

Spatial metaphor in pronoun usage and meaning

Agnieszka VERES-GUŚPIEL

The study presents role of spatial metaphor in semantics of pronouns. Spatial metaphor is engaged mainly in expressing various, mainly social, attitudes, and as this source domain is experience-based domain it is widely used for conveying meaning. The distance and proximity can express grammatical and mental distance, plays role in expressing attitude and tabu. Also, in case of plural personal pronouns, space metaphor is used to expressing exclusivity and inclusivity, or such virtual use that conveys more complex meaning as identification with a group or conveys participation in the action scenario. As our language activity, grammatical and lexical choices are governed by the way we perceive our world, and for this study specifically social world, thus the choice of specific pronoun is not only a grammatical choice, but takes part in construing. Distance and proximity expresses positive or negative attitude, solidarity, inclusivity and exclusivity and mental distance, providing also a way to refer to tabu. The above mentioned usage can be observed both in Polish and Hungarian on material originating from the researcher's corpora and others, active in field researchers. (Laczkó-Tátrai 2012, Domonkosi 2010, Tátrai 2012).

Use of language is considered to be a social cognitive process, which is facilitated by cooperative human nature, intentionality and social cognitive abilities (Croft 2004, Tomasello 2002, Verschueren 1999, and Tátrai 2011). Therefore social relations and attitudes to others will appear also in the usage of pronouns, mainly through spatial metaphors. Pronouns are grounding (Langacker 2008) elements and thus basic cognitive processes (perception, categorization, attention, schematization (Maruszewski 2011), will have an impact on our linguistic choices also during social-cognitive activity (Kossakowska-Kofta 2009). To process and understand the social context, we need to mobilize knowledge about the social world which is organized in schemas (see also: Bartlett 1932, Bruner 1957, Neisser 1976). The schemes contain general, abstract knowledge that is applied to specific implementations (Fiske and Tylor 1991). The language symbols used are interpreted by the recipient based on his/her mental state, his/her background knowledge related to the referenced scene and the language symbol schemes related to the reference scene, and on this basis, he/she also interprets the interpersonal relationship offered by the speaker.

Space – as an experience-based domain - is a rich metaphor source for expressing an attitude, politeness, mental distance and tabu and can be expressed

also by pronouns. Although the work presents the function and employment of space in Hungarian pronouns, as the metaphor itself is as universal as the human experience of space, the findings can be applied to other languages. The use of space, the expression of physical distance, is closely related to the expression of attitude, as it processes the behaviour in which a positive attitude is expressed by a decrease in spatial distance and distance is associated with dislike or fear (Pease 2011, see also Hall 1982).

In this sense, the use of V/T forms can be considered not only as a courtesy formula but also by expressing trust and intimacy in the case of T forms, the distance evoked by V forms. It is no coincidence, then, that in addressing systems, T forms evoke closeness, intimacy, trust, and identification, V forms - through the metaphor of space (Tolcsvai Nagy 1999) - evoke distance, and in this connection a relationship of subordination.

The plural personal pronoun forms, and in this case primarily the 1st plural forms appear in few functions expressing solidarity, power, modesty, identification with a group (see also Jobst 2007, Börthen 2010, Łysiakowski 2005), in empathic use or even virtual use signalling participation in action scenario (Veres-Guśpiel 2017). From this point of view, the plural personal pronouns and the inflectional morphemes are capable to express various attitudes, manipulative use, and community formation. Moreover, the use of 1st plural forms can affect the way the recipient interprets the utterance.

Proximity pronouns can be used to express a negative attitude in applications where the proximity pronoun (this, these) replaces the personal pronoun (he, they) and thus objectifies them. Building mental distance appears also when talking about tabus. Tabu notions can be described by not naming directly metaphorical lexical elements, but also one can refer to them with demonstrative pronouns, which are denoting something that is perceived as shameful, or that (in utterer's opinion) shouldn't be named.

Keywords: space metaphor, personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, attitude, proximity, distance, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics

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