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Metaphor and poetic creativity: a cognitive linguistic account

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The issue of metaphorical creativity was studied by George Lakoff and Mark Turner (1989) in their *More Than Cool Reason*. Lakoff and Turner make two very important claims. One is that poets share with everyday people most of the conceptual metaphors they use in poetry and the second is that metaphorical creativity in poetry is the result of four common devices that poets use in manipulating otherwise shared conceptual metaphors. These include the devices of elaboration, extension, questioning, and combining. However, others have shown that these cognitive devices, or strategies, exist not only in poetic language but also in more ordinary forms of language use, such as journalism (see, e.g., Jackendoff and Aron, 1990; Semino, 2008). Moreover, it seems that not all cases of the creative use of metaphor in poetry are the result of such cognitive devices. Mark Turner proposed that in many cases poetry makes use of what he and Fauconnier call "blends," in which various elements from two or more domains, or frames, can be conceptually fused, or integrated (see, e.g., Turner, 1996; Fauconnier and Turner, 2002).

In this paper, I will suggest that in order to be able to account for the full range of metaphorical creativity in poetry, we need to go even further. I will suggest that a fuller account of the poetic use of metaphor requires that we look at the possible role of the context in which poets create poetry. My interest in the role of context in metaphor use goes back to a suggestion I made in my *Metaphor in Culture* (2005), where I claimed that when ordinary people conceptualize an idea metaphorically, they do so under what I called the "pressure of coherence": the pressure of their bodily experiences and the pressure of the context that surrounds them. In later and more recent studies (e.g., Kövecses, 2008, 2009), I suggest that when we speak and think metaphorically, we are influenced by these two factors and that the effect of context is just as pervasive, if not more so, as that of the body. I claim that poets work under the same pressures and that the effect of context may be in part responsible for the creative use of metaphor in poetry. Let me now clarify what I mean by context.

Context in poetry

Context can be used in poetry in two ways:

> Poets may describe the context in which they create poetry.
> They may use context as a means of saying something else.

When the first is the case, we get straightforward examples of describing a scene, such as in Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach*:

> The sea is calm to-night.
> The tide is full, the moon lies fair
> Upon the straits,- on the French coast, the light
> Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
> Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
> Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!

Here we get an idea of what the poet can see from inside a house on the beach: the sea being calm, the time of the day being night, being dark outside with some well lighted places, the French coast being visible, the night air being sweet, etc. The context (scene) is described in an almost literal way. This does not mean, however, that the description of the surrounding context does not have any metaphors. We can suggest that the description of the context is largely literal, though some metaphors are interspersed in the description; that is, in the terminology of conceptual metaphor theory, the surrounding context is the target domain that is described by means of certain source domains. For example, the descriptive statement "the cliffs of England stand" is based on the conceptual metaphor in which the CLIFFS OF ENGLAND functions as the target domain with PERSON as the source domain, as indicated by the metaphorically used verb *stand*. This is not, of course, a major metaphorical achievement by Arnold. It is a completely commonplace metaphor. The point here simply is that an otherwise dominantly literal description of the context may contain certain metaphors, but these metaphors may not be remarkable poetically in general and/or in the particular poem.

From the perspective of poetic metaphors and the study of particular poems, much more interesting are the cases where this more or less literally conceived context is used metaphorically to express meanings that are not normally considered part of the meaning of the context as described. Using conceptual metaphor theory, we can say that the context can function as the source domain and the meanings to be expressed by means of the source domain function as the target. The exciting question in such cases is: What is the meaning (or, what are the meanings) that the dominantly literally-conceived source (i.e., the context) is intended to convey? Consider the continuation of the Arnold poem:

Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen! You hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Although the description of the context continues, there is a clear sense in the reader that the poem is not primarily about depicting the physical location and events that occur around the observer. Indeed, the last line ("and bring the eternal note of sadness in") makes this meaning explicit; the coming in and going out of the waves convey an explicitly stated sadness. But of course we know that waves cannot actually "bring in" sadness or "notes of sadness" – they can only be metaphorically responsible for our sad mood when we hear the "tremulous cadence slow." And this sense of sadness is reinforced in the next stanza:

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

In sum, then, a poet can describe a scene in which s/he writes a poem, or he or she can use the scene in which s/he writes a source domain to talk about things other than the particular scene he or she is in. My concern will be with this second use of context, or scene.

The notion of context is a complex one due to its variety and space- and time-dimension. The kind of context that was considered so far was the physical context, or environment, but there are several others. The notion of context additionally includes the linguistic, cultural, social contexts, and the main entities of the discourse, such as the speaker, hearer, and the topic. As regards the space-dimension of context, we can distinguish between local and global contexts that indicate the endpoints of a continuum from local to global. Finally, we can distinguish between contexts that apply to the present time at one end and those that reach back in time, on the other. The contexts that are global and "timeless" are less interesting for the present project because they provide an extremely general frame of reference for whatever we say or think, or whatever poets write and think. My interest is in the most immediate contexts –

physically, linguistically, culturally, socially, spatially, and temporally. The assumption is that it is these kinds of immediate contexts that most powerfully and most creatively influence the use of metaphors in poetry.

Let me now take the various types of context and provide an illustration for how they shape the use of metaphors in poems.

Physical context

Since I began with the physical context above, let me take this kind of context first and see how it can shape the creative use of metaphors in poetry. For an illustration, let us continue with the Arnold poem:

> The sea of Faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
> But now I only hear
> Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
> Retreating, to the breath
> Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
> And naked shingles of the world.

At work in this stanza are two conceptual metaphors: HEALTH IS WHOLENESS and PERFECTION/ COMPLETENESS IS ROUNDNESS, as indicated by the expressions "at the *full*" (wholeness) an "and *round* earth's shore" (roundness). (The stanza, we understand, is about the health and perfection of the human condition until the coming of the changes that were happening at the time: the changes to the established order of the world in which religion played a major role. These two extremely general metaphors can be instantiated (and could be instantiated by Arnold) in many different ways. The question arises why they are made conceptually-linguistically manifest in the particular way they are; that is, by the metaphor "the sea of Faith." This is, we can safely assume, because of what Arnold saw before him at the time of creating the poem: the ebb and flow of the sea. As the sea retreats, that is, as faith disappears, the world becomes a less healthy and less perfect place.

Knowledge about the main entities of discourse

We can distinguish several major entities of poetic discourse: the speaker (poet), the topic, and the hearer, or addressee (audience).

Speaker/ Poet

The idea that the general physical, biological, mental, emotional, etc. condition, or situation, of the poet can influence the way a poet writes poetry is well known and often taken into account in the appreciation of poetry. Dickinson is a well studied case, as discussed, for example, by Margaret Freeman and James Guthrie. Guthrie has this to say on the issue:

> … I propose to concentrate on the fact of illness itself as a governing factor in Dickinson's development as a poet. We are already accustomed to thinking about ways in which illness or deformity modulate the registers of expression we hear while reading Milton, Keats, Emily Bronte, Lord Byron. For Dickinson, illness was a formative experience as well, one which shaped her entire poetic methodology from perception to inscription and which very likely shook the foundations of her faith. Reading Dickinson's poems in the full knowledge and belief that, while writing them, she was suffering acutely from a seemingly irremediable illness renders many of them recuperable as almost diaristic records of a rather ordinary person's courageous struggle against profound adversity. (Guthrie, 1998: 4-5)

Along similar lines, I suggest that a poet's physical condition, poor health can have an effect on the way he or she metaphorically conceptualizes the subject matter he or she writes about. In my terminology, this is how self-knowledge of one's situation as a contextual factor can affect the often creative use of metaphors. Let us take one of Dickinson's poems as a case in point:

> I reckon – when I count at all –
> First – Poets – Then the Sun –
> Then Summer – Then the Heaven of God –
> And then – the List is done –
>
> But, looking back – the First so seems
> To Comprehend the Whole –
> The Others look a needless Show –
> So I write – Poets – All –
>
> Their Summer – lasts a Solid Year –
> They can afford a Sun
> The East – would deem extravagant –
> And if the Further Heaven –
>
> Be Beautiful as they prepare
> For Those who worship Them –
> It is too difficult a Grace –

To justify the Dream –

The significant question is how Dickinson's optical illness is transformed into metaphorical patterns in her poetry in general and in this poem in particular. I would propose the following analysis that fits my interpretation of the poem. (However, others may have a very different interpretation that may require a very different conceptual analysis.)

In my interpretation the poem is about poetic creativity. Dickinson uses the following conceptual metaphor to talk about it: POETIC CREATIVITY IS A NEW WAY OF SEEING (AS A RESULT OF THE SUMMER SUN). The mappings, or correspondences, that make up the metaphor are as follows:

summer → productive period
sun → inspiration
new way of seeing → being poetically creative (i.e., coming up with a poem)

An interesting property of the first mapping is that the literal summer stands metonymically for the literal year and the metaphorical summer for "always." Thus, poets are always creative; they have a year-long summer.

A second metaphor that Dickinson relies on is POEMS ARE HEAVENS. In this metaphor, the mappings are:

further heaven → poem
worshippers → people reading poetry
God → poet

God's grace, in this metaphor, corresponds to the poet's inspiration. Dickinson's inspiration, however, is a difficult one: it is her optical illness. She writes her poetry by relying on, or making use of, her illness. This is a difficult grace to accept.

In other words, her bodily condition of having impaired vision is put to use in an extraordinary way in this poem by Dickinson. Other poets may make use of their physical condition, or self-knowledge, in different ways. I believe that would be difficult to make generalizations about the precise ways in which self-knowledge of this kind is used by poets. At the same time, this contextual factor may explain some of the apparently strange uses of metaphor in the works of poets.

Topic and addressee

For an illustration of how the addressee and the topic can influence the choice of a poet's metaphors, let us turn to Sylvia Plath's poem, *Medusa*. Here are some relevant lines:

> Off that landspit of stony mouth-plugs,
> Eyes rolled by white sticks,
> Ears cupping the sea's incoherences,
> You house your unnerving head -- God-ball,
> Lens of mercies,
> Your stooges
> Plying their wild cells in my keel's shadow,
> Pushing by like hearts,
> Red stigmata at the very center,
> Riding the rip tide to the nearest point of
> departure,
>
> Dragging their Jesus hair.
> Did I escape, I wonder?

In this poem, the addressee is Sylvia Plath's mother. The question arises why the poet thinks metaphorically of her mother as a medusa – in both senses of this term. What we know is that Plath's relationship to her mother was strained and ambivalent. The strained and ambivalent nature of the relationship is one of the major topics of the poem. In Greek mythology, Medusa is a gorgon with snakes for her hair, who turns people who look at her to stone. We can thus suggest that the negative aspects of Plath's relationship to her mother are analogically reflected in the Medusa metaphor for her ("your unnerving head"). The particular metaphorical image for the mother is provided by the broader cultural context; i.e., Greek mythology. Note, however, that the selection of the image is secondary to the poet's knowledge about the addressee and the topic of the discourse; if her mother had been different, Plath would not have picked the image of the Medusa but something else – an image that would have fit a different mother with different properties. In this sense, I propose that it is the addressee and the topic of the discourse (the poem) that primarily governs the choice of the image applied to the mother – though conveyed in the form of a culturally defined analogy.

As the lines quoted above also suggest, the poet is trying to escape from the harmful influence of the mother. (This can be seen most clearly in the line "Did I escape, I wonder?"). What is remarkable here is that, to convey this, the poet makes use of the other sense of *medusa*: the "jellyfish" sense ("Your stooges / Plying their wild cells in my keel's shadow"). She's trying to get away from an overbearing mother, and the mother is portrayed analogically as jellyfish. Schools of jellyfish move about in the sea, and jellyfish stings can

inflict pain and even death in humans. Thus it can be suggested that the "jellyfish" meaning of *medusa* is used by the poet because mythological Medusa was introduced (in the title) to begin with. The word form *medusa* evokes all the knowledge structures associated with it, and the poet is taking advantage of them, as they analogically fit the nature of the relationship with her mother. Another motivating factor for the use of the second sense is that, according to some commentators, Sylvia Plath developed a great deal of interest in marine biology at about the time she wrote Medusa. This kind of personal interest of a poet may also influence the choice of particular metaphorical images (in this case, the image for the addressee).

Cultural context

As we saw above, the choice of the image of Medusa was in part motivated by the larger cultural context, of which the three gorgons of Greek mythology, including Medusa, form a part. The symbolic belief system is one aspect of Sylvia Plath's cultural system. The poem continues with the following lines:

> My mind winds to you
> Old barnacled umbilicus, Atlantic cable,
> Keeping itself, it seems, in a state of miraculous repair.

Another aspect of the cultural context is the surrounding physical-cultural environment. In the lines, the relationship to her mother is conceptualized metaphorically both as the *umbilicus* and the *Atlantic* telephone *cable*. In the former case, the generic-level conceptual metaphor PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS is fleshed out at the specific level as the umbilicus. This is of course motivated by human biology, not by cultural context. What gives a metaphorical character to it is that we know that the poet is no longer physically-biologically linked to the mother via the umbilicus. The metaphor is probably used to convey the naturalness and inevitability of a strong bond between mother and child. However, the metaphor *Atlantic cable* derives from the surrounding physical-cultural environment. The first transatlantic telephone cable system between Great-Britain and North-America was laid in the 1950s, making it possible for people to communicate directly with each other at a long distance. Through the metaphor, the strength of the biological bond is reinforced, and the *Atlantic cable* can be seen as the temporal (and metaphorical) continuation of the umbilicus.

The cultural context, among other things, includes, as we just saw, the belief system of a person and the physical-cultural environment. Both of these occur in various specific forms in a large number of other poems. The cultural belief system also involves the religious beliefs that are entertained in a given culture. Let us take the first stanza of a poem, *Prayers of Steel*, by Carl

Sandburg.

> LAY me on an anvil, O God.
> Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.
> Let me pry loose old walls.
> Let me lift and loosen old foundations.

Here the poet evokes God and wants God to turn him into an instrument of social change. This making of an "old type of man" into a "new type of man" is conceptualized on the analogy of God's creation of man in the Bible. In other words, the source domain of the metaphor is the biblical act of man's creation, while the target domain is the making of a new type of man who can effect social changes in the world. This means that the source domain is provided by the religious belief system in the culture by virtue of an analogy between God's creation of man and the creation of a tool that metonymically stands for the poet (INSTRUMENT USED FOR THE PERSON USING IT), who can thus function in a new role to effect social change.

A remarkable physical-cultural element that is significant in Sandburg's poetry is the skyscraper. Consider the first stanza of the poem called *Skyscraper*:

> BY day the skyscraper looms in the smoke and sun and
> has a soul.
> Prairie and valley, streets of the city, pour people into
> it and they mingle among its twenty floors and are
> poured out again back to the streets, prairies and
> valleys.
> It is the men and women, boys and girls so poured in and
> out all day that give the building a soul of dreams
> and thoughts and memories.
> (Dumped in the sea or fixed in a desert, who would care
> for the building or speak its name or ask a policeman
> the way to it?)

What makes the skyscraper such a significant symbol and what makes Sandburg choose it to talk about America? The poem was written in 1916 in Chicago. It was at the turn of the 20th century in the major American cities that skyscrapers began to be built on a large scale. The skyscraper became a dominant feature of the cities' skyline. Due to its perceptual and cultural salience, it became, for Sandburg and many others, a symbol of America. The symbol is based on a connection between a salient element (a kind of building) that characterizes a place and the place itself; hence the metonymy SKYSCRAPER FOR AMERICA, which is a specific-level version of the more generic metonymy A CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY

FOR THE PLACE THAT IT CHARACTERIZES. In this case, the characteristic property is embodied in a type of building.

What is additionally interesting about this example is that it is a metonymy, not a metaphor. It seems that metonymies are also set up in part as a result of the local cultural influence; the skyscraper was at Sandburg's time a salient feature of the American landscape that made it a natural choice for a metonymic symbol for the country.

Social context

We have seen above in the analysis of the first stanza of the Sandburg poem that the poet conceptualizes the creation of a new type of man in the form of an implement on the analogy of the creation of man. We can see the same conceptual process at work in the second stanza:

> Lay me on an anvil, O God.
> Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.
> Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.
> Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.
> Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars.

An important difference between the first and the second stanza is that the implement that is created in the first can be used to take apart a structure, whereas the object that is created in the second can be used to put a structure together (steel spike, red-hot rivets, great nail). In other words, first an implement is made that is used to destroy a structure, and then the essential ingredients of a structure are made to construct a new structure. This process of work serves as the source domain for a target domain in which the old social structure is removed by means of a work implement and a new social structure is put in its place by means of a new type of man that can accomplish all this. The new type of man is the poet who does both jobs. In short, this is based on the conceptual metaphor THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SOCIAL STRUCTURE IS THE PHYSICAL MAKING OF NEW TOOLS AND BUILDING INGREDIENTS.

But of course there is more complexity to this conceptualization than a set a systematic mappings that make up the metaphor. The complexities partly derive from the fact that the tools and the ingredients metonymically stand for the poet and that the making of the tools and ingredients metonymically stand for the making of the entire building.

The combined effect of factors

In many cases of the influence of contextual factors on metaphoric conceptualization in poetry, the kinds of contexts we have identified so far contribute jointly to the metaphorical conceptualization and expression of ideas. This situation is another source of conceptual complexities mentioned in the previous section. Let us consider the Sandburg poem again, as analyzed above. Here's the poem again in full:

> LAY me on an anvil, O God.
> Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.
> Let me pry loose old walls.
> Let me lift and loosen old foundations.
>
> Lay me on an anvil, O God.
> Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.
> Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.
> Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.
> Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars.

We have seen that both the cultural and social contexts motivate the choice of certain aspects of the language and conceptualization of the poem. The religious belief system (from the cultural context) serves to think and talk about the making of a new man who can build a new social structure and the model of work (from the social context) functions to talk and think about the construction of the new social structure. But there is an additional type of context that needs to be discussed as it clearly contributes to the poem's world. This is the knowledge the speaker-poet has about himself or herself, as discussed above in the Dickinson example.

The knowledge a poet has about himself or herself includes not only the biological-physical condition the poet is in but also his or her personal history. If we take into account Sandburg's personal history, we can account for why he talks about "Lay me on an anvil, O God / Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar" (and "into a steel spike" in the second stanza). The likely reason is that his father was a blacksmith, and we can assume that the poet had some early childhood experience with the job of a blacksmith. It is a blacksmith who takes a piece of metal, heats it, puts it on an anvil, and shapes it into some useful object. This personal knowledge about the job may have led the poet to make use of this image.

Although both images are simultaneously present and important, the image of the blacksmith overrides the image of God making man. In the Bible, God makes man by forming him from the dust of the ground and breathing life into his nostrils. In the poem, however, the man-object is created by God as a blacksmith. What emerges here is a complex picture in which the creation of the

man-object is accomplished by a God-blacksmith and the resulting man-object is used according to the social model of work as source domain to conceptualize the creation of a new social structure. This is a complex case of conceptual integration, or blending, as proposed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002).

What this analysis adds to conceptual integration theory is that it makes the motivation for the particular input spaces participating in the blend clear and explicit. My specific suggestion is that the integration network consists of the input spaces it does (biblical creation, job of a blacksmith, model of work, and creation of new social structure) because of the various contextual influences that were at work in the metaphorical conceptualization of the poem.

The interaction of context-induced and conventional conceptual metaphors

It was noted in the section on cultural context that the skyscraper became one of America's symbols in the early 20th century. This was the result of the metonymy SKYSCRAPER FOR AMERICA. It was also noted in the section on social context that the metaphor THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SOCIAL STRUCTURE IS THE PHYSICAL MAKING OF NEW TOOLS AND BUILDING INGREDIENTS plays a role in the general meaning of the poem by Sandburg. These context-induced conceptual devices, however, interact with a conventional conceptual metaphor in the poem; it is SOCIETIES ARE BUILDINGS. This conventional conceptual metaphor is a specific-level version of the more general COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE COMPLEX PHYSICAL OBJECTS metaphor (Kövecses, 2002). The SOCIETIES ARE BUILDINGS metaphor consists of a number of fixed, conventional mappings, including:

the builders → the persons creating society
the process of building → the process of creating society
the foundations of the building → the basic principles on which society is based
the building materials → the ideas used to create society
the physical structure of the building → the social organization of the ideas
the building → the society

Since America is a society, it is conceived of as a building, more specifically, as a skyscraper. The conventional conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS A BUILDING is evoked by the poem, but the poet goes way beyond it. He creates a complex image (a blend) with several changes in the basic metaphor: the building becomes a skyscraper, the builder becomes a God/ blacksmith/ poet/ worker, and the building material and tools become the poet. Many of these changes are motivated by contextual factors. The building as skyscraper is motivated by the physical-cultural context, the builder as God by the religious belief system, the

builder as blacksmith by the poet's personal history, and the builder as worker by the social model of work.

I'm not suggesting, of course, that such conventional conceptual metaphors are always present in poems. But I think it is a legitimate claim to suggest that when they are they can be changed and modified largely in response to the effect of contextual factors, such as the ones discussed above.

Conclusions

I believe that the analyses of metaphorical language in poetry I have presented in the paper have certain implications for a variety of issues both for the study of poetry and that of human cognition in general.

First, the analyses indicate that it is possible to go beyond some limited, and limiting, approaches to the interpretation of poetry. Poems and poetic language are sometimes studied from a purely hermeneutical-postmodernist perspective without any regard to the social-cultural-personal background to the creative process. They are, on the other hand, also sometimes studied from a purely social-historical perspective without any regard to the text-internal systematicity of a poem. The approach that I am advocating provides a natural bridge between these two apparently contradictory views in that context-induced metaphors can be seen as both resulting form the social-cultural-personal background and lending coherent meaning structures to particular poems. This view is supported by, for example, Guthrie, who claims:

> Finally, I would add that I am only too well aware that readings based upon biographical evidence are apt to become excessively reductive and simplistic. Nevertheless, in the prevailing postmodernist critical climate, I think we actually stand at greater risk of underestimating the degree of intimacy existing between an author's literary productions and the network of experiences, great and small, that shapes an individual life. (Guthrie, 1998: 5)

A related implication of the analyses for the study of metaphor in poetry is that we can provide an additional source of metaphorical creativity in poetry. The use of contextually-based, or context-induced, metaphors is often novel in poems, simply because the contexts themselves in which poems are created are often unique and/or specific to a particular poet.

Second, the analyses have implications for conceptual metaphor theory (including blending theory). The most recent and dominant version of conceptual metaphor theory have emphasized the importance of primary metaphors that arise from certain well-motivated correlations between bodily and subjective experiences (e.g., knowing as seeing) (see, for example, Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Grady, 1997). These metaphors are, in turn, seen as having a

neural basis (see Lakoff, 2008). In the view that I am proposing, in addition to such metaphor, there are what I call context-induced metaphors that derive not from some such correlations in experience but from the context of metaphorical conceptualization (see, for example, Kövecses, 2005; 2008; 2009). This view can also provide us with a missing link in conceptual integration theory. Blends come from a network of input spaces, where the inputs can be source and target domains. It is, however, not always clear where source and target input domains come from. My suggestion would be that in many cases the presence of such inputs in the network is motivated by the effect of context on the conceptualization process.

Third, the view proposed here may have certain implications for the study of embodied cognition. If it is true that, for example, the physical-biological aspects of a poet can influence his or her metaphorical conceptualization in the course of creating poems, as we saw in Dickinson's case, then embodied cognition is can be based on personal experiences as well – not only universal correlations in experience, as the main proponents of the embodied nature of conceptual metaphors are wont to emphasize. As a matter of fact, embodied cognition in metaphorical conceptualization may be based on a variety of different experiences, including universal through social, cultural, etc. (see Kövecses, 2005) to personal.

Fourth, and finally, the analyses in this paper may point toward a possibly new factor in the classification of poetry. The factor is the role of context in the metaphorical creation of poems. We can think of this factor as producing a continuum at one end of which we find highly contextually-driven poetry and at the other poetry that is devoid of the influence of the local context. We can call the former "localist," or relativist poetry and the latter universalist, or "absolutist," poetry. I do not know if this is a valid (or useful) distinction to make in the study of poetry, but it seems to follow naturally from the approach I have proposed.

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