

An Integrated Framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis and Multi-Level View with an Application to Metaphors for the Vietnam War

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Abstract:

Since Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) was introduced, methods of studying conceptual metaphor have kept improving to respond to methodological criticisms. Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) proposed by Charteris-Black (2004) has been considered as a “thought-provoking contribution” to metaphor analysis (Deignan, 2005) when approaching metaphor from discourse perspective and comprehensively interpreting metaphor from four aspects (semantic, cognitive, pragmatic, and critical). CMA is originally applied to one conceptual level in metaphor – domain. However, this paper argues that CMA can be exploited at four conceptual levels in Multi-level View of conceptual metaphor (Kövecses, 2017) - image schema, domain, frame, and mental space. The combined framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis – CMA (Jonathan Charteris-Black, 2004) and Multi-level View of conceptual metaphor – MLV (Kövecses, 2017) can gain deeper insights into ideologies motivating metaphorical concepts for the Vietnam war as well as elucidate the conceptual structure of metaphor via the four levels. Hence, this combination fills the gap of lacking a framework with optimal balance of semantic, pragmatic, cognitive and critical dimensions. It also features the intriguing relationship between ideologies and conceptual structure, i.e., ideologies are embedded in all the four conceptual levels and systematically develop with increasing specificity from image schema to domain, frame and mental space. The focus of this paper is on our argument for an integrated framework of conceptual metaphor and the newspaper articles written by American war correspondents during the Vietnam war are used for illustration of how the integrated framework can help us better understand the conceptual metaphors in the articles.

Keywords:

Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Critical Metaphor Analysis, Multi-level View of conceptual metaphor, the Vietnam War.