

# Metaphor in conversation

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When people make conversation they use all kinds of devices to convey their messages, including metaphor. Although metaphor is often associated with creative, complex and rhetorical texts (such as fiction, poetry, or speeches), metaphors are actually a characteristic feature of everyday discourse. The type of metaphor used varies per register, from extensive analogies to a single word and from novel comparisons to conventional expressions. Which type of metaphor is typical of conversation can only be established in comparison to other registers. This thesis provides a unique register-specific description of metaphor use in conversation that results from a corpus-based, cross-register comparison between conversation, fiction, academic writing and news texts. It shows how metaphors in conversation can be identified by using an explicit and reliable tool for metaphor identification (MIPVU) and adopts a three-dimensional perspective on metaphor analysis that distinguishes between metaphor in language, metaphor in thought and metaphor in communication. The quantitative analysis takes into account the frequencies, distribution, form, variation and communicative function of metaphorical expressions in casual conversation. Moreover, an experiment focuses on the multimodal nature of conversations by exploring the effect of tone of voice on metaphor processing. The thesis stresses the need for a clear distinction between different areas of metaphor analysis as well as the need for an explicit method for metaphor identification and shows how interdisciplinary, corpus-based and comparative research can lead to valid, new, register-specific insights.



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