

The legacy of Primary Metaphor Theory: What to take home and what to build on

KJ Nabeshima (spiralcricket@gmail.com) Kansai University

Since the beginning of the theory (Grady, Taub, and Morgan 1996, Grady 1997ab), the idea of Primary Metaphor (e.g. Anger Is Heat, More Is Up, Difficult Is Heavy, Functional Is Erect; PM, hereafter) has largely been welcome and accepted (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Goldberg p.c.; Gibbs 2018).

However, how precisely PM theory works and what it predicts may not be so clear: For example, we do not seem to know the followings.

- 1) How do we distinguish PMs from non-PMs.
- 2) Is it a two-layer system with primary level and compound level or a multi-layer system?

In this paper, I will take up Grady (1997ab) and his papers after (Grady 1999, 2005), and claim (1) and (2).

- (1) Grady's original idea is presented with a two-layer system, but does not exclude a multi-layer system.
- (2) A multi-layer system fits the data.

I will show several examples to support (2). Examples from Event Structure Metaphors (ESMs, Lakoff 1993) show the possibility of multiple compositions. ESMs consist of independent components such as (3).

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| (3) a. States Are Locations | b. Changes Are Motions | c. Causes Are Forces |
| d. Purposes Are Destinations | e. Difficulty Is Heavy | f. Relationship Is a Vehicle |

(3a)~(3f) can be thought of as independent primary metaphors and they form the basis for Love/Life Is a Journey metaphor. If that is the case, a composition of more than two primary metaphors should be allowed. Another example is (4).

- (4) She deliberately sowed the seeds of dark and thorny flowers, rather than brightly colored ones.

In (4), it is known from the context that the plant represents emotions metaphorically. Here, Emotion Is Plant, Causes Are Forces, and Bad Is Dark are at least needed. These results seem to support my claim (2). In addition to (1) and (2), the nature of composition and decomposition, the definition of primary metaphors, and the need for the concept of instantiation will be discussed.

Selected Bibliography

- Grady, J. (1997) "THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS revisited." *Cognitive Linguistics* 8-4, 267-290.
- Yu, N. (2015) Metaphorical Character of Moral Cognition: A Comparative and Decompositional Analysis. *Metaphor and Symbol* Volume 30, Issue 3 163-183.