

# Metaphor

*Embodied Cognition and Discourse*

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*Edited by*

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“Bulldozer” and “bull in a china shop” make very little sense without activating a story about the actions or behavior of the vehicle and mapping it onto a story about the topic. Metaphors range in a continuum between these extremes: The potential of some ordinary metaphors to activate metaphorical stories, the stories they activate, and the factors that influence the degree to which particular individuals experience these stories should be an integral part of any theory of metaphor use and comprehension.

It has also been emphasized that story metaphors – both in text and in visual images – are often embedded in specialized cultural knowledge. As a result, different members of an audience may process these metaphors in very different ways. Detailed research on the interaction of cultural knowledge with metaphorical stories can thus contribute both to our understanding of language and to our understanding of the discourse in which the metaphorical stories appear. This finding greatly expands the importance and enriches the meaning of “context” in Context-Limited Simulation Theory.

Finally, most of the experimental research on metaphor comprehension has been carried out with simple, usually idiomatic and decontextualized metaphors. The kind of novel and complex metaphorical expressions Steen calls “deliberate” metaphors, including metaphorical stories and story metaphors, may provide a much more fruitful (if also methodologically more challenging) area for future research. In this respect, the possible role of metaphorical stories and transportation into the story world in the comprehension of ordinary metaphors also bears examination.

It is doubtlessly the case that the role of context in limiting (or facilitating) simulations is more complex than it previously seemed and that it may work differently with different types of metaphors. Future research should thus examine the effects of different aspects of context on the comprehension of different types of metaphor.

#### NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- \* The author is deeply indebted to Beate Hampe for many useful suggestions, edits, and words of advice that have contributed greatly to the final form of this chapter. Mistakes and omissions are entirely the responsibility of the author.
- 1 Barack Obama, “A more perfect union.” Speech given at the Constitution Center, Philadelphia, PA, March 18, 2008, passages from paragraphs 3 and 16. A recording of the speech is available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWe7wTVbLUU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWe7wTVbLUU) (uploaded March 18, 2008).
- 2 J. M. Nash, “The new science of Alzheimer’s,” *TIME*, July 17, 2000.
- 3 Tony Blair, “A fight we have to win.” Address given to the annual conference of the Labour Party, Gateshead, UK, 2005.
- 4 The artist’s cartoons are published online at: [www.jamiolsworld.com/](http://www.jamiolsworld.com/).

## 13 From Image Schema to Metaphor in Discourse: The FORCE Schemas in Animation Films

*Charles J. Forceville\**

### Chapter Preview

Moving toward a place and manipulating objects are probably the most important manifestations of goal-oriented actions. Both SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION and MAKING AN OBJECT are thus profoundly embodied source domains for the metaphorical conceptualization of PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY. Of these metaphors, only the former – popularly known as LIFE IS A JOURNEY – has received a large amount of attention. Focusing especially on the role of the various FORCE schemas (Johnson 1987), this chapter investigates metaphors from both source domains in three short animation films. Animation provides a perfect medium to express these metaphors in a condensed, aesthetically appealing, and emotion-generating manner. In line with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, it is argued that viewers’ understanding and appreciation of these metaphors critically depends on image schemas. Stressing that the body is the beginning but not the end of meaning-making, the chapter also shows that this understanding cannot be reduced to them and that cultural and contextual factors qualify and fine-tune embodied schemas.

### 1 Introduction

A key claim of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is “the centrality of embodiment as *the* mechanism of meaningfulness” (Lakoff 2014: 12, emphasis in original). Conceptual metaphors draw on source domains consisting of schemas that fundamentally depend on the body’s ways of negotiating the world. This crucially implies that such image schemas are not primarily propositional structures. Rather, they are patterns of bodily engagement, feeling, experience, and action. It is precisely because they are not reducible to propositions that image schemas help theorize how we understand a broad range of multimodal and non-linguistic discourses, such as cartoons, comics, advertisements, and films. In turn, studying non-verbal and multimodal



instantiations of image schemas will alert us to dimensions of such schemas that may not be so prominently present – or even absent – in language.

To demonstrate how image schemas play a role in non-verbal and multimodal discourse, I will in this chapter examine FORCE schemas in three short animation films. This is an excellent way to study these schemas *in action*, and thus take seriously Mark Johnson's (2005: 28) warning that an exclusive focus on the *structural* dimensions of image schemas may prevent scholars from "captur[ing] fully the qualities that are the flesh and blood of our experience."

Forces play a central role in physical events and actions, and thus in movement. Moving toward a place and manipulating objects are among the essential bodily actions undertaken to achieve goals. Unsurprisingly, therefore, SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION, and MAKING AN OBJECT, both of which involve the application of various forces, are often used as source domains that are metaphorically coupled with the target domain of achieving goals. Both LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION (popularly known as the JOURNEY metaphor) and LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS MAKING AN OBJECT are thus profoundly embodied and widespread metaphors.

While the MAKING AN OBJECT metaphor has to my knowledge hitherto not been systematically investigated within CMT, the JOURNEY metaphor has been studied not only in its verbal manifestations (e.g. Katz & Taylor 2008; Ritchie 2008b; see also Deignan, *this volume*) but also in live-action film (e.g. Forceville 2006b, 2011; Yu 2009). More recently, I have investigated this metaphor in animation film (e.g. Forceville 2013, 2016; Forceville & Jeulink 2011).<sup>1</sup> Short animation films are a perfect medium to express the JOURNEY metaphor in a condensed, aesthetically appealing, and affect-eliciting manner. That many such films make no or minimal use of language supports the claim that viewers' understanding and appreciation of them is first of all triggered by deep-rooted, embodied image schemas and metaphors. The goals of this chapter are to demonstrate

- (i) how narrative animation films crucially depend on the various literal uses of FORCE schemas;
- (ii) how the medium of animation can draw on FORCE schemas to present primary as well as complex metaphors;
- (iii) that meaning-making requires complementing embodied cognition with many aspects of cultural knowledge;
- (iv) that a better understanding of image schemas, and of "embodied cognition" more generally, can much benefit from researching the multimodal discourse medium of animation films.

## 2 Conventional Metaphors, Primary Metaphors, and Image Schemas

Grady (1997a,b) has argued that many of the structural, conventional metaphors analyzed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are in fact not as basic as they have been presented to be but constitute combinations of more fundamental metaphors, which he calls "primary metaphors." In Grady's model, the complex metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS can be further decomposed into the primary metaphors ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT in order to account for the pertinent mappings. In primary metaphors, the distinction between target and source is not, as in "classic" CMT, one between abstraction or complexity versus concreteness; target and source in a primary metaphor are equally rooted in everyday basic experience. Evans and Green (2006: 305, emphasis in original) sum up the key distinction between target and source in Grady's theory as follows: "primary source concepts relate to sensory perceptual experience, while primary target concepts relate to subjective responses to sensory-perceptual experience." They go on to explain that since human beings have more immediate conscious access to sensory-perceptual experiences than to subjective (judgmental, evaluative) experiences, primary metaphors help human beings come to grips with the latter in terms of the former. In the specific situation in which they occur, the target and source in primary metaphors thus cannot be reversed. Although frequent co-occurrence of target and source may cause activity in the part of the brain associated with the source even upon being confronted with the target alone (Lakoff 2014: 8), the mapping of pertinent features and structures among features goes unidirectionally from source to target, in non-verbal metaphors no less than in verbal ones (e.g. Carroll 1996, for more discussion, see also Forceville 2002; for further discussion of this, see *this volume*: Grady & Ascoli; Shen & Porat).

Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 50–54) provide a non-exhaustive list of primary metaphors, including AFFECTION IS WARMTH, IMPORTANT IS BIG, HAPPY IS UP, DIFFICULTIES ARE BURDENS, CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS, SIMILARITY IS CLOSENESS, and STATES ARE LOCATIONS.<sup>2</sup> "Since they arise directly from experience – and in many cases, from the bodily experience of the world shared by all humans – [primary metaphors] are more likely to be universal than the more complex metaphors which are combinations of them" (Grady 1997b: 288). Grady's formulation is rightly cautious, though, since even primary metaphors are not necessarily culture-free. While the human body's natural tendency to move forward (essential in the JOURNEY metaphor) may seem universal and thus completely "natural," once we take *manner* of movement into account, we may become aware of cultural differences. For instance, a



Chinese woman whose feet have been bound to create “lotus feet” will definitely walk in a very different way from a barefoot Indian, or an Inuit in heavy boots slugging through snow (see also Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013; *this volume*: Casasanto; Cuccio; Winter & Matlock).

Image schemas, such as PATH, BOUNDED REGION, UP/DOWN, NEAR/FAR, CONTACT, and the FORCE schemas, are directly meaningful, preconceptual structures rooted in the body’s movement through space, perceptual interaction with the environment, and the handling of objects (Hampe 2005b; Evans & Green 2006). Image schemas occur as embodied source domains in primary metaphors, which in turn combine and thus help structure complex metaphors. It is at the level of these complex metaphors that the embodied part is complemented by accultured features, and it is particularly these latter that are “mapped” (Kövecses 2010b: 7) or “projected” (Black 1993: 28) from source onto target domain. This mapping/projecting process constitutes the interpretation of the metaphor. A metaphor, however, is an incredibly complex phenomenon. As Gibbs (2012: 353) points out, “no single linguistic, conceptual, or cultural fact shapes metaphor performance, and each of these factors should be studied collectively in terms of the interactive effects on the structure and use of metaphoric language and thought.” Moreover, metaphors in turn interact with numerous other dimensions of cultural meaning to achieve their effects.

### 3 The FORCE Schemas according to Johnson (1987)

The FORCE schemas are central to the way human beings conceive of events – that is, to the “event structure metaphor” (Lakoff 1993). Basically, the event structure metaphor draws on the closely related primary metaphors CHANGE IS MOTION and CAUSES ARE FORCES. Since ACHIEVING GOALS and MAKING OBJECTS necessarily involve change from one state to another, the FORCE schemas unsurprisingly play a central role in the complex metaphors LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION and LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS MAKING AN OBJECT.

Johnson (1987: 42–48) draws attention to the rich potential of the FORCE schemas as source domains that help shape and structure abstract target domains. Johnson emphasizes the need to explore more concretely how forceful bodily experiences give rise to image-schematic structures that can be transformed, extended, and elaborated into domains of meaning that are not strictly tied to the body, such as social interactions, rational argument, and moral deliberation. Without claiming to be exhaustive, he points out the following “pre-conceptual gestalts” for FORCE: (i) we experience forces through interaction, since they affect us or something in our perceptual field;

(ii) they involve movement through space in a certain direction; (iii) a thing subject to a force tends to follow a specific path of motion; (iv) forces have origins and, when under the influence of agents, can be directed to certain targets; (v) forces have degrees of intensity; (vi) they make themselves felt according to a certain structure, or “sequence of causality.” Johnson further outlines seven types of common FORCE schemas. While retaining their original labels, I provide a slightly broadened description here:

- a. **COMPULSION.** An agent or entity is pushed into a certain direction by external forces that can be human as well as non-human.
- b. **BLOCKAGE.** An agent or entity is prevented from moving along the envisaged path by an obstacle, which must be negotiated in one way or another, e.g. by passing round it, climbing over it, or destroying it.
- c. **COUNTERFORCE.** An agent or entity meets with a force that exerts pressure on him/it, hindering movement into the planned direction.
- d. **DIVERSION.** An agent or entity collides with a force that causes him/it to deviate from the intended course.
- e. **REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT.** A (potential) barrier or blockage is eliminated, allowing for unhindered movement to an agent or entity.
- f. **ENABLEMENT.** Some sort of internal or external force provides the means for the agent or entity to move into the desired direction.
- g. **ATTRACTION.** An agent or entity is physically drawn toward an object or place.

Johnson (1987: 48) acknowledges that forces have yet other dimensions. “A more complete list, for example, would have to distinguish among schemata for IMPACT versus CONTINUOUS STEADY FORCE versus INTERMITTENT FORCE versus DIMINISHING FORCE and so on.”

### 4 Literal FORCE in a Bugs Bunny Animation

In this section, I will discuss the various FORCE schemas as they occur *literally* – although in exaggerated form – in a mainstream US animation film (usually called a “cartoon”).<sup>3</sup>

*Summary of the story:* Bugs Bunny is hunted by Elmer Fudd. When Bugs is trapped and about to be shot, Elmer suddenly gets a telegram telling him his Uncle Louie leaves him 3 million dollars – but only on the condition that he does not hurt any animals, “especially rabbits.” Bugs subsequently takes advantage of the situation by taxing Elmer’s hospitality.

Here are some examples of the forces identified by Johnson. At the start of the film, Bugs has to negotiate the obstacle of a bush and, barging through it in order to escape the hunting dogs that are pursuing him, is momentarily deflected from his track, losing his balance (Figure 13.1: DIVERSION).



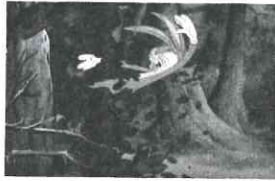


Figure 13.1 DIVERSION. Bugs tumbles from screen left through a bush.



Figure 13.2 BLOCKAGE. Bugs is trapped in a "dead end."



Figure 13.3 ATTRACTION. Bugs jumps up and down, falling back to earth.

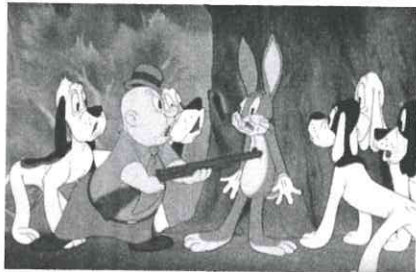


Figure 13.4 COMPULSION. Bugs is pinned against a tree by Elmer's gun.



Figure 13.5 REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT. Elmer opens a door.

Shortly afterwards he runs into a natural "dead end" (Figure 13.2: BLOCKAGE). Jumping up and down as if he himself were one of them to deceive Elmer's dogs, Bugs lands on the ground each time, being subject to the law of gravity (Figure 13.3: ATTRACTION).

Elmer, having caught up with the dogs, pins Bugs against a tree with his gun (Figure 13.4: COMPULSION). When Elmer enters his house, he opens the door (Figure 13.5: REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT).

Irritated by Bug's shameless behavior, Elmer forgets himself and sticks his gun through the bath curtains where Bugs is having a shower, against the latter's body. Bugs responds by plonking the bath plug in the barrel, causing Elmer to jump backwards (Figure 13.6: COUNTERFORCE). When Bugs simulates he is going to die after being chucked out of the house, Elmer gets nervous he may lose Uncle Louie's inheritance, and Bugs finds himself luxuriously carried back into the house by Elmer (Figure 13.7: ENABLEMENT).

Several more examples of the various forces identified by Johnson could have been given from this eight-minute cartoon. In fact, these forces are completely routine in numerous cartoons of the golden age of Hollywood short animation films with heroes such as Bugs Bunny, Daphne Duck, the Roadrunner, Woody Woodpecker, Tom and Jerry, Popeye, and many others.

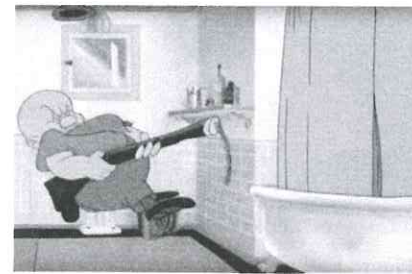


Figure 13.6 COUNTERFORCE. After Bugs (behind the curtains) has plonked a bath plug in Elmer's gun, Elmer falls backwards.

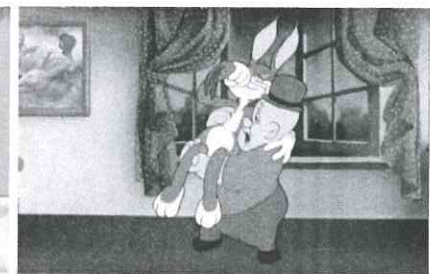


Figure 13.7 ENABLEMENT. Elmer carries Bugs back into the house.

Chasing, trying to get hold of a desired person or object, and trying to avoid an unpleasant person or object are standard ingredients in the visual gags, reinforced by sound effects, that dominate these shorts. My point is that the forces are here primarily *literal*, and viewing their various manifestations is intrinsically pleasurable and spectacular.

Of course, forces play a role in the characters' attempts to achieve goals, but inasmuch as they are to be understood metaphorically, they partake in primary metaphors rather than in complex ones: For one thing, the purpose is to be formulated as SHORT-TERM rather than as LONG-TERM. This claim is supported by the fact that the cartoon consists of a series of more or less independent scenes, whose order is, moreover, to some extent arbitrary. For another, the PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY in each case exemplifies the "co-occurrence" (Gibbs 2014b: 170) or even "conflation" (Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 48) of target and source. That is, the FORCE schemas permit no, or only minimal, metaphorical mappings on the PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY domain. It is presumably for this reason that this type of cartoon is so attractive for children: What you see is what you get.

## 5 Metaphorical FORCES in Art Animation: *Death and the Mother*

Let me now consider manifestations of the FORCE schemas in a much more complex animation film, Ruth Lingford's *Death and the Mother*, in black and white, with some red highlights, based on a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen.<sup>4</sup>

*Summary of the story:* Death approaches a house where a mother tends to her sickly daughter. He transforms himself into an old man and asks her for food. When the mother turns to her furnace, he steals the baby from its cradle. The mother is desperate and frantically tries to find Death to retrieve her



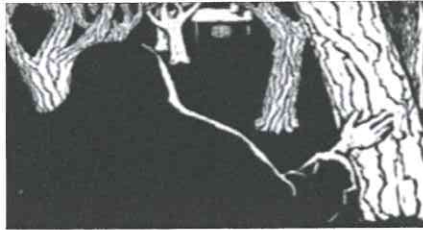


Figure 13.8 **ENABLEMENT**. Death walks (i.e. “self-propels”) toward the house of the mother and child.

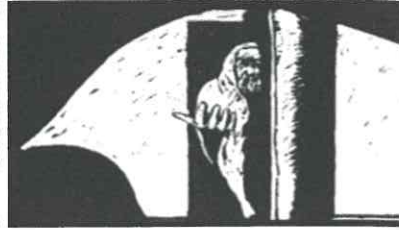


Figure 13.9 **REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT**. Death opens the door himself.

daughter from his clutches. She continually loses her way but is helped by various agents guiding her. Once she has found Death, she attempts to wrench her child from his arms. Then Death shows the mother, in a magic mirror, the unhappiness that lies in store for her daughter. The mother cries and, now definitively, surrenders her child to Death.

Here is an analysis of the way in which physical forces help propel the narrative both literally and metaphorically. Black-cloaked Death walks toward the house (Figure 13.8) where the mother nurses her child. His is “self-propelled motion” (**ENABLEMENT** by his own muscle power), but we know from myths and fairy tales that Death has a desire to take people with him, so we could also say that Death is here drawn to the sickly child, a candidate to be seized away from life by him (**ATTRACTION**). If we recruit this folk knowledge, we interpret **FORCE** not just literally but also as a source domain in a metaphor that would run something like **DESIRE IS PHYSICAL ATTRACTION** (or **COMPULSION IS A COMPELLING FORCE**, Grady 1997a: 287). Transformed into an old man, Death subsequently opens the door of the house (Figure 13.9: **REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT**). Tellingly, he obtains access to the house without knocking: Death is an uninvited guest. This could be construed metaphorically as **DEATH INTENT ON FETCHING SOMEONE IS AN UNBLOCKABLE FORCE**.

When the mother has gone out into the cold darkness outside, inasmuch as she uses her own muscle power to move forward, this is another instance of **ENABLEMENT**. However, she also meets several “agents” whose help she invokes. In most cases she needs to make a sacrifice to that agent before she is guided into the right direction. These sacrifices take the form of a forceful violation of her body. When the mother meets a thorny rose bush, she needs to allow the hand-like thorns to scratch her breasts (Figure 13.10), drawing blood to make the roses flower. When she arrives at a frozen lake, the ice is too thin to hold her (**BLOCKAGE**), exemplifying both literal obstruction and the primary metaphor **DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION**.



Figure 13.10 The mother lets hand-like thorns of a rose bush scratch her breasts, drawing blood (the latter depicted in red in the original).

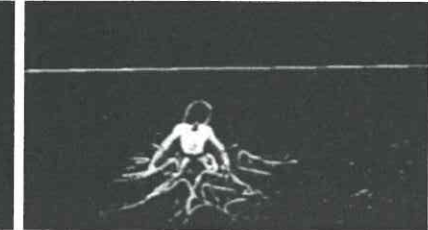


Figure 13.11 **ENABLEMENT**. The lake magically sweeps the mother across to the other side.

The lake demands her to tear out her eyes and surrender them in return for melting its ice and sweeping her across the waves to the other side (Figure 13.11: **ENABLEMENT**). There another sacrifice is required of her: The price for being told the way by an old hag is donating her long hair (Figure 13.12).

Of course, we can consider the three bodily violations to which the mother voluntarily submits as purely literal ones: blood-drawing scratches on her breast, tearing out of her eyes, removing of her hair. However, the context in which these forceful actions occur are non-realistic: The blood allows the bush to flourish into roses that outline the path the mother is to take; the waves of the water take her up and in a swift, magic, and sweeping movement transport her to the other side; and the hair, finally, is not cut with scissors but is drawn off the woman's head in one smooth moment, as if it were a wig. I propose that, based on a primary metaphor that can be formulated as **PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN IS PHYSICAL PAIN** (Lakoff 2014: 7), these repeated instances of physical suffering – all forceful acts of violation – *in this specific story* give rise to a more complex metaphor that could be rendered as **SELF-SACRIFICIAL LOVE IS FORCEFUL SELF-MUTILATION**.

The hag takes the now blind mother by the hand and leads her toward Death (**ENABLEMENT/ATTRACTION**). When they arrive at a rocky porch, she pushes the mother through it (Figure 13.13: **ENABLEMENT/COMPULSION**). Again, this act of pushing triggers non-literal interpretations: The hag is willing to help the mother only so far; actually meeting Death is a dangerous enterprise that the mother will have to undertake alone. The blind mother feels her way through the dark and finds Death, who holds her child. They wrestle over the child (Figure 13.14: **COUNTERFORCE**). After Death has given the mother's eyes back to her and shown her the child's tragic future, the mother gives her child back to Death and pushes him away (Figure 13.15: **COMPULSION**), thereby metaphorically showing that she now, finally, accepts her daughter's life will end.





Figure 13.12 An old hag takes the mother's hair in return for giving her directions.



Figure 13.13 **COMPULSION/ENABLEMENT**. The hag pushes the mother through the rocky porch into the realm of death.



Figure 13.14 **COUNTERFORCE**. Death and the (blind) mother wrestle over the child.



Figure 13.15 **COMPULSION**. The mother has surrendered her daughter to Death and pushes him away.

## 6 Metaphorical FORCE in Art Animation: *The Hand/Ruka*

While *Death and the Mother* portrays a journey, *The Hand* takes place in one location.<sup>5</sup> This has consequences for the kinds of forces that propel its plot. In this section, I will consider both the physical and the metaphorical forces that can be identified in the story.

*Summary of the story:* A potter wants to make simple clay pots for his plants. However, an enigmatic giant Hand, whose owner is not visible on-screen, continually invades his room and changes the clay into an image of itself, a hand, indicating that it wants the potter to make a sculpture of the Hand instead of making pots. The potter refuses, but the Hand keeps raiding his room as well as haunting his thoughts. When the potter remains stubborn, the Hand locks him up in a cage and forces him to sculpt a hand. The potter gets depressed and dies. The Hand provides him with some sort of state burial, as if the potter had always voluntarily celebrated the Hand.

The transformation of clay into a pot, or a hand, requires the exercise of literal pressure on the clay (Figures 13.16, 13.19). We could categorize this exertion of



Figure 13.16 **COMPULSION**. The potter exerts pressure to make a clay pot.



Figure 13.17 **COUNTERFORCE**. The Hand is prevented from entering by the door (**BLOCKAGE**); the potter pushes against it to keep the Hand out (**COUNTERFORCE**).

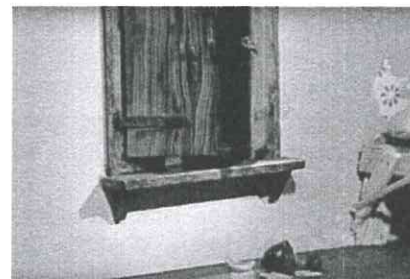


Figure 13.18 **REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT/COMPULSION**. The Hand pushes open one of the shutters, causing a potted plant to fall from the window ledge.

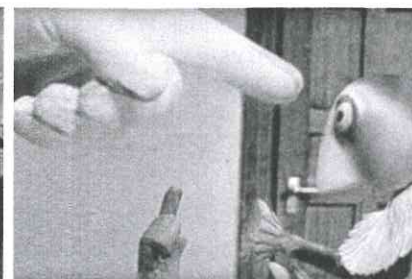


Figure 13.19 **COMPULSION**. The Hand shows the potter that he should create a hand.

physical force to transform the clay into a pot and a hand, respectively, as compulsion. When the Hand attempts to come in through the front door, the potter tries to push it closed (Figure 13.17: **BLOCKAGE**, **COUNTERFORCE**), but the Hand bursts open one of the shutters to gain entrance (Figure 13.18: **REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT/COMPULSION**). When its various seduction strategies have no effect on the potter, the Hand (now tellingly in a *dark* glove) sets him before his wheel and draws his hand toward the clay that is to be transformed into a hand (Figure 13.20: **ATTRACTION**). When even that does not help, the Hand fits the potter's hands into strings, effectively turning him into a marionette, puts him into a cage, and manipulates the craftsman's hands into sculpting a hand (Figure 13.21).

As in *Death and the Mother*, there are strong suggestions that we should interpret the various forces not just literally, but also metaphorically. It is vital





Figure 13.20 COMPULSION. The Hand draws the potter's hand toward the clay that he wants made into a hand.



Figure 13.21 The Hand has put strings on the potter's hands to manipulate him into making a hand sculpture (DIVERSION, COMPULSION) in a cage.

to emphasize that the time and place of production of this animation film favor a reading of the various FORCES in terms of the primary metaphors SOCIAL CONTROL IS PHYSICAL CONTROL, BEING IN CONTROL IS BEING ABOVE (Grady 1997a: 290), and especially Lakoff's (2014: 3) CONTROL IS CONTROL BY THE HANDS (for discussion of the distinction and interaction between metaphor and metonymy, see *this volume*: Littlemore; Mittelberg; Ruiz de Mendoza).

In terms of genre, *The Hand* is a high-culture art animation, aimed at adults, and the production context is Czechoslovakia in the 1960s. While to an uninformed contemporary viewer the Hand could be a metonym for any repressive agency, awareness of the historical context makes it difficult to see the Hand as anything else than the personification of the Communist regime of the period. Consequently, the various forces the Hand exercises on the potter are to be understood as metaphorically mapping onto the non-physical pressure that a totalitarian power inflicts on its people. Thus, the brute ways in which the Hand literally assaults the potter's house signify the manners in which it – and by extension the Communist authorities – violates the potter's privacy and freedom. Similarly, the literal pushing and dragging and marionetting of the potter by the Hand metaphorically cue the dogmatic rules that the potter is to obey in his creative work. If we take the potter to symbolize the artist, as we are undoubtedly invited to do, the metaphorical projections from the FORCE domain become even more focused.

## 7 Combining the FORCE Schemas with Other Concepts to Create Metaphorical Meaning

It is essential that, as theorists, we do not burden the various FORCE schemas – or any other image schemas, for that matter – too heavily with intrinsic

meaning. Image schemas are profoundly embodied building blocks for meaning-making. They have minimal structure. *In a given context* the basic meanings they have can be, and usually are, enormously enriched, for instance by being deployed as source domains in complex metaphors. As Johnson (1987: 169) points out, “creativity is possible, in part, because imagination gives us image-schematic structures and metaphoric and metonymic patterns by which we can extend and elaborate those schemata.” The precise meaning of metaphors, that is, is often dependent on a specific discourse context and can, moreover, develop within that context (Cameron et al. 2009; *this volume*: Deignan; Jensen; Müller; Semino & Demjén).

In my analyses of *Death and the Mother* and *The Hand*, I have suggested several ways in which forces can be interpreted metaphorically. But awareness of these FORCE metaphors alone is by no means sufficient to do justice to the (potential) meanings of these sophisticated art animation films. Indeed, it is because the various forces and the metaphors they trigger interact with other salient metaphorical and cultural information templates that we are invited to construe the FORCE schemas metaphorically in the first place. In the following, I will briefly discuss some of these kinds of information for the two art animations.

### 7.1 The JOURNEY and MAKING-AN-OBJECT Metaphors

In *Death and the Mother*, all the mother's relocations are motivated by her attempt to save her daughter from death and thus exemplify the metaphor LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION. Most of the non-literal meanings of the forces must be understood as part of this overarching, complex metaphor. The metaphor governs other events and objects as well. When the mother gets lost in the woods, we interpret this as her despair about not being able to achieve her goal, i.e. save her child. Similarly, the rocky porch (Figure 13.13) symbolically marks a liminal space, here a transition between the realms of life and death. In *The Hand*, many of the literal forces pertain, in one way or another, to the making of something, namely, a pot or a hand. This suggests the metaphor LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS MAKING AN OBJECT. It is within this metaphor that the distinction between the pots that the artist wants to make and the hands he is compelled to make obtains significance.

### 7.2 Personification

Personification is one of the most common forms of metaphor (e.g. Martínez et al. 2013). Personification can serve different purposes: It can turn abstract phenomena into embodied, live agents with the powers of choice and featuring



specific attributes and typical behaviors. Moreover, in animations, personification is a highly useful tool to *visualize* plot events, since “persons” undertake (self-enabled) actions. In *Death and the Mother*, the pertinent personification is not just that of death, but also that of the rose bush and of the lake. In *The Hand*, the essential personification, via metonymy, is that of the disconnected hand into the Hand of the dictatorial Communist authorities.

### 7.3 Other Image Schemas, Feeding into Conventionalized Metaphors

Among the image schemas that play a role in *Death and the Mother* are the LIGHT/DARK schema, giving rise to the primary metaphor(s) BAD/UNKNOWN/DANGEROUS IS DARK (Forceville & Renckens 2013; Winter 2014, *this volume*), as in the mother’s wandering in the wood, and the related KNOWING IS SEEING (Sweetser 1990), pertinent when the mother, by sacrificing her eyes, surrenders control to the personified lake – and later is given back her eyes by Death so that she can witness her daughter’s fate in the magic mirror. The BALANCE schema is closely tied to the FORCE schemas: BEING IN CONTROL IS BEING IN PHYSICAL BALANCE – and when the lake swirls the mother around in transporting her to the other side, the mother has completely relinquished her balance. The UP/DOWN image schema pair is notable, too. When the hag takes the mother by the hand, they go up a rocky road, its rising orientation presumably connoting the difficulty of the journey (DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION). By contrast, when the mother definitively relinquishes her daughter to Death, the latter descends a long flight of steps toward a river in the “underworld.” It is noteworthy, incidentally, that these two instances, while both drawing on the UP/DOWN schema, cue *different* conceptual metaphors, namely EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IS GOING UP versus DYING IS GOING DOWN. This is a healthy reminder that an image schema can be recruited to mean different things in different contexts (Hampe 2005d). A more culturally informed pertinent metaphor is A LIFETIME IS A YEAR, which equates death with winter.

In *The Hand* we probably understand the potter’s/artist’s house in terms of a CONTAINER that is continually invaded by the unwelcome Hand, recruiting the IN/OUT image schema pair. The CONTAINER schema plays a role in another way, too: The artist wants to make pots, which are containers that can accommodate, and facilitate the growth of, a variety of flowers, as a dream of the artist makes clear. In this respect they are completely unlike the hand sculptures, which are merely unimaginative copies of the relentless Hand. The pots thus acquire an ad hoc symbolical meaning: They literally help the growth of flowers, and metaphorically aid the flourishing of the artistic imagination. It is therefore all the more sad and telling that in his paranoia to keep out the

Hand, the artist nails wooden planks against his own cupboard – so that as a result of all this hammering, the potted plant that stands on top of it falls on his head, killing him and shattering to pieces. Ironically, the very act of fighting totalitarianism and censorship causes the artist to destroy his own art and actually leads to his death.

More generally, animation offers attractive opportunities for examining the “manner of motion” dimension of what Dodge and Lakoff (2005) propose to call the LOCOMOTION image schema. However many verbs a language may boast to convey this dimension (walk, run, jump, trudge, stroll, crawl . . .), it can be embodied in infinitely more ways in the medium of animated film.

### 7.4 Myths and Folk Knowledge

The two wordless art animation films (accompanied, however, by information in the musical and sonic modes) presuppose an enormous number of shared assumptions, myths, and beliefs to be recruited from what relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 38) calls the “cognitive environment” of its envisaged audience, i.e. from background frames that are mostly accessed automatically and subconsciously. A few shared assumptions of this type that are relevant to *Death and the Mother* and *The Hand*, respectively, are listed in (1) and (2).

- (1) “Personified death looks like a skeleton, often wearing a black cloak”; “It is rude to enter the house of somebody one does not know without knocking”; “Providing food for hungry strangers is a virtuous deed”; “Being out in the snow at night without warm clothing is lethally dangerous”; “There is no stronger love than the love of a mother for her child”; “Christ shed his blood to save the world”; “In medieval mythology, a pelican was believed to tear open its breast to feed blood to its young”; “*Red* symbolizes suffering”; “*Roses* symbolize love”; “Making sacrifices is often necessary to achieve one’s goal”; “Fairy tales feature creatures with magical powers”; “Many women consider their hair as essential to their attractiveness”; “Dying is crossing the river Lethe” . . .
- (2) “People making handstands and pirouettes tend to be in a happy mood”; “Plants need continual watering to grow”; “Bowing and taking off one’s hat is a sign of respect”; “Hands are the body parts that we use *par excellence* to manipulate (Latin *manus*: ‘hand’) the world around us”;<sup>6</sup> “People are afraid of agents that gain access to their homes via brutal force”; “Willfully destroying other people’s creations is cruel and intimidating”; “Artistic freedom is incompatible with repression and political interference” . . .

Note that not all viewers will (be able to) access all of these assumptions, myths, and beliefs. Indeed, it is precisely because, by definition, cognitive environments among viewers vary that any discourse will yield minor or major divergences in interpretation by different recipients. After all, as relevance



theory insists, relevance is always relevance to an individual (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 142–151).<sup>7</sup> That being said, a considerable number of these assumptions will nonetheless need to be drawn upon in conjunction with the FORCE schemas to lead to meaningful interpretations.

### 7.5 *The Style of the Films*

Although it is difficult to measure how exactly they affect the animations' interpretation, the stylistic choices made by their creators undoubtedly have an enormous impact on narratives and the metaphors used in them. Indeed, it is the style of a film (or any other type of narrative) that transforms what narratologists call the "fabula" – i.e. the chronological, cause-and-effect order of a plot, summarizable irrespective of medium – into a "story" or "syuzhet," the latter being the actual representation in a given medium (a novel, a film, a comics album, a dance performance, an opera, etc.) that the audience is presented with (Bal 2009; Bordwell & Thompson 2008).

The film scholar David Bordwell (1985: 53, emphasis in original) links the three dimensions as follows: "In the fiction film, narration is *the process whereby the film's syuzhet and style interact in the course of cueing and channeling the spectator's construction of the fabula.*" Without style, the audience of a story would be presented with only bare, propositional information. But, as Francisco Yus (2011: 147, emphasis added) rightly claims, "propositional *attitude* is essential in human communication." In short, style in films, and by extension in any metaphors that help structure them, is enormously influential in guiding audiences toward the presumably intended attitudinal and emotional responses toward fabula events. In film, stylistic choices pertain to camera angles, camera movements, framing, lighting, props, actors, and many others. In the animation films discussed, specific mention needs to be made of the technique: digital animation with a woodcut-engravings look for *Death and the Mother* and puppet animation for *The Hand* – rather than, for instance, claymation or sand animation or cut-out animation. This pertains, for instance, to the stark black-and-white contrasts in *Death* and to the colorful details of the artist's harlequin-like outfit, the flowers, and the Hand glove's change of color from white to black in *The Hand*; but also to the musical score and the sound effects as well as numerous other facets.

## 8 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have considered the FORCE schemas with reference to one mainstream and two art animation films. The schemas are expressed on a physical, literal level throughout all three. Johnson's (1987) seven various subtypes occur routinely.

In the Bugs Bunny cartoon, the FORCE schemas occur mainly as part of activities and events that pertain to survival, the fulfillment of ad hoc desires, and the avoidance of ad hoc unpleasant experiences. The FORCE schemas are used metaphorically only minimally, namely, in primary metaphors, if at all. By contrast, in the two art animations examined, viewers are emphatically invited to develop the FORCE schemas' straightforwardly literal meanings not just into primary metaphors but into complex metaphors. Specifically, the various forces identified eventually lead to the construal of the metaphors LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TOWARD A DESTINATION (*Death and the Mother*) and LONG-TERM PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS MAKING AN OBJECT (*The Hand*), respectively. Clearly, Johnson's claims about the metaphorical potential of the FORCE schemas in verbal expressions are no less valid for manifestations in the medium of animation – and these latter are commensurate with CMT's claim that "metaphor is primarily a matter of thought and action and only derivatively a matter of language" (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 153).

The analyses of the two art animations have also made clear that conceptual metaphors can occur both as primary and as complex metaphors, which seamlessly interact with each other. From a dynamic systems perspective, Gibbs and Santa Cruz (2012: 305) formulate it like this: "A dynamical view of human performance is applicable to understanding the temporal unfolding of conceptual metaphor experience, in which conceptual metaphors act as multiple attractors that the system moves toward and away from given its past history and present circumstances ... No single conceptual metaphor has complete control over how an utterance is interpreted."

While the various primary and complex metaphors identified in the two art animations may provide the skeleton for understanding these profound films, their "flesh and blood" (Johnson 2005: 28) comes from the way these metaphors function in interaction, not only with each other but also with numerous facets of folk knowledge pertaining to social conventions, symbols, rituals, myths, symbols, customs, style, and daily practices. As I have argued, metaphorical construal *always* takes place in a highly specific context: in *this* discourse, in *this* genre, in *this* medium, at *this* moment, in *this* place, issued by *this* creator, to *this* audience. While a metaphor creator presumably has a more or less specific audience in mind, and thus can make a more or less precise assessment of that audience's cognitive environment, by definition the audience, whether an individual or a group of individuals, brings (or fails to bring) its own cognitive environment to the interpretation of the metaphors – and every other meaningful element, for that matter. Since much of an audience's cognitive environment is determined by culture, cultural knowledge, habits, and myths always affect and complement embodied knowledge (cf. Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2013).



Image schemas are the irreducible embodied building blocks of meaning-making, not least for providing the source domains of primary metaphors. These primary metaphors always occur together with other primary metaphors to form complex metaphors. Embedded in and supported by incredibly rich cultural contexts, these become the metaphors we actually live by.

## NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- \* I am much indebted to Beate Hampe for alerting me to pertinent literature, for suggesting many useful improvements, as well as for meticulous editing. I also thank Thomas Wiben Jensen for a critical reading of an early draft. Finally, I have benefited from the comments of an anonymous reviewer, some of whose suggested formulations I gratefully use *verbatim* in the Introduction. Of course, I claim all mistakes and errors entirely for myself.
- 1 For other genres, see also Kromhout and Forceville (2013); Wietske Koelma, Iris Adriaansz, and Charles Forceville, "LIFE IS A JOURNEY: An animated metaphor" (5'28"). [www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvocTKD5o5A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvocTKD5o5A) (June 3, 2014).
  - 2 For a comprehensive list of candidate primary metaphors, see Grady (1997a: 281–299).
  - 3 Bugs Bunny Cartoon *The wabbit who came to supper* by "Friz" Freleng, USA 1942, 8'06", original in color. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZSp0YQU9zM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZSp0YQU9zM) (last accessed: 12/3/2016).
  - 4 UK 1997, 10'36". [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hi4zdX-OG5Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hi4zdX-OG5Q) (last accessed: 12/3/2016).
  - 5 Jiří Trnka, Czechoslovakia, 1965, 18', original in color. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS4Th36zN\\_g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS4Th36zN_g) (last accessed 13/3/2016).
  - 6 For detailed work on this latter point, see Yu (2003), Forceville (2009a), Abbott and Forceville (2011).
  - 7 For a more detailed discussion, see Forceville (2014).

## 14 Doing Metaphor: An Ecological Perspective on Metaphoricity in Discourse

Thomas W. Jensen\*

### Chapter Preview

This chapter adopts new theoretical insights from cognitive science and dynamic systems theory and employs the notion of "metaphoricity" to explore how metaphor in discourse can be understood more adequately. Relating the ecological turn in cognitive science to metaphor studies and insisting on a unified bio-social perspective, it argues that metaphoricity – if conceptualized within an ecological framework – can offer an alternative to viewing metaphor as primarily social or cognitive. In-depth analyses of two real-life examples analyze metaphoricity as the act of *doing metaphor* within an interpersonal ecology established by the ongoing and dynamic presence of other people, physical artifacts and sociocultural constraints. Rather than treated as a product of individual minds, metaphor is thus shown to emerge from the dynamics of human dialogue viewed as a complex living system. The chapter focuses especially on how metaphoricity works as a gradable, interactively negotiated phenomenon that is intertwined with affective behaviors and situational affordances.

### 1 Introduction

What is the key component in developing and experiencing metaphor in social interaction? In short, other people! Everything we say and do in the flux of social interaction is fundamentally addressed at and shaped by the constant, and constantly evolving, presence of other people. This co-presence constitutes an "inter-personal ecology" with distinct possibilities and constraints on the creation of metaphor. In writing, metaphors are ingrained in the linear architecture of sentences structurally nested in organized chunks of language allowing for more elaborate metaphoric images. Still, writing is – at least traditionally – a more solitary activity which lacks the principal "affordances" (Gibson 1979) of social interaction: The immediate inter-bodily dynamics and possibilities for impulsive action and thought enabled by the interactive environment in the here-and-now of *doing language*, or "languageing" (Thibault