IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)
Volume 29, Issue 4, Series 3 (April, 2024) 53-59
e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.
www.iosrjournals.org

The Treatment Of Metaphor In Philosophy

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Abstract
Every theoretical pronouncement on metaphor is rooted in some philosophical consideration. A number of philosophers have put the phenomenon of metaphor under direct scrutiny. The oldest philosophical interest in metaphor is found in Isocrates. As it is the case with pre-Socratic philosophers, only fragments of their texts are available, and much of what is known about their ideas is gleaned through these fragments or through the work of later Greek philosophers who respond to and quote the pre-Socratics. The philosophical treatment of metaphor revolves around two main poles. The first concerns what constitutes a metaphor while the second concerns the purpose that metaphor serves. The exploration of the evolution of the treatment of metaphor in philosophy reveals differing considerations with regard to the two poles. On what constitutes a metaphor, theories differ ranging from an extremely restrictive account of the phenomenon put forward by Isocrates to Nietzsche's radical consideration of all language to be metaphorical (Kirby, 1997; Nietzsche, 1873). On the function that metaphor fulfils, there is no shortage of theories, too, ranging from these that consider it to be exclusively ornamental to theories that hold it to be the building block of reality.

Date of Submission: 02-04-2024 Date of Acceptance: 12-04-2024

I. Introduction

The study of metaphor is multidisciplinary. It cuts across linguistics, psychology, anthropology and different fields (Gibbs, 2008). This paper examines the philosophical treatment of metaphor through the treatises of four philosophers belonging to four different eras, and representing four different philosophical schools, Isocrates, Aristotle, Nietzsche and Derrida. The relevance of studying the differing philosophical approaches to metaphor crystallises in their relations with the more practical linguistic pronouncements on the phenomenon. The selected philosophers whose work is studied and presented represent significant theories in the analysis of the phenomenon of metaphor within philosophy. The traditional understanding of metaphors as purely ornamental linguistic devices finds its embodiment in Isocrates' account (Kirby, 1997). Aristotle's extensive elaboration on metaphor detailed in the Poetics, Rhetoric and De Interpretatione is appraised by academia as an unprecedented intellectual study of the phenomenon, and is considered by Kirby to be of relevance even to Lakoff and Johnson's climacteric theory of Conceptual Metaphor (Kirby, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

We deem Nietzsche's essay, On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense, to be of crucial importance to the philosophical study of metaphor (1873). In the essay, Nietzsche argues that language is inherently designed to cloak the truth and to construct reality (Nietzsche, 1873). He traces language's incapacity to describe any objective truth, and its propensity to fabricate layers of deception to its metaphorical nature.

Derrida in On Grammatology and in White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy presents a new model of signification (Derrida, 1967; Derrida and Moore, 1974). His new modal is built on the concept of "Différance" where metaphor is quintessential to language's capacity to designate non-linguistic independent objects in the world.

II. The Pre-Aristotelian Treatment Of Metaphor

There is no recorded study of metaphor that precedes Isocrates (Kirby, 1997). He is, then, credited with the first exploratory work on the phenomenon. Isocrates distinguishes between the existence of two variations of the Greek language. There is one that is used by commoners. It is plain, and devoid of any adornments. The other variation of Greek is used by poets (Ibid). It is exuberant and more attractive. The language of poets is distinct because of meter, and ornamentation . This ornamentation is in the form of metaphors, neologism, and borrowings from other languages (Ibid). Isocrates makes a radical pronouncement that most modern linguists would vehemently dispute. He asserts that the everyday language of commoners is completely devoid of any use of figurative language. The first contention with Isocrates' claim is found in Aristotle who rejects the

thought that metaphor is exclusively monopolised by poetic language (Aristotle, 1924). There is even legitimacy to argue that Isocrates himself turns on his own claim. His own prose contains abundant use of figurative language. For example, when Isocrates says "every government is the soul of its city", he clearly personifies cities through the conceptual metaphor: A CITY IS A LIVING HUMAN BEING (Gagarin, 2019 p.201). This apparent contradiction means that Isocrates recognises as metaphors only those figurative uses of language that have never been expressed before. Hence, the idea that a city is a living human being, and its government is its soul does not satisfy Isocrates' requirement for a metaphoricity because it is not new. So, one possibility is that for Isocrates, a metaphor has to be original, which constitutes an overstated version of what would years after Isocrates be termed as dead metaphors (Black, 1979). Isocrates' restrictive definition of metaphor does not stop here. The fact that his own prose while replete with metaphors that are not part of the everyday language which Athenians use fails his test of metaphoricity leaves us with one explanation. Poeticity and meter are defining characteristics of metaphors for Isocrates. And this is one thing that Aristotle contends in Rhetoric (1924).

III. Aristotle's Account Of Metaphors

Aristotle opposes Isocrates' claim that metaphor is only of the domain of versification, and is not used in prose (Kirby. 1997). In the Rhetoric, Aristotle defines metaphor as:

"Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else ; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy. That from genus to species is exemplified in ' Here stands my ship ' for lying at anchor is the standing ' of a particular kind of thing. That from species to genus in Truly ten thousand good deeds has Ulysses wrought ', where ' ten thousand ', which is a particular large number, is put in place of the generic ' a large number '.(Aristotle, 1924 p. 324, 325)

Aristotle presents a detailed account of how metaphor is constructed. He names four models: the replacement of genus by species, species by genus, species by species, and concept for concept (Kirby, 1997) . Genus refers to a group of things that have something in common like a super ordinate, and species are used to refer to elements that belong to the genus like a hyponymy. Aristotle gives the example of "a ship that stands". Ships do not normally stand. They anchor. Standing is a genus that is used instead of laying anchor. Then, he exemplifies the opposite where a species is used to replace a genus. In saying "ten thousand good deeds has Ulysses wrought", what is meant is that he has wrought many good deeds and not specifically ten thousand. An imposing number of something is the genus, and ten thousand is the species because it is specific (Aristotle, 1924). Metaphor by analogy is the replacement of one concept by another. For example, when Shakespeare writes "All the world's a stage", He replaces the concept of the world with the concept of a stage (Shakespeare, 2006, 2.7). Using the concept of a stage to refer to the world opens a lot of possibilities of metaphorical constructions like referring to living as acting and highlighting the trivial aspect of life. Aristotle's description of metaphor is not entirely remote from Lakoff and Johnson's idea that conceptual metaphor consists in mapping characteristics from a source domain into a target domain (1980). Janko notes that the four ways of constructing metaphors that Aristotle names are similar to conceptual mapping (Janko, 1987). Leezenberg groups the genus for species, and species for genus substitutions under synecdoche, the species for species under metonymy , and the concept for concept analogy under metaphor (Leezenberg, 2001). Where Aristotle's conception of metaphor deviates from Lakoff and Johnson's is in his insistence that metaphor is only used for decorum and for the intensification of catharsis. For Aristotle, Metaphor is a device that sets apart the artistic use of language from the mundane use of language. Metaphor enables language to accomplish grandeur .(Aristotle, 1924). Aristotle differentiates between poetic and mundane language. He stresses that poetic language has to include metaphors and other figures of style because it has to be different from vapid everyday language. However, he notes that an overuse of linguistic ornaments is counterproductive, and could make texts recondite.

Aristotle identifies metaphor as an important carrier of thought. He names four constructions that allow the formation of metaphor. He maintains that metaphors primarily serve aesthetic purposes. He furthers that the ability to create metaphors is an intrinsic talent. Poets could not be taught how to think of metaphors. It is an inborn gift. It consists of detecting resemblance between concepts. Aristotle describes how metaphors are formed, and how they elevate the quality of artistic language (Ibid). Aristotle's more profound discussion of how metaphors carry meaning is in his De Interpretatione (Edghill, 1928). He explains how metaphors could find resemblance between words that do not resemble each other. This is achieved when a word acquires a new meaning. Metaphor operates on the basis that words have certain intrinsic properties. Yet, it takes the properties of one object and ascribes it to another object. Hence, unlike words, metaphors cannot be counted on to refer to realities. This is an important point that Aristotle makes because it explains his consideration of metaphors as artistic devices that cannot be used to formulate theories or even be used in everyday language. Metaphors are essentially subversive. They take words that correspond to known realities, and make them correspond to new concepts. Metaphors are used profusely in literature. However, philosophical texts strive to stay away from

using them (MacCormac, 1972). Apart from few philosophers who are explicitly keen on expressing their thoughts in Metaphors, like Heraclitus, it is customary not to use metaphors in philosophical texts (MacCormac, 1972). MAcCormac, however, foresees an incoming change when he writes " There has been a growing recognition that metaphor is not necessarily an illegitimate linguistic device and that it may be very useful and necessary not only for literature but for philosophy as well." (1972).

Aristotle's account of metaphor bears some resemblance with the idea of conceptual metaphor as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In his description of how metaphors are constructed, he names the exchange of one thing for another. This is evocative of what Lakoff and Johnson describe as the transfer of some of the aspects from one concept into another (Janko, 1987). What the modern understanding of metaphors would contend in Aristotle's ideas is the purely artistic use. The current appreciation of metaphors, which is largely motivated by Metaphors we Live by Lakoff and Johnson recognises metaphors to be essential to all communication, formal, informal, commonplace or artistic (1980).

The Relevance Of Aristotle To Modern Metaphor Study

There is no shortage of reasons that justify the inclusion of Aristotle in any discussion of metaphor. Although there is a tendency to castigate his conception of metaphor because of how reductive it is, it is still judicious to revisit his ideas. One voice that vehemently defends Aristotle's relevance in the study of metaphor is that of Umberto Eco who claims despite the substantial multidisciplinary work on metaphor, it remains that very little brings any novelty to the foundations that Aristotle lays in Rhetoric (Eco, 1988). Even in the case of complete disagreement with most of his postulates, it is to be conceded that Aristotle's treatment of metaphor unlocks an unprecedented interest in the phenomenon, and sets an example of how a rigorously intellectual examination of metaphors is well commendable.

In the Rhetoric, the first breakaway from what has been understood about metaphor, as we have seen above with Isocrates, is that metaphor is detectable outside the exclusivity of poetry. This is a claim that already emancipates metaphor from the tight grip of poets.

The most remarkable breakthrough that Cognitive Linguistics brings to the study of metaphor is that prior to Cognitive Linguistics, metaphor has been thought to be a phenomenon that exists within the confines of language, and then Cognitive Linguistics comes along, and identifies metaphor as a phenomenon that pertains to thought, and not merely to language. As novel as this divergence in the study of metaphors is, Aristotle's Rhetoric lays sturdy foundations for a link between metaphor and thought.

An attentive examination of Aristotle's work on metaphor would find it to be reconcilable with even Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive shift in the understanding of the phenomenon. The cognitive shift marks the complete rejection of the assumption that metaphor is a decorative ornament that only artists use to embellish their styles. Aristotle abstains from espousing the exclusively adorning assumptions about metaphor. It is one of the most striking variances between Aristotle and Isocrates in their treatments of metaphor. Aristotle does not go all the way to paint a world where metaphor is pervasively ubiquitous in people's daily communications. But he rips it from the exclusive grip of poets. There is another more important foreshadowing of Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive turn in understanding the workings of metaphor. It is the recognition of the phenomenon as a cognitive process rather than a purely linguistic one.

In his dissection of how metaphors work, Aristotle describes a process whereby nodes of meaning travel from one concept to another. This model is completely aligned with the Semiotic understanding of how signs acquire, and convey meaning (Peirce, 1991).

IV. Nietzsche's Radical Reversal

Aristotle's view that metaphors are more suited to serve aesthetic purposes, and that metaphors fail the test of truth compared to literal expressions has dominated European thought for a long time (O'Rourke, 2006). Truth is contingent on the verification of whether the literal meaning of a proposition refers to some reality in the world or not. This conception of truth renders the case of metaphors hard to defend because they do not refer to any observable state of affair in the world. Metaphors are thought to be able to convey truth only when they are replaced by their equivalents of literal expressions. Nietzsche would reverse this paradigm by arguing that language is entirely metaphorical (1873).

The rejection of metaphor's truth value is based on the consideration of metaphor as a distortion of literal meaning. It is a distortion that works well in artistic use. It is intriguing. It embellishes language. But it does not have the truth value that literal meaning has. Yet, while it is known how metaphors are constructed, literal expressions are yet to be defined. For example, it seems undisputed that the proposition "I drank water" is literal. However, it could be disputed that the knowledge which science provides is more literal. H20 could be considered more literal than water. Others might consider their beliefs about a domain to be the source of literal meaning. This poses the problem of whether to consider literal meaning the description of what is accessed through the senses, the knowledge that science provides, zealots' dearly-held beliefs or any other system

(Hinman, 1982). All these systems purport to call things what they really are in the world and to capture the literal meaning. Any expression that describes other things rather than the reality of the thing is not literal, and is metaphorical (Nietzsche, 1873). While it is contentious to decide which system provides literal meaning (observation, natural science, belief or other), it is less contentious to determine what metaphorical meaning is (Nietzsche, 1873). It is everything that exists beyond what is real. It is easier to determine what is metaphorical than to determine what is literal. For Nietzsche, a statement is literal when it faithfully describes some reality in the world. There should neither be addition nor subtraction from the referred to reality (Nietzsche, 1873). Let us concede that Nietzsche's requirements for a word to be literal are extremely constraining. A literal word must capture the entirety of what it refers to, and it must not add anything to it. Addition could come from similar concepts, cultural interference, or anything. All addition must be blocked to enable a word to literally point to its referent. These rigorous conditions for a word to be literal elucidate Nietzsche's original premise that all language is metaphorical. If there is more than one word that refers to the same reality, then at least one of these words is metaphorical regardless of how literal it seems. Nietzsche's extremely rigid conditions for the formulation of a literal expressions might seem exaggerated to the point of impossibility, and it is exactly his intent. The loose classification of what is literal results in a distortion of the notion of truth. What constitutes reality, for Nietzsche, is a collection of metaphors, approximations and mappings. Nietzsche points to the inherent incapacity of language to communicate truths (1873). He expresses how perceiving a thing, and naming it are deeply metaphorical processes:

"we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for thing, metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities. In the same way that the sound appears as a sand figure, so the mysterious X of the thing in itself first appears as a nerve stimulus, then as an image, and finally as a sound." (Nietzsche, 1873 p.3).

This brings about the incapacity to have access to things in themselves. Humans' sensory abilities are limited, and do not allow them to experience the world as it is. The very act of perception is broken down into the stimulation of the nervous system by an object, and then the creation of a mental image. This stimulation of the nervous system that translates into the creation of a mental image constitutes a metaphor. We have established that metaphor is the transfer of one concept into another. What qualifies perception as a metaphor is that perception is achievable through the transformation of nervous-system stimulation into the creation of a mental image. This is the first metaphor because the physiological process carries over to the conceptualisation of an image. Those are two different domains. The second metaphor results from naming the mental image through the transformation of a mental image into a word made of a cluster of sounds. There is another reason why perception is metaphorical. The process of perceiving, and naming confuses similarity with sameness (Hinman, 1982). When I perceive a glass today, and perceive a different glass the following day, I consider that I have perceived the same thing, a glass. I use the same word, "a glass", to name the two objects despite their differences in shape, size, colour or material. Perception classifies, and places perceived objects into these categories. The fact that the two glasses are dissimilar, and are thought of as the same thing, and named the same thing is evidence that perception, and naming are metaphorical.

The idea that the mind classifies things in categories points to a bigger issue. "Every word immediately becomes a concept" (Hinman, 1982 p.187).The word "television" is used to refer a myriad of devices that are very different from each other. Every time the word "television" is used to describe a new high-performing machine capable of transmitting images and videos, there is forgetfulness of the original device that was named "television". As technology advances, it is likely that the specificities of new televisions will move even further from the first use of the word, Nietzsche explains how the process of creating concepts from words drives us even further from the truth (1873). There are two mechanisms that come into play. First, there is the elimination of differences. we dismiss the apparent difference between objects that we name the same. Second, there is the confusion of similarity and sameness. We do not use one word to name all the objects in the world. Only those objects that are similar are called the same thing. They are similar, but they are not identical (Hinman, 1982). The elimination of differences, and the consideration of similar things as the exact same things is what allows different things to be referred to by the same word, and turns that word into a concept. Nietzsche describes the process of conceptualising as follows: "Every concept arises from the equation of unequal things." (1873 p. 3). It is clear that there is no literal meaning when we use the same word to refer to things that are different. That same word is a metaphor. The formation of concepts is even more radical with abstract ideas. With a concrete concept like "television", there is the possibility to go back to the first televisions, to compare them to other televisions and to record similarities and differences. But with abstract ideas, there is more complexity. For example, we do not know the essence of an abstract quality like "honour". We recognise certain actions as "honourable", and from those actions, we synthesise a "hidden quality" of honour (Nietzsche, 1873). We use "honour", "honourable", and to "honour" to speak about actions that are separate from each other. Again, To qualify an action as "honourable" cannot be literal. This makes all reference to abstract concepts metonymical. The process that allows naming an action as heroic, honourable, misanthropic or wicked is misleading. It takes

actions that are performed by people, detaches these actions from their performers, and grounds them in some abstract concepts whose true essences are unknown. The process is circular. It collects actions, and names them after abstract concepts, and then those concepts are only known through the actions that people perform. For example, if a mother in a poor family chooses to divide the last loaf of bread amongst her children and not take any of it herself, she is described as altruistic. A faithful description of what the mother has done should only communicate the actions the mother undertakes. Undertaking these actions and wrapping them around the abstract and independent concept of altruism functions like reversed personification. Interestingly, the concept of altruism, like all abstract concepts, is presented as independent, but at the same time is only knowable through some concrete actions observable in the world. The abstract concepts are thought of as the motivators for the undertaken action while in truth the concepts are constructed through the actions. In the poor-mother example, it would be said that because of her altruism, she has chosen to feed her children and not feed herself. Yet, her actions are what construct the idea of altruism. This creates an illusory causal relationship between abstract concepts that make people act in certain ways. Nietzsche argues humans 'hastiness to form abstract concepts from observed behaviours and actions, and to sanctify them as independent absolutes is what makes human-animals different from non-human animals (1873). Humans do not stop at the creation of these abstract concepts, they submit, and enslave themselves to them (Nietzsche, 1873). Because they are not recognised as metaphors, grand abstract concepts like honour, chivalry, compassion, and mercy are considered as realities that dictate how humans should live. Humans judge themselves, and judge each other on the touchstones of ideas that are only created by their imaginations (Nietzsche, 1873).

Nietzsche views language as indissociable from metaphor (1873). The act of perception is itself metaphorical as it consists of transforming a nerve-stimulus into a mental image. The act of naming the image is, also metaphorical. Then, every uttered word becomes a concept through a distortion that deletes differences between objects and experiences to group them under the same categories. Metaphors keep drifting away from any suspicion of literal meaning as language unfolds. The creation of abstract concepts receives extended scrutiny by Nietzsche. He uses his attack on the objectivity of language to diagnose the state the humankind that tortures itself by trying to live up to ideals which do not exist in reality, and that are only created through metaphors.

V. Derrida's Account Of Metaphor

Derrida extensively discusses metaphor throughout much of his canon. Yet, if we were to designate his most condensed writing on the phenomenon, we would find it in his book Of Grammatology (1967). He contends the idea that philosophical texts do not constitute propitious terrain for metaphor. He considers metaphor to be an essential vehicle of meaning. He describes the binary juxtaposition of literal and metaphorical meaning as illusory. For Derrida, there is no literal meaning (1967). He posits that all communication is only achievable through metaphor. To invalidate what he holds to be a fallacious distinction between purportedly pristine literal meaning and supposedly aesthetic metaphorical meaning, Derrida develops an arsenal of concepts that reshape the relationship between language and signification. Firstly, he castigates what he qualifies as the "Metaphysics of Presence" (Derrida, 1967 p.34). It is the philosophical postulate that there are objective truths in the external world, and that these autonomous entities representing truths are knowable and describable through the medium of language. The philosophical postulate engenders a number of binary relationships which are all unreal (Derrida, 1967). One of these binary oppositions is the duality of Presence and Absence. The belief in the existence of independent non-linguistic entities in the external world prompts a hierarchy where that which is present is superior to that which is absent (Novitz, 1985). That which is present is real, constant and reliable while that which is absent is unreal, erratic and unreliable. Another erroneous hierarchical duality, Derrida contends, places speech over writing based on the idea that it is more spontaneous, and is thus more reflective of immediacy (1967). A third binary juxtaposition contrasts the centre to the margin. Metaphysical Presence engenders a system whereby there is always a foundational epicentre around which are scattered marginal bits that are naturally inferior to the centre in terms of representativeness of reality. The fourth and probably the most important binary opposition is that of essence and difference. It refers to the idea that things can be known either through an immediate description of their essence or through relating them to how different they are from other things. Derrida traces this metaphysical presupposition to early Western philosophical traditions originating with the concept of the Logos. While originally in the early texts of pre-Socratic philosophers the likes of Heraclitus, Logos refers to the unwavering order that imbues the Cosmos, the concept would garner more meaning around the idea of order and stability. In Rhetoric, Aristotle uses the concept of Logos to describe the act of conveying logical meaning through speech (Aristotle, 1924). It is, for Aristotle, one of the tripartite paths of persuasion. The other two are Ethos and Pathos. While Ethos and Pathos respectively refer to persuasion on ethical grounds and persuasion through emotional appeal, Logos refers to achieving persuasion through describing some authentic reality in the world, which the mind cannot dispute, through the medium of language. It is here where Derrida finds his culprit. Aristotle's Logos which dominates

the philosophical tradition is what Derrida calls "Logocentrism", and which originates the concept of "Metaphysics of Presence" (Derrida, 1967 p.36). The fallacy, according to Derrida, that there is order and some infallible truths which that can be described through language is what generates all the binary oppositions he rues.

Derrida's alternative to language that refers to independently real objects in the external world, is the concept of "Différance" spelt with an "a" instead of the regular spelling with an "e" (1967, p.91). The morphology of Derrida's coined word packs the combination of two words "difference" and "deferral" (Wood and Bernasconi, 1988). The concept of Différance" is in complete opposition to De Saussure's signifier and signified. De Saussure proposes that the sign is a signifier which refers to a signified, a clear stable object in the world, and that the signifier conjures the mental image of that object in the mind of the hearer (De Saussure, 1916). Derrida rejects the entirety of this system. He contends that the sign does not designate an object. The sign designates a relationship of difference and deferral with other signs, and this is what constitutes the concept of "Différance". For example, the word "carrot" manages to designate a distinct type of vegetable by virtue of how different it is from other types of vegetables. What allows "carrot" to signify is the difference it bears with other vegetables like potato, cucumber or the likes. Language does not point to objects in the world. Instead, it functions through a mesh of interconnected signs. This prompts important entailments. Based on the concept of "Différance", meaning is constantly flowing. It is not fixed. Additionally, it accounts for the evolving nature of language. Language is not a finished product. It is continuously moving and changing. Meaning is not something one captures. It is forever delayed. Furthermore, when signification happens through the relationships between different signifiers, crude oppositions disappear. Instead of opposition, there is comparison and interconnectedness. Presence is replaced by deferral. This description of meaning already opens the door for ongoing re-conceptualisation, and metaphor is an effective tool to achieve that. It deranges the illusory conceptualisation of meaning as being stable. While many of Derrida's ideas seem to offer a solid account of how language is never a finished product, the rejection of the existence of any literal meaning might seem problematic. We can argue that the word "carrot" gains meaning by virtue of its relationships to other signs, but ultimately people do use the word to designate a particular type of vegetable in a particular colour and shape. Derrida responds that when a sign refers to an object, it is because the language-user intervenes in the workings of signification, hijacks the sign, and forces it to refer to an object. The process unnaturally circumscribes the sign, and brands the manoeuvre "literal meaning". Incidentally, limiting a sign's free-flowing mesh of meaning constitutes a metaphor. Thus, every time a sign is forced to halt the way it floats in an orbit of meanings supplied by Différance vis-à-vis other signs, it becomes metaphorical. Derrida accepts that language is utilised to refer to objects in the world, but he contends that this usage of language is abberational. While this violence which is exerted on words facilitates communication, it is extremely reductive of the more fascinating nature of language described by Derrida as free-roaming meaning (1967).

VI. Conclusion

Philosophy's interest in Metaphor is traceable to the pre-Socratic philosopher Isocrates. His benchmark of what constitutes metaphorical language is extremely restrictive, designating as metaphor only those new subversive images that exist exclusively within poetry (Kirby, 1997). Subsequent to Isocrates comes Aristotle who in Rhetoric details an exhaustive account of what qualifies as metaphor, and the function it serves. The analysis of Aristotle's pronouncements reveal how anticipatory they are of more recent theories within Linguistics and particularly Cognitive Linguistics. While it is easy to note the differences between Aristotle's account of metaphor, and the prominent shift prompted by Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed in their seminal work Metaphors We Live By, a careful examination of Aristotle's ideas goes on to show that they are not completely at odds. Amongst the philosophers whose theories on metaphor are impossible to overlook is Nietzsche. He considers all language to be metaphorical. His ideas on metaphor align with his ontology, the human nature and morals. His philosophical treatment of language in general and metaphor in particular goes into how it constructs reality. Derrida represents an iconic figure in Post-Structuralism. He erects a system of Deconstruction where language does not refer to any non-linguistic realities (Novitz, 1985). Similar to Nietzsche's, Derrida's conceptualisation of language rejects the existence of any literal meaning (Derrida, 1967). Under such a disposition, when used to designate objects in the world, language is purely metaphorical.

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