

4 Cognitive Linguistics I: Meaning and Conceptual Metaphor

4.1 The Inchoateness of Linguistic Meaning and A Priori Reasoning

There is a certain irony the notion of meaning involves. Meaning is meaningless unless what meaning means is specified. But any specification of meaning in terms of ‘what is the meaning of meaning?’ presupposes what we ask for when we want to determine the meaning of meaning. It presupposes the determination of meaning itself. Thus if we want to determine what meaning means and if we want to avoid reasoning in circles, we have to transcend meaning in and for itself. As a first step, it is adjuvant to draw on our pre-understanding of meaning. Everybody understands the word ‘meaning’, just not always in the same way. This is because pre-understandings in general are never localizable in a Platonic realm of clear, universally valid and immutable ideas that we can all grasp (how many *mis*-understandings and their consequences would have been prevented if this were the case!). Rather, the vague and versatile nature of pre-understandings points to the fact that they depend on historical, cultural and personal circumstances in the widest sense possible, which is also the case when we claim that something or somebody has meaning or that something or somebody is meaningful.

Such an articulation of the pre-understanding of meaning is insightful, because it shows us that any pre-understanding of meaning takes meaning to be a relational notion. There is always *something* or *somebody* that/who *has* meaning or that/who *is* meaningful. Meaning-assignments are inseparable from a meaning-bearer that is supposed to be meaningful when we say that this or that or he or she has meaning. In addition, our pre-understanding of meaning not only discloses that meaning is always a meaning *of* something, but meaning is also meaning *for* something or somebody, namely for the agent who assigns a meaning to the meaning-bearer. Any meaning is thus the nexus between its own *of* and its own *for*. Without any further specification, the attempt at approaching meaning by saying that it relies on our pre-understandings of it already reveals that meaning implies its own dyadic relation, the relata of which are formally presupposed. In short, if we want to know more about the meaning of meaning, it can be promising to take into consideration firstly the specific, often unthematized context in which the notion of meaning comes into play, secondly the variable ‘meaning of’ and thirdly the variable ‘meaning for’.¹ This is not much for the beginning, but it helps us to

¹This distinction between ‘meaning of’ and ‘meaning for’ is suggestive of W. Overton’s distinction between ‘I mean’ and ‘it means’. Both pairs are correlative, or, as Overton [1994: 1] puts it, they possess in all of their elaborations within various “domains of inquiry and across levels of analysis [...] [an] underlying relational matrix.” However, Overton’s distinction explicitly separates persons (*I mean*) from objects (*it means*): “When we focus on the ‘I mean’ pole of this relationship, we focus on the contribution of the person

escape the Münchhausen trilemma of understanding the meaning of meaning as an unrelational notion.

If we look at philosophical approaches towards part-whole relations in order to investigate PWO, then three contexts of meaning can be distinguished. Although these three contexts not only apply to part-whole relations, but to the nature and range of meaning in general, they enter into force in the philosophical literature on parts and wholes as well. Firstly, there is what philosopher and cognitive linguist M. Johnson calls ‘the conceptual-propositional theory of meaning’. Johnson characterizes this ‘theory’, which is actually not a fleshed-out theory of a single philosopher but rather a contextual stance that many theories incorporate and vary, as follows:

“Sentences or utterances (and the words we use in making them) alone are what have meaning. Sentences get their meaning by expressing propositions, which are the basic units of meaning and thought. Propositions typically have a subject-predicate structure. Our language and thought are thus meaningful to the extent that they express propositions, which allow people to make assertions about the way the world is and to perform other speech acts, such as asking questions, issuing commands, pleading, joking, expressing remorse, and so on. Our capacity to grasp meanings, and our capacity for reasoning, depends on our conscious use of symbolic representations in the mind that somehow can relate to things outside the mind. These symbolic representations (usually thought of as concepts) are organized into meaningful propositional structures via formal rules of syntax, and then the propositions are organized into thoughts and arguments via formal rules of logic. According to this objectivist semantics, neither the syntactic rules, nor the logical relations, nor even the propositionals themselves have any intrinsic relation to human bodies.”
[Johnson 2007b: 8]

Johnson traces the context of such a philosophical stance towards meaning back to Frege’s claim that propositions would be “the basic units of human meaning and thought” [id.: 9], which had an immense impact on 20th century analytic philosophy. Not only the lion’s share of the analytic mereologists that I have discussed in section 3.1, but also the Husserl of the 4th LI, which is a direct and linguistic consequence of his part-whole ontology developed in the 3rd LI, presuppose and even argue in favor of this stance. Although Husserl does not deny the significance of subjective intentionality for the linguistic expression of meanings, he locates the source of meanings in a mind-independent realm of objectivity from which we can grasp them. He also reduces the expressibility of such meanings to a formalizable language, i.e. to a pure grammar that he is eager to discover.² We can generally say that according to the ‘conceptual-propositional’ stance, the domain of the variable ‘meaning of’ is limited to

to meaning. The ‘it means’ pole focuses us on the contribution of the manifest world of common sense.” This is the reason why I prefer to operate with the more neutral distinction between meaning for and meaning of, because it does not necessarily imply a polarization of persons on the one side and objects on the other. For example, organic entities of nature (animals, plants) or artificial intelligences could also embody a ‘meaning for’ and not only a ‘meaning of’ (e.g. a flying ball could be said to have meaning for a dog), while persons can create a ‘meaning of’ to other beings for which it is a ‘meaning for’.

²“And if the verbal resources of language are to be a faithful mirror of all meanings possible *a priori*, then language must have grammatical forms at its disposal which give distinct expression, i.e. sensibly distinct symbolization, to all distinguishable meaning forms.” [Husserl 2001: 55]

propositions, including linguistic utterances that express propositions. Propositions relate to a supposedly mind-independent external world and can be defined as “the primary bearers of truth and falsity” [McGrath 2014], whereby a (expressed) proposition is true and therefore meaningful if it corresponds with something that is a priori objective, like a matter of fact in the external world or a universal idea.

Particular natural languages are no indicator for the truth or falsity of a proposition, because one and the same proposition can be expressed in more than one natural language (e.g. ‘The cup is red’, ‘Die Tasse ist rot’, ‘Het kopje is rood’, ‘La tazza è rossa’ all express the same proposition). The ‘meaning of’, which is the (expressed) proposition, thus depends on a strong conception of mind-independent reality and on the reducibility of language to propositional, formalizable structures and formalized symbols. These structures and symbols “get meaning by mapping directly onto that objective reality. Reasoning is a rule-governed manipulation of these symbols that gives us objective knowledge, when it functions correctly.” [Johnson 1987: xxi-xxii.] From this perspective, the objective reality as such does not have meaning in itself, but is rather the necessary condition for propositional meaning. “Meaning is a matter of how our concepts map onto or pick out aspects of this mind-independent objective reality.” [Johnson 2008: 45] Therefore, if we want to show that a (expressed) proposition is meaningful, it should be principally possible to “give the conditions under which it would be true, or the conditions under which it would be ‘satisfied’ by some state of affairs in the world.” [Johnson 1987: xxiii].

This limitation of meaning to (expressed) propositions fits with a limitation of the domain of the variable ‘meaning for’. For what or whom is a proposition meaningful? Of course, a proposition is meaningful or meaningless for anybody who thinks and reasons and communicates via accessible concepts. This means that propositions can be meaningful for basically every rational animal, provided that rationality is a potentially correct mirror of objective reality. But the limitation involved in the ‘meaning for’ arises when we take a closer look at how and when propositional thinking takes place. As Johnson’s characterization of this stance describes, the rational organization of concepts into meaningful propositional structures (which is supposedly done by every rational animal) and the deductive organization of these structures into thoughts and arguments via formal logic (which is actually done by a comparably small group of professional logicians) are conscious and disembodied activities. The agent who forms and expresses a proposition, thus the agent who ‘grasps’ a meaning and relates it to the external world, has to be fully aware of this act. She knows what is going on in her mind in order to pick out concepts, form a proposition and express it according to her act of meaning-intention. The ‘meaning for’ thus applies only to conscious rational animals, or to rational animals in conscious moments of self-inspection. But the limitation of this variable’s domain of appropriateness is even stricter. Not only has the agent to be conscious of her propositional thinking and expressing, she also has to be disembodied, i.e. detached from the reality her propositions are about. Only in so doing, can the intended proposition be compared without bias and risk of falsification with the correspondent state of affairs in the world.

The agent’s act of meaning-intention in the ‘conceptual-propositional theory of meaning’ has to be the *tertium comparationis* between proposition and reality. As Johnson writes, the conceptual-propositional stance presupposes a God’s eye view on reality, “that is, a perspective that transcends all human limitation and constitutes a universal valid reflective stance. For example, meanings are treated as relations among symbols and objective states of affairs that

are independent of how any individual person might understand or grasp those relations. It is alleged that there is a position *outside* this relationship from which the fit of symbol and thing can be judged. Concepts are said to stand in logical relationships as a matter of objective fact, regardless of how humans might comprehend them or organize them into systems.” [id.] Thus neither the particular structures of our bodies and minds, nor the natural languages with which propositions are generally expressed, seem to matter for the ‘meaning for’ aspect of the conceptual-propositional stance of meaning. Meaning is supposed to be free from all kinds of empirical contingencies: Propositional meaning is meaning *for* a conscious, disembodied rational animal. Because such a rational animal can be as rational as the propositions it grasps (the remainder – if there is any – is subjective irrationality), one could even say that the ‘meaning for’ is reducible to the ‘meaning of’. The God’s eye view does not interfere between proposition and reality; it only mediates by surveying passively without adding any proper surplus to this relation. Everything that points to subjectivity, except for the pure act of thinking *as* deducing, falls out of the equation between proposition and reality, thus even out of the infamous view from nowhere. Therefore, this stance of meaning is in line with what I have introduced above³ as the *deductive* method of ontology, only applied to one special ‘theory’ or layer of meaning.

4.1.1 Propositional Meaning, Perceptual Meaning and Situational Meaning

Although the conceptual-propositional stance towards meaning as a direct relation between language and world has been the dominant view in the 20th century (analytic) philosophy of language and logic, Johnson suggests regarding the linguistic function of meaning in a significantly broader context. This context, which can be studied by empirical methods and explained by empirical correlations, comprises our everyday, conscious as well as unconscious, rational as well as emotional, understanding of situations that have meaning for us. According to Johnson, the conceptual-propositional stance is inadequate, because “‘meaning’ in these traditions has very little to do with what people find *meaningful* in their lives.” [Johnson et al. 1980: ix] Words and sentences can indeed be meaningful, but the domain of the variable ‘meaning of’ is infinitely richer, because not only linguistic meaning is covered by the legitimate question of how “can *anything* (an event, object, person, word, sentence, theory, narrative) be meaningful to a person?” [Johnson 1987: 2] Basically everything can be meaningful, not only true statements about worldly states of affairs.

Such an expansion of the ‘meaning of’ domain naturally enlarges the ‘meaning for’ domain, because the rationality, cognitive awareness and disembodiment that are presupposed for making true propositions about the world are no longer the only guarantors of meaningfulness. “We are concerned with how *real human beings reason* and not with some ideal standard of rationality. We are concerned with *what real human beings grasp as meaningful*.” [id.: 11] It is known that real human beings, however, do have a body, perceive with their senses, have emotions and values, are members of cultural, social and historical settings, and are not always rational in their attempts at making sense of the world. The problem should therefore not consist in how to reduce the applicability of ‘meaning of’ and ‘meaning for’ to propositional truth makers

³Cf. section 1.2.

and external truth bearers, but in how to manage the undeniable richness and translinguistic dimensions of these domains. This implies that we should trace their variety back to grounds of meaning they, and thus we, all share but at the same time, implement in the most varied ways.⁴ Meaning in this regard is not the reference of propositional language to worldly states of affairs, but rather a sort of sense-making both of the ‘meaning of’ (x makes sense to y) and the ‘meaning for’ (y makes sense of x).⁵

We have seen above how the Husserl of the 4th LI assesses the role of subjective intentionality when it comes to linguistic meaning.⁶ Although Husserl refuses to grant psychological acts a meaning-generating function, he indicates that meaningful linguistic expressions can tell us something about how intentional acts fulfill meaning. Thus, albeit only in outlines, he enhances the status of the ‘meaning for’ in relation to the ‘meaning of’ in the process of meaning-generation. This is a first step in the direction of Johnson’s stance towards meaning. For the relations of parts and wholes, on which I would like to focus, the Husserlian reference to subjective acts of meaning-mediation (from universal concepts to linguistic expressions) gives rise to the significance of the ‘meaning for’, which is no longer just a free floating mind with a rationality for which all concepts and propositions are transparent and graspable. How we intend part-whole structures as meaningful and how we express them in meaningful language are overlapping, if not congruent aspects of one and the same consistence of part-whole meaning. The realization of this coherence between language and intentionality then allows us to make valid inferences from linguistic forms of expressions to the structures of our intentional mind without reducing the scope of the latter to the limits of the former. Once we have thus reevaluated the status of the variable ‘meaning for’, there is nothing to stop us from asking, “But why should only propositions have meaning, whereas we experience infinitely many other aspects in life as meaningful, too? Language, be it formal language or natural language, may be an expression of propositional meaning-bearers, but given the infinite range that can be covered by the meaning-intentions of the ‘meaning for’, aren’t there other bearers of meaning as well?”

In order to recognize the nature of the ‘meaning of’ in the light of the enriched and correlated ‘meaning for’, we have to do two things. Firstly, it is crucial to acknowledge and to analyze the structure of the ‘meaning for’, which is located in all possible acts of meaning-intentions. “*Intentionality* is the capacity of a mental state or of a representation of some kind (concept, image, word, sentence) to be about, or directed at, some dimension or aspect of one’s experience. Meaning, I am claiming, is irreducibly intentional in this sense: The capacity for a mental event

⁴“The hypothesis of the unity of the notion of meaning is not an insistence on a single unified literal concept ‘meaning’; rather, it is a commitment to the existence of a series of connections among the various senses of ‘means’. It is a commitment to the conviction that we are unified human beings and not a cluster of autonomous modules. It is a commitment to the ‘cognitive semantics’ view that humans have general cognitive mechanisms which can be specified to particular functions. So, linguistic meaning turns out to be a special instance (perhaps the most central) of our capacity to have meaningful experience.” [Johnson 1987: 176–7]

⁵“It should now be more evident how cognitive semantics transforms the notion of meaning considerably in contrast with Objectivist semantics. A theory of meaning is a theory of understanding, and understanding is the totality of the ways in which we experience and make sense of our world in an ever-evolving process. Understanding is not achieved merely by entertaining and reflecting on sentential/propositional structure alone.” [Johnson 1989bb: 116]

⁶Cf. section 3.2.

or a symbol to be meaningful (to ‘have meaning’) always presupposes some being or beings for whom the event or symbol is meaningful, by virtue of its relation to something beyond itself. How that mental event or symbol gets its relatedness will depend upon the understanding in which it is embedded.” [id.: 177] This first step shows us that meaning-intentions point beyond (expressed) propositions as the only instance of the ‘meaning of’, whereas – contra Husserl – they do not necessarily point beyond intentionality as a mere transmitter or fulfiller of universal, a priori sources of meaning. Instead, as a second step, the significance of the ‘meaning for’ and the appropriate richness of the ‘meaning of’ indicate that meaning structures are generated by the interaction of the two, i.e. by the inseparableness of human understanding and reality, of which language is only one possible yet informative outcome.

Unlike the role devoted to the mind in the conceptual-propositional stance, human understanding is not “limited to understanding conditions of truth and falsity.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 199] It is rather our bodily being in the world that generates meaning, not our disembodied grasping of meanings as Platonic, pre-existing ideas. For this reason and in contrast to the ‘conceptual-propositional theory of meaning’, Johnson calls his own cognitive-linguistic stance the ‘embodied theory of meaning’. Instead of coming ‘top-down’ from an a priori realm of pure meanings the structure of which magically conforms to the structure of the world, meanings “emerge ‘from the bottom up’ through increasingly complex levels of organic activity; they are not the constructions of a disembodied mind.” [Johnson 2007b: 10] It is therefore impossible for Johnson to defend a Cartesian dualism that jams an ontological wedge between the intentional, understanding mind of the ‘meaning for’ and the external world as the ultimate and objective measure of truthful propositions. In lieu thereof, ‘meaning for’ and ‘meaning of’ are, as it were, two interconnected sides of the same meaning coin. For any comprehensive ontological approach towards PWO that takes into consideration the meaningfulness of part-whole relations, some details of this dichotomy’s annulment cannot be omitted.

Before I come to that, however, a few words about the relation of the present project’s methods and the definitions of meaning just discussed are expedient. In order to determine the ontological nature of PWO, I argued in chapter 1 for the need for two different methods: a deductive one consisting of a priori conceptual analysis and an inductive one consisting of both ordinary language analysis and empirical experiments. These two methods can now be related to the two stances concerning the notion of meaning. The conceptual-propositional stance towards meaning, being no more than a linguistically expressible truth bearer for something existing in the external world that makes the bearer in question true, is closely related to the deductive method. One central assumption of the deductive method for ontological research was the correspondence of reality and rationality: *adaequatio rei et intellectus*. The conceptual-propositional stance as described by Johnson and as we have become acquainted with it in Husserl’s 3rd and 4th LI builds on this correspondence theory of truth. With our propositional thoughts and formalized language, we are supposed to strike the chord of objective reality, which in turn makes a proposition meaningful. Given the assumed structural equivalence of laws of thinking and laws of reality, it is not even necessary to verify the propositional content of the former with the data provided by the latter.

The discovery of the a priori laws of logic (or, in Husserl, the a priori laws that make the laws of logic possible⁷) can be a priorily deduced from irreducible axioms with a set of predefined

⁷“These laws, which govern the sphere of complex meanings, and whose role it is to divide sense from nonsense,

procedures. No perception, no feelings, no body, no interpersonal communication or reference to culturally changing points of view are appropriate conditions for the meaningfulness of propositional contents. Meaning is neither *in* the ‘objective’ world nor *in* the ‘subjective’ act of meaning-intention, but prevails in a priori propositions and their symbolic expressions *about* the world. Conceptual-propositional meaning is thus deducible from a priori laws, and this is what binds this conception of meaning to the deductive method. This method is essential, because only through it were we able to arrive at conceptualizations of parts (moments as well as pieces), wholes (independent as well as dependent), and finally also of PWO as something that happens beyond the scope of this method. Therefore, the limitation of meaning to propositional meaning does not disqualify it automatically, only because it became clear at the end of the second chapter that PWO is not to be found in eternal, a priori laws of logic. Consequently, if language is supposed to be the only possible expression of propositional meaning and if propositions are supposed to be the only bearer of meaning (the only ‘meaning of’), then PWO would simply be meaningless, as it has no a priori, purely conceptual foundation. If we give credence only to the notion of meaning that is acceptable for the deductive method and its propositional-conceptual stance, then we would have reached an obvious end of this investigation into PWO’s ontological nature, because it would imply that even the quest for the ontological nature of PWO is meaningless. How can it be meaningful to strive for the determination of a potential ontological category of which we know beforehand that it is meaningless due to the fact that it is conceptually absent, thus unthinkable, thus – *adaequatio rei et intellectus* – unreal?

The partly linguistic, partly philosophical approach of Johnson, however, is as promising as it is methodically suboptimal, as it cannot do justice to the rich notion of experienced meaning it draws upon. First and foremost, it is promising, because on the one hand, he does not discard the method of deductive conceptual analysis, which has been undeniably fruitful for our first inspection of what we can conceptually *think of* when we think of parts, wholes and PWO. This is because, on the other hand, he embeds this deductive method, together with its narrow scope of meaning, in a much broader framework in which it becomes clear that propositional meaning is actually just a fraction of what meaning adheres to, both as ‘meaning for’ and ‘meaning of’. If we only analyze concepts and propositions and compare them with the external world in order to determine meaning in terms of truth or falsity, then we ignore not only all of the other areas in which meaning occurs to us. We also ignore the possibility that propositional meaning could be deeply connected with these other areas. What are these ‘other areas’ that are equally meaningful for us? For Johnson, everything – e.g. “things, people, situations, and relationships” [Johnson 2007b: 69] can be meaningful as long as it “stands forth qualitatively” [id.] in the world.

Why is it that language is meaningful for us, why does it sometimes make sense to us and sometimes not? Because language, both formal language and the natural languages in which we daily communicate, shares some basic structures of meaningfulness with other, non-linguistic phenomena. These structures are pre-propositional and they emerge through the experience of a certain kind of quality. “The problem with qualities is that they are about how something shows itself to us, about how something *feels* to us, and they seem to involve more than can

are not yet the so-called laws of logic in the pregnant sense of this term: they provide pure logic with the *possible meaning forms*, i.e. the *a priori* forms of complex meanings significant as wholes, whose ‘formal truth’ or ‘objectivity’ then depends on these pregnantly described ‘logical laws’.” [Husserl 2001: 49]

be structurally discriminated by concepts. Qualities are not reducible to the abstractions by which we try to distinguish them. Consequently, to the extent that philosophers of mind and language focus only on conceptual and propositional structures and the inferences supported by those structures, they lack an adequate way to investigate the role of qualities in meaning and thought.” [id.: 70] We will see shortly how in Johnson’s framework language is based on bodily experience, which is itself an experience of this kind of quality. In the description of these qualities, Johnson refers to J. Dewey who calls them ‘pervasive’ or – in reference to J. Locke – ‘tertiary’ qualities.⁸

It is important to notice not only the promising, but also the somehow problematic shift that is going on in Johnson’s characterization of meaning. Firstly, Johnson declares conceptual-propositional meaning as insufficient for a complete account of meaning. Conceptual-propositional meaning presupposes an external world, the objects in which exist independently of any observer. The attributes of these objects are their primary qualities, because in the tradition of Locke, only this kind of quality is subject-independent.⁹ If we do not want to actively include the perceiving or in any other way experiencing subject as a constitutive factor, then an (expressed) proposition has to aim at an object’s primary qualities, as only they are supposed to be attributable to an object in itself. Truth and falsity are only attributable to propositions about the factual nature of an object. This conceptual-propositional stance and the deductive method it entails has to presuppose the separation of the subject, whose propositions are or are not meaningful, and the objective world, which makes or does not make the proposition true. As we have seen, Johnson does not uncouple meaning from propositions about primary qualities, but he embeds this notion of meaning in a much more embracing characterization of meaning on which also linguistic meaning relies: meaning as a tertiary quality. Tertiary qualities “*are not properties of objects*. Instead, entire situations are characterized by pervasive qualities, and we pick out particular qualities [such as primary ones, M.S.] for discrimination within this unified situational whole.” [id.: 72] In such a situational whole, which is the ‘meaning of’, there is no distinction between the observing subject and the observed object. These two poles are nothing more than abstractions at a later, post-experiential stage. For this reason, Johnson agitates against the ontological separation of subject and world, which we will discuss in the next section.

Secondly, however, the method with which he agitates against this separation is suboptimal, because he uses a downright empirical-inductive method in order to disclose a more-than-empirical notion of meaning. The problem commences with the following: In his rich determination of meaning as belonging to tertiary qualities, Johnson not only incorporates meaningful propositions about primary qualities, but also meaningful perceptions of secondary qualities. We can describe secondary qualities as the empirical attributes of an object that we can perceive with our sense organs (whether or not these attributes exist only in the subject’s perception of them). For Johnson, the experience of meaning transcends even this domain of secondary qualities, which becomes clear in an exemplary depiction:

“When I look out my office window, I have the gift of experiencing an oak tree, massive almost beyond imagination, whose branches overwhelm my entire visual

⁸Cf. Johnson [2007b: 71].

⁹Cf. on the distinction between primary and secondary qualities Locke [1975: 117], Nolan [2011] and Ayers [2011].

expanse. In spring and summer, I see virtually nothing but literally hundreds of branches covered in an explosion of leaves, through which I occasionally glimpse a campus sidewalk flanked by grass, with students hustling along to classes or strolling hand in hand. In this moment there is only the situation, not as a mere visual scene, but as an experience with a pervasive unifying quality that is at once visual, auditory, tactile, social, and cultural. The pervasive quality changes as the day changes, and it changes also from day to day and season to season.” [id.]

What makes this situation meaningful for Johnson and representative for any person with similarly holistic experiences? The meaningfulness involved here neither consists in the appropriateness of propositional statements referring to it (conceptual-propositional meaning), because firstly the meaning seems to exist prior to the statement telling about it. Secondly, the ‘meaning of’, i.e. the quality of the situation, is not a stable object but an ever-changing complex of entities. Thirdly, the language that is required to describe this situation naturally draws on metaphors to complement the literal sense, which becomes even clearer in the many poems Johnson cites to show the qualitative richness of the ‘meaning of’.¹⁰ This is also a first hint about the significance of metaphors in Johnson’s analysis of ordinary language and the inferences he draws.¹¹ Nor does the meaningfulness of this situation lie in the empirical perception of objects or groups thereof, e.g. the smell of green leaves, the size of the high tree with leaves, the hustling of moving students, or one pair of students. What we can call ‘perceptual meaning’ that refers to the perceptible attributes of an object and that likewise presupposes a dichotomy between the perceiver and the perceived is exceeded by an experience that is intrinsically tied to the ‘meaning of’, because the ‘meaning for’ partakes in it as a situational component. There is no meaning in this ‘embodied theory of meaning’ if either the ‘meaning of’ or the ‘meaning for’ is cut off,¹² notwithstanding the rather distanced position Johnson takes in his example as an observer who sees the campus through his window. He himself, as a ‘meaning for’, is an essential part of the overall quality, which makes him experience himself as a part of the ‘meaning of’ as well. The idea that he is actually ‘just’ seeing or hearing the outside world as a passive observer may come only afterward as an abstraction from the holistic experience.

Whereas the ‘meaning for’ in the conceptual-propositional stance can be downplayed because the subject is generally ignored, and whereas the ‘meaning of’ in the perceptual sense of meaning is often downplayed because secondary qualities are said to exist only in the perceiving subject, both ‘meaning of’ and ‘meaning for’ are thus irreducible for meaning as consisting of tertiary qualities. Experience in this sense is experience of wholeness. In the epistemological order of

¹⁰“It is frustrating, therefore, that we have almost no adequate way to describe and explain what qualities are or how they shape our lives. Phenomenology sought to remedy this grave defect by taking as its chief task the articulation of the character of so-called lived experience. But even phenomenology has a hard time with the qualitative dimension, for it is easier to describe the *structural* aspects of experience than it is to describe felt qualities. The tendency is thus always to look for the constituting structures of experience, at the expense of the actual experience of qualities. After all, what can you possibly *say* philosophically about the quality of a red wheelbarrow covered with rain? ‘so much depends / upon // a red wheel / barrow // glazed with rain / water // beside the white / chickens.’ [*The Red Wheelbarrow* by William Carlos Williams, M.S.]” [Johnson 2007b: 70–1]

¹¹Cf. section 4.2.

¹²“Meaning comes, not just from ‘internal’ structures of the organism (the ‘subject’), nor solely from ‘external’ inputs (the ‘objects’), but rather from recurring patterns of engagement between organism and environment.” [Johnson et al. 2002: 248]

experience, this wholeness comes first. By drawing on Dewey's article 'Qualitative Thought', Johnson states that it "is not wrong to say that we experience objects, properties, and relations, but it *is* wrong to say that these are primary in experience. What *are* primary in experience are pervasive [i.e. tertiary, M.S.] qualities of situations, within which we subsequently discriminate objects, properties, and relations." [id.: 75] Metaphorically saying that these three kinds of meaning are layers now allows us to frame the experiential-situational meaning as being the most embracing in the epistemological order, followed by the perceptual layer, which again includes the conceptual-propositional layer.

meaning_{sit}: The meaning of a situation of any sort (e.g. aesthetic, emotional, social, natural, spiritual) in which the 'meaning for' and the 'meaning of' are intertwined but not reducible to one another. This situation consists of tertiary, 'felt' or 'pervasive' qualities that entail secondary and primary ones at subsequent phases of abstraction.

meaning_{perc}: The meaning of sense data that refer to a perceptible object whereby the 'meaning of' is usually reducible to the 'meaning for' and its physiological and neurological nature (e.g. John sees the brownness of a horse. Thereby the perceived brownness is not a property of the horse itself, but is reducible to the bodily act of seeing and the neurological processes belonging to it). Percepts consist of secondary, empirical qualities.

meaning_{prop}: The meaning of a (expressed) proposition that is either true or false, because it does or does not correspond with a matter of fact in the external world. Thereby the 'meaning for' is usually reducible to the 'meaning of', because the propositional content supersedes the subjective act of meaning-intention, making the latter an epiphenomenon and, as such, devoid of any surplus compared to the former. Ideally, propositions refer to an object's primary qualities, such as its material and physical nature, and are derived by a priori acts of conceptual analysis and deductive reasoning.

After having formulated these characterizations of the three kinds of meaning¹³ that are relevant for PWO as well, I would like to mention why I find Johnson's method – although I will follow it until the end of this chapter – rather suboptimal, given his own account of meaning as meaning_{sit}. It became clear in chapter 2 that PWO does not have meaning as meaning_{prop}, because this notion is a priori contradictory, inconsistent and too dynamic to grasp with

¹³What I just termed 'meaning_{sit}' and 'meaning_{perc}' can be set alongside Škilters' [2011: 278] definition of meaning, according to which "[m]eaning is a perceptually and bodily grounded non-linguistic cognitive structure with a situation-foundation (including the factors from the concrete situation of the meaning assignment) and an experience-foundation (including variety of experiential, subjective, bodily grounded, background knowledge aspects of the agent). In assigning meaning to something – visual or verbal or other stimuli – we are merging both kinds of resources together to generate coherent semantics of the respective stimuli [...]" I think that the best way to relate this definition to the distinction I am advocating is to subsume both the situation-foundation and the experience-foundation of this definition under the term 'meaning_{sit}', whereby this term should be defined more broadly, which is, however, not necessary for conducting the present project. The merging of these foundations, together with the connection it undergoes with perceptible stimuli, would then result in what I call 'meaning_{perc}'. Here as elsewhere, however, the transitions are gradual and often impossible to demarcate analytically.

stable concepts. However, Husserl himself points out that the process which I call ‘PWO’ may be a meaningful notion when we look at empirical perception, which he *expressis verbis* refuses due to his preference for a formal, non-material ontology and the deductive method required for it to study the basic structures of reality. However, we will see in the course of the present chapter that Johnson’s empirical analysis of natural language is instructive regarding the experiential nature of PWO, that is to say about its meaning_{perc} as far as we can elucidate it by looking at and inferring from ordinary judgments. But does Johnson not have a higher aim, namely the elucidation of meaning_{sit} in order to explain the qualitative richness of lived experience? He indeed seems to have this aim and I absolutely agree with him regarding the significance of tertiary qualities.

The problem is, however, that while Johnson’s intentions target the level of tertiary qualities, the methods he draws on are more suitable for disclosing the empirical nature of meaning, including the abstractness of meaning_{prop} as resulting from and being entailed by meaning_{perc}. This is because, as a cognitive linguist, Johnson’s research methods, particularly the investigation into ordinary language that he conducts in most of his works, is downright empirical, which he even proclaims several times throughout his publications. To be precise, while the experience of meaning takes meaning to be a tertiary quality, both the origins of meaning in body-environment interactions *and* the principal way we can get informative access to this origin by looking at ordinary language is explicitly empirical. As Johnson writes, an “embodied view of meaning looks for the origins and structures of meaning in the organic activities of embodied creatures in interaction with their changing environments. It sees meaning and all our higher functions [thus meaning_{prop+perc+sit}, M.S.] as growing out of and shaped by our abilities to perceive things, manipulate objects, move our bodies in space, and evaluate our situation.” [id. 11] Thus even the origin of meaning_{sit}, not only the origin of meaning_{prop}, is supposed to lie in the empirical realm of meaning_{perc}. It is no surprise that this empirical realm can be studied best with empirical methods. To do so, Johnson often refers to studies of neuroscience, because although “the brain alone cannot give us meaning, it is surely the supreme bodily organ in the construction of meaning.” [id.: 155] He generally argues in favor of an “empirically responsible philosophy [that] would require our culture to abandon some of its deepest philosophical assumptions.” [Johnson et al. 1999: 3] Such an empirically responsible philosophy consists in a sort of “cognitive science of philosophy [that] can [...] apply the conceptual tools, methods, and results of the cognitive sciences to help us understand the nature and to assess the adequacy of philosophical theories.” [id.: 340]¹⁴

The essential contribution by Johnson himself to this empirically responsible philosophy lies in the analysis of natural language and philosophical theories in order to show that and how many expressions we use or statements we make, including the corresponding concepts of meaning_{prop}, are actually metaphorical in nature. They rely on perceptual-bodily experiences and the structural patterns (called ‘image schemata’¹⁵) that are produced by body-environment interactions. “We view issues having to do with meaning in natural language and with the way people understand both their language and their experiences as empirical issues rather than matters of a priori philosophical assumptions and argumentation.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 210] But we may rightly doubt whether what people find meaningful in their lives, their acts of sense-

¹⁴Cf. on the notion of an ‘empirically responsible philosophy’ also Johnson et al. [2002: 262].

¹⁵Cf. section 5.1.

making as sense-feeling, their capacity of being a ‘meaning_{sit}-for’ by experiencing the infinitely rich scope of ‘meaning_{sit}-of’, can be explained, let alone described, by empirical methods alone. Such methods, even when they are presented as an “empirical phenomenology” [Johnson 1987: xxxvii] to give some credit to the description of human experience, can themselves only be meaningful when they attempt to explain meaning_{perc} and/or undermine meaning_{prop}, because empirical methods necessarily draw on inductive generalizations which cannot do justice to the singularity of felt sense. Of course, because he wants to demonstrate “the intimate connections between perceptual and semantic structures” [Johnson 1989bb: 111], Johnson’s main target is the objectivism of meaning_{prop}. Since Johnson’s analyses of ordinary language will prove to be significant for PWO and since the meaningfulness of PWO is specifically not identifiable by the deductive method against which Johnson argues, his empirical approach is indeed useful for my own investigation. But due to the restrictions of his method, we cannot expect to arrive at insights into the experiential nature of PWO as meaning_{sit} within the methodological framework of Johnson and cognitive linguistics in general. The inductive method à la Johnson is as little able to arrive at the ambitious aim of elucidating meaning_{sit} as the deductive method of conceptual analysis is able to surmount meaning as meaning_{perc}. Although Johnson’s empirical method cannot keep up with his much more embracing notion of meaning_{sit}, the cognitive linguistic approach of Johnson and others does endow us with the following fundamental insight: The process of PWO is an embodied and hence ‘really’ existing aspect of reality that expresses itself, among others, in ordinary language and abstract thinking.

4.1.2 No Meaningfulness Without a Mind/Body/World Unity

There are thus two distinguishable perspectives in Johnson’s framework of cognitive linguistics. The first perspective comprises the meaningfulness of lived experience, including the experience of the body and its senses as being our connectives to the world around us, in short, embodied meaning or MEANING_{SIT}. The second perspective consists of the methods with which MEANING_{SIT} is supposed to be explicable. Unlike the experience of embodied meaning, which necessitates a certain kind of being aware of the experience (otherwise it would not be a direct experience, but at most a passive perception of sense data or a belated reflection on a previous experiential state), the empirical methods are supposed to shed light on the unconscious structures with which we are able to be a ‘meaning for’ at all. Whereas the first perspective can draw on phenomenological descriptions of ‘what it feels like to experience qualities or a situation as meaningful’, the second perspective regards phenomenology to be insufficient and instead refers to our ‘cognitive unconscious’ via empirical methods.¹⁶ For example, when we actually feel an emotion in the sense of being aware of it and the situation in which this emotion occurs, then we are already beyond the unconscious state in which the emotion in question turned out to

¹⁶“There is much to be said for traditional philosophical reflection [i.e. conceptual analysis of MEANING_{PROP}, M.S.] and phenomenological analysis [i.e. describing MEANING_{SIT}, M.S.]. They can make us aware of many aspects of consciousness and, to a limited extent, can enlarge our capacities for conscious awareness. Phenomenological reflection even allows us to examine many of the background prereflective structures that lie beneath our conscious experience. But neither method can adequately explore the cognitive unconscious – the realm of thought that is completely and irrevocably inaccessible to direct conscious introspection. It is this realm that is the primary focus of cognitive science, which allows us to theorize about the cognitive unconscious on the basis of evidence. Cognitive science, however, does not allow us direct access to what the cognitive unconscious is doing as it is doing it.” [Johnson et al. 1999: 12]

be meaningful on a pre-reflective level.¹⁷ It is the elucidation of this pre-reflective level that the second perspective seeks with empirical means, while it is the description of the reflective level that Johnson thinks can be the field of phenomenological analysis. Phenomenology in Johnson's usage of the word, *nota bene*, does not refer to Husserl's method of transcendental reduction, but only to a "reflective interrogation of recurring patterns of our embodied experience." [Johnson 2005: 20]

Although both perspectives have to be distinguished, they are equally relevant for the determination of the ontological nature of PWO. Whereas the first perspective can tell us more about the meaning_{sit} of PWO, the second perspective can tell us something about the manifestations of PWO in ordinary language. From the latter we can draw conclusions concerning their embodied yet unconscious structures and the development of these structures. Another reason why both perspectives are significant is that by targeting the deductive method's presupposition of a disembodied faculty of reasoning about meaning_{prop}, the empirical approach of the second perspective does not content itself with meaning_{perc} as a research subject. It additionally aims at meaning_{sit} and thereby prepares for one of meaningful experience's major characteristics: the dissolution of mind/body and body/world dichotomies. Thus the second perspective methodically confirms what is consciously felt in the first perspective, which is actually not a separation of mind/body/world as it is often found in the deductive method, but a becoming aware of the inadequacy of such an assumption despite its obtruding and deceptive appearance. By methodically justifying that there is no such ontological separation, the empirical approach of cognitive linguistics provides a stepping stone from which a profound *and* justified experience of meaning as being one with the 'meaning of' is possible. It is the accentuation of the active role of the body and its interactions with its physical, cultural and social environment that makes the empirical method of Johnson conclude that even our minds and our understanding are embodied, while our bodies are part of the world, which consequently grounds the mind and makes it differ from the world only in a relative and functional, but not in an absolute sense.¹⁸

The renouncement of any absolute mind/body/world separation towards which the empirical method of Johnson works not only serves as the explanans for the experience of MEANING_{SIT} as explanandum: it also explains the origin of the three kinds of meaning I distinguished by arguing in favor of the meaning-creating role of the body's interaction with its environment in the widest *and* closest sense. In Johnson's words, if "there is no disembodied mind – no

¹⁷"Another way of putting this central point is that by the time we feel an emotion, a mostly unconscious assessment has occurred of the situation we find ourselves in, and in cases where we are functioning optimally, we have frequently already taken steps to transform the situation in order to restore homeostasis and enrich the quality of our experience. We have *perceived and understood* our situation in a certain light, although with little or no conscious reflection. This is a way of saying that our world (our situation) stands forth meaningfully to us at every waking instant, due primarily to processes of emotion and feeling over which we have little control. *And yet the situation is meaningful to us in the most important, primordial, and basic way that it can be meaningful - it shapes the basic contours of our experience. The situation specifies what will be significant to us and what objects, events, and persons mean to us at a pre-reflective level.*" [Johnson 2007a: 66]

¹⁸"A person is not a mind *and* a body. There are not two 'things' somehow mysteriously yoked together. What we call a 'person' is a certain kind of bodily organism that has a brain operating within its body, a body that is continually interacting with aspects of its environments (material and social) in an ever-changing process of experience. [...] In short, 'mind' and 'body' are merely abstracted aspects of the flow of organism-environment interactions that constitutes what we call experience." [Johnson 2007a: 12]

transcendent soul or ego – to be the source of meaning, then what things are meaningful to us and how they are meaningful must be a result of the nature of our brains, our bodies, our environments, and our social interactions, institutions, and practices. [...] The core idea is that our experience of meaning is based, first, on our sensorimotor experience, our feelings, and our visceral connections to our world; and, second, on various imaginative capacities for using sensorimotor processes to understand abstract concepts.” [Johnson 2007b: 12] But granted that the empirical research of the cognitive sciences is able to explain the interwovenness and the thus originating meaning through the interactions of mind/body/world, there still remains a mutual asymmetry between the methodology for and the actual experience of meaning_{sit}. Both aspects include more than the other is able to cover. In exploring what Johnson calls the ‘cognitive unconscious’, i.e. the “‘hidden hand’ that shapes how we conceptualize all aspects of our experience” [Johnson et al. 1999: 13], the empirical methods’ explanatory approaches try to dig deep into the iceberg of the ‘meaning for’, thereby going beyond the experiential *quidditas* as the what-is-it-likeness of direct meaning-experience. Therefore, the experience of MEANING_{sit}, including the perception of meaning_{perc} and the rational character of meaning_{prop}, also withdraws itself from being fully covered by empirical methods. This is because such methods may *explain* the embodied nature of meaning and the fallaciousness of mind/body/world dichotomies, but they cannot *capture* or reproduce the experiential sense of meaning_{sit}.

For this reason, it is partly understandable why Johnson has been reproached for being an extreme empiricist.¹⁹ If you only consider his method and his frequent accentuations of the significance of empirical research against speculative and/or deductive armchair reasoning, such a remark may be understandable. However, in his response to this reproach, he states that “[w]e do not, and never have, espoused any form of empiricism at all, extreme or otherwise. [...] We have pointed out [...] that the empirical findings we were reporting do not fit either rationalism or empiricism, and we proposed a third alternative that did not require the dichotomy. We called it *experientialism* and later described it [...] as an *embodied realism*.” [Johnson et al. 2002: 247–8] Thus Johnson draws on empirical findings in order to show that he is not an empiricist. This may sound less paradoxical if we consider the difference between method and the experientialism or embodied realism of meaning_{sit} that the method attempts to explain. While we, as ‘meaning for’, are grounded in the ‘meaning of’ that is our bodies’ and brains’ ongoing interactions with the world, we can only empirically approach these interactions from the outside and conclude from there about the trans-empirical, both rational (meaning_{prop}) and experiential (meaning_{sit}) nature of our understanding that is happening on the inside. In other words, as a third-person method, ‘embodied realism’ and similar approaches of cognitive science account for the proof of what is already taken for granted in the awareness of our first-person point of experience, namely that “we are always ‘in touch’ with our world through our embodied acts and experiences.” [id.: 249] The use of empirical methods alone does not have to make you an empiricist qua subject matter, although it is another question whether the subject matter can be fully captured by empirical methods alone if it is supposed to be trans-empirical in nature.

The intrinsic tension of Johnson’s cognitive linguist approach seems to prevail in the unbridgeable gap that looms between the explanans and the explanandum. Even if there are “at least nine types of empirical evidence for a view of embodied meaning” [id.: 250], there still

¹⁹Cf. Rakova [2002: 218].

remains a desideratum no empirical evidence can fulfill, because precisely in being empirical, it scrapes past what it wants to make evident. The benefit of Johnson's approach is that this intrinsic tension is not implicit, but openly and self-critically discussed. With regard to image schemata, which are what Johnson takes to be the major kind of unconscious structures that interconnect mind, body and world²⁰, he states the following:

“I still cannot shake off the nagging sense that the limitations of our exclusively structural analysis of image schemata leave out something of great importance. Conscious life is very much an affair of felt qualities of situations. The human experience of meaning concerns *both* structure *and* quality. However, beyond phenomenological description, there appear to be no philosophical or scientific ways to talk adequately about the fundamental role of quality in *what* is meaningful and *how* things are meaningful. We can name the qualities, but we cannot even describe them adequately. When we describe the image-schematic structure alone, we never capture fully the qualities that are the flesh and blood of our experience.” [Johnson 2005: 28]

The application of empirical methods allows us to conclude (or to hypothesize?) that there are certain structures with which we experience meaning in all of its depth and variety and why and how these structures are supposed to emerge due to the ontological inseparability and interactivity of mind/body/world. However, what it means to experience meaning and to experience this inseparability and this interactivity is a twilight zone that is inaccessible for any empirical method alone. This is why, both despite *and* thanks to his rich notion of meaning as meaning_{sit}, I prefer to take Johnson's approach as an empirical (not empiricist), i.e. inductive, method with which first and foremost the empirical domain of PWO, as it occurs in natural language, can be explained. To aim higher than one is able to reach is the best condition for finding a more appropriate position from which the research object can be focused on anew. But for now, let us see how, as discussed in 1.3.1, the semantic dimension of ordinary language can help us to partly react to the *quaestio iuris* of meta-ontology, which here means to justify the a priori inference of PWO that pointed beyond Husserl's formal ontology into the empirical realm.²¹

It is hard to argue that ordinary language and linguistic meaning can tell us something about the fundamental structures and categories of the world and thus provide us with ontological insights if they are taken to be autonomous domains. Only under the premise of their not being connected to or embedded in bodily, material, and sociocultural contexts is it justified to neglect ordinary language due to its alleged vagueness, contingency and inconsistency for ontological research. The consequences would be to either remain exclusively within the domain of language as one ontological region among others and to iron out the equivocality of natural language by means of logical analysis, and/or to hypothesize an analogousness between language and world, such that linguistic meaning consists in semantically true statements about matters of worldly affairs. The first option, however, is too limited, because at most it can do no more than draw conclusions about the (onto-)logical nature of language alone, whereby then 'logical' and 'ontological' are dubiously treated as synonyms. The second option is hardly defensible if

²⁰Cf. section 5.1.

²¹Cf. subsection 2.2.7 and section 2.3.

the ontologist does not make it their business to find a convincing nexus between language and world but refers to their godlike vantage point instead. The philosophical doubtfulness of such a God's eye view and the psychological doubtfulness of the philosophizing 'God' who raises a claim on it makes the quest for a nexus between language and world even more urgent. It is only via such a nexus, as a concrete and accessible *tertium comparationis*, that we can draw inferences from language to world and vice versa.

For Johnson, this nexus is, in the first instance, the human body in all of its physiological and neurological aspects. Although there are important sociocultural differences in how we conceptualize our body, it is undeniable that every person, including every person engaged in the act of philosophizing,²² experiences the world and its richness of meanings via his or her body. At the same time, provided that there is empirical evidence for it, abstract concepts and their linguistic counterparts are also grounded in bodily structures. We can say that the body, which always includes the embodied mind, is the necessary 'meaning for' for any form of meaning, such that three biconditional arrows point from the body to the domains of 'meaning_{prop} of',²³ 'meaning_{perc} of'²⁴ and 'meaning_{sit} of'²⁵. Thus the inferences we draw from ordinary language regarding the nature of the experienceable world must also primarily be directed to the body as a 'node' from which and only from which both linguistic meaning and the qualities of the experienceable world can be woven out. Johnson describes this point of view concisely in the following quote:

"The contours and structures of our bodily (sensorimotor) experience of our world influence our understanding of the most abstract, nonphysical domains, principally by means of metaphoric projections based on image-schematic structure. Our 'bodily' understanding and our 'conceptual' or 'propositional' understanding are thus intimately related. Linguistic meaning does not exist as an independent entity generated by some language module in our cognitive apparatus. Instead, it is a specification of our general capacity to experience our world, and aspects of it, as meaningful, given the nature of our bodies, our purposes, our goals and our values. What we perceive as meaningful within our environmental context is very much the basis for what can be meaningful for us at the level of language. And language, in turn, adds even more possibilities for the articulation of meaning, and thereby for

²²Johnson repeatedly reminds his readers that philosophers are as human as any other persons are. They have a body, culturally and socially influenced perspectives, a restricted knowledge of natural languages, and they certainly are not born as philosophers who are mysteriously called to make more valid truth-claims than other persons. As philosophers themselves, like many scientists, mostly do not thematize their very own embodiedness and historicity, Johnson regards it as one of the tasks of cognitive science to explicitly put philosophers on the same cognitive level as all other human beings. "When philosophers construct their theories of being, knowledge, mind, and morality, they employ the very same conceptual resources and the same basic conceptual system shared by ordinary people in their culture. Philosophical theories may refine and transform some of these basic concepts, making the ideas consistent, seeing new connections and drawing out novel implications, but they work with the conceptual materials available to them within their particular historical context." [Johnson et al. 1999: 338]

²³If, and only if, there are bodily structures as 'meaning for', there can be meaningful propositions as 'meaning of'.

²⁴If, and only if, there are bodily structures as 'meaning for', there can be meaningful sense data as 'meaning of'.

²⁵If, and only if, there are bodily structures as 'meaning for', there can be meaningful situations as 'meaning of'.

a richer experience of our world.” [Johnson1989b: 117]

This quote comprises Johnson’s theory in a nutshell. One of the most important assertions that comes to the foreground here is that linguistic meaning relies on more comprehensive layers of meaning. Much of the semantic structure of language, taken as an expression of ‘the most abstract, nonphysical domains’ of our conceptual apparatus, is but a reflection or ‘projection’ of more basic structures of meaning. The act of this projection consists in the activation and *mapping* of certain mostly unconscious, spatial ‘image-schematic structures’, which our bodies have incorporated via body-environment interactions, *into* domains that are seemingly disembodied, such as the abstract domains of concepts and language. Not only the basis of this projection (our bodily schemata, our direct experiences) is often unconscious, but also the act of projecting itself. This is why conceptual and linguistic domains often appear to us as purely a priori, independent systems that are literally mirroring the world but do not depend on the world or any other parameters in order to exist. Yet once we assume the interconnectedness and inseparability of mind, body and world and once we regard linguistic meaning as embedded in more comprehensive domains of meaning, we can inductively draw inferences from the ordinary and formal usages of language to the sources from which the acts of projection take place. It is only then that most of what appears to be literal in language is in fact mostly a metaphorical modification of a source domain that does not lie in language itself, but in pre-linguistic body-environment interactions. Thus “we first acquire the bodily and spatial understanding of concepts and later understand their metaphorical extensions in abstract concepts.” [Johnson et al. 2002: 253 f.]

The significance of the cognitive linguistic approach for the present project lies in the assumption that part-whole structures are responsible for some of the semantic aspects of a linguistic expression via a projection of embodied part-whole patterns into abstract, linguistically expressible concepts. “No matter how sophisticated our abstractions become, if they are to be meaningful to us, they must retain their intimate ties to our embodied modes of conceptualization and reasoning.” [Johnson 1999: 81] Thus in order to conduct preliminary determinations of PWO’s ontological nature, it seems advisable to follow Johnson and look at linguistic expressions containing part-whole relations. In so doing, the cognitive linguist approach serves, admittedly in an unorthodox fashion, both as a justification and as a method for ontological purposes. In particular, it supports the belief that the ways we communicate meaningfully with language such that our commonsensical demands for understanding each other through language are largely satisfied cannot be completely misleading when we want to discover and describe some of the fundamental structures of the reality we live in and we are part of. If language, mind, body and reality indeed hang as closely together as is claimed, then it is plausible that starting from the one end (language) can finally lead us to the other end (reality). Although the start again seems to lie at the ‘top’, it is actually, unlike in the deductive method, the ‘bottom’ (the environment, our bodies, image schemata, MEANING_{SIT}) in the sphere of which all higher notions should be fathomed. In this sense, the cognitive linguistic, i.e. inductive-empirical approach towards PWO is genuinely bottom-up and might therefore undercut its logical-conceptual *absence* at which we arrived in the course of the chapter 2.

4.2 On Conceptual Metaphors

Let us begin by figuring out whether or not PWO is identifiable as a conceptual metaphor. For Johnson and cognitive linguistics in general, metaphors are not just a linguistic, but a cognitive and therefore embodied phenomenon. For this reason, it is important to distinguish the traditional view of metaphors, which corresponds with what Johnson calls ‘objectivism’ and what I more specifically described as the ‘deductive method’ in the context of ontology, from the comparably novel stance of cognitive linguistics. Johnson states that the traditional view, by drawing on trivial notions of what metaphorical language is supposed to be, considers metaphors as a purely linguistic and more or less poetic trope.²⁶ In assuming that our concepts and propositions can and must directly match reality as such, our language has to literally denote objects and events in the real world. Metaphors are therefore traditionally held to be a deviant and relatively insignificant stylistic device.²⁷ Johnson dedicates a great deal of his work to arguing against such a narrow and almost deprecatory view of metaphors. For him, metaphors do not just appear in rhetorical language, but, as language is grounded in the structure of our body and minds, metaphors are deeply embedded in our conceptual apparatus and therefore depend on the ways in which we experience our environment with our body in the broadest sense.²⁸ Once we regard metaphors as conceptual and language as being mostly an expression of metaphorical concepts, then this notion of conceptual metaphors enables us to draw inferences from the linguistic to the conceptual domain in order to make valid hypotheses about the existence of basic cognitive patterns such as image schemata and from there – hopefully – about the ‘experienceability’ of the world.

What is a conceptual metaphor exactly? A conceptual metaphor basically consists of three components: (1) primary or literal metaphors, (2) complex or abstract metaphors, and (3) either conscious or – as is more often the case – unconscious acts of mapping or projecting the primary to the complex metaphor. While the primary metaphors are located in what can be called the ‘source domain’,²⁹ the complex metaphors are situated in the ‘target domain’. The act of mapping is basically a unidirectional projection from a primary metaphor of the source domain to a complex metaphor of the target domain:

$$\left(\underset{\text{source domain}}{\text{primary metaphor}} \xrightarrow[\text{mapping}]{\text{act of}} \underset{\text{target domain}}{\text{complex metaphor}} \right) \rightarrow \text{conceptual metaphor}$$

While the source domain originates or emerges from our bodily interactions with the environment, the target domain is the place in which abstract concepts and symbolic language, but also ordinary expressions of natural language prevail. “The most sweeping claim of conceptual metaphor theory is that what we call abstract concepts are defined by systematic mappings from body-based, sensorimotor source domains onto abstract target domains.” [Johnson 2007a: 177] Because the act of mapping is mostly unconscious, the elements of the target domain

²⁶Cf. Johnson [2010: 402].

²⁷Cf. Johnson et al. [1999: 120].

²⁸“But metaphor is not merely a matter of language. It is a matter of conceptual structure. And conceptual structure is not merely a matter of the intellect – it involves all the natural dimensions of our experience, including aspects of our sense experiences: color, shape, texture, sound, etc.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 235]

²⁹Cf. Croft [2003] for an introduction to the concept of ‘domain’ in cognitive linguistic research on conceptual metaphor and metonymy.

do not appear to be metaphorical results of projections from more basic, body-based conceptual metaphors. Instead, abstract concepts seem to be independent of bodily structures and experiences. This is what, according to Johnson, the lion's share of Western philosophy, in accordance with the ordinary misapprehension of the fundamental role of metaphors for cognition and experience, has failed to recognize.³⁰ Only when we disclose the metaphorical dimension of our abstract thinking and ordinary language are we able to attribute philosophical theories and theorems to the concrete, embodied human beings that philosophers undeniably are. But more generally, and more in line with my own research aim, by demonstrating the intimate relationships between primary and complex metaphors it is possible to empirically indicate how linguistic meaning conforms with more comprehensive layers of bodily and situational meaningfulness. Thus the ontology of PWO perhaps hinges on the decision to identify and classify this seemingly abstract yet logically inaccessible notion as a conceptual metaphor. To do so, it is advisable to inspect more closely the single components such a conceptual metaphor entails.

4.2.1 Primary Conceptual Metaphors

We stand up and sit down. We walk from one room to another. We hear and see. We sidestep other people when we walk on the street. We open an envelope and take out or put in a letter. We grasp a glass, drink some water from it and refill it. The simple fact that we constantly interact with our environment via our bodies is one of the two conditions that gives rise to primary metaphors. The other condition is that we also constantly make implicit judgments about these bodily interactions by relating them to more abstract domains. In other words, a “primary metaphor is based on an experiential correlation between a particular sensorimotor domain and some domain pertaining to a subjective experience or judgement.” [id.: 178] Thus we again have a division of domains, whereby what is the source domain for conceptual metaphors is subdivided into a sensorimotor domain and an experiential domain. In this case, however, the connection between the domains is bidirectional. This is because the sensorimotor domain determines and therefore restricts – due to bodily and physical limitations – what and how we can conceptualize what we experience, whereas the experiential domain is directed to the sensorimotor domain because it makes judgments about it:

$$(\text{sensorimotor domain} \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{\text{determines}} \\ \xleftarrow{\text{evaluates}} \end{array} \text{experiential domain}) \rightarrow \text{primary metaphor}$$

Primary metaphors are, for example, “AFFECTION IS WARMTH, IMPORTANT IS BIG, MORE IS UP/LESS IS DOWN, ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE, HAPPY IS UP/SAD IS DOWN, STATES ARE LOCATIONS, CAUSES ARE FORCES, CAUSATION IS FORCED MOTION, PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, TIME IS MOTION, CONTROL IS UP, KNOWING IS SEEING, HELP IS SUPPORT, DIFFICULTIES ARE BURDENS, CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS, and UNDERSTANDING

³⁰“I have argued that the single biggest reason that most traditional and contemporary philosophy cannot recognize the pervasive, theory-constituting role of metaphor in philosophy is the failure of philosophers to acknowledge the existence of deep systematic conceptual metaphor. They cannot recognize it because to do so would require a fairly substantial revision of some of the founding assumptions of their philosophies. It would require them to abandon some of their founding metaphorical conceptions in favor of other metaphors. If you acknowledge conceptual metaphor, then you have to give up literalism. If you give up literalism, you must abandon objectivist theories of knowledge. If you reject objectivist metaphysics and epistemology, you must abandon the classical correspondence theory of truth. Eventually, you will have to rethink even your most basic conception of what cognition consists in.” [Johnson 2008: 51]

IS SEEING.”³¹ [id.: 179] Of course, there are many more primary metaphors.³² The second place in these ‘*x is y*’ judgments represents the sensorimotor domain, in which we experience warmth, size, verticality, physical structure, motion, etc. Such experiences are omnipresent for our bodies and they create basic patterns from which we can interpret more abstract domains. More often than not our subjective judgments about them are internalized and learned from early childhood to such an extent that we are not aware of how our conceptualizations of, for example, affection or importance relies on our bodily experiences of warmth or size respectively. It is hypothesized that the correspondence between the sensorimotor domain and the experiential domain is taken to be a conflation of the two domains, which gradually produces stable neural connections in our brains. “The sensorimotor networks perform complex inferences; for example, if something shoots up, it moves upward rapidly and in a short time is much higher than before. Via the neural connections, the results of these inferences are ‘projected’ from the sensorimotor source network (verticality) to the subjective judgment target network (quantity).” [Johnson et al. 1999: 55] From such a correspondence of, in this case, physical verticality to experienced quantity, the primary metaphor MORE IS UP comes into existence. Ordinary linguistic statements like “The number of books printed each year keeps going *up*” [Johnson et al. 1980: 15] or ‘Steel prices rose’³³, for example, can then be traced back to the primary metaphor MORE IS UP.

The bidirectional correlation between the sensorimotor domain and the experiential domain is of philosophical importance. On the one hand, it prevents any relativistic misinterpretations of Johnson’s theory, while on the other hand, it allows for a certain imaginative freedom as well as sociocultural diversity in how the sensorimotor domain can be evaluated both within and beyond the cognitive unconscious in which primary metaphors normally arise and prevail. The fact that our bodily constitution, thus the sensorimotor domain, only allows for a certain range of metaphors anticipates the reproach that, according to Johnson’s theory, metaphors could be arbitrarily created and that it would be impossible to give a systematic, universally valid account of them. Johnson’s restriction of primary metaphors to body-environment interactions enables him to disclaim a certain Nietzschean position according to which concepts would only be arbitrarily chosen, solidified metaphors that actually have no direct grounding in reality.³⁴ As our bodies are part of the world and given the hypothetical condition that metaphors, i.e. among others our abstract concepts, are results of our bodily constitution, Johnson is able to state that there is instead a certain universality inherent to primary metaphors. “Inevitably, many primary metaphors are universal because everybody has basically the same kinds of bodies and brains and lives in basically the same kinds of environments, so far as the features

³¹To indicate their special status, Johnson writes conceptual metaphors (as well as image schemata) in capital letters. Since this has become the standard way of notation in cognitive linguistics, I will adopt this stylistic choice.

³²“Grady [1997, M.S.] hypothesizes that people will acquire hundreds, or even thousands, of primary conceptual metaphors just by going about the daily affairs of their lives. These metaphors are formed primarily because of the nature of our bodies (with their brains, sense organs, motor systems, and emotions) as they interact with our environments. We cannot avoid acquiring these metaphors, because the experiential correlations (and hence neural co-activations) on which they are based constitute large parts of our mundane experience.” [Johnson 2007a: 178]

³³“When steel sellers are charging more for their steel, the situation is conceptualized and spoken of in terms of a spatial rise. But there need be no entity that is rising in space.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 263]

³⁴Cf. Nietzsche’s [1988] proclamatory essay ‘Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne’.

relevant to metaphor are concerned.” [id.: 257] However, what will become even more apparent when we turn to the case of complex metaphors, is that the rather contingent nature of the experiential domain prevents any universality according to which every body and every culture would have to have the same conceptual metaphors only because the nature of our bodies is quite similar. Instead, the particular states within the experiential domain are “experientially basic because they characterize structured wholes within recurrent human experiences.” [id.: 117]

Human experiences are not just experiences of and via the body. They are also experiences of and via cultural, social or religious settings in the broadest sense. These additional contexts have an effect on the *evaluation* of the sensorimotor domain. Likewise, within the restrictions but beyond the conventionalized metaphors of the sensorimotor domain, we can create new meanings, thus novel primary metaphors. This is done when we actively (re-)evaluate the sensorimotor domain from the perspective of the experiential domain and consequently find appropriate linguistic expressions for it. Faithful to his denial of any ontological gap between mind/body/world, Johnson even goes so far as to claim that via the creation of novel metaphors, we create new realities. “New metaphors have the power to create a new reality. This can begin to happen when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it. If a new metaphor enters the conceptual system that we base our actions on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to. Much of cultural change arises from the introduction of new metaphorical concepts and the loss of old ones. For example, the Westernization of cultures throughout the world is partly a matter of introducing the TIME IS MONEY metaphor into those cultures.” [id.: 145] In short, the bidirectional correspondence between the sensorimotor and the experiential domain of primary metaphors is philosophically important. It ensures a maximum of socialcultural variety and creative freedom (which is ultimately an ontological freedom due to the fundamental mind/body/world inseparability) and accounts for a minimum of arbitrariness when it comes to the most basic level of our bodily being in the world. The correspondence in question could thus be understood as a regulative that filters out strong versions of objectivism and relativism alike.³⁵

Both the sensorimotor domain and the experiential domain are again subdividable. As we have seen, the sensorimotor domain is what connects our bodies to the spatio-temporal environment in the widest sense. In interacting with this environment, we adopt certain basic patterns of it, like size, distance, verticality and horizontality, paths and goals, containers and also – important for the present investigation – parts and wholes. Such patterns are mostly spatial and topological in nature. They are called ‘image schemata’ and I will discuss them in more detail in section 5.1. Because image schemata belong to the sensorimotor domain, they are taken to be universal and ‘real’ in the sense that they account for the “ontological continuity [which] is the coupling (the interactive coordination) of an organism (here, a human one) and its environment. Recurrent, adaptive patterns of organism-environment interaction are the basis for our ability to survive and to flourish. They are also the ground of meaning.” [Johnson 2007b: 136]. This is what makes the sensorimotor domain, subdivided into body-environment interactions and the resulting image schemata, so important for any ontological reading of

³⁵Cf. Yu [2008] on the relationship between bodily universality and cultural-experiential contingency in cognitive linguistics.

Johnson and cognitive linguistics in general. Starting with what seems to be the most abstract and complex concepts, expressed in ordinary and philosophical language, we can reach down via the experiential domain of meaning, via primary metaphors and then via image schematic patterns into the most basic and comprehensive structures of the world in which and for which we are sensing and understanding organisms. It seems that in this theory, due to the ontological continuity, there is no Kantian *An sich* (although the experiential domain constantly influences the ways in which reality presents itself to us). We just have to follow the chain of inductive inferences from empirical studies of language down into the cognitive unconscious and from there even ‘deeper’ into a plausible yet unavoidably hypothesized ontological picture of reality. This kind of certainly not always unproblematic and unspeculative reasoning is what Johnson’s position of ‘embodied realism’³⁶ could contribute to ontological investigations, provided that their methodology allows for empirical studies and, in particular, ordinary language analysis. A subdivision of the sensorimotor domain might look as follows, whereby it must always be kept in mind that such subdivisions do not imply ontological separations, but merely serve to clarify interconnected, gradual, and functional stages of one and the same process of fluctuation and stabilization:

$$(body/environment\ interactions \xrightarrow[\text{constitutes}]{} image\ schemas) \rightarrow sensorimotor\ domain$$

Subdividing the experiential domain, which Johnson does not, as such, do but which I think is crucial, allows us to distinguish two factors with which we experientially evaluate the elements of the sensorimotor domain. With ‘evaluate’ I do not only mean to ‘judge’, but first and foremost to ‘enrich with values’ and ‘to make valuable’, thus the attribution and discovery of meaning, the event of sense-making. Whereas the sensorimotor domain tends to be universal, both factors of the experiential domain are rather contingent and particular. Whereas the sensorimotor domain *enables* meaningfulness by connecting us to the world, both factors of the experiential domain *make meaning* in all its layers *actual* for the embodied ‘meaning for’. And whereas the elements of the sensorimotor domain prevail in the cognitive unconscious in the context of everyday experience, both factors of the experiential domain are consciously experienceable as far as we direct our awareness to them.

The first factor is the holistic immediateness of experience, in other words, the body-based experience of what comes to us from the world as integrative, meaningful wholes, namely as Gestalts.³⁷ It is clear that the notion of a Gestalt, with all of the part-whole relations it involves, is fundamental for an ontology of PWO that draws on experience and perception. It is principally in this factor of the experiential domain where the qualitative richness of the world is felt, not as something foreign and unknowable, but as natural and pervasive, as being real both outside and inside of the experiencing subject, as meaning_{sit} that comprises the two other kinds of meaning. “If you pay attention to how your world shows itself, you will indeed see that the flow of experience comes to us as unified wholes (gestalts) that are pervaded by an all-encompassing

³⁶“Embodied realism, as we understand it, is the view that the locus of experience, meaning, and thought is the ongoing series of embodied organism-environment interactions that constitute our understanding of the world. According to such a view, there is no ultimate separation of mind and body, and we are always ‘in touch’ with our world through our embodied acts and experiences.” [Johnson 2002: 249]

³⁷Of course, the correct German plural of Gestalt would be Gestalten. Since the English literature on this topic usually combines the German loan word ‘Gestalt’ with the English plural morpheme ‘s’, however, it seems reasonable to adapt to this terminological convention and to use ‘Gestalts’ as the English plural of ‘Gestalt’.

quality that makes the present situation what and how it is.” [Johnson 2007b: 73] Johnson sometimes identifies Gestalts with embodied image schemata,³⁸ which I think is misleading, because the skeletal nature of image schemata does not mesh with the qualitative richness of Gestalt experiences. I also disagree when Johnson, opposed to identifying Gestalts with image schemata, brings Gestalts too close to the ‘higher’ realm of concepts,³⁹ because Gestalt experiences share with the sensorimotor domain a preconceptual and prereflexive status. Due to the gradual and hardly separable dynamics in which body/environment interactions and complex, abstract concepts are but two correlative poles, it is, of course, comprehensible to ascribe the notion of Gestalts to its ‘neighboring’ stages like image schemata or concepts. But I think that this notion is better accounted for when it is classified as a part of the experiential domain, into and out of which image schemata and concepts naturally transition.

Distinguishing image schemata, Gestalt experiences and concepts is beneficial when we look at basic level categories that hold the middle ground between more special and more general categories. A house is the basic level category between a skyscraper (subordinate category) and a building (superordinate category); a tree is the basic level category between a birch (subordinate category) and a perennial plant (superordinate category). Johnson argues that our basic level of experience, thus our experiential domain, to which Gestalt experience also belongs, allows us to function and interact well on the level of basic categories. We enter a room and we see: a table, chairs, a few persons, a tree outside the window. We have an overall Gestalt experience of basic level categories that are manifested in particular objects and situations. Neither is this experiential domain the level of image schemata, because the latter “is the level that defines form itself, and allows us to [unconsciously, M.S.] make sense of the relations among diverse experiences” [Johnson 1987: 208], nor is the experiential domain of Gestalt experiences congruent with the more abstract domain in which we conceptualize what has been experienced, because “though basic-level and image-schematic structures are meaningful for us in the most immediate and automatic way, they by no means exhaust our understanding. We need a lot more than concepts at those levels to function successfully for our purposes. To make sense of our experience, we need categories that are superordinate and subordinate to basic-level categories.” [id.] This means that Gestalt experiences are, on the one hand, inseparable from other stages of embodied understanding and metaphoric inferences, while, on the other hand, they must be well distinguished in order to highlight their unique role for meaningful, qualitative experience.

The second constitutive factor of the experiential domain consists in the sociocultural background in the widest sense, thus including the linguistic, historical, political, religious and social

³⁸“My argument begins by showing that human bodily movement, manipulation of objects, and perceptual interactions involve recurring patterns without which our experience would be chaotic and incomprehensible. I call these patterns ‘image schemata,’ because they function primarily as abstract structures of images. They are gestalt structures, consisting of parts standing in relations and organized into unified wholes, by means of which our experience manifests discernible order.” [Johnson 1987: xix]

³⁹“Thus we classify particular experiences in terms of experiential gestalts in our conceptual system. Here we must distinguish between: (1) the experience itself, as we structure it, and (2) the concepts that we employ in structuring it, that is, the multidimensional gestalts like CONVERSATION and ARGUMENT. The concept (say, CONVERSATION) specifies certain natural dimensions (e.g., participants, parts, stages, etc.) and how these dimensions are related. There is a correlation, dimension by dimension, between the concept CONVERSATION and the aspects of the actual activity of conversing. This is what we mean when we say that a concept fits an experience.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 83]

settings in which the embodied ‘meaning for’ is making sense of the contents of its experiences. For heuristic reasons we could say that whereas Gestalt experience is more closely tied to our bodily sense organs, our cognitive preference for basic-level categories, the phenomenological awareness of the ways we experience, and some psychological dispositions in which wholeness is often experienced prior to parthood, the sociocultural background in the widest sense comes to us from sources outside our physiological and psychological constitution. Nonetheless, this manifold background is shaping the experiential domain and co-evaluating the sensorimotor domain as strongly as Gestalt experience, which is why these factors are hard to distinguish in practice. In everyday contexts, both factors are inseparable, one from the other and from the rather physical and spatio-temporal dimension of the sensorimotor domain as well as from the abstract domains of conceptual thinking and language in which they result.⁴⁰ Johnson and Lakoff [1980: 57] write that “what we call ‘direct physical experience’ is never merely a matter of having a body of a certain sort; rather, *every* experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions. It can be misleading, therefore, to speak of direct physical experience as though there were some core of immediate experience which we then ‘interpret’ in terms of our conceptual system. Cultural assumptions, values, and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay which we may or may not place upon experience as we choose. It would be more correct to say that all experience is cultural through and through, that we experience our ‘world’ in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself.” The sociocultural factor of a primary metaphor always points towards or inaugurates the primary metaphor’s mapping to a complex metaphor. Therefore, all complex metaphors are clearly socioculturally coined.

However, the sociocultural characteristics of a complex metaphor are already ascribable to the choice of primary metaphors that are then mapped into complex metaphors. Take the primary metaphor WAR as an example. With WAR, many complex metaphors can be created like LOVE IS WAR, CONVERSATION IS WAR, ARGUMENT IS WAR, NATURE IS WAR, SCHOOL IS WAR, etc. I will look at such complex metaphors in the next subsection. Not only the fact that we can conceptualize love, conversations, etc. as warlike is culturally determined, but also the fact that war itself can stand out as a primary metaphor in the first place. In the sensorimotor domain, every body constantly experiences confrontations and conflicts with or among objects, like when you stumble, when you bang your head against the ceiling, when you are brawling with somebody, when you see how two cars collide in an accident. In such situations, our bodies perceive or experience physical force combined with pain or destruction. Within the sensorimotor domain, such universal body/environment interactions can be schematized as the confrontation of two forces, like when two arrows point towards each other. In our Gestalt experience of reality, we can immediately experience such conflicting forces like when we are spectators of a sport match, when we take part in a demonstration against a new law, or when we engage in a lively discussion and exchange arguments. One of the most pervasive and holistic attributes of such situations consists in the confrontation of forces, physically as well as figuratively. But it is an utterly sociocultural matter to evaluate such forces, which

⁴⁰“I have only attempted to suggest that cognition cannot be locked up within the private workings of an individual mind. Since thought is a form of coordinated action, it is spread out in the world, coordinated with both the physical environment and the social, cultural, moral, political, and religious environments, institutions, and shared practices. Language – and all forms of symbolic expression – are quintessentially social behaviors.” [Johnson 2007a: 151]

are basically neutral, as WAR, with the primary metaphors WAR IS CONFLICT or WAR IS THE CONFRONTATION OF PHYSICAL FORCES. Only in cultures for which war plays an important role can primary and consequently complex metaphors involving WAR get the upper hand. It is possible that for other cultures in which war is less dominant, the confrontation of forces rather points to the possibility of novelty, progress, or chance.

The same is the case with PURPOSE. For example, the complex metaphor a PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY entails the primary metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS. Already the motivation that universal, spatial destinations are evaluated as purposes and not only the “cultural belief that everyone is supposed to have a purpose in life” [Johnson et al. 1999: 62], which underlies the complex metaphor, is sociocultural to the core. We can assume that cultures in which there is a strong tendency of instrumental reason, in which rather the destination as aim and less the ways towards or from it is the actual purpose, a primary metaphor like PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS is more prevailing than a primary metaphor like PURPOSES ARE PATHS or UNCERTAINTIES ARE DESTINATIONS. Or, to give another example, although we have universal body-based schemata like front and back, “in some cultures the future is in front of us, whereas in others it is in back.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 14] Thus how we (rarely) consciously and (mostly) unconsciously evaluate, i.e. interpret, the elements of the sensorimotor domain is never free from the sociocultural factor, because not only our abstract concepts, but also our bodies are never isolated nor isolatable from socioculturally colored environments in and with which they interact.⁴¹ The consideration of this sociocultural factor makes the approach of cognitive linguistics, firstly, even more empirical than any simple analysis of ordinary language could pretend to be. It, secondly, makes this approach less naturalistic than an exclusive insistence on the sensorimotor domain would make us suppose. And it, thirdly, accounts for the fact that different cultures have developed different logics that may be inconsistent with each other without becoming invalid.⁴² The experiential domain of primary metaphors can then be depicted as:

(Gestalt experience + sociocultural background) → experiential domain

After this delineation of the composition of the two domains of primary metaphor, it must again be pointed out that primary metaphors are exclusively conceptual, i.e. cognitive in nature. This means that the constitution of primary metaphors is situated in the cognitive unconscious, which is hardly accessible even for phenomenological introspection. Moreover, primary metaphors originate for the most part in early childhood. Johnson argues that our very first bodily interactions with and perceptions of our environment, including the fact that

⁴¹Cf. Taylor [2016: 159–160] for a similar discussion of the sociocultural background for the complex metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY and cf. Quinn [1991] for a critical discussion of this topic in general.

⁴²A culture that regards reality as unmoving and passive but the soul as fleeting and active, for example, will conceptualize time differently than a culture for which reality is in flux while the soul is eternal. This gives rise to different temporal logics in the abstract metaphorical domain in which complex metaphors are formed. “In the MOVING TIME metaphor, times are moving objects, whereas in the MOVING OBSERVER metaphor, times are stationary locations on the time landscape. This inconsistency of multiple metaphorical structurings of a single concept is typical of a vast range of abstract concepts, including causation, morality, mind, self, love, ideas, thought, and knowledge [...]. My claim is that each of these different, and often inconsistent, metaphorical structurings of a concept gives us the different logics that we need in order to understand the richness and complexity of our experience. However strong our desire for a monolithic, consistent ontology might be, the evidence does not support such a unified and simple view of human experience.” [Johnson 2007b: 259]

we are socialized and culturalized congenitally, not only determines the development of our primary metaphors, but also our ways of thinking and expressing in general. During the major development of primary metaphors, we feel ourselves, as infants, not distanced from the world around us. The ontological unity of body/mind/world, through which primary metaphors come into existence, feels natural and unquestionable for us in the early stages of development. Only at later stages, in consequence of the necessity to abstract away from immediate givens in order to reason and to express ourselves adequately, do we take the structure and the objects of the world around us to be mind-independent. In so doing, the actual bodily connectedness to the world, often even the reliance on the sociocultural factor through which we evaluate our experiences, falls into oblivion.⁴³

It is certainly the case that we, including our concepts and ontological categories, are much closer to the mind-shaping and mind-shaped reality than we generally tend to *think* (not to *experience*). But it is also the case that the nexus that binds us to the world around us, thus our body-based primary metaphors, are hard to expose just by hypothetically reconstructing their constitution and thus by assuming what might go on in our cognitive unconscious. Especially when we are looking for a hypothesized ontological category such as PWO that should not only be and actually cannot be an abstract, a priori concept, it is impossible to delimit such a quest to the realm of primary metaphors. As we do not have direct access to primary metaphors, the mere claim that they are embodied and mere hypotheses about how and why they are embodied would still be a priori reasoning, just in disguise. In order to be faithful to the claim that only with empirical methods can we disclose and systematize the realm of primary metaphor as a nexus to the world that we are attempting to investigate ontologically, we have to induce primary metaphors from somewhere. This ‘somewhere’ must be an empirical realm, because empirical methods can only make valid claims on what is empirical in nature. From where should we then empirically induce primary metaphors? From where should we start to validate whether PWO is an embodied ontological category such that it falls into the realm of primary metaphors? It is from ordinary language that this induction has to begin, and it is the domain of complex conceptual metaphors that we therefore have to elucidate, because complex conceptual metaphors are on the one hand embedded in our cognitive, embodied mind like primary metaphors, but on the other hand they are, unlike primary metaphors, integral parts of ordinary language.

4.2.2 Complex Conceptual Metaphors

A complex or ‘compound’ metaphor is formed when one or more primary metaphors are mapped into an abstract domain that has no sensorimotor grounding of its own. “Primary metaphors

⁴³“Notice, once again, that whatever the infant takes to be the most primordial ontological distinction is a question of *affordances*. It is not an absolute ontological fact that the world comes divided into two ultimate categories – human versus other-than-human – any more than that the basic categories are animate versus inanimate. Instead, the basic ontological categories *for embodied, social creatures like us* will depend on the nature of our bodies, our brains, our environment, and our social interactions. In other words, no matter what our ontological categories might be, or turn out in the future to be, they are not built into the nature of some allegedly mind-independent world. Our realism, as Hilary Putnam [...] has argued, is ‘realism with a human face’; what we ‘take’ as real depends on how we experience things via the affordances of our world at a given time and place, relative to our bodies, our interests, and our purposes in making conceptual distinctions.” [Johnson 2007b: 40]

are like atoms that can be put together to form molecules. A great many of these complex molecular metaphors are stable-conventionalized, entrenched, fixed for long periods of time. They form a huge part of our conceptual system and affect how we think and what we care about almost every waking moment.” [Johnson et al. 1999: 60] Consequently in our everyday language, we can find a plethora of variations of complex metaphors.

One example of a complex metaphor has already been given in the previous paragraph: A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY. On the one hand, this complex metaphor refers back to the primary metaphors it is composed of:⁴⁴ (1) PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS and (2) ACTIONS ARE MOTIONS. Additionally, like primary metaphors but to a somewhat lesser degree, complex metaphors rely to a high degree on the sociocultural factor. The sociocultural belief that conditions the complex metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY is that people “are supposed to have purposes in life, and they are supposed to act so as to achieve those purposes.” [id.: 61] If we combine the primary metaphors with this sociocultural factor, then we get “People are supposed to have destinations in life, and they are supposed to move so as to reach those destinations.” [id.] In this case, we only have to implement what Johnson calls a ‘simple fact’ but what I think is actually another sociocultural component, namely that “A long trip to a series of destinations is a journey” [id.]. Once we have thus formed the complex metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY, we can relate many variations of it that are found in ordinary language to this conceptual metaphor. Such variations cover central entailments of this metaphor: if a purposeful life is a journey, then the person who lives this life is a traveler; then life goals are destinations; then a life plan is an itinerary. From there, we can form and understand metaphorical expressions like ‘I don’t know where to go in my life’, ‘you need to find a new direction in life’, ‘she has to reorient herself’, ‘finally he reached happiness’, ‘he needs to plan his life anew’, ‘I had some ups and downs but now I’m back on track’, or ‘she wants to go in life where no one went before’.

The mapping of several primary metaphors to how we experience and conceptualize life as purposeful is reflected in many linguistic expressions that describe a single person’s ‘course’ of life. The more primary metaphors we map into the conceptualization of what a purposeful life means to us, the more linguistic expressions are possible. If we additionally map, for example, the primary metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS, then we understand the expression ‘He’s *at a crossroads* in his life’. Or if we map CHANGE IS MOTION, then it becomes clear why we can say and understand ‘he went *from* his forties *to* his fifties without a hint of a mid-life crisis’.⁴⁵ Furthermore, complex metaphors “can be used as the basis for even more complex metaphors. [...] The neural connectivity of the brain makes it natural for complex metaphorical mappings to be built out of preexisting mappings, starting with primary metaphors.” [id.: 63–4] The complex metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY, which normally applies to one person’s life, can be extended to the common life of two persons. This is particularly the case when we conceptualize love as a journey, where a “couple’s life together is also supposed to be a journey to common goals.” [id.: 64] The example sentences just given can be easily modified and understood for LOVE IS A JOURNEY when we use first person plural and substitute ‘life’ for ‘love’.

What complex metaphors have in common with primary metaphors is not only their depen-

⁴⁴Here I draw on Johnson et al. [1999: 60 f.].

⁴⁵These two examples are taken from Evans [2007: 109 f.].

dency on sociocultural contexts, in which complex metaphors even exceed primary metaphors, because complex metaphors, although they are equally conceptual, stand much closer to specific conventions all around natural languages. Complex metaphors are also constituted by holistic Gestalt experiences of meaning, just that these experiences do not directly evaluate the sensorimotor domain like the experiential domain of primary metaphors does. Still, we really *feel* it when we, for example, encounter some stumbling blocks in our love relationship as if we stumble on physical obstacles, or when we lose orientation in our lives as if we lost orientation in a forest, or, to draw on the complex metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR,⁴⁶ when we *defend* our position and *attack* other positions in a philosophical debate as if we are fighting with a sparring partner or even an enemy. Such experiences are really there, cognitively as well as intersubjectively. They can define the whole character of a love relationship, a phase in life, or a question and answer panel at a conference. The complexity of complex metaphors should not mislead us to think that what is expressed in and via such a metaphor is not directly experienced as a situation's pervasive Gestalt, thus in our terms as 'meaning_{sit} of'. We just do not have the right concepts to comprehend and words to express such a situation. This is why we have to draw on primary metaphors and interpret them according to the conventions of our cultures and natural languages and according to the degree of poetic imagination with which we can actively modify standard expressions like 'we are at a difficult point in our relationship' and renew them to e.g. 'the ground of our relationship is shaking, but we are unafraid to fall'. People of cultures in which love relationships are unusual or in which journeys are unknown would find it difficult to have a Gestalt experience of their relationships that conforms to the complex LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. But this does not mean that these people have different sensorimotor domains or even different primary metaphors that are contingently mapped into the complex metaphor in question.

Many more examples for primary and complex metaphors can be found in the vast amount of literature on cognitive linguistics, but what is more important, they can always and often effortlessly be identified in plenty of expressions in our everyday languages, as 'real-world data' so to speak. In order to proceed to the question of whether or not we also use parts and wholes and PWO metaphorically in our conceptualized, embodied ordinary languages, it is worthwhile to integrate the following model of complex metaphors

$$\text{primary metaphor} \xrightarrow[\text{mapping}]{\text{act of}} ((\text{Gestalt experience} + \text{sociocultural background}) \rightarrow \text{complex metaphor})$$

into the model of conceptual metaphors in general, now displayed as a simplified diagram (Figure 4-1) that displays how I understand Johnson's take on conceptual metaphor thus far:

⁴⁶Cf. Johnson et al. [1980: 4].

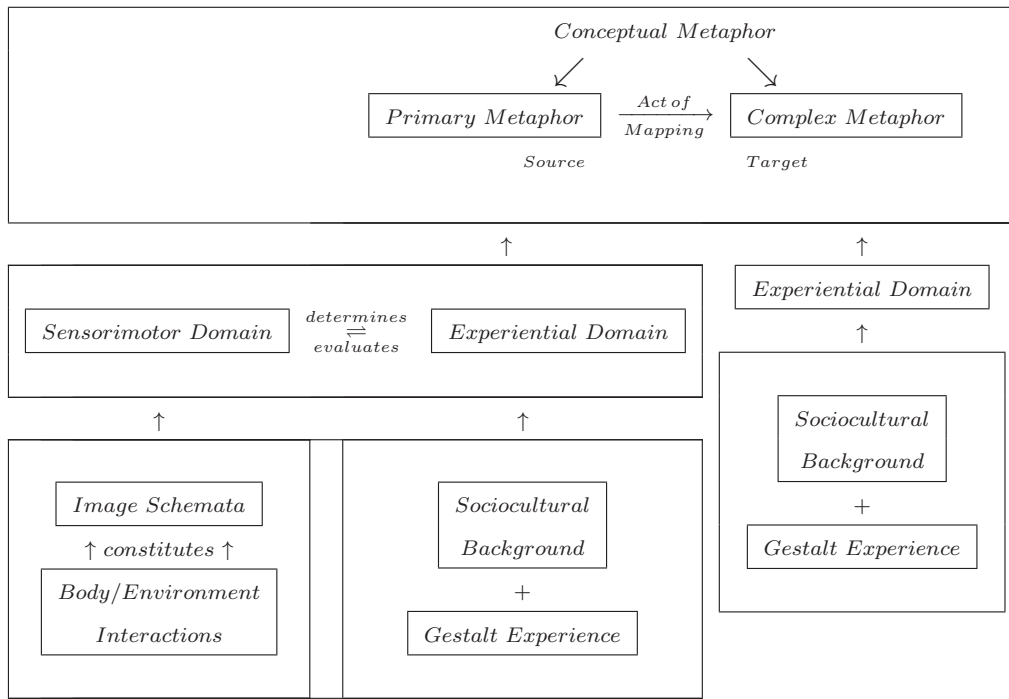


Figure 4-1: *Conceptual Metaphor*

4.2.3 Across Domains: The Act of Metaphorical Mapping

Before we can begin with the question of whether or not PWO should be regarded as an embodied, conceptual metaphor, it is important to mention one important peculiarity of conceptual metaphor in general. This peculiarity concerns the act of metaphorical mapping. It involves the experiential domain that is constitutive of the primary metaphor and the experiential domain that is constitutive of the complex metaphor. We consciously and unconsciously map one or more primary metaphors to a complex metaphor in order to conceptualize and express an experience that is too abstract or too complex to rely directly on a sensorimotor grounding on its own. Thus we activate the experiential domain of one or more primary metaphors, which are themselves determined by the sensorimotor domain, and apply it to another experiential domain for which we do not have direct body-based concepts for conceptualization. A clear example for such an act of mapping is found in Croft’s [2006: 278] discussion of Johnson’s and Lakoff’s take on metaphorical mapping. Croft presents the following two sentences:

- (1) She’s in the living room.
- (2) She’s in a good mood.

The experiential domain of the first sentence is directly determined by two sensorimotor domains: the sensorimotor domain of locations and the sensorimotor domain of containment. These two sensorimotor domains come into existence by the facts that our bodies are constantly physically located somewhere in the world and that our bodies are constantly interacting with the inside or outside of themselves (e.g. our process of breathing in and out, our excretions and secretions, the boundaries of our visual fields) and other objects.⁴⁷ They are thus two closely connected body/environment interactions that give rise to appropriate image

⁴⁷“We are physical beings, bounded and set off from the rest of the world by the surface of our skins, and

schemata.⁴⁸ Together, they determine the experiential domain in which we or another person is *in* a particular *location*, for example in the living room. Depending on the context, this experiential domain either evaluates the sensorimotor domain of locations (e.g. when we ask: ‘*where* is she?’), or of containments (e.g. ‘*in* which room is she?’), or both at the same time. The two resulting primary metaphors would be PERSONAL LOCATION IS BODILY LOCATION (i.e. the whole person is located where her body is located) and PERSONAL CONTAINMENT IS BODILY CONTAINMENT (i.e. the whole person is contained in what contains her body). These primary metaphors stand out against a sociocultural background in which the material (the body) and the immaterial (the mind, as representative of a person) are spatially congruent.⁴⁹ Now we can combine these two primary metaphors and map them into a target domain that itself has no body-based metaphors to be expressed directly. A mood is such a domain. In order to conceptualize and express a mood, we have to make use of more basic structures that are derived from source domains consisting of primary metaphors. In this case, ‘mood’ or ‘good mood’ is conceptualized as a container in which somebody can enter and stay for a while. Of course, ‘mood’ is only a location and a container in a figurative way of thinking, which is why it is strange to answer ‘well, she is in a good mood’ when we ask ‘where is she?’ or ‘is she inside or outside?’ Rather, the state in which she is in, her mood, is a complex metaphor, i.e. a fusion of STATES ARE PERSONAL LOCATIONS and STATES ARE PERSONAL CONTAINMENTS, which are complex metaphors in their own right. Thus “the emotional domain is conceptualized as having the same or similar structure to space by the use of the predicate *in*.” [id.]⁵⁰

Generally we can say that conceptual metaphors that involve complex metaphors are mappings from a source domain of primary metaphors to a target domain of complex metaphors if and only if the experiential domain of the source domain and the experiential domain of the target domain are not overlapping. To illustrate this, we can think of mapping as a cognitive copy-and-paste process: we copy an element from one experiential domain and paste it into another experiential domain. The socioculturally influenced Gestalt experience of the source domain and the one of the target domain should be more or less disparate for the act of metaphorical mapping to be fruitful. While personal/bodily location and personal/bodily

we experience the rest of the world as outside us. Each of us is a container, with a bounding surface and an in-out orientation. We project our own in-out orientation onto other physical objects that are bounded by surfaces. Thus we also view them as containers with an inside and an outside. Rooms and houses are obvious containers. Moving from room to room is moving from one container to another, that is, moving out of one room and into another. [...] But even where there is no natural physical boundary that can be viewed as defining a container, we impose boundaries – marking off territory so that it has an inside and a bounding surface – whether a wall, a fence, or an abstract line or plane. There are few human instincts more basic than territoriality. And such defining of a territory, putting a boundary around it, is an act of quantification.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 29]

⁴⁸Cf. on image schemata section 5.1.

⁴⁹It is also conceivable that although the person’s body is in the living room, their mind is directed to another place. Maybe they imagine themselves to be in the bathroom, or are simply daydreaming, or are meditating and have a full-blown disembodied experience. To say that ‘they are in the living room’ is then correct only against a cultural background in which the spatiotemporal location of the body is congruent with the location of the mind, whereas in other cultures it would be more appropriate to say that ‘they are somewhere else’ (without ironic connotations).

⁵⁰Other examples in which emotional states are conceptualized as physical states are given in Johnson et al. [1980: 32]: “He’s *in* love. We’re *out of* trouble now. He’s *coming out of* the coma. I’m *slowly getting into* shape. He *entered* a state of euphoria. He *fell into* a depression. He finally *emerged from* the catatonic state he had been in since the end of finals week.”

containment are overlapping experiential domains, i.e. a set of congeneric domains belonging to what Langacker [2008: 44] calls a “domain matrix”, they can be classified as primary metaphors (source) and be mapped together into the source domain. The experiential domain of emotions as states we are in (target), however, does not overlap with the experiential domain of personal/bodily location/containment. We have to map *across* domains in order to find conceptualizations and adequate expressions for experiential domains in which these are originally missing, because no sensorimotor domain is available that directly determines the experiential domain in question. Metaphorical mapping is thus mapping across domains that are experienced as being *in toto* disjointed from each other. Lakoff even goes as far as talking about ‘ontological’ domains in the context of cross-domain mapping.⁵¹ This is why novel metaphors, in which an element of one experiential domain is mapped into a very different experiential domain, can have surprising or even poetic effects.

However, although the source domain and the target domain differ in the case of complex conceptual metaphors, there must be some justification for the establishment of a link between the two. Several (cognitive) linguists claim that there has to be some kind of *similarity* between the target and the source domain that enables the metaphorical mapping.⁵² While the domains themselves are different, the source domain comprises a particular element that is taken to be *similar* to an element in the target domain for which there either is no adequate concept or for which the metaphor can provide a more fitting one. In the act of cross-domain mapping, we consciously discover or unconsciously draw on such an element and in so doing create or refer to a kind of intersection between genuinely different domains. When we apply Jakobson’s influential characterization of metaphors as being based on lexical similarities and processes of selection and substitution to cognitive linguistics’ notion of conceptual metaphor, we could say that in metaphorical mapping, we *select* a specific element that is similar in the source and target domain and *substitute* what lacks sensorimotor foundation in the target domain for the element that has this foundation in the source domain.⁵³ For example, although the domains of a spatial container and an emotional state are quite different, the mapping of ‘in’ is justified, because we can enter and leave a room like we enter and leave a mood. It would be equally correct to say metaphorically that a mood enters and leaves us (e.g. ‘a bad mood crept inside me’), whereby the mapping had to be established via the selection of a similar element within a source domain in which we (e.g. our bodies) would be the container instead of the contained. In both cases, we select one element that is similar in both domains and substitute its occurrence in the target domain for its similar occurrence in the source domain.

Furthermore, it is one of the defining characteristics of metaphorical cross-domain mapping that the source domain often forfeits its evidence. Mainly in the case of conventional or ‘dead’ metaphors, there can be a “‘complete’ distance” [Dirven 2003b: 109] between the domains such that we are not aware, for example, that an entity can *actually* be ‘in’ only in physical containers, whereas we unconsciously take for granted that an entity is ‘in’ an emotional state and thereby forget that this is a *figurative* conceptualization based on the embodied cognition

⁵¹“The ontological correspondences that constitute the *love is a journey* metaphor map the ontology of travel onto the ontology of love.” [Lakoff 1994: 47]

⁵²Cf. for example Jakobson [1990] and Johnson et al. [1980: 151 f.]. For an overview and a critical discussion cf. Barnden [2010: 6] and Littlemore [2015: 4].

⁵³Cf. Jakobson [1990] and the clarification of it (followed by a well-founded critique of Jakobson’s model) in Bredin [1984b: 90].

of another domain. Dirven [id.: 100] states that in “metaphor, [...] two elements are brought together, but the source domain loses its existence when mapped onto the target domain. Although the source domain itself is wiped out, some aspects of its own nature or structure are transferred to that of the target domain. The contrast between the two elements or domains is often so great that this disparity can only lead to full substitution of one domain by the other.” Yet it is not impossible to depict the often forgotten source domain. As a rule of thumb that is sufficient for the purposes of the present project, we can recognize the similar element of the otherwise heterogeneous source and target domains by applying what R. Gibbs calls the ‘*is like* test’: “Figurative statements of the *X is like Y* form are most meaningful when X and Y represent terms from different conceptual domains. If a non-literal comparison between two things is meaningful when seen in an *X is like Y* statement, then it is metaphorical [...]” [Gibbs 1999b: 36] To apply this rule of thumb to our example, one element (being in) of an emotional state (a good mood) *is like* an element (being in) of a physical container/location (a living room), because both are similar as to the experience of being enclosed by borders that somehow define our momentary state of being. In the same manner, both can be heavy, inescapable, back-breaking, never-ending or unstable. In other respects, however, the domains in question are unequal because, for example, a physical container can be movable, destructible by force, inhabitable, transitive or stackable, while this is not the case for emotional states that may be, in contrast, fleeting, curable, inspiring, scary, or contagious – for which we would have to draw on other primary metaphors that are mapped in order to make such conceptualizations possible and expressible.

Obviously, not only are emotional domains lacking – but they are indirectly conceptualized via – primary metaphors with sensorimotor grounding. Johnson demonstrates that this is also the case for highly abstract domains. For instance, the primary conceptual metaphor CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS can be mapped into the seemingly abstract domain of syllogistic logic, thereby grounding the latter, because “the logic of our bodily experience provides all the logic we need in order to perform every rational inference, even with the most abstract concepts.” [Johnson 2007b: 179] In the sensorimotor domain, we constantly interact with or experience ourselves as containers, whereby we firstly experience the logical ‘law of the excluded middle’ by experiencing that an “entity is either inside the container or outside it, but not both at once”⁵⁴ [id.].

Secondly, our body/environment interactions with containers and the resulting image schema form the basis for syllogistic reasoning, because if “I place object O within physical container C and then put container C inside of container D, then object O is in container D.”⁵⁵ [id.] In addition, however, I think it is important to point out that the Gestalt experience of ‘categories’ in the primary metaphor CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS, i.e. the source domain, must be distinguished from the understanding of ‘categories’ as a more abstract content of experience – the experience of a priori reasoning – in the target domain of pure logic. To me it seems that

⁵⁴This sensorimotor experience we then metaphorically map into the abstract domain of categories. “An entity either falls within a given category or falls outside it, but not both at once. For example: Charles cannot be a man and not a man at the same time, in the same place, and in the same manner.” [id.]

⁵⁵“If entity E is in category C’, and category C’ is in category D’, then entity E is in category D’. For example: All men are mortal (C’ is in D’) and Socrates is a man (E is in C’); therefore, Socrates is mortal (E is in D’).” [id.] - Cf. on this example also Lakoff [1994: 52] and cf. Macnamara [1994] on the relationship between logic, cognition and psychology beyond the particular hypotheses of Johnson and Lakoff.

the experiential domain of the primary metaphor already includes the experience of certain categories, namely basic-level categories, in this case medium-sized physical containers such as the human body or a box of chocolates or the bag we pick up at the supermarket counter. This is why CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS is classifiable as a primary metaphor in the first place: basic-level categories and physical containers are members of the same experiential domain or domain matrix. One and the same experiential domain or domain matrix can include both without inconsistencies or demands for ancillary experiential domains. In our sensorimotor interaction with the environment, we not only know what containers are thanks to our Gestalt experiences of physical containment, but, in the same fashion, we also know what basic level categories are. This implicit knowledge forms the similarity that allows us to map CATEGORIES ARE CONTAINERS into the abstract domain in which non-basic-level categories are abstract containers. Only then does the act of mapping transfer contents from one domain “to a domain of a different kind” [Johnson 1999: 94].

Thus in this case too it is helpful to apply Gibbs’ ‘*is like* test’ and recognize the *similarity* of basic-level and abstract categories that enables the cross-domain mapping of source to target domain: abstract categories *are like* basic-level categories in that both can contain or be contained in something else, while they are dissimilar in many other respects. – This may seem to be only a minor comment on the example given by Johnson. The actual reason for accentuating the necessity of domain-difference and experienced similarity of domain-elements in the case of conceptual metaphor will become clear in the case of *metonymic* mapping,⁵⁶ which is a mapping *within* and not *across* experiential domains. This will turn out to be the area in which the embodied cognition of PWO as underlying a plenitude of our ordinary linguistic communication and commonsense understanding becomes essential.

A final point that is significant when we talk about cross-domain mapping of conceptual metaphors concerns the nature of the experiential domain. Until now, I have used the notion of ‘experiential domain’ only in a vague sense to distinguish the physical from the emotional and the abstract domain. These are very broad areas with fuzzy borders. The problem is that even in the literature of cognitive linguistics, there is no clear-cut and unanimously accepted definition of what we can understand as an experiential domain. Some authors use the terms ‘frame’, ‘scene’ or ‘scenario’ for an experiential domain and describe it as comprising “static or dynamic mental representations of typical situations in life and their typical elements”, whereby the “content and the shape of a frame depends on our everyday experience, on our world knowledge. Beings, things, processes, and actions that generally or ideally occur together are represented in the mind as a frame.” [Blank 1999: 173]. But is it philosophically justified to use the term ‘representation’ when we accept with Johnson that there is no strict dichotomy between mind and world? Are we not rather directly *embodied in* our interactions with the environment and sociocultural backgrounds instead of them being indirectly *represented* in a disembodied mind?⁵⁷ A similar concern can be raised when we consider Lakoff’s influential delineation of an experiential domain as an Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM).⁵⁸ Although this

⁵⁶Cf. section 5.2.

⁵⁷Cf. Dreyfus et al. [2015] for a profound and constructive critique of representationalism in the history of philosophy.

⁵⁸“An idealized cognitive model may fit one’s understanding of the world either perfectly, very well, pretty well, somewhat well, pretty badly, badly, or not at all. If the ICM in which *bachelor* is defined fits a situation perfectly and the person referred to by the term is unequivocally an unmarried adult male, then he qualifies

conception has some benefits, such as the recognition of salient properties that partly make up for a Gestalt experience, its insistence on the separation of reality and the cognitive-conceptual realm implies to me an at least epistemological dualism that factors out the ‘realness’ of our experiences in favor of their ideality in our minds.⁵⁹ Likewise, I find it unsatisfactory from a philosophical perspective when the experiential domain is reduced to a “conceptual domain” [Evans 2007: 61], a “lexical domain” [Riemer 2003: 380], a “knowledge network” [Croft 2006: 270], an “internally coherent knowledge construct” [Ruiz de Mendoza 2014: 144], or a network of semantic association.⁶⁰ Gestalt experience as such is neither only conceptual, linguistic and known in the field of primary metaphor, where it is rather unconscious, embodied and preconceptual, nor in the field of complex metaphors, where there is an experienced ‘conceptual vacuum’ that is in need of one or more primary metaphors to fill it.

A comparably rich and experience-based characterization of domains, whereby the experiential domain is understood as a cognitive domain, comes from Langacker [2008: 44–5], who writes that an “expression is said to invoke a set of cognitive domains as the basis for its meaning”. A cognitive domain can be “broadly interpreted as indicating any kind of conception or realm of experience.” [id.] He explains that “how many domains we recognize, and which ones, depends on our purpose and to some extent is arbitrary.” [id.] Some domains, such as space, time and unanalyzed experiences of colors, pitches, temperature, tastes and smells would be basic and preconceptual, whereas most domains were nonbasic and would consist of “instances of immediate sensory, emotive, and motor/kinesthetic experience [...] as well as the abstracted products of intellectual operations” and “conceptions manifested instantaneously at the level of conscious awareness (e.g. the image of a circle), as well as elaborate scenarios that we can only conceptualize stage by stage through processing time [...]. There is no requirement that a nonbasic domain be fixed, established, or conventionally recognized. Apprehension of the situational context thus qualifies as a cognitive domain, as does the previous discourse.” [id.] If we add to this the indispensable sociocultural factor, then we have to conclude that basically and ‘nonbasically’ every instant of our conscious and unconscious life happens in at least one experiential domain. Although I think that this is indeed the case and that Langacker’s characterization of the cognitive/experiential domain is therefore instructive, it is still justified to ask in what sense then the experiential domain is *determined* by the sensorimotor domain. Langacker’s characterization of cognitive domains seems to cope well with the experiential dimension of the primary source and the complex target domain of conceptual metaphors, but what I am missing is a clear account of how and why the cognitive domain relates to our bodies and thus via our bodies to the reality we constantly interact with.

In fact, while Langacker accentuates the capacities of the disembodied mental realm, he reduces bodily experience to the immediateness of physical body/environment interaction.⁶¹ To

as a member of the category *bachelor*.” [Lakoff 1987: 70]

⁵⁹“This kind of explanation cannot be given in a noncognitive theory one in which a concept either fits the world as it is or not. The background conditions of the *bachelor* ICM rarely make a perfect seamless fit with the world as we know it. Still we can apply the concept with some degree of accuracy to situations where the background conditions don’t quite mesh with our knowledge. And the worse the fit between the background conditions of the ICM and our knowledge, the less appropriate it is for us to apply the concept. The result is a gradience – a simple kind of prototype effect.” [id.: 71]

⁶⁰Cf. Benczes [2011: 213].

⁶¹“Ultimately, the world we construct is grounded in our experience as creatures with bodies who interact with their surroundings through physical processes involving sensory and motor activity. This is known in

this it could be responded, with Johnson, that embodiment also entails the embodiment of meaning in situational contexts in which not just physical interactions with objects take place, but in which also e.g. moral, aesthetic, emotional, or spiritual values are experienced as meaningful.⁶² Furthermore, it seems that Langacker makes the existence of a cognitive/experiential domain dependent on our subjective recognition and apprehension of it. If I interpret him correctly here, then I have to disagree. Firstly, the experiential domain's evaluation is not arbitrary, but depends on how the sensorimotor domain determines it via embodied image schemata, which bestows a certain degree of intersubjective universality to our otherwise highly subjective and contingent experiences. Secondly, as is one of the principal research findings of Gestalt theory⁶³, most Gestalt experiences reveal to us the contents and forms of experience as being pre-organized wholes, the structuredness of which we directly experience. We do not arbitrarily impose structure on our experiences. We cognize (discern) rather than recognize (acknowledge) an experiential domain. In our everyday existence in the world at least, we are not distanced enough from what happens around and within us that we could purposefully decide and *revise* instead of phenomenologically discover and *describe* what counts how as our experiential domain. This latter approach to domains can also deal better with the open, often vague nature of experiential domains. As domains “do not have fixed boundaries and overlap with one another” [Benczes 2011: 208], the explicit delineation of a domain would draw lines and isolate where in fact we experience continuous transitions and occurrences.

In conclusion, on the one hand the experiential domain comprises every kind of experienced, coherent arrangement of qualities (from primary to tertiary, from the most basic to the most abstract, from preconceptual to conceptual, from instantaneous to temporally persistent) and is therefore, as such, hard to define in more precise terms. Not without reason can the experiential domain therefore be pictured as a “chunk of experience” [Geeraerts 2015: 424], and not without reason does Johnson bemoan the lack of profound descriptions of qualitative experience in cognitive linguistics while appealing to philosophy to resolve this desideratum.⁶⁴ On the other hand, we should keep in mind that the Gestalt experience of the experiential domain is *determined* by the sensorimotor domain of embodiment. This also makes the experiential domain embodied in a wider sense and encourages us to find certain patterns as mind/body/world connectives (i.e. image schemata) with which a more precise, universal and reality-oriented understanding of the experiential domain can be enabled.

cognitive linguistics as *embodiment*. But obviously, our mental life transcends the limits of immediate bodily experience. Various cognitive processes give rise to mental structures, at successive levels of organization, whose connection with such experience is progressively more remote. Not only do these structures allow us to cope with the real world more efficiently, but also they define – and vastly expand – what constitutes it. From our standpoint, the world we inhabit and engage has not just physical but also social, cultural, and intellectual dimensions. Once they are cognitively established, we can operate in these realms in largely autonomous fashion.” [Langacker 2008: 524–5]

⁶²“Our situations, with all of their summing up, implying, and carrying forward, are *embodied situations*. Meaning, therefore, is embodied. And neither the nonformal, nonconceptual, implicit aspects nor the explicit forms, patterns, words, and concepts are the meaning in themselves. Meaning resides in their situational relation as that relation develops and changes.” [Johnson 2007b: 83]

⁶³Cf. chapter 6, in particular section 6.3.

⁶⁴Cf. Johnson [2005: 28].

4.2.4 Ontological Conceptual Metaphors: Is PWO One of Them?

The question is if part-whole structures, in particular the oscillation between parts and wholes that, in the context of Husserl's 3rd LI, is inconsistent in a purely formal sense, can be regarded as a conceptual metaphor. This would make it possible to link a certain aspect of ordinary language – viz. part-whole metaphors – via processes of embodied cognition with the environment, i.e. the world or reality we interact with with our bodies. In this subsection, I would like to argue that PWO is not a conceptual metaphor, for several reasons. To begin with, let us recall the characterization of PWO given at the end of section 2.3:

PWO_{ded} A part-whole oscillation (PWO) is the dynamic interplay of moments and whole within the same entity. It occurs when, during the fusion (continuation) of moments and whole, both moments and whole become distinguishable (discontinuous) as well. During their continuation, the moments and the whole stand out alternately and the entity in question displays both the qualities of the moments and the potentially different or even contradictory qualities of the whole.

Is there at least one type of conceptual metaphor, whether primary or complex, that conforms to this characterization? Since I am interested in the ontological nature of PWO, the question can be specified: Is there at least one type of conceptual metaphor, whether primary or complex, that offers valuable clues concerning the ontological nature of PWO? If there is at least one such type of conceptual metaphor, then it must be found in the group of conceptual metaphors that Johnson and Lakoff call 'ontological metaphors'. This group seems to be, at least in terms of its name, the most promising for the present ontological investigation.

Ontological metaphors belong to the most basic kind of metaphors; they are thus primary to such an extent that we normally do not notice their metaphorical character, even when, or especially because, they are mapped into complex ontological metaphors in everyday language. In the sensory domain, an ontological metaphor comes into being via our interaction with stable physical objects and containers. The experiential domain evaluates these sensorimotor data as entities and substances, which are ontological categories. "Understanding our experiences in terms of objects and substances allows us to pick out parts of our experience and treat them as discrete entities or substances of a uniform kind. Once we can identify our experiences as entities or substances, we can refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them – and, by this means, reason about them." [Johnson et al. 1980: 25] The primary ontological metaphor SUBSTANCES AND ENTITIES ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS AND PHYSICAL CONTAINERS can thus be mapped into more abstract domains in order to figure out "ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., as entities and substances." [id.] and in order to refer to, categorize, group or quantify events, activities, emotions, ideas etc. as we can do with physical objects and containers. This seems to imply that there are no more ontological categories than substances and entities, whereby it is not quite clear to me where Johnson and Lakoff see the difference between them. It could be critically remarked that this is a rather minimalistic inventory of ontological categories that is suggested by the notion of ontological metaphor. But now is not the time to engage further in this criticism.⁶⁵

⁶⁵It has to be mentioned, however, that after having written *Metaphors we live by*, where the notion of ontological metaphors was developed, Johnson and Lakoff themselves became more skeptical towards the limited

An example of an ontological metaphor would be the complex ontological metaphor THE MIND IS AN ENTITY that relies on the primary ontological metaphor ENTITIES ARE PHYSICAL OBJECTS. Although the mind is non-physical in itself, the ontological metaphor allows us to treat the mind as an entity in its own right so that we can refer to it, make valid or invalid claims about it, quantify it and compare it with other entities that may not share the mind's properties. However, merely "viewing a nonphysical thing as an entity or substance does not allow us to comprehend very much about it. But ontological metaphors may be further elaborated." [id.: 27] Thus, conceptualizing the mind just as a substance with certain properties is often not enough. This is why we can, for example, create the complex metaphors THE MIND IS A MACHINE⁶⁶ and THE MIND IS A BRITTLE OBJECT⁶⁷ to talk about the ontologized mind in coherent ways. Through sensorimotor interactions and bodily perceptions, but also through sociocultural knowledge, we all know what machines and fragile objects are. Therefore we understand the substantialized mind as a machine or fragile object, because in the act of metaphorical mapping, we draw on experiential similarities of elements belonging to these quite different domains. And as is typical for conceptual metaphors in general, the source domain often disappears when the target domain is activated. If I tell my colleague that the amount of beer I consumed last night is 'throwing a spanner in my work' today or that I have 'steam coming out of my ears' given my unpaid overtime, probably none of us is taking me for a real machine in order to understand the meaning of the utterances. "Ontological metaphors like these are so natural and so pervasive in our thought that they are usually taken as self-evident, direct descriptions of mental phenomena. The fact that they are metaphorical never occurs to most of us." [id.: 28] This aspect will be one of the reasons for the decision that *what is meant* by PWO in the above characterization of it should not be regarded as a conceptual metaphor, although metaphorical part-whole relations and oscillations can indeed be found in ordinary language as types of metaphors among many other things.

It is undeniable that the use of the term 'PWO', not just due to its being an abbreviation of 'part-whole oscillations', implies that there is a stable, existing entity. But what is actually meant by this term is a dynamic process without metaphysical substance of its own, thus an 'in-between' or *momentum movens* of parts and whole. In this sense, 'PWO', as a concept to be expressed in language, is an ontological metaphor indeed, just by the fact that I can write about it and refer to it in some way. We have to act as if it were a stable entity, whereas in fact it is not and should not be confused with ontological categories such as 'substance', 'essence' or 'being' that have stable and often unequivocal connotations. Thus 'PWO', as a signifier, is

number of such metaphors. In their 2003 afterword to this book, thus 23 years after the original publication, they concede that in fact all metaphors are ontological "in that they create target domain entities" [Johnson et al. 1980: 264]. This means that just by the mere process of mapping from the source domain, a target domain is created that is then conceptualized as an entity in itself, whereas prior to the act of mapping, the content of the target domain had only been locatable in its experiential domain without having the status of something that can be treated as a stable entity in its own right. For the sake of argumentation in this section, I will, however, stick to the original depiction of ontological metaphors.

⁶⁶For this complex ontological metaphor, Johnson and Lakoff provide the following example sentences: "We're still trying to *grind out* the solution to this equation. My mind just isn't *operating* today. Boy, the *wheels are turning* now! I'm a *little rusty* today. We've been working on this problem all day and now *we're running out of steam*." [id.: 27]

⁶⁷Examples are: "Her ego is very *fragile*. You have to *handle him with care* since his wife's death. He *broke* under cross-examination. She is *easily crushed*. The experience *shattered him*. *I'm going to pieces*. His mind *snapped*." [id.: 28]

an ontological metaphor, whereas I think that PWO, as what is signified by the signifier, is not. The main argument why PWO, unlike ‘PWO’, is not an ontological metaphor and therefore not a conceptual metaphor (presupposing that the only conceptual metaphors that come into consideration for ontological investigations are ontological metaphors) is that it can neither be traced back to physical objects, nor to physical containers. Johnson and Lakoff adjudge to physical objects and physical containers the role of constituting ontological metaphors in the sensorimotor domain.

The argument why physical objects cannot serve as a source domain for PWO, however, is straightforward and makes use of the idea of PWO as was disclosed in the course of the second chapter’s analysis of Husserl’s part-whole ontology. Physical objects are material objects and material objects are *qua being material* aggregations of independent pieces, not wholes of dependent moments. Accordingly, mere bodily interaction with physical objects cannot determine an experiential domain in which physical objects are experienced as ontologically dependent on each other. Otherwise we would not readily develop the metaphors of substance and entity out of our interactions with physical objects, which we, however, seem to do according to Johnson and Lakoff. This does not mean that no use of part-whole relations in ordinary language can be conceptual or even ontological metaphor at all. Part-whole metaphors that relate to independent, separable parts are indeed determined by the sensorimotor domain of physical objects and can be mapped into complex metaphorical expressions. For example, the primary metaphor PIECES ARE BROKEN PHYSICAL OBJECTS could give rise to complex expressions like ‘My heart is *shattered*’, ‘We *broke up* yesterday because we could not function as a couple anymore’, ‘This society is *disrupted*, there are gaps *dividing* the people’, or ‘*Piece by piece* she is recovering her health’. Such accumulating or fragmenting conceptions of part-whole (or part-part) relations, however, are not *what is meant* in the characterization of PWO that has been repeated above.

The argument why physical containers cannot serve as a source domain for PWO and therefore do not make PWO an ontological metaphor is less straightforward. Prima facie it seems that part-whole relations, even part-whole relations consisting of dependent parts and *even* such relations in the empirical realm of contents where PWO is assumed to be detectable, can be schematized and thus conceptualized with the inside-outside structure that is typical for containers. The prime illustration for this is given in E. Ginsberg’s critical discussion of Husserl’s six propositions that are deductively derived from his axiomatic set of definitions for founding relations (3rd LI, §14)⁶⁸. At this point, it is irrelevant how and why Ginsberg corrects these propositions, but it is revealing how she conceptualizes and visualizes them. She does so by making use of visual container schemata. Let us take Husserl’s second and fourth propositions

⁶⁸Husserl’s set of definitions reads as follows: “If a law of essence means that an *A* cannot as such exist except in a more comprehensive unity which connects it with an *M*, we say that an *A* as such requires foundation by an *M* or also that an *A* as such needs to be supplemented by an *M*. If accordingly *A*₀, *M*₀ are determinate instances of the pure kinds of *A* or *M*, actualized in a single whole, and standing in the relations mentioned, we say that *A*₀ is founded upon *M*₀ and that it is *exclusively* founded on *M*₀, if *A*₀’s need for supplementation is satisfied by *M*₀ alone. This terminology can of course be carried over to the Species, by a quite harmless equivocation. We say further, more indefinitely, two contents or two Species, stand in a foundational relationship or in a relationship of *necessary connection*. This indeed leaves it open which of the two possible but not mutually exclusive relationships is meant. The indefinite expression: *A*₀ requires supplementation by, is founded upon a certain moment, plainly means the same as the expression: ‘*A*₀ is non-independent’.” [Husserl 2001: 25]

as an example, because these propositions concern a dependent part within a dependent whole and therefore come close to the mutual dependency of parts and whole in PWO. This is the second proposition:

“A whole [M⁶⁹] which includes a non-independent ‘moment’ [A], without including, as its part, the supplement [Z] which that ‘moment’ demands, is likewise non-independent, and is so relatively to every superordinate independent whole [N] in which that non-independent ‘moment’ is contained.” [Husserl 2001: 26]

This is the fourth proposition:

“If C [L] is a non-independent part of a whole W [M], it is also a non-independent part of every other whole [N] of which W [M] is a part.” [id.]

Although Ginsberg declares the second and the fourth propositions to be wrong and suggests modifications of them,⁷⁰ she draws the following container schemata (Figures 4-2 and 4-3) that are supposed to illustrate the respective propositions.

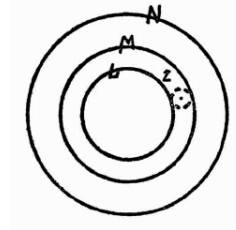
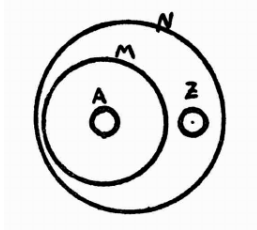


Figure 4-2: *Ginsberg's Second Proposition*⁷¹ Figure 4-3: *Ginsberg's Fourth Proposition*⁷²

She provides similar container schemata for Husserl's first, third, and sixth propositions. These diagrams suggest that part-whole relations, including relations of dependency, could rely on our bodily interactions with physical containers and could therefore be ontological metaphors, provided that Johnson's framework of embodied cognition and cognitive linguistics is applicable. Now we can ask the following three questions:

1. Is PWO an ontological metaphor such that it can be conceptualized by embodied container-reasoning?
2. Are part-whole *dependency* relations ontological metaphors such that they can be conceptualized by embodied container-reasoning?

⁶⁹The letters in brackets refer to Ginsberg's figures 4-2 and 4-3 below.

⁷⁰This is her modification of the second proposition: “Ein Ganzes M, welches ein unselbständiges Moment A ohne die von ihm geforderte Ergänzung Z als Teil einschließt, ist unselbständig relativ zu dem für M unmittelbaren Ganzen N, in welchem die Ergänzung Z mitenthalten ist.” [Ginsberg 1929: 113] - ‘A whole M, which includes a dependent moment A as a part without A's necessary supplement Z, is dependent relative to N, which is an immediate whole for M and in which the supplement Z is contained.’ [own translation] This is her modification of Husserl's fourth proposition: “Ist L ein unselbständiger Teil des Ganzen M, so ist es auch ein unselbständiger Teil jedes anderen Ganzen N, von welchem M ein unselbständiger Teil ist.” [id.: 117]- ‘If L is a dependent part of the whole M, then L is also a dependent part of every other whole N of which M is a dependent part.’ [own translation]

⁷¹Id.: [111].

⁷²Id.: [115].

3. Are part-whole *independency* relations ontological metaphors such that they can be conceptualized by embodied container-reasoning?

As PWO presupposes dependent parts and as dependent parts presuppose independent parts, the denial of (3) would deny (2) and (1), and the denial of (2) would deny (1). But let us begin with (1), thus

ad (1), according to the characterization of PWO given above, a part p is both continuous and discontinuous regarding the whole w that includes p . This means that p is simultaneously dependent and independent of w , i.e. that p is both distinguishable (not separable) from and fused with (not indistinguishable from) w . Thus p 's supplementation must be at the same time inside and outside the w in which p itself is located. In a container, however, either something is inside or outside, but nothing can be inside and outside at the same time. Therefore, PWO is not reducible to container-reasoning and is not an ontological metaphor, because PWO can also be explained by our bodily interactions with physical-material objects. The latter is the case for dependent parts in general, and in addition,

ad (2), dependent parts are also not reducible to container-reasoning, because a physical container implies that there is a boundary, an interior, an exterior and a portal "that allows motion between the Interior and the Exterior." [Dodge et al. 2005: 62] In container-reasoning, parts must, then, be movable from the inside to the outside of the container and vice versa. But dependent parts are not like that. By definition, they cannot be removed from the whole in which they are 'contained'. A container is thus a form of thinking that is overdetermined for dependent parts, because in order to conceptualize dependent parts, only the interior of a whole is required, whether as the foreground or as the background for one or more of its parts. The rest can fall out of the picture. There must be another schema that is more suitable for dependent part-whole relations, and I will look for it in the next section. Moreover,

ad (3), even for *independent* part-whole relations, the sensorimotor interaction with physical containers is problematic as a determinant. We saw that, at least in the Husserlian context, independent parts form a whole only in aggregation. There is thus no whole that holds independent parts together. As I showed in subsection 2.2.5, independent parts instead form a whole by mutual founding relations, 'without external assistance'. It is as if the removal of all containments would make the container itself disappear, like the removal of all grains would make the sandheap disappear. This is not what a physical container implies. It implies that there is a bounded interior even when it is empty, thus, as it were, an empty set that can exist devoid of parts, which is impossible given the fact that parts and wholes are not only terminologically, but principally correlative.⁷³ Besides, it also implies that the boundary is a kind of surface or a demarcation line. The surface or demarcation line of a whole, however, can also be seen as a part of it instead of something the whole has in and for itself, as is the case for a container. A container does not contain its surface, but the boundary of a whole can be

⁷³A similar point is made by Winston et al. in their 1987 article 'A Taxonomy of Part-Whole Relations'. There, the authors argue that meronymic part-whole relations must be distinguished from topological inclusions, i.e. container-contained relations, because what is contained can always be removed. There is no necessary connection between container and contained, whereas in part-whole relations, there is a necessary correlation between part and whole. "In cases of spatial inclusion, the subject is surrounded but is not a part of the thing which surrounds it. Meronymy also normally involves this element of spatial inclusion, for example, the heart is surrounded by the body, but meronymy also involves the additional element of a connection between part and whole." [Winston et al. 1987: 427]

seen as being an independent (e.g. the bark of a tree) or dependent (e.g. the finish of a car) part of the whole.

Ergo, neither is PWO an ontological metaphor, nor are part-whole relations in general identifiable as a container (or an entity) form of thinking. If we want to develop the notion of PWO out of our sensorimotor domain, we have to find another schema for part-whole relations. *It is questionable, however, whether such a schema can give rise to a conceptual metaphor at all.* There are three reasons that motivate this doubt.

Firstly, we saw that in the act of metaphorical mapping, two different experiential domains are connected by the projection of one element from the source domain to the target domain in order to conceptualize, reason about and linguistically express the latter. This is called ‘cross-domain mapping’. Although the thereby supposed heterogeneity of experiential domains for metaphorical mapping has been criticized by some cognitive linguistics,⁷⁴ it is not only proposed by Johnson and Lakoff.⁷⁵ If we look at part-whole relations, however, it is difficult to speak of cross-domain mappings. To justly avoid the ontological separation of mind/body/world, let us assume that our general understanding of parts and wholes is derived from our embodied being in the world (the sensorimotor domain) and the relevant image schema (which, as I just argued, is not the container schema). In the first section of the next chapter, I want to support this assumption by specifying an image schema for part-whole relations. At any rate, it is remarkable that whenever we experience part-whole relations, for example when the dishwasher breaks a wine glass into two pieces, when a partner feels incomplete in a relationship in which the other partner finds completion, or when the smell of popcorn contributes as a quasi-necessary part to our cinematic experience, we do not switch between experiential domains, be they physical (glass), emotional (relationship), aesthetic-gustatory (cinema) or otherwise in nature. *In general, part-whole relations take place within the same experiential domain, domain matrix or similar domain-dimensions.* These are not restricted to space and time, of course. Part of a university, for example, are professors, who are often spread across the world for conferences, and who may have lived several hundred years ago (which makes some chairs quite prestigious). We can perceive, understand and conceptualize part-whole relations without having to draw on a principally different experiential domain. What is more, sometimes it is the experiential domain itself that counts as a whole, for example when I am fully immersed in a (socioculturally dependent) religious practice and the whole of my experience is constituted by parts that (literally) symbolize the meaning of the whole. *Thus, one of the main conditions for metaphorical mappings, namely the cross-domain aspect, does not hold for part-whole relations.*

This is closely connected to a second reason why it is inappropriate to subsume part-whole relations under the category of conceptual metaphors. Since the experiential domains in which part-whole relations generally occur to us are homogeneous rather than heterogeneous, there is no possibility of the source domain falling into oblivion when the target domain is activated. We remember that this “annihilation of the source by the target” [Warren 2006: 17] is often the case with conceptual metaphors. For example, when we utter the complex metaphor ‘time goes by so fast’, we tend to forget that we have made an entity out of time (ontological metaphor), that we attributed an activity and a movement to this entity (which is taken from the sensorimotor domain of our bodies or other objects moving in the world), and that we actually compare two

⁷⁴Cf., also for a bibliographic overview, Barnden [2010: 25].

⁷⁵Cf. Croft [2006: 278] and Ruiz de Mendoza [2014: 144].

or more events (while we conceptualize events as entities) in order to experience the interval between them as ‘short’ (spatial distance).⁷⁶ In part-whole relations, however, it is not possible to factor out the source domain, because these relations are happening in one and the same (set of) experiential domains. Otherwise, there would be no direct correlation between parts and whole, without which, however, it would not make sense to talk about parts and wholes at all. It is just the case that sometimes the whole is prominent, i.e. in the foreground, while at other times one or more parts step out from the background and are highlighted – whether in our perception, in our reasoning, in a trans-subjective situation or as dynamic properties ascribable to objects themselves. In particular for PWO, which is characterized by the shifting of embeddedness and distinctiveness of one or more moments within the whole and of the whole in relation to its moments, it is not possible to ‘annihilate’ either the whole as a source for the moments or the moments as a source for the whole. It is as if both sides constantly merge into and emerge from one another. Besides, and referring to the discussion in chapter 2, this is also why material pieces are not suitable to characterize PWO. The pieces that compose a material object as a whole, for instance the handle h and the bowl b of a coffee cup $c = \{h, b\}$, form sources which are no longer distinguishable from the function and significance of the object (the aggregation, the set) in question. Pieces mostly stand out when they are somehow separated, for example when c breaks into h and b . But then c has ceased to exist and the separated h and b form aggregations in their own right. On the other hand, c ’s moments such as its color(s), motive, immaterial valuableness (we all have a ‘favorite’ cup for some reasons), type of production (hand-made/mass production), or its hygienic condition spontaneously stand out with c as a whole and without being separable from it.

The third reason why ‘PWO’ and *some* part-whole relations, but not PWO and *all* part-whole relations are conceptual metaphors can best be depicted *ex negativo*. If PWO and all part-whole relations were conceptual (primary or complex) metaphors, then there would be no evident reason for the hypothesis that they could involve an ontological, thus most general and omnipresent category or structure of reality. As Johnson, Lakoff and other cognitive linguistics in general show, both our ordinary languages and our cognitive ways of conceptualization consist of innumerable conceptual metaphors. Most of them, in particular primary metaphors, are unconscious,⁷⁷ and for many, including complex metaphors, the source domain is unconscious as well. To this we can add that metaphorical thinking and expressing is unavoidable. “Because metaphorical maps are part of our brains, we will think and speak metaphorically whether we want to or not. Since the mechanism of metaphor is largely unconscious, we will think and speak metaphorically, whether we know it or not.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 257] Thus if there are indeed so many primary metaphors, not to mention complex metaphors, how and why would it be justified to pick out one single kind of conceptual metaphor, part-whole relations with the sub-kind of PWO, and to elaborate on its ontological nature, while so many equally important

⁷⁶Cf. Johnson et al. [1999: 137–169] and Johnson [2010: 407–411] for a detailed discussion of the conceptualization of time in philosophical contexts.

⁷⁷“Primary metaphors arise spontaneously and automatically without our being aware of them. There are hundreds of such primary conceptual metaphors, most of them learned unconsciously and automatically in childhood simply by functioning in the everyday world with a human body and brain. There are primary metaphors for time, causation, events, morality, emotions, and other domains that are central to human thought. Such metaphors also provide a superstructure for our systems of complex metaphorical thought and language.” [Johnson et al. 1980: 256 f.]

others could also be taken account of? If PWO should have a special status as a dynamic interface of part-whole structures that is to be found in our experiential domains, and if we consider ordinary language as an indicator for this special status, then it is in vain to look for conceptual metaphors in which parts and wholes play a role, because this kind of conceptual metaphor is and would be just one among many. Fortunately for the present project, it is not only in conceptual metaphors that we unconsciously as well as consciously reason and express ourselves. Language offers at least one more indicator that indeed points to the special status of part-whole relations and also PWO for our thinking and – in so doing – for the reality we live in: metonymy.

To conclude, PWO is not an ontological metaphor, mainly because part-whole relations are not – or at least not only⁷⁸ – a conceptual metaphor. In order to determine the ontological nature of PWO with the help of ordinary language and in the framework of cognitive linguistics, there are four conditions that have to be fulfilled:

1. To make claims about the ontological nature of something, whether it is a stable entity or a dynamic process, and to determine what could be an ontological category, it is insufficient to remain within the borders of subjectivity and make no claims about reality at all. But somehow we have to take our subjectivity into consideration, because we are embodied and experiencing beings. By arguing against the dichotomies of mind/body/world and by introducing the notion of sensorimotor image schemata, Johnson bridges the gaps between objective reality, bodily experience, neuronal structures and abstract thinking. Above, I tentatively approached image schemata by considering if and how the CONTAINER schema could be constitutive for metaphorical conceptualizations of part-whole relations. However, it became clear that another schema is required. Therefore, in order to connect the notion of part-whole relations and PWO to the world around us (the ‘bottom-up’ approach), we need to find an appropriate image schema for part-whole relations in the next section, 5.1.
2. Metaphorical mapping presupposes two or more different experiential domains. Part-whole relations, however, generally occur within the same or a similar experiential domain. One condition to account for part-whole relations and PWO in experience is to find a conceptual structure that allows for intra-domain instead of cross-domain mapping. This condition, together with the subsequent two, will be taken up in section 5.2.
3. In metaphorical cross-domain mapping, the source domain from which the element comes that helps to conceptualize the target domain is generally factored out. This is the case in particular in what counts as ‘dead’ metaphors, which is a broad field, because a better part of our conceptual metaphors are primary and therefore unconscious. Also, due to our bodies and contingent sociocultural backgrounds, we almost always seem to think and talk in conceptual metaphors. For PWO, however, it is important that there is an active, recognizable relationship between the source and the target within the same experiential domain, such that certain aspects (a whole, one or more parts) of this domain can be in the foreground and in the background, but interchangeably. Thus one condition for

⁷⁸At the end of subsection 5.1.2, I provide some example sentences from cognitive linguists who discuss the PART-WHOLE image schema and illustrate it with both primary and complex conceptual metaphor.

PWO is to maintain intra-domain-stability while allowing for intra-domain-activity. In other words, whereas metaphorical mapping is unidirectional such that the source of the mapping can fall out of the picture once the act of mapping has reached the target, PWO presupposes an active bidirectional mapping between source/target and target/source.

4. The concentration on cognitive linguistics serves to justify the ontological nature of PWO by taking ordinary language seriously. It would be fruitless and therefore insufficient to conclude that part-whole relations, not to mention PWO, is ‘just’ a conceptual metaphor among many others. Why then all this effort to carve out the potential of part-whole relations within the framework of cognitive linguistics? There must be something more to it, and our language should comprise at least one more fundamental semantic feature besides conceptual metaphors that elucidate the ontological nature of PWO better than conceptual metaphors do, even in their special function as ontological metaphors.

The following chapter serves to fulfill these four conditions, first by looking for an image schema for part-whole relations (section 5.1) and then by introducing the notion of conceptual metonymy (5.2) as an equivalent to conceptual metaphor. This equivalent should be more suitable in accounting for part-whole relations in ordinary language and conceptual thinking, which means embodied cognition and the dimension of our ‘enworlded subjectivity’. The latter is the case, because “our own nature is not quite alien to the structure of the world. Positively speaking, the elements and forces that are out there in the world are also present in our body-mind complex, enabling us to adjust ourselves to the environment.” [Balasubramanian 2006: xxi] It has to be added that this more reality-directed point is not always acknowledged by Johnson himself, although his position implicitly invites us to draw ontological conclusions in this way. But as Dreyfus et al. [2015: 94] recently put it, “[t]he idea is deeply wrong that you can give a state description of the agent without any reference to his or her world (or a description of the world qua world without saying a lot about the agent). Such a description would be possible if the knowledge were ‘in’ the ‘subject.’ But it isn’t; the grasp is in the contact, the interaction, and this interaction can’t be described while just talking about the agent.” This is why we should always keep in mind that there is no reason, neither for cognitive linguistics on the one hand nor for philosophical ontologists on the other hand, to disregard cognitive linguistic research as a valid source of data for ontological investigations.