

Lakoff and Johnson's theory of conceptual metaphor has created a vast and diversified research program in cognitive linguistics, to the extent that one can use terms such as *source domain*, *target domain*, and *transfer* without having to define them. Indeed, conceptual metaphor has been invoked to account for linguistic phenomena in every aspect of grammar: lexicon, sentence, grounding devices such as tense and aspect, construction, as well as discourse. In this presentation, however, we open up a new area of research for conceptual metaphor: Chinese radicals.

A Chinese radical is part of a Chinese written character. The word 明, 'bright', for instance, is made up of two radicals. The one on the left refers to the sun and the one on the right refers to the moon. A radical was originally a pictorial representation of the thing it represents. The radical for the sun, 日, for instance, comes from the picture of its referent (?). This constitutes the first step in the metaphorical /metonymic process of word formation. The next step is for a radical to carry the meaning to other words. Hence 日 'sun' plus 月 'moon' becomes 明 'bright', whereby the domain of celestial objects is projected onto the domain of visual sensation to electromagnetic radiation. The third step moves the word towards polysemy: if 明 means brightness, something under the bright light is easy to see, hence obvious. So the duplication of 明, 明明 means *obvious(ly)*. There is a fourth step: 明 is further combined with other words to form new compound words. 明智 is one of them, meaning *wise*. We will use 日 as an example in our presentation and demonstrate how metaphor serves as the driving force behind the series of semantic extension in the Chinese lexicon.

The received doctrine in Chinese morphology is that the Chinese morpheme is the character, such as 明. Defined as the smallest unit of meaning, a morpheme is indivisible to smaller units. We surmise that this doctrine is the major reason why the Chinese radical has suffered decades of silent treatment. Our presentation is the first study in this area, and we are hoping that it leads to further research in the study of Chinese morphology and lexicon within the theoretical framework of conceptual metaphor.