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Coming out as a multimodal metaphor: Perspectives from gesture and language

Coming out jako metafora multimodalna: Perspektywa gestyczno-językowa

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Ja, niżej podpisany/a

Tomasz Dyrmo

....

przedkładam rozprawę doktorską

pt. *Coming out jako metafora multimodalna: Perspektywa gestyczno-językowa*

na Uniwersytecie im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu

i oświadczam,

że napisałem/am ją samodzielnie.

Oznacza to, że przy pisaniu pracy, poza niezbędnymi konsultacjami, nie korzystałem/am z pomocy innych osób, a w szczególności nie zlecałem/am opracowania rozprawy lub jej istotnych części innym osobom, ani nie odpisywałem/am tej rozprawy lub jej istotnych części od innych osób.

Jednocześnie przyjmuję do wiadomości, że gdyby powyższe oświadczenie okazało się nieprawdziwe, decyzja o wydaniu mi dyplomu zostanie cofnięta.

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(miejscowość, data)   (czytelny podpis)

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Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Communication is inherently multimodal (e.g., Górska 2020, Kress and Leeuwen 2001, Forceville 2020, Cienki 2017, Zlatev 2014, Winiarska and Załazińska 2018). We use written language and combine it with pictures to design advertising campaigns with an intention to convince the potential buyers to purchase a product or a service. These modes of communication seem clear and straightforward because they are often at the forefront of our conscious attentional processes. Gestures may be brushed off as communicatively insignificant, yet in they have been shown to substantially contribute to the spoken message and its perception (see Beattie and Shovelton 2006, Azar and Özyürek 2015, McNeill 2017). For a cognitive linguist, they provide yet another gateway into the human mind and into the ways in which concepts can be semiotically expressed (Załazińska 2016: 37).

When people talk about their coming out experiences in the stories they post online, they also use different types of gestures. Because sexual orientation and gender identity are fundamentally abstract concepts that do not have readily available physical counterparts, the gestures they use are often metaphorical – they do not pertain to the physical, but to the abstract domain of experience. In other words, they give a physical – gestural – manifestation to abstract concepts. In line with this reasoning, the research presented in this thesis deals with both gestural and linguistic expression of metaphoricity in coming out stories.

One may ask, of course, what is so interesting about coming out stories and coming out itself that they merit a scholarly investigation. The simple answer to this question would be: because coming out stories, like most of stories, construct the reality we live

in (Stibbe 2015, Jelec 2020, van Dijk 2008). A quick Internet search revels that, at the time of writing this thesis, there are approximately 22 900 coming out stories published on YouTube alone, with many more expressed only in writing on personal blogs, Facebook groups, and in forum comments. The more elaborate answer would be that coming out stories, and coming out as a conceptual metaphor, have just begun to be explored from a linguistic, and in particular from a cognitive linguistic perspective. The most current studies on the subject investigate, for example, how coming out as a transgender person is expressed both in language and in gesture (Lederer 2019), and how people conceptualise coming out when they offer advice on how to come out (Chirrey 2020). There are also studies that have investigated coming out in different contexts than sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Some of these include the study of coming out as a violent person (Gottzén 2017), person with obesity (Saguy and Ward 2011), as a non-drinker (see Romo 2018), or as a chronically ill person (e.g., Myers 2004). Yet, there is still not much more in the field of cognitive linguistics that offers a broader perspective on coming out narratives and coming out metaphor. This thesis aims to at least partially fill in this gap. In particular, the research answers the question of how coming out experiences are expressed metaphorically in gesture and speech.

1.2. Coming out

This section is divided into two parts. In the first part, I talk about coming out as a social phenomenon, highlighting its social importance for the LGBT+ community more globally. The next part discusses coming out as a linguistic and conceptual phenomenon, as seen through the lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Queer Linguistics.

1.2.1. Coming out as a social phenomenon

In his book, *Closet space: Geographies of metaphor from the body to the globe* (2000), Brown pays particular attention to the relationship between the act of coming out and the

physical environment. He notices that "[t]he closet metaphor is often described as a specific place, and the coming-out process entails a physical move from one place to another" (2000: 37). This becomes more explicit later on:

> The expression's [i.e., *coming out*, added by the author, TD] inherent mobility equates the subject's self-identification and truth telling to physical mobility of the body. A quite recurrent theme in these narratives was that of having to move to another place in order to know oneself as gay. It wasn't enough just to open the closet door; one had to leave its interior for a different location (Brown 2000: 48).

This is a noteworthy quote because it focuses on the social aspects of coming out, as seen through the linguistic expression itself: as a linguistic expression, according to Brown, it prompts people to change their physical location to feel more secure and more like themselves. Only then they feel that they can express themselves fully. This agrees with the interpretation of coming out as a speech act offered by Chirrey (2003) that focuses on how the social institutions reinforce the heteronormative social roles. Seidman (2004) draws a parallel conclusion, although they are in a slightly different spirit: "[c]oming out feels good and makes more choices possible, (…), the visibility alone does not threaten privilege" (2004: 7). This fragment, too, makes a direct reference to the social landscape in which coming out is situated: heteronormativity. It is suggested that coming out metaphor – and therefore its social extension – exists predominantly in those societies where heteronormative standards are taken as the default.

In analysing the way coming out can be understood, Gusmano (2008, 2018) establishes that the act of coming out may be recognised as "a way of performing sexual identities" (2008: 475), which stands in opposition to coming out being an act of resistance towards heteronormative standards. In Gusmano's understanding, even "staying invisible" (2008: 482) is a somehow agentive act because a person makes a conscious decision to stay in the closet. She also refers to outing, a forceful revealing of somebody's sexual orientation or gender identity as coming out. Outing, nonetheless, is passive, in contrast to coming out, which is an act of explicit agency.

Chester et al. (2016) investigated the nature of an online coming out, happening in the cyberspace. In a series of interviews, they found frequently recurring themes of gay men's experiences: these were the experiences of social homophobia, internalised homophobia, and their past non-online disclosures to the family and friends. Participants also expressed what they feared after having revealed their identity: a general disapproval of

their lifestyle, losing friends, and hurting those who were close to them. These recurrent themes seem to be universal, at least in the light of the present research. Similar conclusions about the content of coming out stories will emerge later, in the analytical part of the thesis.

1.2.2. Coming out as a linguistic and conceptual metaphor

Apart from being a social phenomenon, coming out functions in a linguistic context. Chirrey (2003), has paid attention to how language expresses coming out. In particular, coming out is understood as a locution which should be adequately adjusted to a given interlocutor, or otherwise it cannot be effective. Chirrey also notices that coming out functions as a transformative act: the speaker changes the way they are seen by the person they come out to, which amounts to a standard pragmatic perlocution (2003: 31-32).

A different take on coming out is outlined by DiDomenico (2015), who analyses coming out experiences from a more story-oriented perspective. Essentially, stories are often designed in order to make people interested. DiDomenico notices that LGBT+ individuals "enact categories" in their narratives (2015: 617), meaning that a person who comes out as gay is clearly a gay person, and a transgender person comes out as clearly transgender. These performative expectations make the coming out individuals give up on the nuances of their identity, in order to present themselves as belonging to one clear category.

Motschenbacher (2019) conducted an informative piece of research in which he investigated how Ricky Martin was presented linguistically in media reports before and after his coming out. The results of his study have shown that the pre-coming out scenarios were often focused on his ethnicity, sexual desire and professional life (music and his engagement in humanitarianism). After coming out, these scenarios have visibly changed: they were oriented towards his sexual identity, political leanings, and his romantic relationship. Family scenarios, initially absent from the pre-coming out reports, were also put to the fore of the media debate.

From a cognitive linguistic perspective, coming out has been analysed as a conceptual metaphor (see the next section for a detailed description of Conceptual Metaphor

Theory). Chirrey (2020) investigated Internet advice texts on how to come out. She found that, frequency-wise, the most common source domain was the domain of MOVEMENT (66%), followed by the domain of CONFLICT (18%), GAMBLING GAME (6%), WORK (5%), BUILDING (3%) and lastly DEVELOPMENT (2%). Interestingly, the mappings of the journey metaphor included several quite generic elements: travellers are understood as people who come out, the start of the journey is being in the closet and the end of the journey is being out. The events that happen in the meantime are events in the coming out process, and forks in the path are the potential life choices related to coming out. Forward progress is understood as coming out and the travelled distance – the measure of progress in coming out (2020: 18-19). My studies expand on the proposals offered by Chirrey. In Dyrmo (2022c), I offer a multimodal analysis of coming out, showing that gestures can form discursively coherent scenarios alongside speech, motivated by a generic metaphor of KNOWING IS SEEING. In Dyrmo (2022b), it has been shown how different levels of schemacitiy hierarchy (from image schemas to metaphorical scenarios) participate in the metaphoricity of coming out. A mental model of coming out emerges, built upon the image schemas of ITERATION, CONTAINER, and FORCE; the domain of MOVEMENT and TRANSFER, which in turn feed into the general frame of coming out. This frame, when enriched with narrative and evaluative elements, gives rise to metaphorical scenarios of revealing one's sexual orientation.

This concludes an overview of how coming out is understood from both a social and linguistic perspective. The next part of the thesis is devoted to Conceptual Metaphor Theory in more detail.

1.3. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) operates on the assumption that language and language use reflect basic cognitive processes. Metaphors, therefore, are the more general mechanisms of thinking and some of them get lexicalised via entrenchment and frequency of use (Lakoff and Johnson 2003 [1980], Kövecses 2005, 2017, 2020, Langacker 2008). Principally, however, metaphor researchers propound the idea that metaphorical mappings – abstract correspondences between two domains – are the mappings between

domains of thought in the human conceptual system, not the semantic domains in language only. By words of Lakoff and Johnson:

> If anything is central to Cognitive Science, it is the nature of the human conceptual system. We have found that that system is fundamentally metaphorical in character. That is, it contains metaphorical as well as nonmetaphorical concepts, and the metaphorical structure is extremely rich and complex. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 195)

This richness and complexity of the metaphorical element in the human conceptual system is best attested by the many studies that have been conducted in the vein of CMT since its conception to the present day. The area of metaphor studies is both methodologically and thematically vast and interdisciplinary: for this reason, the survey of the studies presented below is necessarily quite selective yet kept fairly representative of the number of perspectives and approaches in the metaphor research today.

Early on, research in CMT was centred on the question of how metaphorical conceptual system is structured. In a pioneering cognitive semantic study, Kövecses (1986) investigated the structure of selected human emotions: anger, pride and love. His analysis revealed that such emotions are often conceptualised in terms of FORCE, CONTROL and BALANCE. These and many more abstract concepts, according to Kövecses, are organised in structured metaphorical systems that may exhibit various degrees of prototypicality. In a later study, Kövecses (1991) investigated the concept of happiness that is conceptualised by an array of abstract concepts, for example by the concept of RAPTURE, SANITY or CONTAINER, lending more credence to the assumption that human conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical and some of these metaphors form structured systems.

A slightly different approach has been taken by Sweetser (1990). She adopted a diachronic approach to metaphorical conceptualisation and concluded that many metaphors came into being via the process of semantic change. For example, in the Mind-as-Body metaphor, the domain of seeing is used to mean understanding. The link is between these two domains is strong: English *comprehend*, a synonym to *understand*, derives from a Latin word *comprehendere*, which means *to seize* (1990: 28). She strongly argued in favour of the concrete-to-abstract direction of metaphorical extension, claiming that perceptive verbs that have come to express metaphorical concepts (KNOWING IS SEEING, for example) were used in the past to describe physical activity.

A rich avenue of research in the vein of CMT has been Discourse Analysis, in which conceptual metaphors have played a crucial part. Zinken (2007) has put forward the idea of a discourse metaphor, which is "an intermediate stage in the life course of a successful figurative expression – from an innovative analogy to a conventional lexical concept" (2007: 450). This means that discourse metaphors occupy the middle place between an unconventional expression that has just been invented in a communicative community and a fully "conventional conceptualisation" (2007: 462). Goatly (2007) takes a similar although distinct, discourse-oriented perspective on metaphor: according to him, metaphors are "cognitive filters" (2007: 25) and what we see in discourse is mediated via the metaphors that are employed. Goatly goes as far as to suggest that, indeed "metaphors have a potential to challenging the common-sense categories of knowledge" (2007: 28), which means that employing a particular metaphor in discourse will effectively change the way the discourse topic is perceived by a larger discourse community. At the same time, Goatly acknowledges the adaptive role of metaphors: we create and use them because they are helpful mediators between what we know and what we do not know (2007: 33).

A discourse dynamic approach to metaphor opened doors to analysing metaphorical language in face-to-face conversations (e.g., Cameron 2007, Gibbs and Cameron 2008, Cameron et al. 2009). In this approach, metaphors are thought of as dialogic devices, the meaning of which is actively negotiated by conversational partners in talk. Within this approach, metaphors are created online, in the "talking-and-thinking" process (Cameron 2007: 109). This entails that metaphors that have been used in a conversation do not disappear into vacuum, but they "are left behind as a trace of the discourse system" (Cameron et al. 2009: 66), which may be brought later and reused or renegotiated for different conversational purposes. Metaphor is therefore not conceived of "as a tool" but a shared "activity" (Cameron et al. 2009: 67), effectively adding more nuances to how metaphoricity emerges in discourse.

At roughly the same time, attention of metaphor scholars has been occupied by the notion of embodied cognition and its connection to metaphorisation. Gibbs (2006) says, for example, that in order to understand what people say, we need to simulate the person's experiences, at least to some limited extent. Metaphorical conceptualisation in embodied simulation, according do Gibbs, operates on the assumption that "(…) metaphoric language is rooted in bodily processes that people may imaginatively recreate during their ordinary use of such language" (2006: 436). In other words, metaphorical

concepts are born out of our bodily and daily experiences with the world. This assumption had been present in cognitive linguistic research earlier, but it later provided some stimulus for considering gestures a source of metaphoricity and this aspect of embodied cognition will be discussed later in the thesis.

Many different operationalisations of metaphor in cognitive terms have been brought about, one of which is a storytelling-oriented account of metaphorical conceptualisation offered by Ritchie (e.g., 2010, 2011, 2017). Following the embodied simulation paradigm mentioned earlier, Richie has suggested that stories activate certain kinds of simulations, for example those of emotional kind. It has been also claimed that "[m]etaphors often imply stories, and it is likely that simulations experienced through these stories contribute to the effectiveness of metaphors" (Ritchie 2010: 140), suggesting, possibly, that the more relevant, known, or otherwise salient a story is, the more effective the metaphor becomes. In a similar vein, when metaphors co-construct stories, they actually invite the listener(s) to contribute and finish the story, showing the creative potential of metaphorical conceptualisation. From this perspective, metaphors may become "story metaphors" (Ritchie 2017: 230), which are known as allegories and function as salient and culturally relevant pieces of discourse in a given community.

More recently, the question of when, if at all, metaphors may be used deliberately has gained some weight. This is a relevant question because if metaphors are cognitive in nature, they should fall into the so-called "cognitive unconscious" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Steen (e.g., 2008, 2017) devised a revision to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which proposes that some metaphors may indeed be used deliberately, for example when they are consciously recognised as stylistic, rhetoric devices (Steen 2008: 244). Steen claims that metaphors are deliberate when their primary purpose is to direct a recipient's attention to the non-literal aspect of a given phrase or utterance (2008: 227). Similarly, Steen acknowledges that deliberate metaphors are consciously elaborated and commented upon, which is an intentional act on the part of the speaker (2017: 13). Müller (2011) says, in the context of Deliberate Metaphor Theory, that metaphors can actually be activated by means of certain "turning devices" (2011: 62), such as "figuratively speaking" or "sort of" (2011: 62). Müller also notices that metaphors are not binary in nature – it is not that some aspect of the communicated message is metaphorical or not; in fact, metaphoricity is rather a gradable phenomenon, which may be activated to various degrees in different contexts (e.g., Müller 2008). This aspect of metaphor research is relevant in cognitive

linguistic approach to gestural meaning making and will be touched upon in the later part of the thesis.

One of the he most recent developments in CMT is the "levels of metaphor" approach (e.g., Kövecses 2017, 2020), which assumes that metaphors can be decomposed into several levels: from image schemas, through conceptual domains, frames, right up to metaphorical scenarios. The co-called Extended Theory of Metaphor, proposed by Kövecses (2020), assumes that metaphors are compositional, meaning that they can be decomposed into smaller units of conceptual structure. Kövecses explicitly states that "metaphors (…) simultaneously [involve] conceptual structures, units, on a variety of different levels of schematicity" (2017: 2). Following the notion of schematicity (Langacker 1987), Kövecses proposes that metaphors are composed of image schemas, at the highest level of schematicity, followed by domains, frames and mental spaces (metaphorical scenarios) at the lowest level of schematicity. This contribution to CMT will be discussed and elaborated on in more details in Article 2 (Dyrmo 2022b).

1.3.1. Multimodality in Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory has assumed from its very inception that metaphors are not only ornamental figures of speech nor poetic devices. Most famously, Lakoff and Jonhson (2003 [1980]) claim that "[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (1980: 3). If metaphors are cognitive – that means they reflect how we think – then they cannot be limited to language only. As early as in 1996, Charles Forceville, with his influential monograph *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising*, transports research on metaphor into the area of multimodality. His analysis of pictorial metaphors in the domain of advertising has showed that metaphor is indeed the preserve of thought because it can be found in yet another mode of expression apart from language – pictures. These attempts to include additional modalities stem partially from the need to disarm the circular argument in CMT. McGlone (2001), for example, says:

> How do we know that people think of theories in terms of buildings? Because people often talk about theories using building-related expressions. Why do people often talk about theories using building-related expressions? Because people think about theories in terms of buildings. Clearly, the conceptual

metaphor view must go beyond circular reasoning of this sort and seek evidence that is independent of the linguistic evidence (2001: 95).

The line of reasoning McGlone proposes here is that linguistic evidence is not enough to make strong claims about the conceptual character of metaphor. His reasoning is rather that we need additional source of evidence that is "independent of linguistic evidence". This implies that if we want to show the conceptual character of metaphors, we need additional modes of expression that account for it. That is, we need multimodality in metaphor.

Multimodal metaphor is understood as a metaphor in which multimodal metaphor is that its "target and source are rendered exclusively or predominantly in two different modes/modalities" (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi 2009: 4). There are many modes of metaphorical expression, from which I have chosen a representative sample to illustrate how metaphor scholars have overcome the circularity argument. I focus on gestural modality specifically in the later part of the thesis.

A great deal of research has been done on metaphors in the visual modality. Górska (2019), for example, analyses the role of activation of metaphoricity in cartoons, focusing on their image-schematic properties. In her analysis of Kapusta's cartoons, which are based on geometric shapes, she notices that "LOVE is depicted as the enclosure of two people within a rectangle" (2019: 283). This conceptualisation of love is predominantly based on the metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS (BOUNDED SPACE), which is also true of coming out conceptualisations, as will be shown later in the thesis. In similar vein, Szawerna (2018) provides an analysis of how metaphoricity emerges in comic books. In his analysis, he finds that in coming books events can be visually represented as objects, following the metaphor EPISODIC EVENTS ARE OBJECT, providing another line of evidence for the objectification theory put forward by Szwedek (e.g., 2014). Another study on multimodal metaphor has been carried out by Bort-Mir et al. (2020), in which they investigated the reception and interpretation of filmic metaphors from the domain of perfumery by members of different cultures. By implementing the paradigm of think-aloud protocols, they aimed to answer a series of questions concentrating on the possible variability of interpretations of filmic metaphors. 90 participants were asked to interpret what was happening on the screen online. They were audio- and video-recorded and their answers were then coded and analysed. Significant variability in how people from different

cultures interpret visual metaphors has been found: American participants, for example, tend to use PERFUME IS SEA WATER metaphor more often than Spanish participants.

An interesting study has been conducted by El Rafaie (2013) who has investigated how semiotic resources are used in order to create a metaphorical meaning, often unexpected. By introducing the term "cross-modal resonances" she captures the emotional nature of metaphor interpretation. She analyses two pieces of art, both of which refer to incarceration and both of which have certain personal undertones. She interprets the metaphors of incarceration as operating at the level of "constraining relationship", which is quite a conventional way of understanding unhappiness (2013: 242). She notices that metaphorical conceptualisation is sometimes impossible to put in words, and yet people are still able to understand the message conveyed visually in a metaphorical way.

Perez-Sobrino (2016), in an investigation of multimodal metaphor and metonymy in advertising, has addressed the questions whether there is any kind of preference in expressing conceptual domains in certain modes of expression. Having analysed a corpus of 315 annotated conceptual operations, 56% of which were metaphors, she came to the conclusion that source domains are predominantly presented in a visual mode (65%), followed by verbo-pictorial mode (27%), with verbal mode being the least frequent (7%). As for target domains, the proportions were much different: Visual mode was used in 39% of all the metaphors, 35% in verbo-pictorial and 24% in verbal only. She concluded, based on the results, that the best way to advertise a product effectively is to present the metaphor in both the visual and textual mode. A more recent and more comprehensive analysis of figurative communication is offered by Perez-Sobrino et al. (2021) in their book *Unpacking Creativity: The Power of Figurative Communication in Advertising*. In a series of studies, they aimed to further investigate the workings of figurative language in advertising. Several interesting findings have emerged. First of all, they established that people who saw an advertisement with metaphor and metonymy for a second time felt more engaged in it than those people who saw it only once (2021: 103). They also found out that metaphor is more persuasive than metonymy and the effect was true for all study participants (2021: 112). They have also taken a look at the interaction between emotions and figurative operations (such as metaphor, irony and hyperbole) used in an advertisement. It's been shown that resemblance metaphors mainly trigger surprise, in contrast to metonymy, which is a trigger for positive emotions (2021: 179).

In a quite recent book, Simon Unwin (2019) presents metaphorical conceptualisation from the perspective of architecture. An interesting example he gives is that of a womb

metaphor: Unwin says that ancient tombs were built so as to resemble a womb, and adds, that "[t]he womb is one of the oldest and understandably most enduring metaphors in architecture" (2019: 6). He also notices the structural similarity between stone circles and "the circle of people" (2019: 10), representing a group of people standing close together. Although he does not give any interpretation of this metaphor in cognitive linguistic terms, it might be easily interpreted as one of the PROXIMITY-DISTANCE metaphors, in which people that form a circle are close to each other as a community.

Another study in which the multimodal character of metaphors is shown is the study of horror movies by Winter (2014). He analyses a set of orientational metaphors, namely GOOD IS UP and DOWN IS BAD and their entailments in order to account for the choices directors make in presenting space in horrors. In his analysis of the film *The Cabin in the Woods*, he notices that "the evil is triggered beneath ground level" (2014: 153). A similar pattern is followed in the film *Aftershock*, in which the building of a church (GOOD) is situated above the ground level (UP) and the hidden basement – underground.

An interesting concept is developed by LeMesurier (2014). LeMesurier speaks of a metaphor that "evoke[s] remembered embodiments" (2014: 365), meaning a somatic metaphor. Somatic metaphors come from schematised movements that have been passively remembered via muscle memory. Somatic metaphors "activate bodily memories quickly through connotations that draw on memories of embodied experience" (2014: 365). It is worth nothing here that the notion of somatic metaphor does not concern gestures only, but they are emergent embodiments that come into being for example during dance classes or acting. In other words, they "summon body-centric experiences" (2014: 372). It means that we can treat the category of somatic metaphor as an umbrella term for all body-oriented metaphors, including verbo-gestural metaphors that are elaborated upon in Article 3 (Dyrmo 2022c).

1.3.2. Gesture as a mode of metaphorical expression

Cienki (2008) rightly argues that "[o]ne should be able to find metaphoric expressions in various forms of human behaviour, and not exclusively in language" (2008: 5). These various forms of human behaviour undoubtedly include gestures, which, if they convey metaphorical meaning, become metaphoric gestures.

The definition of metaphoric gestures is often presented in the context of iconic gestures because of how they differ in what they present. Whereas, according to McNeill (2005), iconic gestures "present images of concrete entities and/or actions" (2005: 39), metaphoric gestures "present images of the abstract" (2005: 39). In his description of metaphoric gesture, McNeill points to object-related gestures, meaning those metaphorical gestures that pertain to abstract concepts as if they were physical object occupying space (2005: 39), which he later calls "a discursive object" (2005: 50). And indeed, one of the main strains of gesture research focuses on the meaning of object-related metaphorical gestures. One of the early descriptions of object-related gestures is that offered by Bavales (1994). She calls these gestures "delivery gestures" (1994: 312) because they are used in order to 'hand over' the new information to the speaker. This is an indirect reference to the conduit metaphor, introduced by Reddy (1979), who says that communication can be conceived of as transport of objects from the addressee of the message to the recipient of the message. In an interesting study on how students spontaneously produce figurative language and gestures, Corts and Pollio (1999) found that people also quite frequently make use of object-related gestures when they talk about abstract concepts. For example, they noticed that while describing alcoholism, a lecturer said that "alcoholism is not a disease inside somebody's skin", and at the same time produced a series of "sharing-an-object" gestures (1999: 94). This is an interesting observation because it shows that there need not be an explicit reference to object in speech in order for a metaphorical gesture to surface. Cienki (2004) also found similar metaphors in the gestures produced by American politicians. For example, one of the Bush's metaphorical gestures is that of "a firm solid, straight object" (2004: 429), which is accompanied by the word "strong". This, in turn, shows that metaphorical gestures may elaborate on what is being conveyed in speech. Parrill and Sweetser (2005) found another interesting metaphorical mapping in gesture, namely PROCESS IS ITERATIVE MOTION (2005: 210), which is accompanied in speech by "wandering around idly", which also refers to motion, but it lacks the sense of interactivity present in gesture. They also make an important note about how metaphorical gestures operate in the domain of programming, which is an inherently abstract domain. They say that "there is no way of representing the programming domain itself -that is, gesture about a program can only be metaphorical" (2005: 212). This means that there are certain conceptual domains that cannot be rendered physically, and they have and always will have to be understood and expressed figuratively. Sweetser and Sizemore (2008) analysed a videotaped lecture on Cognitive Science. They found,

similarly to their previous study, that processes can be conceptualised gesturally as motions that are circular. For instance, when talking about word retrieval, the lecturer used circular gestures with one finger close to the side of their head to express the schematic elements of the process: it's composed of repeated action. They also found that stopping can be metaphorically expressed as a horizontal barrier (Sweetser and Sizemore 2008: 46). Enfield (2009), analysing the discussion of family relations, establishes the mapping between time and space and its metaphorical gestural enactment. He notices that family relations are mapped into space relations: the concept of father occupies a higher position in gestural space and the concept of son – lower (2009: 212). A study of metaphorical gestures is offered by Calbris (2011). She specifically refers to one example of metaphor, which is a metaphor of self-protection, expressed by palm-forward gesture. She says that "the reflex action (…) represented by the physical elements of this co-speech gesture communicates a deep meaning" (2011: 16). In their 2013 article, Cienki and Mittelberg offer another definition of metaphoric gesture:

> Metaphoric gestures inherently involve the compression of representing a physical form, relation, or motion which maps onto an idea, relation, or process which is abstract, or at least not physical. (Cienki and Mittelberg 2013: 146).

This is a significant departure from an original McNeill's definition. They explicitly say that metaphoric gestures reflect something that is "abstract, or at least not physical". This means, presumably, that metaphoric gestures do not have to express abstract concept only, but they may represent something that is not physically available. They do not provide any example of such a concept but it might be assumed that they may mean ideas connected with elements of the physical matter that are too small or subtle to be perceived with the naked eye, such as forces between atoms or atoms themselves. Ladewig (2014) offers an extensive discussion of CYCLE image schema, which may be the "source domain in the metaphoric mapping process" (2014: 1612). Cycle image schema can be found, according to Ladewig, in many metaphors. For example, MIND IS A MACHINE, BODY IS A MACHINE, TIME IS MOTION THROUGH SPACE and THINKING IS A PROCESS IN A MACHINE (2014: 1614). It is interesting to note that the machine itself is not represented in gesture. What is enacted is only a part of the concept of a machine, meaning mental operations are conceptualised in terms of (electrical?) circuits (1614: 1614). McNeill et al. (2015), in their discussion of space as discourse, say that discourse itself

may be seen as a very generic metaphor (2015: 267). Different concepts are ascribed to different regions of metaphorical space in gesture. For example, as they state in the paper, moral values that were actually displayed by a person were placed in the central plane of the space, whereas those that were only appearances were assigned to the left side of the gestural space. The study conducted by Lewis and Stickles (2017) offers yet another perspective on metaphoricity in gesture. They aimed to experimentally investigate whether gesturing in a certain way will impact the perception of time. Specifically, they asked their participants the question: "Next Wednesday's meeting has been moved forward two days. What day is the meeting on now?" (2017: 9). At the same time, they also used two types of gestures: the sagittal away gesture – where the gesture goes from the space before the speaker towards the speaker and the sagittal forward gesture, which is the reverse. Interestingly enough, they found that 'away-gesture' participants responded that the meeting was moved to Friday, which was surprising. In the 'toward-gesture' condition, more participants responded that the meeting was moved to Monday, which supported the study's prediction.

Schröder (2017) investigated how metaphors in gesture differ in the context of culture. She found out a metaphor of TERRITORY present both at the gestural and spoken language. Schröder says that "[the metaphor, added by TD], is elaborated in greater detail and on a more specific level resulting in a more complex metaphor" (2017: 504). She also discusses the image schema of CONTAINER in the context of openness to other cultures. More generally, it is shown that image schemas play an important role in metaphorical gestures, for example by expressing the source domain of a metaphor image-schematically, as in CULTURES ARE CONTAINERS metaphor.

Müller (2014) discusses the topic of object-related metaphor, directing particular attention to the notion of how gestures recur. She specifically analyses the Palm-Up Open-Hand gesture and says that this gesture form is used especially when showing or manipulating an object are salient elements of conceptualisation of a given phenomenon or action. The topic of recurrent gestures will return in the analytical part of this thesis.

An important contribution to the concept of metaphorical gesture is made by Harrison (2018) in his book *The Impulse to Gesture: Where Language, Minds and Bodies Intersect*. Harrison specifically addresses the question of how negation is expressed in gesture and claims that it is conceptualised in terms of blockage. He notices that, to express negation in gesture, people employ the Vertical Palm gesture which means that they want to keep the metaphorical object away from themselves (2018: 87). Vertical Palm is

therefore "the gestural equivalent of stopping an utterance" (2018: 87). His data attest to more metaphorical conceptualisations in gesture, for example the metaphor TIME IS SPACE, which is evidenced by a gesture that moves along a horizontal axis to denote passing time (2018: 119). Harrison also makes an interesting observation about refusal expressed gesturally: the gesture actually metaphorically depicts throwing something away, as if to take it away from the field of vision (2018: 181).

Masi (2020), in his study of gestures in TedTalks presentations, finds out that the concept of SECRECY is metaphorically conceptualised in gesture. From the analysis it appears that the concept of SECRECY is contrasted in terms of the occupied gestural space with the concept of OPENNESS. Secrets, according to Masi occupy "a small space between fingers" (2020: 10), in contrast to "the more visible space between two hands" (2020: 10), which are supposed to represent a more open attitude. This is an interesting observation because, presumably, both of these metaphors operate on a more generic metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING, which is also frequently found in coming out narratives, as will be evidenced by the analysis in Article 3 (Dyrmo 2022c). The same is also true of another gesture found by Masi, namely the gesture of "covering something", which corresponds in speech with "keeping salaries secret" (2020: 11).

In their 2021 study, Hart and Winter (2021) analyse discourse-related gestures in anti-immigration discourse of Nigel Farage. They claim that, in order to legitimise his standpoint, Farage uses a specific, rhetorically effective type of gestures, including metaphorical gestures. He uses metaphors based on the concept of containment in gesture in order to present that that a country may be "opened or closed" (Hart and Winter 2021: 11) to immigration. They also find a metaphorical gesture denoting size, namely MAGNITUDE IS SIZE, that is expressed in the context of "sheer volume of people" in speech. The authors claim that gestures may contribute to the discursive legitimisation strategies: to expresses denial, palm-down gestures are used; to foreground "othering", hands get extended away from the torso; to express proximity, hands more towards the torso.

Having presented a selective sample of studies related to metaphorical gestures, I now proceed with a short description of the structure of the three articles constituting the thesis.

1.4. The structure of the thesis

The structure of the next parts of the thesis follows this order:

The article *Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?* (Dyrmo 2022a) elaborates on the connection between body and language and argues for a more inclusive approach within the cognitive linguistic enterprise towards both sex- and gender-related categories. Within this approach, categories of sex and gender are treated not as strictly binary, but fluid and prone to change over a lifetime. The article provides the overall theoretical framework for the two later articles presented in the thesis.

In the next article, *A multilevel model of coming out* (Dyrmo 2022b), an extension of Kövecses's approach to conceptual metaphor is proposed (see Kövecses 2017, 2020), with an application of the extended approach to coming out narratives in English. The results of the analysis are a multilevel model of coming out, which takes into account conceptual structures of varying levels of specificity, from the most schematic image schemas to the least schematic and context-dependent metaphorical scenarios.

Metaphorical scenarios served as a point of departure for the last article in the series, *Gestural metaphorical scenarios and coming out narratives* (Dyrmo 2022c), where an extension to the idea proposed by Musolff (e.g., 2004, 2016) is offered. Gestural metaphorical scenarios are verbo-gestural equivalents to the lexical metaphorical scenarios and show that gesture can form coherent and discursively meaningful stories alongside speech.

The thesis closes with the general conclusions from the above-described studies and proposes directions for further research.
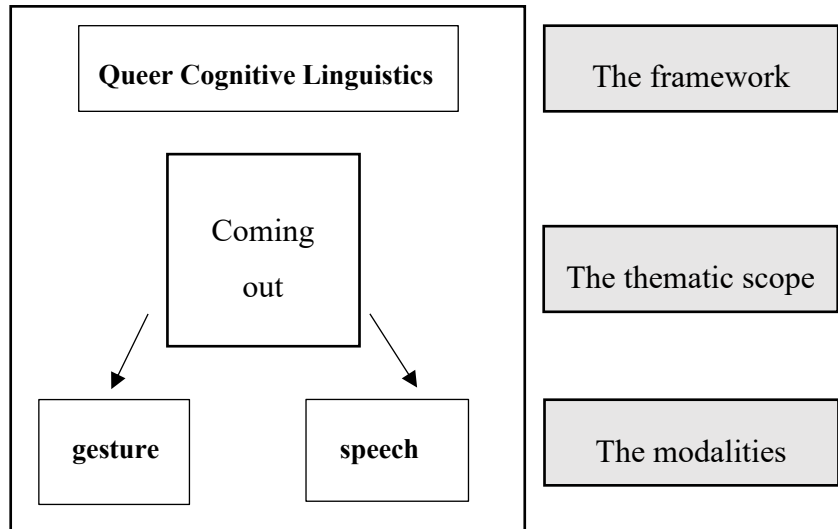
Figure 1. A visual representation of the thesis

Article 1: *Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?*

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Dyrmo, Tomasz. 2022a. „Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?", tekst i dyskurs, 16: 241-257.

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Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?

This article proposes a more inclusive approach to the concept of gender, identity, and non-normativity. Gender is often used in research as a binary category, leading researchers to misrepresent the more complex reality. Taking a more inclusive perspective on how people differ in terms of their body and body perceptions and accepting gender as a fuzzy category make research in linguistics more inclusive in terms of the communities we study and the methodologies we use. Queer Cognitive Linguistics (QCL) proposes a non-reductive approach to language and cognition, recognising the complexity of the human conceptual system. QCL treats universality in human cognition with caution and posits, after Embodied Sociolinguistics, the two-way embodiment, where the interactions between body and language are both bidirectional and intertwined.

Key words: queer cognitive linguistics, metaphor, gender, coming out, pronominal reference

Czy potrzebujemy kognitywnego językoznawstwa queerowego?

Celem artykułu jest wskazanie na bardziej włączające podejście do pojęcia płci, tożsamości oraz nienormatywności. Płeć jest często używana w badaniach jako kategoria binarna, co prowadzi badaczy do stawiania ogólnych pytań. Obranie bardziej inkluzywnej perspektywy na to, jak ciała oraz pojęcia związane z ciałem różnią się i różnicują, pozwala uczynić językoznawstwo bardziej inkluzywnym pod względem badanych społeczności i używanych metodologii. Kognitywne Językoznawstwo Queerowe proponuje nieredukcyjne podejście do języka i myślenia, biorąc pod uwagę złożoność ludzkiego systemu pojęciowego. QJK podchodzi do uniwersalizmu ludzkiego myślenia ostrożnie, postulując, za socjolingwistyką ucieleśnioną, ucieleśnienie dwubiegunowe, w którym interakcje między ciałem i językiem są obustronne i wzajemnie się przenikają.

Słowa kluczowe: queerowe językoznawstwo kognitywne, metafora, gender, coming out, odniesienie pronominalne

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Brauchen wir eine kognitive Queer-Linguistik?

Das Ziel des Artikels ist es, einen inklusiveren Ansatz für die Konzepte von Geschlecht, Identität und Nicht-Normativität aufzuzeigen. Das Geschlecht wird in der Forschung oft als eine binäre Kategorie verstanden, was die Forschenden dazu veranlasst, eher allgemeine Fragen zu stellen. Eine inklusivere Perspektive auf die Unterschiede und Differenzierungen von Körpern und körperbezogenen Konzepten trägt dazu bei, dass die Linguistik in Bezug auf die untersuchten Gruppen und die verwendeten Methoden inklusiver wird. Kognitive Queer-Linguistik schlägt angesichts der Komplexität des menschlichen Begriffssystems einen nicht-reduktiven Ansatz für Sprache und Denken vor. Kognitive Queer-Linguistik geht mit der These des Universalismus des menschlichen Denkens vorsichtig um und postuliert, in Anlehnung an die Embodied Sociolinguistics, eine bipolare Verkörperung, bei der die Wechselwirkungen zwischen Körper und Sprache wechselseitig und miteinander verflochten sind.

Schlüsselwörter: kognitive Queer-Linguistik, Metapher, Geschlecht, Coming Out, Personalpronomina

1. Introduction

The interaction between language and cognition seems straightforward – language is one of the higher cognitive processes via which we categorise elements of the world (e.g. Langacker 2016). Metaphor scholars have mostly accepted that figurative language aids us in understanding complex ideas in terms of less complex ones (e.g. Fabiszak 2007, Kövecses 2020, Musolff 2017). It follows from this that the world that we understand via linguistic categories is far more complex – the categories we use may mislead us into taking the current understanding of social phenomena as static and unchanging. Gender is such a category.

Penelope Eckert says:

> Gender has emerged as the primary social constraint in variation. It is primary because gender is fundamental to every political economy, and problematic because its treatment as a male–female binary erases dynamics that are at the center of the relation between gender and language use (Eckert 2014: 529).

This article tackles the issue of limiting gender to a binary category as mentioned by Eckert. I want to show, coming back to the long-held cognitive linguistic assumption of non-discreteness of conceptual categories, that gender- and sex-related categories may constrain our understanding of cognitive processes. Next, I demonstrate that many categories regarded in research practice as binary are not that dualistic. Finally, I show that the growing diversity in

gender-related categories and their use in discourse has an impact on how scholars understand and apply the concept of gender in research and that applying only binary categories may lead to misrepresentations in language use. For example, coming out (revealing sexual orientation and/or identity) is sometimes claimed to be a linear process (see e.g. Coleman 1982), yet more recent research started to see its more complex nature (Guittar 2014). A more flexible perspective on gender and gender-related categories lets us reflect on how to operationalise variables in linguistic research to make them more reliable and inclusive in scholarly practice. A similar research has been done in Polish, for example by Rejter (2013), Kępińska (2006), and Łaziński (2005) who focus on both grammatical and embodied gender. Rejter says, for example, that "it would be productive to systematically elaborate on the notion of gender by focusing on these aspects that are statistically marginalised" (Rejter 2013: 8), adding further that "what's proposed by (…) cognitive approaches to language turns out to be extremely helpful in studying (…) aspects of language and gender" (Rejter 2013: 24)[1]. This is the guiding principle of the paper.

A neighbouring discipline, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), has offered an informative account of how language, including figurative language, can affect people's thinking about social phenomena. It has been noticed that CDA "is concerned with discourse on topics which explicitly fall within the social and political realm" (Hart 2010: 93) and gender-related discourse surely meets this requirement. Hart maintains that CDA supports the idea that language should always be suited within the social practice and that language "can determine, to some extent, conceptual representation" (Hart 2010: 94). This assumption echoes the idea voiced much earlier, for example in Koller's work on gender in professional contexts (Koller 2004). In her critical study of gender in a workplace, she takes as a starting point the idea that "cognition informs ideology in the form of (metaphoric) mental models, which are drawn on its discourse production" (Koller 2004: 42). It means that the metaphors we use influence the social reality we live in, which, she later proposes, helps certain metaphors "rise to hegemonic prominence" (Koller 2004: 42) and become the dominant metaphors operating in the workplace discourse and influencing social relations between discourse participants. These metaphors, following Gibbs and Siman's (2021) idea, can be rejected, either at the linguistic, psychological, or social level, making room for new metaphors that can be potentially more productive. In a similar way, Lazar (2007) provides insight into how feminist critical discourse analysis helps to analyse "taken-for-granted gendered assumptions" (Lazar 2007: 142). She claims that the feminist approach to critical discourse studies problematises the idea of gender as an "ideological structure" (Lazar 2007: 156) and tries to challenge it. Both feminist critical discourse analysis and CDA are also concerned with

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[1] Translated from Polish by the Author.

the notion of power. For critical discourse analysts, power plays a crucial role in establishing social hierarchies, and those, in turn, influence who produces and distributes discourse. Lazar (2017) in her later article comments on the ways power relates to gender-related stereotypes: they either help to establish a dominant ideology or subvert it (Lazar 2017: 582). Hart says that "non-powerful members often have only limited access to alternative Discourses and therefore do not necessarily recognise discourse as ideological" (Hart 2014: 4). A non-reductive approach to gender proposed here puts a spotlight on these members of the discourse community whose discourses may be cast as marginal, hence powerless. Highlighting the presence of such alternative discourses necessarily directs attention to those aspects of the linguistic structure and – consequently – the conceptual structure that might go unnoticed when not purposefully foregrounded.

Before we go into details about queering Cognitive Linguistics (CL), let us overview the issues that are common to both CL and Queer Linguistics (QL).

1.1. Variation

Variation is discussed in cognitive linguistics rather broadly and in many contexts (e.g. Littlemore 2019, Mussolf 2021), as it pertains to 'not just […] cultural, national and societal but also [to] individual level' (Mussolf 2021: 3). This means that (metaphorical) variation should be analysed at the level of individual perceptions and conceptualisations, with the entailed cognitive, cultural and social differences. Geeraerts notices similarly that "[w]ithout such variation, the language as the semiotic system used in a given community is the same for each and every member of that community" (Geeraerts 2016: 3), which may lead to overgeneralised research questions and misrepresentation of language in use.

Yet, as there are many sources of variation, some of them have been studied more, some less thoroughly. Littlemore alerts us to the fact that embracing variation and diversity in cognitive linguistic research, specifically in metaphor research, stems from challenging the assumption of "normal and prototypical people" (Littlemore 2019: 49) and their 'normal and prototypical' conceptual systems. We can, therefore, ask if we should analyse those conceptualisations produced by non-normative people. Does it give us any more insight into the workings of the mind? These questions pull us towards a more inclusive approach to studying metaphor in language by accepting that social concepts are not static but gradable and dynamic (e.g. Croft, Cruise 2004; Geeraerts 2016, 2017), a claim that is deeply entrenched in cognitive linguistics, yet still not fully explored in non-normative populations.

1.2. Gradability

Gradability describes the features of categories, especially the fact that they are non-binary and can form a continuum. Thus, gradability refers to the degree

of prototypicality of a given concept, for example the concept of metaphoricity. In cognitive linguistics, metaphors can be more or less conventional (e.g. Chiappe et al. 2003; Gibbs, Colston 2012) or more or less active (Müller 2008). The concept of metaphoricity does not have well-delineated boundaries (e.g. Littlemore et al. 2016, Yurchenko et al. 2020). That is, the fact that the concept of metaphor is prototypically structured entails some fuzziness within the category.

In QL, the notion of fuzzy/gradable categories is also of major importance. It is explicitly claimed that "[i]ntersectionality pushes back against reductionist and essentialising characterisations" (Cashman 2018: 439), meaning that members peripheral to the category are also relevant and should not be glossed over. QL asks the provocative question of whether "one needs to pre-assume and contrast two binary macro-categories, female and male, whose average behaviour is treated as a normative yardstick" (Motschenbacher, Stegu 2013: 521). QL proposes an approach that does not try to average out central characteristics of gender categories by basing them on prototypical meanings.

This characterisation points to the course taken by some cognitive linguists attempting to challenge binary thinking about categories. Steen et al. say (emphasis mine, TD):

> The cognitive linguistic idea is that our thought and language are metaphorical in *roughly the same ways for everyone because of a number of constant parameters in human experience*; this is an important and exciting proposition, but it also *is a gross idealization* when it comes to observing variation in usage (Steen et al 2010: 767).

A uniform conceptual system is appealing because it offers a possibility for major generalisations. The fact that we all have bodies provides a baseline for creating a uniform model of the way we think, use language, and produce/understand metaphors. Yet, if we look closely at usage, we notice that people do not have the same bodies and do not experience them in the same way. Jenny Lederer's analyses of the metaphors used by transgender individuals confirm this observation (Lederer 2015, 2019). As pointed out by Lederer, people who undergo gender transition feel that they are divided "someplace in between" (2015: 113). The metaphor, called by Lederer the metaphor of DIVIDED SELF, is used by transgender individuals to conceptualise the struggle between the internal and the public self (Lederer 2015: 107). Moreover, it highlights the fact that they are somehow between two genders: the one they were assigned at birth and the one that they feel is their own. In the 2019 article, Lederer points out that binary conceptualisations are visible in gesture (Lederer 2019: 38–41), but the same binary categories are later contested by transgender individuals (Lederer 2019: 49–50) and gesturally "scare-quoted", indicating that they do not match their subjective experiences.

The next section offers a brief analysis of some of the recent takes on variation in metaphor and how to expand these proposals by embracing a more dynamic and granular perspective on gender.

2. Variation in metaphor studies

Kövecses claims that "[s]ince the human body and the brain are predominantly *universal*, the metaphorical structures that are based on them will also be predominantly *universal*" (Kövecses 2020: 11, emphasis mine, TD). This claim warrants, as previously noticed, that we can make generalisations on the grounds of the universality of human biology. For instance, the domain of sexuality and gender, the predominance of male/female dichotomy in research, provide a stable background for researching "gendered metaphors" (Koller, Semino 2009: 13). It is not a problem that researchers want to analyse the gender-metaphor relationship in the context of masculinity and femininity. From such research, we can infer that people are forced to use certain gendered metaphors by the situations they are in (Semino, Koller 2009: 54) or that women regularly use "feminine" metaphors, e.g. of FOOD PREPARATION and DOMESTICITY (Philip 2009). It has been explicitly stated that metaphors referring to gender reinforce gender-related stereotypes (Charteris-Black 2009: 144). Those studies enrich our understanding of how gender influences metaphor use and what metaphors are used to understand gender.

Yet, if we look at the study conducted by Hegstorm and McCarl-Nielsen (2002), we can start speculating about how procedures influence and reinforce constructed social categories. The authors sought to check which (gendered) metaphors are used to describe either familiar or unfamiliar people. They decided to anonymise the study by asking participants only about their first names. Later, the authors decided to exclude sixty-one participants from the study as it was impossible to identify the sex of the respondents by their first name only[2] (Hegstorm, McCarl-Nielsen 2002: 225). This study raises some questions about gender/sex concepts in research. Firstly, the researchers do not explicate the difference between (biological) sex and gender. Secondly, the problem with sex assignment conducted by the researchers themselves makes it clear that binary gender categories, when indicated by an English name, are not easy to establish, even within a binary, seemingly unproblematic approach.

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[2] There were other reasons for excluding participants from the study, yet the sex-related one seems to be the most prominent. The authors enumerate the reasons: (a) No first name was provided, (b) the first name did not identify the sex of the respondent (e.g. Chris, Pat), (c) there was no reference to the sex of the person being described, and (d) the respondent did not use metaphors or similes (Hegstorm, McCarl-Nielsen 2002: 225).

We can agree that every situation is different and dynamic, as is also metaphor use (e.g. Cameron 2007), but the variation stems from the fact that people come into communicative events with their own (embodied) experiences. Cameron says that "[…] participants are continuously interpreting each other's words and contingently adapting their own ideas as their intentions and emotions evolve" (Cameron 2007: 109). Thus, people are not static in the way they think. They are rather, as Cameron states further, "dynamic systems" (Cameron 2007: 111). Although Cameron does not refer to the problem of gender binarity in research, we can apply the idea of complex systems to people whose identity is dynamic and ever-changing, who identify as queer or gender fluid (e.g. Baker 2018) or who are in the process of gender transition. Variability is not a concept that can be applied only to interactions. Variation in cognition and language comes from the fact that human beings are inherently cognitively and socially diverse.

3. Different bodies – different metaphors

In cognitive linguistic studies, embodiment has been used to describe the universal character of human conceptualisation. Benjamin Bergen refers to embodiment in metaphor saying that "the embodied metaphor story is a story about how we come to think about abstract concepts, basing our understanding on concrete perceptual, motor and affective experiences" (Bergen 2019: 22). This approach directs our attention to how abstract concepts can be explained by some more concrete features, e.g. movement or space. This is true when we look at language and cognition globally, as research suggests that physical motion facilitates comprehension of movement-related linguistic expressions (e.g. Gibbs, Colston 2012; Wilson, Gibbs 2007).

Embodiment may be understood slightly differently, as coming from the inherent complexity and diversity of the human population. Littlemore, for example, says that "[p]eople with different bodies, which do not correspond to the so-called norm, may experience embodied metaphors in very different ways" (Littlemore 2019: 49). This claim rings true when we refer to the members of the LGBT+ community and non-normative populations. Kövecses's claim about universality is true, yet what counts as universal at the most general level of embodiment is not universal when we zoom in. As individual bodies differ fundamentally, so do the ways people use and interpret figurative language.

3.1. Body (dis)appearing

Littlemore further notes that:

> […] *gender* is a *relatively stable bodily feature*, so whether one occupies a male or a female body is *likely to impact upon the way in which metaphor is embodied*. On the other hand, much of the recent work in gender studies has focused on the *socially constructed nature of gender, which suggests that the interaction between gender and embodied metaphor is likely to be complex* (Littlemore 2019: 113, emphasis mine, TD).

There are several important issues raised here. Littlemore speaks of gender as a bodily feature and its impact on how metaphors are embodied. The binary approach to investigating gender and metaphor has been used by many researchers in metaphor scholarship (e.g. Ahrens 2009), yielding interesting results on how the categories of masculinity and femininity influence metaphor use. Yet, Littlemore highlights that the concept of gender is socially constructed, which entails (with the concept of biological sex) fuzziness and complexity. This is an interesting proposition and invites a more inclusive take on the gender-metaphor relationship.

Surprisingly, Littlemore notes that "our conscious attention is *normally directed towards the world*, our body tends to *disappear* from our conscious thought" (Littlemore 2019: 119, emphasis mine, TD). Yet, it is not always the case, as shown in studies on non-normative gender identities or gender-related concepts, such as coming out and sexual orientation and identity. These studies[3] of non-normative discourses show that people do pay attention to their bodies (or body-related experiences) when the body constitutes the primary point of reference for their stories.

One departure from the dualistic gender embodiment is the paradigm of Embodied Sociolinguistics, proposed by Bucholtz and Hall (2016). Their idea of embodiment rests on the very notion of having a body. They claim that "[t]he body is far from stable, shifting across time and space as speakers collaboratively construct new investments in the semiotics of physicality" (Bucholtz, Hall 2016: 183). This contrasts with the idea of a prototypical and stable body. This aspect of dynamically changing conceptualisations is not new – it has been advocated in dynamic system theory, as mentioned above, as well as in the paradigm of ecological cognition (e.g. Szokolszky 2019), and seems to be much needed in contemporary approaches to metaphor and gender-related categories.

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[3] See for example Cobb, Starr 2012; Ho 2020; Littlemore, Turner 2020; Tay 2017.

4. Dynamicity in language and identity

Before we discuss the question of how coming out is subject to variation, let us reflect on how socially constructed and dualistic categories exhibit prototypicality. It is interesting to observe that gender-related categories vary even when researchers take a binary approach. This has been noticed in Mio's (2009) study of metaphor and humour. Mio noticed that even when we take the dualistic approach to gender, there is some in-between fuzziness between the categories of male and female, expressed in the study as "androgynous". The study reports that whereas sex-typed men assessed disparaging metaphors as more humorous and sex-typed women as the least humorous, the androgynous type (as established by Bem Sex-Role Inventory) was somewhere in the middle in the results. This approach, as we can see, offers a more flexible approach to sex and gender categories and makes the study more ecologically valid. Moreover, the study illustrates that even pre-established categories are fuzzy. It confirms the claim of QL that "[p]roblematising gender allows to recognise incoherencies or marginal category members that are frequently glossed over in a quantitative approach" (Motschenbacher 2010: 8). QL, hence, tries to find more leeway for those categories that may be treated as marginal and/or are prototypically constructed. If we accept that gender-related categories flexibly change over a lifetime, it helps us to notice and account for more variability in conceptualisation.

4.1. Dynamicity in coming out

Coming out is considered a dynamic process, not a one-time event (Guittar 2014). This dynamicity is critically commented upon in the following way: "Coming out is often positioned as *a structured, formulaic process* through which gay and lesbian persons will experience all or most of a series of stages, until the process is completed" (Guittar 2014: 10). This approach to coming out seems to be quite straightforward. Non-normative individuals come out to others about their non-normativity and when they do it many times, they finally reach the end of the process. Guittar proposes a more flexible understanding of coming out, the concept of a career (Guittar 2010: 115–131). This understanding differs from the process because coming out in the career frame never actually ends. People who come out do it to themselves many times across their lifespan as their identities evolve, and then come out to people around them. Because gender and sexuality are regarded as fluid rather than static, it is reasonable to assume that people who re-discover or re-conceptualise their sexual/gender identity may want to come out again, each time with a different identity. This is noticed by Guittar:

> […] sexual identities are *becoming increasingly fluid*, and individuals are reporting having experienced a great deal of fluidity. Some people experience only an internal

sense of fluidity as they move through a series of self-affirmations (…). *Other people demonstrate fluidity by moving through multiple identities*, both privately and publicly, each of which results in the disclosure of their sexuality to whomever they decide to share this information. *This latter group often finds themselves coming out multiple times to some of the same people, even themselves* (Guittar 2014: 122, emphasis mine, TD).

This observation links queer linguistic considerations of gender-related identities to the cognitive linguistic idea of fuzzy categories. Guittar states that sexual identities are fuzzy (fluid), in that they change over time. Some people seem to never have a stable identity and they need to come out again and again. Notably, there is a visible relationship between coming out and identity. Because coming out may be understood as a career or a process, the identities and/or orientations people come out with are by default not static, but dynamic. Some of those re-conceptualisations are only internal when non-normative people need to affirm and embrace their identity, some others, on the other hand, have a more public character. In other words, some coming outs are only internal, when people accept their non-normative identity or sexual orientation, and some are external and internal, when they also communicate to the public about their non-normativity. This points to several sources of variation in gender concepts and coming out. Firstly, the body we have influences our identity and sexuality, expressed in the language we use and in the discourse we create. Secondly, since identity and sexuality are fluid (or fuzzy), people need to come out time and again to break the heteronormative stereotype. This iterativity is likely to change people's concepts and the way they understood gender-related categories. It is not only embodiment that may change how we conceptualise the world. It is also the way we think of our body in both the physical and psychological sense.

4.2. Pronouns and non-binarity

In the next two subsections, I offer a comparison between the use of the pronoun 'they' in four online dictionaries: *Longman*, *Oxford*, *Cambridge* and *Macmillan*. I contrast the dictionary entries of the pronoun with the actual language use from coming out narratives shared by non-binary individuals on the Internet.

4.2.1. Dictionary use of *them/they*

To illustrate how gender-related categories and language are connected, it is worth looking at pronouns. Because non-binary people experience and express gender differently, so they may conceptualise and use gender-related concepts, for example, pronominal reference. For non-binary people, identifying neither as

male nor female, pronouns constitute a vital element of coming out, especially in legitimising their identity.

Before we look at the non-binary pronominal reference, let us focus on the conventionalised uses of the pronoun 'they'.

1 used to refer to two or more people or things that have already been mentioned or are already known about

Bob and Sue said *they* wouldn't be able to come.

4 used when talking about someone who may be male or female, to avoid saying 'he or she' (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, online[?])

If anyone has any information related to the crime, will *they* please contact the police?

In LDOCE, in usage (1), 'they' refers only to 'people' in the plural and is used to signal their discursive presence. Moreover, the first example in the dictionary shows that 'they' refers to people who have prototypically male and female names, perhaps in order to show that 'they' can be used to refer to either of the two genders. In (4) the meaning does not refer to whether 'they' can be used to signal the already existing referent, but to signify that 'they' is used when the gender of the referent is unknown or irrelevant, still maintaining the binary divide between male and female.

In *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*[?], the situation is quite similar. The first, most salient usage is that of "people, animals or things that have already been mentioned or are easily identified", only later pointing to "[…] *he* or *she* to refer to a person whose sex is not mentioned or not known" and lastly, to 'they' as "people in general". *Cambridge Dictionary*[?] describes 'they' in the same way.

The *Macmillan Dictionary*, of the four examined here, mentions the use of 'they' in reference to people who identify as non-binary[?]:

5 used as a singular pronoun by and about people who identify as non-binary

The singer has come out as non-binary and asked to be addressed by the pronouns *they/them*.

Notably, the context presented here is that of coming out. It may mean that coming out is the salient context where non-binary individuals address their need of being referred to as they/them. It might be the case that this is one of the very few contexts where this usage may be used quite unambiguously. Let us now turn to the selected examples of 'they' used in coming out narratives.

[?] https://www.ldoceonline.com/
[?] https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/
[?] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/
[?] https://www.macmillandictionary.com/

4.2.2. Them/they in coming out narratives

Some fragments taken from *www.whenicameout.com*, a publicly available repository of coming out stories, serve as an illustration of 'they' used in the non-binary contexts:

(1) I told her that I feel like I'm not female or male. *She still uses she/her pronouns, when I asked her to use they/them.*

(2) However she doesn't really like talking about this kind of stuff for some reason, and even though *I've told her on multiple occasions that I prefer they/them*, she still uses she/her to refer to me.

(3) She refused to call me by my preferred name, and used *they/them* pronouns for about a day (…)

(4) She still uses she/her pronouns, when I asked her to use *they/them*.

As can be seen, sense (5) in *Macmillan* reflects the changing nature of the 'they' pronoun as used by a non-binary individual. Yet, although this is accepted in one dictionary, it does not mean that people will start accommodating to the usage in a new context. The examples above show that non-binary people struggle with coming out at the linguistic level. While people who come out as gay do not usually need to worry about their pronouns being unacknowledged, non-binary people revealing their identity face linguistically expressed rejection, which is clearly visible in examples (1)–(4). When the linguistic aspect of their identity is left unrecognized, non-binary people do not feel that they have been accepted:

(5) Later when I came out to my class, *people kept deadnaming and mispronouncing me*, saying, 'Same thing' or 'You know what I meant'. Later by the people in my class I got bullied (still am being bullied) *and called an 'it.'*

In the above example, language becomes a means for bullying and ridiculing a non-binary person by using the name they used before coming out and purposefully changing their pronouns from 'they/them' to 'it'.

The above comparison shows that, although dictionary definitions may offer a more inclusive approach to language use, more time is needed for the change to be normalised in everyday life.

4.3. Coming out and performative tensions

One issue is raised by Chirrey (2020), who examines coming out metaphors. She states that "[…] the choice of conceptual metaphor within the texts reinforces heteronormative and homonormative ideologies […]" (Chirrey 2020: 9). This shows that homonormative approaches to metaphor also operate on established conceptualisations of revealing sexual orientation or gender identity. This observation appears accurate when we look at what DiDomenico (2015) says about the expectations people have towards LGBT+ people who tell their coming

out stories: "there exists a tension between conceptions of the self and how it ought to be narrated during specific communicative activities" (DiDomenico 2015: 608). These tensions, called "performative expectations" (DiDomenico 2015: 621) that LGBT+ individuals orient towards, pose difficulties for those who want to come out as they need to choose which identity they want to present. Strikingly, even when people want to inform others of their non-normativity, they are expected to conform to some genre norms. They need to adjust the language (and metaphors) of the audience and follow the coming-out genre-specific rules. For instance, one of DiDomenico's interviewees had to orient her narrative towards people for whom racial and religious contexts were relevant, avoiding subjects that would be too specific (DiDomenico 2015: 621).

5. Discussion and conclusions

Alan Cienki admits that "[t]he richness of language use gets forgotten or pushed aside because it has to in order to have the control of different variables needed in the study" (Cienki 2020: 187). This has been demonstrated by Hegstorm and McCarl-Nielsen (2002) in their study on gender-related metaphors about familiar and unfamiliar people. In this study, enforced male/female binary categories, useful in establishing patterns in male-female conceptualisations, do only partial justice to the complexity of gender as an analytic category. Queer Linguistics agrees that certain prototypes of gender categories are more often exploited in linguistics than others and this practice is not always uncalled-for (Motschenbacher 2010: 7). Rather, Queer Linguistics invites researchers to take a more inclusive approach to language and to use a more complex scales in measuring such dynamic concepts as gender and identity.

The analysis of pronouns conducted in the vein of QCL expands the research grounds by focusing on non-binary individuals, who have so far received marginal treatment on their conceptualisations and language use. By focusing on 'they', it becomes clear that a new context-dependent usage has emerged. This usage, noted in some dictionary entries, has not reached conventionalisation beyond the group of non-binary people. Yet, QCL makes the analysis more fine-grained and sensitive to patterns of language use, here specifically to the patterns of pronominal reference of non-binary individuals that might have otherwise been unnoticed.

QCL also expands the repository of materials for analysis. Personal accounts of LGBT+ individuals, their experiences, and coming out narratives, have not been systematically analysed in cognitive linguistic studies, apart from some noteworthy exceptions mentioned earlier. This approach invites researchers to

reach out to LGBT+ individuals and include their conceptualisations and language use in their research practice.

Describing Historical Queer Linguistics (HQL), William Leap says that HQL "considers relationships between language and the possibilities, messiness, and out-of-sync temporalities of sexuality in settings other than the immediate historical moment" (Leap 2020: 40). In light of this definition, Queer Cognitive Linguistics can be understood as *considering the relationship between language, cognition and categories of non-normative and non-prototypical gender(s) and sexuality(ies)*, establishing as a research focus the queerer approach to language and cognition. Taking a queerer perspective on language and cognition allows us to take a broader and non-reductive view on language and cognition in terms of human sexuality and gender. If we accept that LGBT+ people highlight what is important for them in each moment and make their identities context-sensitive, then it is easier to account for variability in human communication, language, and cognition. QCL and CL share two fundamental elements. Both are interested in how language use reflects cognition. Both are also concerned with embodiment. QCL focuses more on how non-normative individuals conceptualise the world via their bodies, that is how their objective bodily experiences surface in language use and discourse structure more broadly.

Methodologically, QCL focuses more on non-normative groups. Consistent with Littlemore's approach, non-normative individuals realise metaphors in a different way than people who are closer to the prototypical centre of the category 'gender' and/or 'sexuality'. Experimentally, QCL concentrates more on data from non-normative individuals and how the processing of gender-related metaphors differs from the processing of the same metaphors by normative populations. In analysing archival data, QCL encourages researchers to expand the repository of analytical categories, adding, for example, non-binarity between the prototypical male and female binaries. In research practice, apart from including individuals who have been underrepresented in linguistic research, QCL allows for a broader perspective on how socially constructed categories manifest in language.

In terms of metaphor, we extend the paradigm of "social variation" (Langacker 2016: 9) to non-normative gender variation. Non-normative gender variation entails that people are not assigned to pre-established socially constructed categories on the grounds of prototypical features, such as their names or gender roles. Non-normative gender variation invites the two-way notion of embodiment (Bucholtz, Hall 2016: 173), where "bodies produce language" but also "language produces bodies". Thus, the bodies we have influence conceptualisations, and the language we use constructs body-related discourses. Littlemore notices that "members of minority groups […] are forced to see the world through the eyes of others and to borrow metaphors from the dominant group" (Littlemore 2019: 105).

What I am proposing here is therefore not a radical paradigm shift, but a modest nod to the idea of fuller inclusivity. If we accept that "metaphors are like a series of brush strokes" (Charteris-Black 2012: 213), then, taking a broader view of gender, sex, and body, we can paint a more accurate, complex and vivid picture of reality.[8]

This article is programmatic and proposes a research focus that is more concerned with non-normative cognition. Its aim has been – through a succinct overview of some cognitive linguistic studies and a case study of pronominal reference – to present how the inclusion of non-normative individuals may enrich our understanding of the human conceptual system. A more fine-grained and larger in scope analyses is the next step to show how non-normativity emerges from large amounts of linguistic data.

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[8] At the time of writing this article, Bigeye National Study (n = 1975) finds that 52% of respondents agree on the existence of non-binary identities and that they form a spectrum (https://lp.bigeyeagency.com/hubfs/Gender_BeyondtheBinary.pdf).

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Article 2: *A multilevel model of coming out*

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A multilevel cognitive model of coming out

Wielopoziomowy kognitywny model coming outu

Abstrakt

Biorąc za punkt wyjścia wielopoziomowe podejście do metafory pojęciowej, niniejszy artykuł przedstawia analizę narracji coming outu zgodnie z modelem zaproponowanym przez Zoltana Kövecsesa (2017), począwszy od schematów wyobrażeniowych, poprzez domeny, ramy i scenariusze metaforyczne. Artykuł opisuje, w jaki sposób te poziomy wzajemnie na siebie oddziałują i współtworzą znaczenia metaforyczne na poziomie struktur mentalnych, które motywują wybory językowe w narracjach ujawniania orientacji seksualnej bądź tożsamości płciowej. Analiza materiału językowego pozwala na stwierdzenie, że wysoko zindywidualizowane historie opierają się na powszechnych, mniej skomplikowanych mechanizmach poznawczych.

Słowa kluczowe: coming out, metafora pojęciowa, iteracyjność, metafora wielopoziomowa

Abstract

The article explores coming out narratives, as its starting point employing a multilevel approach to this phenomenon in line with a model proposed by Zoltan Kövecses (2017), applying image schemas, domains and frames, and metaphor scenarios. It describes how these levels interact with each other to construe the metaphoric meaning at the level of mental structures which motivate linguistic choices in coming out narratives concerning sexual orientation or gender identity. The analysis of the linguistic material reveals that highly individualised coming out narratives are underpinned by less complex cognitive mechanisms.

Keywords: coming out, conceptual metaphor, iteraction, multilevel metaphor

1. Introduction

Cognitive linguistics seeks to uncover the underlying elements of the conceptual structure – expressed linguistically – that are common to those sharing a given set of experiences (e.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Geeaerts 2006). For example, when somebody comes out of the room, they move from one place to another. Movement is one of the most common yet hardly perceptible experiences. We know that if we come out of the basement where we were looking for a jar of jam, we will find ourselves in another familiar place. The experience of leaving a place and entering another gives rise to metaphorical mappings STATES ARE LOCATIONS and CHANGING STATES IS CHANGING LOCATIONS (in Grady 1997 called primary metaphors, Peña 2004 and Rousch 2018 call them sub-metaphors of the Event Structure Metaphor) that help us understand abstract concepts.

Coming out metaphor, when decomposed, reveals primary conceptual structures underlying it. "Coming out", a linguistic metaphorical expression, is understood as revealing one's sexual orientation/gender identity (see Chirrey 2020). This definition highlights that 'coming out' is a metaphorical expression in which the source domain is made explicit. Some researchers state that coming out is 'a movement of LGB sexuality from inside to outside […]' (Lovelock 2017: 3). The definition makes the metaphoricity of the expression clear, foregrounding its schematic properties (Dyrmo 2022, Lederer 2019). Coming out is also 'an ongoing process of always *becoming* rather than coming out' (Klein et al. 2014: 301). How this ongoingness comes into being linguistically has not been thoroughly addressed yet. Chirrey (2020) offers one detailed analysis. Starting with the notion of Event Structure Metaphor, she claims that coming out is conceptualised as JOURNEY. Under this interpretation, travellers are people who come out, the start of the journey is being "in the closet" and the end – being "out". In the analysis of coming out advice texts, she found out that the metaphor of JOURNEY is used most frequently, followed by the metaphor of CONFLICT, GAMBLING GAME, WORK, BUILDING, and DEVELOPMENT. This article complements the above study and puts forward a hypothesis that coming out is complex and iterative, and can be broken down into smaller conceptual components. Following Kövecses's claim that conceptual metaphors may be analysed at various levels of specificity (Kövecses 2017: 2, see also Kövecses 2020a, b), I propose **a multilevel model of coming out**, built on image schemas, domains, frames, and metaphorical scenarios.

2. Coming out data and ethical concerns

Coming out is a sensitive issue and merits reflection on ethical concerns. Coming out narratives analysed here come from whenicameout.com, which contains over 2100 coming out narratives. The narratives vary in length and content, but all start with the phrase "When I came out…". Users who submit them are free to decide if they want to include any personal details, such as gender, age, and orientation/identity. Here, I do not include any details except those revealed by the authors themselves. For anonymity, I provide neither the gender assigned to the story nor the age, even if given. From 2100 coming out stories that were available at the time of gathering data, 300 were read for recurring patterns and then 70 were carefully analysed by the author. Selected fragments of the 70 narratives are presented in the later part of the article.

3. A multilevel analysis of coming out narratives

Geeraerts says that 'Cognitive Linguistics […] takes the form of an archipelago rather than an island' (2006: 2). The elements of the archipelago work in accord with "a shared perspective" but fail to comply with 'the common rule of a well-defined theory' (2006: 2). This unifying theory has been recently proposed by Kövecses (2017, 2020a, b), who attempts to link all the separate strands of Cognitive Linguistics by offering a hierarchical level-based approach to conceptual metaphor. In doing so, he draws upon decades of previous work, starting with Rosch's (1978) prototypical structure of conceptual system, through Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) metaphor as a mechanism of thought, Langacker's (1987) schematicity in Cognitive Grammar, Fillmorian (1982) frame semantics, ending with more contemporary approaches to metaphor in discourse, i.e., Musolff's metaphorical scenarios (e.g., 2016).

This article applies the multilevel model of metaphor proposed by Kövecses (e.g., 2017, 2020a, b) to coming out narratives. He claims that metaphors 'occupy different levels of schematicity' (2017: 23): image schemas are the most schematic and scenarios (as in Kövecses 2017) the least. Kövecses (e.g., 2017) uses mental spaces and scenarios interchangeably. In this analysis, I use the term "scenario" proposed by Musolff (e.g., 2016) to mean 'discourse-based, culturally and historically mediated version of a source domain' (2016: 30), which I consider distinct from "metal space". Mental spaces, according to Fauconnier, are 'created online' (1994: xxxix), in contrast to scenarios,

which are more stable, and distributed across a community sharing certain experiences. With this in mind, an adapted model of coming out, based on Kövecses (2017), is presented in Fig. 1[1].
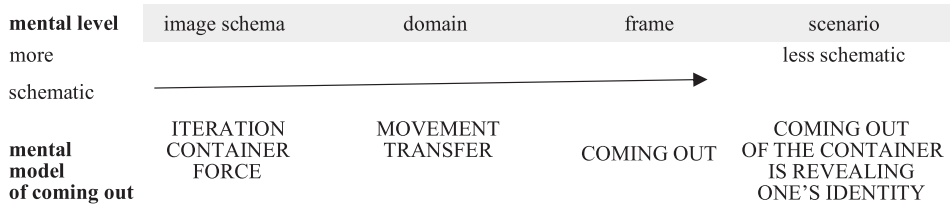
mental level	image schema	domain	frame	scenario
more schematic				less schematic
mental model of coming out	ITERATION CONTAINER FORCE	MOVEMENT TRANSFER	COMING OUT	COMING OUT OF THE CONTAINER IS REVEALING ONE'S IDENTITY

Fig. 1. A cline of schematicity: Coming out from a multilevel perspective.
Based on Kövecses 2017: 18

As Figure 1 shows, coming out may be structured from the very basic concepts of ITERATION, CONTAINER and FORCE to more complex conceptual structures, such as scenarios of REVEALING ONE'S IDENTITY understood as COMING OUT OF THE CONTAINER. I elaborate on these levels in the next subsections, starting from image schemas.

3.1. Image schema

Image schemas have been defined as 'directly meaningful, highly schematic, continuous, analogue, internally structured and highly flexible gestalts' (Hampe 2005: 1–2), 'recurring patterns of experience that are abstract and topological in nature' (Peña 2008) and 'preverbal and prereflexive emergent level of meaning' (Johnson 2017: 86). Some most commonly described are the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema (e.g., Cienki 2005), OBJECT (Szwedek 2011) and CONTAINER (Pagàn 2016). Image schemas became the basis of image-schema-based theories, one of which is the theory of complex image schemas proposed by Szwedek (2019). He points out that image schemas may consist of two simpler ones, e.g., ENABLEMENT built upon REMOVAL OF RESTRAINT and ABILITY (2019: 10).

I suggest that ITERATION may be a complex image schema involving two simpler ones: SOURCE-PATH-GOAL and PROCESS. The next subsection discusses the specifics of this proposal and elaborates on two additional image schemas that play a part in coming out conceptualisations.

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[1] The concepts used in this Figure are defined, explained and illustrated in the following sections of this paper.

3.1.1. ITERATION image schema

The ITERATION image schema appears in the cognitive linguistic literature early on, introduced by Johnson (1987: 126) as one of the conceptual structures forging our embodied understanding of the world. This concept has been implemented in many contexts, one of which is the study of speech acts of begging (Pérez Hernández and Ruiz de Mendoza 2002). In that study, begging was treated as an iterative speech act. Authors suggest that the iterative nature of this speech act comes from begging as a repeated action, and the more one begs, the higher the prospects of success (2002: 287). This conclusion is quite similar to the argument proposed here, namely that coming out is a cyclical process in which every iteration differs from the previous one.

Iteration as a complex image schema

The ITERATION image schema is built upon two image schemas: SOURCE-PATH-GOAL and PROCESS. SOURCE-PATH-GOAL, following Johnson, can be used to conceptualise 'any process or activity' (2017: 182), which makes SOURCE-PATH-GOAL connected to PROCESS. The rationale for linking PROCESS and ITERATION is that they both involve repetition: PROCESS may involve cyclical repetition (or motion) that signifies the aspect of MOVEMENT. If so, the domain of MOVEMENT is then inherently connected with SOURCE-PATH-GOAL. They are connected, yet the underlying logic behind them is different and modality-dependent. Cienki (2005, 2013), for instance, connects PATH and CYCLE, yet this connection applies to gesture and does not link to SOURCE or GOAL. ITERATION image schema discussed here differs from the one introduced by Pérez Hernández and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002: 278). They consider the repetition aspect, but the act of begging they discuss, unlike in the act of coming out, does not involve metaphorical movement but only insistence on the part of the speaker.

The ITERATION image schema may be illustrated by the following examples:

(1) I realized that I was actually gay though so I **re-came out**.
(2) I'm starting to **come out again.**

ITERATION has been lexicalised in the above examples in a two-fold way. Example (1) illustrates the use of a morpheme "re-" with the prototypical meaning of "anew". Example (2) uses the adverb "again" to express the iterative character of coming out.
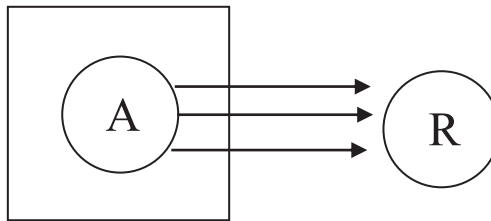
Fig. 2. A schematic representation of the ITERATION complex image schema

Figure 2 is a rendition of the ITERATION image schema based on Pérez Hernández and Mendoza's model – the arrows depict the repetition (PROCESS) aspect of the schema. Added to the picture is the reference to the Agent and Recipient roles, which are crucial to understanding this image schema. People who come out have to disclose their sexual orientation/gender identity many times, so every coming out is different, with a stable underlying conceptual structure shared across different experiences.

3.1.2. CONTAINER image schema

Coming out as revealing one's sexual orientation is also structured in terms of the CONTAINER image schema. Richard Trim notes:

> Anything outside the container is considered to be alien. As we have seen, the use of inside or outside also depends on the perceiver's viewpoint: different sections of society use inside or outside orientation to describe their own particular world (2007: 147).

Trim notices that viewpoint (or perspective) is a part of container-based conceptualisations, which also applies to coming out. The person that is metaphorically 'in the closet' (hides their orientation and/or identity) sees the reality differently from the person who has never had to "be in the closet". Under the view of Queer Linguistics (e.g., Motschenbacher 2010), heteronormativity is a metaphorical space that people are by default placed in, where they have to conform to the pre-established standards and social roles (Motschenbacher 2010: 16). Heteronormativity, imposed on an individual, is thus the context in which coming out happens.

The examples below illustrate how the CONTAINER image schema works in coming out narratives:

(3) When I came out, I was **already out** to most of my school friends as gay […]
(4) I hid **in the closet for four years**.
(5) I'm now a proud lesbian that is **no longer hiding in the closet**!
(6) I was trying to still do the things I wanted even though **I was in the closet**.

The examples are motivated by the CONTAINER image schema, which offers two different perspectives on the same situation. Example (3) and (5) demonstrate the CONTAINER-external perspective of the person who puts more weight on being *out* of the container – the endpoint of the coming out process. Examples (4) and (6) show the CONTAINER-internal perspective of the person who conceptualises the situation as progressing (indicated by past tense and the phrase "no longer hiding in the closet"). These examples show that the CONTAINER image schema allows perspectivisation, directing attention either at the processual aspect of coming out of a container or the state-like character of being hidden in a container.

3.1.3. FORCE image schema

Heteronormativity can be understood in terms of pressure or, in cognitive linguistic terms, force dynamic relations (e.g., Talmy 1988, 2015). In coming out, forces play a three-fold role: (a) the experiencer is affected by the endogenous (from within) force, (b) the experiencer is affected by the exogenous (from the outside) force, (c) the experiencer is affected by the exogenous force which accelerates the endogenous force and is forced to come out. When the source of the force is endogenous, we talk about coming out, an act of *self*-disclosure in which the full agency lies within the person inside the metaphorical container (Figure 3a). In the second case, with the exogenous force, the person has no control over their coming out, becoming
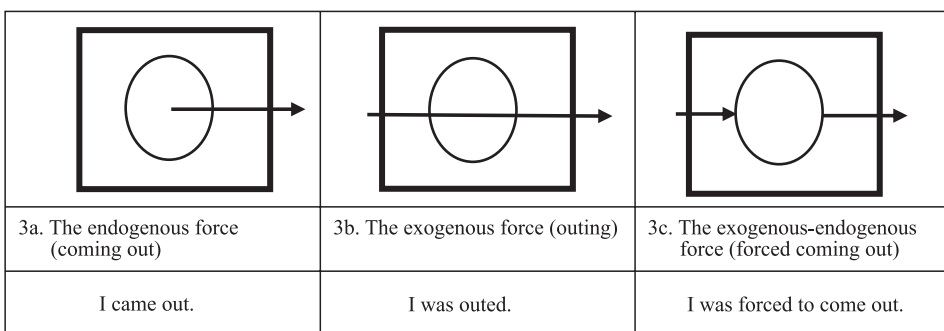

3a. The endogenous force (coming out)	3b. The exogenous force (outing)	3c. The exogenous-endogenous force (forced coming out)
I came out.	I was outed.	I was forced to come out.

Fig. 3. A schematic representation of three different types of FORCE influencing the person coming out

the passive recipient of the force (Figure 3b). In the third case – illustrated in 3c below – coming out may be forced by an external agent acting upon the experiencer – the person in the closet – with exogenous force. Here, the Experiencer, upon being forced, moves out of the container with their own endogenous force.

A schematic illustration of the exogenous and endogenous forces is presented in Figure 3a, b, and c.

The force dynamic relationship is attested by the following examples:

(7) When I **came out** to my parents, I knew they wouldn't have a problem with it.
(8) It hurt that she **outed me.**

Here, the role of the conceptualiser changes from Agent to Theme. Example (7) uses active voice to mark the active role of the conceptualiser (3a). In example (8), in the active voice constructions, another person (she) is the Agent who becomes an external force pushing the LGBT+ person out of the container (3b) Notably, this transitive action is lexicalised via a verbal use of the preposition "out" – "to out".

Besides the explicit reference to one's sexual orientation/gender identity being forcefully revealed, some verbs suggest force-related conceptualisations:

(9) They threatened me and manipulated me until I was **forced to come out**.
(10) And tried to embarrass me in front of my sister whom **she forced me to come out to**.
(11) When I came out — well, when **my dad made me come out** […]

Here, the external force is exploited: in all the examples an individual or a group of people makes a person come out (3c). Linguistically, when outing is mentioned, the act of revealing someone's secret is as conceptually salient as who does it. This indicates that the source of the force is no less important when it is exogenous. If a person wants to come out but does it under external pressure, the source of force appears to be significant. Moreover, people forced to come out in examples (9)–(11) use the verb "come out", signalling that they retain some control over the conceptualised situation. Thus, the coming out process may take one of three forms: (1) coming out performed out of the speaker's own volition, conceptualised as a self-propelled motion (see also section 3.2.1.); (2) being outed by someone else, linguistically expressed in the passive voice used with the verb "to out" derived from the preposition "out" and conceptualised as a process in which external force pushes the person out of the container with no action by the experiencer; and (3) being forced to come out, which is expressed with the verbs "force" or "make sb do sth", reflecting a conceptualisation in which an external force is applied to the person causing them to move out of the container.

3.2. Domains

The term "domain" is captured by the following definition: 'Domains […] constitute the coherent and relatively stable knowledge structure that we have about any particular entity' (Littlemore 2015: 14). Apart from being "coherent" and "stable", they are based, partially, upon image schemas (Geeraerts 2006: 12), which makes them more schematic in Kövecses's hierarchy. In this section, following the basic definition of conceptual metaphor as a cross-domain mapping (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), I analyse the MOVEMENT and TRANSFER domains in coming out narratives. I suggest, following Reddy's (1979) conduit metaphor, that coming out is conceptualised in the domain of COMMUNICATION in terms of MOVEMENT and TRANSFER, both present in coming out narratives.

3.2.1. MOVEMENT

The domain of MOVEMENT in coming out is based on the image schema of FORCE (see 3.1.3). I treat MOVEMENT as a domain[2], a more specific structure than the image schema of FORCE, due to their bottom-up relation to each other. Domains, in Kövecses's understanding, depend on image schemas and I follow this reasoning here. Moreover, as claimed by Kövecses, 'the levels within such schematicity hierarchies do not have rigid boundaries but are graded as regards their schematicity' (Kövecses 2020b: 52), which allows more leeway in interpreting their relative position in the hierarchy. The movement is generated by force and the person that comes out from the container does it either by the self-generated force or is made to do so by the outside-generated force. The MOVEMENT in coming out may be instantiated by the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema, where the SOURCE position of the conceptualiser is in the container, the PATH is the movement and the GOAL is the place they take outside of the container. This process is schematised in Figure 4:
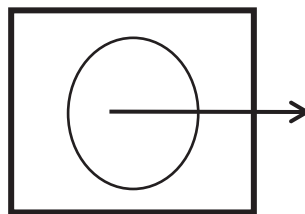

Fig. 4. Coming out as MOVEMENT from the container (see Figure 3a)

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[2] MOVEMENT is treated similarly also in Semino (2005, 2010), Tay (2018), Dorst et al. (2011).

The examples below show how coming out is understood as MOVEMENT to the GOAL (my friends, my mum):

(12) When **I came out to my friends** as aromantic and asexual, they were extremely nice […]

(13) When **I came out to my mum** it was kind of an accident.

In this interpretation, coming out as movement involves only the CONTAINER-internal perspective of a person moving out of a metaphorical container. Importantly, the movement here is volitional, initiated by the internal (endogenous) force within the self and is directed at the GOAL, the recipients of coming out, as in the above examples: in (12) it is the friends and in (13) – the mother of a person who was coming out.

3.2.2. TRANSFER

Reddy (1979) states that communication is understood as transferring objects, hence we talk about ideas that we *have* or *convey*. Words are objects containing meaning, a message may be accepted or rejected. Coming out narratives are also an act of communication and we can expect conduit metaphor to appear in them. The following examples illustrate these conduit-based conceptualisations in coming out narratives:

(14) When I came out to my sister, she actually **took it pretty well**.

(15) She **didn't take it well** and unfortunately we had to stop talking completely.

These examples show the perspective of the recipient, being in the spotlight of the conceptualisation. It is perhaps no coincidence that the verb "take", literally meaning "to get something into somebody's possession", is used in coming out narratives to refer to accepting or rejecting the speakers identity/orientation. In this conceptualisation revealing information of one's identity/orientation is understood as manipulating objects. Szwedek (2011) says that object-related (ontological) metaphors are the very first step in conceptualisation. He states that 'structural and orientational metaphorizations necessarily depend on objectification, because structure and orientation are merely aspects of objects […]' (Szwedek 2011: 360). This explanation is useful in coming out conceptualisation as it makes it clear how this conceptualisation proceeds. If sexual orientation/gender identity is a metaphorical object that we can transfer to others for them to see and take, then many context-dependent and personalised metaphorical scenarios may emerge. If "coming out" is not "taken well", the message was not "well-received" by the recipient. This means that the LGBT person needs to come

out to the same interlocutor again, before they accept the revealed identity/ orientation. In the opposite context, when coming out is "well-received", the information about one's identity/orientation is accepted and does not require further steps from the speaker.

3.3. Frames

Fillmore uses the term "interactional frame" to refer to

> a categorization of the distinguishable contexts of interaction in which speakers of a language can expect to find themselves, together with information about the appropriate linguistic choices relevant to these interactions (Fillmore 1976: 25).

Following this definition coming out can be understood as a "distinguishable context of interaction". Speakers who intend to come out find themselves doing so many times: their experience becomes a recurrent pattern, a frame. Individuals from the LGBT+ community that have experienced coming and acquired the coming out frame, know that they need to make certain linguistic choices to communicate their non-normativity successfully. These linguistic choices are situational and context-dependent, but still conform to the overall shared frame.

Frames '[i]nclude semantic roles, relations between roles, and relations to other frames' (Lakoff 2010: 71). This allows us to understand coming out as a complex frame including a number of Roles and Relations.

3.3.1. COMING OUT frame

I suggest that coming out is a complex frame motivated by various more schematic conceptual structures. It follows from the multilevel approach (see Introduction) that frames rely on image schemas and domains, but they are less schematic. Coming out frame, therefore, is construed as a complex network of Roles and Relations[3] (see Lakoff 2010, Fillmore 2003b):

Table 1 lists the specific coming out frames emerging from the data. All of them use the previously discussed lower-level conceptual mechanisms. (1) is motivated by the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema and the domain of MOVEMENT. The image schema of FORCE is prominent in (2) and (3a). Frames in (3) rely on the elements of the TRANSFER domain, where the

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[3] By semantic roles I mean roles and relations as understood in Case Grammar. Lakoff's (2010) understanding follows Frame Semantics, with roles and relations as elements of the frame, not description of the grammatical structure.

Table 1. Elements of the COMING OUT frame

Elements of the frame	Specific coming-out frames
Roles	Agent, Recipient, Theme, Goal
Relations	**1. volitional coming out** Agent (=LGBT+ person) comes out to Goal (e.g., When I came out to my parents, I knew they wouldn't have a problem with it.) **2. outing / being forced to come out** 2a. Agent (=relative or another person) outs the Theme (LGBT+ person) (e.g., I was outed by my sister) 2b. Agent (=relative or another person) forces Theme (=LGBT+ person) to come out (e.g., My parents forced me to come out) **3. coming out as sharing a secret** Agent (=LGBT+ person) transfers Theme (=the secret) to Recipient (=relative or another person). 3a. Agent (=relative or another person) rejects $Theme_1$ (=the secret) and forces $Theme_2$ (=LGBT+ person) back into the closet. 3b. Agent (=relative or another person) accepts $Theme_1$ and $Theme_2$ remains outside.

Theme (secret) is transferred from Agent to Recipient. Markedly, an object can be either rejected or accepted, as shown in (3a) and (3b), respectively.

Frames, being more specific than domains, establish a pattern that is recognised by a group of discourse participants. Fillmore recognises that '[u]sers already familiar with the frame will not need to bother with the frame-setting part […]' (2003b: 267). Members of the LGBT+ community share the experience of coming out volitionally, being forced to come out, or being outed, as well as the experience of transferring information about their gender identity/sexual orientation to others. While their individual experiences most probably will differ, there is a common set of elements, theorised in Table 1 as Roles and Relations. These Roles and Relations are components of mental models of coming out, shared within the LGBT+ community. These models serve as the basis for communicating coming out experiences: they provide the underlying structure for personalised and individualised scenarios.

3.4. Scenarios

Scenarios are 'figurative mini-narratives that carry with them an evaluative stance' (Musolff 2017: 3). They differ from frames as they add evaluations and further narrative potential to frames (Musolff 2016: 30). This conceptual enrichment of frames admits of a more open and flexible approach

to the coming out metaphor. This section presents fragments of coming out narratives and shows how they reflect two scenarios: COMING OUT OF THE BOUNDED SPACE IS REVEALING A SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY and COMING OUT IS SHIFTING A HEAVY OBJECT OFF ONE'S SHOULDERS.

3.4.1. COMING OUT OF THE BOUNDED SPACE IS REVEALING A SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY

Coming out of the closet as a metaphor means revealing one's sexual orientation/ gender identity. This metaphor may be semantically elaborated with evaluative and narrative parts, creating a specific, discourse-bound scenario.

(16) When I **came out** to my new class, they were like 'cool' and that was the end of it. Later that day I came out to my old schoolfriends, and they were all really supportive and helped me through the times my mum was being homophobic.

This fragment uses the coming out metaphor evaluatively (*they were all really supportive*; *my mum was being homophobic*). From the unfolding narrative we learn that the first coming out happened at school with the positive outcome, but coming out to their mother was the reverse. It thus follows the pattern of frame 3a and 3b from Table 1.

(17) When I **came out** it was a few days after my best friend came out and I tried to tell my mum immediately. Then she told me not to follow the trend and to not label myself. I **came out to** my best friend and another two friends; they accepted me because one of them was bi. I haven't **come out to** my dad and I haven't since talked to my mum about it, I just don't know how. I'm scared other people will unfriend me because my friend **came out to a guy** and he didn't want to be her friend anymore. I'm just really hoping that my giant family isn't homophobic.

This coming out story is motivated by frame 1: volitional coming out and the image schema of ITERATION. It describes a series of coming outs, showing that coming out is an iterative process: a person taking this step reveals their identity/sexual orientation many times. Here, the speaker comes out first to their mother and then to their friends. The person realises the need to repeat the process by coming out to their father and the rest of the family. Coming out is evaluated as connected with fear and uncertainty.

3.4.2. COMING OUT IS SHIFTING A HEAVY OBJECT OFF ONE'S SHOULDERS

Coming out can be conceptualised as shifting some kind of burden off one's shoulders. This aspect is evident in several narratives:

(18)   No one else knows about me, and only one other person knows about her, but **it felt so freeing** when I told her, like **I had this great weight lifted off my chest**, and since then I've felt more like me, and more accepting of myself than ever.

(19)   I was crying and when I finally told her she said she didn't mind and was really supportive. It was **such a weight off my shoulders** and now I have to work on telling my dad and sister.

The person in (18) conveys the sense of freedom after coming out, underpinned by frame 3: sharing an object. The aspect of freedom is connected with the metaphor SECRETS ARE HEAVY OBJECTS and PSYCHOLOGICAL BURDEN IS PHYSICAL BURDEN, illustrated later in the story. With a heavy object lifted, the person can 'feel more like them'. In this example, lifting a heavy object enables the person to feel more accepting of themselves. This is also supported experimentally: people who think of secrets 'feel physically burdened' (Slepian et al. 2012: 622). It is stated that 'important meaningful secrets, including those regarding […] sexual orientation, affected individuals across numerous domains, as if they were physically burdened' (Slepian et al. 2012: 622). Following this interpretation, at the conceptual level, lifting a heavy object is enabling motion, so the person feels free to move.

The scenarios, though based on the same conceptual metaphor, vary in content. In (18) the difference is the place from which the weight is lifted – the chest, prompting a different conceptualisation. In (19) it is the shoulders. The result of coming out in (19) implies a sense of progress: the person who has come out once now plans to do so to other members of their family. In (18) the endpoint is the feeling of acceptance and freedom. Those specific elements show individual differences – both at the lexical and conceptual level – that make the scenarios distinct.

Narratives in (18) and (19) are evidence of one more frame contributing to the understanding of the coming out experiences. Here the orientation and identity are conceptualised as heavy objects, motivated by the OBJECT image schema, but unlike in the TRANSFER schema, they are not presented to the interlocutors, but rather lifted from the body of the Experiencer.

4. Discussion

Kövecses states that 'conceptual metaphors cannot and should not be linked to a single conceptual structure, such as frames or domains' (2017: 24) and proposes a more comprehensive hierarchical approach. We can thus analyse coming out at many interconnected levels. Image schemas suggest that coming out is construed as forces, and might be iterative. Domains help us gain an understanding of how image schemas act with one another to create even more complex structures - frames. Frames feed into scenarios, allowing a flexible approach to discourse and metaphor. Additionally, simpler image schemas may merge into complex image schemas, such as ITERATION. This complex image schema is helpful in explaining coming out as a processual more than a one-time event. Some researchers have suggested that coming out is actually never completed and should be seen more as a career than a process (see Guittar 2014).

Taking the complex and iterative character of coming out into account, the revised version of the schematicity hierarchy is presented below:

mental level	image schemas	complex image schemas	domains	frames	scenarios
more schematic less individualised					less schematic more individualised
	CONTAINER	ITERATION	MOVEMENT	COMING OUT	COMING OUT OF BOUNDED SPACE IS REVEALING A SEXUAL ORIENATION/ GENDER IDENTITY
mental model of coming out	FORCE		TRANSFER		COMING OUT IS SHIFTING A HEAVY OBJECT OFF ONE'S SHOULDERS

Fig. 5. An elaborated version of the schematicity continuum of mental representation

This schematicity continuum comprises elements of mental representation that may have a part in metaphorical conceptualisations. We see that these conceptual structures vary in terms of personalisation/individualisation. Image schemas are the least prone to variation because they are pre-conceptual and acquired via interactions with the world, whereas metaphorical scenarios, representing stable cumulative knowledge of frames enriched with values, are more variable.

5. Conclusion

This article aimed to analyse coming out narratives from the multilevel perspective of conceptual metaphor proposed by Kövecses (2017, 2020a, b). The analysis of selected coming out narratives shows that coming out metaphor is constructed by many more schematic and less schematic cognitive structures: ITERATION and FORCE image schemas, the domains of MOVEMENT and TRANSFER, frames, and evaluative, axiologically loaded scenarios. Further research should focus on a more comprehensive, multimodal analysis of coming out narratives across many contexts. It is to be seen how coming out is conceptualised in the visual or gestural mode or how people talk about coming out experiences in natural conversations. An exploratory study in one language is not enough to capture the complexity of coming out: more fine-grained analyses in different languages are necessary to support the presented model and learn more about how coming out is understood.

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Article 3: *Gestural metaphorical scenarios and coming out narratives*

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Gestural metaphorical scenarios and coming out narratives

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This article extends the framework of metaphorical scenarios proposed by Musolff (2006, 2016) by adding a gestural component. Coming out videos, serving as the source of data for the present analysis, help to uncover the conceptual mechanisms that shape the understanding and conceptualisation of this phenomenon. The extended framework of gestural metaphorical scenarios reveals that conceptual metaphors create cognitively and communicatively coherent wholes that are expressed multimodally, via speech and gesture. The article proposes that coming out, a highly individualised process, is conceptualised at various levels by both generic and specific metaphors. The analysis shows that metaphorical variation is present not only at the level of lexical scenarios, but also at the level of gesture, giving rise to multimodal discourse fragments. The extended framework, therefore, might be useful in analysing multimodal discourse.

Keywords: gestural metaphorical scenario, conceptual metaphor, gesture, multimodality, coming out

1. Introduction

Traditionally, metaphors have been analysed in language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Quite recently scholars have turned their attention to multimodality (e.g., Forceville, 2009), which opened doors for the analysis of metaphor in music (Spitzer, 2004), art (Fabiszak & Olszewska, 2018) and gesture (Cienki, 2008, 2016). Of the wide variety of discourses that metaphors are frequently observed and analysed in, political discourse is one of the most prominent (Musolff, 2006, 2016). Metaphorical scenarios, proposed by Musolff (2006, 2016), are a useful tool for analysing this type of discourse. In this article, I propose that this tool may be also applied to gestures, extending the existing paradigm. In Musolff's understanding, metaphorical scenarios are "mininarratives that dominate discourse manifestations of source domains" (2006, p. 23), elsewhere defined as "an

ontologically rich sub-type of frames" (Musolff, 2016, p. 63). Metaphorical scenarios may be understood as offering "a pragmatically loaded perspective about the target topic" (Musolff, 2016, p. 64). Due to their frame-like nature, they offer a pragmatic perspective and, in this way, filter attention.

Müller's use of scenario, on the other hand, is focused on gestural "enactment of the source-domain" (Müller, 2017, p. 307), narrowing it down to "imagery scenario" and "experiential scenario" that she observes in unfolding discourse of dance classes (Müller, 2017). The way she uses the term seems similar to gestural metaphorical scenario. Her account of scenario focuses more on the online creation, leaving space for developing this concept in other aspects. Moreover, if we take quite literally what Gibbs states of metaphor, that "metaphor in human experience should always be understood as an action" (Gibbs, 2019, p. 33), it makes sense to include gestures as "something that people do" (Gibbs, 2019, p. 33). Gestural metaphorical scenario (GMS) is an extension of the concept of the metaphorical scenario. Gestural metaphorical scenarios manifest in gesture forms, creating a coherent speech co-dependent narrative.

In this article, I deploy coming out narratives as an illustration by which I show the workings of gestural metaphorical scenarios, pointing to how they are different from and similar to metaphorical scenarios expressed linguistically. Coming out is understood here as "the process through which lesbian, gay and transgender people accept and publicly affirm their sexual orientation or gender identity" (Molnar, 2018, p. 52). Although this definition is quite straightforward, the nature of coming out is complex and amounts to more than sexual orientation. Coming out is a series of connected events that encompass disclosing sexual orientation and gender identity, including the process of self-realisation and self-disclosure (Molnar, 2018). Referring to "coming out" as a "closet metaphor", Scott (2018, p. 146) notices that coming out is an example of figurative language employed in discourse. This particular use (closet metaphor) highlights only one aspect of the coming out process: the aspect of isolation, not explaining the complexity of the phenomenon in a larger context. I will point out how complex coming out is and, in particular, direct attention to the intricacies of this process, which motivate the metaphor variation observed in GMS.

1.1   Selection procedure

I selected the videos by typing a phrase "(my) coming out story" in the search bar on YouTube. The videos were selected from the search results on the basis of the titles of the videos. At this stage, I reviewed approximately 20 videos and chose six matching the main requirement of the study: hands of the speaker had to be clearly visible. The videos were downloaded from YouTube and catalogued

as separate files. I copied automatically generated transcriptions from YouTube and re-viewed them for accuracy and, then, I conducted the analysis of the collected material.

The character of the video as a medium for coming out stories may affect the speaker's gestures. Firstly, YouTube videos are not the most ecologically valid source of data as we do not know if, and if yes, how the videos were edited. Secondly, talking to a camera is not the most natural way of describing coming out experiences. What is more, a situation in which a person speaks to a webcam is definitely different from a face-to-face interaction between two people. These issues should be born in mind alongside the ethical concerns addressed below.

1.2   Ethics of the study

Discussing LGBT+-related subjects alerts researchers to the ethical concerns which highlight the need to raise awareness of the ethical standards necessary in academic work on LGBT+ issues. These arguments are understandable, given the vulnerability of the group. Yet, putting much stricter ethical requirements on LGBT+-related research may impede scholarly discussions about topics relevant to the community (e.g., coming out). Academics who work in the areas that involve LGBT+ community aim to advance the understanding of how LGBT+ people communicate and interact. As coming out is a sensitive topic, measures to ensure confidentiality of data are required. The YouTube videos I analyse here were publicly available at the time of writing. Two of them have been hidden by the authors by now. I have attempted to contact the authors and receive their permission, but only one has responded and agreed on using the video. To ensure anonymity for the speakers, I employed sketches of the gestures instead of the stills. To address possible ethical concerns, I decided not to provide URLs. Faces in the pictures have not been removed when they acted as a reference point for the gesture (signifying the gesture being additionally meaningful with reference to its placement in the gesture space).

2.   Metaphoricity and gesture

In this section, I present metaphoricity as a multifaceted phenomenon that can be gesturally embodied (Müller & Tag, 2010, p. 87). First, I discuss the relationship between conceptual metaphor and multimodality, concluding with a discussion of the model of metaphorical scenario (Musolff, 2006, 2016).

2.1   Conceptual metaphor theory and multimodality

Musolff notices that "metaphor (…) brings together different areas of experience and knowledge so that a particular topic is cognitively and communicatively present in terms of another" (2016, p. 8). This definition adds more weight to its communicative function, moving away from "conceptual domains" towards "topics" to fittingly capture the role of metaphor in discourse. Therefore, metaphor is not a reflex of thought only, but a narrative tool for expressing complex multimodal scenarios. Musolff does not focus exclusively on language in his definition, which allows for more modalities to be counted as expressing metaphoricity. Lederer (2015), for example, shows how transgender individuals conceptualise decision-making in the coming out manifested in gesture as weighting, externalised in the form of both hands iconically depicting the scales. The metaphor, although observed in the context of transgender coming out stories, may be quite universal and deployed in many communicative contexts (e.g., as a recurrent gesture, see Ladewig & Bressem, 2013). Moreover, weighting metaphor in gesture is based on an axis-oriented conceptualisation (e.g., Calbris, 2008), showing how transgender people "necessarily feel mismatched between two genders" (Lederer, 2015, p. 107).

Beattie and Sale's (2012) study shows the impact of gesture-speech mismatch. Their study shows that people whose verbal message is different from the content expressed in gestures are liked less than people who do not mismatch gesture and speech. This effect may be explained by the figure-ground principle, stating that "some objects (figures) seem prominent, and other aspects of the field recede into the background (ground)" (Sternberg & Stenberg, 2012, p. 115). In this interpretation, gestural metaphorical scenarios comprise two modalities – language, more controlled, being the figure, and gesture, being the background element of the scenario, hence less controlled. When the mismatch is perceived, the figure-background reversal that occurs crossmodally between gesture and speech takes over the 'default scenario', the prototypical speech-gesture relation, and gesture becomes more visible to the conceptualiser (for a review of figure-ground reversals in language, see Thiering, 2011, for multimodal reversal, Veale, 2008). The aspect of controllability will be addressed later in this article.

The terminological shift proposed by Musolff allows for developing the concept of metaphor use in discourse context. The extended definition is a useful starting point for arguing that multimodal manifestations of metaphor may be analysed as coherently structured narratives, not only in language (metaphorical scenarios) but also in gesture, in gestural metaphorical scenarios.

2.2   Metaphorical scenarios

Metaphorical scenarios are understood by Musolff as 'mininarratives' that encompass parts of the discourse. Those fragments of discourse display a set of (non-exhaustive) features that can be expressed linguistically. The list is as follows:

1.   Metaphorical scenarios are exemplified by lexical items (Musolff, 2016, p. 31).
2.   Metaphors may be constructed deliberately to create a metaphorical scenario (Musolff, 2016, p. 87).
3.   Metaphorical scenarios help create coherence in discourse (Musolff, 2006, p. 25).
4.   Metaphorical scenarios create "focal points" (Musolff, 2006, p. 23).
5.   Metaphorical scenarios are subject to "pervasive (though systematic) semantic variation, pragmatic modification and meta-representational commenting" (Musolff, 2016, p. 139) in the sense that metaphors remain susceptible to context-induced alternations.

Scenarios structure the reality and create coherent wholes in discourse. The cognitive function of scenarios is that they help to construct stories, prototypical 'default scenarios' that may be elaborated and modified. For example, the EU IS A FAMILY scenario in Musolff (2016) is based on the idea of "a couple who experience the ups and downs of married life" (2016, p. 32). It evokes many interrelated concepts, such as courting, divorce, flirting or romance (2016, p. 32). These concepts are then incorporated within the scenario to form "mini-narratives", for example, a parent-child narrative or "married life" as between France and Germany (2016, p. 32). Musolff notices that those mini-narratives are not "grounded in experiential basis of folk-theoretical domain knowledge" (2016, p. 33), because these scenarios are possible only in the specific political discourse and otherwise may be considered debatable or irrelevant to the prototypical meaning of a family. Musolff (2006) says that "scenarios have stereotypical status" because "they include conventionally required assumptions that may be revealed by experts to be empirically wrong but are still the default expectations that underlie the folk-theories held by non-experts" (Musolff, 2006, p. 27; Putnam, 1975, p. 249). This means that stereotypical meaning, constructed on prototypes, is a part of the folk assumptions that may be overall accepted even if proven incorrect by experts. Consequently, in metaphorical scenarios, even though they are not completely grounded in experience, stereotypical meaning makes them easily accessible.

3.   Gesture: Definitions and functions

Gestures are "every-day occurrences – the spontaneous, unwitting and regular accompaniments of speech that we see in our moving fingers, hands and arms" (McNeill, 2005, p. 3). McNeill suggests that gestures are unplanned and relatively unconscious. Kendon, more leniently, says that gestures are "manual actions (…) employed in such a way as to provide the properties of objects or actions the speaker is talking about" (Kendon, 2009, p. 39). He points out that gestures give additional information, much like adjectives in a sentence (Kendon, 2009, p. 38). Gestures are believed to have an expressive function in that they "express inner state, appeal to somebody, and represent objects and actions in the world" (Müller, 2013, p. 204).

A special subtype of gesture is metaphorical gesture, described by McNeill as those helping to "imagine the non-imaginable" (McNeill, 2009, p. 60) by presenting an abstract object as a concrete entity. The metaphors expressed in both gesture and speech are called verbo-gestural metaphors (Müller, 2008).

The subject matter of Gesture Studies is diverse and encompasses many strands of scientific enquiry (e.g., Chui, 2011; Cienki, 2013; Geet et al., 2018; Jelec, 2019; Lederer, 2015; Mittelberg, 2019). Despite its variability, all of these research avenues treat gestures as communicative phenomena that have a cognitive basis, which may be claimed of gestural metaphorical scenarios, as explained below.

3.1   Features of gestural metaphorical scenarios

Table 1 below presents a list of features characterising verbal metaphorical scenarios proposed by Musolff and gestural metaphorical scenarios. They are discussed in the following sections.

3.1.1   Mode of expression

Metaphors are expressed in different modalities (cf. Forceville, 2009). Mode is understood following Forceville: "a sign system interpretable because of a specific perception process" (Forceville, 2009, p. 22). Metaphorical scenarios I analyse here are communicated in two modes: the verbal (lexical) and the gestural mode. In Musolff's understanding, lexical items are words associated with a given "topic" (Musolff, 2016, p. 31). Gesture forms may be viewed as equivalents to lexical items present in spoken discourse. Gesture form, similarly to a lexical item, "reflects how the speaker interprets each scene and how much significance is attached to it and various kinds of information included in it" (Kimbra, 2008, p. 128). Gesture forms help to understand how a given issue is conceptualised by an individual in a particular discourse. This claim lets us reflect on individual variation in gesture

Table 1. Lexical metaphorical scenarios and gestural metaphorical scenarios: A comparison

FEATURE	Lexical metaphorical scenarios	Gestural metaphorical scenarios
mode of expression	expressed via lexical items	expressed via gesture forms
level of control	more controlled	less controlled
role in discourse structure	create coherence for the recipient	create coherence for the recipient
role in conceptualisation	create focal points in source domains	create focal points via the process of gesture conventionalisation
individual variation	present	present

and how the gesture forms vary across speakers when they talk and gesture about a given topic. I elaborate on this issue in Section 3.1.5.

3.1.2   Level of control

Musolff (2016) claims that some metaphors may be used on purpose, which points to an important question: To what extent is one able to control the use of metaphor both in language and gesture? When, if at all, is metaphor used deliberately (cf. Steen, 2017)? The issue of (non-)deliberate gestures has been already thoroughly discussed. For example, Casasanto and Jasmin (2012, p. 652) propose that deliberate gestures elicited in study conditions "reflect conscious spatializations of time". Cooperrider (2017) shares the same perspective, claiming that gestures are also deliberately communicative. Deliberateness is strictly connected with the level of control. I suggest that, while gestures may be either deliberate or spontaneous (cf. Li, 2017), the message they convey, especially in metaphorical terms, falls within 'the cognitive unconscious' (e.g., Johnson, 2018; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). This means that metaphorical gestures accompanying speech may be a less conscious form of expressing metaphors.

The question of control in metaphor use stems from the assumption that lexical items in Musolff's metaphorical scenarios are controlled more than gestures. Although Kendon (2004, p. 11) says that gestures are "deliberate expressive movements", they are arguably less controlled than speech. My claim here is not that gestures are always unconscious and unintentional – they are certainly conventionally and intentionally used and their conventionality has been systematically discussed (see e.g., Kendon, 1992). Yet, due to their conventional nature, gestures may be less controlled. Lexical items may also be well-entrenched in discourse,

but when they prompt certain scenarios, the level of metaphor activation and control may vary. Similarly, metaphorical scenarios prompt figure-background effect especially when the elements of the "default scenario" are altered (Musolff, 2016, p. 34). This claim legitimises that the "figure" elements of the scenario may be more active and better controlled than the "background" elements.

The example presented in Figure 1 below helps to explain the concept of level of control in the context of gesture-speech (mis)match unfolding in time.
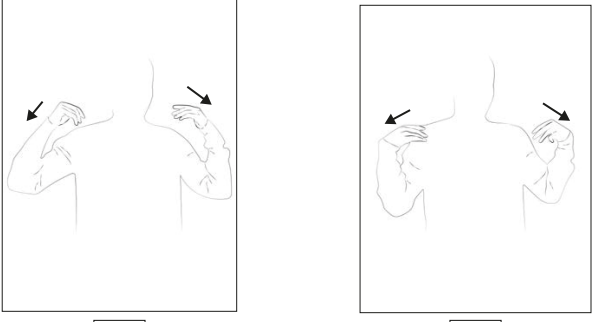
MODE	TIMELINE
GESTURAL	1A 1B
VERBAL	'…a story time when I came out <u>as gay</u>.' 'You feel like a weight off your shoulders.'

Figure 1. The level of control in gesture: Low level of control

The gesture in Figure 1 is a large both-hand gesture indicating taking a burden off the shoulders, following the metaphor PSYCHOLOGICAL BURDEN IS PHYSICAL BURDEN. The gestures take place in the upper frame of the speaker's body, at the level of the shoulders. This gesture localisation corresponds to the expression "be a weight off somebody's shoulders" in speech. The psychological burden is objectified in gesture and physically taken off the speaker's shoulders. The example shows that the speaker uses both hands to make this particular gesture and the gesture is repeated (hence two depictions presented in Figure 1), suggesting a recurring character of the gesture (see e.g., Ladewig & Bressem, 2013; McNeill, 2018; Müller, 2017). Figure 1a shows roughly the same gesture, with a different verbal context. The gesture in 1a is produced with a mismatch with speech – the speaker talks about coming out, not taking weight off his shoulders (as in 1b). This example may suggest that the message conveyed in speech may differ from that conveyed in gesture not because gestures are conceptually more easily accessible to the conceptualiser but because they are less controlled. We may speculate that if a gesture is

present in discourse and pertains to the message that is not yet verbalised, then the gesture requires more conscious effort to be inhibited than speech.

As gestures are discourse- and person-specific, it is not possible to generalise the above assumption (see Section 1.1.). Nevertheless, I assume that the presence of a mismatch adds credibility to the argument as it indicates that gestures are at least less controlled and unintentionally mismatched with speech, giving them a status of natural communicative phenomena, even in uncontrolled recording environment.

3.1.3   Role in discourse structure

Musolff's understanding of coherence comes from Fillmore's definition of conceptual scenes, which are coherent and consistent conceptual frame-like structures (Fillmore, 1975). Metaphorical scenarios create coherence because they present logically connected frame-like structures in a form of a discourse-specific mini-narrative. This coherence-making conceptual device enables the discourse comprehender to decode meaning without much strain, using both words and gestures.

Coherence in Musolff's examples is accounted for by Idealised Cognitive Models (ICMs) (Lakoff, 1987), as some scenarios are a subtype of ICMs (Musolff, 2006, p. 27). Coherence arises from the common SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema underlying scenarios. Due to the stereotyped, highly generic nature of this schema and its metaphorical realisations, both lexical metaphorical scenarios and gestural metaphorical scenarios create coherence for the recipient of the message. In gestural metaphorical scenarios, coherence is prominent when a speaker employs the schema to conceptualise disclosing their orientation.

Figure 2 shows three elements of the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema. The SOURCE is presented at the very beginning of the gesture, the PATH is the movement from the SOURCE to GOAL. This generic schema underlines THE COMMUNICATION IS SENDING OBJECTS metaphor (Reddy, 1993) and its more specific realisation – COMING OUT IS GIVING AN OBJECT. This is supported by the PUOH gestures investigated by Müller (e.g., 2004, 2017). The Palm-Up-Open-Hand gestures "ground communicative actions in real world actions" and create "a stable form-meaning pairing" (Müller, 2017, p. 294), which we may treat as supporting the claim that coherence comes from a clearly delineated schematic, stable structure realised in the gestural metaphorical scenario. A similar observation about schematicity in gesture forms is made by Mittelberg (2017) who notices that POUH gestures are based on generic image schemas, such as CONTAINMENT or SUPPORT. These schemas, although not visible in the analysed sample, help to substantiate the claim about coherence by pointing to the generic conceptual mechanisms underlying gestures.
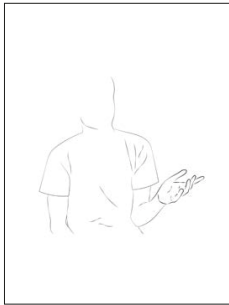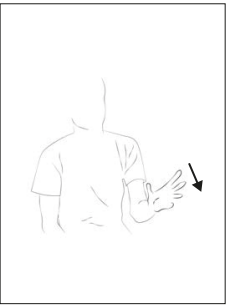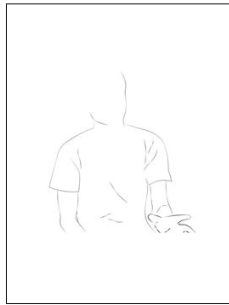
MODE			
GESTURAL	2A	2B	2C
	SOURCE	PATH	GOAL
VERBAL	'I didn't really do anything in terms of coming out.'		

Figure 2. SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema in gestural metaphorical scenario

3.1.4   Role in conceptualisation

Because metaphorical scenarios, as structural metaphors, are endowed with a relatively rich conceptual structure, their role is to provide understanding of complex, abstract phenomena. Abstract concepts are objectified, given certain boundaries thanks to which they can be manipulated and used in scenarios as 'real' elements. Metaphorical scenarios in the verbal mode direct attention to certain elements of discourse and shift the recipient's attention away from those aspects that remain hidden. Lexical items in the verbal mode indicate lexicalised concepts. In contrast to lexicalised concepts, gesture forms are far freer and more flexible in their expression. Gestures may be more or less conventionalised (e.g., Brookes, 2005; Müller, 2018) and this conventionality (or recurrence) may be observed in gestural metaphorical scenarios.

The cognitive function of gestural metaphorical scenarios comes from the cognitive function of gestures themselves (see Calero et al., 2019; Hostetter, 2011). This function of a GMS is complementary to its communicative role. Gestural metaphorical scenarios, apart from being communicative by conveying meaning via gesture forms, help the speaker/receiver of the message understand the concept being talked and gestured about better, hence having a structuring function. I propose that their primary function, in the described context, is to help the speaker/gesturer conceptualise and structure the concept, and represent the experiences and feelings schematically. Schematicity of gestural expression is evident in the generic image-schematic understanding of coming out and its recurring

nature. Because coming out exemplifies an emotionally taxing experience, the help of gestures as diffusors and expressors of emotions and meaning may be important in the pre-verbal and verbal stage of the message conceptualisation and expression. Coming out is only one instance of such social phenomena that impacts the production of the message (other cognitively challenging concepts and their impact on gesture are discussed in Pouw et al., (2014) and Son et al., (2018)). It may be therefore assumed that gestures have a general regulatory (facilitatory) function in communicative context: they both convey the content of the discourse and reveal the emotional state of the gesturer, as has been fittingly encapsulated in calling gestures "expressive movements" (Kappelhoff & Müller, 2011).

The role of metaphorical scenarios in conceptualisation is the same at verbal and gestural level. Musolff (2006) argues that metaphorical scenarios build focal points, functioning as a reference for further metaphor use and development. Focal points, therefore, create a common space for the extension of elements in a given metaphorical scenario. In Musolff's example (2016), once the scenario of the EU as a family is established in discourse, metaphors creating the scenario are stored and passively remembered by the discourse participants, ready to be re-used and re-elaborated if necessary. It might be possible that gesture forms create focal points, but this process may be much longer because they need to recur in the discourse context and undergo at least partial conventionalisation within this discourse. It does not mean that those gestures are universally and cross-culturally known – the generic meaning and form of these gestures are recruited temporarily for the specific use within a given discourse/scenario and may recur within it.

Some gestures, however, may be conventionalised within a given discourse due to their frequency of recurrence, or may become prototypical gestures of a given speaker, executed within a particular frame of gestural space. The generic conduit metaphor COMMUNICATION IS SENDING OBJECTS directly underpins the discourse-specific metaphor GIVING AN OBJECT IS COMING OUT. These gestures, as shown later, are recruited for the specific purposes of coming out and are recurrent within the analysed sample.

Metaphorical variation
Metaphorical variation can be seen both in lexical and gestural metaphorical scenarios. Metaphorical diversity is commented upon by Musolff (2016, p. 139) in the following way:

> The figurative discourses (…) are characterised by pervasive (though systematic) semantic variation, pragmatic modification and meta-representational commenting. None of the speakers, writers, nor (…) any of the hearers/readers accepted the respective metaphors blindly.

This means that people who use metaphors adapt them to the specific circumstances of use. The conceptual and expressive variants within a scenario may sometimes be deliberate, although the metaphorical scenario as a whole may be beyond conscious awareness. Moreover, metaphorical thought may be altered at the individual level of conceptualisation, retaining some of the most generic and universal features of a given metaphor, crucial for understanding and communicating a given message within a discourse.

In gestural metaphorical scenarios, we observe metaphorical variation at three levels. Firstly, different speakers conceptualise different stages of coming out in their own ways, their experiences are naturally individualised and so are the metaphors they use. Besides, because metaphors are speaker-specific, they also tend to form variants within the metaphorical scenarios, underpinned by one, generic conceptual metaphor, KNOWING IS SEEING. Thirdly, the gestures may also have different forms – sometimes one hand, sometimes two hands are used to gesture about the same or similar situations or things. Examples below illustrate these levels of variation in metaphor use in gestural metaphorical scenarios.
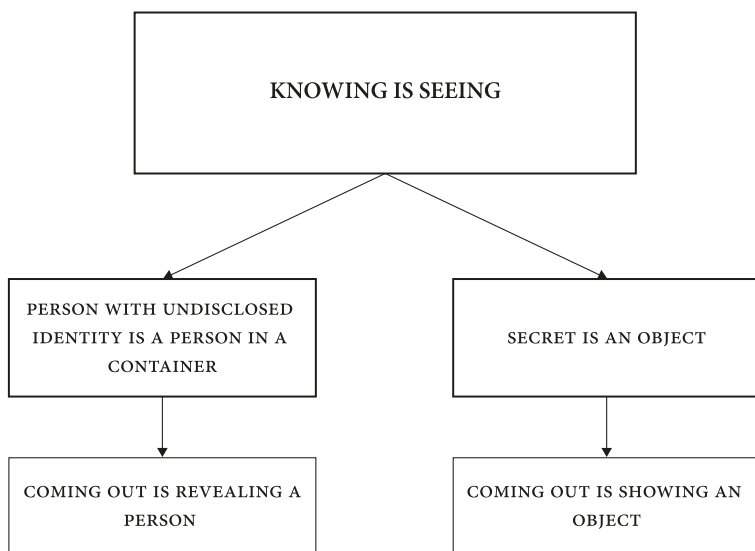
Figure 3. KNOWING IS SEEING metaphor and its coming out-specific instantiations

The figure above shows that a generic metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING creates metaphorical discourse- and context-specific projections. Here, COMING OUT IS REVEALING A PERSON is a third-level metaphor (see above), specific to coming out narratives and underpinning the process of conceptualisation. Metaphors PERSON WITH UNDISCLOSED IDENTITY IS A PERSON IN A CONTAINER and COMING OUT

IS SHOWING AN OBJECT are discourse-specific. They might be recruited from the generic metaphor at the highest level of schematicity and then be applied for the specific purposes of coming out conceptualisation. The level of schematicity of those metaphors may be different but the grounding mechanism ("perceived structural similarity", Kövecses, 2010, p. 85) is similar, as seeing something is a prerequisite for learning. The diversity of metaphors created online in discourse entails the concept variation in metaphor use. Variation in metaphor use and pro-duction is a consequence of our ecological and cultural diversity (Kövecses, 2010; Littlemore, 2003, 2019; Sharifian, 2017;) coming from the individualised percep-tion of the world. This variation is evident also in language, and if so, it may be seen in gestures.

Variation within gestural metaphorical scenarios

Coming out may be expressed differently by different speakers who use various metaphors conceptualising their experiences. The figures below illustrate this diversity in conceptualisation and gesture form. In describing gestural forms, where relevant, I adopt the description of gestures by Ladewig (2011), based on four parameters: (a) hand shape, (b) orientation, (c) movement and (d) position in gesture space and give a short description of the analysed gestural form.
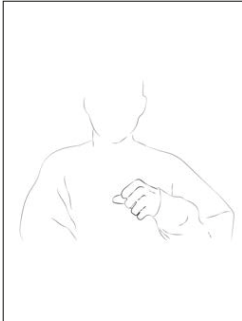
MODE	
GESTURAL	4A 4B
VERBAL	'I remember being like this closeted 14-years-old.'

Figure 4. PERSON WITH AN UNDISCLOSED IDENTITY IS A PERSON IN A CONTAINER

The gesture sequence consists of two gestures. The hand in 7a curls into a fist and then (7b) becomes vertically oriented. The gesture itself comes from the cen-tral position in the gestural space to the lower position of the gestural space (as per McNeill's schematisation of gestural space in 2005), as if cutting the space before

the speaker. The above cutting gesture, accompanied by the verbal fragment in Figure 4, is a metaphorical gesture demonstrating a barrier that a person who is "in the closet" has to face, preventing them from getting out of the metaphorical container. By showing this particular gesture, the speaker situates himself inside the container. Two readings of this gesture are possible. (1) The gesture invokes the image of being either cut from the world: a fast vertical movement, shown in the drawing by an arrow, represents that the person in the closet is separated from the world. (2) This gesture may also signify that a person is closeted and then the hand of the speaker symbolises the "door" of the "closet". These two interpretations show that gesture can express many ideas at once, which seems to be in accordance with what Calbris (2011) calls "gestural polysemy" (2011, p. 5). However we interpret the gesture in this case, the primary idea is preserved: the person speaks of himself as being inside a container.
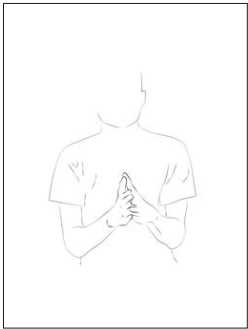
MODE	
GESTURAL	
	5A 5B
VERBAL	'At this point I had already come out to people at school.'

Figure 5. COMING OUT IS REVEALING A PERSON

Figure 5 shows a gesture sequence composed of two consecutive gestures. The gesture may be understood metaphorically as opening the container (the closet). In terms of movement, the 5a part of the sequence shows that the hands of the speaker touch each other, creating a kinaesthetic rendition of an obstacle (the "door" of "the closet"). The 5b part shows the process of opening the container, yet the direction of the gesture is slightly altered. Now it is tilted to the side, as if indicating a departure from the main topic discussed so far. Despite this variation, the metaphor is still preserved. A shift in gestural space is visible in the above example: in 5a the gesture occupies the central position, and later moves to the

left side, which corresponds to "people at school" in the given verbal fragment, presumably suggesting that "people at school" constitute a separate topic or are treated as less important.

Variation in gesture form
As a mode of expression in gestural metaphorical scenarios, gesture forms are also discourse- and person-specific. The following three examples show that the same metaphor may be expressed by the same underlying PUOH gesture but realised with different gesture form by three speakers.
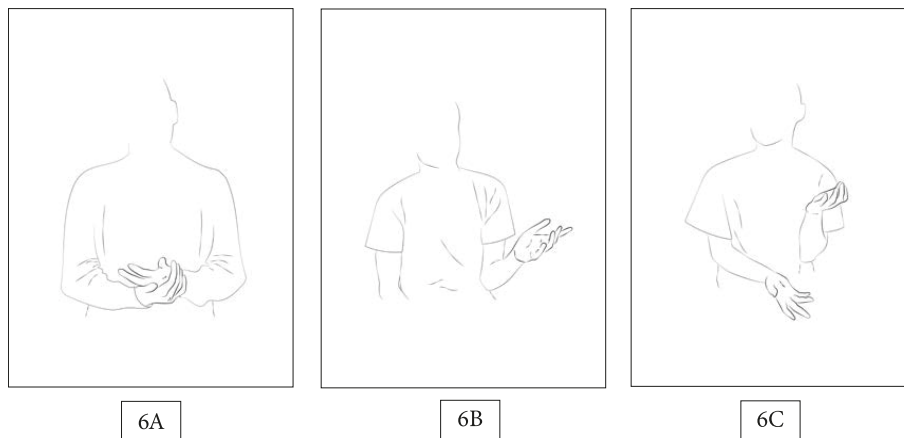

| 6A | 6B | 6C |

Figure 6. COMING OUT IS SHOWING AN OBJECT

The above gestures are the subvariant of the same metaphor, COMING OUT IS SHOWING AN OBJECT. Shape-wise, all of the above gestures are similar – the hand is slightly curled, as to represent holding an object. They differ with respect to the use of gestural space. Gesture in 6a takes place in the lower frame very close to the gesturer. In 6b, the gesture is more visible, occupying a more central, yet left-tilted side, much like in 6c, where the central frame view is maintained, but the hand is directed more towards the potential listener. Each of the speakers uses different hand-body orientation in their gestural expression. In 6a, the gesturer uses both hands to gesture, which may indicate that they want to protect the imaginary object from being seen. In 6b, we see a one-hand gesture, and in 6c, a very similar gestural form, yet two-handed. Following Ladewig and Bressem's (2013) claim that gesture conveys a different message depending on its placement in the gestural space, we can tentatively suggest that this is the case in this example. Yet, the data do not allow to elaborate on this issue.

Variation may be also observed at the level of one-hand/two-hand gestures and its scope, as in the following examples.

MODE		
GESTURAL	7A	7B
VERBAL	'…during this process I got involved in a theatre'	'It's like constant hiding stuff is like so terrible'

Figure 7. Individual variation in COMING OUT IS A CIRCULAR PROCESS metaphor

This isolated example of a metaphor COMING OUT IS A CIRCULAR PROCESS (movement) is realised differently by two speakers. These realisations are based on the same metaphor, but the gestural form, in terms of the four parameters, is different. As for the orientation, Figure 7a shows a flat-hand horizontal circular movement, whereas 7b – the vertical. The difference is quite visible – in the left-hand example, the gesture is directed towards the ground as if coming out occupies bounded space; the other gesture highlights more the aspect of repetitiveness. The gestural forms in 7a indicates the aspect of surface not a process, which contrasts with the verbal message. The gestural form in 8a pertains to the aspect of repetition that is gestured cyclically. A similar observation concerning gesture form is drawn by Ladewig (2014) who notices that "(…) the cyclic gesture represents the combining of details as an activity that is in progress" (Ladewig, 2014, p. 1607). She also observes that, as in the above example, "gesture very often adds information not present in speech" (2014, p. 1607), highlighting the fact that gesture is an independent expressive modality. Moreover, there is a difference in terms of occupied gestural space: in 7a, the hand is placed in the central position, whereas in 7b – one hand is placed more in the centre, the other – more towards left-periphery.

Variation in gesture form is visible in the above example. These two speakers do not refer to the same idea in what they say: one speaks of the process, and the other about keeping a secret and associated emotions (*terrible*). Yet, gesture seems to be underpinned by the same conceptualisation: the CYCLE image schema (Ladewig, 2014; Ladewig & Bressem, 2013), the 'semantic core' of conceptualisa-

tion (Ladewig & Bressem, 2013). The message conveyed in speech by the gesturer in 7a refers to a process both verbally and gesturally, making these two modalities co-expressive.
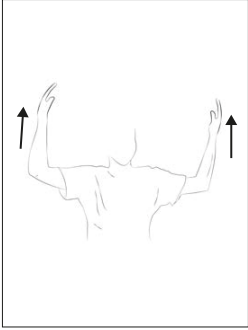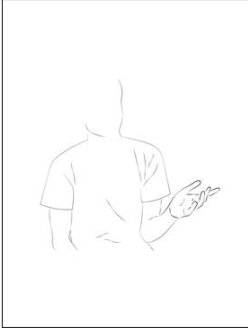
MODE		
GESTURAL	8A	8B
VERBAL	'Thank you for watching my big fat coming out story'	'I didn't really do anything in terms of coming out'.

Figure 8. Variation in gesture form: COMING OUT (SECRET) IS AN OBJECT metaphor

In Figure 8a the gesture is big and congruent with the verbal content of the message. The size of the gesture is only one of many dimensions that are person-specific. In Figure 8b the gesture is visibly smaller. It is hard to explain these differences, yet, I assume that these alternations in gesture size, significant in how coming out is conceptualised at the specific level, may confirm the generic status of the object metaphor: both gestures refer to an object, regardless of the gesture size. As for the hand shape in the above gestures, in 8a the hands are curled more than in 8b, where the gesture seems to, in terms of its movement, indicate object transfer rather than lifting something up. There is a significant difference between the gestures' placement in the gestural space. The gesture in 8a occupies the upper position, whereas in 8b, as mentioned earlier, the left side of the gestural space. The placement of these gestures seems to be relevant for their function: while the gesture in 8a in an end-video gesture that serves a global discursive function, the 8b gesture is more about coming out itself, presumably the transfer of the metaphorical object.

4.   Discussion

The notion of "coming out" is intertwined with "outing", understood as "the act of (…) revealing that a certain person is gay or lesbian, (…) usually done against the person's wishes (…)" (Halwani, 2002, p.141). This definition applies to sexual orientation but it may be broadened to any marginalised identity. Although the gestural metaphorical scenarios analysed in this paper are based on stories of voluntary coming out experiences, they can potentially account for both phenomena. Metaphorically, coming out equals leaving a bounded space, and the motion involved is self-propelled, indicating willingness and self-agency. In contrast, outing equals leaving the same bounded space due to the external force acting upon the person in the closet, forcing them to leave. This conceptual difference may be also reflected in the emotional involvement, as the voluntary leaving the space is often thought-out carefully, and "outing" involves forces out of the control of the person concerned.

I have hinted that conceptualisation of coming out is a mechanism employing objectification, defined by Szwedek (2011, p.350) as the process in which "an abstract entity is conceptualized as an object with all the latter's potential of attributes". In the analysed material, people who talk about coming out use objectification to gesturally communicate their coming out experiences. It raises the question: If objectification is the first stage of conceptualisation, how does this mechanism change over time? This issue points out to another mechanism that may take place specifically in coming out conceptualisations. Iteration, the re-occurrence of a given process in time in different contexts, may be connected with Szwedek's objectification. If, and how these two phenomena are connected needs further research.

We may also suggest, based on the assumption that gesture forms are recruited from the generic pool of metaphorical gestures, that the model can, at least partially, predict the use of gestures in the outing scenario. If coming out is based upon the idea of a voluntary action, then the forces are egocentric, when the doer is also the receiver. In the outing scenario, the source of the force is external, so the conceptualisation at the level of gestures may be different but predictable from the abovementioned force-dynamic alternations that occur across different scenarios.

5.   Conclusions

The aim of the article was to present gestural metaphorical scenario as an extension of Musolff's concept of metaphorical scenario. In doing so, I compared ges-

tural metaphorical scenarios with metaphorical scenarios in the verbal mode and proposed a sample analysis of the coming out scenario. I propose that the notion of gestural metaphorical scenario may be useful in analysing multimodal, poly-semiotic communication (Zlatev, 2018), allowing a deeper analysis of written or spoken discourse as well as gestures as a complex and language co-dependent semiotic system. Gestural metaphorical scenarios create a new research space for analysing longer stretches of discourse. This article contributes to the now developing field of queer cognitive linguistics, that offers insights into thinking, gesture, and language of LGBT+ individuals. The proposed extension of the con-cept of metaphorical scenario poses some questions as to its predictive value. Are we able to predict gesture forms in one scenario knowing the conceptualisation mechanisms in a related one? How recurrent, partially conventionalised gestures should be defined in the context of coherently structured gestural metaphorical scenarios? To answer these questions, we need to investigate the nature of gestural metaphorical scenarios further, as gestures themselves are, as McNeill (2013, p. 28) famously claimed, "window into the mind".

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Publication history

Conclusion

The presented research has investigated the way coming out is conceptualised and expressed multimodally, via language and gesture, embracing a more inclusive research focus concentrated chiefly on non-normative cognitions and populations. Firstly, it has been described how widely accepted conceptualisations of social phenomena brush aside the complexities of human conceptual system. To address this issue, it has been shown that accommodating research practice to those conceptualisations that seem to be inconvenient in a study design can make it less inclusive in terms of the populations under study and reductionist in the approach to the subject matter. I have also pointed out that allowing the diversity of human non-normative conceptualisations in metaphor scholarship may enrich the cognitive linguistic enterprise both methodologically and thematically. Moreover, it has been postulated, following Embodied Sociolinguistics, that embodiment can be treated in a twofold way: the body can be discursively constructed via (more inclusive) linguistic practises, and the body itself influences the way people conceptualise body-related concepts, and, effectively, express them in language, and other modalities.

Secondly, in the spirit of Queer Cognitive Linguistics (Dyrmo 2022a), a model of coming out has been proposed (Dyrmo 2022b). The model, based on a multilevel approach to coming out, shows how different conceptual structures varying in the level of specificity are recruited to linguistically express coming out experiences, starting from image schemas, through complex image schemas (added to the model), conceptual domains, frames, and metaphorical scenarios at the most specific of the hierarchy. The proposed analysis contributes to Conceptual Metaphor Theory in two ways. Firstly, it empirically shows how various conceptual structures participate in the metaphoricity of coming out. Secondly, it demonstrates the applicability of the multilevel approach to one of the still underexplored domains of social experience.

Lastly, in Dyrmo (2022c), the notion of a metaphorical scenario proposed by Musolff has been extended to the gestural component. The gestural analysis of the coming out experiences reveals that coming out can be conceptualised in terms of a variety of different metaphors, all of them underpinned by a generic metaphor of KNOWING IS SEEING. The newly introduced idea of a gestural metaphorical scenario shows that gestures can be analysed at a discourse level and allows for a more flexible approach to a

multimodal analysis. This contribution to Conceptual Metaphor Theory demonstrates that people who share their stories on the same topic use ontologically related gestures in order to conceptualise their experiences. The experiences, although distributed across members of one big community, share the fundamental component, reflected in the generic metaphor of KNOWING IS SEEING. Additionally, this extension to the notion of metaphorical scenarios shows that metaphors are indeed the preserve of thought, confirming a long-held assumption of cognitive linguistics.

The research calls for further investigation into the nature of non-normative cognition and multimodal manifestations of the non-normative conceptual systems. In Dyrmo (under review a) it has been investigated how LGBT+ people mentally simulate viewpoint and express it in metaphorical gestures. It remains to be seen, for example, how coming out is understood and expressed in more controlled settings, for instance in face-to-face interviews. It would be interesting to see whether there are any differences between the results offered in this thesis and the research on coming out in different, potentially typologically distant languages. In a cognitive semantic study of coming out in Polish (Dyrmo under review b) it has been shown, for instance, that coming out is conceptualised via several meaning foci, for example visibility, opening, container, sharing, and burden, which are consistent with the analyses offered in this thesis. Moreover, it would be interesting to see how different modalities, for example pictorial, are recruited to communicate coming out experiences. Apart from these research avenues, there is at least one methodological question that should be answered by further research into gestural metaphorical scenarios: how can we use the notion of gestural metaphorical scenarios in a more principled and reliable way to analyse different types of multimodal data? Answering this question would mean establishing yet another of much needed procedures for identifying metaphoricity across modalities and would possibly guarantee more methodological stability in the analysis of gestures in metaphorical scenarios in further research. The presented analyses of both gestural and linguistic material have revealed that coming out is conceptualised in a variety of different ways. These ways, although they are necessarily modality-dependent, share a conceptual core, that is, the OBJECT image schema, which gets recruited both by the linguistic modality and the gestural modality. The primacy of the OBJECT image schema has been hinted at throughout both the linguistic and gestural analyses of the material and would surely require more research of cross-modal and cross-linguistic nature.

The analyses presented here, following the theoretical framework of Queer Cognitive Linguistics (Dyrmo 2022c), offer a more elaborate picture of the human cognitive system, especially of those populations that have been for long left aside in cognitive sciences. With the research project presented here, I hope to have narrowed down this research gap and have given at least partial justice to the complexity of the ways coming out is conceptualised and expressed multimodally. Finally, I hope to have kindled some interest in the still unexplored questions in a queerer approach to language and cognition.

Abstract

People vary in the way they think and express their thoughts both in language and gesture. With the assumption that people with different bodies and different body experiences conceptualise the world in demonstrably different, sometimes non-normative ways (see e.g., Casasanto 2011), it is now important to reflect on these differences in scholarly practise. Following the focus on non-normative cognitions and populations postulated in Queer Cognitive Linguistics (Dyrmo 2022a), the presented studies show how coming out is expressed multimodally, via language and gesture. A sample pronoun analysis of LGBT+ people in Dyrmo (2022a) makes a case for a more inclusive approach to social categories of sex and gender orientations and identities, postulating, at the same time, the inclusion of non-normative categories into research practise. In Dyrmo (2022b), it has been demonstrated how people who talk about coming out conceptualise their diverse experiences of revealing their sexual orientation and gender identity. A multilevel cognitive model of coming out shows that a variety of different conceptual structures is recruited to linguistically express coming out experiences: from the image schematic concepts of ITERATION, CONTAINER, and FORCE, through the domains of MOVEMENT and TRANSFER, and the general frame of COMING OUT, to the most specific metaphorical scenarios of COMING OUT OF THE BOUNDED SPACE IS REVEALING A SEXUAL ORIENTATION and COMING OUT IS SHIFTING A HEAVY OBJECT OFF ONE'S SHOULDERS. In Dyrmo (2022b) it has been demonstrated that the multilevel model of metaphor can be successfully applied to the coming out discourse, and, potentially, to many different domains of social experience.

In Dyrmo (2022c), it has been shown how conceptualisations of coming out are manifested in gesture, all underpinned by a generic metaphor of KNOWING IS SEEING. This generic metaphor is the starting point for the more elaborate conceptualisations of coming out, which surface in such metaphors as SECRET IS AN OBJECT and PERSON WITH AN UNDISCLOSED IDENTITY IS A PERSON IN A CONTAINER. These metaphors, in turn, have their respective entailments: COMING OUT IS SHOWING AN OBJECT and COMING OUT IS REVEALING A PERSON. Moreover, in Dyrmo (2022c) it has been shown that the notion of a metaphorical scenario can be extended into gesture. It has been proposed that, while lexical

metaphorical scenarios are expressed via lexical items and potentially more controlled, gestural metaphorical scenarios emerge from recurrent gesture forms and are arguably less controlled than their lexical equivalents.

All in all, the presented research embraces a more inclusive focus on non-normative populations, showing how coming out can be expressed multimodally. It also contributes to the development of metaphor scholarship more generally, extending one existing and highly influential concept of a metaphorical scenario, and validates a recent proposal of a multilevel approach to metaphor, applying it to coming out.

Streszczenie

Ludzie różnią się w sposobie, w jaki wyrażają swoje myśli zarówno za pomocą języka, jak i gestów. Gdy zakładamy, że ludzie różniący się ciałami i doświadczeniami rozumieją świat w różny, czasami nienormatywny sposób (Casasanto 2011), ważnym jest, aby poddać wynikające z tego założenia wnioski odpowiedniej refleksji naukowej. Biorąc za punkt odniesienia postulaty Queerowego Językoznawstwa Kognitywnego (Dyrmo 2022a), zaprezentowane w dysertacji badania pokazują, jak coming out wyrażany jest w sposób multimodalny, w języku i w geście. Analiza zaimków, których używają osoby ze społeczności LGBT+ (Dyrmo 2022a) wskazuje na zasadność wprowadzenia bardziej inkluzyjnego podejścia do kategorii społecznych w praktyce naukowej. W badaniu drugim (2022b) wskazane zostało, jak ci, którzy mówią o doświadczeniach coming outu konceptualizują coming out i jak te konceptualizacje realizują się na różnych poziomach struktury pojęciowej. Wielopoziomowy kognitywny model coming outu pokazuje, jak te poziomy wyłaniają się z warstwy językowej, od schematów wyobrażeniowych (ITERACYJNOŚĆ, POJEMNIK i SIŁA) przez domeny (RUCH i TRANSFER), ramę poznawczą (coming out), skończywszy na scenariuszach metaforycznych (WYCHODZENIE Z ZAMKNIĘTEJ PRZESTRZENI TO UJAWNIANIE SWOJEJ ORIENTACJI SEKSUALNEJ oraz COMING OUT TO ZRZUCANIE CIĘŻARU Z RAMION). Ten sam model jest przykładem, że wielopoziomowe podejście to metafory można z sukcesem stosować na dyskursu coming outu, jak również do dyskursów o innych zjawiskach społecznych.

W badaniu trzecim (Dyrmo 2022c) wskazane zostało, jak pojęcie coming outu rozumiane jest na poziomie gestu. Badanie pokazuje, że wszystkie przeanalizowane przykłady są osadzonymi w kontekście pochodnymi generycznej metafory WIEDZIEĆ TO WIDZIEĆ. Zasugerowano jednocześnie, że, w przeciwieństwie to scenariuszy leksykalnych, metaforyczne scenariusze gestyczne - zbudowane na gestach powracających (recurrent gestures) - podlegają mniejszej kontroli gestykulującego niż scenariusze na poziomie językowym.

Podsumowując, zaprezentowane badania zakładają większą inkluzyjność w praktyce naukowej i pokazują, że coming out może zostać wyrażony zarówno za pomocą języka, jak i gestu. Sytuują się również w granicach dyskusji o metaforze poznawczej w szerszym zakresie, rozszerzając istniejące już pojęcie scenariusza metaforycznego do

gestu, a także pokazując aplikacyjność wielopoziomowego podejścia to metafory przez zastosowanie go do dyskursu coming outu.

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Appendix A: Author contribution statement (Polish)

Oświadczenie o wkładzie autorów i autorek

Dyrmo, Tomasz. 2022a. „Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?", tekst i dyskurs, 16: 241-257.

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Autor wyżej wymienionych artykułów naukowych deklaruje następujący wkład w powstanie artykułu:

Tomasz Dyrmo (100%): konceptualizacja, zbieranie danych, analiza danych, przygotowanie manuskryptu, redakcja tekstu

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Appendix B: Author contribution statement (English)

Author contribution statement

Dyrmo, Tomasz. 2022a. „Do we need Queer Cognitive Linguistics?", tekst i dyskurs, 16: 241-257.

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The author of all of the above research articles declares the following contribution to the articles:

Tomasz Dyrmo (100%): conceptualisation, data collection, data analysis, manuscript writing (draft and post-review editing)

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