

Lakoff, George. "Image Metaphors." Metaphor & Symbol 2 (1987): 219-222. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. 30 Sept. 2005.

In order to fully understand the negative effects metaphors can have, it is a good idea to have some general background information on them. The focus of this article by George Lakoff is to help a person relate to a given topic. Lakoff classifies metaphors into two categories, conceptual metaphors and image metaphors. He defines conceptual metaphors as being, "metaphors that map complex conceptual structures in a source domain onto conceptual structures in a target domain" (219). Lakoff also defines image metaphors as, "another type of metaphor that maps conventional mental images onto other conventional mental images by virtue of their internal structure" (219). Lakoff goes on to say that "the images that image metaphors apply to are conventional images – images that are acquired largely unconsciously and automatically over the years by members of a cultural community" (219). This can cause many problems for people that are not in the same cultural community or have not developed those images as of yet. Lakoff also touches on metaphors that he calls "one-shot mapping" (221). These metaphors can cause the most problems because they are not common knowledge and are not used repeatedly. These metaphors are used once or twice and require a great deal of analyzing to understand. Lakoff contends that image metaphors also depend greatly on the imagination of the reader or listener, as it is up to them to make the connection between topics.

This article gives a general background of metaphors and defines certain types of metaphors including the commonly used image metaphor. This article expands on the definition of metaphor given by Lynne Cameron and Kavous Ardalan, but does not give supporting information on how metaphors can cause communication problems.