

Embodying Cars - Abstract

In human experience, we embody cars when we drive and ride them to become hybrid creatures that move together from point A to point B. In our modern societies we constantly experience cars, which makes car-embodiment metaphors ready to use and worthwhile considering. Adding to the importance of this paper, Arabic car-embodiment metaphors have not yet been investigated within the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Prior work on embodying cars dealt with how the car is a representation of a human character or trait such as: being a hero, family member, or being powerful or corrupt (Živković 2014; Young 2001; Notar 2014). As these instances of embodiment are philosophical in nature, there is no prior work that tackled the technical and practical type of embodiment. For this study, I consulted two car technicians/experts to provide a list of car-embodiment metaphors. One of these technicians was a speaker of Arabic and the other a speaker of English. I then searched these metaphors online to see how they are used in Arabic and English. The data collected from the online search was analyzed to establish how car-related concepts are used. Of the metaphors found are:

- The car engine is a human HEAD and the engine has a NAVAL
- The car has a FACE, EYES, and the eyes can be LINED with KOHL
- The car can STAND, WALK, WHISTLE, and CHOKE on liquid

I found that more than two-thirds of the car-related concepts considered in this study were used similarly in both Arabic and English. I propose that the reason for using these technical car-embodiment metaphors is that it is easier and more feasible to use the already available human part and state names than coining new ones. Finding most of the metaphors in both Arabic and

English is a result of the importation of cars and their parts from English speaking countries to Arabic ones.

Keywords: car embodiment, conceptual metaphor theory, Arabic metaphors, English metaphors, cognitive linguistics.

References

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