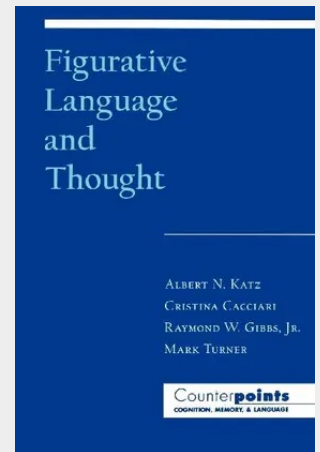


Figurative Language and Thought

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.

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