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Conceptual Metaphor Theory Meets the Data

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Abstract Metaphor makes our thoughts more vivid and fills our communication with richer imagery. Furthermore, according to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) of [26], metaphor also plays an important structural role in the organization and processing of conceptual knowledge. According to this account, the phenomenon of metaphor is not restricted to similarity-based extensions of meanings of individual words, but instead involves activating fixed mappings that reconceptualize one whole area of experience in terms of another. CMT produced a significant resonance in the fields of philoso-

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phy, linguistics, cognitive science and artificial intelligence and still underlies a large proportion of modern research on metaphor. However, there has to date been no corpus-based study of conceptual metaphor, which would provide an empirical basis for evaluating the CMT using real-world linguistic data. The annotation scheme and the empirical study we present in this paper is a step towards filling this gap. We test our annotation procedure in an experimental setting involving multiple annotators and estimate their agreement on the task. The goal of the study is to investigate (1) how intuitive the conceptual metaphor explanation of linguistic metaphors is for human annotators and whether it is possible to consistently annotate interconceptual mappings; (2) what are the main difficulties that the annotators experience during the annotation process; (3) whether one conceptual metaphor is sufficient to explain a linguistic metaphor or whether a chain of conceptual metaphors is needed. The resulting corpus annotated for conceptual mappings provides a new, valuable dataset for linguistic, computational and cognitive experiments on metaphor.

Keywords Conceptual Metaphor Theory · corpus annotation · human experimentation

1 Introduction

The study of metaphor dates back to the times of Aristotle and touches on various aspects of human reasoning and multiple disciplines. Since the first inquiries, the theory of metaphor has evolved significantly under the influence of linguistic and psychological findings [3,46,26,24,20,13,4,15,16], and the establishment of the fields of artificial intelligence [2,36], cognitive science [19] and neuroscience [11]. Following Aristotle's *Poetics*, it is widely acknowledged across these disciplines that metaphor is based on *analogy* [12,26,18,36,9] and arises when one concept is viewed in terms of the properties of another. Humans often use metaphor to describe abstract concepts through reference to more concrete or physical experiences. Below are some examples of metaphor.

(1) How can I *kill* a process? [29]

(2) Hillary *brushed aside* the accusations.

(3) I *invested* myself fully in this research.

(4) And then my heart with pleasure *fills*,
And *dances* with the daffodils.
("I wandered lonely as a cloud", William Wordsworth, 1804)

Metaphorical expressions may take a great variety of forms, ranging from conventional metaphors, which we produce and comprehend every day, such as those found in (1) and (3), to poetic and novel ones, such as (4). In metaphorical expressions, seemingly unrelated features of one concept are attributed to another concept. In example (1), a *computational process* is viewed as something *alive* and, therefore, its forced termination is associated with the act of killing. In (2) Hillary is not literally clearing away the accusations with a brush. Instead, the accusations lose their validity in that situation, in other words Hillary *rejects* them. The verbs *brush aside* and *reject* both entail the resulting disappearance of their object, which is the shared salient property that makes it possible for this analogy to be lexically expressed as a metaphor.

Metaphor has traditionally been viewed as an artistic device that lends vividness and distinction to its author's style. This view was challenged by [26], who claimed that it is a productive phenomenon that operates at the level of mental processes (see also [40]). According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphor is not merely a property of language, i.e. a linguistic phenomenon, but rather a property of thought, i.e. a cognitive phenomenon. This view was subsequently acquired and extended by a multitude of approaches [18,36,9,11, 38] and the term *conceptual metaphor* was coined to describe it. Conceptual metaphor is not limited to similarity-based meaning extensions of individual words, but rather involves reconceptualisation of a whole area of experience in terms of another. Thus metaphor always involves two concepts or conceptual domains: the *target* (also called *topic* or *tenor* in linguistics literature) and the*source* (also called *vehicle*). Consider the examples in (5) and (6).

(5) He *shot down* all of my arguments. [26]

(6) He *attacked* every weak point in my argument. [26]

According to Lakoff and Johnson, a mapping of the concept of *argument* to that of *war* is employed in both (5) and (6). The *argument*, which is the target concept, is viewed in terms of a *battle* (or a *war*), the source concept. The existence of such a link allows us to talk about *arguments* using *war* terminology, thus giving rise to a number of metaphors. Conceptual metaphor, or *source-target domain mapping*, is thus a generalisation over a set of individual metaphorical expressions that covers multiple cases in which one domain can be described using the language of another. However, critically, the CMT does not merely claim that cognitive metaphor provides a means for producing or understanding metaphorical expressions; rather, cognitive metaphor is viewed as an important organizing principle of the conceptual system. The systematic mappings of conceptual metaphors provide a cognitive mechanism for representing and reasoning about a target domain in terms of a source domain (i.e. "the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another.", [24]). One of the things that makes the CMT attractive is that it is true to the principle of cognitive economy; rather than representing knowledge of two domains separately, our understanding of one domain can be derived from the structure of our understanding of a source domain. The CMT therefore makes a very strong claim about how conceptual knowledge is organized in the mind. However, a key assumption is that there exists a fixed set of correspondences between pairs of domains that form the basis of the activated mapping.

The examples in (5) and (6) provide a good illustration of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Lakoff and Johnson explain them via the common conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, which is systematically reflected in language in a variety of expressions, i.e. linguistic metaphors.

(7) Your claims are *indefensible*. [26]

(8) I *demolished* his argument. [26]

(9) I've never *won* an argument with him. [26]

(10) You disagree? Okay, *shoot*! [26]

According to CMT, we conceptualise and structure arguments in terms of battle, which systematically influences the way we talk about arguments within our culture. In other words, the conceptual structure behind battle, i.e. that one can shoot, demolish, devise a strategy, win and so on, is metaphorically transferred onto the domain of argument. Lakoff and Johnson claim that such metaphorical associations do not only reveal themselves in language, but to a large extent govern our behavior. For example, one might not only talk about "*demolishing* arguments", but at the same time behave aggressively in the process.

Manifestations of conceptual metaphor are ubiquitous in language and communication. Below are a few other examples of common metaphorical mappings.

- TIME IS MONEY (e.g. "That flat tire *cost* me an hour")
- IDEAS ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS (e.g. "I can not *grasp* his way of thinking")
- LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. "I would not be able to *put* all my feelings *into* words")
- EMOTIONS ARE VEHICLES (e.g. "[...] she was *transported* with pleasure")
- FEELINGS ARE LIQUIDS (e.g. "[...] all of this *stirred* an unfathomable excitement in her")
- LIFE IS A JOURNEY (e.g. "He *arrived* at the end of his life with very little emotional *baggage*")

Lakoff and colleagues organised their ideas in a resource called Master Metaphor List (MML) [25]. The list is a collection of source–target domain mappings (mainly those related to mind, feelings and emotions) with corresponding examples of language use. The mappings in the list are organised in an ontology, e.g. the metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS is a special case of

a more general metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS. To date MML is the most comprehensive metaphor resource in the linguistic literature.

CMT produced a significant resonance in the fields of philosophy, linguistics, cognitive science and artificial intelligence, including natural language processing (NLP). It inspired novel research [30,31,36,37,2,10,33,32,1], but was also criticised for the lack of consistency and empirical verification [35,41, 38,34]. The sole evidence that [26] presented in support of their theory was their introspections about a set of carefully selected examples, such as those in the Master Metaphor List. Such introspections, albeit clearly illustrating the main tenets of the theory, are not a satisfactory substitute for empirical data [34]. These examples cannot possibly capture the whole spectrum of metaphorical expressions, and thus do not provide evidence that the theory can adequately explain the majority of metaphors in real-world texts. A corpus-based study of conceptual metaphor is needed for the latter purpose.

Despite the popularity and impact of CMT, there still has been no corpus-based study of conceptual metaphor and analogy nor a proposal for a comprehensive procedure for annotation of cross-domain mappings. A corpus annotated for metaphorical associations could provide a new starting point for linguistic, cognitive and computational experiments on metaphor. The annotation scheme presented in this paper is a step towards filling this gap. We designed the annotation study to reveal (1) how intuitive the conceptual metaphor explanation of linguistic metaphors is for human annotators and whether it is possible to consistently annotate interconceptual mappings; (2) what are the main difficulties that the annotators experience during the annotation process; (3) whether one conceptual metaphor is sufficient to explain a linguistic metaphor or whether a chain of conceptual metaphors is needed; and (4) what proportion of metaphorical expressions can be explained using the proposed lists of most general source and target categories suggested in the MML.

The annotation scheme we developed is a joint scheme for identification of metaphorical expressions and source-target domain mappings. It thus addresses two problems: the distinction between literal and metaphorical lan-

guage in text and the formalisation of human conceptualisation of metaphorical mappings. Rather than assume the existence of a set of pre-defined and fixed metaphorical mappings as claimed in CMT, the annotation procedure we adopted does not rely on such mappings, but instead makes use of independent sets of common source and target domain categories. Such a setting allows to test the CMT against the annotated corpus data. For example, if a given source domain is consistently mapped to the same target domain in the corpus (i.e. LIFE is always paired with JOURNEY) then this is evidence for a deep representational correspondence between these two domains and thus support for the CMT. However, on the other hand, if a given target domain tends to vary in how it is paired with source domains (both across linguistic inputs and across annotators) then this is evidence against the hypothesis that any particular source domain structures understanding of the target domain. The data thus provide a test of whether there is a restricted set of mappings which structure conceptual domains (as specified by the master metaphor list) or rather whether humans use an unrestricted range of different mappings and pair domains on a more ad-hoc basis that depends on the particular linguistic input.

The annotation was carried out on real-world texts taken from the British National Corpus (BNC) [5], representing various genres. We tested the scheme in an experimental setting involving multiple annotators and measured their agreement on the task. The focus of the study is on single-word metaphors expressed by a verb. Restricting the scope to verbs was a methodological step aimed at testing the main principles of the proposed approach in a well-defined setting and it was done without loss of generality. The choice of verbs was primarily motivated by their high frequency in metaphorical constructions, according to corpus studies. For example, [6] conducted a corpus study of the use of metaphor in educational discourse for all parts of speech. She found that verbs account for around 50% of the data, the rest shared by nouns, adjectives, adverbs, copula constructions and multi-word metaphors. This suggests that verb metaphors provide a reliable testbed for our experiments. The annotators

were asked to (1) classify the verbs in the text into two categories: metaphorical or literal and (2) identify the interconceptual mapping for each verb they tagged as metaphorical. For the second task, the annotators were given pre-compiled lists of suggested source and target domain labels, from which they selected the categories that – in their judgement – described the source and target concepts best or introduced their own category if the relevant list did not contain the desired one. We expect the assignment of domain labels to be the most challenging part of the annotation process. The main goal of the study is thus to verify whether such labels can be assigned consistently, which could in turn provide evidence in support of CMT.

Only a part of the corpus was annotated by multiple independent annotators, to measure reliability. The rest of the dataset was annotated by one of the authors. Besides verbal metaphors, this annotation also captured metaphors expressed by nouns, adjectives and adverbs, in order to estimate metaphor statistics across part-of-speech classes and syntactic constructions.

This paper first describes previous work on metaphor annotation, then our own dataset and annotation scheme used to identify both linguistic and conceptual metaphor in text, and finally concludes with the annotation reliability study conducted in a setting with multiple annotators and the analysis of the resulting corpus.

2 Previous approaches to metaphor annotation

The task of metaphor annotation in corpora can be split into two stages, to reflect two distinct aspects of the phenomenon, i.e. the presence of both linguistic and conceptual metaphor. These stages include the identification of metaphorical senses in text, which requires distinguishing between literal and non-literal meanings, and the assignment of the underlying source-target domain mappings. Although humans are perfectly capable of producing and comprehending metaphorical expressions, the task of annotating metaphor in text is challenging. This might be due to the variation in its use and external

form, as well as the conventionality of many metaphorical senses. [14] suggests that literal and figurative meanings are situated at the ends of a single continuum, along which metaphoricity and idiomaticity are spread. This makes demarcation of metaphorical and literal language fuzzy.

Traditional approaches to metaphor annotation include the manual search for lexical items used metaphorically [39], for source and target domain vocabulary [8, 21, 32] or for linguistic markers of metaphor [17]. The [39] proposed a metaphor identification procedure (MIP) for human annotators. The procedure involves metaphor annotation at the word level as opposed to identifying metaphorical relations (between words) or source–target domain mappings (between concepts or domains). In order to discriminate between words used metaphorically and literally, the annotators are asked to follow the guidelines presented in Figure 1. In the framework of this procedure, the sense of every word in the text is considered as a potential metaphor, and every word is then tagged as literal or metaphorical. Thus such annotation can be viewed as a form of word sense disambiguation with an emphasis on metaphoricity. MIP laid the basis for the creation of the VU Amsterdam Metaphor Corpus[1] [44]. This corpus is a subset of BNC Baby[2] annotated for linguistic metaphor. Its size is 200,000 words and it comprises four genres: news text, academic text, fiction and conversations.

[32] conducted a corpus study in order to confirm that metaphorical expressions occur in text in contexts containing lexical items from source and target domains. The difficulty associated with this approach is that it requires exhaustive lists of source and target domain vocabulary. The analysis was performed on the data from the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) corpus [7] and focused on four conceptual metaphors that occur with considerable regularity in the corpus. These included NUMERICAL VALUE AS LOCATION, COMMER-

[1] `http://www.ota.ox.ac.uk/headers/2541.xml`

[2] BNC Baby is a four-million-word subset of the British National Corpus (BNC) [5], comprising four different genres: academic, fiction, newspaper and conversation. For more information see `http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/babyinfo.html`

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse.
3. – For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
   – For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
     – More concrete [what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste];
     – Related to bodily action;
     – More precise (as opposed to vague);
     – Historically older;

     Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.
   – If the lexical unit has a more basic current contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

Fig. 1 Metaphor identification procedure of Pragglejaz Group

CIAL ACTIVITY AS CONTAINER, COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY AS PATH FOLLOWING and COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY AS WAR. Martin manually compiled the lists of terms characteristic for source and target domains by examining sampled metaphors of these types and then extended them through the use of a thesaurus. He then searched the corpus for sentences containing vocabulary from these lists and checked whether they contain metaphors of the above types. The goal was to evaluate the predictive ability of contexts containing vocabulary from the source domain and the target domain. In addition, Martin estimated the likelihood of a metaphorical expression following another metaphorical expression described by the same mapping. The most positive results were obtained for metaphors of the type NUMERICAL VALUE AS

LOCATION ($P(Metaphor|Source) = 0.069$, $P(Metaphor|Target) = 0.677$, $P(Metaphor|Metaphor) = 0.703$). The low predictive ability of the source domain vocabulary may be due to the fact that source domains normally refer to our physical experiences. Consequently, the associated vocabulary would tend to occur independently, as opposed to abstract (target) concepts that are more likely to appear in metaphorical constructions.

[45] experimented with metaphor annotation in unrestricted text. They employed two teams of annotators and compared externally prescribed definitions of metaphor with intuitive internal ones. Team A was asked to annotate "interesting stretches", whereby a phrase was considered interesting if (1) its significance in the document was non-physical, (2) it could have a physical significance in another context with a similar syntactic frame, (3) this physical significance was related to the abstract one. Team B had to annotate phrases according to their own intuitive definition of metaphor. Apart from metaphorical expressions, the respective source-target domain mappings were also to be annotated. For this latter task, the annotators were given a set of mappings from the Master Metaphor List and were asked to assign the most suitable ones. However, the authors do not report the level of interannotator agreement, i.e. the proportion of instances that were tagged similarly by all annotators, nor the coverage of the mappings in the Master Metaphor List on their data. The fact that the method of [45] is limited to a set of mappings exemplified in the Master Metaphor List suggests that it might not scale well to real-world data, since the predefined inventory of mappings is unlikely to be sufficient to cover the majority of metaphorical expressions in arbitrary text.

3 Data

Our annotation study was conducted on a set of texts taken from the British National Corpus. BNC is a 100 million word corpus containing samples of written (90%) and spoken (10%) British English from the second half of the 20th century. The data for it was gathered from a wide range of sources and the

corpus is balanced with respect to genre, style and topic. As such, it provides a suitable platform for the development of a metaphor corpus, aimed at the study of metaphor in real-world texts in contemporary English.

To collect the data for the metaphor corpus we sampled texts from the BNC representing various genres: fiction, newspaper and journal articles, essays on politics, international relations and sociology, and radio broadcasts (transcribed speech). This allowed for a study of metaphor in diverse discourse. The total size of the corpus annotated is 13,642 words.

4 Annotation scheme

Our task is to identify both linguistic metaphors and the corresponding conceptual metaphors. The annotation process will, therefore, operate in two stages. First, lexical items are classified as either metaphorically or literally used. Then, for all cases of metaphorical use the appropriate source-target domain mappings need to be assigned. The annotation scheme thus addresses two problems: the distinction between literal and metaphorical language in text and the formalisation of human conceptualisation of metaphorical mappings.

4.1 Main principles and challenges

The main challenges in developing such a metaphor annotation procedure are the choice of the definition of metaphor and a suitable inventory of source and target domain categories used to assign the mappings.

- **Definition of metaphor** As already mentioned in section 2, the distinction between metaphorical and literal meanings is not always clear-cut. A large number of metaphorical expressions are conventionalised to the extent that they are perceived as literal by most native speakers (e.g. "He *found out* the truth"). Some approaches to metaphor consider only novel expressions to be truly metaphorical [23], whereas others consider any linguistic expression to be metaphorical where an underlying analogy can

be identified [44]. In this paper we consider both novel and conventional metaphors as interesting for annotation; however, we only include the conventional cases where both literal and metaphorical senses are commonly used and stand in clear opposition in contemporary language. This is where the scope of our annotation differs from that of [44], who is additionally interested in the historical aspects of metaphor.

– **Inventory of categories** The primary question one faces when trying to derive an annotation scheme for metaphorical associations is defining a set of source and target domain categories. As opposed to the previous approach of [45], who used a predefined set of fixed mappings from the MML (e.g. LIFE IS A JOURNEY), in our scheme both source (e.g. JOURNEY) and target (e.g. LIFE) domains can be chosen independently. We expect that this will allow for higher flexibility of annotation and thus provide a better reflection of human intuitive conceptualisation of metaphor, as well as the identification of novel mappings.

  The main properties of categories to consider while designing and evaluating such an annotation scheme are their coverage and specificity. The inventory of categories should cover a wide range of topics and genres. The categories themselves should be at the right level of generality, i.e. not too general (to ensure they are sufficiently informative for the task), but at the same time not too specific (to ensure they provide high coverage of the data).

The remainder of this section describes how the annotation scheme was developed and tested with these principles in mind.

4.2 Source and target domain categories

To date the most comprehensive resource of metaphorical mappings is the Master Metaphor List [25]. Its source and target domain categories were repeatedly adopted for linguistics and NLP research [2, 28]. Following these approaches,

we relied on a subset of categories from the Master Metaphor List to construct the inventory of categories for annotation.

We selected a number of general categories from the MML, e.g. LOCATION, CONTAINER, JOURNEY, LIFE, TIME, RELATIONSHIP, and arranged them into source and target concept lists. These lists were then given as suggested categories to annotators. Suggested source and target concepts are shown in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. The expectation is that the categories in these lists would account for a large proportion of metaphorical data, i.e. provide high, albeit not exhaustive, coverage. In order to test their coverage, we conducted a pilot study on a small text sample (2,750 words) from the BNC. We annotated metaphorical expressions and the corresponding inter-conceptual mappings in these texts using the categories from the suggested source and target concept lists. The study revealed that the target concept list accounted for 76% of metaphorical expressions in these texts, whereas the source concept list had a 100% coverage. Such discrepancy can be explained by the fact that target categories, which tend to describe abstract concepts, are significantly less restricted than source categories that stand for our physical experiences. In other words, we can use metaphor to talk about an unlimited number of abstract things, whereas the entities, events and processes to which we compare them are limited to the actual physical experience we all share. Thus the set of potential target concepts is likely to be significantly larger and harder to predict. To account for this, the annotators, although strongly encouraged to use categories from the provided lists, were allowed to introduce novel categories in cases where they felt no category from the lists could adequately explain the instance. This step is also crucial for the identification of novel unconventional mappings.

4.3 Annotation procedure

Metaphor annotation is carried out at the word level. The proposed annotation scheme is based on some of the principles of the metaphor identification pro-

Source concepts
PHYSICAL OBJECT
LIVING BEING
ADVERSARY/ENEMY
LOCATION
DISTANCE
CONTAINER
PATH
PHYSICAL OBSTACLE (e.g. barrier)
DIRECTIONALITY: e.g. UP/DOWN
BASIS/PLATFORM
DEPTH
GROWTH/RISE
SIZE
MOTION
JOURNEY
VEHICLE
MACHINE/MECHANISM
STORY
LIQUID
POSSESSIONS
INFECTION
VISION

Table 1 Suggested source concepts

cedure developed by [39]. We adopt their definition of a basic sense of a word and their approach to distinguishing basic senses from metaphorical ones. We modify and extend the procedure to identify source-target domain mappings by comparing the contexts in which a word appears in its basic and metaphorical senses. Besides assigning labels to metaphorical associations, this stage of the procedure then feeds back into the metaphor identification process and acts as an additional constraint on metaphoricity.

Since the experiments involving multiple annotators focus on metaphors expressed by a verb, the annotation procedure and guidelines, although in principle suitable for the analysis of all parts of speech, were tailored to verb

Target concepts
LIFE
DEATH
TIME/MOMENT IN TIME
FUTURE
PAST
CHANGE
PROGRESS/EVOLUTION/DEVELOPMENT
SUCCESS/ACCOMPLISHMENT
CAREER
FEELINGS/EMOTIONS
ATTITUDES/VIEWS
MIND
IDEAS
KNOWLEDGE
PROBLEM
TASK/DUTY/RESPONSIBILITY
VALUE
WELL-BEING
SOCIAL/ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SYSTEM
RELATIONSHIP

Table 2 Suggested target concepts

metaphors. The procedure used as part of annotation guidelines is presented below.

1. For each verb establish its meaning in context and try to imagine a more basic meaning of this verb in other contexts. As defined in the framework of MIP [39] basic meanings are normally:
   - more concrete;
   - related to bodily action;
   - more precise (as opposed to vague);
   - historically older.
2. If you can establish a basic meaning that is distinct from the meaning of the verb in this context, the verb is likely to be used metaphorically. Try to identify a mapping between the source domain (where the basic

meaning comes from) and the target domain (the concepts forming the context of the verb in front of you) using the provided lists of source and target categories. Record the mapping. If you fail to identify a mapping, reconsider whether the sense is really metaphorical in this context.

The following example illustrates how the procedure operates in practice.

(11) If he asked her to post a letter or buy some razor blades from the chemist, she was transported with pleasure.

In this sentence one needs to annotate the four verbs that are underlined.

- The first 3 verbs are used in their basic sense, i.e. literally (*ask* in the context of "a person asking another person a question or a favour"; *post* in the context of "a person posting/sending a letter by post"; *buy* in the sense of "making a purchase"). Thus they are tagged as literal.
- The verb *transport*, however, in its basic sense is used in the context of "goods being transported/carried somewhere by a vehicle". The context in this sentence involves "a person being transported by a feeling", which contrasts with the basic sense in that the agent of *transporting* is an EMOTION (the target concept) as opposed to a VEHICLE (the source concept). Thus one can infer that the use of *transport* in this sentence is metaphorical and the associated interconceptual mapping is EMOTIONS – VEHICLES.

5 Annotation reliability

After an annotation scheme has been developed its reliability needs to be verified. Reliability of a scheme can be assessed by comparing annotations carried out by multiple annotators independently [22]. This section describes an experiment where the same small portion of the metaphor corpus was annotated by several participants.

5.1 Data

A text sample from the BNC (text ID: ACA) was selected for the reliability study. Since the focus of the study is on single-word metaphors expressed by a verb, the first part of the annotation task can be viewed as verb classification according to whether the verbs are used metaphorically or literally. However, some verbs inherently have a weak potential, or no potential at all, to be used metaphorically, and as such the study is not concerned with them. The following verb classes were excluded: (1) auxiliary verbs; (2) modal verbs; (3) aspectual verbs (e.g. *begin, start, finish*); and (4) light verbs (e.g. *take, give, put, get, make*).

5.2 Annotation experiment

Subjects Three independent volunteer annotators participated in the experiment. They were native speakers of English and held a graduate degree in linguistics or computer science. However, they were naive to the specific purposes of the study and the claims of the CMT.

Material and Task The subjects were given the same text from the BNC which was an essay on sociology. The text contained 142 verbs to annotate, which were underlined. They were asked to (1) classify verbs as metaphorical or literal, and (2) identify the source-target domain mappings for the verbs they marked as metaphorical. They received two lists of suggested categories describing source and target concepts, and were asked to select a pair of categories from the two lists that best described the metaphorical mapping. Along with this they were allowed to introduce new categories if they felt none of the given categories expressed the mapping well enough. The annotation was done electronically using colour highlighting and inserting category labels in Microsoft Word.

Guidelines and Training The annotators received written instructions (2

pages, corresponding to the guidelines described in the previous section) and were asked to do a small annotation exercise (2 sentences: 1 example sentence and 1 sentence to annotate, containing 8 verbs in total). The goal of the exercise was to ensure they were at ease with the annotation format.

5.3 Interannotator agreement

Semantic annotations involve interpretation on the part of the participant and are thus inherently subjective. It is therefore essential to report *interannotator agreement*, that quantifies the similarity of the annotations produced by different annotators. We evaluated reliability of the proposed annotation scheme by assessing interannotator agreement in terms of κ statistic [43] on both tasks separately.

Kappa statistic As opposed to simple percentage of identically tagged instances, κ measures agreement by factoring out the degree of agreement expected by chance. It is calculated as follows:

$$\kappa = \frac{P(A) - P(E)}{1 - P(E)}, \tag{1}$$

where $P(A)$ is the proportion of times that k annotators agree and $P(E)$ the proportion of times one would expect them to agree by chance. If there is perfect agreement among the annotators, then $\kappa = 1$, whereas if there is no agreement besides what is expected by chance, then $\kappa = 0$. κ is negative when annotators agree less than expected by chance. The amount of agreement one would expect to happen by chance depends on the number and distribution of the categories used for annotation.[3] The values of κ are traditionally interpreted using the following scale [27]: 0 - 0.20 indicates slight agreement, 0.21 - 0.40 fair agreement, 0.41 - 0.60 moderate agreement, 0.61 - 0.80 substantial agreement, 0.81 - 1 means the agreement is almost perfect.

Results The number of metaphors and their conceptual mappings as annotated by the participants are shown in Table 3. The average proportion

[3] For more details on how chance agreement is calculated see [43].

Annotator	Metaphors	Annotated mappings	Target from list	Source from list
A	53	53	52	52
B	39	39	39	37
C	58	51	42	25

Table 3 Differences in annotations

of the cases where a conceptual metaphor could be annotated for a given linguistic metaphor (across the three annotators) was 95%, whereas that using the categories from the provided lists was 82%.

The reliability of the scheme was first measured for the task of metaphor identification and then for the assignment of interconceptual mappings. The identification of metaphorical verbs yielded a reliability of $\kappa = 0.64$ ($n = 2; N = 142; k = 3$), where n stands for the number of categories, N for the number of instances annotated and k for the number of annotators. This level of agreement is considered substantial.

The measurement of the agreement in the second task appeared less straightforward. It was complicated by the fact that each annotator only assigned conceptual mappings to a set of verbs that in their judgement were metaphorical. These sets were not identical for all annotators. Thus, the agreement on the assignment of source and target domain categories was calculated only using the instances that all annotators considered to be metaphorical. This yielded a total of 30 conceptual mappings to compare.

One of the annotators (C) found the provided categories insufficient. Although trying to use them where possible, he nonetheless had to introduce a large number of categories of his own to match his intuitions, which generally suggests the insufficiency of MML. In addition, he did not assign any mapping for seven metaphorical expressions. Both of these issues complicated the comparison of his annotation to those of the other annotators. Thus, his labelling of the mappings was excluded from the calculation of kappa statistic for agreement on conceptual metaphor annotation. However, his data was qualitatively analysed along with the rest.

The resulting overall agreement on the assignment of conceptual metaphor was thus $\kappa = 0.57$ $(n = 26; N = 60; k = 2)$, whereby the agreement was stronger on the choice of the target categories ($\kappa = 0.60$ $(n = 14; N = 30; k = 2)$) than the source categories ($\kappa = 0.54$ $(n = 12; N = 30; k = 2)$).

Analysis of annotations Analysing cases of disagreement during metaphor identification suggests that the main source of disagreement was the conventionality of some metaphorical uses. These include expressions whose metaphorical etymology can be clearly traced, but the senses are lexicalised (e.g. "*fall* silent", "the end is *coming*") and thus perceived by some annotators as literal.

According to the annotators' informal feedback on the experiment, they found the task of identifying linguistic metaphor relatively straightforward, whereas the task of assigning the respective conceptual metaphor appeared more difficult. The analysis of annotations has shown that one of the sources of disagreement in the latter task was the presence of partially overlapping categories in the target concept list. For example, the categories of PROGRESS and SUCCESS, or VIEWS, IDEAS and METHODS were often confused. This level of granularity was chosen following the Master Metaphor List. However, the annotated data suggests that, for the purpose of annotation of conceptual mappings, such categories may be joined into more general categories without significant information loss (e.g. VIEWS, IDEAS and METHODS can be covered by a single category IDEAS). This would increase mutual exclusivity of categories and thus lead to a more consistent annotation. Based on the observations in the data and the annotators' feedback, the source and target lists were refined to ensure no or minimal overlap between the categories, while maximally preserving their informativeness. As a post-hoc experiment, the labels in the annotations were mapped to this new set of categories and the annotations were compared again. The agreement rose to $\kappa = 0.61$ $(n = 23; N = 60; k = 2)$, as expected.

Further examples of similarities and differences in the annotations are given in Figure 2. As the examples illustrate, the annotators tend to agree

on whether a verb is used metaphorically or literally (with the exception of the verb *catch* tagged as literal by Annotator B). Their choices of source and target domain categories, however, vary. The annotators often choose the same target domain, although they refer to it by different (overlapping) labels, e.g. IDEA/THOUGHT/VIEW or TIME/MOMENT IN TIME. Annotator C introduced a more general category PERCEPTION, rather than using the more specific category VISION provided in the list, or DISEASE instead of the suggested category INFECTION. Thus they tend to choose categories that are intuitively related and the variation of the target domain labels is rather due to the granularity of categories used. In contrast, the choice of the source domain labels exhibits more conceptual variation. Annotator A tends to assign a general category PHYSICAL OBJECT to all instances appearing within the context related to physical activity, whereas Annotator B opts for finer-grained categories, as well as conceptualising the context in terms of events and actions rather than objects. These observations suggest that, although the annotators may share some of the intuitions with respect to conceptual metaphor, the explicit labelling of the latter in text is a challenging task. Furthermore, the across-annotator variability can be seen as problematic for the CMT, as it inconsistent with the idea that there are fixed mappings between conceptual domains, with knowledge in one domain being generally understood in terms of knowledge in another.

6 Corpus data analysis

In order to create a dataset for experimentation, as well as to perform a more comprehensive data analysis, one of the authors annotated a larger corpus using the above annotation scheme. The corpus contains 761 sentences and 13,642 words. The text used for the reliability study constituted a part of the corpus. This allowed to measure the agreement with the external annotators. The agreement on the identification of linguistic metaphor was $\kappa = 0.62$ ($n =$

Annotator A

The Impressionist painters caught (IDEA -- PHYSICAL OBJECT) the contagion, and the new race of photographers tried to seize (MOMENT IN TIME -- PHYSICAL OBJECT) the fleeting moment and make it stay (MOMENT IN TIME -- PHYSICAL OBJECT). Cultures and historical periods differ ( ) greatly in their concepts of time and the continuity of life. We live ( ) in a century imprinted (IDEA -- PHYSICAL OBJECT) on the present, which regards (VIEWS -- VISION) the past as little more than the springboard from which we were launched (PROGRESS -- MOTION) on our way.

Annotator B

The Impressionist painters caught ( ) the contagion, and the new race of photographers tried to seize (TIME – ACTION) the fleeting moment and make it stay (TIME – MOTION). Cultures and historical periods differ ( ) greatly in their concepts of time and the continuity of life. We live ( ) in a century imprinted (VIEWS – MECHANISM) on the present, which regards (VIEWS – VISION) the past as little more than the springboard from which we were launched (PROGRESS – MOTION) on our way.

Annotator C

The Impressionist painters caught (IDEA – DISEASE) the contagion, and the new race of photographers tried to seize (MOMENT IN TIME – PHYSICAL OBJECT) the fleeting moment and make it stay (MOMENT IN TIME – PHYSICAL OBJECT). Cultures and historical periods differ ( ) greatly in their concepts of time and the continuity of life. We live ( ) in a century imprinted (TIME – PAGE) on the present, which regards (THOUGHT - PERCEPTION) the past as little more than the springboard from which we were launched (PASSAGE OF TIME – JOURNEY) on our way.

Fig. 2 Example of similarities and differences in annotation

$2; N = 142; k = 4$), whereas that on the choice of source and target domain categories reached $\kappa = 0.58$ ($n = 22; N = 56; k = 3$).

As an additional experiment, we also annotated nouns, adjectives and adverbs in the corpus as metaphorical or literal using the same procedure. This was done in order to investigate how metaphor can be expressed by other word classes, to gather metaphor statistics across a wider range of syntactic constructions and to estimate the relative proportion of verbal metaphors across genres (the study by [6] only concerned metaphor in educational discourse). In what follows we will describe statistics of the resulting corpus and attempt to identify common traps in the annotation of source-target domain mappings in real-world text.

6.1 Metaphor statistics across genres

Metaphor frequency was calculated as the number of metaphors relative to the number of sentences in the text. The results presented in Table 4 indicate that metaphor is overall an extremely frequent phenomenon - it appears on average in every third sentence. An interesting finding is that fiction texts seem to contain fewer metaphors than other genres. However, it should be noted that the frequency metric used is biased towards genres with longer sentences, and fiction texts contain some dialogues consisting of short phrases. In addition, the dialogues themselves tend to contain mainly literal language, as opposed to author's descriptions where metaphors are more frequent. Overall, therefore, fiction contains relatively fewer metaphorical expressions than other genres.

The last column of Table 4 shows the proportion of verb metaphors across genres. The distribution of their frequency over genres appears similar to that of other part of speech classes. However, it should be noted that metaphors expressed by a verb are by a large margin the most frequent type and constitute 68% of all metaphorical expressions in the corpus.

Text	ID	Genre	Sent.	Words	Met–rs	Met./Sent.	Verb m.
Hand in Glove, Goddard	G0N	Literature	335	3927	41	0.12	30
After Gorbachev, White	FYT	Politics	45	1384	23	0.51	17
Today newspaper	CEK	News	116	2086	48	0.41	30
Tortoise by Candlelight, Bawden	HH9	Literature	79	1366	12	0.15	10
The Masks of Death, Cecil	ACA	Sociology	60	1566	70	1.17	42
Radio broadcast (current affairs)	HM5	Speech	58	1828	10	0.17	7
Language and Literature journal	J85	Article	68	1485	37	0.54	28
Total			761	13642	241	0.32	164

Table 4 Corpus statistics for metaphor

Frequency	Source concepts
0.23	MOTION
0.13	VISION/SEEING
0.13	LIVING BEING
0.13	GROWTH/RISE
0.07	SPEED
0.03	DIRECTIONALITY: e.g. UP/DOWN
0.03	BASIS/PLATFORM
0.03	LOCATION
0.03	DISTANCE
0.03	MACHINE/MECHANISM
0.03	PHYSICAL OBJECT
...	

Table 5 Distribution of source concepts

6.2 Mappings statistics

It is also interesting to look at the distributions of the source and target categories in the text annotated by the three annotators, shown in Tables 5 and 6 respectively. The topic of the text (in this case sociology) has an evident influence on the kind of mappings that can be observed in this text.

The most frequent source domain of MOTION was mainly mapped onto the target concepts of CHANGE, PROGRESS, CAREER and SUCCESS. TIME was generally associated with DISTANCE, and the MOMENT IN TIME category with LOCATION. VIEWS and IDEAS were viewed as either LIVING

Frequency	Target concepts
0.27	ATTITUDES/VIEWS
0.13	CHANGE
0.12	TIME/MOMENT IN TIME
0.12	PROGRESS/EVOLUTION/DEVELOPMENT
0.05	BEHAVIOUR
0.05	SUCCESS/ACCOMPLISHMENT
0.05	FUTURE
0.05	CAREER
0.03	SOCIAL/ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SYSTEM
0.03	IDEAS
0.03	METHODS
0.03	KNOWLEDGE
0.02	DEATH
0.02	PAST

Table 6 Distribution of target concepts

BEINGS or PHYSICAL OBJECTS. A large proportion of the mappings identified match those exemplified in the Master Metaphor List, but some of the mappings suggested by the annotators are novel (for example, EMPHASIS IS A PHYSICAL FORCE, SITUATION IS A PICTURE, etc).

6.3 Metaphor and metonymy

An interesting issue observed in the data is the combination of metaphor and metonymy within a phrase. Consider the following example:

(12) We live in a century *imprinted* on the present, which *regards* the past as little more than the springboard from which we were *launched* on our way. (BNC: ACA)

In this sentence the verbs *imprint*, *regard* and *launch* are used metaphorically according to all annotators. However, the noun *present* can be interpreted as a general metonymy referring to the people who live in the present, rather than the time period. In the latter case, the verb *regard* would receive a different, more conventional interpretation. This in turn is likely to affect the

annotation of the corresponding conceptual metaphor and may even result in *regard* being tagged as literally used.

7 Challenges for mapping annotation

The current study also revealed a number of difficulties in the annotation of source-target domain mappings in real-world text. These are presented below.

7.1 Level of abstraction and relations between the mappings

One of the major steps in the design of the annotation scheme for conceptual metaphor is the construction of the inventory of categories that generalise across many metaphorical expressions. However, given a set of examples, it is often unclear at which level of abstraction the source and target categories should stand. Consider the following sentence:

(13) Sons aspired to *follow* ((CAREER or LIFE) IS A (PATH or JOURNEY)) in their fathers' trades or professions.

Here the verb *follow* is used metaphorically; the best generalisations for both source and target domains are, however, not obvious. This metaphor can be characterised by a more precise mapping of CAREER IS A PATH, as well as the general one of LIFE IS A JOURNEY. These two mappings are related, however, the nature of this relationship is not entirely clear. [30] discusses hierarchical organisation of conceptual metaphors and models it in terms of subsumption. [26] point out cases of entailment relations between mappings, e.g. the metaphor TIME IS MONEY entails TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY or TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE. This entailment is based on the fact that the source concepts in the latter mappings are properties of MONEY. However, the more general metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY does not strictly entail or subsume the metaphor CAREER IS A PATH. CAREER is not necessarily a property of LIFE, but is part of one possible life scenario. [9]

view metaphor in terms of such discrete scenarios within the domains, rather than in terms of continuous domains themselves. Originating in the source domain, the scenarios can then be applied to reason about the target domain. Thus certain scenarios from the domain of JOURNEY can be projected onto the domain of LIFE, for example, describing the concept of CAREER through that of a PATH.

7.2 Chains of mappings

In some cases chains of mappings are necessary to explain a metaphorical expression. Consider the following example:

(14) The Impressionist painters *caught the contagion* [..] (BNC: ACA)

In this sentence the phrase *caught the contagion* is used metaphorically. The interpretation of this metaphor triggers two conceptual mappings, namely IDEAS/VIEWS – INFECTION and INFECTION – PHYSICAL OBJECT. This chain-like association structure intuitively seems natural to a human. At the same time, though, it adds additional complexity to the annotation process, since the number of associations involved may vary. However, it should be noted that the cases where chains of mappings are necessary to explain a metaphorical expression are rare, and only three examples of this phenomenon were found in the corpus.

8 Conclusion

Besides making our thoughts more vivid and filling our communication with richer imagery, metaphors also play an important structural role in our cognition [26]. Despite this, there previously has been no proposal for a flexible scheme that would allow annotation of metaphorical associations in arbitrary text. The earlier approach of [45] aimed at assigning a preconstructed mapping from the Master Metaphor List to a metaphorical expression, a task that

can be viewed as a classification of metaphorical expressions with respect to their topic. In addition, [45] did not report any inter-annotator agreement on this task nor conducted any data analysis. In this paper, we presented a novel annotation scheme for metaphorical mappings and the first publicly available corpus annotated for metaphorical associations. The annotation scheme was designed with open-domain metaphor annotation in mind. Metaphorical mappings are annotated by explicit context comparison, and source and target domain labels are assigned to the contexts independently, rather than in the form of a preconstructed mapping.

Our annotation experiment has shown that metaphor is a highly frequent phenomenon, which makes its thorough investigation indispensable for theoretical and applied, cognitive and computational study of language. Another important finding is that a large proportion of linguistic metaphors (68%) are represented by verbs, which provides a post-hoc justification for our choice of verbal constructions for this study.

We then investigated how conceptual metaphor manifests itself in language. Although the annotators reach some overall agreement on the annotation of interconceptual mappings, they experienced a number of difficulties. The greatest of them was the problem of finding the right level of abstraction for the domain categories. The difficulties in category assignment suggest that it is hard to consistently assign explicit labels to source and target domains, even though the interconceptual associations exist in some sense and are intuitive to humans. Awareness of these issues can potentially feed back to CMT or other theoretical accounts of metaphor. Such problems also need to be taken into account when designing a cognitive or computational model of metaphor that relies on CMT. As an alternative to explicit source and target domain labels, source and target domain could be represented as classes, or clusters of related concepts, optimized to capture the majority of metaphorical instances. For example, in (13) the concept of CAREER can be clustered together with the concept of LIFE, and the resulting cluster can then represent the target domain. Such clusters of concepts may be learned empirically from linguistic

data, as shown by [42]. The individual clusters can then me organised into a network, where the links between the clusters represent metaphorical associations. A detailed description, design and verification of such a model are, however, left for future work.

Finally, the corpus presented here provides a new dataset for linguistic, computational and cognitive research on metaphor. Further empirical studies of the interconceptual mappings in real-world linguistic data may shed light on the way metaphorical associations govern our reasoning processes and organize our conceptual system, in terms of which we think, communicate, create and act.

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