

Zoltán Kövecses

Context-induced variation in metaphor

Abstract

I argue that conceptualizers often do not know in advance which metaphor they are going to use on a given occasion because the choice of particular metaphors in discourse is largely a matter of context, and contexts are extremely variable. I attempt to show what the major components of what we call “context” are and how they play a role in giving rise to the particular metaphors we use on particular occasions. I identify a number of contextual factors that have such an effect. They range from global to local along the physical, social, cultural, historical, linguistic, and so on, dimensions. When we use metaphors in real discourse, our metaphors are selected in conformity to them.

Keywords: metaphor, context, context-induced metaphor, contextual factors in metaphor, discourse

1 Universality and variation in metaphor

The cognitive linguistic view of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2006, 2010) that uses primary metaphors as its fundamental construct assumes that primary metaphors are based on correlations in bodily experience and, hence, that these metaphors are embodied (Grady 1997, Lakoff & Johnson 1999). Since embodiment such as the correlation between amount and verticality, purposes and destinations, similarity and closeness, anger and heat, and the like, characterizes all human beings, the corresponding primary metaphors will be, or at least can potentially be, universal. In this view, nonuniversal aspects of metaphor are accounted for by the various ways in which primary metaphors are put together in different cultures to form “complex metaphors.” The main focus of this kind of research is, however, on universal aspects of metaphor.

By contrast, another line of research within the cognitive linguistic paradigm takes as its point of departure the huge amount of variation we can find in metaphor and places a great deal of emphasis on the attempt to account for such variation. As Kövecses (2005) observes, the major driving force behind variation is context. This is defined by a variety of contextual factors, such as differences in key concepts in a culture, in history, and environment. Thus, given conceptual metaphor theory, it appears that we can have two research interests, one primarily concerned with universality and another primarily concerned with variation. Taking into account the causes of universality and variation, we get two general lines of research:

Embodiment – Universality
Context – Variation

In *Metaphor in Culture* (2005), I made an attempt to reconcile the two programs by making the claim that when we comprehend something metaphorically in particular situations, we are under two kinds of pressure: the pressure of our embodiment and the pressure of context. I called this double pressure the “pressure of coherence”, that is, metaphorical conceptualizers trying to be coherent with both their bodies (i.e., correlations in bodily experience) and their contexts (i.e., various contextual factors).

In the present paper, I will continue to elaborate what I mean by the influence of context on metaphorical conceptualization. First, I will provide a brief summary of my 2005 position, and then, I will go on to some new grounds in specifying how contexts can exert an influence on metaphorical conceptualizers in specific situations.

For the purpose of a clearer exposition, I distinguish between two kinds of context: global and local. By global context I mean the contextual factors that affect all members of a language community when they conceptualize something metaphorically. By local context I mean the immediate contextual factors that apply to particular conceptualizers in specific situations.

2 Global contexts

Global contexts include a variety of different contextual factors. When we engage with the world and metaphorically conceptualize it, we unconsciously monitor and pick out certain details of it. This world consists of ourselves (our body), the physical environment, the physical and social aspects of the settings in which we act, and the broader cultural context. Since all of these aspects of the world can vary in many ways, the metaphors we use can vary in many ways. Let us see some examples for this phenomenon.

We can begin with the *physical environment*. There are differences in the physical environment in which people live, and because people are (mostly unconsciously) attuned to these differences, the metaphors that people speaking different languages and varieties of languages use will also vary. The physical environment includes the particular geography, landscape, fauna and flora, dwellings, other people, and so forth that speakers of a language or variety interact with on a habitual basis. A good test case of this suggestion is a situation in which a language, which was developed by speakers living in a certain kind of natural and physical environment, is moved by some of its speakers to a new and very different natural and physical environment. If this happens, we should expect to find differences between metaphorical conceptualization by speakers of the original language and conceptualization used by people who speak the “transplanted” version of the same language. For example, (British) English is a language that was moved to a new and very different physical environment; that is, to North America, where it developed a unique metaphorical language patterned after the new environment (Kövecses 2000, 2005).

Social factors can play a similar role in shaping the overall metaphorical patterns of a community. One example of this is the distinction between men and women in all societies. Men’s and women’s metaphors may differ when they conceptualize aspects of the world. Annette Kolodny (1975, 1984) shows us that American men and women had significantly different metaphorical images of the frontier in the period between 1630 and 1860. Based on her careful examination of hundreds of literary and non-literary documents in the period, men thought of the frontier as a virgin land to be taken, whereas women as a garden to be cultivated.

The *cultural context* means the unique and salient concepts and values that characterize particular (sub)cultures—together with the governing principles of a given culture or subculture. The governing principles and key concepts have special importance in (metaphorical) conceptualization because they permeate several general domains of experience for a culture or cultural group. This can be noticed in perfectly everyday concepts. They may have an important role in distinguishing people's habitual metaphorical thought across cultures or subcultures. For example, Frank Boers and Murielle Demecheleer (1997, 2001) suggested that the concepts of HAT and SHIP are more productive of metaphorical idioms in English than in French. And conversely, the concepts of SLEEVE and FOOD are more productive of metaphorical idioms in French than in English. They argue that this is because the former two concepts are relatively more salient for speakers of (British) English, while the latter two are relatively more salient for speakers of French.

An additional set of factors includes what I call *differential memory*. What this means is the history—the major or minor events that occurred in the past of a society/culture, group, or individual. The memory of the events is coded into the language. Because of the past-oriented nature of language, many of the metaphors we use may reveal a certain time-lag between our experiences of the world today and the experiences associated with the source domain in the past (Deignan 2003). One of my students, Niki Köves (2002), did a survey of the metaphors Hungarians and Americans use for the concept of LIFE. Her survey showed that Hungarians primarily use the LIFE IS WAR and LIFE IS A COMPROMISE metaphors, whereas the Americans most commonly employ the LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION and LIFE IS A GAME metaphors. The issue obviously has to do with the peculiarities of Hungarian and American history. Hungarians have been in wars throughout their more than one thousand year old history as a nation and state, and had to struggle for their survival as they are wedged between powerful German-speaking and Slavic nations. Given this history, it is not surprising that for many Hungarians life is struggle, and less of a game. With time, however, this habitual way of conceptualizing life, or any other concept, may change.

Finally, a set of causes that produces metaphor variation is what I termed *differential concerns and interests*. An entire society may be characterized by certain concerns and interests. Americans, for example, are often said to be given to action, as opposed to passivity. This trait may explain the heavy use of sports and game metaphors by Americans. The claim here is not that only Americans have the game and sports metaphors, but that they have them for a more extensive range of target concepts than other nations. In other words, the reality (or maybe just the myth) of having a trait may give rise to a heavy reliance on a metaphorical source domain that is coherent with the trait.

3 Local contexts

Local contextual factors that influence the choice of particular metaphors include knowledge about major entities in the discourse, immediate physical setting, immediate social setting, immediate cultural setting, and immediate linguistic environment.

3.1 *The effect of knowledge about major entities in the discourse on metaphor use*

The major entities of a discourse situation include the speaker, the hearer (addressee), and the topic. Let us consider how two of these – topic and addressee – play a role in shaping the metaphors that are used in a piece of discourse.

Let us take an example of how the topic can influence the choice of novel metaphors in discourse. As we will see, the example is additionally interesting because it gives us some idea of how the addressee may also be involved in the selection of metaphors by the speaker/conceptualizer.

In the Comment section of *The Times* (January 30, 2008, p. 14), the author congratulates and offers advice to the newly elected head coach of the England football team. His or her specific recommendation (the name is not indicated) is that Fabio Capello, the new Italian head coach, should play David Beckham against Switzerland in an upcoming game at Wembley Stadium, despite the fact that Beckham did not play top-class football for several months at the time. If Beckham is given a chance to play, he will have played on the English national team 100 times, and this would be a nice way of saying good-bye to him as regards his career on the national team.

The author of the article explains that he or she is aware that Beckham is not fully prepared for this last game on the national team. S/he writes:

Beckham is 32. He has not played top-class football since November. Los Angeles Galaxy are sardines not sharks in the ocean of footy.

How did the author arrive at the novel metaphors according to which the American football (soccer) team, the Los Angeles Galaxy, “are *sardines not sharks* in the *ocean* of footy”? In all probability, it is the author’s knowledge about David Beckham, the main topic of the discourse, that gives rise to the metaphors. The author (together with us) knows that Beckham plays for the Los Angeles Galaxy, a team located in Los Angeles, which, in turn, is a city on the Pacific Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean contains sardines and sharks. In somewhat more technical language, we could say that the frame for Beckham as a football player includes the name of the team that he plays for and the place where the team is located, which in turn evokes the frame of the Pacific Ocean. The frame for the Pacific Ocean in turn involves the various kinds of fish that live in that ocean.

Of all these various kinds of fish, why are the Los Angeles Galaxy *sardines* and not *sharks* and why is football an *ocean*? With this question, I wish to indicate that the author’s knowledge about Beckham does not provide a full explanation of the novel metaphors used. It is a major part of the story, but probably not the whole story.

What we have to take into account additionally are some highly schematic conventional conceptual metaphors, such as THE SIZE OF SOCIAL GROUPS IS THE SIZE OF PHYSICAL ENTITIES and SOCIAL COMPETITION IS THE SURVIVAL BEHAVIOR OF ANIMALS. The former conceptual metaphor is extremely general and probably functions only as a very general constraint on which linguistic expression can actually be selected; the idea of the vastness of the world of football and the many teams participating in it should be conveyed through reference to some huge physical entity (such as the ocean). The latter conceptual metaphor seems to be a special case of the SOCIAL BEHAVIOR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOR metaphor. In the world of business competition, English has the conventional metaphorical expression: *big fish eat small fish*. Similarly, in football some teams are very powerful (the sharks), but most of them are weak (the sardines) in relation to the powerful ones. The expression *big fish eat small fish* and the underlying conceptual metaphor may in part be responsible for the author using the words *sardines* and *sharks* for some of the strong teams and for the much larger number of weak teams in the world of football.

The same article also offers us a glimpse of how knowledge about the addressee can give rise to novel metaphors in discourse. There are two examples in the article that point in that direction. The first one reads: “Dear *Signor* Capello” [my italics, ZK]. This is the first

sentence of the article, with which the author addresses the intended recipient of the message – the new Italian head coach of the English team, Fabio Capello. Although the use of the word *Signor* could not be interpreted as a metaphor, the fact that the English author addresses the recipient (*Signor* Capello), an Italian, partly in Italian is an indication that, in general, the addressee plays a role in how we select linguistic items for our particular purposes in the discourse. The second example is as follows: “Beckham is a good footballer and a nice man: *e una bella figura*” [italics in the original, ZK]. This example comes much closer to being a metaphor, in that a man (Beckham) is compared to a figure, a shape – a schematic word for geometric forms. In addition, the comparison is given in Italian, which shows that the language of the addressee must have influenced the choice of the metaphor. More generally, a part of what we know about the addressee in all probability plays a role in the selection of the metaphor.

3.2 *The effect of the immediate physical setting on metaphor use*

The physical setting may also influence the selection and use of particular metaphors in discourse. The physical setting comprises, among possibly other things, the physical *events and their consequences* that make up or are part of the setting, the various aspects of the physical *environment*, and the *perceptual qualities* that characterize the setting. I’ll briefly discuss an example for the first of these.

Physical events and their consequences are well demonstrated by a statement made by an American journalist who traveled to New Orleans to do an interview with Fats Domino two years after the devastation wreaked by hurricane Katrina, when the city of New Orleans was still struggling with many of the consequences of the hurricane. The journalist comments:

The 2005 hurricane capsized Domino’s life, though he’s loath to confess any inconvenience or misery outside of missing his social circle ... (*USA TODAY*, 2007, September 21, Section 6B)

The metaphorical statement “The 2005 hurricane *capsized* Domino’s life” is based on the general metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and its more specific version LIFE IS A SEA JOURNEY. The SEA JOURNEY source domain is chosen probably because of the role of the sea in the hurricane. More importantly, it should be noted that the verb *capsize* is used (as opposed to, say, *run aground*), though it is not a conventional linguistic manifestation of either the general JOURNEY or the more specific SEA JOURNEY source domains. I suggest that this verb is selected by the journalist as a result of the (still) visible consequences in New Orleans of the hurricane as a devastating physical event. The physical setting thus possibly triggers the extension of an existing conventional conceptual metaphor and causes the speaker/ conceptualizer to choose a metaphorical expression that best fits that setting.

3.3 *The effect of the immediate social setting on metaphor use*

When we use metaphors, we use them in a social context as well. The social context can be extremely variable. It can involve anything from the social relationships that obtain between the participants of the discourse through the gender roles of the participants to the various social occasions in which the discourse takes place. Let us take an example of the last possibility from the American newspaper *USA TODAY*.

As mentioned above, in 2007 the newspaper carried an article about Fats Domino, one of the great living musicians based in flood-stricken New Orleans. In the article, the journalist

describes in part Domino's life after Katrina – the hurricane that destroyed his house and caused a lot of damage to his life and that of many other people in New Orleans. The subtitle of the article reads:

The rock 'n' roll pioneer rebuilds his life—and on the new album 'Goin' Home,' his timeless music.
 (USA TODAY, 2007, September 21, Section 6B)

How can we account for the use of the metaphor “*rebuilds his life*” in this text? We could simply suggest that this is an instance of the LIFE IS A BUILDING conceptual metaphor and that whatever meaning is intended to be conveyed by the expression is most conventionally conveyed by this particular conceptual metaphor and this particular metaphorical expression. But then this may not entirely justify the use of the expression. There are potentially other conceptual metaphors (and corresponding metaphorical expressions) that could also be used to achieve a comparable semantic effect. Two that readily come to mind include the LIFE IS A JOURNEY and the LIFE IS A MACHINE conceptual metaphors. We could also say that x *set out again on his/her path* or that after his/her life broke down, x *got it to work* again or *restarted* it. These and similar metaphors would enable the speaker/conceptualizer and the hearer to come to the interpretation that the “rebuilding” idea activates.

However, of the potentially possible choices it is the LIFE IS A BUILDING metaphor that is selected for the purpose. In all probability, it is because, at the time of the interview, Domino was also in the process of rebuilding his house that was destroyed by the hurricane in 2005. If this is correct, it can be suggested that the social situation (rebuilding his house) triggered, or facilitated, the choice of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BUILDING. In other words, a real-world instance of a source domain in context is more likely to lead to the choice of a source concept of which it is an instance than to that of a source domain of which it is not. In this sense, the social setting may play a role in the selection of certain preferred conceptual metaphors, and hence of certain preferred metaphorical expressions in discourse.

3.4 *The effect of the immediate cultural context on metaphor use*

The social setting can be relatively easily distinguished from the cultural context when we have to deal with social roles, social relations, and social power. However, the social setting is less clearly distinguishable from what I call the “cultural context” in many other cases. The situation I wish to describe in this subsection is probably more cultural than social, in that it lacks such straightforward social elements and characteristics as power, relations, and roles.

Consider the following example taken from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, in which Bill Whalen, a professor of political science at Stanford University and an advisor to Arnold Schwarzenegger, uses metaphorical language concerning the actor who later became the governor of California:

“Arnold Schwarzenegger is not the second Jesse Ventura or the second Ronald Reagan, but the first Arnold Schwarzenegger,” said Bill Whalen, a Hoover Institution scholar who worked with Schwarzenegger on his successful ballot initiative last year and supports the actor's campaign for governor.

“He's a unique commodity – unless there happens to be a whole sea of immigrant body builders who are coming here to run for office. This is ‘Rise of the Machine,’ not ‘Attack of the Clones.’” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, A16, August 17, 2003)

Of interest in this connection are the metaphors *He's a unique commodity* and particularly *This is ‘Rise of the Machine,’ not ‘Attack of the Clones.’* The first one is based on a

completely conventional conceptual metaphor: PEOPLE ARE COMMODITIES, as shown by the very word *commodity* to describe the actor. The other two are highly unconventional and novel. What makes Bill Whalen produce these unconventional metaphors and what allows us to understand them? There are, I suggest, two reasons. First, and more obviously, it is because Arnold Schwarzenegger played in the first of these movies. In other words, what sanctions the use of these metaphorical expressions has to do with the knowledge that the conceptualizer (Whalen) has about the topic of the discourse (Schwarzenegger), as discussed in a previous section. Second, and less obviously but more importantly for my purpose here, he uses the metaphors because these are movies that, at the time of speaking (i.e., 2003), everyone knew about in California and the US. In other words, they were part and parcel of the immediate cultural context. Significantly, the second movie, *Attack of the Clones* does not feature Schwarzenegger, but it is the key to understanding of the contrast between individual and copy that Whalen is referring to.

Given this knowledge, people can figure out what Whalen intended to say, which was that Schwarzenegger is a unique individual and not one of a series of look-alikes. But figuring this out may not be as easy and straightforward as it seems. After all, the metaphor *Rise of the Machine* does not clearly and explicitly convey the idea that Schwarzenegger is unique in any sense. (As a matter of fact, the mention of machines goes against our intuitions of uniqueness.) However, we get this meaning via two textual props in the text. The first one is a series of statements by Whalen: “Arnold Schwarzenegger is not the second Jesse Ventura or the second Ronald Reagan, but the first Arnold Schwarzenegger” and “He’s a unique commodity – unless there happens to be a whole sea of immigrant body builders who are coming here to run for office.” What seems to be the case here is that the speaker emphasizes the idea of individuality *before* he uses the MACHINE metaphor. But not even this prior emphasis would be sufficient by itself. Imagine that the text stops with the words “...This is ‘Rise of the Machine.’” I think most native speakers would be baffled and would have a hard time understanding what Whalen intended to say in this last sentence. Therefore, in order to fully understand the discourse we badly need the second textual prop, which is: “not ‘*Attack of the Clones*.’” It is against the background of this phrase that we understand what the metaphorical expression *Rise of the Machine* might possibly mean.

In other words, in this case we have an entirely novel (but contextually motivated) metaphor in the discourse. In order to understand the meaning of this metaphorical phrase we need support from the neighboring linguistic context. In the present example, it is provided in the form of the two contextual props discussed above.

3.5 *The effect of the immediate linguistic context on metaphor use*

Let us provisionally think of discourse as being composed of a series of concepts organized in a particular way. The concepts that participate in discourse may give rise to either conventional or unconventional and novel linguistic metaphors. Suppose, for example, that we talk about the progress of a particular process and want to say that the progress has become more intense. There are many ways in which this can be done. We can say that the progress *accelerates*, *speeds up*, *gains momentum*, *moves faster*, *picks up* or *gathers speed*, and many others. These are all relatively *conventional* ways of talking about an increase in the intensity of a process. They are all based on the conventional generic-level mapping INTENSITY IS SPEED, as it applies to the concept of progress (in relation to a process). The larger metaphors within which the mapping INTENSITY IS SPEED works are also well

established ones: PROGRESS IS MOTION FORWARD and, even more generally, EVENTS ARE MOVEMENTS.

However, the particular concepts that refer to the specific process we are talking about may influence the selection of the linguistic metaphorical expression in talking about the intensity of the progress at hand. The linguistic metaphors we actually use may be much *less conventional* than the ones mentioned above. As an example, let me take a headline from *The Wall Street Journal Europe* (January 6, 2003) from my book *Metaphor in Culture* (2005) and reanalyze it here. It reads:

The Americanization of Japan's car industry shifts into higher gear.

Here, the process is the Americanization of Japan's car industry and the suggestion is that it has become, or is becoming, more intense. Instead of describing the property of "increase in intensity" by any of the conventional linguistic metaphors above, or, as a matter of fact, by a large number of additional ones that could be used (such as *galloping ahead*), the author uses the relatively *unconventional* linguistic metaphor *shifts into higher gear* (which is also an instance of the general metonymy ACTION FOR RESULT, where shifting into higher gear results in higher speed, that is, we have SHIFTING GEAR FOR GOING FASTER).

I propose that this particular expression is selected because of the influence of the immediate linguistic context, that is, the concepts that surround the conceptual slot where we need an expression to talk about "an increase in intensity" (of the progress of a process). Since the process is that of the Americanization of Japan's *car* industry, we find it natural and highly motivated that the author of the utterance uses the expression *shifts into higher gear* in that conceptual slot in the discourse. Since the surrounding context includes the "car industry," it makes sense to use the motion of a car, and not the motion of some other entity capable of motion, in the metaphor. It seems to me that the pressure of coherence (i.e., trying to be coherent with the linguistic context) is at work here.

Although I've treated the specific kinds of contextual effects on metaphor use separately, most of the time they occur together. Some of the examples above and numerous others indicate that more than one contextual factor may be simultaneously responsible for the selection of particular metaphors in discourse.

4 How does this approach compare with other models of metaphor use?

Cameron and Gibbs (Cameron 2008, Gibbs & Cameron 2008) point out, rightly, that conceptual metaphors in the standard theory work downwards only, meaning that when we use linguistic metaphors, these are viewed as resulting from or being the expression of preestablished conceptual patterns in the mind. My approach, however, rejects this idea of the standard view and suggests that context (linguistic or otherwise) can actively contribute to metaphorical conceptualization. Let us take one of Cameron's (2007) examples and see how this can be accounted for by using my approach. Cameron analyzed metaphor use in a series of conversations between Jo Berry and Pat Magee. Jo Berry is the daughter of former MP Sir Anthony Berry who was killed in a bombing accident in 1984. The bomb was planted by the then Irish Republican Army activist, Pat Magee. The two people met in Ireland in 2000 at Jo's request in order for her to try to understand the motives behind the bombing.

In discussing the metaphor topic of understanding each other, Cameron states: "The metaphor of *breaking down barriers*, with 13 uses across the talk, can be seen as more violent

alternative to *building bridges*, enabling CONNECTION through removal of a barrier rather than through making contact across a gap.” (p. 214) Extract 17 provides the following example:

Extract 17

- | | | | |
|----|------|-----|--|
| 1: | 2096 | Jo | <X where X> victims of all <u>sides</u> have been meeting, |
| | 2097 | | ... and ... |
| | 2098 | | er, |
| | 2099 | | ... (1.0) that is just about, |
| | 2100 | | ... er, |
| | 2101 | | .. br- <u>breaking down barriers</u> , |
| | 2102 | | <u>sharing stories</u> , |
| | 2103 | | and – |
| | 2104 | Pat | hmh |
| | 2105 | Jo | ... and <u>through</u> .. experiencing each other’s <u>stories</u> , |
| | 2106 | Pat | hmh |
| | 2107 | Jo | ... there’s a real feeling of, |
| | 2108 | | ... <u>closeness</u> and humanity of everyone, |

She suggests in connection with breaking down barriers that it has “a strong literalizing echo in the metaphor of the physical barriers constructed during the conflict on the streets of Irish cities, both the barriers of burning cars and of army road blocks” (p. 214). She is clearly right that there is a literalizing effect here, but what needs to be accounted for in the first place is why the metaphor of *breaking down barriers* got selected at this moment and, indeed, on a dozen of additional occasions in the discourse. I believe this particular expression is selected as a result of what the participants of the conversation know about the topic of the conversation and about each other. The misunderstanding of the Other (in the form of “barriers”) is conceptualized in light of what the conceptualizers know about the violent events that led to the misunderstanding (e.g., setting up and breaking down barriers). In other words, given the framework I have outlined above, the felt literalization follows from prior context-induced metaphorical conceptualization, where knowledge about the topic and the addressee both seem to play a role in the selection of the metaphor at a particular point of the conversation.

Although there are differences in terminology, method, goal, and so on, between Cameron’s approach and mine, I feel we are interested in the same aspect of metaphor research; namely, how the context influences what we say metaphorically. Both Cameron’s approach and mine focus on context and explain the use of metaphor as based on context – and not only or simply on the basis of cognitively preestablished conceptual metaphors.

5 Conclusions

Conceptualizers often do not know beforehand which metaphors they are going to use on particular occasions. They do not know because the choice of particular metaphors in discourse is largely a matter of context, and contexts are extremely variable.

In this paper, I have made an initial attempt to show what the major components of what we call “context” are and how they play a role in giving rise to the particular metaphors we use on particular occasions. I have identified a number of contextual factors that have such an effect. They range from global to local along the physical, social, cultural, historical, linguistic, and so on, dimensions. When we use metaphors in real discourse, our metaphors are selected in conformity to them.

The physical dimension ranges from the immediate physical setting to the global physical environment of the linguistic community; the social dimension from the immediate personal setting to the social setting of the society; the cultural dimension from the immediate cultural situation to the general cultural norms, values, concepts of a group of people; the historical dimension from one's personal history to the history of a nation; the "interest" dimension from one's personal interests and concerns to the general interests and concerns of a society; and the linguistic dimension from the immediate linguistic context to the general discourse patterns associated with a particular subject matter. Not all of these have been demonstrated in this paper, and not in the same depth. At the same time, my hope is that enough has been shown to make the point that a fuller view of metaphor needs to take into account not only the "preestablished" (conventional) conceptual metaphors but also the ones that arise on the fly in context.

I believe this view of the production and understanding of novel metaphors in discourse has certain potentially important implications for the study of metaphor. First, we could begin to study everyday forms of metaphorical creativity. By analyzing the types of discourse we have seen in this paper, we could see and explore many of the ways in which all humans utilize the support of various contextual factors when they are being metaphorically creative. It is as though we all used the generic conceptual metaphor DISCOURSE IS CONTEXT in the production of novel metaphors in discourse. Second, by studying the effect of discourse on metaphor, we could explore some of the complexities of metaphorical creativity in poetry. My initial investigation along these lines seems promising and indicates that many novel uses of metaphor in poetic language also result from the influence of the same contextual factors we have seen above (Kövecses 2009 unpublished ms.). Third, we could begin to try to fit together the view of "context-induced" metaphors with the results of various other strands of research on metaphor in recent years, such as "standard" conceptual metaphor theory, the neural theory of metaphor, the Gibbs-Cameron view, blending theory, corpus linguistic findings, and several others. (For an initial attempt, see Kövecses 2009 unpublished ms.). The overall result would surely be something much richer and complex than the theories of metaphor taken individually in their current forms.

References

- Boers, F. & Demecheleer, M. (1997): A few metaphorical models in (western) economic discourse. In: Liebert, W.A., Redeker, G. & Waugh, L. (eds.): *Discourse and Perspective in Cognitive Linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 115-129.
- Boers, F. & Demecheleer, M. (2001): Measuring the impact of cross-cultural differences on learners' comprehension of imageable idioms. *ELT Journal* 55, 255-262.
- Cameron, L. (2007): Patterns of metaphor use in reconciliation talk. *Discourse and Society* 18(2), 197-222.
- Cameron, L. (2008): Metaphor and talk. In: Gibbs, R.W. (ed.): *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 197-211.
- Deignan, A. (2003): Metaphorical expressions and culture: An indirect link. *Metaphor and Symbol* 18(4), 255-271.
- Gibbs, R.W. & Cameron, L. (2007/8): The social-cognitive dynamics of metaphor performance. *Cognitive Systems Research* 9, 64-75.

- Grady, J. E. (1997): THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS revisited. *Cognitive Linguistics* 8, 267–290.
- Kolodny, A. (1975): *The Lay of the Land. Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Kolodny, A. (1984): *The Land Before Her. Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2000): *American English. An Introduction*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2005): *Metaphor in Culture. Universality and Variation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2006): *Language, Mind, and Culture. A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002/2010): *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction*. (2nd edition). Oxford University Press. In press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2009): *Metaphor and poetic creativity: a cognitive linguistic account*. Department of American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University. Unpublished manuscript.
- Köves, N. (2002): *Hungarian and American dreamworks of life*. Term paper. Department of American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. [discussed in Kövecses 2005]
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980): *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1999): *Philosophy in the Flesh*. New York: Basic Books.

Zoltán Kövecses
Eötvös Lóránd University
Department of American Studies
zkovecses@ludens.elte.hu