

Review of: "Grice's Café – Coffee, cream, and metaphor comprehension"

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This paper does a great job of (i) discussing how comparisons between the direct and indirect access models is really an apples-and-oranges comparison between a psychological performance model and a rational competence model; (ii) an exegesis of Grice and discussion which supposed claims are merely attributed to him; (iii) an enlightening review of neurological studies on metaphor processing.

The overall argument of the paper is clear and convincing. I particularly liked the approach of deriving auxiliary hypothesis and the fMRI studies showing that (i) processing time is not necessarily indicative of processing effort, that (ii) metaphor comprehension is effortful, and that (iii) literal meanings are activated in metaphor processing.

I felt that some of the content of endnote 24 might be better in the main text. The length of endnote 24 certainly suggests that there is more to say here. In particular the work by Giora mentioned in endnote 24 and the discussion of automaticity in metaphor processing w.r.t. conventionality is more important. It seems plausible that highly conventionalised metaphors with their more automatic processing would not require multiple stages of working out the metaphoric meaning, whereas with novel metaphors the working out could be quite effortful - potentially involving deadends/inferential/conceptual clashes. The paper devotes a fair chunk to discussing the interpretation of N400 in metaphor processing. Perhaps more could be said about reading times (perhaps after the discussion of neurological studies). The author may want to decide on how far to take this discussion of conventionality, but I felt that this important issue would need some further elaboration in the main text. After my first read I was left with the impression that the author is sceptical of the methodology of reading times entirely, but perhaps that is a misinterpretation on my part.

Many of the metaphor examples are cases involving a fair amount of conventionality. Perhaps examples of novel metaphors could benefit the section on conventionality and automaticity of processing. I agree with the author that processing might be a different beast there, but we don't want to give the impression that the dimension of conventionality is not properly represented.

I was a bit surprised that the Discussion section raises a new issue which the paper does not quite work towards: "chunks of properties." It seems the authors wants to say more about foregrounding/backgrounding conceptual properties in metaphor processing (foregrounding and bundling those properties which lead to a coherent metaphoric meaning). While the points here are convincing, I am not sure it is good to open up the discussion to new issues when we are trying to wrap up the paper. Especially, since the author himself previously says he does not want to get into how the metaphoric

meaning is worked out conceptually. I myself find this aspect very interesting, but in the spirit of this paper either (a) raise this issue earlier in the paper and give it a fair place in the overall argument or (b) defer it to "future research" or leave it out entirely. In any case, starting the Discussion section with it seemed like a rough transition from what the paper had been working towards up until then. The second half of the Discussion section is more in-line with it.

The overall style and language of the paper is very good, but the number of typos and minor grammar mistakes (the occasional word missing here and there) does increase in the second half of the paper. Give it a thorough proofreading before finalising.

All in all, I think this paper contributes an important exegesis of Gricean pragmatics w.r.t. to not just metaphor processing (in particular) but the entrenched direct-vs-indirect-access debate (in general).