

# Review of: "Conceptual oxymoron, oxymetaphor, and oxymetaphonymy: inclusive border and violent inclusion in close-up"

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## **General comments**

The issue raised in this paper is interesting, and consequently needs further investigation, as noted by the author himself. Oxymoron is one crucial aspect of what may be referred to, somehow loosely, as contradictoriness; I mean the coexistence of opposite meanings within the semantic structure of a given concept, be it encoded by simple lexical units or complex ones (expressions, phrases, formulaic expressions such as idioms, proverbs, etc.) - I would like to draw the author's attention to some important studies in the literature on contradictoriness, especially in the paremiological literature (see for instance Furnham 1987; Yankah 1984[1994]; see also Lemghari 2019).

What makes the study of oxymoron, or contradictoriness at large important is its connection with related semantic phenomena, namely polysemy. I have in mind particular polysemous words we may consider as consisting of opposite senses, which might be characterized as a kind of oxymoron or antiphrasis. The main issue would be to account for how a word, for instance, *terrific*, comes to denote by semantic extension a sense opposite to the meaning of the category it represents. If the sense involved is metaphorical in character, a special focus should be on the cognitive operations at the base of such an extension. In this case, some of the notions introduced by the author, oxymetaphor, oxymetonymy, etc. would be helpful not only for figuring out why tropes like *inclusive border* and *violent inclusion* are not contradictory in themselves, but also for providing cognitive motivation for their use.

## **Specific comments**

I would make here some specific remarks to lead, I hope, the author to refine his analysis by elucidating the points I assume to be less clear for any reader not familiar with cognitive semantics. For the purpose of clarity, my comments will come in line with the paper's structure.

### **Section 1**

I think an academic work must have an introduction wherein the main issues are stated, the unfamiliar terms delineated, and the aims clearly put.

### **Section 3**

First line: 'in this broder context' → in this broader context.

Second line: I think references should be added immediately after authors: for instance, Mezzadra & Neilson (2013: 6).

- There seems to be no clear-cut difference between the notions *verbal level* and *discourse level*/the author introduces to distinguish between two levels at which oxymoron operates. For me, these levels boil down to the same level. The notions might become clearer, should the author describe *verbal level* as *lexical level*. In this case, *lexical level* would refer to the level of language, whereas *discourse level*, to that of communication. It must be noted furthermore that the conceptual level of oxymoron is not covered by either of these notions. For a three-level approach of metaphor see Steens (2008).
- The term *metaphtonymy* was coined by Goossens (1990) to describe a particular interaction that holds in many cases between metaphor and metonymy, as noted later by the author. Given the characterization of metaphtonymy, one expects the author to create some clarity about the role metonymy plays in the conceptual structure of oxymoron. The author is kindly asked to define at the outset the technical terms he introduces, such as metaphor, metaphtonymy, etc. This would make the text more accessible to readers who might not be familiar with the cognitive paradigm's terminology.
- Paragraph 3: "It is against this complex...". I would suggest rather the expression "It is in light of this complex...".
- As regard Figure 1, the author should provide evidence for why he considers *inclusion* a hyponym of what is referred to as "peaceful approach". A close look at the semantic behavior of the word *inclusion* might reveal, surprisingly, that the concept it is associated with is likely to be conceptualized in opposite senses, along the positive and negative dimension. On the negative dimension, it might be argued that the meaning of *inclusion* matches that of the adjective *violent*. In this case, arguably, the oxymoron at hand might be deemed to be part of the semantic structure of the word *inclusion*, the role of the adjective *violent* being to highlight the negative conceptualization of the word *inclusion*. I feel that the author's line of reasoning comes closer to such an assumption, especially when he alludes to some polysemous cases.

The issue raised and discussed by the author is important. It will gain more importance, I believe, if it is related to the nearer notion of antiphrasis. It must be noted that antiphrasis is a contextual, and hence a pragmatic 'rhetoric' device of using words or expressions in senses that are opposite to their commonly accepted meanings. But what I would take to be instrumental in antiphrasis is that it plays, as a cognitive operation in the same fashion as metaphor and metonymy, a crucial part in creating new senses, with varying degrees of entrenchment. An example to consider in this sense is the word *terrific* which is associated with opposite senses, namely, 'frightful' and 'fine or magnificent', following *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

#### Section 4

- Paragraph 2, first line: 'In this light' → On that view or in this sense.

-----, second line: 'by' → but.

This paragraph should be reworded → On that view, the oxymorons *violent inclusion* and *inclusive border* should be analyzed not only as tropes, but rather as figurative conceptualizations that involve metaphor, metonymy, or both...

- It would be very helpful for the purpose of illustration if the author explained what is really metonymic about these oxymorons.

- Please, use *see* instead of *recall* for references → (see Gozzi 1999, 2003 for the notion of oxymetaphor).

Paragraph 3, first line: 'from the domain of physical violence to' → onto.

Paragraph 4, the end of the first sentence: here the author might posit the metonymy that lies at the base of the conceptual mapping of physical spaces onto actions, namely the *spaces for actions* metonymy.

Paragraph 5: It is hard to think of the mapping *borders are spaces* as a conceptual metaphor, for both the source and target are physical domains. Unless I'm mistaken, the author's main claim is that the oxymoron *inclusive border* relies on an interaction of a metaphor and a metonymy. I think he is right, with the proviso that the metaphor posited be a real one, in the sense that the target is a rather abstract domain. One possible solution would be to reverse the domains of the metaphor *borders are spaces*, the metonymy *spaces for actions* being taken into account. On the whole, the resulting metaphor would be put in the form of *actions are borders*. As such, the metaphor is not at odds with the common definition of conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson 1980; 1999; Lakoff 1993), since the target *actions*, which is metonymic in nature, proves abstract (see Kövecses 2011 for how metonymies might provide targets for metaphors). On this view, furthermore, the metaphor would be arguably accounted a metaphonymy, given that it is made up of a metonymy and a metaphor

Paragraph 7: 'without me assigning' → without ~~me~~ assigning.

## Section 5

- The title of this section should be reworded. This is a possible alternative: ***Violent inclusion and inclusive border: are they distinct, combined, or complex oxymorons?***

- Paragraph 1, first line: Replace 'in the context of' by 'in light of' or 'on the basis of'.

- Paragraph 2: the first sentence should be reworded: the use of *but* is somehow confusing.

- The last paragraph consists of one sentence which is too long to be effortlessly understandable.

## References

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