



## Primary Metaphors for LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME\*

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### ABSTRACT

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Grady (1996, 1997a, 1997b) argues that some metaphors, such as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, IDEAS ARE FOOD, and LIFE IS A JOURNEY, are complex metaphors that can be reanalyzed with primary ones. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is one such metaphor. The metaphor is decomposed into two primary metaphors, PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS and MAKING PROGRESS IS SCORING. This reanalysis will reveal that the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is a dual of the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. This discovery suggests that many other well-known metaphors could be fruitfully reanalyzed as complex metaphors, allowing their relationships with other metaphors to be much more clearly recognized.

### KEYWORDS

primary metaphor, LIFE IS A SPORTING GAME, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, metaphorical duality

## 1. Introduction

Grady (1996, 1997a, b, 2005) argues that some well-known metaphors, such as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, IDEAS ARE FOOD, and LIFE IS A JOURNEY, are compound metaphors and they can be broken down into more basic, or primary, metaphors and reanalyzed. In his paper 'THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS revisited,' Grady posits that THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS is the compound of two primary metaphors, ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT, and explains the benefit of this reanalysis.

The three benefits Grady suggests are as follows. First, the two primary metaphors can explain why not all the elements of the domain of BUILDING participate in the mapping. Windows, corridors, roofs, and many others do not participate in the mapping because the two primary metaphors do not include those elements. What they highlight is strength and endurance of physical structures. Second, the primary metaphors have experiential motivations, while THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS does not. Having experiential motivation is a priori for positing a metaphor. Third, they can relate THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS with other metaphors such as THEORIES ARE FABRICS, SOCIETIES ARE BUILDINGS, and so on. Source and target domains with structures are closely related to the two primary metaphors. Since fabrics are physical structures and societies are abstract structures, the metaphors are interrelated to each other.

In spite of these benefits of positing primary metaphors, this has unfortunately not been applied to other metaphors except in Grady (1997a, b). Filling the research gap, in the paper, the issue will be pursued with the well-known metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME.

## 2. Primary and Complex Metaphors

### 2.1 THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS Metaphor: Examination

Major correspondences Grady observes in the metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS are as follows.

- (1) a. Major premises, including facts and assumptions, are foundation of the theory.
- b. The major claims and arguments of a theory, along with their organization, make up its framework.
- c. Facts are solid materials or supporting elements — as in the sentence *Your facts are not solid enough to support your hypothesis.*
- d. Arguments are intermediary elements — they are supported by facts, they in turn support conclusions and claims.
- e. Claims are the uppermost elements of structure — they are supported by facts and arguments.

- f. The general logical structure is the design.
- g. A theoretician is an architect, engineer, or builder
- h. The convincingness of the theory — its resistance to counter-argument or disproof—is the strength and durability of the physical structure
- i. The continued existence of the theory as an accepted set of relevant claims and arguments is the duration of a physical structure; failure is understood as collapse. (Grady 1997a, 269)

Careful examination of the correspondences reveals that the most highlighted elements in the source domain, BUILDING, are its strength, endurance, and solidity. Correspondingly, solidity, strength, and endurance are highlighted in the target domain, as shown in (2).

- (2) a. Your facts are *solid*, but your argumentation is *shaky*.
- b. All the arguments are *solid*, but they can't *stand up* without a factual basis.
- c. Some of the arguments are well *put together*, but in its overall *design*, this is a very *weak* theory. (Grady 1997a, 269)

The emphasis on the strength, endurance, and solidity of a building naturally obscures other elements of the source domain. For instance, windows, tenants, and rent do not map onto the target domain, as shown in (3).

- (3) a. ?this theory has French *windows*
- b. ?the *tenants* of her theory are behind in their *rent* (Grady 1997a, 270)

Moreover, crucial parts of the building, such as doors, floors, roofs, and corridors, do not show up in the metaphorical mapping. Important functions of the building, such as sheltering occupants and providing spaces for their activities, also do not map. A very limited set of elements participates in the mapping. Grady calls this the poverty of mapping problem.

Grady observes two more problems with the metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS. Comparing the THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS metaphor with the metaphor MORE IS UP, Grady argues that there is a comparative lack of experiential motivation for the former. The MORE IS UP metaphor is based on our bodily experiences, as Lakoff (2006) explains in (4). This is the case with other metaphors as well, such as KNOWING IS SEEING as in (5).

#### (4) MORE IS UP

Contemporary theory postulates that the metaphor is grounded in experience – in the common experiences of pouring more fluid into a container and seeing the level go up, or adding more things to a pile and seeing the pile get higher. (Lakoff 2006, 226)

## (5) KNOWING IS SEEING

The experiential basis in this case is the fact that most of what we know comes through vision, and in the overwhelming majority of cases, if we see something, then we know it is true.

(Lakoff 2006, 227)

Conceptual metaphor is defined as the understanding of an abstract concept using a concrete and physical concept. Therefore, metaphorical conceptualization should be based on bodily experiences. However, it is difficult to find any experiential motivation for MORE IS UP and KNOWING IS SEEING in the THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS metaphor. There is no concrete or physical experience that would link theories to buildings.

The third problem with the THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS metaphor is that it does not have well-defined boundaries and overlaps with other metaphors. As shown in (6), not only theories, but *Nazi Germany*, *marriage*, *a banking system*, and *an ecosystem* can also be understood as buildings. Social, political, economical, and logical systems are regarded as buildings, with an emphasis on strength.

- (6) a. the *architect* of Nazi Germany  
 b. Trust is the *foundation* of marriage.  
 c. The Federal Reserve is the *cornerstone* of the nation's banking system.  
 d. Recent land development has caused the near *collapse* of the Bay's ecosystem.

Not only are other targets understood in terms of the source domain of BUILDINGS, the target domain, THEORIES, is understood in terms of other source domains as well. For instance, in (7), *tore*, *weave*, and *fabric* show that theories can be understood as textiles.

- (7) a. They *tore* the theory to shreds.  
 b. She was able to *weave* the notion of attachment into her theory.  
 c. Although many of its specific claims were shown to be incorrect, the basic *fabric* of the theory remained intact. (Grady 1997a, 272)

They are also understood as works of art, as shown in *crafting* and *a masterpiece* of (8).

- (8) a. He spent a lifetime *crafting* his theory of memory.  
 b. Their theory is *a masterpiece* of logical construction. (Grady 1997a, 272)

Examples in (9) show that the metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS is involved in a more general metaphor which covers all the abstract systems such as theories, society, political life, and procedures.

- (9) a. *the fabric* of society  
 b. *a hub* of political life  
 c. *a lattice/an array* of procedures

Based on these three problems, *poverty of mapping, lack of motivation, and unclear relationship with other metaphors*, Grady argues that the THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS metaphor is different from metaphors such as MORE IS UP. He posits that metaphors such as MORE IS UP are primary metaphors, whereas metaphors such as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS are complex metaphors that are made up of primary metaphors. Specifically, he reanalyzes THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS as a compound of the primary metaphors ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT.

## 2.2 THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS Metaphor: Reanalysis

As discussed, THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS is a compound metaphor that can be broken down into two primary metaphors. These two metaphors will be individually examined and explicated. Then they will be shown working in tandem to create THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS. The first primary metaphor is ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE, as shown in (10). Physical structures are complex physical objects that are composed of physical parts in a specific arrangement. Abstract organizations, such as *Nazi Germany, marriage, and ecosystem*, are complex abstract entities. These abstract organizations can be metaphorically understood as being composed of constituents that are in relation to one another.

### (10) ABSTRACT ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

<u>ABSTRACT ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>PHYSICAL STRUCTURE</u>
Complex abstract entity	Complex physical object
Abstract constituents of the entity	Physical parts
Logical (etc.) relations among constituents	Physical arrangement of parts (Grady 1997b, 274)

An example of ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE is shown in (11). In (11), *the theory* and *our marriage* are understood as fabrics, as can be seen in *unraveled* and *tatters*.

- (11) a. The theory has completely *unraveled*.  
 b. Our marriage is in *tatters*. (Grady 1997b, 275)

The second primary metaphor is PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT. The correspondences of this metaphor are shown in (12). The erectness of physical objects maps onto the persistence of abstract entities, i.e., the continued function and continued validity of abstract entities.

## (12) PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT

<u>PERSISTING</u>	<u>REMAINING ERECT</u>	
Abstract entity	Physical object	
Persistence	Erectness/verticality	(Grady 1997b, 274)

An example of PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT is shown in (13). The persistence of *the speed record* and *situation* are metaphorically understood as erectness, as can be seen from *stands/ fell/ was toppled*.

- (13) a. The speed record for the mild still *stands/ fell/ was toppled*.  
 b. This [i.e., the situation] will not *stand*. (Grady 1997b, 275)

As we have seen, the two primary metaphors, ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT, are separate metaphors that can exist independently. As stated in Grady (1997b, 275), when these independent metaphors combine, they create the complex metaphor ABSTRACT ORGANIZED ENTITY IS ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECT, as in (14). An erect physical structure requires support to maintain its erectness. Parts of a structure depend on the parts below them for support, though the opposite is not necessarily true. This, then, maps to asymmetrical dependence. Thus, in addition to the elements inherited from ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and the elements inherited from PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT, the combination involves one additional element: asymmetrical dependence maps to support.

## (14) ABSTRACT ORGANIZED ENTITY IS ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECT

<u>ABSTRACT ORGANIZED ENTITY</u>	<u>ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECT</u>	
Complex abstract entity	Complex physical object	
Abstract constituents of the entity	Physical parts	
Logical (etc.) relations among constituents	Physical arrangement of parts	
Persistence	Erectness/verticality	
Asymmetrical dependence	Support	(Grady 1997b, 275)

One instance of ABSTRACT ORGANIZED ENTITY IS ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECT is THEORIES ARE ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECTS. We can think of THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS as a misnomer for THEORIES ARE ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECTS. Positing that THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS is a complex metaphor consisting of two primary metaphors is beneficial in that this solves the three problems that we have examined so far: poverty of mapping, lack of experiential motivation, and unclear relationship to other metaphors. The first problem is easy to deal with since all the elements of the source domains of the two primary metaphors are mapped onto the target domains.

The second problem, lack of experiential motivation, is resolved in that though there is no

experiential motivation for THEORIES ARE ERECT PHYSICAL OBJECTS, there is experiential motivation for its constituent primary metaphors, ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE and PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT. The relationship between logical and physical structures is easily identified. The connection between erectness of an entity and its persistence is not difficult to observe. When an entity, such as a person, remains erect, it persists, but falling could indicate that the person is unable to persist, i.e., dead. In another instance, if an entity such as a building remains erect, it persists, but if it falls, it no longer persists.

The third problem is unclear relationship with other metaphors. By reanalyzing THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS as a complex metaphor, it is possible to understand why the metaphor appears to have overlap with other metaphors. The targets in (6), such as *Nazi Germany* or *marriage*, are able to map onto elements of structures even though they are not theories because they fall under the metaphor ABSTRACT ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE. Similarly, that same metaphor allows the target theory to be mapped onto fabric in (7). Recall that ABSTRACT ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE is a primary metaphor that can exist independently from STANDING IS PERSISTING. This allows theories to map onto physical structures that have no verticality, such as fabric.

Based on the arguments Grady provides, the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME will be examined and primary metaphors will be suggested in the next section.

### 3. LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME Metaphor

In Hiraga (1991), Kim (2016), and Choi (2019), the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME has been well established. Through the metaphor, people are understood as game players, living as playing games, and success or failure in life as success or failure in games, such as the examples *home run* or *strike out*. Achievement in life is understood as winning games. The correspondences of LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAMES are as follows.

- (15) a. People are baseball players.
- b. Living is playing games.
- c. Life plan is game strategy.
- d. A leader of an organization is a baseball coach.
- e. Success in each stage of life is a success in each stage of a game.
- f. Failure in each stage of life is a failure in each stage of a game.
- g. Achieving in life is winning the game.

From the correspondences in (15), it is observed that the highlighted elements of LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME are achieving a goal, and in order to achieve it, planning strategies and success &

failure are important elements. As shown in (16), the baseball elements, *win the game*, *cover all the bases*, *play hardball*, *home run*, *drop the ball*, and *strikes*, correspond to achieving purposes, strategies, and success & failure.

- (16) a. The first rule for *winning the game of life* is to set clear and empowering goals.  
(<https://iqdoodle.com/game-of-life/>)
- b. Apartments that *cover all the bases* for Tinker employees and families  
(<https://www.northstar-ok.com/blog/apartments-that-cover-all-the-bases-for-tinker-employees-and-families>)
- c. Should I *Play Hardball* To Get A Raise?  
You've ended up doing the work of two people, so if you left, what would they do?  
Should you threaten to quit to get what you want?  
(<https://www.fastcompany.com/3050879/should-i-play-hardball-to-get-a-raise>)
- d. The Kansas City Royals join Sun Life to offer a program called *Home Run* to Health, a four-week program to promote healthy lifestyles.  
(<https://www.mlb.com/royals/community/programs/hr-to-health>)
- e. The Leadership Framework is a tool that helps us achieve clarity of purpose and alignment around who does what and how we will measure ourselves. Clarity and alignment are vital to establishing accountability -- as well as to re-establishing accountability when someone *drops the ball*.  
([https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/someone-dropped-ball-carly-fiorina?trk=articles\\_directory](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/someone-dropped-ball-carly-fiorina?trk=articles_directory))
- f. Piloting a new '*strikes*' system to address repeat ad policy violations  
(<https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/10957124?hl=en>)

When considering the highlighted elements in a sporting game, the most important thing in a game is to achieve its purpose: winning. The procedure and strategy of playing a game serve to achieve the ultimate purpose of winning it.

#### 4. Complexity of LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME

The three problems of THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS are similarly observed in LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME. First, some important elements of games do not map onto life. For example, only special players in a baseball game map onto the target domain. As shown in (17), *a cleanup hitter*, *a pinch hitter*, and *a designated hitter* are frequently used metaphorically in the domains of economics, politics and others. However, *a fifth hitter*, *a sixth hitter*, and some similar elements are never mapped onto any of the target domains.



- (17) a. Will Exports, the Japanese Economy's *Cleanup Hitter*, Recover? (Discuss Japan, Jun. 5, 2014)
- b. Suga is leaving only a year after taking office as a *pinch hitter* for Abe, who suddenly resigned over health problems, ending his nearly eight-year leadership, the longest in Japan's constitutional history. (The Korea Times, Sep. 30, 2021)
- c. When the split between liberals and Never Trumppers is complete, you will find that you never really knew us. It will be like finding out your best friend thinks people get COVID through 5G phone signals, or believes in QAnon, or even worse, supports *the designated hitter*. (USA Today, Nov. 3, 2020)

Similarly, some baseball rules, strategies, and success & failure, such as *cover all four bases*, *play hardball*, *hit a home run* and *drop the ball*, are frequently used as metaphorical expressions, as shown in (18).

- (18) a. You Need to *Cover All 4 Bases* to Ensure Marketing and Sales Success in Your Contracting Business

(<https://www.springboardbizcoaching.com/are-you-covering-all-the-bases-in-your-marketing-and-sales.php>)

- b. Saudi Arabia might *play hardball* with OPEC — here's why  
(<https://www.businessinsider.com/saudi-arabia-obstacles-to-opec-oil-output-freeze-2016-9>)
- c. When life throws you curveballs, *hit them out of the park!*  
(<https://www.notsalmon.com/2015/09/21/when-life-throws-you-a-curveball/>)
- d. Locsin confirms Duque '*dropped the ball*' in Pfizer vaccine deal, but urges end to blame game (CNN, Dec. 21, 2020)

However, other similar baseball strategies such as *sacrifice fly*, *bunts*, and *stealing a base* rarely participate in the mapping. The incompleteness of the mapping is called *the poverty of mapping problem*.

The second problem, *lack of experiential motivation*, is similarly observed in the LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME metaphor. Motivations for LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME are not clear when compared with MORE IS UP or KNOWING IS SEEING. As is explained in the previous section, when water is added in a bowl, the level goes up. Adding water makes the level of water higher. That is how we connect the concept MORE with the concept UP. However, the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME does not have such a clear connection.

The third problem, *unclear relation with other metaphors*, is also observed in the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME. Life is understood as various concepts such as a journey, a war, and a fabric.

- (19) a. LIFE IS A JOURNEY : Did you let life and circumstances *choose the path* for you? (<http://timemanagementninja.com/2011/05/two-roads-which-path-are-you-choosing/>)
- b. LIFE IS A WAR : Life is *a battle*. You not only *fight external battles* with the world outside but also *internal battles* with your own destructive and evil qualities. (<https://www.hinduwebsite.com/gita/wisdom/gita-day2.asp>)
- c. LIFE IS A FABRIC : You *weave the tapestry* of your own life. You have been given all the tools you need—the golden thread. ([www.globalpeacemovementnow.com](http://www.globalpeacemovementnow.com) > blog > weave-the-tapestry-of-your-life)

And many other concepts, such as economics, politics, disease, law, and so on, are understood as a baseball game.

- (20) a. ECONOMICS IS A BASEBALL GAME  
 b. POLITICS IS A BASEBALL GAME  
 c. OVERCOMING DISEASE IS A BASEBALL GAME  
 d. REGISTRATION OF LAW IS A BASEBALL GAME

Political and economical issues are explained by the concept of the baseball game, as shown in (21).

- (21) a. ‘*Curveballs* and obstacles’ face Pelosi this week as Democrats spar over \$3.5 trillion budget plan (Washington Post, Aug. 22, 2021)
- b. Should the U.S. *Play Hardball* with China on Trade? (ChinaFile, Jul. 20, 2017)

Registration of law is understood as the concept of a baseball game, as shown in (22a), and COVID-19 is understood as a baseball pitcher, in (22b).

- (22) a. Politics of ‘*three strikes*’ law  
 ...The “*three strikes and you’re out*” law passed in the aftermath of the awful 1993 kidnapping and murder of 12-year-old Polly Klaas was advertised as a way to keep violent predators in prison. ...More than half of the *third “strikes”* that have triggered a 25-to-life sentence involve neither serious nor violent felonies. Even shoplifting can be escalated to a *third-strike* felony... (SFGate, May 7, 2011)
- b. Delta Variant *Throws Fed A Curveball* In Gauging Recovery Pace (Forbes, Jul. 31, 2021)

Therefore, we can say that the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME does not exist in isolation but is interrelated with other metaphors such as LIFE IS A TEXTILE, POLITICS IS A GAME, POLITICS IS A JOURNEY, and so on. Therefore, we can say that the problem of *unclear relationship with other metaphors* is also observed.

The three problems of *poverty of mapping*, *lack of motivation*, and *unclear relationship with other metaphors* observed in the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME suggest that it is not primary but a complex metaphor and that it is composed of primary metaphors that are related to purposes.

## 5. Reanalysis and Benefits

This paper claims that the metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESIRABLE OBJECTS is one primary metaphor for LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME. The mapping of the primary metaphor PURPOSES ARE DESIRABLE OBJECTS is shown in (23).

### (23) PURPOSES ARE DESIRABLE OBJECTS

#### ACHIEVING PURPOSES

abstract purposes

pursuing the purposes

achieving the purposes

#### ACQUIRING DESIRABLE OBJECTS

desirable objects

planning and performing actions to get the objects

obtaining the objects

Our purposes in life and other domains are abstract, such as *to live a happy life*, *to be better than what I am*, *to receive more attention from others*, and so on. The purposes correspond to desirable objects. Pursuing the abstract purposes corresponds to planning and performing activities to get the desired objects. Achieving the purposes corresponds to obtaining the objects. This metaphor applies to any type of purposeful activities, such as political and economical activities.

One more primary metaphor should be added, as shown in (24).

### (24) MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS PURPOSES IS SCORING

The mapping of the primary metaphor MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS PURPOSES IS SCORING is shown in (25). Making progress or advancement corresponds to scoring. Small success corresponds to adding points, and failure corresponds to losing points.

### (25) MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS PURPOSES IS SCORING

#### MAKING PROGRESS

advancement

small success

failure

#### SCORING

scoring

adding points

losing points

The two primary metaphors combine together, as shown in (26). This combination is called unification, according to Grady (1997a, b).

(26) ACHIEVING PURPOSES IS ACQUIRING DESIRABLE OBJECTS THROUGH SCORING	
<u>ACHIEVING PURPOSES</u>	<u>ACQUIRING OBJECTS THROUGH SCORING</u>
abstract purposes	concrete objects
pursuing the purposes	planning and performing activities
achieving the purposes	obtaining the objects
advancement	scoring
small success	adding points
failure	losing points

Positing two primary metaphors can solve the three problems with the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME. The first problem, *poverty of mapping*, is solved since, in the two primary metaphors, all the elements of the source domain map onto the target domain. In order to get desirable objects, we plan and perform actions to get the objects. Finally, we get the objects. The three elements are all mapped onto the target domain. The same applies to the second primary metaphor.

The second problem, *lack of experiential motivation*, is solved since in many cases, the purposeful activities are for getting what we want. When we are thirsty, we need to get a bottle of water. Only after getting the bottle of water, we can quench our thirst. Therefore PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS is experientially motivated. The second primary metaphor MAKING PROGRESS IS SCORING is also motivated. When we grow, our height measurement can be considered a kind of score, as parents compare their children's height against others or against an average. Evaluation in school is also based on scores. High scores allows you to pass or defeat your competitors. Adding more points to make high scores is desirable. The relationship between height & quantity and desirability is explained by the metaphor GOOD IS UP.

The third problem, *unclear relation with other metaphors*, is solved because the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is under a more general metaphor with a more general target concept, PURPOSES OF ANY PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES, and more general source concepts, DESIRED OBJECTS. Economic and political activities, legislation of law, and overcoming disease are all purposeful activities. The methods to reach a goal are getting a tool (scoring) to get a desired object.

## 6. One More Benefit: Metaphorical Duality and Inheritance Hierarchy

We have established that LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is a complex metaphor that is composed of the primary metaphors PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS and MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS PURPOSES IS SCORING. One of the benefits of reanalyzing complex metaphors in this way is that this can illuminate certain relationships with other metaphors. For instance, understanding that LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is composed of two primary metaphors that have to do with purpose and process, respectively, suggests that it could have a special relationship with other

metaphors that have to do with purpose and process. LIFE IS A JOURNEY is one such metaphor. However, the purposes of the two metaphors are understood differently. The purpose in LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME is acquiring a desired object, while the purpose in LIFE IS A JOURNEY is a desired location. The two opposing purposes suggest that the LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME metaphor is a partner of the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. This partnership is called metaphorical duality (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 2006). Metaphorical duality means that we conceptualize events in two different systems, a location system and an object system. In a location system, purposes are understood as a desired location while in an object system, purposes are understood as a desirable object. In a location system, reaching a destination is through movement and in an object system, obtaining an object is through various activities such as hunting, fishing, and agriculture, if the object is something to eat. The two system of the Event Structure metaphor are shown in (27) and (28).

(27) THE LOCATION EVENT STRUCTURE METAPHOR

- a. States Are Locations (interiors of bounded regions in space)
- b. Changes Are Movements (into or out of bounded regions)
- c. Causes Are Forces
- d. Causation Is Forced Movement (from one location to another)
- e. Actions Are Self-propelled Movements
- f. Purposes Are Destinations
- g. Means Are Paths (to destinations)
- h. Difficulties Are Impediments To Motion
- i. Freedom Of Action Is The Lack Of Impediments To Motion
- j. External Events Are Large, Moving Objects (that exert force)
- l. Long-term, Purposeful Activities Are Journeys (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 179)

(28) THE OBJECT EVENT STRUCTURE METAPHOR

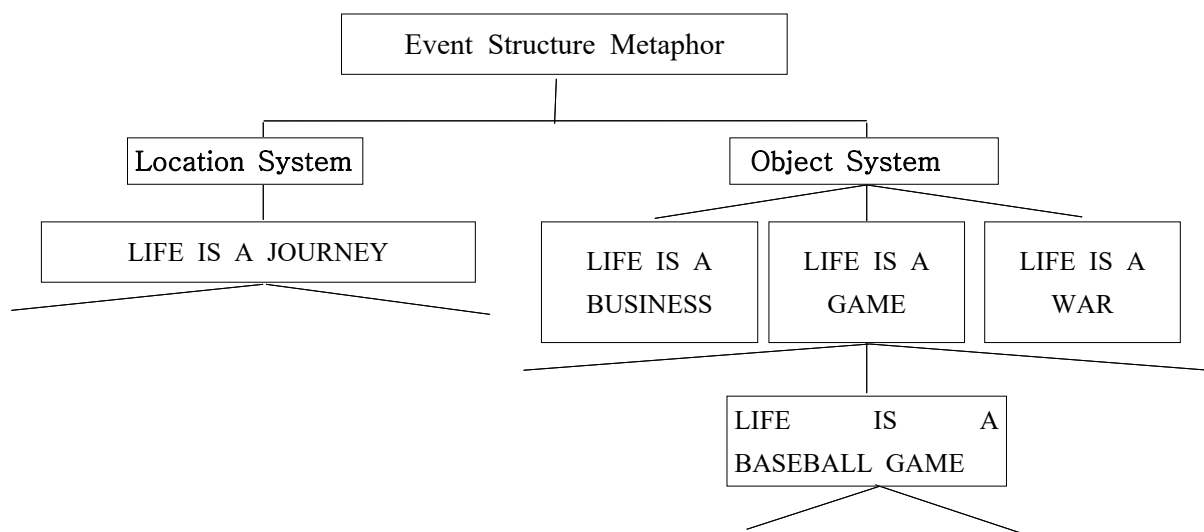
- a. Attributes Are Possessions
- b. Changes Are Movements Of Possessions (acquisitions or losses)
- c. Causation Is Transfer Of Possessions (giving or taking)
- d. Purposes Are Desired Objects
- e. Achieving A Purpose Is Acquiring A Desired Object
  - Achieving A Purpose Is Getting Something To Eat
    - Trying To Achieve A Purpose Is Hunting
    - Trying To Achieve A Purpose Is Fishing
    - Trying To Achieve A Purpose Is Agriculture (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 198)

The two metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY and LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME, as a pair, have two opposing systems, a location system and an object system. In the location system, movement and destinations are important concepts. Therefore, we have PURPOSES ARE DESIRED DESTINATION

and ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS REACHING A DESIRED LOCATION, as in (29a). On the contrary, in the object system, obtaining an object is important. As in (29b), in the object system, we have the metaphors PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS and ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS ACQUIRING A DESIRED OBJECT.

- (29) a. Location system:  
 PURPOSES ARE DESIRED LOCATIONS  
 ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS REACHING A DESIRED LOCATION.
- b. Object system:  
 PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS  
 ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS ACQUIRING A DESIRED OBJECT (Lakoff 2006: 211)

Based on the discussion above, we can set up an inheritance hierarchy of metaphors, as in <Figure 1>. The metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME can be seen as a dual of LIFE IS A JOURNEY through the inheritance from the metaphor LIFE IS A GAME, which shares its status of the object systems with LIFE IS A BUSINESS, LIFE IS A WAR, and so on.



**Figure 1. Hierarchy of Metaphors**

As we have seen, treating the complex metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME as a combination of primary metaphors has one more benefit as well as solving the three problems *poverty of mapping*, *lack of experiential motivation*, and *unclear relationship with other metaphors*. This treatment makes it possible to relate the metaphor with the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor in a special fashion. The two metaphors are one pair in the metaphorical duality system.

The location system is utilized in the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor while the object system is utilized in the LIFE IS A GAME metaphor. The purpose of a journey is reaching an aimed location.

The purpose of a game is winning the game which is understood as a desired object.

- (30) a. Primary metaphor of LIFE IS A JOURNEY:  
PURPOSES (OF ANY PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES) ARE DESIRED LOCATIONS
- b. Primary metaphor of LIFE IS A SPORTING GAME  
PURPOSES (OF ANY PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES) ARE DESIRED OBJECTS  
(WINNING THE GAME)

The second primary metaphor MAKING PROGRESS IS SCORING is also has its dual. In the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, in order to reach a desired location, you need to move forward. As shown in (31), getting out of feeling stuck and moving forward is highly encouraged.

- (31) a. And next time don't wait until you feel completely *stuck* in life to *make that big step forward*.  
(<https://www.thelawofattraction.com/10-things-remember-youre-feeling-stuck-life/?nowprocket=1>)
- b. Get my simple, 4-step checklist and action plan to help you *get unstuck* in life.  
(<https://www.thementalhealthupdate.com/posts/feeling-stuck-in-life>)
- c. It will show you what it really means to *keep moving forward* during times of great difficulties. It will also address what you can do to navigate through hard times. At the same time, the article will present you the most common obstacles that prevent people from moving forward. (<http://www.planetofsuccess.com/blog/2016/keep-moving-forward/>)

However, in the metaphor LIFE IS A GAME, adding points is important. Therefore, hitting and running in a baseball game are regarded as a small success. The small success leads to the final goal, winning the game. Missing the ball and striking out are regarded as a failure, as shown in (32a). Sometimes a curveball thrown to us unexpectedly makes it hard to reach the goal, as in (32b).

- (32) a. Many of us go through life *hitting and missing*. Sometimes we make it to *first base* or even *a home run* and other times we just keep *striking out*.
- b. Sometimes we think we are doing ok and life is good, but then *a curveball gets thrown at us* that we didn't see coming and we think "Wow, where did that come from?"(<https://livingandstuff.ca/baseball-and-life/>)

Therefore, scoring is important for the final success, as shown in (33).

- (33) a. They all have an option: Change their *scoring* systems. Unlike in sports, you don't have to play under someone else's system. So as long as it isn't illegal, immoral, unethical, or downright narcissistic, there are all sorts of systems available for *scoring your version of success*. (<https://marksanborn.com/blog/2014/02/05/4-ways-keep-score-life/>)

- b. Successful people *keep score* of exciting progress, positive behavior, financial gain... anything they want more of. Your natural inclination is always to improve your score.  
(<https://meaningring.com/2014/08/21/keep-score-for-success-by-jack-canfield/>)

Now, we can get one more metaphorical dual, as shown in (34).

- (34) a. Primary metaphor of LIFE IS A JOURNEY:  
MAKING PROGRESS IS FORWARD MOVEMENT
- b. Primary metaphor of LIFE IS A GAME  
MAKING PROGRESS IS SCORING

As we have seen, treating the complex metaphor LIFE IS A (BASEBALL) GAME as a combination of primary metaphors has one more benefit as well as solving the three problems *poverty of mapping*, *lack of experiential motivation*, and *unclear relationship with other metaphors*. The treatment makes it possible to relate the metaphor with the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor in a special fashion. The two metaphors are one pair in the metaphorical duality system.

## 7. Conclusion

Close observation of the metaphor LIFE IS A BASEBALL GAME reveals some issues that suggest it is a complex metaphor. Through the analysis of the usages of this metaphor, we can determine that the complex metaphor is composed of two primary metaphors, PURPOSES ARE DESIRABLE OBJECTS and MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS PURPOSES IS SCORING. Reanalyzing LIFE IS A GAME in this way not only solves the issues discussed earlier, but the deeper understanding can lead us to other discoveries about the metaphor as well. For instance, by paying attention to one of its constituent metaphors, PURPOSES ARE DESIRABLE OBJECTS, we can place LIFE IS A GAME in metaphoric duality with LIFE IS A JOURNEY. We can extrapolate from this that primary metaphors regarding purpose and process could explain a diverse range of complex metaphors, such as LIFE IS A WAR, ECONOMICS IS A GAME, and so on.

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Examples in: English

Applicable Languages: English

Applicable Level: Tertiary Education