (*Defense of Poetry*). Metaphor, which brings to light "the similitudes of things," is a function of the imagination. However, imagination does not occupy a lower place than logic, as Aristotle

envisioned by separating "poetry" from truth-seeking "logic." Instead, imagination and thus metaphor is responsible for our perception of the world and our construction of "reality." Reality becomes increasingly relativized and subjective. Interpreting Coleridge in words that the authors of Metaphors We Live By would applaud, Hawkes writes: "We live in a world of metaphors of the world, out of which we construct myths. We make the world up, in other words, as we go along, and we experience it concretely" (Hawkes 1980: 55).

The philosopher I. A. Richards, an interpreter of Coleridge and a fellow Romantic in his view of metaphor, denounces the classical view of metaphor in his essay "The Philosophy of Rhetoric." The worst of Aristotle's assumptions, he maintains, is that metaphor is "something special and exceptional in the use of language, a deviation from its normal mode of working, instead of the omnipresent principle of all its free action" (Hawkes 1980: 49). Richards introduces two terms that have proved useful in literary criticism: the "tenor" (general drift) and the "vehicle" (the analogy used to carry the tenor). For example, in Emily Dickinson's poem entitled "Death is the supple Suitor," "Death" is the tenor and "Suitor" is the vehicle. From Richards' ideas, Hawkes does not consider it a great leap to propose that all language is inherently metaphorical, since we "get at" reality via metaphor, just as we "get at" Dickinson's portrayal of death via her vehicle of a suitor. Language is the vehicle, and reality is the tenor.

In recent decades, the classical view and the romantic view have spawned innovative theories about the centrality of metaphor in language, and whether poetic metaphor differs from everyday metaphor. Jan Mukarovsky, Samuel Levin, Rudolf Botha, and Monroe Beardsley are

working the same vein as the classical thinkers, since metaphor for them is a deviation from the norm of language, although not an avoidable deviation. Paul Grice's theory of conversational maxims may be construed as endorsing the classical view of metaphor, since, according to Gricean theory, metaphor arises by flouting or exploiting the maxims. However, neo-Griceans such as Stephen Levinson have demonstrated that metaphor, which is partly explained by pragmatic theory, is no more "deviant" than the many other common language usages in the domain of pragmatics.

Metaphor slipped out of sight in the early decades of the twentieth century with the advent of synchronic linguistics. In the study of diachronic linguistics, that is, language change over time, metaphor could hardly be ignored because, along with metonymy, generalization, and specialization, it was responsible for semantic change. In fact, classical and historical philologists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries largely used figures of speech to explain semantic change in the lexicon (Nerlich "Our research" WWW). Gustaf Stern, in his 1931 book Meaning and Change of Meaning, regards metaphor (included in the class "Nomination") as one of the principles of sense-change (Stern 1965: 166-7, 171). However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, structuralists such as Leonard Bloomfield scientifically analyzed languages frozen in time, ignoring etymology. Later, linguists such as Noam Chomsky stripped language of extra-linguistic and diachronic "contamination" and studied it in its "purified" form (Nerlich "A brief historical flashback" WWW). By the mid-to-late twentieth century, linguists had gained invaluable insights into syntax, but at a cost: research into metaphor had been marginalized and was rarely discussed

outside literary and philosophical circles. That metaphor pervades our language (a romantic notion) can be proven by etymology and diachronic semantics. But the synchronic emphasis effectively ignored this.

When the topic of metaphor was broached by linguists, it was flavored by the classical view of metaphor. The Czech linguist Mukarovsky addressed the issue of poetic, "abnormal" language versus everyday "normal" language, and introduced the concept of "foregrounding" (from the Czech word *aktualisace*). In an essay entitled "Standard Language and Poetic Language" (already presupposing a distinction between the two), he explains the existence of dead metaphors. In order for something to be foregrounded or highlighted, there must be a dull background as a relief. When a metaphor ceases to be strikingly deviant, it merges with the background and becomes "dead" or "inert" (Hawkes 1980: 73). "Deviance" can be understood in a statistical sense: the relative rarity or frequency of a combination of words can be measured from a representative corpus of the language. Statistically, "table" will appear with "leg" more frequently than, say "fog" and "cat," and thus Sandburg's metaphor of fog coming in on little cat feet is more deviant, that is, more striking. It is this "possibility of distorting the norm of the standard" that is "indispensable to poetry. Without it, there would be no poetry" (Mukarovsky 1967: 245). Because standard language is the background for poetic language, "poetic language is thus not a brand of the standard"(242). In fact, a poetic neologism that penetrates into the standard language is a loan just as much as a borrowing from a foreign language is.

Samuel Levin does not view metaphor, or poetic language, as such an exclusive entity. However, poetic language can be outside the camp of grammatical utterances. Interpretation of metaphor may involve the rules of generative grammar, as he explores in his essay "Poetry and Grammaticalness" (1967). Some examples he cites from poetic language are blatantly ungrammatical, such as "he danced his did" from e. e. cummings' poem "Anyone lived in a pretty how town" and "a grief ago" from Dylan Thomas's poem of that name. To interpret a phrase such as "a grief ago," the reader must recall the general grammatical rule below:

AdvP ---> T N(temporal) D

This rule gives rise to grammatical adverb phrases that are similar to "a grief ago": "a week ago," "two years back," and so on. "A grief ago" is ungrammatical, and hence striking, because "grief" does not belong to the subclass of temporal nouns ("day," "while," "year," and so forth). If the restriction is lifted, the revised rule will look something like this:

AdvP ---> T N(temporal or state of mind) D

It will generate other sequences that were previously prevented, such as "one anxiety back." Quoting Noam Chomsky, Levin attributes this ability to recover the meaning of an ungrammatical utterance to the general cognitive ability to make analogies:

Given a grammatically deviant utterance, we attempt to impose an interpretation on it, exploiting whatever features of grammatical structure it preserves and whatever analogies we can construct with perfectly well-formed utterances. ("Some methodological remarks on generative grammar" 234)

Grammar limits the framework within which take place the reader's attempts to construe the phrase grammatically. Not only does this make feasible the "grammaticalizing of the sequence," but it "brings into

association with the element(s) in the sequence a group of forms with narrow, well-defined meanings. This latter type of confrontation," Levin speculates, "probably lies behind all metaphor" (Levin 1967: 230). Levin has contributed at least two ideas on metaphor worth our consideration: first, metaphor is at least sometimes ungrammatical and must be construed by the reader's effort to make it grammatical (implying that it is deviant), and that analogy is a necessary later step in the process of metaphor interpretation.

Rudolf Botha, the author of The Function of the Lexicon in Transformational Generative Grammar, is representative of a whole generation of linguists, according to John Taylor's summary of his book. Botha distinguishes novel metaphors from dead, established metaphors. Since a novel metaphor involves a shift in the semantic markers, semantic selectional rules, reference, and even syntactic properties of the lexical item involved, metaphor lies outside the domain of grammar, since grammar "aims at accounting for rule-governed and not for rule-changing creativity" (Botha 1968: 200). In Taylor's words, Botha states that novel metaphors "lie outside the study of a speaker's competence, and thus outside the scope of linguistics proper" (Taylor 1995: 101). In the case of dead metaphors, however, the speaker's internalized rule system has already been modified because of previous contact with that metaphor. The metaphorical meaning of a lexical item becomes stored in the lexicon alongside the literal meaning of that same item. In short, a metaphor "is declared out of bounds" the first time it is encountered, but from then on, "it is assimilated to any other instance of polysemy/homonymy" (Taylor 1995: 131). Surely any account of

metaphor that considers novel metaphor to be “out of [the] bounds” of rule-governed grammar is classical in outlook.

The aesthetician Beardsley is most vivid and descriptive in his classical view of metaphor as a “deviant” linguistic form. In his book Aesthetics, he advances his own theory of metaphor, under the heading “Logical Absurdity.” He has named his theory “the Controversion Theory,” admitting that “this odd name is the best I have been able to discover” (Beardsley 1958: 138). It is fitting that metaphor, an odd instance of language (classically speaking), is explained by a theory with an equally odd name. In the same family as irony, metaphor is “a significant attribution that is either indirectly self-contradictory or obviously false in its context, and in which the modifier connotes characteristics that can be attributed, truly or falsely, to the subject” (142). Of course, as George Miller corrects below, this view is faulty in that it presupposes that a metaphorical utterance must have a logically absurd literal interpretation, which is not always the case.

A later formulation of Beardsley’s theory of metaphor is, not surprisingly, colorfully named “The Metaphorical Twist.” A metaphor is discovered and interpreted, in the controversion account, by the following activity:

...[W]hen a term is combined with others in such a way that there would be a logical opposition between its central meaning and that of the other terms, there occurs that shift from central to marginal meaning which shows us the word is to be taken in a metaphorical way. It is the only way it can be taken without absurdity. The term “logical opposition” here includes both direct incompatibility of designated properties and a more indirect incompatibility between the presuppositions of the terms....The logical opposition is what gives the metaphor its metaphorical twist. (Beardsley 1981: 112)

Max Black, belonging to the romantic camp (Veale "Localist Principles of Meaning" WWW) remarks that the same test applies just as well to hyperbole and oxymoron (and Paul Ricoeur cites irony in The Rule of Metaphor). As a more serious objection to the controversion approach, Black demonstrates that the negation of metaphorical statements can still be metaphors, but would be literally true statements at the same time. Because they are not "logically absurd," the negation of metaphorical statements would not be recognized as metaphors. His example, "Man is not a wolf," "is as metaphorical as its opposite [Man is a wolf], yet it clearly fails the controversion test" (Black 1979: 35).

George Miller, in his essay "Images and models, similes and metaphors" classifies metaphors into the following three types, and thereby avoids Beardsley's error:

- 1) Nominal metaphors: $BE(x, y)$ when x is not a y . Some examples are as follows: "This is the leg of the table." "The lion is the king of the beasts." "George Washington was the father of his country."
- 2) Predicative metaphors: $G(x)$ when an x is not G . "The rich perform leisure [just as the poor perform duties]."
- 3) Sentential metaphors: $G(y)$ when y is not a discourse referent.

"John lost his marbles" (in a context that otherwise has nothing to do with marbles) (Miller 1979: 230-233).

Beardsley has foreseen the nominal and predicative metaphors (whose prominent "not" is probably the source of what he terms "logical absurdity"), but he has overlooked the sentential metaphors, another illustration of which is Max Black's "He does indeed live in a glass house" (Black 1979: 35).

Beardsley was not the only thinker to overlook sentential metaphors. In fact, Paul Grice considered metaphors to be violations of the conversational maxim of quality (truthfulness), but in actuality--as neo-Griceans such as Levinson point out--metaphors can also arise from the flouting of the maxim of relevance (Levinson 1983: 157). (Miller's "not a discourse referent" applies in cases where, in the Gricean schema, the maxim of relevance is exploited.) Perhaps Grice can be forgiven this oversight, considering that his formulation of unspoken conversational imperatives was a catalyst for the field of pragmatics, and considering that his framework did allow for Levinson's solution, although Grice himself never overtly indicated it. Overarching Grice's maxims is one "golden rule" termed the Cooperative Principle: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989: 26). Below are the principles that, he posits, govern constructive conversation:

QUANTITY:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

QUALITY: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

RELATION: Be relevant.

MANNER: Be perspicuous.

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly. (Grice 1989: 26-27)

Rational interchanges are based on the assumption that both interlocutors are following the above rules (or at least that both interlocutors must feign that they are observing the above rules, in the exceptional cases of cross-examinations, etc.) (369-70). Furthermore, implicatures arise in the following way:

an implicatum [what is implied] (factual or imperatival) is the content of that psychological state or attitude which needs to be attributed to a speaker in order to secure one or another of the following results; (a) that a violation on his part of a conversational maxim is in the circumstances justifiable, at least in his eyes, or (b) that what appears to be a violation by him of a conversational maxim is only a seeming, not a real, violation; the spirit, though perhaps not the letter, of the maxim is respected. (Grice 1989: 370)

Since metaphor is directly related to the maxims of quality and relevance, it may be helpful to include Grice's analogue for each of them:

QUALITY: I expect your contributions to be genuine and not spurious. If I need sugar as an ingredient in the cake you are assisting me to make, I do not expect you to hand me salt; if I need a spoon, I do not expect a trick spoon made of rubber.

RELATION: I expect a partner's contribution to be appropriate to the immediate needs at each stage of the transaction. If I am mixing ingredients for a cake, I do not expect to be handed a good book, or even an oven cloth (though this might be an appropriate contribution at a later stage). (Grice 1989: 28)

A rational speaker must have good reason for flouting a maxim; he or she must do so in good faith, that is, in keeping with the general Cooperative Principle. Various figures of speech arise from such exploitations, and metaphor is one of these. When the first maxim of quality is flouted, the result is irony, metaphor, meiosis, or hyperbole. Grice's example of a metaphor is "You are the cream in my coffee," which involves a categorical falsity, and the contradictory of it will be a

truism (as illustrated by Black). Obviously, neither of these is what the speaker is trying to get across. Rather, "the most likely supposition is that the speaker is attributing to his audience some feature or features in respect of which the audience resembles (more or less fancifully) the mentioned substance" (Grice 1989: 34). As Stephen Levinson points out, Grice's account also fails to distinguish between tropes. Levinson speculates that metaphor may lack some of the defining features of the other tropes (for example, irony has the goal of disparagement) (Levinson 1983: 161). Grice's account falls short in another area, too: once the metaphor is identified, how is it interpreted? Eva Kittay notes that Grice's conversational maxims are "particularly helpful for arriving at the identification of an utterance as metaphorical," but "do not help to establish its *metaphorical interpretation*" (Kittay 1987: 202).

Reformulating Grice's general account for working out implicatures, Levinson demonstrates its limitations:

Stage 1: locating a trigger

i.e. identifying the need for inference. There are two kinds of triggers:
(a) in saying that p S [the speaker] has generally observed the maxims, but p is nevertheless conversationally inadequate in some degree, requiring that p be "amplified" or "repaired" with the additional assumption q
(b) In saying that p , S has flouted the maxims, and whatever he means he cannot mean p ; to preserve the Cooperative Principle, S must substitute some proposition q for p

Stage 2: inferring q

In the case of (a), H [the hearer] can use the reckoning involved in standard implicatures....In the case of (b), H must (1) determine what kind of trope p is, (2) apply the reasoning characteristic of that trope, (3) select among the competing values for q on the basis of their conversational adequacy vis-a-vis the maxims (Levinson 1983: 157-8)

In short, Grice's account suffices only for stage 1. Levinson advocates a division of labor to resolve this problem of metaphor: pragmaticists will

provide an account of identification of tropes (in which Gricean maxims will feature prominently) and provide a means to distinguish metaphors from other tropes; cognitive psychologists will provide the general theory of analogy, which "very general cognitive ability" would be the capstone of the understanding of metaphor (Levinson 1983: 161).

Interestingly, Levinson appeals to the same ability to reason analogically that Levin appeals to in "Poetry and Grammaticalness." Also of interest is the label Levinson has chosen for *Stage 2*: "inferring *q*." Levinson is not the only linguist to emphasize the role of inference in interpreting metaphor; in fact, L. Jonathan Cohen and Avishai Margalit have written an article expressly about "The Role of Inductive Reasoning in the Interpretation of Metaphor."

In fact, much of our understanding of what is spoken to us is not explained by linguistic rules, but by the "very general cognitive ability" mentioned by Levinson. Jerry Morgan, in his essay "Two Types of Convention in Indirect Speech Acts," recognizes an "ability to somehow infer what the speaker's intentions were in saying what he said, with the literal meaning it has" (Morgan 1978: 264). This ability is not a strictly linguistic ability at all, but the application of "very general common-sense strategies" that work in conjunction with linguistic rules (264-5). In other words, "conventions of usage" complement "conventions of language" (261). For this reason Morgan finds the label "conversational maxims" misleading, because they apply to more than conversation--they apply to all acts that are interpreted by other individuals (265).

Because metaphor arises by exploiting ("misusing") the maxims of conversation, and since these conversational maxims themselves were created to address areas where logical semantics fails, the Gricean

account of metaphor may be construed as endorsing the classical view of metaphor as a "deviant" usage of language, especially if conversational implicatures are regarded as being outside mainstream usages of language. But Levinson hastens to assert that, far from being marginal, metaphors addressed by pragmatic rules are in good company: "To claim that metaphor is in part pragmatic in nature is not to denigrate or isolate it, but merely to place it firmly among the other more straightforward usages of language...." (Levinson 1983: 156).

John Searle, largely bolstering the Gricean theory in his 1979 essay "Metaphor," has been labeled a staunch classicist in the metaphor tradition. "The umbrella term 'classical model' is used...to designate those representational strategies traditionally employed by the Literalist camp, such as the omniscient type hierarchies of Aristotle (1992)...., the necessary and sufficient truth conditionals of Searle (1979)..." (Veale "The Continuum Revisited: Literality and Non-Classical Representation" WWW). Searle emphasizes that metaphorical meaning always equals the speaker's utterance meaning. A listener must recognize the difference between word/sentence meaning and the speaker's meaning. (The role of a speaker's "intentions" is explored and emphasized in Relevance theory, to be discussed). Besides metaphor, irony and indirect speech acts are "instances of the break between speaker's utterance meaning and literal sentence meaning" (Searle 1979: 93). (Note that Searle has not provided the means by which one may distinguish among the tropes, a responsibility that lies in the domain of pragmatics, according to Levinson).

A metaphor does not change the meaning of either expression involved; rather, the metaphorical utterance does mean something

different than the meaning of the words and sentences, because the speaker *means* something different by those lexical elements. Speaker meaning need not coincide with the meaning of the word or sentence (Searle 1979: 100). It is even possible for a metaphorical assertion to be true when "the statement of similarity on which the inference to the metaphorical meaning is based is false" (102). For example, the speaker utters the metaphor "Richard is a gorilla" to mean "Richard is fierce, nasty, prone to violence, and so forth." The hearer, operating on the same assumption that gorillas are fierce, nasty, prone to violence, and so forth, will conclude that the speaker meant that of Richard. But even if the hearer knows, having watched enough nature films, that gorillas are shy, retiring, sensitive creatures, the hearer can still reach the understanding that Richard is violent, by virtue of reconstructing the speaker's intention.

Like every other thinker cited in this paper, Searle admits the impossibility of capturing a metaphor in a paraphrase. Something is inevitably lost when Disraeli's statement "I have climbed to the top of the greasy pole" is rephrased as "I have after great difficulty become prime minister." Metaphors "serve to plug...semantic gaps," Searle suggests (Searle 1979: 97). Dead metaphors, oxymoronically speaking, have lived on because they fill a semantic need.

After discarding two semantic explanations of metaphor, the object comparison theory and the interaction theory, Searle admits that he too is at a loss to explain *how* it is possible for the speaker to say "*S is P*" and mean "*S is R*," although *P* does not mean *R*. Nor can he explain *how* it is possible for the hearer who hears the utterance "*S is P*" to know that the speaker means "*S is R*." In fact, he equates the following two questions:

“How do metaphors work?” and “How does one thing remind us of another thing?” Like Levinson, Searle seems to be appealing for someone to contribute a cognitive explanation. Claiming that “there is no single principle on which metaphor works” (Searle 1979: 113), Searle returns to the two defeated theories and allows that they may be sub-steps within a proper theory (115). Although ineffectual standing alone, the object comparison theory and especially the interaction theory hold some promise as elements within the mysterious cognitive process of interpreting metaphor.

Jerry Morgan, responding to Searle’s “Metaphor,” wholeheartedly agrees with Searle’s distinction between utterance meaning and speaker meaning. He also is convinced that “the proper domain of the analysis of metaphor” is pragmatics, not semantics (the two theories discarded by Searle are semantic theories) (Morgan 1979: 136). However, he chides Searle for using conventionalized, “stored” metaphors when attempting to construct rules of metaphor interpretation. For Morgan, “clear cases of metaphor” are metaphors that are unfamiliar to the hearer, and thus must be processed the long way. Conventional, “pre-packaged” metaphors, which are on the way to becoming idioms, take a cognitive short-cut. To illustrate, “John is a pig” takes less cognitive processing than a “fresh” metaphor like “John is a kangaroo.” The fresh metaphors that must be calculated and figured out ought to serve as test cases for the understanding of metaphor (Morgan 1979: 141). For Morgan, stored metaphors are second-class metaphors, not deserving the same investigation as a “genuine” metaphor. In Strategies of Discourse Comprehension, van Dijk and Kintsch cite evidence that literal expressions require no less processing than nonliteral expressions

(metaphors, idioms, and indirect requests), provided that the metaphors are conventionalized or semiconventionalized. “[M]ore extensive problem-solving activities are presumably required for new creative metaphors” (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983: 313).

Tim Rohrer, attempting to disprove Searle’s theory, claims that Searle’s model is sequential, that is, that a metaphorical utterance must first be processed as if it were literal, then it must be judged as non-literal, and finally, it must be decoded by other cognitive means. All this transpires in real time, presumably, and thus the interpretation of a metaphor should take longer than the interpretation of a literal statement. Rohrer cites experiments that, given enough context, readers process metaphors just as rapidly as literal statements. However, he cautions that other studies (Blasko & Connine, 1993) demonstrate that, just as van Dijk predicted, novel metaphors take longer to process than highly familiar ones, evidence that Botha would welcome (Rohrer “The cognitive science of metaphor” WWW).

Raymond Gibbs, a cognitive scientist, supports Lakoff and Johnson’s position in his book Poetics of the Mind (1994). He, like Rohrer, rallies psycholinguistic experimental data to demonstrate the error of Searle’s theory. The results of various studies are conflicting, however. Metaphors were comprehended as quickly as literal targets, when preceded by lengthy story contexts (Inhoff, Lima, & Carroll, 1984), which leads one to believe, contra Searle, that “the process requires no more effort than understanding literal language” (Gibbs 1994: 100). Yet another study (Blasko & Connine, 1993) demonstrated that:

very rapid processing of metaphors is facilitated by readers’ previous experiences with these metaphors. Highly familiar metaphors can be processed more easily

than are relatively novel metaphors. (Gibbs 1994: 104)

This leads one to wonder about other studies that employ conventional and nonconventional metaphors indiscriminately. For example, one metaphor cited from the 1984 study by Inhoff et al. is the stored metaphor "the troops marched on" in reference to any continued activity in the face of opposition (Gibbs 1994: 100). The same flaw cripples a similar argument against the Gricean account of irony, which is related to metaphor in that it is figurative language. Gibbs cites evidence that an ironic (specifically, sarcastic) comment such as "He's a fine friend" takes no longer to process than the same statement in a literal context or a nonsarcastic equivalent statement, such as "He's a bad friend" (383). However, statements such as "You're a big help" or "he's a fine friend" are so often used ironically that the listener bypasses the process of identification and interpretation and instead takes them to mean that which they most often are meant to mean: their ironic meaning. A credible experiment must test the time difference between one's processing of literal language and one's processing of nonconventionalized figurative language.

Jerry Morgan discusses the short-circuiting of yet another expression explained in Gricean terms as the exploiting of a conversational maxim: indirect speech acts. Theoretically, indirect speech acts (such as "Can you pass me the salt?") should take more effort to process than direct requests ("Pass the salt"), since indirect speech acts require the hearer to make an implicature. However, if an expression is used often enough, the hearer's knowledge of the "conventions of usage" will allow him or her to short-circuit the implicature (Morgan 1978: 261). Morgan illustrates this as follows: the

first time Harry was refused a loan with the words, "Do I look like a rich man?", Harry, recognizing that the maxim "Be relevant" or "Be perspicuous" was apparently flouted, had to make inferential steps to understand that the answer was no. The next time Harry applied for a loan from the same person and heard the same negative response, "Do I look like a rich man?", he immediately grasped the fact that his request was denied, without calculating the inference (274-5).

Just as the classical view of metaphor has seen intriguing new extensions in recent decades, the romantic view of metaphor, with an anthropological/philosophical twist, has found modern-day proponents in George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner. In Metaphors We Live By, Lakoff, a linguist, and Johnson, a philosopher, collaborate to present what they consider a revolutionary approach to metaphor. Their stance is unabashedly romantic, although they prefer to call it "experientialist":

Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish--a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3)

In regarding their findings as a new discovery, Lakoff and Johnson ignore the rich romantic tradition which has already found that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life." The eighteenth-century Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Vico and the rhetorician Du Marsais, among others, had already proclaimed the ubiquity of metaphor in language

and in thought. As Nerlich puts it, the romantic tradition of metaphor in philosophy, rhetoric, and psychology "has so far been overlooked by those who, like Lakoff and Johnson (1980), make claim to a radically new approach to metaphor" (Nerlich "A brief historical flashback" WWW). This is because Lakoff and Johnson are reacting to the recent past in metaphor theory, in which Chomsky, Katz, and Fodor have had leading roles, and all of whom "regard metaphor as a deviant phenomenon of language as a system" (ibid). Metaphors We Live By can be considered "the most decisive break-through" not because of its novel ideas, but because it brought these ideas to a vast readership and sparked a host of articles, books, conferences, World Wide Web pages, and even the nascent field of cognitive semantics (Nerlich "Cognitive semantics" WWW).

Metaphors We Live By addresses the second-class metaphors that Morgan has dismissed, and in fact addresses such conventionalized metaphors almost to the exclusion of "fresh" metaphors. Conspicuous by their absence are any passages from poetry, which is typically a haven for unconventionalized metaphors (the "foreground," according to Mukarovsky). Approaching metaphor from a sociolinguistic standpoint, Lakoff considers the best evidence to be "linguistic evidence," usually oral and commonplace (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 4). When the subject of nonconventional metaphors is broached, Lakoff and Johnson somewhat misleadingly label them "imaginative (or nonliteral) metaphor[s]," as if some metaphors are literal (53). They distinguish three subspecies:

- (a) extensions of the used part of a metaphor (ex. "These facts are the bricks and mortar of my theory," which extends the used part [the outer shell of the building] of the metaphor Theories Are Buildings)
 - (b) instances of the unused part of a literal metaphor (ex. "His theory has thousands of little rooms and long, winding corridors," which uses the unused part [the interior of the building] of the same metaphor)
 - (c) instances of novel metaphor (ex. "Classical theories are patriarchs who father many children, most of whom fight incessantly," which is a new way of thinking about something, at least the first time we read it)
- (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 53)

Though the "imaginative" metaphors are dubbed "alive" by teachers of literature, Lakoff and Johnson find systematic metaphors such as Argument Is War to be "alive" in a more fundamental sense: they are metaphors that we live by. Though metaphorical expressions like "attacked his position" seem "dead" to English teachers, they are more alive in that they interact with other metaphors and play a role in our conceptual system (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 55). As long as a metaphor achieves its purpose, that is, lends an understanding of an aspect of a concept, that metaphor "works" (97).

According to Lakoff and Johnson's definition, *the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another* (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 5). We may mentally harbor metaphors, such as "Argument Is War," without every being conscious of them. This metaphor yields all sorts of metaphorical expressions: "I won/lost the argument," "He attacked your position, not realizing that the same arguments could be used as weapons against him," "She was losing ground, but refused to surrender," and "He shot down my theory."

Without our being aware of it, our culture's conceptual metaphor "Argument Is War" governs our words and our actions; it can be a metaphor we live by. It is perfectly possible for another culture to hold the unconscious metaphor "Argument Is a Dance," and to act differently in an argument because of that different underlying metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 4-5). Perhaps we acquire the underlying conceptual metaphor as we grow up hearing all the verbal manifestations of it. If so, speakers' minds are formed by the character of their language, not the other way around--a language is not formed by the minds of those who speak it.

When we understand one concept in terms of another, we inescapably overlook other aspects of the concept. For example, an argument has the aspect of a cooperative exchange of ideas, with the goal of reaching the truth. But a metaphorical concept has an obscuring effect: it "can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 10). By highlighting certain aspects, it necessarily hides others. Metaphorical structuring is partial, not total, because if it were total, one concept would actually *be* the other. (Argument isn't actually war. Argument is merely understood in terms of war.) There will always be a part of a metaphorical concept which does not and cannot fit (13).

Lakoff fiercely contends that "Metaphors are not mere words" (Lakoff 1993: 208). The mental mapping is primary, and the linguistic realizations of that mapping are secondary. This explains why many metaphorical expressions ("We've hit a dead-end street," "We can't turn back now," and "Their marriage is on the rocks") do not conflict, but rather point to one underlying conceptual metaphor: Love Is a Journey.

If metaphors were merely linguistics, "we would expect different linguistic expressions to be different metaphors," but, as illustrated above, that is not always the case (Lakoff 1993: 209).

Elizabeth Traugott has some misgivings about conceptual metaphors. She argues that the conceptual metaphor Argument Is War is not a metaphor as such, but a "conceptual schema." "Schemata" are abstract, semantically underspecified domains on the conceptual level, which constitute the basis on which conventional and innovative metaphors are constructed" (Nerlich "Cognitive semantics" WWW [no reference given for Traugott]). Schemata are the raw material from which metaphors are constructed, but are not metaphors themselves. Brigitte Nerlich concurs, suggesting that Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphors are not metaphors in themselves, but are the "blue-prints" for metaphors; in fact, "these blue-prints themselves are based on even more rudimentary schemas, the image schema Up-Down, for example" (ibid). Gerard Steen, in the nascent field of literary pragmatics, regards Lakoff's hypothesis of underlying conceptual metaphors as unnecessary: "When it *is* a matter of actual analogical mapping during discourse processing, this still does not require the postulation of pre-existing conceptual metaphors in the mind" (Steen 1994: 6).

That metaphors, which in turn are structured by language, can structure and even constrain the speaker's world view is not a new concept. Named after its two main proponents in the first half of this century, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis makes the very same claim. In fact, Lakoff and Johnson acknowledge their debt to those linguists: "Our observations about how a language can reflect the conceptual system of its speakers derive in great part from the work of Edward Sapir, Benjamin

Lee Whorf, and others who have worked in that tradition” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: xi). Whorf, who studied the language and culture of the Hopi Indians of Arizona, concluded that their perception of the world is ineluctably unlike a Yankee’s perception of the world, largely because their native languages are unlike. For example, the Hopi Indians are much less obsessed with the progression of time, because their language is devoid of tense contrasts. Hopi he labeled a “timeless” language, whereas English he labeled a “temporal” language. Extrapolating from this “finding” to all cultures, Whorf concludes in “Science and Linguistics”:

Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar, and differs, from slightly to greatly, between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds--and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way--an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. (Whorf 1978: 212-213)

Unfortunately for Lakoff and Johnson, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is regarded as untenable by most linguists. First of all, Hopi, upon closer investigation, does have a tense category. Second, some Yankees doubtless share the Hopi perception of time, and vice versa. There even have been extensive experiments to see if a grammatical distinction such as Navaho verb forms (which vary depending on the shape of the object they modify) affects the perception of children speaking only that

language. This experiment (reported by Carroll and Casagrande in Readings in Social Psychology in 1958) found that monolingual speakers of Navaho differed only minimally from white English-speaking Bostonians in their classification of objects (O'Grady 1989: 184-5).

As far as Lakoff and Johnson's application of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is concerned, it seems contradictory that a speaker's world view is determined by conceptual metaphors, and that a speaker can create new conceptual metaphors. The former statement implies limits; the latter implies limitlessness. "New metaphors have the power to create new reality," claim the authors (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 145). In fact, this may be one of the most appealing aspects of poetry. While claiming that conceptual metaphors are deterministic, Lakoff and Johnson admit that one conceptual metaphor can replace another in a person's lifetime. (As a rather depressing example, "Love Is Health" can be displaced by "Love Is War"). Something truly deterministic ought to be inflexible, it seems. In Hawkes' opinion, creative new metaphors "seem sometimes to shake the bars of our cage,...often only to demonstrate how firmly, how comfortably, these are fixed" (Hawkes 1980: 91).

Lakoff and Johnson spend twenty-eight pages denouncing the Western myth of objectivism, to which belong, in their opinion, formal semantics and the object-similarity theory of metaphor. Less than three pages are devoted to the inadequacies of the myth of subjectivism, which is inextricably linked to the Romantic tradition (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 223). The authors propose a third view, the "experientialist synthesis," as a better alternative to objectivism. The experientialist view avoids the subjectivist extreme of irrationality by embracing both

imagination and reason. The synthesis of imagination and reason is metaphor. Reason, involving categorization, entailment, and inference, and imagination, involving seeing one kind of thing in terms of another, are united in metaphor. "Metaphor is thus *imaginative rationality*." We use metaphor to reason, especially in areas that cannot be comprehended in any way other than metaphor: "feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 193). This is strikingly reminiscent of the Romantic theorist Shelley's defense of poetry: "Reason respects the differences and imagination the similitudes of things." Call it what one may, this synthesis is fairly close to Romanticism proper.

In his book A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor, Earl MacCormac applauds Lakoff and Johnson for their "efforts to explain metaphor as a cognitive device rather than as only a linguistic category, but..." he goes on to list many criticisms (MacCormac 1985: 69). Because the authors of Metaphors We Live By insist that most ordinary language is metaphorical, their rejection of the literal forces them to describe language that they claim is nonmetaphorical using language they have demonstrated to be metaphorical. ("Nonmetaphorical" refers to a concept coming unmediated from the environment [such as "up" or "down"] which is "understood and structured on its own terms" [Lakoff and Turner 1989: 57].) Because Lakoff and Johnson claim that knowledge of concepts is based on prototypical natural categories as *gestalts*, their insistence that most ordinary language is metaphorical has another undesirable consequence: it deprives metaphor of its "distinct cognitive feature," namely, the creation of new categories by juxtaposition of old categories in new ways. If conventionalized

metaphors are truly metaphors in the same sense as imaginative ones, the process of interpreting them must be the same: a mundane recognition of natural categories (MacCormac 1985: 76). MacCormac's hunch coincides with Jerry Morgan's: "nonliteral" and "literal" metaphors should not be assigned to the same plane, because, to use Morgan's terminology, "stored" metaphors "short circuit" the processing route that nonconventionalized metaphors take (Morgan 1979: 141).

MacCormac also takes Lakoff and Johnson to task for their description of metaphor and their redefinition of "dead" and "alive" in regard to metaphor. If metaphor is described as "understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another," virtually any association would qualify. Given this ridiculously broad description, it would be trivially true that all language is metaphorical. As a result of their redefinition of "dead" and "alive," Lakoff and Johnson find themselves bereft of the terminology to distinguish between metaphoric and nonmetaphorical (or dead) utterances. Hence they resort to "figurative/nonliteral metaphors" and "literal metaphors," which are problematic labels, to say the least (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 59).

Eva Kittay is likewise mystified by Lakoff and Johnson's notion of a "literal metaphor." "It appears that, at times, Lakoff and Johnson have completely conflated the distinction between literal and metaphorical language--a distinction upon which their own discussion nevertheless hinges" (Kittay 1987: 50 note). She attempts to salvage their theory from this extreme by emphasizing the weak distinction they make between the literal and metaphorical: the literal arises from our direct experience and interaction with our environment, whereas the metaphorical arises when we understand one experience by structuring it

by the gestalt of another domain (20). Lakoff and Johnson's theory allows that all metaphors *must* be rooted in the literal at some point, she argues. Of course, "literal" is not understood in the Fregean sense, but rather applies to concepts which are directly experienced and which may be taken as literal (186). (Perhaps the best concise explanation of what is meant by "Fregean" is provided by Raymond Gibbs: "the commitment to understand meaning in terms of reference and truth, given the objectivist commitment" [Gibbs 1994: 4].) The authors of Metaphors We Live By seem to blur the distinction between "literal" and "metaphorical" in their attempt to argue that metaphor is all-pervasive, but Kittay sees the problems this obfuscation spawns: "...[A] distinction is necessary if the discussion of metaphor is not to reduce to incoherence. If we deny the literal in language, we deny the possibility of metaphor as well" (Kittay 1987: 20).

Lakoff himself returns to this tangled terminology in his 1993 essay "The Contemporary theory of metaphor." He upholds the literal-metaphorical distinction, but with a non-traditional definition: "literal" applies to those concepts that are not comprehended via conceptual metaphor, such as "the balloon went up." Concrete physical experience may be understood in literal terms, but as soon as one ventures into the realm of abstractions or emotions, metaphorical understanding becomes the norm (Lakoff 1993: 205).

MacCormac's own view of metaphor is interactionist, to the extreme that semantic anomaly is a necessary element (a view which has been sufficiently refuted by examples such as "John is not a pig"). He sees his as the formal version of the theory identified with Max Black. MacCormac's view of the metaphorical process is as follows:

[M]etaphor results from a cognitive process that juxtaposes two or more not normally associated referents, producing semantic conceptual anomaly, the symptom of which is usually emotional tension. The conceptual process that generates metaphor identifies similar attributes of the referents to form an analogy and identifies dissimilar attributes of the referents to produce semantic anomaly. (MacCormac 1985: 5)

Lakoff and Johnson are romantics to the extreme: they find metaphor to be so all-pervasive that Lakoff has even maligned the Literal Meaning Theory as the "villain in the Western philosophical tradition" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 215). MacCormac represents the other extreme: he finds metaphor to be accompanied by semantic anomaly, reminiscent of Beardsley's "logical absurdity." Note, however, that he too considers analogy as a vital step in interpretation. Levin and Levinson likewise expect analogy to be a crucial ingredient in an adequate cognitive account of metaphor.

For his next book, More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor, Lakoff coordinated with not a professor of philosophy named Mark, but a professor of English named Mark. As the title indicates, this book includes the "figurative/nonliteral metaphors" largely excluded by Metaphors We Live By. Bridging the perceived gap between poetic language and everyday talk, the authors argue that great poets use the same tools as the rest of us, simply with more skill, talent, and practice. Many poetic metaphors are extensions of commonplace metaphors. As an example, Emily Dickinson's poem "Because I could not stop for Death -- / He kindly stopped for me--" is seen as an extension of the widely-held conceptual metaphor Death Is Departure. Poetry is largely demystified, since it relies on common, unconscious, automatic, basic metaphors which comprise our cultural knowledge and which enable us to

communicate with one another, whether by ordinary conversation or by poetry (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 15). Poets can speak to us, and we can understand them, because we all--poets and non-poets--share the same modes of thought (xi).

Lakoff and Turner stress repeatedly that a metaphor is a matter of thought, not of language. A metaphor is a conceptual mapping, not a sequence of words. The reason for confusion about the essence of metaphor is the existence of an underlying conceptual metonymy: Words Stand For the Concepts They Express (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 108). In discussing metaphor, we must always keep these two strata in mind. Later, Lakoff would reserve the word "metaphor" for the mental cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system and use "metaphorical expression" to refer to the surface realizations of such a cross-domain mapping, be they words, phrases, or sentences (Lakoff 1993: 203).

If the underlying conceptual metaphor is a commonplace one (such as Life Is a Journey), the linguistic realization of that metaphor may be commonplace and trite ("A friend is a fellow-traveler along life's path") or idiosyncratic (Dickinson's poem beginning with the stanza "Our journey had advanced-- / Our feet were almost come / To that odd Fork in Being's Road-- / Eternity--by Term--" [Dickinson 1961: 157]). If the underlying conceptual metaphor is idiosyncratic (such as Nature Is an Intoxicant), the linguistic actualization of it will necessarily be idiosyncratic (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 50). Take, for example, the following stanzas by Dickinson:

I taste a liquor never brewed--
From Tankards scooped in Pearl--
Not all the Vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an Alcohol!

Inebriate of Air--am I--
And Debauchee of Dew--
Reeling--thro endless summer days--
From inns of Molten Blue-- (Dickinson 1961: 25)

Poetry requires more effort to process than ordinary language, because poetic uses of metaphor are often conscious extensions of ordinary conventionalized metaphors, or they are unusual manipulations of basic metaphors, or because many metaphors are combined and compressed into a minimal amount of space (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 54). Though employed masterfully by poets, metaphor is the common inheritance of all.

Not all English professors are as gracious as Turner in sharing metaphor with the masses. In More Than Cool Reason, the difference between poetic metaphor and everyday metaphor is in degree, not in kind. However, in Metaphor: The Logic of Poetry, co-authored by a poet and an English professor, "poetic metaphor is different from everyday metaphor" (Briggs and Monaco 1990: 3). To these authors, an insurance company being the Rock of Gibraltar surely is not the same kind of metaphor as my love being a red, red rose. Instead of painstakingly explaining the distinction, they attribute it to the context: "But context --where you find the statement, whether in a poem, an advertisement, or political speech--makes the crucial difference" (7). In another vague and unsupported statement, they claim:

In the everyday use of metaphors for clarification or persuasion [recall Aristotle's schema of logic, rhetoric, and poetry with the corresponding goals of clarity, persuasion, and distinctiveness of expression], the emphasis is nearly always on the similarity between terms; in poetic metaphor, *it is on the tension of both the similarities and dissimilarities between them.* (Briggs and Monaco 1990: 6)

Briggs and Monaco, expounding a modern strain of the classical view of metaphor, serve to emphasize just how "romantic" is the view of metaphor that Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner espouse. For the latter, metaphor is ordinary, omnipresent, accessible, conventional, and irreplaceable (Lakoff and Turner 1989: xi).

When they define the mechanism whereby metaphors work, Lakoff and Turner again show their true romantic colors. In her book The Language Poets Use, the critic Winifred Nowotny, who is "faithful to the Romantic tradition," explains metaphor not as a simple comparison or analogy; instead, "one constituent acts upon another almost like an x-ray" (Hawkes 1980: 72). In much the same way, Lakoff and Turner explain metaphor as a mapping between two conceptual domains. Metaphors map certain aspects of the source domain (the "vehicle" in Richards' terminology) onto the target domain (the "tenor"). The result is a new understanding of the target domain (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 38-39). One wonders whether a metaphor results in a new understanding of the source domain as well, at least in some cases. Lakoff and Turner vehemently deny this possibility, stressing that mapping is unidirectional (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 131), and associating bidirectionality with the semantic interaction theory, a theory criticized by Searle (but one that has potential as a substep in a better theory). Levinson, in his overview of pragmatics, highly approves of the domains-mapping idea, but does not see it as expressly unidirectional:

Crucial...seems to be the way in which what is involved in metaphor is the mapping of one whole cognitive domain into another, allowing the tracing out of multiple correspondences....[A]s Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have pointed out, two domains or

conceptual fields like *politics* and *war*, once put into correspondence, productively produce all those familiar metaphors, dead and alive.... (Levinson 1983: 159)

Max Black in "More About Metaphor" (1979) endorses Richards' formulation of metaphor as the interaction of two copresent thoughts, albeit with adjustments:

In the context of a particular metaphorical statement, the two subjects "interact" in the following ways: (a) the presence of the primary subject incites the hearer to select some of the secondary subject's properties; and (b) invites him to construct a parallel implication-complex that can fit the primary subject; and (c) reciprocally induces parallel changes in the secondary subject. (Black 1979: 29)

Bidirectionality enters at point (c): the reciprocal, parallel change in the secondary subject. Although the interaction theory is flawed, as Searle and others have demonstrated, it does have its merits, too, merits which Levinson notes: "It thus happens, as Black (1962, 1979) has argued, that a single metaphor reverberates through two entire conceptual fields" (Levinson 1983: 159). Wary of the baggage accompanying the term "interaction," Levinson has nevertheless tacitly approved of at least one aspect of the interaction theory: that both conceptual fields are subject to reverberation.

Lakoff and Turner refuse to consider the possibility of metaphorical mapping in any other direction than "one way only, from the source domain...onto the target domain" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 132). However, they claim that their investigation into metaphor has been an empirical one, and that they have arrived at their conclusions by studying cases of both poetic and ordinary language. They invite

“empirical corroboration or invalidation,” and I accept the challenge (136).

Perhaps not in all cases, but surely in some cases of a single metaphor the mapping goes in both directions. As anecdotal evidence, consider the following poem by Emily Dickinson (a poet cited with unparalleled frequency in discussions of metaphor):

Death is the supple Suitor
That wins at last--
It is a stealthy Wooing
Conducted first
By pallid innuendoes
And dim approach
But brave at last with Bugles
And a bisected Coach
It bears away in triumph
To Troth unknown
And Kindred as responsive
As Porcelain. (Dickinson 1961: 287)

Clearly this is a metaphor wherein the suitor is the source domain (the vehicle) and Death is the target domain (the tenor). Aspects of a suitor are attributed to death: coaxing, conquering once for all, carrying one away from loved ones, and obliterating a woman's identity, to name a few. But just as striking is the way Death colors the suitor: the suitor is menacing, sinister, and inescapable. One cannot help but recall the biographical fact that Emily Dickinson chose to remain a spinster all her days. Perhaps, as a fellow student in my Early American Literature class suggested, Dickinson is telling us more about courtship and marriage than she is about death.

Another Dickinson poem reinforces the theory that the target domain can affect the source domain. The first two lines are as follows:

“Hope” is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul-- (Dickinson 1961: 34)

Without reading any further, the reader already has a conception of this "thing with feathers" based entirely on the fact that it has served as the source domain for "hope." I unconsciously took it to be a robin; a student I interrogated assumed it was a dove. Both of us immediately ruled out the raven, which has negative connotations of foreboding. The positive connotation of "hope" somehow spilled over to "the thing with feathers," although Lakoff and Turner assert that mapping is a one-way affair. At least in the aforementioned "empirical" cases, metaphorical mapping seems to go in both directions. Interestingly, Lakoff may have made a slight concession in favor of bidirectionality in his 1993 essay "The contemporary theory of metaphor." Rather than stress that mapping is unidirectional, he stresses that it is "asymmetrical" (Lakoff 1993: 245). This leaves open the possibility of mapping in both directions, although mapping may go heavily in one direction and faintly in the other.

Because Lakoff and Turner are die-hard romantics in their perception of metaphor, they view the pragmatic approach to metaphor with hostility, because it seems to banish metaphor from mainstream usages of language, which are interpreted by semantic logic. Worse yet, the pragmatics position relies on the villain, the Literal Meaning Theory. (The Literal Meaning Theory, as conceived by Lakoff and Turner, maintains that conventional, ordinary language is semantically autonomous and capable of making reference to objective reality; such a linguistic expression is called "literal." A correlate of this theory is that no metaphors are literal [Lakoff and Turner 1989: 114-5].)

Pragmatics, according to Lakoff and Johnson, is the rubric under which are lumped together all sorts of odds and ends in linguistic

interpretation that defy semantic rules of interpretation (semantics being associated with philosophical logic). This is a rather unfair characterization of pragmatics as a catch-all for deviant expressions. (Raymond Gibbs is even more blunt when he calls pragmatics a "wastebasket" [Gibbs 1994: 5].) In fact, many linguistic phenomena central to everyday language are dependent upon linguistic processes that the field of pragmatics has brought to light (deixis, conversational implicatures, speech acts, conversational structure, etc.). Lakoff and Turner apparently see such phenomena as a motley assortment of outcasts, and shrink from associating metaphor with them. Pragmatics handles what semantics cannot, and semantics handles "normal, conventional language that can be true or false" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 125). Therefore, conclude Lakoff and Turner, metaphor will be considered deviant if it is addressed by pragmatic rules of interpretation. Lakoff even goes so far as to assert in his essay "The contemporary theory of metaphor":

...[A]uthors like Searle, Sadock, and Morgan claim, incorrectly as it turns out, that metaphor [i]s outside of synchronic linguistics and in the domain of principles of language use. (Lakoff 1993: 239).

In their estimation, the pragmatics position errs on four counts: in (1) not considering conventional metaphor as metaphor, in (2) considering metaphor as deviant, in (3) imagining that the correct meaning of a metaphor is its literal paraphrase, and in (4) assuming that a hearer or reader attempts a literal understanding of a metaphor first, and if that becomes impossible, resorts to a metaphorical reading. Metaphor cannot be a matter of pragmatics, they argue, because it is a

matter of conceptual structure, not purely of language use (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 125-6).

These claims are not hard to shoot down one by one (to use the Argument Is War conceptual metaphor). Conventional and unconventional metaphors are interpreted with differing levels of effort because they *are* different. (Recall van Dijk's discussion of the findings that semi-conventionalized and conventionalized metaphors are processed just as rapidly as nonmetaphorical expressions, but that unconventional metaphors require more effort.) Jerry Morgan does not consider an institutionalized metaphor to be a bona fide metaphor. "I think it is necessary to make a distinction between clear cases of metaphor and cases that have become conventional in one way or another, yet are not idioms" (Morgan 1979: 141). Whether conventionalized metaphors are classified as metaphors or not, the fact remains that they bypass the usual route of interpretation that novel metaphors follow. Morgan sums it up:

The upshot of this is that some apparent metaphors are fresh and must be calculated or figured out, others are stored, labeled as figures of speech, a kind of instant metaphor--just add water and stir--and are recognized as such and understood immediately, probably because of some look-up strategy like, "Try the largest chunk first." (Morgan 1979: 142)

It is important to remember, however, that a gradient exists between the thoroughly conventionalized metaphors (idioms) and thoroughly unconventional metaphors. Most metaphors are probably neither one nor the other, but in between. They move from the former to the latter every time they are used, giving rise to words and phrases that today are understood as strictly literal, but whose etymology reveals a one-time

metaphor ("contradict," "foot of the mountain"). Diachronic linguistics, as mentioned earlier, cannot help but acknowledge the role of metaphor in semantic change.

We have already addressed Lakoff and Turner's second contention, namely, that metaphors are deviant. Here they accurately present the pragmatics position, which holds that metaphors violate conversational maxims. Even if they do not exploit the maxim of quality, they exploit the maxim of relevance. However, metaphors are not "deviant" in the classical sense of deviance (i.e. Aristotle's sense). Metaphors, as well as many usages of language (such as irony, speech acts, and conversational implicatures) are employed in everyday speech; they are not restricted to specialized contexts like poetry. In fact, so many usages of language rely on pragmatic principles of interpretation that to label them (or any large constituent of a whole) as "deviant" is misleading. The metaphor *Linguistics Is Physics* is well-known in the linguistics field, and provides an apt analogy for the so-called "deviance" of metaphor and other linguistic phenomena that resort to pragmatics for explanation. If pure logical semantics is likened to an ideal frictionless surface, and pragmatics is likened to friction's interference in motion, it is evident that, while motion without the hindrance of friction is the vanishingly rare paradigmatic occurrence, motion affected by friction is the widespread, run-of-the-mill motion encountered in daily life. Metaphor addressed by pragmatics should be considered no more deviant than the motion of an object affected by friction. Perhaps Lakoff and Turner are correct on one count: the conventionalized metaphors that are not interpreted from scratch are not deviant. Later in the development of the "contemporary theory of metaphor," Lakoff makes the following

concession to the Gricean theory of metaphor identification and interpretation:

One might think that one "arrives at" a metaphorical interpretation of a sentence by "starting" with the literal meaning and applying some algorithmic process to it (see Searle ["Metaphor"]). Though there do exist cases where something like this happens, this is not in general how metaphor works... (Lakoff 1993: 205).

The "cases where something like this happens" are, in Morgan's terms, "fresh" metaphors; the metaphors "in general" probably are "stored" conventionalized metaphors which are no longer interpreted from scratch.

Third, pragmaticists do not imagine that the correct meaning of a metaphor is its literal paraphrase. Searle has already demonstrated that metaphors cannot be reduced to their paraphrases. A metaphor fills a semantic gap. "The face of a watch" exists because "the side of the watch [that is usually circular and displays the time]" fails to capture all that is conveyed by the metaphorical expression, albeit a "dead" one. A paraphrase can never adequately cover all the semantic ground that a metaphor covers, let alone other ground (emotive, for example), because at best, a paraphrase is a discourse within a single domain; a metaphor is a discourse across at least two domains. The metaphor does not "mean" the paraphrase; the metaphor "means" the speaker's meaning or intention in uttering the metaphor. In fact, interpretations of tropes are fundamentally non-propositional (Levinson 1983: 160).

Lakoff and Turner's fourth objection is that pragmaticists assume that a hearer or reader attempts a literal understanding of a metaphor first, and if that becomes impossible, resorts to a metaphorical reading.

This is a messy issue, because there is not a consensus on this point. Gerard Steen assumes that this view is the "traditional," widely-held view within the field of pragmatics, but does not himself espouse it. Instead, he proposes that we think metaphorically even when there is no blatant semantic or pragmatic anomaly. We are justified in thinking metaphorically whenever two domains or systems of thought are both active, and when they can be seen as parallel. (He acknowledges the work of the psychologists Sternberg and Tourangeau in formulating this view of metaphor, which is in keeping with the domains-interaction view of Lakoff and Johnson.) Metaphorical identification depends on other factors, such as the reader or listener's alertness (Steen 1991: 115). In Steen's 1994 book Understanding Metaphor in Literature, he questions whether the reader or listener even need identify the metaphor explicitly in order to understand it (Steen 1994: 102). Neither does the Relevance theory as interpreted by Adrian Pilkington (to be discussed) require metaphors to be interpreted literally and then reassessed figuratively.

As far as metaphors being conceptual, Lakoff and Johnson have done the fields of linguistics and anthropology a service by their tireless documentation of everyday metaphorical utterances that can be classified by conceptual gestalts, which vary from culture to culture. Pragmaticists such as Levinson approve of the idea of mapping across conceptual fields, from which mapping arise "potentially elaborate parallelisms of infinite depth" (Levinson 1983: 160). The idea of conceptual fields contributes to our understanding of the cognitive side of metaphor, but does not preclude the pragmatic side.

The nascent field of cognitive linguistics, with its romantic slant, has viewed metaphor as a process whereby different meanings get

associated, thus, a means of category extension (Taylor 1995: 122, 215). The cognitive approach to metaphor stands in opposition to the pragmatics view. Rather than see metaphor as a deviant violation of semantic selection restrictions, "the cognitive paradigm sees metaphor as a means whereby ever more abstract and intangible areas of experience can be conceptualized in terms of the familiar and concrete" (132). This "non-classical view" propounded by Lakoff in his 1987 book Women, Fire and Dangerous Things asserts that metaphor is no more deviant a linguistic expression than a penguin is a deviant kind of bird; both are far from the prototypes of their respective categories.

Metaphor is granted a cognitive rationale in this prototypical perspective; it may be employed to stretch our existing categories in new and interesting ways, thereby allowing novel inferences to be drawn relative to different prototypical hubs. (Veale "The Logic of Literal Meaning" WWW)

Cognitive semantics, of which Lakoff is "the figurehead," owes much to the Lakoff and Johnson (1980) idea of conceptual metaphors (Nerlich "Cognitive semantics" WWW and Taylor 1995: 130). In its interpretation of metaphor, cognitive linguistics is indebted to Max Black's formulation of the interactional theory of metaphor (Taylor 1995: 133). It is no surprise, then, that, like its forbears, cognitive linguistics views metaphor in the romantic tradition as an endemic ingredient of speech. Metaphor is defined as "the conceptualization of one cognitive domain in terms of components more usually associated with another cognitive domain" (ibid).

The cognitive approach considers its opponent to be the autonomous approach, and sees metaphor as the touchstone that most radically polarizes those two paradigms (Taylor 1995: 130). In Taylor's

opinion, metaphor is somewhat of an embarrassment to generative linguists, because metaphor must lie outside the domain of linguistic competence proper if metaphor inherently involves a violation of selection restrictions. In order for a hearer/reader to reconstruct the meaning of a metaphor when the literal meaning of the utterance is unhelpful, he or she must exercise his or her knowledge of pragmatics. Pragmatics, a field which was bound to arise in an attempt to provide an interface between the autonomous system of language and interaction with the world, is unnecessary as a separate subfield, say cognitive linguists. All meaning is pragmatic, and thus does not require a separate branch of study (130-132).

Cognitive linguists target Searle and his Gricean theory of metaphor for venomous attacks (Tony Veale's World Wide Web page sports the taunt: "Eat my shorts, Searle!"). Searle represents the classical view of metaphor, and Rohrer and Taylor, among others, have bitterly condemned his theory (or their misconstruals of his theory). Rohrer claims that Searle views metaphor as simply a roundabout way to express literal semantics. The comprehension of a metaphor requires that the metaphor be decomposed into a literal paraphrase (Rohrer "The Cognitive Science" WWW). This is a distortion of Searle's 1979 paper, in which he clearly expressed the impossibility of capturing metaphor in a literal paraphrase.

Taylor criticizes Searle on three points, none of which hold up under scrutiny. First, he echoes Rohrer in condemning Searle for purportedly claiming that a metaphor can be replaced by a single non-metaphorical equivalent. Secondly, he cannot grasp how something so "pervasive" can be deviant (an argument that has already been

countered by the analogy to friction and motion). Taylor holds that "the very pervasiveness of metaphor argues strongly against the deviance hypothesis; being endemic, metaphor would eventually destroy the norm against which it is to be recognized as such" (Taylor 1995: 132). This can be answered by proposing that novel metaphors are not endemic, and that conventionalized, stock metaphors are the norm. Lastly, Taylor questions the rationality of people who purposely speak in metaphors if it is such a bizarre and deviant use of language. Why should a well-intentioned communicator intentionally produce grammatically deviant utterances and demand that the interlocutor struggle to recover the underlying literal meaning? "Why don't people say what they mean in the first place?" (ibid). The answer to this query is found without much effort in the very essay that Taylor is attacking: metaphors "serve to plug...semantic gaps," Searle suggests (Searle 1979: 97). They fill a semantic need. As far as the motivation for using metaphor, that will be explored in the final segment of this paper.

One more recent innovative contribution to the theory of metaphor was propounded in the 1986 book Relevance: Communication and Cognition. In a radical attempt to reduce all of Grice's maxims to the single maxim "Be relevant," Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson have managed to shift the field of pragmatics towards cognitive psychology. They take Grice's analysis as the point of departure for an inferential model of communication (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 21). Straddling the fence between the romantic and classical views of metaphor, they see an all-encompassing unity in that all communication can be explained by the one maxim of relevance (unity and ubiquity being romantic notions). Metaphor is explained by the same maxim as every other

instance of communication, and thus is not a deviant departure from "normal" language. On the other hand, they follow in the footsteps of J. A. Fodor, who views metaphor as a deviant phenomenon of language as a system (Nerlich "A brief historical flashback" WWW).

Sperber and Wilson embrace the Fodorean concept of a language module distinct from a central processor (this central processor being a deductive system). Central to their argument is the assumption that we humans only pay attention to what is relevant to us. Therefore, to claim someone's attention by ostensive behavior, including verbal discourse, is to promise that the information communicated will be relevant to the hearer. The hearer operates under the *presumption of optimal relevance*, given below:

- (a) The set of assumptions $\{I\}$ which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.
- (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate $\{I\}$.
(Sperber and Wilson 1986: 164)

This single principle is the key to human communication and cognition. Like the Romantics whose imagination sees "similitudes" rather than differences, Sperber and Wilson unify all of communication by means of the one property of relevance.

Information is relevant to the degree that it creates contextual effects with minimal processing effort. (Levinson, in his review of Relevance, sums this up, with a note of disappointment, as "the biggest bang for the buck" [Levinson 1989: 459].) A contextual effect is the modification of a context, which in turn is defined as "a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world" (Sperber

and Wilson 1986: 15). A contextual effect could be an implication, the strengthening of an old assumption, or the abandonment of an old assumption. A new assumption can trigger many contextual effects, some requiring more inferential steps (and thus more effort) than others. As a demonstration of optimal relevance, consider the following example:

Suppose that a hearer has a context in mind composed of the following assumptions with their corresponding degrees of strength:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| (a) Peter is richer than Sam. | [certain] |
| (b) Sam is richer than Bill. | [certain] |
| (c) Bill is richer than Jim. | [certain] |
| (d) Jim is richer than Charles. | [certain] |
| (e) Sam is richer than Sue. | [strong] |
| (f) Sue is richer than Jim. | [very weak] |
| (g) Sue is richer than Charles. | [strong] |

Now imagine that the hearer is conversing with a speaker who is in the position to assert either of the following:

- (1) Sue is richer than Jim.
- (2) Sue is richer than Peter. (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 127-8)

Obviously, the second assumption is more relevant, because it sparks more contextual effects. The first has only two contextual effects: it raises the strength of assumption (f) from [very weak] to [certain], and it raises the strength of assumption (g) from [strong] to [certain]. The second assumption sparks five contextual effects: it implies that Sue is richer than Sam, it implies that Sue is richer than Bill, it erases the assumption that Sam is richer than Sue, it raises the strength of assumption (f) from [very weak] to [certain], and it raises the strength of assumption (g) from [strong] to [certain]. Though the second assumption requires more processing, it is optimally relevant because it yields so many contextual effects. Strange as it may sound, relevance

can be quantitative (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 129). Of course, the exact number of contextual effects can only be calculated if the entire context is taken into calculation, and this is impossible in a real-life human psyche.

An utterance is an interpretive expression of a thought of a speaker, and the hearer makes an interpretive assumption about the speaker's informative intention. Here Sperber and Wilson expand upon the same idea of speaker intention that Searle voiced in "Metaphor." The semantic content may be entirely irrelevant or illogical, but the fact that one person has made an effort to communicate may be enough to communicate a thought. Even a well-timed whistle, devoid of any semantic proposition, can have communicative value, because a listener may be able to infer the whistler's informative intention. Sperber and Wilson

see no reason to postulate a convention, presumption, maxim, or rule of literalness to the effect that this interpretation must be a literal reproduction. How close the interpretation is, and in particular, when it is literal can be determined on the basis of the principle of relevance. (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 231)

The presumption of optimal relevance and the concept of a speaker's informative intention are enough to provide an explanation of metaphor. An utterance is strictly literal if its propositional form is identical to the speaker's intention. However, Sperber and Wilson consider literalness to be a limiting case, rather than the norm (a thought in keeping with the romantic view of metaphor). The most optimally relevant expression of a thought is not always a literal expression.

A metaphor involves an interpretive relationship between the propositional form of an utterance and the thought it represents (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 231). When hearing a metaphor, such as Flaubert's criticism of poet Leconte de Lisle-- "His ink is pale" --a hearer will rule out the literal construal because knowing the color of a poet's ink is not very relevant. Flaubert's criticism only takes on relevance when construed in the sense of all the weak implicatures that it effects: Leconte de Lisle is the type of man who would write with pale ink, his language is not bright or flashy, his poetry is dull and bound to fade, and so forth (237). (Of course, none of these implicatures are readily obvious; the speaker has to take so many inferential steps before reaching anything relevant, that one wonders how much "bang" one gets for all those "bucks.")

The listener or reader is responsible for discarding the many superfluous, contradictory contextual implications raised by a metaphor. Lakoff and Turner phrase the same thought in this way: if "mappings [fail to] preserve the general shape...,including the causal connections,...they are disallowed, by which we mean that they make no ostensible sense to us, and so we dismiss them" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 200). A successful metaphor thus requires the collaborative effort of the speaker, who must foresee how the metaphor might be interpreted, and the hearer, who must actually construct it by making inferences until the statement is perceived as relevant. A metaphor is a joint venture, relying on a cooperative listener for completion. Grice's Cooperative Principle is, in spirit, evoked for the interpretation of metaphor, which is something that he did not expressly mention when positing that conversation is, in normal circumstances, cooperative. Others in the

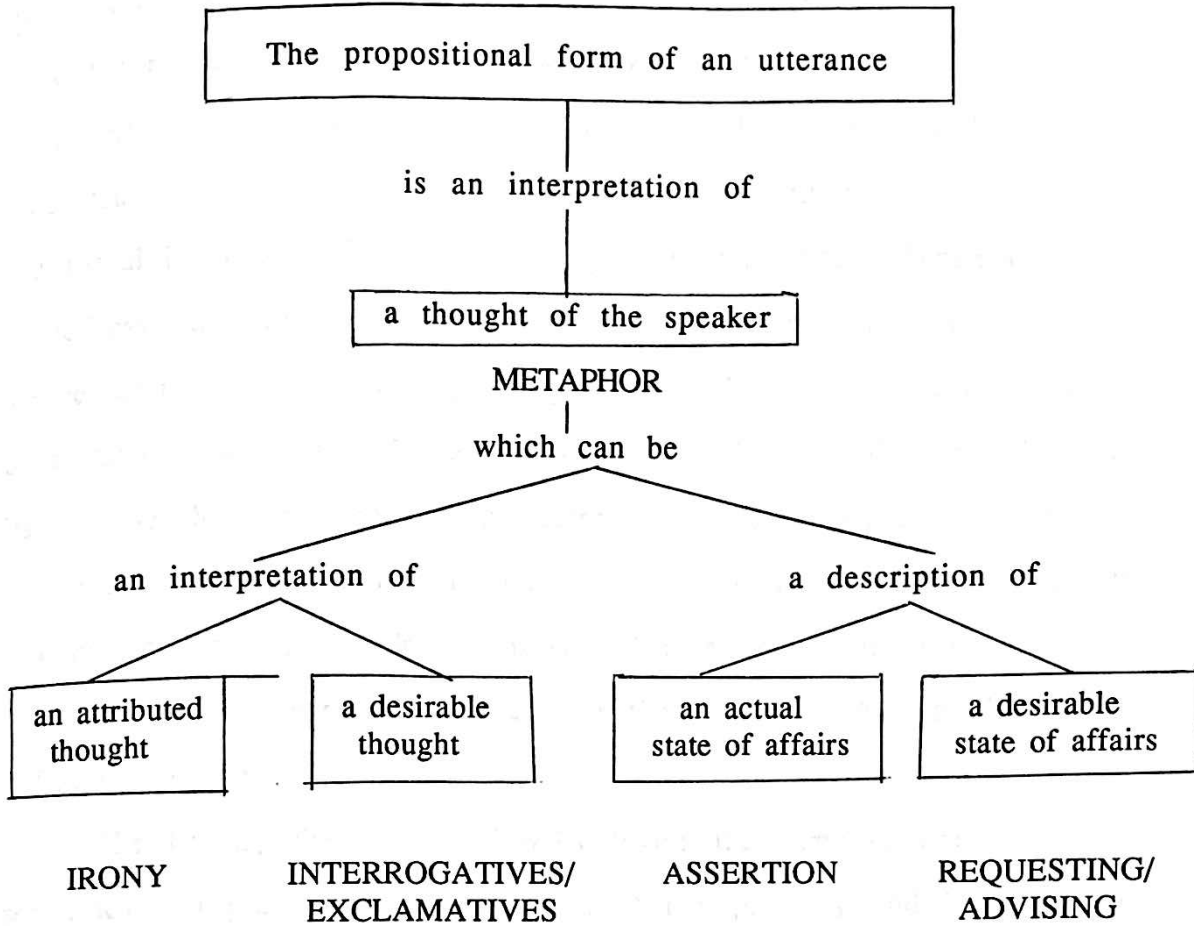
romantic tradition of metaphor see the interpretation of a novel metaphor as creative as the invention of it. Winifred Nowotny imagined that metaphor requires a response much like a play requires a response from its audience. The reader/listener must provide an imaginative "completion" from within his or her personal experience (Hawkes 1980: 72).

Adrian Pilkington believes that Sperber and Wilson's Relevance theory holds great promise for the field of literary pragmatics. He elaborates on metaphor in Relevance terms in his essay "Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective." Metaphors belong on a literalness-looseness continuum. Whereas Grice and Searle propose that metaphors are first processed literally and then decoded by inference, the relevance theory does not require "a rule or principle to operate on an initial literal interpretation" (Pilkington 1991: 55). The listener bypasses the "fallback" step as Lakoff and Turner would put it, by simply construing the propositional form of the speaker's thought, which resembles but is not necessarily reproduced by the speaker's utterance.

Levinson asked for cognitive psychology's contribution to metaphor, and he got it in Relevance theory, but this apparently was not what he was looking for. In his review article, he criticizes it for being simplistic, not a data-driven theory, founded on a shaky assumptions about human cognition, and, in short, "too ambitious and globally reductive" (Levinson 1989: 456). He finds their coverage of tropes too short to be of any value; Sperber and Wilson raise more questions rather than respond to already-existing objections (461). Grice is also skeptical about his maxims being conflated into one. In his opinion, a listener cannot judge whether he has too much or too little information

(quantity) unless he knows a focus of relevance to which the information should relate. But neither can relevance stand alone; the notion of relevance should not be severed from "the specification of some particular direction of relevance" (Grice 1989: 372).

In my humble opinion, the Relevance theory as applied to tropes is suspect for the very reason that similar tropes such as irony and metaphor are interpreted by different processes. "[M]etaphor involves an interpretive relation between the propositional form of an utterance and the thought it represents; irony involves an interpretive relation between the speaker's thought and attributed thoughts or utterances...." (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 230). Sperber and Wilson separate irony from metaphor in their schema, but lump irony together with assertion, requesting and advising, and especially with interrogatives and exclamatives, as depicted by the diagram below (232):



This seems odd in the light that Grice has considered metaphor, irony, meiosis, and hyperbole as instances of the exploitation of the same maxim of quality. For Beardsley, Levinson, Searle, and others, metaphor and irony are so similar that the difficulty, and the responsibility of pragmatics, lies in finding a means of distinguishing them. Even outside the realm of pragmatics, irony and metaphor are traditionally considered fellow members of the category of tropes. In view of everyone else's classification, Sperber and Wilson's seems arbitrary and unnatural.

The Relevance theory has some redeeming qualities besides its "charming hubris" (Levinson 1989: 457). It provides, especially in Pilkington's formulation, a speculative answer to Jerry Morgan's ultimate

question about metaphor use: "Why bother?" There must be some benefit for speaking in obtuse statements with the risk that your interlocutor will not understand the metaphor, i.e., not be able to reconstruct the speaker's intention in making the utterance. Why not use literal language? What is the purpose of metaphor? Searle's failure to address these questions constitutes a flaw in his system, because "until we get at the question of why metaphor is used, I doubt that we will ever understand what it is" (Morgan 1979: 147). Metaphor does not have as its purpose the same kind of indirectness as that of indirect speech acts; nor is its goal the pleasure of puzzle solving. Is metaphor favored for its affective power, that is, does it possess "some emotional or evaluative aspects"? (146). Searle did not address the issue, and Morgan has no definite answers.

The literary theorist Stambovsky levels the same charge to semantics and pragmatics: "[T]heories of metaphor by and large fail to elucidate the *how* of literary metaphor in such a way as to reveal the motive for metaphor" (Stambovsky 1988: 3). Why do artists instinctively turn to metaphor for its "unique communicative power" (ibid)? Pilkington believes that Relevance theory holds the answer. The wide range of possible contextual effects is responsible for the unique communicative power of metaphor. The wider the array of potential implicatures, and the more responsibility the hearer has, the more poetic the effect (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 236). "Beauty" and "surprise" arise from metaphors that successfully introduce many divergent, weak implicatures (237). Because no two people have the exact same cognitive environment, the same metaphor will have different contextual effects on different people. This explains the variety of interpretations

for one metaphor (especially in poetry). There is no cut-off point at which someone can claim that a certain number of implicatures are communicated and no more, because one implication leads to another as it reacts with old assumptions. The richness of metaphor arises from the "range and the indeterminateness and shared responsibility of the implicatures" (Pilkington 1991: 56-7).

In conclusion, the Relevance theory, a hybrid of the classical and the romantic views of metaphor, is the only theory that dares to answer the question, "Why bother?" Perhaps the most adequate explanation of metaphor is one which, like Levinson's, steers away from the extremes of classical thought as well as from the extremes of the blurry romantic conception of metaphor, and acknowledges that metaphor theory should be tackled by the collaborative efforts of two fields, pragmatics and cognitive psychology. If we succeed in understanding the processes of metaphor identification and interpretation, we will succeed in understanding more of the labyrinthine human mind. One recalls John Middleton Murry's Countries of the Mind:

Metaphor is as ultimate as speech itself, and speech is as ultimate as thought. If we try to penetrate them beyond a certain point, we find ourselves questioning the very faculty and instrument with which we are trying to penetrate them. (Hawkes 1980: 67)

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