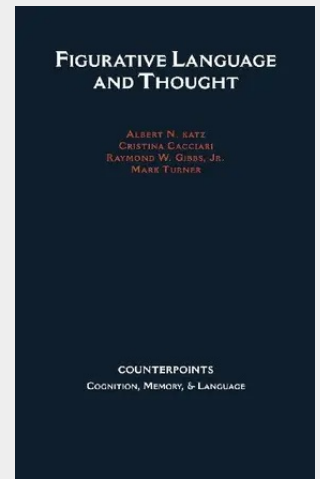


Figurative Language and Thought

Our understanding of the nature and processing of figurative language is central to several important issues in cognitive science, including the relationship of language and thought, how we process language, and how we comprehend abstract meaning. Over the past fifteen years, many traditional theories on these issues have been challenged on the basis of figurative language research. This research has prompted such fundamental questions as: is metaphor primarily a function of thought, or is it merely a matter of language? Why do we prefer to speak metaphorically in everyday conversation, rather than literally? Is metaphor the only vehicle through which we can understand abstract concepts? What role do cultural and social factors play in our comprehension of figurative language? Points on these and related questions will be raised and argued by the book's authors in an integrative look at the role of non-literal language in cognition from investigators who vary widely in their theoretical and philosophical views.

Our understanding of the nature and processing of figurative language is central to several important issues in cognitive science, including the relationship of language and thought, how we process language, and how we comprehend abstract meaning. Over the past fifteen years, traditional approaches to these issues have been challenged by experimental psychologists, linguists, and other cognitive scientists interested in the structures of the mind and the processes that operate on them. In *Figurative Language and Thought*, internationally recognized experts in the field of figurative language, Albert Katz, Mark Turner, Raymond W. Gibbs Jr., and Cristina Cacciari, provide a coherent and focused debate on the subject. The book's authors discuss a variety of fundamental questions, including: What can figures of speech tell us about the structure of the conceptual system? If and how should we distinguish the literal from the nonliteral in our theories of language and thought? Are we primarily figurative thinkers and consequently figurative language users or the other way around? Why do we prefer to speak metaphorically in everyday conversation, when literal options may be available for use? Is metaphor the only vehicle through which we can understand abstract concepts? What role do cultural and social factors play in our comprehension of figurative language? These and related questions are raised and argued in an integrative look at the role of nonliteral language in cognition. This volume, a part of Counterpoints series, will be thought-provoking reading for a wide range of cognitive psychologists, linguists, and philosophers.



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