LITERATURE, METAPHOR, AND THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNER

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For Miwako, my wife

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Introduction

1.1   Reading a poem

Sometime around 1988, two literary experts agreed to sit down and read a poem by Gerald Manley Hopkins that they had never read before. Not only did they read it, they also wrote down their thoughts as they progressed through the poem line by line. The poem was 'Inversnaid', and this is how it begins:

> This darksome burn, horseback brown,
> His rollrock highroad roaring down

Sometimes, the experts' notes record comprehension problems. For example, one of them wonders whether 'His' in line 2 refers back to 'burn' in line 1. They also notice figurative language in many places and ponder ways of interpreting this. They both notice a metaphor in line 1, for example, and wonder why the poem makes this comparison between a burn and a horseback: Does this metaphor suggest speed, or does it suggest the smoothness of a horse's back, and does the horse's dark, brown colour possibly suggest death? As the experts get close to the end of the poem, they respond in an increasingly evaluative manner. One of them feels that the writing is becoming 'a bit loose' and the other exclaims 'Oh boy!' in apparent dismay at the way things are unfolding. The complete narrative of these experts' voyage through the poem is recorded for posterity in Short and van Peer (1989).

   Short and van Peer's literary expertise is reflected in the high quality of their commentary on 'Inversnaid'. At the same time, their reading notes are also a record of the normal kinds of response that a literary text is supposed to evoke: Careful reading is necessary to comprehend

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the text, figurative language is noticed and frequently interpreted in considerable detail, and evaluation takes place. These responses also come up again and again in arguments for work with literature. Some argue that students can develop their interpretative and critical thinking skills by reading literature, while others emphasize evaluation and the idea that the literary reading experience can be powerful and of great personal value. Arguments of the former kind are closely associated with stylistics, while value-related arguments are more frequently found in publications inspired by the reader-response school of thought. In L2 teaching, these arguments are also placed in a broader context and related to language learning or motivation. For example, it is argued that L2 readers will be motivated to read literature because of its value and its power to move people.

The arguments are often sophisticated and persuasive, but language teachers may well have their doubts. Will the teenagers in their classes be able to make any sense at all of poems written in a foreign language? Even if they understand that a poem contains a comparison between a burn and a horse, will they care either way whether this conveys a sense of speed or an impression of smoothness? Will they value the reading experience, or will they just sigh and exclaim 'Oh boy!' whenever the teacher trots out a poem for their benefit? I have used literature in my own EFL classes since the beginning of my teaching career at a Dutch secondary school, where literature was a required subject, and I have certainly faced questions of this nature on more than one occasion.

The importance of theoretical arguments for work with literature is undeniable, but theory alone is not enough. Theory-based assertions need to be investigated to establish whether they have any basis in reality: Does work with literature really help students to become better interpreters? Do they really value reading and responding to literary texts and if so, why do they do this? Calls for research of this nature are often heard (see Hall, 2005; Maley, 2001; Paran, 2006b), but rarely heeded. The main purpose of the present book is to begin to fill this regrettable research gap by trying to find answers to basic questions like the above in one particular context, and by showing how research of this nature can be used to inform teaching theory and practice. In the process, I hope that it will also serve as a stimulus for much-needed further research.

1.2   Literature and literary theory

One unfortunate byproduct of writing about literature is that literature has to be defined at some point, and this can result in lengthy

and involved discussions. Literary theory is mainly to blame for this: Eagleton (1996), in particular, spends a happy time demolishing other people's attempts to define and delimit literature in a way that is 'eternally given and immutable' (p. 9). For example, he points out that literature inevitably changes over time as once-acclaimed writers quietly disappear from the literary canon because nobody cares to write about them any longer. He also shows that no single quality of literary writing adequately manages to define it either. Literature may often be fictional, for example, but not all of it is (biographies and essays, for instance), and many fictional texts are by no means literary. Problems aside, Eagleton is happy to accept at least one thing about literature: It is 'a highly valued kind of writing' (p. 9).

The idea that literature is valued writing will also be adopted in this book, but it immediately raises an obvious question: How does literature get its value? A considerable variety of answers can be found in the writings of literary theoreticians, but in publications on literature in foreign language teaching, two answers are common. One answer, it might be said, emphasizes signification, while the other is more concerned with personal significance. Stylistics is closely associated with signification or the idea that literature derives its value from a symbolic interpretation of the carefully crafted patterns of words in a text. Reader response is more likely to emphasize the personal significance that may be discovered in the course of a responsive reading of the words in the text.

The role of interpretation is one thing that these two pedagogical approaches to literature appear to disagree about most. Stylistically oriented practitioners like Widdowson (1986) view interpretation as central to the value of literature. Lyric poetry illustrates this point particularly well because, as Widdowson points out, the propositional content of these poems is often so banal: 'I sit by the sea and feel miserable. I listen to the nightingale and reflect on mortality' (p. 133). However, a close attention to the associative overtones of the words in these poems will often reveal a deeper symbolic or metaphorical significance. When readers manage to interpret a poem in this kind of way, they will be able to overcome their initial 'So what?' (Widdowson, p. 133) response to the poem's apparently trivial propositional content. In contrast, reader-response proponents tend to be rather negative about interpretation. According to this view, an intellectual emphasis on form and interpretation is likely to stand in the way of other responses that a whole person may aspire to—notably responses of an affective kind. Indeed, Miall (2006) suggests that the neglect of affective responses in literature

teaching may well be causing readers to turn away from both literature and literary study: 'In our classrooms we may too persistently have called on readers to marginalize their personal experience of literary texts in order to participate in the game of interpretation' (p. 24). This does not mean that reader response necessarily rules out interpretation. Rosenblatt (1994) accepts this as a valid response but also sees it as one that should not be engaged in until the reader has had the opportunity to savour the reading experience itself, the 'web of feelings, images and ideas' (p. 137) that readers draw out from the web of words in the text.

It is important to be aware of the distinction between stylistics and reader response because it provides a basis for understanding substantially different teaching practices in work with literature. At the same time it is also important not to exaggerate the differences. The words on the page of the literary text remain essential in both approaches—either as the starting point for interpretative work or as the trigger for an affective, evaluative response. Because of this, it also becomes possible to relate both of them to an old and venerable literary theory: Foregrounding theory. Details of this theory will be discussed in the following chapter, but the basic idea is this: Literary texts use words in unusual ways, and this foregrounds the wording. Readers are slowed down as they pay attention to the foregrounded words, and this gives them an opportunity to think about their meaning and to respond to them in an affective manner. Short and van Peer's (1989) responses to 'Inversnaid' illustrate this nicely (see above). The unusual wording of the poem's first line draws their attention and makes them think about the possible meanings of 'This darksome burn, horseback brown', and as they make their way through the poem, their responses become increasingly evaluative.

Although foregrounding is an old theory, its influence remains strong. In fact, recent theoretical work has revitalized foregrounding by bringing it up to date and relating it to developments in linguistics, especially cognitive linguistics. Cook (1994) and Semino (1997) have been at the forefront of this development by showing how foregrounding theory can be understood and reformulated with reference to schema theory. In this reformulation, foregrounding is said to have a 'schema refreshing' effect on our thoughts and feelings—it can, in small or large ways, change the way we think and feel. One nice thing about this work is that its importance is recognized by stylisticians and reader-response advocates alike. Stockwell (2002) devotes a chapter to it in his stylistically oriented book on cognitive poetics, and Miall (2006) does the same in his recent book on empirical research of literature within the

reader-response paradigm. Thus, foregrounding and its recent cognitive offshoots appear to provide an excellent basis for theory and research that is relevant to both approaches to literature.

1.3   Literature and empirical research

Frustration with literary theory has been a major driving force behind the emergence of the empirical study of literature. Literary theory, it is felt, has given rise to endless numbers of texts about how readers may be supposed to arrive at their responses to literature, but it has majestically kept its distance from the hands-on research effort that would be necessary to support the armchair theory. Initially, it took courage to take on this firmly embedded discipline, but empirical poetics is now well established as a discipline in its own right, and it has the scholarly societies (notably IGEL) and journals (such as *Poetics*) to show for this. Steen (2003) offers an informed and thought-provoking history of the discipline and of IGEL's development since its first conference in 1987.

While literary theory is often criticized by empirical researchers, it remains important as a source of ideas for research. Foregrounding is one literary theory that has provided the theoretical basis for a large number of important studies. In some cases, foregrounding is the sole basis for a research project (van Peer, 1986, for example). Other studies are of a comparative nature. As Hanauer (2001c) puts it, these studies tend to compare the 'language-driven' (p. 108) theory of foregrounding with 'genre theory' (p. 106), that is, the view that our responses to literature are largely determined by the way in which education and society have trained us to respond to it. Many of these studies will be discussed in the following chapter.

With very few exceptions, empirical studies of literature have used native speakers as subjects for research. In some cases when L2 subjects have been used, the researchers have simply treated them as expert readers, ignoring L2 language skill as a potentially relevant research factor (Goodblatt, 2001, for example). Fortunately, the number of studies on L2 reading of literature continues to grow, but major gaps remain. Thus, little is known about whether foregrounding also works as a theory of literary response for L2 readers of literature: Does foregrounding also slow down the reading of L2 readers, guide their interpretations, and give rise to affective responses among them? The discussion of research in later chapters of the book is centrally concerned with these questions.

My own research has mainly investigated L2 readers' responses to metaphor in literature. In addition to allowing for a focused discussion, the book's highlighting of metaphor has at least two advantages. First, as Steen and Gibbs (2004) put it recently, foregrounding is 'pre-eminently represented by metaphor' (p. 341). Other things are involved too, of course, notably foregrounded patterns of language (rhyme, alliteration), but one thing should be clear: Foregrounding theory would be in serious trouble if its predictions turn out not to work in the case of metaphor. Thus, research on metaphor in literature is a central aspect of research on foregrounding in literature. The second advantage is that there is a massive body of research on metaphor and metaphor processing to refer to. This is often research with L1 subjects, but metaphor has been gaining an increasing amount of attention in L2 research. Thus, the focus on metaphor makes it possible to make broad connections with these developments in psycholinguistics and applied linguistics. This would be much less the case with research on foregrounded patterns of language, for example. This being said, the book certainly aims to provide a thorough coverage of work on foregrounding in general. Chapter 2 covers this work in considerable detail in order to provide background for the remaining chapters, which are mainly concerned with metaphor.

1.4   Background to the research

Specifics regarding the background to individual studies will be provided as the need arises in later chapters, but general comments on the materials and on the students involved in the studies are worth making at this point. With regard to the materials, it is necessary to explain and motivate my selections of texts. This is mainly related to validity: When conducting research on responses to literature, it is necessary to select texts that have a valid claim to a literary status. In other words, the texts have to be demonstrably valued as literature. Two of my selections pass this test with flying colours: These are poems by Robert Frost that have been widely commented on by literary specialists. However, the two very short stories that I used are less canonical: 'Carpathia' (1996) by Jesse Lee Kercheval, and 'Night' (1992) by Bret Lott. Nevertheless, a reasonable case can be made for choosing them. First, it is reasonable to claim a literary status for the writers of these stories because both Kercheval and Lott are published novelists. Secondly, the stories themselves have a degree of literary status that derives from the fact that literary experts selected them for inclusion in anthologies: The stories

were taken from two anthologies of very short stories that were put together by university teachers of English. The editors of one of these anthologies even used evaluation ratings in the story-selection process: Students and 'literary friends' (Thomas, 1992, p. 12) were asked to evaluate the stories on a 10-point scale for this purpose. Finally, stories from one of these collections have also been used in other empirical research on literary reading (Kurtz & Schober, 2001).

While validity was an essential issue in the selection process, practical considerations also played an important role. The texts had to be short to ensure that the studies would not take up too much time. The linguistic challenges posed by the texts had to be considered because I needed texts that my students would be able to read without consulting their dictionaries: In some cases, dictionaries could have helped them to interpret metaphors in the texts, and I wanted to ensure that this did not become a factor in my research. Finally, because of my focus on metaphor in literature, metaphor itself played a significant role in the selections. All texts arguably end with important metaphors that I could focus on in my studies.

It is also necessary to say something about the students involved in the studies. I worked with students in classes that I was teaching, and this limits the generalizability of the findings. First, this is limited by the fact that the students were in so-called 'intact' groups—that is, in classes that they had been placed in—because the composition of such groups may not be fully random. Secondly, there are demographic limitations with regard to age, gender, nationality, and English proficiency: I teach female Japanese students in their late teens and early twenties at a liberal arts college with a well-established reputation for the quality of its English programme. These demographic limitations have to be recognized from the outset. At the same time, it is also important to emphasize that my discussion still remains rooted in the experiences of real readers. As a result, it certainly serves as a 'reality check' on literary theory with its abstract claims about how 'the reader' is supposed to respond in the course of her or his encounters with literary texts.

1.5   Organization of the book

Before discussing the details, it is worth drawing attention to an organizational pattern that recurs in the book. This is related to different stages in the processing of literature and metaphor in literature: comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. These stages can be seen in foregrounding theory: Foregrounded language is supposed to slow down

comprehension and to make readers think about how to interpret it and evaluate it personally. It helps to clarify the discussion if these stages are considered separately. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 do this with their respective discussions of research in the areas of metaphor comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. The second half of Chapter 2 also uses this pattern by covering research relevant to the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of literature in separate sub-sections, and the pattern is used in a similar way in the second half of Chapter 3.

Chapter 2 sets the stage for the remainder of the book by introducing the main arguments for work with literature in the L2 classroom. It attempts to do this in a way that distinguishes arguments that are specifically concerned with literature from arguments of a more general kind that also apply to literature. Reading-skills development is an example of the latter kind of argument: It can reasonably be claimed that L2 students develop their reading skills by reading literature, but this argument does not apply exclusively to literature; reading skills will also be developed if students read non-literary texts. The second half of the chapter covers research related to the various arguments for work with literature. As stated above, this discussion is divided into sub-sections on the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of literature.

Chapters 3 to 6 are concerned with metaphor theory and research. Chapter 3 covers theory. The first half of the chapter is a general discussion of linguistic metaphor (the metaphors that we actually encounter in discourse) and of conceptual metaphors such as Time Is Money, which are thought to motivate the linguistic metaphors that we use when we talk about time (*spend time, invest time*, etc.). The second half of the chapter covers related theoretical work on metaphor in literature. This discussion follows the comprehension-interpretation-evaluation pattern, and among other things it discusses Cook's (1994) and Semino's (1997) work on foregrounding as 'schema refreshment' (see above).

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are all concerned with metaphor research in the areas of comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. Each chapter begins with a general discussion of research on one of these stages in metaphor processing and of the various psycholinguistic theories that provide the underpinnings for the research. Research related to the processing of metaphor in literature is covered next, and against this background, the chapters conclude with a discussion of my own studies in this area. With certain qualifications, these studies show that L2 learners process metaphor in literature in a way that conforms with the predictions of foregrounding theory. In the process, they also provide support for both the stylistics and the reader-response approach to work

with literature. On the one hand, they show that interpretation plays a role in L2 students' evaluations of literature, and they also show that metaphor awareness-raising can help students to develop their interpretative skills. On the other hand, they show that interpretation does not necessarily play a positive role in L2 students' evaluations of literature, and that it is certainly not the only thing that they find valuable when they respond to literary texts. Some of the studies in Chapters 5 and 6 also investigate certain kinds of intervention that may be used in the actual teaching of literature in L2 contexts and how this intervention (notably metaphor awareness-raising) affects interpretation and evaluation.

Finally, Chapter 7 returns to the general topic of literature in L2 language teaching with a discussion that centers on figurative language. It is increasingly recognized that figurative language competence is essential as a component of L2 communicative competence and that L2 curricula, methodology, and materials need to reflect this. Work on metaphor in literature is one way of ensuring that this happens, but it is neither the only way of doing this nor the only thing that needs to be done to ensure that figurative language gets adequate attention. In other words, work on metaphor in literature needs to be considered from the broader perspective of work on figurative language in L2 teaching. Chapter 7 attempts to do this in a discussion that covers curricular, methodological, and materials-related aspects of this topic in three separate sections.

1.6 Writing a book about literature for an audience of L2 teachers

By now it should be abundantly clear that this book has been written primarily for (prospective) L2 teachers who are keen to include work with literature in their language teaching classrooms. My approach to writing a book for this kind of audience was influenced by a valuable observation in Minkoff (2006). Minkoff wanted to use literature in class but when he was preparing to do this, he found that the background reading was often difficult to get through because 'so much of it is dry, and even more of it is undecipherable—to a neophyte at any rate' (p. 46). I do not know how many L2 teachers share Minkoff's experience, but I certainly recognize where his comment comes from. In the course of my own reading about literature and metaphor, the going has been tough on numerous occasions. With these experiences in mind, I have tried to produce a book that does not depend on expert knowledge of literary

theory or metaphor theory. Even so, the going may still be tough in places, but throughout the book I have done my utmost to explain things in a way that non-experts will not find too difficult to follow.

Given the book's subject matter, its readership is also likely to include experts in the areas of literature, of literature in language teaching, and of metaphor theory and research. Although the book was not primarily written for such readers, I hope that they will find that I have not misrepresented theory- and research-related issues in the course of my quest for clarity. Inevitably, I also hope that the book includes insights that will contribute to these areas of expertise.

1.7   A note on the language

The book makes a relatively sparing use of acronyms. When I refer to (the teaching of) students who are learning a language other than their native one, I often write 'L2' for shorthand. The book is mainly about work with literature in L2 teaching, and it is useful to have an acronym for this: I use 'WWL' for this purpose in the chapters that follow. Finally, I often discuss aspects of conceptual metaphor theory from Chapter 3 onwards, and it is convenient to refer to 'CMs' and to 'CM theory' in these discussions.

In the early days of CM theory, it was graphologically conventional to use small capitals for CMs so that they would look like this: TIME IS MONEY and LIFE IS A JOURNEY. Visually, this seems equivalent to shouting, and for this reason I have adopted the format for CMs that is used in Lakoff and Johnson (1999): Time Is Money and Life Is A Journey. However, it will still be necessary to use the earlier convention when I quote authors who adhere to it.

There is a comparatively moderate use of the personal pronoun *I* throughout the book. This is not motivated by a desire to make the writing seem objective and scientific; I simply find it a bit embarrassing to refer to myself unless it seems necessary. Readers who dislike endnotes, finally, will be happy to see that there are no endnotes in the book.

2
Literature in L2 Teaching

2.1 Introduction

Edmondson (1997) is frequently cited for his critical views on work with literature (henceforth WWL). One of his points is that there has been a tendency to extend the meaning of literature 'ad infinitum' (Edmondson, p. 45) so that it has come to cover all kinds of written language, ranging from cartoons to song lyrics. This trivializes the discussion because after a certain point the arguments for WWL become almost indistinguishable from arguments for work on written language in L2 teaching. Thus, for the argument to remain meaningful, Edmondson insists that it is necessary to maintain a focus on literature proper—on 'written texts which have a certain aesthetic value and some perceived status in the culture of which they are artefacts' (p. 45). This is in line with the view of literature discussed in Chapter 1.

Edmondson's point is a valid one. If one fails to distinguish literature from popular fiction, jokes, pop song lyrics, and so on, it becomes difficult to claim that one is presenting an argument for WWL. In response to this point, an attempt has been made to distinguish two groups of arguments in the present chapter: Arguments that also apply to literature, and arguments that apply specifically to literature. Arguments of the latter kind were already touched upon in the discussion of stylistics and reader response in Chapter 1. However, it is important to note that even though two groups of arguments are distinguished, both groups are important. Even in the cases when a given argument also applies to other genres, there are often reasons for saying that it applies particularly well to literature or, more broadly in some cases, to fictional writing.

The first half of the chapter covers the theoretical arguments for WWL while the second half focuses on empirical research relevant to this

theory. This part is divided into three sections: Research relevant to the online comprehension of literature, and research that is concerned with the leisurely processing of a text in the form of an interpretation or of an affective, evaluative response.

2.2   Arguments that also apply to literature

Broadly speaking, discussions of WWL are informed by literary theory on the one hand and language teaching theory on the other. The arguments discussed in the present section mainly derive from the latter. From the language teaching point of view, WWL is thought to be valuable because literary texts are authentic, motivating, and a 'stimulus for language acquisition' (Lazar, 1993, pp. 14–15). It also provides exposure to linguistic creativity and opportunities for developing intercultural understanding.

2.2.1   Literary texts are authentic

Authenticity is considered to be a virtue in communicative language teaching. This preference for authentic language in the classroom is normally explained as a reaction to the contrived examples used in EFL texts in the pre-communicative era 'when the emphasis was on grammatical form at the expense of meaning and context' (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 195). However, authenticity can be understood in at least two ways: authenticity as a quality of a text, and authenticity as an experience. Literature can be authentic in both senses, but the learners' L2 proficiency is likely to play a role in determining whether literary texts can be experienced in something like an authentic manner.

In the first sense of authenticity, authentic texts are ones that have been produced in the normal course of language use in a given language community rather than 'contrived' for the purposes of language teaching. Literary texts can certainly be called authentic in this sense, and this is often used as an argument for WWL. For example, as Collie and Slater (1987) put it, literature is 'not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language' (p. 3) and it therefore requires students to 'cope with language intended for native speakers' (p. 4). Clearly, however, the argument does not apply exclusively to literature: Popular fiction is equally authentic under this definition of authenticity, and so are news reports, advertisements, and any number of other genres.

Although some people see textual authenticity as a virtue in itself, Widdowson (1998) argues for caution. Truly authentic texts may well

confuse learners because by the time these texts arrive in the classroom, they will have been stripped of the original contexts that gave them their contextual meaning. Widdowson humorously illustrates the point by asking his readers to imagine a typical, authentic English break-fast table conversation that takes the form of 'inarticulate grunts and yawns and occasional elliptical fragments of utterance' (p. 708). In the classroom, this conversation would probably make little sense because the students would not know the relevant features of its context and the people involved in it. In effect, they would be eavesdropping on the conversation, and as any eavesdropper knows, this can be a puzzling experience. However, one of the nice things about fiction, including literary fiction, is that it is written in a way that, in a sense, takes the needs of the eavesdropper into account. In fiction, as Widdowson (1975) puts it, 'the situation in which the interaction takes place has to be created. The facts about the participants and about the setting in which they interact have to be included within the discourse itself' (p. 67). For example, what would be an inarticulate grunt in a recorded breakfast conversation could be contextualized as follows in fiction: 'John grunted with approval as he surveyed the delicious breakfast buffet that his hosts had laid on.' Against this background, authentic fictional texts may be better for classroom use than authentic texts from some other genres.

An alternative view of authenticity is to treat it not as a textual property but as an experience. Even if a text is not authentic in the earlier sense, it may still give language learners an authentic experi-ence of communication in a foreign language. As Davies (1984) puts it, 'everything the learner understands is authentic for him' (p. 192). As a result, teaching materials are often designed to be authentic in this way: They are written to communicate with the learner but may use a restricted vocabulary and other restrictions on language in order to do this. Depending on the learners' level of proficiency, authentic texts in the first sense of authenticity may also be able to offer them this kind of authentic experience. Children's literature is one genre that may be particularly suitable for this purpose. This point will be discussed below in the section about children's literature and intercultural under-standing.

One interesting question is whether it is possible to create teaching materials that offer learners not only an authentic experience but also an authentic literary experience. This question arises with graded readers in particular, and opinions are divided about whether these 'simplified' texts can be experienced in a literary way. Some of the research presented in later chapters is relevant to this question, and against this background,

a full discussion of graded readers will be postponed until the final chapter of the book.

2.2.2   Literary texts are motivating

Motivation is a key factor in learning, and language teaching materials are among the factors that can affect motivation in a positive or negative way. Dörnyei (2001) suggests that materials will be motivating to the extent that they are related to the students' 'needs, goals and interests' (p. 66) and to their 'everyday experiences and backgrounds' (p. 66). Literature is arguably motivating in this sense because students should be able to relate the 'fundamental human issues' (Collie & Slater, 1987, p. 3) that literature deals with to their own lives and experiences. Well-written stories of any kind may motivate students to keep on reading for other reasons—because of the 'suspense of unravelling the plot' (Lazar, 1993, p. 15), for example. Thus, both literature and popular fiction genres such as thrillers possess qualities that have the potential to make them highly motivating as teaching materials.

Literature and popular fiction may both be motivating, but there is one aspect of this motivation that may be unique to literature. This concerns the style of writing. The stylistic quality of the writing may engage learners and contribute to their motivation to read literary texts, and for this reason, style is often mentioned as a potentially motivating factor. Thus, in their discussion of graded readers, Day and Bamford (1998) emphasize that 'the elusive quality of good writing' (p. 67) is essential to ensure the engagement of learners. Similarly, Lazar (1993) refers to 'fresh, unexpected uses of language' (p. 15) as one of the motivating qualities of literary materials. This idea is clearly related to foregrounding theory and the view that foregrounded language plays a key role in giving literature its value. It is discussed in greater detail in later sections of the present chapter.

2.2.3   Literature makes learners focus on the form of the language

In second language acquisition research, it is widely accepted that a certain degree of focus on linguistic form is necessary for the successful acquisition of a language (see Doughty & Williams, 1998; for a dissenting voice, see Krashen, 2004). In discussions of WWL, an argument related to this idea can be found. The argument is that literary writing requires readers to pay much closer attention to the language than they need to do with most other writing. This is related to background knowledge. When we read news reports, for example, we can often bring a lot of accumulated knowledge about a developing news event to the

text and this allows for efficient processing. We do not need to read everything carefully to know what is going on. In contrast, when we read a story, we do not have this necessary background and this requires us to pay close attention to the text. As Widdowson (1983) puts it, 'you don't know how significant a particular comment is yet. So you have to read on' (p. 30). This is another intuitively appealing argument for WWL although, as Widdowson recognizes himself, it does not apply exclusively to literature. For example, when we read a thriller we also need to pay close attention to keep up with what is happening and this heightened focus on form is equally likely to lead to concomitant language learning benefits. Research by Zwaan (1993) provides empirical support for the idea that fiction requires a heightened focus on form, and this will be discussed later in the chapter.

2.2.4 Literature helps learners to handle linguistic creativity

One comparatively recent language-based argument for WWL centres on linguistic creativity. Linguistic creativity was once considered a hallmark of literary language, but it is now widely recognized that creativity is everywhere—in advertising, in newspaper headlines, in political rhetoric, and in everyday conversation. Indeed, Carter's (2004) recent survey of creativity in conversational discourse leads him to the conclusion that 'creative language is not a capacity of special people but a special capacity of all people' (p. 215). The pervasiveness of creativity also suggests that it deserves to get more attention in language teaching. Cook (2000) is particularly scathing about language teaching practices that fail to recognize the importance of language play.

It is still unclear how this growing recognition of the importance of linguistic creativity will affect L2 teaching practice, but at the very least it suggests that creative discourse should be treated as a factor in course and curriculum design. In reflection of this, McCarthy and Carter (1994) argue for a 'continuum principle' (pp. 166–167) in the selection of materials so that students will experience a range of literary and non-literary texts, and Cook (2000) expresses a similar view. Canonical literary texts belong in this continuum, but so do other creative genres such as advertisements, songs, and jokes.

Littlemore and Low (2006b) develop the creativity argument with a specific focus on metaphor and also, to a lesser degree, metonymy. Broadly speaking, they propose that figurative language competence is an essential component of communicative competence and that, by extension, language teaching needs to include work that will help learners to develop their ability to make sense of L2 figurative language.

This work will be discussed in the final chapter of the book and related to the value of work on metaphor in literature as a means of helping learners to improve their figurative language competence. Other recent publications on creativity such as Hall (2001) and Pope (2005) provide further evidence that creativity is firmly on the agenda. Metaphor, clearly, is an essential item on this agenda.

2.2.5   (Children's) literature contributes to intercultural understanding

Language and culture are inseparable, and this makes culture an essential concern in L2 teaching and learning. Languages both reflect cultures and help to construct and develop them, and this means that L2 learners are inevitably exposed to culture in the form of habits, values, norms of politeness, and so on, in the process of language learning. Teachers need to help their students to negotiate their encounters with a new culture, and it is often suggested that literary and other fictional materials are valuable for this purpose. For example, Sell (2002b) argues that classroom work with an L2 teenage novel allows teachers 'virtually to import the target culture and to create a target-culture community' (p. 285).

   Various views on the relationship between literature and culture can be found. Some see it as an essentially reflective relationship. Valdes (1986), for example, writes about 'the parsing of a literary work for its cultural content' (p. 141) and suggests that the texts can be used directly to exemplify culture. Thus, Huck Finn can be treated as a simple exemplification of the American 'reverence for independence' (Valdes, p. 140). Others take a more interactive position, seeing culture as an ongoing activity. In this view, cultural identity is not a constant but something that is 'continually constructed and negotiated through language' (Hall, 2005, p. 68). Inevitably, writers also participate in this construction and negotiation. Thus, it can be argued that Huck Finn does not simply exemplify American cultural values but he also raises questions about them with his rejection of Aunt Sally's attempts to 'sivilize' him.

   Although the relationship between literature and culture is not an easy one, certain genres may nevertheless be particularly valuable for work on intercultural understanding. Sell (2002a, b) argues that literature written for children and young readers is one such genre. In childhood, L1 readers have much to learn about the culture they were born into and children's literature helps them to do this. Sell (2002a) suggests that it is as if 'children's writers ... wanted to *welcome* children into human society' (p. 12). The writers do not make excessive assumptions about

children's background knowledge, but at the same time, they make sure to provide learning opportunities—opportunities for putting 'two and two together, working from the familiar to the unfamiliar' (Sell, 2002b, p. 284) and developing background knowledge in the process of reading. Clearly, this quality of children's literature also makes it highly suitable for L2 learners.

While Sell presents a strong argument for work with children's literature, this argument does not depend on the specifically *literary* qualities of these texts. He does not, for example, suggest that L2 learners should focus on patterns of figurative language in the texts in order to arrive at symbolic interpretations of these texts. This is the kind of argument for WWL that will be discussed in the next section. Arguments that approach literature and culture from a specifically literary perspective will also be discussed there.

2.3   Arguments that are specific to literature

While the arguments for WWL in the preceding section mainly have their origins in applied linguistics and second language acquisition research, the arguments covered in the present section have been heavily influenced by literary theory. Because these arguments are all arguably indebted to the formalist theory of foregrounding, the present section begins with a brief discussion of this theory.

2.3.1   Background to the arguments: Foregrounding

Foregrounding theory has its origins in the work of the Russian formalists, who focused on literary form and the function of creative literary language in the process of developing a theory of literature. In a frequently cited essay, Shklovsky (1965/1988) takes ideas about human perception as the starting point for this theory. The idea is that human perception inevitably becomes habitual and automatic. For example, when we use a foreign language outside the classroom for the first time, it is a memorable experience, but once we get into the habit of doing this, the experience no longer leaves an impression. Poetic language serves the function of short-circuiting this kind of process because it impedes our habitual, automatic ways of processing things and defamiliarizes them by doing so. Figurative, poetic language in the form of patterning (rhyme, alliteration, etc.) and of semantic deviation (metaphor, metonym, etc.) slows down normal processing and this gives us the opportunity to pay attention and perceive things with freshness

again. As Shklovsky famously put it, the experience makes 'the stone *stony*' (p. 20) again, and we are likely to value this refreshing perception.

Foregrounding theory is not just concerned with the value of the literary reading experience, but also with the interpretation of literature. Poetic, creative language may be ubiquitous in everyday discourse, but Mukařovský (1932/1964) suggests that the creative language in literature will tend to be consistently and systematically patterned. These patterns draw attention to or 'foreground' particular meaning relationships in the text. For example, 'any conspicuous similarity in sound is evaluated in respect to similarity and/or dissimilarity in meaning' (Jakobson, 1960/1988). Thus, in addition to giving the literary experience its value, foregrounding also provides important clues for the interpretation of literary texts.

Although various aspects of foregrounding theory have been criticized in literary theory (see Erlich, 1969, and Cook, 1994), the influence of the theory's ideas on habitualization of processing, interpretation, and literary value remains strong in the arguments for WWL and also in empirical studies of literature. The following discussion of foregrounding-related arguments for WWL begins with stylistics, which emphasizes the interpretative aspects of the theory.

2.3.2   Stylistics

The term stylistics covers a diversity of practices. In one core sense, it is an approach to literary criticism and interpretation that has its roots in the formalist tradition. Short, Freeman, van Peer, and Simpson (1998) characterize it as an approach to interpretation that is based on an 'analysis of the linguistic structure of texts in relation to what we know about the psychological and social processes involved in textual understanding' (p. 46). Wales (2001) also emphasizes its focus on interpretation in her definition of stylistics as an approach that typically involves an analysis of formal features of literary texts 'in order to show their FUNCTIONAL significance for the INTERPRETATION of the text' (pp. 372–373; small caps in the original). The formalist influence is also clear from the attention that is paid to foregrounded patterns of language in the process of analysis and interpretation. In one typical example of a stylistic analysis of a poem (by Thomas Hardy), Verdonk (2002) draws attention to a pattern involving the grammatical subjects of the poem's clauses. Most of these refer to inanimate entities, and this leads Verdonk to an interpretation of the poem's world as one in which indifferent forces dominate. In other words, a linguistic pattern

of *inanimate* subjects is related interpretatively to a mood of *indifference* in the poem.

Countless other examples of stylistic analyses like Verdonk's could be given. Many of these analyses have potential for pedagogical application even though they are not directly concerned with pedagogy. However, there is also a branch of stylistics called 'pedagogical stylistics' (Wales, 2001, p. 373), which uses stylistic theory and methodology sometimes for the teaching of literature as an object of study, and sometimes as the basis for L1 and L2 teaching practices. With regard to the latter, Widdowson (1975; 1992) in particular is credited for providing 'an impressive intellectual foundation for such procedures' (Parkinson & Thomas, 2000, p. 6). Widdowson's work centres on interpretation and on developing students' interpretative skills through WWL. Widdowson (1975) discusses this idea in detail. Like the formalists, Widdowson draws attention to the carefully crafted patterns of figurative language that are characteristic of literary texts, and he suggests that by drawing students' attention to these patterns in a systematic way, teachers can provide students with a starting point for an interpretation of a given literary text. In the process, they help students to develop their interpretative skills. This should benefit them directly as language learners because interpretation is necessary with all discourse. Widdowson also emphasizes the importance of comparing and contrasting literary and non-literary discourse in order to raise students' awareness of the different ways in which linguistic resources may be deployed.

Widdowson (1975) uses Robert Frost's well-known poem 'Dust of Snow' to illustrate the kind of interpretative work that he envisages. On the surface, this two-stanza poem describes how a crow sitting in a tree shakes some snow onto the protagonist and the protagonist's slightly unusual response to this event: It 'saved some part/of a day I had rued' (as cited in Widdowson, p. 104). To give language learners a 'way in' to the poem, Widdowson suggests focusing their attention on the following words: crow, dust, snow, and hemlock tree. Using their dictionaries and background knowledge, the students should try to list as many denotative and connotative meanings as they can for each word. Once they have done this, they should also try to find connections between the meanings that they have listed. Ideally, this should draw attention to metaphorical connections between the words, notably their shared connection with death. Snow, for example, can be linked to this because of its association with winter, 'the dead season of the year' (Widdowson, p. 106). Once this connection has been made, students

have a starting point for an interpretation. Widdowson's own interpret-ation is one related to the harmonious coexistence of life and death in the poem.

This kind of activity focuses on interpretation, but in Widdowson (1986), the value of interpretative work is also considered: If students' readings of lyric poems like Frost's just remain on the surface, a ' "so what?" reaction' (p. 132) is likely. After all, what is the point of reading about someone whose day was saved by snow shaken from tree branches by a crow? Widdowson suggests that interpretative work serves to address this issue because it helps students to discover significance in an additional layer of meaning that is 'inherently metaphorical in char-acter' (p. 136). As we saw, Widdowson himself finds significance at this level in the idea that 'Dust of Snow' represents the harmonious coexist-ence of life and death. Whether or not L2 students also manage to find significance by means of such metaphorical readings is the subject of research presented in a later chapter.

Hanauer (2001b) adds an additional angle to interpretative work by placing it in a cross-cultural context. L2 learners are likely to interpret texts with reference to their own cultural knowledge and values, and interesting differences between L1 and L2 interpretations are likely to be found because of this. He illustrates this point with an example of differences in interpretations of a Biblical parable by Jewish Israeli interpreters and Christian Israeli ones. The Jewish Israeli readers read the parable in terms of the need for planning in life if you want to gain a reward. The Christian Israeli readers, in contrast, saw it as an invocation to hold on to and cherish one's relationship with God. This kind of difference can be enlightening, and against this background Hanauer suggests that it is worthwhile not only for learners to make their own interpretations but also to expose them to interpretations found among members of the target culture. This kind of exposure to different ways of reading the world may be unsettling, of course, because it raises questions about one's own habitualized ways of reading and interpreting. Kramsch (1993) discusses this issue at length with reference to the idea of finding a 'third place' between the target culture and one's native culture in the process of learning a foreign language.

2.3.3   Reader response

As with the discussion of stylistics, a discussion of reader-response theory also needs to distinguish between the theory-oriented and the pedago-gical branches of research and practice. In this case, the difference seems larger than it is in stylistics. As a literary theory, reader response is heavily

concerned with *interpretation*. In contrast, pedagogical texts focus on the *value* of reading literature, and interpretative work is often treated with suspicion. Fish (1980) and Iser (1978) are among the best-known theoretical texts, while Rosenblatt (1994) and Beach (1993) are concerned with L1 teaching practice. Given the pedagogical focus of the present book, the discussion of reader response will highlight the latter.

While stylistics tends to be characterized as an approach that centres on the role of the text and of the language of the text in literary interpretation, reader-response theory is normally presented as an approach that highlights the role of the reader in making interpretations. By extension, it also highlights the subjective side of interpretation. Reader-response pedagogy shares this interest in the individual role of the reader, but it is the value of the reader's experience with the literary text rather than the reader's interpretation that is of central concern. Rosenblatt (1994) is particularly well known for her insistence on the need for a so-called 'aesthetic' reading of literature. To explain what this is, she contrasts it with another kind of reading: 'efferent' reading. Efferent reading is the kind of information-oriented reading that people engage in most of the time—reading for the purpose of 'taking away' something useful from the text. In contrast, aesthetic reading is not primarily oriented towards factual information about characters or location, for example; instead, it is a responsive, experiential kind of reading that Rosenblatt characterizes as 'the web of feelings, sensations, images, ideas, that [the reader] weaves between himself and the text' (p. 137). Thus, the emphasis is on the reader's cognitive and affective responses that emerge in the process of interacting with a text.

While the reader's response is of central concern, the text itself inevitably provides the cues for this response, and this point is recognized in both theoretical and pedagogical reader-response texts. Iser (1978) uses an adapted version of foregrounding theory to make this point. However, in Rosenblatt's (1994) view, the textual cues alone are not enough to account for this response. The reader also needs to assume an appropriate aesthetic stance towards the text in order to ensure that an affective, aesthetic response actually occurs: 'Assumption of an aesthetic stance does not depend entirely on the cues offered by the text, but depends also on the reader's being prepared to act on them' (Rosenblatt, p. 83). Thus, in modified form, the formalist theory of foregrounding continues to play a central role in reader-response theory as a means of accounting for aesthetic reading. However, it is the connection between foregrounding and aesthetic value that counts rather than the connection between foregrounding and interpretation.

From the point of view of teaching methodology, reader response has encouraged practices that centre on stimulating responses among students and helping them to develop their ability to respond. Beach (1993) provides an excellent overview of L1 teaching practices. For example, students may be encouraged to write response journals and to share these journals with one another, or they may be invited to reflect on how their reading experience was shaped by their 'own attitudes and assumptions' (Beach, p. 68). Getting students to evaluate texts on the basis of their experiences with them is another practice recommended by Beach. In L2 teaching, many L1 reader-response practices have been adopted: literary response journals (Spack, 1985), relating experiences of a novel's characters to similar experiences of one's own (McKay, 1982; Parkinson & Thomas, 2000), improvisation and role-play in response to (scenes in) a novel (Elliott, 1990), and so on. The motivation for this kind of activity normally includes reference to language learning benefits such as vocabulary development (Spack, 1985) or the development of a 'feeling for the language' (Elliott, 1990, p. 197); other benefits such as the development of critical thinking skills (Spack, 1985) or the enhancement of cultural understanding (McKay, 1982) are mentioned too. Broadly speaking, reader-response practices are in line with Carter and Long's (1991) personal-growth model of literature teaching in which a student relates 'themes and topics depicted in a literary text to his or her own personal experience' (p. 9).

While reader-response theory encourages a diversity of responses in the classroom, interpretative work gets short shrift. Beach (1993) argues that a focus on the text and on interpretation is likely to inhibit a full aesthetic response and stand in the way of the student's 'experience of "living through" engagement with the text' (p. 46). This may or may not be true, but if the response of the reader is supposed to be central, it seems inconsistent to simply make this assumption without consulting the reader. Readers may well value interpretative work for the insights it provides, as Widdowson suggests (see above). Thus, empirical research on whether interpretation inhibits or enhances readers' evaluations would appear to be desirable, and research of this nature is presented in a later chapter. Research into the effectiveness of reader-response teaching methods is also necessary. Rosenblatt describes aesthetic reading as an experience that takes place *during* an interaction between reader and text, but reader-response pedagogy often involves activities that take place *after* the reading is over, when students are asked to comment on what they have read in their reading journals, for example. This kind of

work may be valuable for a number of reasons, including the development of L2 writing skills, but does it also help readers to develop their ability to respond aesthetically to literary texts? This certainly seems plausible, but research is desirable to find out more about the actual effects of pedagogical reader-response activities.

2.3.4   Politically critical approaches

Stylistics and reader-response theory remain the dominant literary theoretical paradigms for WWL, and against this background the remainder of the book will mainly be concerned with research related to them, especially with research on the connections between foregrounding, interpretation, and evaluation that are suggested by these paradigms. However, literary theory and pedagogy continues to develop, and it would be negligent not to mention one particular development that is becoming increasingly influential: the development of politically critical approaches to language and literature. This discussion centres on critical discourse analysis (CDA) and on approaches to literature that share CDA's fundamental insights.

Critical discourse analysis is not a theory of literature but a politically committed approach to the analysis of language and to language teaching. It is centrally concerned with the relationship between language and power—the way in which language tends to both reflect and contribute to power inequalities in society. The idea that language reflects the world is a well-established one, of course, and CDA builds on this by pointing out that power relationships that exist in the world are also reflected in and perpetuated by means of language. One obvious example is the representation of women in language. Historically, women occupied an unequal position in society, and language came to reflect this in many ways. For example, it is noticeable that in word pairs such as master/mistress or host/hostess, the terms on the male side tend to have positive associations while their female 'equivalents' often have 'negative sexual connotations' (Montgomery, Durant, Fabb, Furniss, & Mills, 2000, p. 81). The inequality of the words reflects the historical inequality of men and women in society.

Although CDA is not a theory of literature, it has certainly been influenced by literary theory. One clear influence is the formalist idea that language processing is normally an automatic and habitualized activity. Fairclough (2001) discusses this idea at length although he uses the term 'naturalization' (p. 76) instead of the formalist term 'habitualization'. Fairclough is concerned about the naturalization of particular ways of speaking and writing because he sees this as a key tool for the exercise

of power. Governments, for example, may be keen to establish in the public mind that they are engaged in a conflict with terrorists rather than freedom fighters because it is easier to sell the idea of fighting the former. Thus, they will make an effort to naturalize the term *terrorist* as the normal, common sense way of referring to the group that they are in conflict with, and given the power that is vested in governments, this effort is likely to be successful. Against this background, Fairclough describes naturalization as 'the royal road to common sense' (p. 76) and to the establishment of a particular ideology as the dominant one.

Fairclough is keen both to educate his readers about naturalization and ideology in the exertion of power and to provide them with the tools to resist this. For this purpose, he develops a set of language-related questions that analysts can use to bring out the 'power relations and ideological processes in discourse' (Fairclough, 2001, p. 91). Although he mainly applies these questions to non-literary texts to exemplify the method, his analyses often have a detail and subtlety that is reminiscent of literary criticism, as Widdowson (1995) points out. Indeed, analysing non-literary texts in a literary way may well be ideal as a means of bringing to awareness subtle patterns of language that represent particular naturalized ways of thinking and talking about the world. Eagleton (1996) makes a similar point in his argument for 'political criticism' (pp. 169–189) of texts—both literary and non-literary—as the core of a new approach to English studies. In this critical new approach to the discipline, Eagleton argues that literary analysis can be profitably applied to all sorts of 'sign-systems and signifying practices in our own society, all the way from *Moby Dick* to the Muppet show, from Dryden and Jean-Luc Godard to the portrayal of women in advertisements and the rhetorical techniques of government reports' (p. 180).

By itself, CDA is not particularly concerned with literature, but some theoreticians working in this critical tradition argue that literature has an important role to play in the development of critical reading skills. Fowler (1996), for example, shares Fairclough's views on the dangers of habitualization and on the reader's need to learn how to become resistant to this. At the same time, Fowler suggests that WWL can contribute to the ability to resist habitualization because literature uses 'deliberate devices for defamiliarization' (p. 51) and these 'encourage us to reflect on the artificiality, the constructedness, of our own habitual perceptions' (p. 60). Weber (1992) also sees literature as a kind of critical awareness-raising device on the grounds that it is likely to challenge 'social stereotypes and prejudices' (p. 154). Weber calls this 'positive manipulation' (p. 154). Simply reading literary texts may in itself have

a positive, transformative effect on the reader. However, Weber suggests that a critical analysis of the texts may strengthen this transformative potential, and his stylistics-based approach to critical analysis aims to help readers to 'benefit from the potential for positive manipulation of certain literary texts' (p. 165).

To complement analytical stylistic work, Fowler and Weber also advocate the practice of getting students to rewrite (excerpts from) literary texts in order to raise awareness of the ways in which a reader's perception of events may be manipulated. An apparently neutral third-person narrator may, for example, describe events in a way that consist-ently reflects a male character's point of view and virtually ignores a female character's perspective. Montgomery *et al.* (2000) suggest that this kind of gender-related bias can be brought out by rewriting the third-person narration as first-person narration and seeing what problems occur in the process. They use Ernest Hemingway's 'A Very Short Story' to illustrate the technique. At one point, for example, the story's third-person narrator writes, 'As he walked back along the halls he thought of Luz in his bed' (as cited in Montgomery *et al.*, p. 242). It is easy enough to turn this into first-person narration by the male character ('I thought of Luz in my bed'), but it does not work well for Luz, the female character: 'He thought of me in his bed.' Pope (1995) is a well-known source of rewriting activities like this, and Kramsch (1993) also argues that rewriting tasks are valuable for the purpose of cross-cultural awareness-raising.

Critical linguistic approaches to literature are compatible in many ways with practices outlined in the stylistics and reader-response sections above. The approaches share an indebtedness to foregrounding theory. Against this background, critical linguists advocate the styl-istic analysis of texts but they also see this primarily as a practice that will contribute to students' personal development as critical citizens. Critical WWL can give readers 'an ability to unmask social ideologies and secondly, a personal commitment to changing the linguistically constructed realities in a determined effort to eliminate all classist, sexist and racist injustices' (Weber, 1992, p. 165).

Critical linguists have admirable objectives, but research is necessary to determine whether critical work with literature actually works as a means of achieving these objectives. In an excellent overview of research with L1 students, Hall (2005) urges caution: 'Expectations should not be naive. Interventions in these complex cultural areas will never be simple or entirely predictable, and can even be counterproductive....' (p. 158). In general, Hall offers a considerably more detailed discussion

of work in the critical tradition than I offer here. It is also worth noting, in conclusion, that my own research does not investigate whether WWL contributes to critical development among L2 students. However, certain aspects of the research may be indirectly relevant, especially the research on metaphor and the evaluation of literature in Chapter 6.

2.4   Empirical research

There is a substantial body of empirical research related to the subject of literary reading. Virtually all empirical reading research is relevant, of course, even if it is not directly concerned with literary reading as such. In addition to this research, there is a growing body of studies that investigate aspects of the nature of literary reading. Most of these studies were conducted with L1 readers of literature, but research with L2 readers has also been carried out. The overview below covers this research in three sections concerned with comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. This division was inspired by Gibbs (1994; 1999a), and it also reflects the book's focus on foregrounding—the idea that (impeded) comprehension leads to interpretative reflection on the language and to affective, evaluative responses to it. As a psycholinguist, Gibbs treats comprehension as an obligatory, time-limited kind of online processing. This contrasts with interpretation and evaluative responses, both of which Gibbs views as non-obligatory, leisurely kinds of processing.

2.4.1   Online processing: Comprehension

In reading research, especially in research related to reading assessment, there is a long tradition of work related to comprehension and the various sub-processes that are thought to contribute to this. When such research is conducted, Urquhart and Weir (1998) emphasize that it is essential to distinguish comprehension from interpretation, which includes 'variations [in understanding] brought about in the reading process on account of different schemata' (p. 113) in the minds of different readers. Comprehension also varies according to reading purpose. Thus, scanning a text for specific information inevitably produces a different kind of comprehension than a careful reading of the text would yield. Careful reading is the kind of reading normally associated with the reading of literature, and Urquhart and Weir define this as reading for 'explicitly stated main ideas' (p. 123). Comprehension also includes propositional inferences, that is, inferences that are not based on information from outside the text. Excellent general reviews of

comprehension-related reading research can be found in Urquhart and Weir (1998), Alderson (2000), Grabe and Stoller (2002), and Koda (2005).

Literary reading research inevitably attempts to focus on what is distinctive about the reading of literature, but obviously this research needs to be informed by what is known about reading in general. All levels of analysis are relevant. For example, L2 learners' ability to process individual words fluently affects their ability to comprehend literary texts: If learners lack fluent, automatic word-recognition skills, this can ' "shortcircuit" larger reading processes' (Hall, 2005, p. 99), not only comprehension but also interpretation and other processes that literary reading research is concerned with.

Some comprehension-related reading research is specifically concerned with narrative texts, and this is of particular interest to literary reading researchers because so much literature is narrative. Broadly speaking, narrative reading research has been concerned with the role of schematic knowledge in processing. According to Koda (2005), this research distinguishes between 'general, domain, and formal' (p. 135) schemata. Cultural differences in general schematic knowledge have been shown to have a significant influence on story comprehension. For example, Steffensen and Joag-Dev (1984) report on the effects of differences in cultural knowledge about wedding ceremonies on the comprehension of two texts by American and Indian readers. One text described an American wedding ceremony and the other an Indian one, and many culture-related comprehension differences were found. To give an example, the Indian wedding narrative referred to two events following the wedding—a wedding feast and a reception—but many American readers of this text failed to distinguish the two and recalled only a single wedding reception. Steffensen and Joag-Dev attribute this misunderstanding to the influence of the American expectation that a wedding will be followed by a reception only.

Formal schemata also appear to influence narrative processing in various ways. At the text level, one research tradition has focused on the role of story grammars: 'explicit knowledge about the structural proper-ties of stories and how such knowledge guides comprehension' (Koda, 2005, p. 156). Mandler and Goodman (1982) provide evidence that these story grammars play a role in L1 processing of simple narratives. In their own story grammar, each narrative episode has a default order consisting of a *beginning* event, the protagonist's *complex reaction* to this, which includes the setting of a goal, an *attempt* to reach the goal, the *outcome* of this attempt, and an *ending*. In one experiment, they tested this order by reversing elements so that, for example, the *attempt* was

placed before the *goal* instead of after it. Reading time measurements revealed that it took L1 readers significantly longer to read the relevant parts of a story when the default order had been reversed. Horiba, van den Broek, and Fletcher (1993) found that a similar story grammar also played a significant role in story recall among L2 learners.

Story grammar research often uses relatively simple, artificial narratives (sometimes called 'textoids'), but Zwaan (1993; 1996) is concerned with the comprehension of real literary texts. This research is heavily influenced by foregrounding theory. Zwaan hypothesizes that the defamiliarizing properties of literary texts affect both the way in which the texts are read and how they are stored in memory. He formulates his hypotheses with reference to van Dijk and Kintsch's (1983) well-known model of discourse comprehension. Zwaan's (1996) basic idea is that because literary writing is typically defamiliarizing, people develop a literary way of reading—a literary 'control system' (p. 241): Under the literary control system, people pay more attention than usual to the form of the language, and to compensate for this, they pay less attention to 'constructing a representation of the referential situation denoted by the text' (p. 242). In van Dijk and Kintsch's (1983) terms, they end up with a relatively strong sense of 'surface structure' and a relatively weak 'situation model'. This is an intuitively appealing hypothesis, especially the hypothesis about memory for surface structure because most people appear to remember quotations from literature much more accurately than quotations from other genres such as news reports.

Zwaan (1993) reports on a series of experiments designed to test his predictions. Most of these experiments used a combination of excerpts from novels and newspaper reports. A key device in this research is that Zwaan often manipulated his subjects' expectations by telling them that a text was 'literary' even though it was, in fact, a news report, or vice versa. In other words, he manipulated his subjects' control systems, and thus affected the way in which they processed texts. In this way, he obtained strong evidence to support the hypothesis that literary reading involves greater attention to surface structure than normal: In the literary reading condition, the subjects' reading speeds were lower, and they demonstrated a better memory for surface form in cued recall tests. This was true regardless of whether the texts were real literary ones or news reports that had been falsely characterized as literary. Hanauer (1998) obtained a similar finding for surface recall of language in poems compared with language in encyclopaedic texts. Van Peer (1986) also investigated the memorability of individual lines in four different poems by comparing lines that contained a lot of deviation and foregrounding

with lines that were comparatively non-deviant. The lines with a lot of foregrounding proved to be significantly more memorable in his study.

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no comparable research on the memorability of surface form among L2 readers of literature. However, Hall (2005) points out that L2 readers often have a comparatively good memory for surface form anyway because of their 'relative lack of automaticity in processing the language' (p. 112). Reading in a foreign language is, in a sense, a defamiliarizing experience already regardless of whether the language is literary. This lack of familiarity will presumably continue to play a role in L2 learners' comprehension even when they are operating under a literary 'control system' of reading.

One study by Hoffstaedter-Kohn (1991) does show that poetic language can cause comprehension problems among L2 learners and that these problems affect their poetic experience as a whole. This study was a qualitative analysis of think-aloud protocols produced by 12 American L2 students of German while they were reading a comparatively short, simple German poem by Gottfried Benn called 'Rauhreif'. The poem includes a number of novel compounds and unusual collocations that German readers of the poem had judged to be poetic. However, items like these caused comprehension problems for many of the American students and, as a result, they were normally not judged to be poetic either. Hoffstaedter-Kohn emphasizes the 'enormous difficulties' (p. 92) that these students experienced while trying to make sense of the poem. Unfortunately, she does not give a clear indication of the students' German proficiency level, which is only characterized as 'less developed than that of native speakers of German' (Hoffstaedter-Kohn, p. 87).

2.4.2 Leisurely processing: Interpretation

As mentioned above, Gibbs (1999a) associates processes such as interpretation and evaluation with leisurely, off-line processing, and off-line processes of this nature will be considered in the present and following sections, starting with interpretation. This is a key concept in literary theory and empirical research, and it is also a key concept in stylistic approaches to literature. Unfortunately, the term is used in a variety of ways and this complicates the discussion (see Schmidt, 1983). Gibbs himself illustrates the meaning of 'interpretation' with reference to a metaphor from T. S. Eliot's poem 'The Hollow Men'. However, this is a local interpretation rather than a global interpretation of the poem as a whole, and it will be best to defer discussion of local-level interpretations of this kind until the next chapter.

In Schmidt's (1983) abstract definition of literary interpretation, someone retrospectively assigns a 'communicate, which he or she presents as a resulting text, to an original communicate, which he or she has constructed via a material text' (p. 251). Goatly (1997) appears to express the same idea in a more concrete way in his discussion of the distinction between 'verbalization' and 'theme'. A reading of Robert Frost's 'The Road Not Taken' could be *verbalized* as a poem 'about someone choosing to go down one road in the hope of coming back to the other, but never being able to do so' (Goatly, p. 280). Linguistic information from Schmidt's 'material text' provides the basis for this verbalization. At the *thematic* level, however, an interpreter might formulate a reading of the poem in terms of the 'limitations and immutability of human choices' (Goatly, p. 280). This is based on a symbolic reading of foregrounded elements in the poem. In Schmidt's terms, this thematic reading is the 'communicate' that an interpreter retrospectively assigns to a material text.

In empirical research on literature, the term 'interpretation' is not consistently used to refer to the kind of activity that Goatly and Schmidt have in mind. The polysemy of the term in literary theory is probably one reason for this. As Schmidt (1983) points out, the term can cover both explanatory statements, of the kind discussed in the preceding paragraph, and evaluative ones—about 'aesthetic, textual qualities' (p. 242). One well-known empirical study by Martindale and Dailey (1995) reflects this evaluative usage of the term: While the title of this study refers to people's 'interpretations' of literature, the body of the paper is actually concerned with people's evaluations. In empirical research, it is also common to investigate non-experts' readings of literature, and this also affects the usage of 'interpretation'. Schmidt's and Goatly's conception of interpretation may accurately describe what expert critics do, but non-experts are likely to have trouble meeting this high standard, and looser definitions of 'interpretation' become necessary to cater for this.

Inexpert readers may not be able to formulate professional interpretations, but it seems likely that they do want to know what the 'point' is of a given literary text. Against this background, Vipond and Hunt (1984) suggest that 'point-driven reading' is common in the reading of literature: Readers read literature because they want to know the point—what the author may be getting at. In other words, they look for a kind of interpretation. Vipond and Hunt contrast this with two other kinds of reading: 'story-driven reading' and 'information-driven reading'. The latter is similar to Rosenblatt's (1994) efferent reading—reading to get

information from the text. Story-driven reading, in Vipond and Hunt's terms, involves reading for enjoyment—the kind of affective arousal that a good thriller might offer, for example. In practice, finding a point can be quite difficult even for L1 readers. In an informal summary of their research on non-expert readings of John Updike's short story 'A & P', Vipond and Hunt claim that only 5 per cent of their students managed to identify a point. The majority concluded that the story seemed point-less to them. Hunt (1996) provides a retrospective account of this and other studies with Vipond on point-driven reading.

Vipond and Hunt's work is one source of inspiration for research on literary expertise. Graves and Frederiksen (1991), for example, compare the readings of six sophomores from McGill's English department to the readings of two senior faculty members in the department, and they found substantial differences. All participants were asked to read a passage from Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, and provide online interpretations—'a description of their developing understanding of a text in their own words' (Graves & Frederiksen, p. 3). It turned out that the students tended to stick closely to the text in their comments while the experts offered significantly more inferential comments. In addition, when students encountered ambiguity, they often took this as 'a reflection of their own inadequacy' (Graves and Frederiksen, p. 21) as interpreters. In contrast, experts took ambiguity in their stride, anti-cipating that the uncertainty would be resolved at a later point in the text. In other words, the experts appeared to be more confident of their ability to find a 'point' than the non-experts.

As mentioned above, stylisticians emphasize the idea that fore-grounding guides the interpretation of literary texts, but there is surpris-ingly little empirical research related to this idea. Van Peer (1986) invest-igated this question indirectly by getting his subjects to rank order lines in three poems in terms of their perceived importance in their individual interpretations of these poems. The lines in the poems had been assessed independently for the presence of foregrounding features, and it turned out that there were significant correlations between fore-grounded lines and the subjects' interpretation-related rankings of the lines. In other words, foregrounding was clearly related to assessments of which lines were important for an interpretation. This is an important finding, but it does not tell us whether the subjects also agreed on their actual interpretations of these foregrounded lines. Short and van Peer (1989) attempted to shed light on this matter by comparing their own interpretations of the poem 'Inversnaid' by Gerald Manley Hopkins. As explained in Chapter 1, this was a poem that neither Short nor van Peer

had read before. They read the poem line by line and wrote comments about each line before moving on to the next one. While they admit that the quantification of the similarities between their comments is not a simple matter, their analysis suggests 'a non-random degree of agreement both on what to comment on and on what interpretation to give to those items' (Short & van Peer, p. 41). A similar research design is used by Alderson and Short (1989) in a comparison of their comments on the first page of a short story, and their study also suggested to them that in literary reading, 'the text plays a considerable role in limiting the meanings that readers create' (p. 104).

The subjects in both of these studies were expert readers, and they were also expert stylisticians in the case of Short and van Peer. This shared expertise may well have influenced the level of agreement, as Short and van Peer recognize themselves. Kurtz and Schober (2001) investigated interpretations of the themes of two very short stories by 16 non-expert but 'avid readers' (p. 139), and they found very little consistency: One story, for example, yielded four interpretations that were shared by up to four readers and another five interpretations that were not shared at all.

L2 readers' interpretations and their attitudes towards interpretation have also been investigated in a number of studies. Hanauer (2001a) is a detailed study of what advanced-level EFL students actually do when they discuss a poem. He asked 20 students, whose native language was Hebrew, to work in pairs and discuss Leonard Cohen's 'Suzanne Takes You Down' in English. In doing so, they were specifically assigned to 'try to understand' (p. 300) the poem. Hanauer found that there were a number of recognizable stages: The students discussed particular features of the poem's language, they formulated and developed local interpretations, and they developed global interpretations against this background. One thing that makes Hanauer's study almost unique is that he was specifically concerned with the language learning benefits of such poetry reading tasks, and he discusses his findings with reference to this. For example, there is clear evidence that the task encouraged a focus on form, and this can be directly related to the focus-on-form tradition in second language acquisition research and to the argument for WWL that refers to this tradition (see above).

Zapata (2005) is an interesting paper about literary interpretation in the culture learning tradition. This was inspired by Hanauer's (2001b) focus-on-cultural understanding method, which was discussed above. In her study, Zapata got 17 intermediate university students of Spanish as a foreign language in the United States of America to read and interpret a short magical realist story by the Argentinian writer Horacio Quiroga.

The students discussed their interpretations in groups and tried to reach a consensus. These interpretations related the story to animal rights, environmental destruction, and discrimination. The students then read interpretations produced by 15 Argentinian cultural informants. These interpretations shared the discrimination theme but also included a religious one that had not been found among the American interpretations. This difference gave the students a sense of how cultural background influences interpretation processes and provided them with new insights into the target culture. In the course of the study, Zapata also measured changes in students' attitudes towards Spanish culture and language learning, and she found clear improvements. However, she does not make clear whether the improvements were statistically significant.

Hanauer's and Zapata's papers are both important because they both frame their research with reference to specific claims about WWL in foreign language learning. Interpretation is the central component in both of the studies but neither of them is concerned with the question of how students feel about engaging in interpretative work. However, other research suggests that interpretation is not necessarily a positive component of the L2 literary reading experience. For example, in a survey of an unspecified number of second- and third-year Hong Kong Chinese students on a university English degree course, Hirvela and Boyle (1988) found that no less than 41 per cent of the students chose interpretation as an aspect of WWL that caused them 'particular trouble' (p. 180). On a positive note, however, Hirvela and Boyle also found that attitudes towards WWL improved substantially when careful attention was paid to the selection of materials.

2.4.3   Leisurely processing: Evaluation and affective response

As mentioned earlier, literature is considered to be valued reading, and readers may therefore be expected to respond to literary texts by evaluating them aesthetically, empathizing with characters, experiencing feelings of suspense, and so on. Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) suggest that these responses can be categorized into two main emotion categories, A-emotions (Artefact emotions) and F-emotions (Fiction emotions), and these categories will be used to structure the present section. A-emotions are responses of an aesthetic nature related to the form of the text, while F-emotions are triggered in response to events in the fictional world.

A-emotions are form-related affective responses—evaluative responses of a positive or negative kind. Gibbs (1999a), for example, suggests that people may evaluate a particular metaphor from Eliot's 'The Hollow Men' for its 'aptness' (p. 101). Local evaluations like this and global

aesthetic evaluations of complete literary texts have been investigated in various ways, and foregrounding has again played a central role in this evaluation research. Linguistic deviation is foregrounded and draws attention to itself, and this slows down the processing of the language and triggers an aesthetic response. As van Peer (1986) puts it, 'what is in the "foreground", what is de-familiarized or de-automatized, what is "made strange", etc. will generally strike the reader' (p. 28). A number of studies have investigated this predicted relationship, notably research by van Peer himself on the effects of foregrounding in poetry. Thus, in one experiment van Peer analysed the degree of phonological, grammatical, and semantic foregrounding in the individual lines of four different poems in order to identify the poems' foregrounded lines on formal grounds. Then he asked a group of university students to read the poems and underline the parts that they considered 'striking'. It turned out that there was a highly significant relationship between these underlined parts and the lines that van Peer had identified as foregrounded. Hanauer (1996) also provides evidence that judgements of poeticity are heavily influenced by formal factors.

Miall and Kuiken (1994) used a design similar to van Peer's to investigate whether foregrounding affects the evaluation of short literary stories in the same sort of way as it affects the evaluation of poetry. Their research also found a significant relationship between the foregrounded sections of the stories they used and the sections of the stories that their subjects evaluated as striking. Miall and Kuiken also used an affect-related measure in their research, and affect also proved to be strongly related to the stories' foregrounded sections. Hoorn (1996) adds support for the role of foregrounding by providing psychophysiological evidence for the effects of phonological and semantic deviation. For this purpose he used an electroencephalogram to record his subjects' responses while they read short poems.

It would be interesting to know to what extent the foregrounding–evaluation connection works for L2 learners, but there is little relevant research. As mentioned above, Hoffstaedter-Kohn (1991) found that comprehension problems interfered with the poeticity judgements of American students of German as a foreign language. In another study, Hoffstaedter (1987) found that L2 speakers of German were significantly less likely than their L1 counterparts to judge that a German poem was actually a poem. In addition, when L2 students were asked to underline poetic phrases in the poem, their selections were 'imprecise and of a more general nature' (p. 83) than those of L1 students.

There is some evidence that the amount of time allowed for reading influences readers' evaluations of literature, confirming Gibbs's (1999a) point that literary evaluation involves casual processing rather than being an aspect of readers' immediate, online response. The evidence comes from a study on the effect of re-reading on evaluation. Dixon, Bortolussi, Twilley, and Leung (1993) investigated this by comparing skilled (undergraduate university student) readers' evaluations of two stories after a first and a second reading of these stories. One of the stories was a literary one (by Jorge Luis Borges) and the other an item of popular fiction from a so-called 'true detective' magazine. They found that evaluations of the literary story increased substantially after the second reading while the evaluation of the popular story remained unchanged. At the same time, it needs to be noted that the evaluation of the literary story was much lower than that of the popular one after the first reading and only slightly higher than the evaluation of the popular story after the second reading. Thus, literature was not self-evidently more valuable than popular writing in the eyes of these skilled readers.

Dijkstra, Zwaan, Graesser, and Magliano (1994) relate A-emotions to story structure. For example, an emotion of suspense can be created when the reader is informed of a threat facing the protagonist of a story that the protagonist herself/himself is not aware of. Suspense is not a uniquely literary response, of course; it can equally well be engendered by popular fiction—thrillers and so on. However, in their study Dijkstra *et al.* worked with literary short stories, and they asked expert readers to rate segments of these stories for suspense and for a number of other story factors that they expected to be related in a positive or negative way to suspense. For example, they anticipated that foregrounding would correlate negatively with suspense because it is likely to slow down processing and put the suspense in abeyance. As predicted, a negative correlation was found, and this indicates that story evaluation involves a complex of factors. Brewer (1996) also discusses evaluation research in this story-structure tradition.

In their discussion of F-emotions, Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) distinguish between emotions related to the characters and situation in the story and emotions related to the self. They call the latter F(e)-emotions (e = egocentric) and the former F(a)-emotions (a = altercentric). In the case of F(e)-emotions, readers give personal meaning to events in the story by relating them to experiences of their own. One interesting study by Larsen, László, and Seilman (1991) relates the quality of these personal meanings to cultural differences. To do this, they got two groups of secondary school students—one Hungarian, one Danish—to

read a Hungarian story called 'Nazis' and to comment on the things that the story reminded them of. It turned out that the Hungarian readers were reminded of specific events significantly more frequently than their Danish counterparts were, and that there was also a qualitative difference: Hungarians had a significantly higher proportion of remindings of events that they had experienced personally, while Danes had significantly more remindings of reported events—events that they had not experienced personally but had only heard about or read about. In other words, it was easier for the Hungarians to relate the story to their own, personal experiences, and it seems likely that this affected their evaluations of the story, as Larsen *et al.* suggest. Unfortunately, however, they did not directly measure story evaluations in their two groups so this conclusion is speculative.

F(a)-emotions are related to the characters. As Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) put it, when readers get involved in a story, they 'imagine themselves in the place of the characters, and experience similar emotions' (p. 132). Miall (2006) points out that this can be a 'decentering' (p. 19) kind of feeling: While we get to experience the world from a character's perspective, 'that character is not us, and does not share our experience' (p. 19). In some cases, this 'decentering' can lead us to new insights about ourselves and the world. Thus, literature not only reminds us of familiar things; it may also expose us to new perspectives and experiences.

Getting to see the world from a character's perspective involves assuming a particular point of view. Point of view and the techniques that writers use to manipulate it have been analysed in detail by narratologists such as Bal (1997), and narratology has also provided inspiration for empirical research on point of view by Bortolussi and Dixon (2003) and by van Peer and Pander Maat (2001). Miall and Kuiken have paid substantial attention to the affective aspects of the reader's engagement with narratives, and to the potentially transformative experiences that may occur when the reader's self merges with a character. Their studies make extensive use of think-aloud data. Thus, in Miall and Kuiken (2002), they discuss their reader's think-aloud responses to Seán Ó'Faoláin's story 'The Trout'. These responses included 'remindings' of the kind discussed above, but they also included cases in which the reader's perspective appeared to have merged with that of the main character, a 12-year-old girl called Julia. These responses characteristically included the use of the pronouns 'we' or 'you' to refer simultaneously to Julia and to the reader. One reader uses both pronouns in a comment concerned with how Julia matures in the course of the story: 'she's gained, she's made the first step towards maturity, although we can't,

uh, you don't become mature overnight, that you, uh, it takes time' (Miall & Kuiken, p. 237). Here, clearly, the reader's focus shifts from a third-person focus on Julia's maturation to one in which the maturation process is shared by Julia and the reader. Other relevant publications by Miall and his co-researchers in this area are Miall and Kuiken (1999), Kuiken, Miall, and Sikora (2004), and Miall (2006). To the best of my awareness, there is no research on L2 learners' F(a)-emotions and on whether the experience of reading literature in a foreign language also includes a 'merging' of characters' and readers' perspectives.

Given the fact that both interpretation and evaluation have been related to foregrounding both in theory and in empirical research, one might expect to find research that tries to clarify the relationship. For example, it may well be the case that some interpretations of a given poem or short story are evaluated more highly than others. Unfortunately, little work appears to have been done in this area. Some suggestive data is provided in Short and van Peer (1989). This study, which was discussed earlier, consisted of a comparison between the two researchers' written interpretations of a poem that neither of them had read before. Although the focus was on interpretation, both researchers also ended up evaluating the poem. Their evaluations were negative, and in both cases this was due to a sense that the poem's final stanza was poorly related to the preceding ones. In their view, the poem's first three stanzas set up a rather elaborate symbolic pattern involving darkness (despair/death) and light, but the final stanza does not adequately follow through on this. As a result, Short and van Peer feel that the 'symbolism and patterning set up in the previous paragraphs is wasted' (p. 53). Thus, they respond to the poem with a negative evaluation (Artefact emotion) related to its inadequate form, and this response is based on their interpretations of the poem's symbolism. Miall and his co-researchers have also pursued the interpretation–evaluation link in a number of publications (see, for example, Miall & Kuiken, 1999) with a focus on the link between interpretation and F-emotions. This research was influenced by Cook's (1994) theory of schema refreshment, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide an overview both of the main theoretical views on WWL in a foreign language and of empirical research related to these ideas. While the overview of arguments for WWL aimed to be fairly complete, it was also designed to highlight the

arguments that centre on a specifically literary response to literature: Stylistics, with its emphasis on interpretation, and reader response, with its emphasis on affective, evaluative responses. In addition, it was suggested that both of these arguments are closely related to the formalist theory of foregrounding. The overview of empirical research in the second half of the chapter also highlighted foregrounding by focusing on research concerned with the connections between foregrounding on the one hand and interpretation and evaluation on the other. This overview, which mainly covered work with L1 readers, made it clear that there is evidence both for the idea that foregrounded language guides literary interpretation and for the idea that it triggers evaluative and other affective responses. The overview also covered the small body of research related specifically to arguments for WWL in a foreign language. Important work has been done in this area, notably by Hanauer (2001a) and Zapata (2005), but much more research is needed. The overview specifically identifies some of the main gaps in the research.

3
Metaphor and Literature

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter made it clear that foregrounding theory continues to play a key role both in arguments for WWL and in empirical research on literary reading. Metaphor plays a central role in foregrounding and this makes it an excellent test case for the theory and for the arguments for WWL that are related to the theory. The remainder of the book is concerned with metaphor against this background. Metaphor is a major topic in a range of disciplines including linguistics, literary theory, philosophy, and psychology, and because so much has been written about it, reviews of the literature run the risk of becoming excessively long. In order to avoid this, the review given below has been limited in two ways. First, it concentrates on theory, especially conceptual metaphor theory. Secondly, it concentrates on relating this theory to literature: the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of metaphor in literature. Empirical research and further theoretical work will be introduced in later chapters as the need arises. The first half of the review below provides a general introduction to linguistic metaphor and to conceptual metaphor theory and the second half of the review concentrates on metaphor in literature.

3.2 Linguistic and conceptual metaphor

The distinction between linguistic and conceptual metaphors is an essential one in any contemporary discussion of metaphor, and the organization of the discussion below is based on this. Linguistic metaphors will be discussed first. These are metaphors of the kind that we actually encounter in discourse when, for example, we call someone a

'vegetable' or a 'wallflower'. Conceptual metaphor theory draws attention to the fact that these two linguistic metaphors (and many others) can be related to the conceptual metaphor People Are Plants, and this aspect of metaphor theory is discussed in the second sub-section.

3.2.1   Linguistic metaphor

In his well-known discussion of foregrounding, Leech (1969) distinguishes two broad categories of figurative language: schemes and tropes. Schemes include rhetorical figures related to repetition (rhyme, assonance, etc.) while tropes cover figures that involve deviations in form or meaning. Metaphor is included in the latter category. In many cases, linguistic metaphors have the property of being words or combination of words that seem incoherent in context as a result of unusual collocation or unusual reference. Van Dijk (1975) uses the following example to illustrate this: 'The flowers in the park smiled at him' (p. 187). There is a degree of incoherence here because flowers are not normally treated as things that can smile. Under one reading, this is metaphorical due to unusual reference: The word *flowers* refers to young women, and these women are literally smiling. It could also be metaphorical for another reason: unusual collocation (predication). Under this reading, real flowers in the park are smiling metaphorically at the observer by appealing visually to his senses.

   Incoherence in context is not unique to metaphor. It is also found in a metonymy such as *The White House announced X*: Buildings cannot normally announce things. Traditionally, this is distinguished from a metaphor on the grounds that metaphor involves a similarity or comparison whereas metonymy does not. *Flowers* in van Dijk's example may refer to 'young women' on the grounds of a likeness such as the feature <+beauty>. In the case of the *White House* metonymy, in contrast, there is a part–whole relationship: *White House* (the whole) stands for a person working in the White House (the part) who actually made the announcement. Consequently, Gibbs (1999b) suggests that the ' "*is like*" test' (p. 36) should be used to distinguish the two figures. Thus, it makes sense to say that 'flowers are like young women', so van Dijk's *flowers* metaphor passes Gibbs's test. In contrast, the *White House* metonymy fails the test because it makes little sense to say, 'White House staff members are like the White House'. The exact nature of a metaphorical comparison or likeness can be characterized using three terms that are common in discussions of linguistic metaphor: *topic, vehicle*, and *grounds*. In the *flowers* example, the vehicle *flowers* is like the topic *young women* on the grounds of the shared feature <+beauty>.

Gibbs (1999b) also makes the point that metaphors come in many different forms, and among other things, this can make a formal analysis of the relationship between topic, vehicle, and grounds rather complicated. The *flowers* metaphor can be analysed using the pattern 'X is like Y on the grounds of Z', but how does one deal with more complex cases such as Leech's (1969) example of a sentential metaphor: 'The sky rejoices in the morning's birth' (p. 154)? Leech proposes a kind of 'cloze' technique to deal with cases like this. His example is a description of the sky that uses a combination of literal and figurative elements: 'The sky [literal] rejoices in [figurative] the morning's [literal] birth [figurative]'. These literal and figurative elements should be displayed separately on two lines with the literal items in the Topic line and the figurative ones in the Vehicle line. Then literal or figurative words and phrases should be chosen to fill the gaps in the two lines and complete the analogy in the following kind of way:

Topic	The sky	[looks bright at]	the morning's	[beginning]
Vehicle	[The parent]	rejoices in	[the child] 's	birth

Further discussion of how to deal with the analysis of different kinds of metaphor (nominal, verbal, sentential) can be found in Miller (1993) and Steen (1999).

Many cases of linguistic metaphor can be approached with reference to the idea of incoherence in context, but it is not always sufficient. One example is Robert Frost's line 'And miles to go before I sleep' in the poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' (Frost, 1951b). There is nothing incoherent here, but the line is often read metaphorically anyway, along the lines of 'I have many duties to accomplish before I die,' for example. Grice's (1989) cooperative principle is helpful here. The cooperative principle includes four maxims, one being the maxim of quantity. This maxim covers the idea that in communication we should normally try to be brief. Frost flouts this maxim because he repeats 'And miles to go before I sleep' twice in the final two lines of his poem. Repetition goes against the idea of brevity, and readers might try to compensate for this by looking for a 'double meaning'—by trying, as it were, to extract two meanings for the price of one repetition. A metaphorical reading of the line is one way of extracting such a double meaning.

Conventionality of linguistic metaphor is another issue that needs to be mentioned. When some unknown soldier first talked about a

sergeant 'barking' orders, the soldier's companions must have been full of admiration for this novel metaphor (and its impudent suggestion that the sergeant had dog-like properties). Nowadays, *barking orders* is so conventional that any good dictionary will include it as an example of normal usage. Against this background, Goatly (1997) has proposed that we need a cline of conventionality: Some metaphors are *dead*, others may be *sleeping* or just *tired*, and still others may be *active*. Deignan (2005) discusses formal tests that may be used to distinguish metaphors on a similar cline using evidence from corpus linguistics. For example, she formally defines the kind of innovative metaphor that Goatly calls 'active' in the following way: 'any sense of a word that is found less than once in every thousand citations of the word can be considered either innovative or rare' (Deignan, p. 40). At the same time, there is clearly a subjective element at work here: What is conventional or 'tired' to the L1 adult may seem innovative to an L1 child or a L2 student when they encounter it for the first time.

3.2.2   Conceptual metaphor

The idea that metaphor needs to be viewed as a conceptual phenomenon and not just as a linguistic one has been argued at length by Lakoff and his fellow researchers (notably Kövecses, 2002; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). As mentioned earlier, there are many plant-related linguistic metaphors for people, and this idea can be captured by positing a metaphorical relationship between the two domains at the conceptual level: People Are Plants. These relationships are called conceptual metaphors (henceforth CMs).

Lakoff and his colleagues make a number of specific claims about CMs. One important one is that CMs usually link a concrete domain with an abstract domain in such a way that the former normally gives metaphorical structure to the latter. This is the case, for example, in the CM An Argument Is A Building. When we talk about the 'foundations' or the 'scaffolding' of an argument, we are using words related to the concrete Building domain to talk about the abstract domain of an Argument. Conceptually, we are using our concrete knowledge of buildings to make sense of the abstract idea of an argument. Terminologically, Building is called the *source domain* and Argument the *target domain* of this CM. Related to this point is the claim that mappings between domains only flow in one direction: The source projects into the target domain, but not vice versa. Another related point is that only some aspects of the source domain can get mapped onto the target domain. This is known as the Invariance Principle, which Kövecses (2002) formulates as

follows: 'Given the aspect(s) that participate in a metaphorical mapping, map as much knowledge from the source onto the target as is coherent with the image-schematic properties of the target' (p. 103). Thus, in the case of People Are Plants, it is coherent to map life cycle–related aspects of the source domain onto the target domain (as in *a 'budding' scientist* or *a 'withered' old man*), because both plants and people have a life cycle. However, photosynthesis is not conventionally carried over because it is difficult to conceive of a counterpart for this plant-related process in the People domain. One final claim that has attracted particular attention among applied linguists is the idea that many CMs are likely to be universal. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), there 'appear to be at least several hundred such widespread, and perhaps universal, metaphors' (p. 57). If this is true, then CMs could provide the basis for the systematic teaching of metaphorical patterns of lexis across cultures as Nattinger (1988) has pointed out.

The idea that some CMs may be universal applies, in particular, to so-called *basic metaphors*. This term was introduced by Grady (1997) based on his observation that some CMs (basic ones) appear to function as building blocks for other CMs. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) adopt this idea, and they provide a list of examples such as Happy Is Up, Purposes Are Destinations, and Knowing Is Seeing. These basic metaphors are the building blocks for *complex metaphors*. For example, the basic metaphor Purposes Are Destinations is one of the building blocks for the complex CM 'A Purposeful Life Is A Journey' (Lakoff & Johnson, p. 60). For a discussion of other CM sub-categories that can be distinguished, see Kövecses (2002, Chap. 3).

CM theory does not apply to all linguistic metaphors. Some linguistic metaphors, which Lakoff and Turner (1989) call *image metaphors*, fall outside the theory: 'There are also more fleeting metaphors which involve not the mapping of concepts but rather the mapping of images' (p. 89). These image metaphors, which Lakoff and Turner also call 'one-shot' (p. 91), are mainly defined in negative terms: They are highly specific cases and do not involve 'robust conceptual mappings' (p. 91) of the Life Is A Journey variety 'where rich knowledge and rich inferential structure are mapped' (p. 91), and they are also not used 'unconsciously and automatically over and over again in reasoning about our lives' (p. 91). In practice, the main characteristic of image metaphors is that they are based on physical, visual similarities. Lakoff and Turner give the following example: 'My wife...whose waist is an hourglass' (p. 90). This image metaphor involves 'the superimposition of the image of an hourglass onto the image of a woman's waist by virtue of their common

shape' (Lakoff & Turner, p. 90). While Lakoff and Turner's point is clear enough, it could be argued that this is a poor example of a metaphor that supposedly lacks robust conceptual roots. After all, there is nothing 'fleeting' about metaphors that draw attention to the female body and idealize a particular kind of shape. Eating disorders are linked to unattainable idealizations like this.

Lakoff and Johnson's ideas have been criticized and developed in various ways thanks to researchers like Grady. Good recent reviews of the issues and developments can be found in Kövecses (2002), Croft and Cruse (2004), and Deignan (2005). One issue that needs to be mentioned is the lack of an agreed methodology for the identification of CMs. Much of the early research was the product of inspired introspection: Researchers tended to consult their mental lexicons to identify CMs and find linguistic examples to support them. There are at least two problems with this approach. At the linguistic level, the problem is that intuited examples may not reliably represent actual usage and for this reason, corpus linguists like Deignan (2005) and Partington (1996) emphasize the desirability of using corpus evidence instead. The link between linguistic examples (intuited or corpus based) and CMs is another problem. For example, there may well be systematic linguistic evidence of a metaphorical connection between, say, language related to food and language related to thought, but how does one turn this observation into a CM: Should this CM be characterized as Ideas Are Food, Thinking Is Eating, Reasoning Is Eating, or as something else again? Steen (1999) has attempted to address this issue by developing a five-step procedure for CM identification, and further discussion of this procedure can be found in a special issue of *Language and Literature* (Steen, 2002).

Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) 'blending theory' is another influential recent development. This research suggests that there are problems with CM theory's claim that metaphorical mappings are unidirectional, with mappings always running from source to target domains. This may be true in some cases, but in other cases it seems clear that the domains interact. Fauconnier and Turner discuss the idiom *digging your own grave* as an example. This idiom means something like 'acting foolishly in a way that causes one to fail', but there is a problem with causality when one attempts to work out the analogy: Foolish action may cause failure, but digging your grave does not cause death. Against this background, they suggest that metaphorical reasoning involves the creation of a so-called 'blended space', where input from the relevant CM domains can interact and make their own individual contribution to the reasoning

process. In other words, the structure of this space is not determined exclusively by the structure of a source domain. A more detailed example of blending will be given below in the discussion of metaphor in literature. A special issue of *Language and Literature* (Dancygier, 2006) is dedicated to the implications of blending theory for stylistics. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) now accept that blending also needs to be recognized as a component of their 'integrated theory' (p. 46) of metaphor.

Lakoff and Johnson's idea that many CMs are widely shared and possibly universal has also been investigated. Charteris-Black's (2002) research on linguistic and conceptual metaphors in English and Malay suggests that there are a number of complications. Various permutations are found when the two languages are compared: Sometimes both the CMs and the CM-related linguistic metaphors are similar, sometimes linguistic metaphors are superficially similar but actually related to different CMs, and so on. Semantic prosody is another problem. For example, the expression *in hand* can be used both in English and in Malay to convey the idea that someone has a situation under control, but the evaluative effect of saying this is different: The agent who has a situation *in hand* is evaluated positively when the expression is used in English but negatively when it is used in Malay. Partington (1996) points out that we also need to be alert to genre-related limits on CM use. He found that Magic is considerably more common as a source domain of metaphor in newspaper sports journalism than it is in most other sections of the paper: A tennis player may have a *magical* moment and *conjure* a shot from behind her or his back, but politicians are rarely seen to have similar magical powers in their attempts to address society's problems.

Thus, while the founders of CM theory have tended to emphasize the conceptual side of metaphor, applied linguists and corpus linguists have shown the need for a greater focus on the actual language of metaphor in discourse. Another reason for paying attention to linguistic form is that form is likely to affect processing, as Goatly (1997) has observed: Metaphors 'have to find expression in some medium, and when that medium is language the form of the expression will have important consequences for their recognition and interpretation' (p. 42). Form-related aspects of metaphor also play a role in the research presented from Chapter 4 onwards.

After the publication of Cameron and Low (1999a, b), metaphor has become an increasingly important topic in applied linguistics and language teaching. Although some of this research will be discussed in later chapters, it would go beyond the scope of the present book to

review it all in detail. However, for the purposes of reference, it does seem appropriate to list the main book-length contributions to the field since 1999. Pütz, Niemeier, and Dirven (2001) is a collection of papers in the area of applied cognitive linguistics and it includes a number of papers about applications of CM theory in language teaching and learning. Boers and Littlemore (2003) is a special issue of the journal *Metaphor and Symbol* on the subject of cross-cultural differences in conceptual metaphor. Cameron (2003) is a study of metaphor in the discourse of L1 English primary school students and teachers. Holme (2004) covers classroom applications of CM theory, as do Littlemore and Low (2006b) in a publication that looks destined to become the textbook of choice on metaphor and L2 teaching.

3.3   Metaphor in literature

In the preceding chapter, the discussion of empirical research on literary reading was organized around comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation and other affective responses. Although the discussion below does not cover empirical research, it is organized in a similar kind of way with sections on theory related to the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of metaphor in literature. This organization is based on Gibbs's (1994) model of the stages of metaphor processing. A similar model can be found in Steen (1994). Gibbs actually mentions four processing stages—comprehension, recognition, interpretation, and appreciation—but the recognition stage will not be discussed in a section of its own. This non-obligatory process involves a conscious, declarative recognition that a metaphor is a metaphor— that is, a statement along the lines of 'Aha, this is a metaphor'. This process is not discussed separately because it does not figure prominently in the arguments for WWL. However, it is touched on briefly in the section on metaphor comprehension below when Steen's (1999) five-step procedure for identifying metaphors is referred to, and one study reported in Chapter 5 is also concerned with the conscious recognition of metaphors.

3.3.1   Metaphor comprehension

Gibbs (1994) defines comprehension in general as 'the immediate moment-by-moment process of creating meanings for utterances' (p. 116). It is superficial processing of a kind that is inevitable when one is engaged in making sense of the ongoing flow of discourse. When listening to a lecture, for example, it is not normally feasible to sit back

and ponder the possible entailments of metaphors in the lecture. In practice, empirical research on metaphor comprehension often involves a contrast with literal comprehension because researchers are interested in whether the former is more demanding and time-consuming than the latter, and if so, what factors make it more demanding. Some of this research and the theories behind it will be reviewed in Chapter 4. The present section focuses on the literal/metaphorical distinction and on the potential problems involved in making this distinction in literary discourse.

The distinction between literal and metaphorical (or figurative) meanings may seem intuitively clear but it is not always easy to make: What are literal and figurative meanings? In some cases, the situation seems relatively clear. Thus, my desktop *Oxford American* dictionary flags the following usage of *anchor* as figurative: 'a person or thing that provides stability or confidence in an otherwise uncertain situation'. One can see how this conventionally figurative usage could have been derived from a physical ship's anchor and its mooring function. In other cases, however, the situation is less obvious. Only experts are likely to be aware that *pedigree* is actually a metaphorical extension of 'the French term for a crane's foot (the basis for the transfer is the similarity in shape between a crane's foot and a diagram of a family tree)' (Deignan, 2005, p. 36). Because the original 'crane's foot' sense no longer exists in present-day English, most language users are likely to feel that the core (literal) sense of *pedigree* is a 'record of descent of an animal' as my *Oxford American* dictionary puts it. Even in cases when literal and figurative senses coexist, the figurative extension may well be more frequent than the literal one. Thus, *see* in the basic sense of physical perception is less frequent than it is in its extended sense of ' "understand" (as in *Do you see what I mean*?)' (Cruse, 2000, p. 199). For further discussion of issues in the literal/figurative distinction, see Cruse (2000, Chap. 11) and Gibbs (1994, Chap. 2). Note that some researchers prefer not to talk about literal meaning (or sense) and use alternatives such as core meaning, basic meaning, or non-figurative meaning.

Distinguishing literal and figurative usage may sometimes be problematic, but distinctions need to be made for research. Steen (1999) discusses this issue in an article about how conceptual metaphors may be formally derived from linguistic ones in a sequence of five steps. The first step in this procedure is to decide whether a given 'linguistic expression [is] used nonliterally in the discourse' (Steen, p. 61). Steen and other metaphor researchers discuss this five-step procedure and its practical application in literary discourse in a special issue of *Language and*

Literature (Steen, 2002). Gibbs (2002a), who is also involved in Steen's project, recognizes the analytical need for this step and for the procedure as a whole, but at the same time he points out that Steen is using an inductive, bottom-up approach. Gibbs suggests that it is also necessary to recognize top-down, deductive 'processes involved in the identification of linguistic expressions as relating to conceptual mappings' (p. 80). In other words, sometimes our knowledge of CMs will guide us towards figurative instead of literal understandings of linguistic expressions in literary discourse. This point would appear to be particularly relevant when linguistic metaphors are virtually 'invisible' (see below). It is also necessary to emphasize, as Steen and his co-researchers do, that Steen's procedure is an analytical one: It cannot be assumed that this procedure directly reflects what readers actually do when they process metaphor in literary and non-literary discourse.

Regardless of the analytical issues, readers do encounter metaphors in literature, and comprehension problems are likely to occur in the process. Among other things, this may be related to the degree of foregrounding involved. Sometimes the foregrounding is so subtle that a metaphor may go unnoticed. At the other extreme, metaphors can be placed so saliently in the foreground that it becomes difficult to see anything else—in a sense, the background disappears in these cases. In between these two extremes, it will be normally clear enough that something potentially figurative is going on because of linguistic cues that signal incoherence in context, as in van Dijk's (1975) example 'The flowers in the park smiled at him' (p. 187), which was discussed earlier. The incoherence makes literal comprehension problematic here, and because of this, figurative readings are likely to be encouraged.

In the subtler cases of foregrounding, linguistic cues may be virtually absent, as in Frost's line 'And miles to go before I sleep', which was also discussed above. Here, the repetition of the line is the main cue that something unusual is going on. Subtle metaphors like this can be called invisible metaphors in Stockwells (2000) terms or inexplicit ones in Goatly's (1997). When linguistic cues are virtually absent, problems may occur in Steen's procedure for the analytical identification of metaphor because it may be difficult to claim that the language is non-literal in the discourse. By the same token, it becomes more difficult to account for readers' actual figurative ways of reading that may occur in these cases. Nevertheless, Frost's 'miles to go' line is often read metaphorically, and Lakoff (1993) suggests that our knowledge of conceptual metaphors may help to account for such readings. Our knowledge of the CM Life Is A Journey may be triggered by the line's reference to an aspect of a journey

('miles to go'), and a metaphorical reading may result from this. This is the kind of deductive, top-down process of arriving at figurative readings that Gibbs (2002a) refers to in his comments on Steen's bottom-up, inductive approach (see above).

At the opposite extreme, problems may occur when the figurative language takes over to such an extent that the reader is no longer able to decide what is literally supposed to be going on. Semino (1997) uses John Ashbery's poem 'The Absence of a Noble Presence' to illustrate this problem. The first stanza of the poem goes like this:

> If it was treason it was so well handled that it
> Became unimaginable. No, it was ambrosia
> In the alley under the stars and not this undiagnosable
> Turning, a shadow in the plant of all things.

> (as cited in Semino, p. 106)

The stanza uses an abundance of potential metaphors to characterize an experience of some kind, but it is impossible to decide exactly what this experience is. In other words, we see a series of potential metaphor vehicles, but we have no obvious way of deciding which topic(s) to connect them to: The speaker apparently uses 'it' to refer to the experiential topic(s), but that hardly helps the reader. As a result, a figurative reading becomes virtually impossible.

Other examples could be given, but the main point should be clear by now: Literary texts sometimes appear to be designed to complicate comprehension in literal and/or figurative terms. Sometimes they may do this by using inexplicit metaphors that provide virtually no overt cues of figurative comprehension potential. On other occasions, they may do this by allowing the figurative to take over to such a degree that it blocks the comprehension process altogether. In cases of the former kind, CMs may help to guide the metaphor comprehension process, but it is not clear whether or how they could help in cases of the latter kind.

In this section, the degree of explicitness of linguistic metaphors has been related to the degree of foregrounding, and its potential effects on comprehension have also been considered. A metaphor's degree of explicitness is also likely to be related to metaphor interpretation and evaluation. However, a discussion of this relationship will be postponed until Chapter 6, where it provides the background to research presented in the chapter. The relationship between metaphor visibility and comprehension will be taken up again in Chapter 4.

3.3.2   Metaphor interpretation

Comprehension and interpretation are sometimes treated as synonyms, but in Gibbs's (1994) terms, they are clearly distinguished. Comprehension is an immediate, online process that operates within 'the time span of a few hundred milliseconds up to a few seconds at most' (p. 116). Consequently, psycholinguists investigating literal and figurative comprehension make heavy use of reading time data to test their theories of this online processing. Interpretation, in contrast, is a conscious and leisurely process without specific time limits. With regard to metaphor, Gibbs characterizes it as a search for a metaphor's possible entailments, and he illustrates the process using the example 'My marriage is an icebox' (p. 117). Gibbs proposes two entailments based on similarities between marriages and iceboxes: The marriage is 'metaphorically cold' (p. 117), or lacking in feeling and affection, and it is 'confining to the people who are married' (p. 117). It is not difficult to imagine additional entailments. For example, the metaphor may entail that sexual intercourse rarely takes place, or that the marriage is metaphorically as dark as the interior of an icebox.

Gibbs is using the term entailment in a CM theory sense here. This can be illustrated using the CM Anger Is Hot Fluid In A Container. Croft and Cruse (2004) point out that there are two kinds of correspondence between the domains: First, there are the mappings or 'ontological correspondences' (p. 197) between the source and the target domains. The source's 'container' maps onto 'body' in the target, 'heat of fluid' maps onto 'anger', 'heat scale' maps onto 'anger scale', and so on. Taking these correspondences as a starting point, we can use our rich knowledge of the source domain to reason about the target domain. For example, we know that when 'fluid in a container is heated beyond a certain limit, pressure increases to a point at which the container explodes' (Croft & Cruse, p. 197). This knowledge can be applied to the target in the following kind of way: 'When anger increases beyond a certain limit, "pressure" increases to a point at which the person loses control' (Croft & Cruse, p. 197). This is an entailment or an epistemic correspondence' (Croft & Cruse, p. 197). It is worth noting that Gibbs (1994) appears to be using entailments from two different CMs in his discussion of 'My marriage is an icebox'. The entailment that this marriage is lacking in feeling and affection comes from Emotion Is Heat. (The decrease in the intensity of the heat entails a decrease in intensity of affection—see Kövecses, 2002, p. 114.) The entailment that the marriage is confining appears to come from a different CM, perhaps Freedom Is Space To

Move/Mobility (Goatly, 1997, p. 49). An icebox offers little space to move and, by extension, the marriage offers little freedom. In general, then, Gibbs appears to be using a combination of his rich knowledge of iceboxes (with their coldness and lack of space) together with two CMs related to this knowledge to work out the entailments of the metaphor.

In analytical work on the interpretation of literary texts, metaphor plays a significant role. Some of this work makes no reference to CM theory. For example, Leech and Short's (1981) stylistic analysis of a short story by Joseph Conrad includes a discussion of patterns of metaphor in the story, but this discussion does not contain a single reference to CM theory. However, reference to CM theory has become increasingly common since the publication of Lakoff and Turner's (1989) application of CM theory to literature, and some of this research will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

Sometimes, CM theory can be used in a relatively straightforward way in discussions of how metaphors in literature are likely to be interpreted. Lakoff and Turner (1989) do this when they discuss a reference to 'the Setting Sun' in Emily Dickinson's poem 'Because I Could Not Stop for Death':

> We passed the Setting Sun—
> Or rather—He passed Us—
>
> (as cited in Lakoff &
> Turner, p. 5)

In the context of this poem with its focus on death, it seems reasonable to use the CM A Lifetime Is A Day to make sense of 'Setting Sun' and interpret it as a reference to old age, as Lakoff and Turner do.

However, problems begin to present themselves when Dickinson's metaphor is considered in the broader context of the poem. The poem describes a situation in which the poem's narrator is travelling in a carriage in the company of a personified Death, and the narrator explains how, in the course of this journey, they 'passed the Setting Sun—/Or rather—He passed Us'. One problem here is that we need to make sense not just of the setting sun itself but of passing or being passed by the sun. Using our rich knowledge of the Day domain and movement of the sun, it may be possible to construct an image of being passed by the sun as it sets, but it is not immediately obvious what metaphorical entailments this has for the Lifetime domain. In other

words, Lifetime Is A Day does not appear to be the relevant CM for the *pass*-related aspects of Dickinson's metaphor.

Dickinson's metaphor illustrates the general point that metaphor in literature often involves a degree of creativity. Lakoff and Turner (1989) suggest that CM theory can handle creativity by means of a number of processes: extending, elaborating, questioning, and composing. Creative linguistic metaphors draw attention to and even challenge CMs by means of these processes. For example, Lakoff and Turner use the following metaphor from Catullus to illustrate the process of questioning:

> Suns can set and return again,
> but when our brief light goes out,
> there's one perpetual night to be slept through.

> (as cited on p. 69)

They relate this linguistic metaphor to the CM A Lifetime Is A Day and suggest that it is designed to question the validity of this CM by drawing attention to its limitations: After a human sun has set, the Lifetime/Day analogy begins to break down because the 'night' that follows this sunset is permanent, not temporary.

Lakoff and Turner (1989) do not discuss how to deal with Emily Dickinson's metaphor about passing or being passed by the setting sun. However, it is conceivable that they would treat this as a case of the creative process of composing. This process involves the creative combination of different metaphors related to the same target domain— the target domain of Death in this case. Among the large number of death-related CMs, there is one that seems particularly relevant to Dickinson's line: Time Is A Pursuer. In their discussion of this CM, Lakoff and Turner suggest that we conceive of life as a race against time, and that 'when time catches up to us, it stops us and we die' (p. 46). In Dickinson's line, the idea of being engaged in a race may be suggested by her emphatic, foregrounded use of the verb *pass*. Thus, when the setting sun passes the carriage in the poem, death is suggested in two ways: The setting sun's passing represents both the loss of the race against time (as represented by the sun) via Time Is A Pursuer, and the end of the metaphorical 'day' of life via Life Is A Day.

Lakoff and Turner (1989) accept that CMs can be challenged and developed by means of processes such as questioning and composing, but they do not appear to think that any tenets of CM theory itself are challenged in the process. However, other researchers have found

it necessary to adapt and develop CM theory in order to handle the theoretical realities of interpreting metaphor in literature. For example, Semino (2002) uses a combination of CM theory and Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) blending theory in her analysis of metaphor in John Fowles's novel *The Collector*. This novel makes elaborate use of a Kidnapping Is Butterfly Collecting CM. Clegg, the narrator, is an avid lepidopterist, who kidnaps a young woman called Miranda and who justifies this kidnapping to himself by treating it as metaphorically equivalent to butterfly collecting. This works well enough in the first half of the novel, and CM theory also works well enough to account for the CM's mappings and entailments at this stage of Semino's analysis. In the latter half of the novel, however, problems begin to occur. A problem occurs, for example, when Miranda offers to have sex with the prudish Clegg. Semino cites Clegg's shocked reaction to this offer as follows:

> She was like some caterpillar that takes three months to feed up trying do it in a few days. I knew nothing good would come of it, she was always in such a hurry.
>
> (as cited in Semino, p. 117)

The problem with this metaphor is that one needs more than knowledge of the source domain to account for it. It may well be the case that some caterpillars need three months to feed up before developing into butterflies, but the idea of caterpillars trying to speed up this process and reduce it to a few days cannot plausibly be treated as source domain knowledge of caterpillar behaviour. Instead, the idea of inappropriate speed appears to come from the target domain: Clegg may be comfortable with the idea of sex with his victim once they have spent an appropriate amount of time getting to know each other, but Miranda's offer comes much too soon in his view. Subsequently, Clegg's subjective time frame for sexual relations is blended and contrasted with the natural time frame for a caterpillar's growth, and this produces his idea that Miranda's offer is unnatural and inappropriate. This illustrates why blending theory is sometimes necessary to complement CM theory.

Conceptual metaphor theory appears to be a powerful tool for making sense of the interpretation of metaphor in literature. If CMs guide our interpretations in the way the theory suggests, then it becomes possible to make fairly clear predictions about how particular groups of readers are likely to interpret linguistic metaphors in literary texts, especially metaphors that are comparatively conventional. The theory also

provides tools for describing and predicting the interpretative efforts that may be required when linguistic metaphors challenge or develop CMs by questioning them, composing them, and so on. However, theory alone is not enough. Research is necessary to find out whether the theory's predictions are borne out in practice, and research of this nature will be presented in a later chapter.

3.3.3   Metaphor evaluation and other affective responses

In discussions of the value of metaphor, some researchers are concerned with qualitative, aesthetic judgements of value in terms of a metaphor's aptness, while others are more interested in the affective side of value—metaphor's emotional effects, in other words. Gibbs (1994) is clearly concerned with the former when he writes about metaphor appreciation. This is another non-obligatory component of casual processing, and Gibbs characterizes it as a kind of aesthetic judgement: 'a reader might especially appreciate the aptness or aesthetic value of such an expression as *My marriage is an icebox*' (p. 117). Sopory (2005), in contrast, is concerned with the affective side of metaphor processing. Other researchers such as Miall and Kuiken (2002) and Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) treat aesthetic response itself as a kind of emotion—an Artefact emotion in Kneepkens and Zwaan's terms (see Chapter 2) or an aesthetic feeling in Miall and Kuiken's. Gibbs (2002b) maintains a distinction between aesthetic appreciation and emotional reaction, but he also recognizes that the former may be shaped 'to some significant degree' (p. 111) by the latter.

Recent theoretical work on the value of metaphor in literature has been concerned with the cognitive role of metaphor and its potential for bringing about cognitive change. Cook (1994) uses the term 'schema refreshment' to characterize the kind of cognitive change involved, and his terminology will be adopted here. The theoretical work in this schema-refreshment tradition is concerned with both aesthetic value and emotional effect and this connects it nicely with the broader research traditions identified in the preceding paragraph.

Cook's (1994) discussion of schema refreshment has its roots in schema theory, especially Schank and Abelson (1977). Broadly speaking, Cook aims to provide a cognitive, schema-theoretical foundation for the formalist theory of foregrounding. In essence, Cook's proposal is that literature's salient deviations in form and meaning may have cognitive consequences: The deviations may, as it were, rearrange our mental furniture and these changes to our schematic understanding are likely to be valuable. Cook expresses this idea in the following way: 'My claim

is that the primary function of certain discourses is to effect change in the schemata of their readers. Sensations of pleasure, escape, profundity, and elevation are conceivably offshoots of this function' (p. 191).

While Cook is concerned with the schema-refreshing role of foregrounding in general, Semino (1997) specifically investigates metaphor in literature from the perspective of schema refreshment. This discussion is closely related to the discussion of metaphor interpretation in the preceding section, where the potential challenge of interpreting metaphor in literature was highlighted. One example of the challenge was Dickinson's description of how her carriage 'passed the Setting Sun—/Or rather—He passed Us'. With reference to schema refreshment, Semino suggests that interpretative challenges like this are valuable and worth facing because we may gain new insights from doing so. For example, if we consciously interpret Dickinson's line in terms of a race with time, then this could heighten our awareness of the metaphorical idea that life is a kind of race against time. More specifically, after reading Dickinson's poem we may be reminded of our metaphorical race with time on occasions when we notice the sun passing above us through the sky.

Both Cook and Semino emphasize that the experience of schema refreshment will vary from reader to reader: What is fresh and insightful for some readers may seem stale and repetitive to others. At the same time, Semino (1997) also suggests that it is possible to distinguish metaphors in terms of their schema-refreshing potential. Seamus Heaney's poem 'A Pillowed Head' is given as an example of a poem with a relatively low potential for schema refreshment. In Semino's opinion, the poem's metaphorical connection between a childbirth and dawn is both conventional in itself (based as it is on the well-established CM A Lifetime Is A Day), and the poem also uses this metaphorical connection in a relatively conventional manner by treating both dawn and childbirth 'as positive and wondrous events' (p. 175). In contrast, Sylvia Plath's poem 'Morning Song', which is also concerned with childbirth, has a relatively high schema-refreshing potential. This is clear from the very first line, where Plath compares a baby to a watch: 'Love set you going like a fat gold watch' (as cited in Semino, p. 177).

In the course of her discussion of schema refreshment, Semino (1997) also attempts to account for the emotional impact of metaphor. She proposes that when writers make metaphorical connections in their texts, feeling is often involved because the metaphorically connected concepts tend to have emotive associations and these associations can be transferred. One illustration of this idea occurs in her discussion of

the Childbirth Is Dawn metaphor in Seamus Heaney's 'A Pillowed Head'. In Semino's view, the Dawn schema is conventionally associated with positive feelings such as hope or joy and these positive feelings carry over to the Childbirth schema. In practice, however, this metaphor may add little to the conventional affective evaluation of childbirth because a birth tends to have positive emotional associations already. In contrast, Plath's *fat gold watch* metaphor for a baby appears to be emotionally more complex. To me, gold watches convey a mixture of moderately positive associations related to their material value and negative ones such as ostentation, and I personally find it a little disturbing to attach either of these associations to a baby. Sopory (2005), who appears to be unaware of Semino's work, offers a similar discussion of how affect gets carried over in metaphor. Corpus research relevant to this idea will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Weber (1992) discusses the connection between literature and cognitive change with particular reference to aesthetic judgements of value. In his view, such judgements can be related to the ideological quality of the change involved. In some cases, texts will challenge classist, sexist, or racist ideologies and bring about positive change in society by doing so. Other texts, in contrast, may have a negative effect when 'the reader's prejudices or stereotypes are strengthened to the point of hardening into more and more irreversible attitude schemata' (Weber, p. 27). Against this background, Weber emphasizes that it is necessary to help readers to develop critical reading skills so that they learn not only to 'resist negative manipulation but also to draw full benefit from the potential for positive manipulation of certain (literary) texts' (p. 165).

Metaphors can clearly play a role in aesthetic judgements of value of the kind that Weber has in mind. As Carter (1997) puts it, 'there are always traces of ideology in metaphor if we have eyes to see them and if evaluation and knowledge of the world are involved' (p. 144). Van Dijk's (1975) metaphor 'The flowers in the park smiled at him' (p. 187) is an obvious case in point. Many people today may find it objectionable to see women referred to as flowers, because this suggests a rather sexist outlook, a view of the world in which women are mainly valued for their appearance and beauty and for serving a decorative function. As a result, a text that uses metaphors of this nature in an unquestioning way may well be evaluated negatively.

Semino (1997) agrees that schema refreshment can be related to aesthetic judgements of value, but she feels that Weber underestimates

the role of the reader in his discussion of this relationship. One problem is that 'Weber's framework seems to take it for granted that the reader's existing schemata are always narrow-minded, intolerant, and stereotyped' (Semino, p. 157). Secondly, it is also questionable to assume that individual readers will necessarily value the experience of having their ideological positions challenged. They may do this in some cases, but on other occasions they may value texts that confirm or reinforce their views instead. Thus, readers who are ideologically opposed to racism and sexism may feel encouraged and strengthened in their convictions by the experience of reading novels like Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. It is perfectly conceivable that this kind of schema-reinforcing experience is felt to be just as valuable as a schema-refreshing one. Research on the role of metaphor in the evaluation of literature will be presented in Chapter 6.

Although CM theory is used in a lot of interesting theoretical work in cognitive poetics, it needs to be noted that this is not inevitably the case. Tsur (2002) explicitly rejects it, saying that his own approach is 'diametrically opposed' (p. 314) to CM theory. Nevertheless, it seems to me that CM theory would be relevant and useful in his work, especially in his discussion of interpretation. Tsur's discussion of a Hebrew poem by Hayim Lesky illustrates this. The first two lines of the poem are translated into English as follows:

> The day is setting over the lake,
> The fish have gone down to sleep in the depth

> (as cited in Tsur, p. 283)

Tsur comments on how these lines introduce the idea of 'going down' (p. 284), and he relates this to the emotional qualities of 'calm or sadness' (p. 285). Some kind of cognitive explanation of this connection is required, and Tsur suggests that we use our 'literary competence' (p. 284) to do this. However, it is easy to see how CM theory offers an alternative here: The CM Sad Is Down conventionally connects 'going down' and 'sadness'. Under the circumstances, Tsur's categorical rejection of CM theory seems counterproductive. In my view, it makes better sense to treat CMs as a potential component of the communicative competence or figurative competence that we use to process figurative language, including figurative language in poetry. Figurative competence will be discussed in Chapter 7 with reference to work by Littlemore and Low (2006b).

3.4   Conclusion

The present chapter aimed to introduce theoretical work on linguistic and conceptual metaphor with a particular focus on metaphor in literature, and it attempted to do this in a way that connects closely with both the preceding chapter and the chapters that follow. The preceding chapter highlighted the formalist theory of foregrounding in its review of arguments for WWL and empirical research related to these arguments. The present chapter built on this by relating the discussion of metaphor in literature to foregrounding theory and by following the comprehension-interpretation-evaluation pattern of organization that was also used in Chapter 2. At the same time, the discussion of metaphor theory was also designed to provide the conceptual background for the research that will be presented in the chapters that follow.

The chapter has hopefully gained focus from the attempt to maintain close links with the chapters that surround it, but the unfortunate consequence of this narrow focus is that little room was left to discuss a number of important publications. Some of the neglected publications on metaphor in applied linguistics have already been mentioned, but there are also various publications in the area of cognitive stylistics that have not been covered. Thus, only two articles from Semino and Culpeper's (2002) edited collection have been referred to even though this collection includes contributions on metaphor by key figures such as Gerard Steen. Stockwell's (2002) introduction to cognitive poetics has not been discussed either, and the same fate has befallen its companion volume of edited papers, Gavins and Steen (2003), even though both of these books include chapters on conceptual metaphor. Unfortunately, it was also impossible to cover Hiraga's (2005) application of CM theory and blending theory to Japanese poetry.

4
Comprehension of Metaphor in Literature

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, metaphor comprehension was defined as 'the immediate moment-by-moment process of creating meanings for utterances' (Gibbs, 1994, p. 116). This is not the kind of leisurely interpretation that readers of literature may indulge in as they ponder the meaning potential of a metaphor or pattern of metaphors in a literary text. Instead, it is processing of a relatively superficial kind, and research methods reflect this with their emphasis on speed. To investigate comprehension, highly sensitive measurements of reading or response times (RTs) are a key tool: Eye movements are tracked to find out whether readers slow down or speed up at relevant points in a text; readers are asked to press a computer key to show that they have finished reading a word or sequence of words, and the computer records their time in milliseconds; after reading a metaphor like *My lawyer is a shark*, probe words such as *swim* or *vicious* are flashed onto the screen to find out which probe draws the most rapid responses. Response times to these words may reveal something about meanings that become salient when the word *shark* is used in a metaphorical sense. Research designs will normally take the form of a comparison between responses to words used in literal and metaphorical ways. Thus, if responses to probe words like *swim* or *vicious* are different after a literal usage such as *The hammerhead is a shark* than after a metaphor like *My lawyer is a shark*, then this can be indirectly revealing of aspects of the metaphor comprehension process. Glucksberg (2001), for example, uses items and probes like these for exactly this kind of purpose.

  Although literary theory has mainly been concerned with leisurely later stages of processing such as interpretation and evaluation, the

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online comprehension of metaphor should also be of considerable interest. One reason is that there is a direct link between comprehension and foregrounding theory. Foregrounding devices such as metaphor are supposed to slow down readers' normal processing and to draw their attention to the text by doing so. Reading-time research can be used to test this prediction and reveal whether the predicted slowing down actually takes place. Another reason why metaphor comprehension research is interesting is that it frequently involves a comparison between literal and metaphorical ways of reading. Metaphors in literature can be highly inexplicit, as we saw in the preceding chapter, and this can make it difficult even for experienced readers to decide whether a literal or metaphorical reading (or a combination of these) is indicated. The challenge is presumably all the greater for comparatively inexperienced L2 readers, and research reported later in the chapter focuses on how successful they are at doing this. To provide background for this, the chapter begins with an overview of L1 and L2 research on metaphor comprehension.

4.2   L1 metaphor comprehension

The Standard Pragmatic Model of metaphor processing is frequently used in overviews both because of its intrinsic importance as a model and because it provides an excellent starting point for explanations of alternative processing models. This model, which is based on the work of Grice (1989) and Searle (1979), can be summarized as a three-step process that occurs when people encounter metaphors:

> When a speaker says *Criticism is a branding iron*, listeners must (a) compute the literal meaning of the utterance; (b) decide if the literal meaning is the intended meaning of the utterance and if the literal meaning is inappropriate for the specific context; (c) compute the conveyed or metaphoric meaning via a cooperative principle or by the rules of speech acts.
>
> (Gibbs, 1994, p. 83)

While this summary fails to capture the subtlety of Grice's and Searle's arguments, it does highlight an empirically testable key point: If the Standard Pragmatic Model is correct, then it should take more time to comprehend metaphors than it does to comprehend non-metaphorical language. As Searle puts it, metaphorical readings will normally occur only after it is determined that an 'utterance is obviously defective if taken literally' (p. 112). This should take longer than the processing of

equivalent literal utterances that are not obviously defective in this way and, thus, do not call for further processing.

Early research suggested that the predicted difference in processing time does not occur, especially if sufficient context is provided to make clear whether a literal or metaphorical reading is indicated. (For overviews of this research, see Gibbs, 1994, pp. 99–106, and Glucksberg, 2001, Chap 2.) As a result, a range of other models of metaphor processing have been suggested, some of which remain quite close to the Standard Pragmatic Model. In the process, it has become clear that time differences can occur depending on a number of factors: conventionality and salience of meaning; the form of the metaphor; the role of conceptual metaphors; and the role of context. These factors will be discussed below, together with some of the main processing theories associated with them.

4.2.1 Conventionality and salience

Conventionality and salience could be treated as two separate factors, but they are closely related in Giora's (2003) Graded Salience Hypothesis, so these factors will be discussed together here. Giora's hypothesis is actually quite close to the Standard Pragmatic Model, but it emphasizes the importance of salient meanings—those that are 'foremost on one's mind' (p. 15)—rather than literal ones. According to Giora, salient meanings of words and phrases play a central role in processing: Sometimes this salient meaning will be literal, but in other cases, a conventionally figurative meaning will be salient instead. One of her examples is the idiom *to get cold feet*. The salient meaning of this expression is the conventionally figurative one of 'losing one's nerve', and Giora suggests that this salient figurative meaning always gets accessed, even in a context where the literal meaning of physically getting cold feet is intended. As a result, one can predict that it would be easier to process the idiom in contexts that are biased towards its salient figurative sense than in contexts that favour its non-salient literal one. In contrast, with novel metaphorical expressions, the opposite is predicted. Of its nature, the figurative meaning of a novel metaphorical expression cannot yet be salient, so literal meaning will inevitably be salient (and easier to process) in this case.

In short, Giora (2003) suggests that salient meanings always get accessed, and that this will affect processing regardless of the context. However, the context does play an independent (or modular) role, and it can speed up processing when 'the prior context is highly predictive'

(p. 37) of a relevant meaning. Thus, bottom-up (salience) and top-down (context) factors both affect processing. This hypothesis, furthermore, applies not only to metaphor processing, but also covers other figurative uses of language such as irony.

Giora (2003) describes a range of evidence in support of the Graded Salience Hypothesis. One of her studies investigated how quickly L1 readers of Hebrew processed conventional and novel metaphors in two different contexts—contexts that biased for literal readings and contexts that biased for metaphorical readings. In the following examples, the Hebrew idiom *to break one's head* is used with preceding context that biases for literal and metaphorical readings respectively. [Note: According to Giora, this idiom is equivalent to the English *to rack one's brains*.]

[Metaphorically biasing context]: In order to solve the math problem, the student broke her head.

[Literally biasing context]: Because she was so careless when she jumped into the pool, the student broke her head.

(Giora, p. 108)

According to Giora, the literal and figurative meanings of *break one's head* and the other Hebrew phrases that she used are 'similarly salient' (p. 107), so no difference in reading times were predicted in literally and metaphorically biasing contexts. This prediction was borne out in the study. In contrast, significant differences were found when novel metaphors were read in these two contexts. In this case, as noted above, literal meaning should be more salient than the novel (and inevitably non-salient) metaphorical meaning, and this difference in salience should affect reading times even when prior contexts are respectively supportive of these literal or metaphorical readings. This prediction was also borne out: Unfamiliar metaphors 'took longer to read in the metaphorically than in the literally biasing contexts' (Giora, p. 108).

Although Giora's (2003) data appear to provide solid support for the Graded Salience Hypothesis, there are a couple of problems. In the first place, it would have been desirable to see some kind of support for the claim that the literal and figurative meanings of familiar Hebrew metaphors such as *to break one's head* were 'similarly salient' (p. 107). This lack of difference in salience is rather surprising, given Giora's own point that idiomatic meanings of phrases such as *to get cold feet* will often

be more salient that their literal ones. A more problematic point is that the quality of the contextual support for literal and figurative readings of unfamiliar metaphors does not appear to have been controlled carefully. This is certainly the case with Giora's example *Their bone density is not like ours*. In this case, the literally biasing context seems considerably more helpful than the figuratively biasing context. This is the literally biasing item:

> Our granny had a fracture from just falling off a chair and was rushed to the hospital. I told my sister I had never had a fracture from falling off a chair. She explained to me about the elderly. She said: *Their bone density is not like ours*.
>
> <div align="right">(Giora, p. 108)</div>

In this case, the repetition of 'fracture' and the reference to 'hospital' help to prime the idea that one is dealing with literal rather than figurative problems with bone density. Note also that 'the elderly' provides an obvious antecedent for the pronoun 'their' in this item.

   Giora's (2003) helpful literally biasing context contrasts rather sharply with the unhelpful figuratively biasing one:

> A: My husband is terribly annoyed by his new boss. Every day he comes home after work even more depressed than he was the day before. Somehow, he cannot adjust himself to the new situation.
>
> B: *Their bone density is not like ours*.
>
> <div align="right">(p. 108)</div>

In this example, the pronoun 'their' has no clear antecedent. It probably refers to 'people like my husband' here, but this has to be inferred in context. In theory, it could also refer to 'people like my husband's boss', for example. The second problem is that although the context certainly biases against a literal reading of 'bone density', it hardly provides helpful, positive support for a particular figurative reading. At least two readings seems possible: If the husband's 'bone density' is causing the problem at work, then the metaphor may suggest that he lacks the 'mental toughness' necessary to deal with a new boss; if the boss's 'bone density' is the problem, then the metaphor may suggest that the boss lacks the 'sensitivity' necessary to deal with underlings. Thirdly, puzzlement may be caused by the pronoun 'ours' in speaker B's utterance. This presumably refers inclusively to speakers A and B, but

because we have no information about these speakers it becomes diffi-
cult to see what it is that makes their 'bone density' so obviously different
from that of people like speaker A's husband or like the boss of speaker
A's husband.

Of course this is only one of Giora's items. The contexts provided
for the other unfamiliar metaphors that she used in her research may
well have been equally helpful in the literally- and figuratively biasing
contexts. Nevertheless, given the difference in quality of the contextual
help for literal and figurative readings in Giora's example, it becomes
difficult to accept the claim that the higher reading speeds in the liter-
ally biasing contexts are exclusively due to the greater salience of the
literal meaning. This being said, Giora's idea that salient meanings play
an important role in processing remains an attractive one, and the
Graded Salience Hypothesis has also started to gain attention among L2
researchers. This work will be covered in the discussion of L2 metaphor
comprehension in Section 4.3.

4.2.2   Form of the metaphor

In Chapter 3, the linguistic form of a metaphor was identified as a factor
of theoretical importance with reference to comprehension. The discus-
sion there was concerned with metaphor explicitness: Depending on its
linguistic form, a metaphor will be more or less explicit or visible to the
reader and it was suggested that this may affect processing in positive
or negative ways. This and other aspects of form have also played an
important role in empirical metaphor research. Gentner and Bowdle
(2001), for example, report a range of research concerned with the
form-related difference between metaphors and similes, and against the
background of this research, they present their career of metaphor hypo-
thesis. They characterize this as an attempt to provide a 'unified theoret-
ical framework' (Gentner & Bowdle, p. 224) for metaphor research. The
name for this hypothesis derives from the idea that metaphors have a
'career': They inevitably start off this career as novel metaphors, but later
on they can become increasingly conventionalized due to frequency
of use. Gentner and Bowdle's discussion centres on this career-related
difference in conventionality on the one hand, and the form-related
difference between metaphors and similes on the other.

The difference between metaphor and simile can be viewed as a form-
related difference affecting explicitness: The use of *like* in similes makes
it explicit to the reader that a likeness between something and some-
thing else needs to be worked out. A metaphor lacks an explicit cue
of this nature. Gentner and Bowdle (2001) suggest that comprehension

is affected by this difference: The presence of *like* contributes to rapid comprehension in the case of novel figurative expressions but it tends to slow down the comprehension of conventional ones. In Gentner and Bowdle's view, novel metaphors are likely to puzzle or 'garden-path' (p. 233) readers briefly. For example, when readers encounter the metaphor *This job is a jail*, they get no explicit clue telling them that *jail* needs to be processed as a comparison, and this causes momentary puzzlement. Such puzzlement is avoided when *like* is added (*This job is like a jail*) because this helps to guide readers in the right direction. In the case of conventional figurative expressions, however, Gentner and Bowdle suggest that the use of *like* will tend to have an opposite effect and slow down comprehension. For example, it is quite conventional to call someone a *pig* in the conventionally figurative sense of 'greedy person'. In this case, it may cause puzzlement if the canonical form is changed into the expression *You're like a pig*. The addition of *like* seems slightly odd and deviant here, and this deviance is likely to reduce processing speed. In effect, one could say that the addition of *like* defamiliarizes the familiar expression *You're a pig*, and that this affects normal processing. Bowdle and Gentner (2005) discuss experimental research related to the career of metaphor hypothesis. One of these studies was concerned with speed of comprehension, and as predicted, they found that novel items were comprehended faster as similes than as metaphors while conventional items were comprehended faster as metaphors than as similes.

The presence or absence of *like* appears to be one form-related aspect of processing, but it is by no means the only aspect of form that has been studied. For example, the sentence position of a metaphor's vehicle is another form-related factor that has been investigated for its role in comprehension. Giora (2003) investigated this in a study in which subjects were given items like the following:

> Sarit's sons and mine went on fighting continuously. Sarit said to me: These *delinquents* won't let us have a moment of peace.
>
> (p. 112)

In this example, the metaphor vehicle *delinquents* has sentence-initial position. However, in other cases, the second sentence was rearranged so that *delinquents* appeared in sentence-final position. The response times of Giora's subjects to probe words such as *criminals* demonstrated that sentence-initial topics tended to be processed more slowly than sentence-final ones.

4.2.3   The role of conceptual metaphors

The Standard Pragmatic Model reflects the assumption that the human mind is geared towards the literal and that it needs to make an additional effort to deal with 'deviant' figurative language. Gibbs (1994) boldly proposes the opposite: The ubiquity of figurative language (metaphor, metonymy, irony, indirect speech acts, and so on) suggests that such language is normal rather than deviant. Against this background, it makes more sense to assume that literal language enjoys no priority and that the human mind is fully equipped to handle figurative language directly. This has come to be known as the direct access view: 'An alternative view of figurative language use suggests that people can comprehend the intended meanings of many nonliteral utterances directly if these are seen in realistic social contexts' (Gibbs, 2001, p. 318). Note that Gibbs limits the claims for direct access to cases when the context is realistic.

Gibbs's (1994) discussion of the specifics of metaphor processing fully reflects the direct access idea that the human mind is equipped to deal directly with figurative language. With reference to CM theory, Gibbs proposes that 'our understanding of metaphor is inherently constrained by our conceptualization of experience' (p. 249), that is, by the CMs that provide structure to our experience. Large numbers of linguistic metaphors are instantiations of these CMs, and this makes it possible for them to be 'understood quite easily during the earliest moments of processing' (Gibbs, p. 251). In other words, the CMs that give figurative structure to our mental architecture make it possible to understand CM-related linguistic metaphors directly. Gibbs calls this the conceptual structure view of metaphor.

Research by Gentner, Bowdle, Wolff, and Boronat (2001) provides some support for the conceptual structure view. With reference to CM theory, they hypothesized that consistency would play a role in metaphor comprehension: Once a given CM has been activated, linguistic metaphors that are consistent with this CM should be easier to comprehend than those that are not. They investigated this idea by creating short texts in which the final metaphor was either consistent or inconsistent with the pattern of metaphors preceding it in the text. For example, they wrote two passages describing a participant in a debate. One passage had a pattern of metaphors related to the CM A Debate Is A War and the other had a pattern related to the CM A Debate Is A Race. The final sentence, in both cases, was 'His skill left his opponent *far behind him* at the *finish line*' (Gentner *et al.*, p. 213). This is consistent

with A Debate Is A Race but not with A Debate Is A War. As predicted, they found that metaphors that were consistent with a CM were read significantly faster than those that were not. However, this was only true with novel metaphors. Consistency did not affect comprehension speed when highly conventional linguistic metaphors were used. For overviews of other research relevant to the conceptual structure view of metaphor, see Gibbs (1994; 2006).

4.2.4 The role of context

Context has already been mentioned a number of times in the preceding discussion of factors in the online comprehension of metaphor. Clearly, it is viewed as a significant factor by many researchers, but there is some disagreement about the specifics. Katz and Ferretti (2001) describe this as a disagreement between the direct access view (of which Gibbs is a proponent) and views that hypothesize the need for the initial obligatory processing either of a literal meaning (the Standard Pragmatic Model) or a conventional, salient one (Giora's Graded Salience Hypothesis).

Katz and Ferretti's (2001) own research found some support for all of these views but the support was not unambiguous for any of them. This research investigated the reading times of familiar and unfamiliar proverbs in two contexts: literally and figuratively biasing ones. For example, in a literally biasing context, *Lightning never strikes the same place twice* expressed the idea that real lightning would not strike the same place (a particular tree) twice, and in the figuratively biasing context it expressed its familiar proverbial meaning. Similar contexts were created for comparatively unfamiliar proverbs such as *Empty bottles make the most sound*. Katz and Ferretti used a self-paced moving windows method for presenting the paragraphs word-by-word so that reading times for individual words could be recorded.

Reading-time data for the familiar proverbs mainly supported the direct access view. In figuratively biasing contexts, familiar proverbs were read slightly faster for the first word or two, but the speed difference disappeared after that. This finding is difficult to reconcile with views that claim the need for an initial, obligatory processing of a literal or salient meaning, because a difference in reading times would be predicted by both. However, these latter views did gain support from the unfamiliar proverbs' reading times. Unfamiliar proverbs were read more quickly in literally biasing contexts than in figuratively biasing ones. Given the fact that clear contextual support for literal and figurative readings is provided in both cases, the direct access view cannot easily

account for this difference in reading times. In contrast, both literal-first and salient-first models predict that the literal reading will be more accessible and easier to process in this case, and the data bear this out.

Against the background of their mixed findings, Katz and Ferretti (2001) argue for a conciliatory position amongst the various views: The data suggest 'that taking categorical either-or positions in which saliency, for instance, is pitted against a direct access model … might prove to be the less profitable route to take' (p. 214). Instead, they favour what Gibbs (2001) calls a 'broad umbrella' (p. 325) approach in which recognition is given to a broad range of factors—literality, salience, context, and so on—as potential constraints on processing, and they argue for a shared focus on investigating how these factors interact. Given the paucity of data on L2 online comprehension of metaphor (see below), this would appear to be a particularly appropriate position for L2 researchers to assume at present.

Although the various comprehension-speed studies discussed in this section were motivated by different processing models, many of them provided evidence that can be viewed as supportive of foregrounding theory. The findings related to novel metaphors are particularly relevant. Giora's (2003) study found that items like *Their bone density is not like ours* are read faster in literally biasing contexts than in contexts that turn them into novel metaphors, and Katz and Ferretti (2001) obtained similar findings for unfamiliar (novel) proverbs. At the same time, various factors can affect the speed of processing of novel metaphors. Form is one factor, because Bowdle and Gentner's (2005) research shows that novel metaphors preceded by *like* are understood more quickly than they are when *like* is absent. This finding is related to metaphor explicitness. Another study by Gentner and her fellow researchers (Gentner *et al.*, 2001) shows that the activation of a relevant CM has a similar effect: Novel linguistic metaphors are understood faster if they are preceded by other linguistic metaphors that activate a relevant CM.

4.3   L2 metaphor comprehension

In comparison with the rich L1 research tradition outlined above, L2 research in the area of online metaphor comprehension is limited. However, there is some relevant research concerned with L2 metaphoric competence, and recently Giora's Graded Salience Hypothesis has also provided inspiration for online L2 processing research. These studies will be discussed next.

Littlemore (2001; see also Littlemore & Low, 2006b) has investigated L2 metaphoric competence in a number of papers. Littlemore (2001) defines metaphoric competence as the 'ability to acquire, produce, and interpret metaphors in the target language' (p. 459). For the purpose of her research, she relied on four metaphoric competence measures, such as 'originality of metaphor production' (p. 461) and 'speed in finding meaning in metaphor' (p. 461). Broadly speaking, her research was designed to investigate whether metaphoric competence was related to communicative competence on the one hand, and to learners' cognitive styles on the other.

For present purposes, Littlemore's (2001) findings with regard to the relationship between L2 learners' speed of finding meaning in metaphor and their communicative competence are relevant. One would expect to find a clear relationship between higher levels of competence and speed of finding meaning in metaphor, but surprisingly, this is not what Littlemore found. In fact, she found no significant relationship between communicative competence and any of her four measures of metaphoric competence.

Littlemore herself attributes this surprising finding to problems with her test of communicative competence. She used the students' scores on an oral interview for this purpose. This was a stressful event for the students because it was an official examination at the Belgian university where they were studying, and this raises questions about whether it was a suitable measure of their communicative competence in English. However, it is also conceivable that there was simply not enough variance in the communicative competence of Littlemore's subjects: Her students were all English majors at the 'intermediate to upper-intermediate level' (pp. 467–468). Significant differences in metaphor processing speeds may well have been found if lower-intermediate students had also been included in her sample. Some support for this possibility can be found in Azuma (2005). Azuma found a significant correlation between vocabulary size and her own measures of metaphoric competence among the lower-level Japanese EFL students who participated in her research: 'the less vocabulary they know, the lower their metaphorical ability' (p. 208). However, Azuma does not provide specific data on the relationship between vocabulary size and metaphor comprehension speed, because she did not use comprehension speed as a measure of metaphoric competence.

While very little research has been done on the online comprehension of novel metaphors by L2 learners, there is a fairly substantial body of literature on the subject of L2 idiomatic language processing. It is

interesting to note that recent research in this area has emphasized the importance of literal meaning in the comprehension process. Direct access of figurative meaning may well be possible for L1 learners thanks to their extensive L1 exposure to idiomatic expressions, but Kecskes (2006) suggests that this is unlikely to be the case for L2 learners because they are 'usually much more familiar with the literal meanings of lexical units than with their figurative meanings' (p. 227). In other words, literal meanings are also likely to be the salient ones for L2 learners. If this is the case, then the Standard Pragmatic Model with its emphasis on literal-first processing may well turn out to retain considerable validity for research on L2 figurative language processing.

A number of recent studies provide solid support for the import-ance of literal meanings in L2 idiom processing. In one study, Liontas (2001) investigated L2 learners' ability to identify idiomatic phrases in authentic literary texts. His subjects, who were American university students of Modern Greek, were asked to read these texts and underline all expressions that seemed idiomatic to them and to explain briefly in writing why the phrases had been chosen. The main reason given (in approximately 24 per cent of the cases) was that the 'literal meaning does not make sense' (Liontas, p. 8). This finding does not clarify the exact role of the literal meaning in actual online comprehension, of course, but it certainly makes it clear that these learners often could not use prior knowledge of Modern Greek idioms to directly identify the items that they encountered. In other words, direct access was not an option for these students.

Abel (2003) reports a similar finding with German EFL students. In the course of a study concerned with the role of individual idiom components in L2 idiom comprehension and storage in memory, she asked her subjects to explain what they did if they encountered an unfamiliar idiom in an English text. The majority of Abel's students 'answered that they consider the literal meaning of the constituents and then try to put together the idiomatic meaning of the whole phrase' (p. 349). The students' initial focus on the literal meaning of an idiom's individual constituents also provides some support for Abel's idea that the so-called 'decomposability' of idioms plays a role in L2 idiom comprehension. Idioms are considered decomposable if a connec-tion can be found between literal components of the idiom and the idiom's figurative meaning. Abel gives *to miss the boat* as an example of a decomposable idiom: The verb *miss* contributes independently to the idiom's figurative meaning of 'miss an opportunity'. In contrast, the idiom *to kick the bucket* would not normally be considered decomposable

because there is no obvious way in which the idiom's components can be connected to the figurative meaning 'to die'. Thus, the strategy of using the literal meaning of an idiom's components to work out the idiom's overall meaning will presumably work better with decomposable idioms than with non-decomposable ones.

While Liontas's and Abel's studies both provide suggestive indirect evidence of the importance of literal meanings in L2 idiom comprehension, Cieślicka (2006) produces direct evidence that literal meanings play an online role. Giora's Graded Salience Hypothesis heavily influenced this research. Like Giora, Cieślicka believes that salient meanings play an important role in figurative language processing. However, Cieślicka also argues that literal meanings are normally the salient ones for L2 learners because of the formal L2 instruction that they experience: Such learners 'most typically encounter new L2 idiomatic expressions when they are already familiar with literal meanings of words making up those idiomatic phrases' (p. 121). This echoes Kecskes's (2006) views on the primacy of literal meanings among L2 learners (see above).

Cieślicka (2006) worked with advanced-level Polish students of English philology as subjects in order to find support for her literal salience view. The students listened to short sentences with English idioms and were asked to respond by reading single words on computer screens and deciding as quickly as possible whether these were real English words. Some of these probe words were related to the literal meaning of the idiom while others were related to its figurative sense. For example, the students listened to the sentence 'The young student *had cold feet* about giving the presentation' (Cieślicka, p. 144) and they were asked to judge whether *toes* (a literal probe) or *nervous* (an idiomatic probe) were real English words. All of the idioms used in the study were assessed for familiarity by an independent group of students and also by the participants themselves after the experiment was over. It turned out that even though the idioms were familiar to the participants, the priming effects of the literal probe words 'significantly exceeded those obtained by idiomatic targets' (Cieślicka, p. 131). In other words, Cieślicka's subjects were better at recognizing literal probes (like *toes*) as real English words than they were at recognizing figurative probes (like *nervous*) after hearing idioms like *to have cold feet*. This represents strong evidence for the view that literal meanings are more salient than figurative ones for L2 learners and that they interfere with L2 processing of conventionally figurative language. In other words, even conventional figurative expressions can

cause foregrounding effects and slow down L2 learners' comprehension of these expressions.

The preceding overview of research on L1 and L2 metaphor comprehension has covered some of the main issues, but none of the research discussed was directly concerned with the comprehension of metaphor in literature. The research reported in the remainder of the chapter draws on the general metaphor comprehension studies in the process of investigating aspects of L2 learners' comprehension of metaphor in short literary texts.

4.4   L2 comprehension of metaphor in literature

The research summarized above indicates that literal meanings play a significant role in L2 comprehension of metaphor (especially idioms), but it does not tell us anything directly about the comprehension of metaphor in literature. Hoffstaedter-Kohn's (1991) research (see Chapter 2) provides evidence that figurative language in poetry can cause comprehension problems for L2 learners, but her research does not relate these problems to metaphor comprehension research in any way. My own research, reported below, attempts to bridge this gap. This is concerned with literal and metaphorical comprehension of metaphors in literature and the conditions that influence this among L2 learners.

4.4.1   Literal and metaphorical comprehension of metaphor in literature

In the earlier discussion of the comprehension of metaphors in literature (see Chapter 3), two potential challenges were identified. At one extreme, literary texts may use relatively invisible metaphors that provide only subtle hints of their figurative meaning potential for the reader. Frost's 'miles to go before I sleep' was given as an example of this. At the other extreme, literary writers may challenge the reader by allowing figurative language to take over to such a degree that it blocks the comprehension process altogether. John Ashbery's poem 'The Absence of a Noble Presence' was used to illustrate this. Recent research by Yaron (2002, 2003) sheds some light on how readers approach literary challenges of the latter kind. The research discussed below investigates the former kind of challenge: the effect of metaphor invisibility on comprehension.

Metaphor visibility is Stockwell's (2000) term for what Goatly (1997) calls metaphor explicitness. Detailed discussions of the resources that can be deployed to increase or reduce metaphor visibility can be found in both texts, especially in Goatly's Chapter 6. To illustrate the effect of

Table 4.1 Metaphor visibility: From invisible to blindingly visible

1. Only one term is visible:	*I can see the sun.*
2. Both terms are visible, but the link is not very close:	*I can see my love.* *I can see the sun.*
3. Both terms are visible and closely linked:	*Juliet is the sun.*
4. Both terms are visible and closely linked, and a lexical cue is given:	*Juliet is, metaphorically speaking, the sun.*

these resources on a nominal metaphor, Table 4.1 displays variations on Shakespeare's metaphor 'Juliet is the sun' that range from the invisible to the blindingly visible. The variations show that the visibility of the 'sun' metaphor depends on (1) how much of the metaphor is visible (both topic and vehicle term, or vehicle term only); (2) how strongly the elements are linked; and (3) whether there is a lexical cue that highlights the presence of a metaphor. Depending on the combination of these factors, the metaphor can range from invisible (example 1) to blindingly visible (example 4).

The first example in Table 4.1 is invisible. Without further context, it is impossible to know that 'the sun' is referring unconventionally to Juliet. Example 2 has slightly greater visibility because the topic ('my love') and the vehicle ('the sun') are given, and the parallelism between the two lines also suggests a connection between the two. However, parallelism is not a strong link, and the possibility remains that 'my love' and 'the sun' are actually two separate entities. In example 3, the copula connecting the topic and vehicle effectively excludes this possibility, and this substantially raises the visibility of the metaphor. The lexical cue 'metaphorically speaking' in example 4 further increases the visibility by highlighting the metaphorical nature of this connection.

Exact statistics on the proportions of visible and invisible metaphors in literature are not available. Brooke-Rose's (1958) corpus study of metaphor in English poetry makes it clear that the proportions can vary substantially from writer to writer. For example, simple replacement metaphors (Brooke-Rose's term for items like example 1 in Table 4.1) come third in overall frequency, but Hopkins and Thomas use them with great frequency while Pope and Milton hardly use them at all. The copula metaphor with its strong connection between metaphor topic and vehicle (example 3 in Table 4.1) is only seventh in overall frequency, but Donne uses them more than any other poet in Brooke-Rose's corpus while Eliot does not use them at all. Additional statistics can be found

in Goatly (1997), who compares metaphor usage in literature (modern novels and lyric poetry) and in other genres (conversation, news, popular science, and advertising). He found that the explicit marking of metaphor by means of lexical cues or other devices (example 4 in Table 4.1) is extremely rare in literature (8 per cent of the cases in novels and 2 per cent in lyric poetry), but common in both conversation (30 per cent) and news (39 per cent).

Statistics aside, it is clear that L2 students will encounter metaphors at the invisible end of the scale when they read literature. The question is how well they will manage to deal with this particular kind of challenge. One predictable outcome is that they will comprehend these metaphors in a literal way: The research by Cieślicka (2006) and others indicates that literal meanings are salient for L2 learners, and low visibility metaphors do little to override this. The following study, which is also discussed in Picken (2001), and two follow-up studies investigate this prediction.

Metaphor visibility and the comprehension of metaphor in literature

Participants: Thirty first-year students in a department of English literature at a women's college in Japan participated in this study.

Materials: The students were asked to write explanations of a verbal metaphor located at the end of a very short story called 'Carpathia' (Kercheval, 1996). Two versions of the metaphor were used, one virtually invisible, the other highly visible.

'Carpathia' tells the story of the honeymoon of the narrator's parents. They are sailing on the good ship Carpathia, and one morning they wake up to find themselves at the scene of the shipwreck of the Titanic. The husband and wife react differently to the disaster: The wife helps the survivors, while the husband ponders the fate of those who did not survive. The Carpathia returns to New York and the narrator's parents return home. At a welcome-home party, the narrator's father gets drunk. When someone asks him about the Titanic, he expresses his selfish and male chauvinist perspective on the event as follows: 'They should have put the men in the lifeboats. Men can marry again, have new families. What's the use of all those widows and orphans?' (Kercheval, 1996, p. 93). The story's ending records his wife's shocked response to this. For the purpose of the study, two versions of this ending were created:

> [*Ending with invisible metaphor*]: My mother, who was standing next to him, turned her face away. She was pregnant, eighteen. She was drowning. But there was no one there to help her.

[*Ending with visible metaphor*]: My mother, who was standing next to him, turned her face away. She was pregnant, eighteen. In her heart, she was drowning. But there was no one there to help her.

In the second version with the visible metaphor, the prepositional phrase 'In her heart' makes it virtually impossible to interpret 'she was drowning' literally: People can drown in many locations, but a heart is not one of these. Without the prepositional phrase, the 'drowning' metaphor is much less visible in the first version, but it is not completely invisible because it is clear from the context that the mother is standing next to her husband at a party and it is difficult to imagine that she could be drowning under the circumstances.

Method: The two versions were distributed at random among the students. They were given approximately 20 minutes to read the story and to write explanations (not translations) of the story's final two sentences in Japanese. They were instructed not to use dictionaries during the task, but spoken explanations of a small number of potentially unfamiliar vocabulary items were given in English and Japanese, and the English explanations were also given on the task sheet, including one for *drown*. However, in order to avoid relating a literal explanation of this word to its occurrence in the metaphor at the end of the story, 'drowned' was written into the story at an earlier point, and the literal explanation of this word was explicitly related to this line.

The students' explanations were categorized either as Metaphorical or as Literal, and an Other category was used for the readings that could not be categorized with confidence. Literal explanations were those in which 'drowning' was a physical drowning, and the Metaphorical category covered cases in which 'drowning' was explained in terms of the mother's feelings of despair, pain, shock, sadness, and so on.

Results and discussion: Analysis of the data revealed substantial differences between the group that got the high-visibility version of the metaphor and the group with the low-visibility version. In the high-visibility group, there were 14 Metaphorical explanations and only 1 Literal one. In the low-visibility group, there were 4 Metaphorical explanations, 8 Literal ones, and 3 that could not be categorized with confidence. The difference in the number of Literal readings is statistically significant. A chi-square test using the Yates correction factor for 2×2 designs yields the value 5.714, which is significant at the .025 level.

The interesting thing is that these differences occurred even though all the students who went for a Literal reading appeared to realize that the

wife could not literally be drowning at that point in the story. Instead of reading the words metaphorically, however, they stuck to a literal meaning of 'drowning' but located the event in the past or treated it as a hypothetical event. Locating it in the past was the most common approach. In six cases, this was the mother's own past—for example, she remembered how nobody had come to her rescue when a ship had sunk when she was eighteen. In one case, the drowning victim was a different woman. This reading also cast the father's response in a positive light: He regretted the fact that there were no men in the lifeboats because this meant that there were no men around to help the pregnant mother (another woman) when she was drowning.

Hypothetical drownings were found in two cases. One of these was a hypothetical future drowning: The mother felt that if she or her child were drowning, they would not get any help—presumably from the father. The other was a hypothetical past event: The mother could not overcome the frightening thought that she could have drowned in the sea. This Literal explanation was also the only one that was found in the group that read the high-visibility version of the drowning metaphor.

Overall, the findings suggest that metaphor visibility has a powerful effect on comprehension. The salient literal meaning of 'drowning' was difficult to overcome in the low-visibility version of the story's ending. At the same time, it needs to be emphasized that the study does not provide direct evidence of what happens during actual online comprehension. It is perfectly possible, for example, that all students entertained the possibility of a metaphorical reading during online processing, but that some students ultimately rejected this possibility. By the same token, the students who ended up with a metaphorical reading may well have entertained, but rejected, a literal reading during online processing. Under the circumstances, the strongest claim that can be made for the study is this: With regard to the literal or meta- phorical *product* of L2 learners' online comprehension of metaphor in a short literary text, the visibility of the metaphor appears to play a highly significant role.

Follow-up studies: Two follow-up studies were carried out with 'Carpathia'. One of these investigated the effects of metaphor visibility on more advanced students at the same college as the students in the first study. For this purpose, 16 third-year students were asked to read the version of the story ending with the low-visibility version of the metaphor: 'She was drowning'. Five literal explanations were found in

this case, and two of these involved hypothetical drownings. In comparison with the first-year students in the first 'Carpathia' study, this is a slightly lower proportion of literal explanations. Nevertheless, the number is large enough to show that metaphor visibility continues to affect comprehension among more advanced students.

The other follow-up study investigated whether different metaphors would have the same kind of effect as the original 'drowning' metaphor. The latter is a verbal metaphor, and this follow-up study used two story endings that included a nominal metaphor instead. Apart from this, the study was identical to the first one. Nineteen first-year students in the English department at the same women's college participated, the two versions of the story were distributed at random, and after an explanation of the vocabulary, the students were asked to write explanations of the story's final lines in Japanese.

The new metaphors were based on the idea of a love relationship as a (sinking) ship: 'Her love's ship was sinking' was the lower-visibility version and 'Her ship of love was sinking' the higher-visibility one. Brooke-Rose (1958) would categorize the noun phrases in both of these versions as 'genitive links'. The genitive link is an important grammatical category of metaphor: It is the most frequent category both in Brooke-Rose's (1958) corpus of poetry and in Goatly's (1997) corpora of modern English lyric poetry and modern novels. Genitive and *of*-construction metaphors also tend to be complex and ambiguous (see Brooke-Rose, Chaps 7–8, and Goatly, pp. 215–220), one of these ambiguities being the 'possibility of literal interpretation' (Brooke-Rose, p. 159). A metaphor type that is both frequent in literary texts and potentially confusing was an obvious candidate for a follow-up study.

At first sight, the difference between the metaphors may appear to be so slight that it would be counterintuitive to expect differences in processing. On closer inspection, however, there are differences, and a particularly important one is related to a point made by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (1985): 'more distinctions can be made in post- than in premodification generally, and this . . . is true also for the *of*-construction' (p. 1276). A specific advantage of being able to make more distinctions in postmodification is that it is easier to avoid ambiguity. 'Her love's ship' is ambiguous because it can mean at least two things: 'The ship of her love (in which "her love" is the person that she loves)' and 'Her [metaphorical] ship of love.' The *of*-construction 'ship of love' can avoid this ambiguity: The absence of the possessive pronoun 'her' before 'love' indicates that 'love' is an abstract noun. Quirk *et al.* also mention a relevant difference in meaning between the genitive and

Table 4.2   Explanations of metaphors in the second 'Carpathia' follow-up study

	her love's ship (lower- visibility metaphor)	her ship of love (higher- visibility metaphor)
Metaphorical	3	8
Mixed	3	1
Literal	1 + 1(?)	
None	2	

the *of*-construction: The genitive prototypically expresses *possession*, and possession is a concept that we think of 'chiefly in terms of our own species' (p. 323). Given the genitive's association with human possession, the default reading of 'her love's ship' is likely to be 'the ship of the person she loves'.

Although the difference between the metaphors was comparatively subtle in this follow-up study, degree of visibility had a clear effect on the explanations in the two groups. (See Table 4.2.) Only three explanations in the Metaphorical category were found in the lower-visibility metaphor group of ten students, while the nine students in the higher-visibility metaphor group produced eight explanations in this category. The Mixed category covers explanations with a combination of literal and metaphorical components. For example, one student wrote that the narrator's mother had (literally) experienced being rescued from a sinking ship and also that her husband's words at the party (metaphorically) made her feel such despair that it was like being thrown into a cold sea.

Of the two explanations in the Literal category, one was unambiguously literal; the other was apparently literal but so puzzling that it had to be categorized with caution. The gist of what this student wrote was that the parents were on the Titanic (!) when it sank, but that the Carpathia rescued them. This good fortune was mainly due to the fact that the mother was pregnant. If this had not been the case then they might not have been allowed onto the Carpathia. (The student does not explain why permission to board the Carpathia was contingent on pregnancy.) Finally, the two students in the None category wrote summaries of the story but these summaries did not include explanations of the story's final lines.

Taken together, these three 'Carpathia' studies show that metaphor visibility is a significant factor in the comprehension of metaphor in literature by L2 learners. There is a substantial and sometimes significantly greater likelihood that relatively invisible metaphors will be

understood literally by such learners. This provides convergent evidence for the salience of literal meanings among L2 learners that researchers like Liontas (2001), Abel (2003), and especially Cieślicka (2006) have also documented.

4.4.2   Afterthought: Literal meaning revisited

Literal meaning is a tricky concept at the best of times—see Chapter 3 and Gibbs (1994, Chap 2) for further discussion. The 'Carpathia' studies above introduce an additional complication in the sense that they show that 'drowning' can be made literal in a number of different ways. It can become a drowning in the past or a drowning in the hypothetical past or future. In later studies with 'Carpathia', a new 'fantasy' or 'ghost story' reading was also encountered. In this case, the mother became a ghost. A past drowning had caused her death, and her ghost was standing next to the father at the party. This was a new way of reconciling the contradictory facts that the mother had both experienced a 'drowning' and that she was standing next to her husband at the same time.

Depending on the purpose of one's research, it may be desirable to take differences like these into account. In the 'Carpathia' studies, a single Literal category is enough to convey the broad picture, but sub-categorizations would probably be desirable if one wanted to invest-igate the connection between L2 metaphor comprehension and L2 reading proficiency, for example. The metaphor comprehension models discussed at the beginning of the present chapter do not provide a good basis for this because they refer to literal meaning in the singular only.

Theoretical work by Werth (1999) provides a good starting point for categorizing the multiplicity of potential literal readings, and work by van Dijk (1975) and others can be used to make sense of the connection between metaphor and fantasy. Werth's work on discourse processing has been widely used in stylistics recently (for example Stockwell, 2002). One reason is that he is particularly concerned with issues in the processing of fiction. Informally speaking, Werth sees this as a process of building a rich mental picture of a 'text world' in response to the linguistic cues provided by the text. A basic fictional text world consists of one text world and a number of sub-worlds. The text world is the world described by the story's narrator. The sub-worlds can be added either by the narrator or by the characters in the course of their parti-cipation in the story. The following invented passage illustrates this:

The four of them continued on their path. Late in the afternoon an unusually shaped hill appeared on the horizon: It looked just like an

enormous hamburger. When Richard saw this, his stomach began to rumble. In his mind's eye he had visions of the juicy Monsterburgers served at Mrs Brown's Hamburger Heaven.

This passage builds a text world and a sub-world. The text world is a world in which four characters are walking somewhere. The sub-world is the world of Richard's subjective experiences, especially his vision of the Monsterburgers. He has visions of the Monsterburgers, but his travelling companions do not.

Werth (1999) suggests that there are three main classes of sub-world: deictic, attitudinal, and epistemic ones. Deictic sub-worlds, which are normally set up by the narrator, involve narrative shifts in terms of time and place. A flashback in a narrative is an example of a shift in time. Attitudinal sub-worlds are created by a character's desires, beliefs, and purposes. The sub-world in the passage above is an example: Richard is dreaming of a Monsterburger because he is hungry. This is a desire sub-world. Epistemic sub-worlds, finally, are related to issues of truth. For example, in the following passage there is an issue of truth regarding time:

'You must be joking,' the Colonel remarked. 'It can't be half-past three already. I'd most certainly have known. I always get peckish round about three.'

(as cited in Werth, p. 245)

In the text world, the time appears to be half-past three, but in the Colonel's epistemic sub-world, this truth is hard to accept: 'It can't be half-past three already'.

For present purposes, the practical value of text world theory is that it provides a basis for the sub-categorizations of different kinds of literal comprehension. In principle, the literal readings of 'She was drowning' can be categorized as literal in the main text world or as literal in one of various sub-worlds: A deictic sub-world category can be used for cases of drowning in the past, and an epistemic one for cases of hypothetical drowning.

The relationship between metaphor and fantasy is clarified in van Dijk's (1975) discussion of metaphor. This relationship can be illustrated using his example 'The flowers in the park smiled at him' (van Dijk, p. 87), which was also discussed in Chapter 3. Van Dijk not only discusses this example from the perspective of metaphor, but he also considers the fact that this 'metaphor' could be quite literal if it were

used in a fantasy story such as *Alice in Wonderland*. In a fantasy world in which flowers have human faces, it would certainly be possible for these flowers to smile literally. Other fantasy readings become available once we shift from the text world of a story to the sub-world of a character's mind. Thus, someone could be dreaming that human-faced flowers are literally smiling at him.

Levin (1993) also discusses the relationship between metaphor and fantasy. He suggests that there are, in principle, two options available to us when we encounter a potentially metaphorical expression. The first option is to 'construe the utterance so that it makes sense in the world' (Levin, p. 121). This happens with metaphorical readings, such as when we construe 'flowers' metaphorically as 'women'. The alternative option is to 'construe the world so as to make sense of the utterance' (p. 121). This happens with fantasy readings. For example, we construe the world in such a way that flowers have lips and emotions, and in this fantasy world it becomes literally possible for flowers to smile at people. In short, a fantasy reading is another theoretically legitimate way of making literal sense of metaphor, and this kind of reading actually occurred in research with 'Carpathia'. I have also encountered fantasy readings like this in other studies. (The nicest example was a 'Father Christmas' reading of Frost's 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening': In one study, a student decided that Father Christmas was the poem's protagonist. Under this reading, it is easy to see why the protagonist ends the poem pondering the enormous number of miles that he has to go—presumably delivering presents on Christmas Eve—before he can finally get some sleep.)

Finer-grained categorizations of different literal ways of reading could be useful in metaphor research related to language development and L2 competence. Literal readings of the 'fantasy' kind have already been used as a category in L1 developmental psycholinguistic research on children's metaphor processing (Winner, 1988). One of Winner's examples is the metaphor *The prison guard became a hard rock*, which some young children made sense of by suggesting that magic was used to accomplish the guard's remarkable transformation into a rock. By the same token, finer distinctions of various kinds of literal reading could prove to be valuable in L2 research on the relationship between metaphoric competence and communicative competence—see the earlier discussion of Littlemore (2001). Literal readings of any kind are not metaphoric, of course, but in context, some literal readings may make considerably more sense than others. For this reason, they may also reflect different levels of communicative competence. In the 'Carpathia' studies, for

example, hypothetical readings of 'She was drowning' make pretty good sense to me: Given the father's insensitive, male-chauvinist attitude towards women, his wife may well wonder whether he would do anything to help her if she were drowning. In contrast, there appears to be little textual warrant for a fantasy reading in which the wife has become a ghost after drowning.

4.5   Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with L1 and L2 comprehension of metaphor. In L1 research, the debate about the role of literal meaning in online metaphor comprehension remains a lively one. In L2 research, recent evidence suggests that literal meanings are highly salient for learners and that this salience has a significant effect on the way in which they comprehend figurative language. Cieślicka (2006) calls this the literal salience view. Convergent evidence for this research was found in my own studies on the role of metaphor visibility in the literal versus metaphoric comprehension of metaphors in a short story called 'Carpathia'. The evidence for the salience of literal meanings among L2 students suggests that the Standard Pragmatic Model of metaphor processing remains relevant in L2 research.

Many of the metaphor comprehension studies also provide indirect support for foregrounding theory, especially the idea that foregrounding interferes with comprehension. L1 metaphor comprehension research indicates that linguistic expressions are often processed more slowly in contexts where they assume a novel metaphoric meaning than in contexts where they can be read literally. L2 research indicates that salient literal meanings interfere even with the comprehension of conventional figurative language, and my own studies on the comprehension of metaphor in literature are compatible with this finding. At the same time, the research also shows that other factors play a role: L1 studies provide evidence that the speed of comprehension of novel metaphors can be affected by their linguistic form and by the activation of relevant conceptual metaphors. The latter finding is relevant to Chapter 5, which includes research on the role of CM awareness-raising in the processing of linguistic metaphors.

5
Interpretation of Metaphor in Literature

5.1 Introduction

The online comprehension of metaphor is a major area of psycholin-guistic research, but less attention has been paid to the casual, off-line interpretation of metaphor, especially of metaphor in literature. Never-theless, there is a fairly substantial body of research, and L2 researchers have made a significant contribution to this with research on culture and metaphor interpretation. The present chapter presents an overview of this research with a particular focus on work in the CM tradition. This focus is necessary to provide background for the studies presented in the second part of the chapter. These investigate the awareness of CMs among L2 learners and the effects of metaphor awareness-raising on metaphor interpretation among these learners. The studies mainly have implications for teaching, but some of the data gathered in the studies is relevant to foregrounding theory and the idea that foregrounding guides interpretation.

5.2 Metaphor interpretation

Gibbs (1994) characterizes metaphor interpretation as an off-line, conscious activity. This activity is not exclusively related to metaphor in literature, but the two are often discussed together. Gibbs (1999a) also connects the two by using a literary metaphor (from T. S. Eliot's 'The Hollow Men') to illustrate what is involved in interpretation. This metaphor includes a comparison between people's voices and the sound of wind in dried grass, and Gibbs suggests that we can draw a potentially 'rich set of entailments' (p. 101) from this. Gibbs (1994) also suggests that CM theory helps to account for what happens during metaphor

interpretation. For example, if we encounter a mildly creative metaphor like *lava pours out when Jane explodes*, we can use our knowledge of the CM Anger Is Hot Fluid In A Container to make sense of this. In this CM, there are mappings between 'hot fluid' and 'anger', and between 'degree of fluid heat' and 'intensity of anger' (see Chapter 3; Kövecses, 2002, p. 96). Given our world knowledge that lava is extremely hot, we can work out the entailment here that Jane's anger has an extreme intensity. A further entailment might be that Jane's anger, like lava, is hazardous to people in the vicinity. The metaphor may also suggest that Jane's anger is characterized by volubility because the lava 'pours out' when she gets angry.

Steen (1994) also draws a clear distinction between time-limited online comprehension and leisurely metaphor interpretation. Following Reinhart (1976), he sees this as a difference between deciding what a metaphor vehicle refers to in context (comprehension) and a more elaborate kind of processing involving analogy (interpretation). To illustrate the difference, Steen uses T. S. Eliot's metaphor 'I have seen the mermaids riding seawards on the waves' (as cited on p. 43). For the purposes of comprehension, it is sufficient to work out that 'riding' stands for something like 'floating' in this line. This yields a perfectly comprehensible statement about mermaids floating seawards. However, one can also go a step further and work out a detailed analogy between mermaids floating on waves and people riding on horses. This yields what Steen calls a 'double vision' (p. 44) of the metaphor. Like Reinhart, he also suggests that the latter kind of reading may be related to literary experience. Inexperienced readers may be content just to work out what a metaphor stands for while experienced ones will often want to work out a full analogy and consider its implications.

Metaphor interpretation has been investigated in a number of empirical studies. These cover interpretation in both L1 and L2 contexts. Some of the studies are concerned with literature while others are not. The following overview begins with general research on interpretation before moving on to the specifics of interpreting metaphor in literature.

5.2.1   L1 and L2 metaphor interpretation

Although metaphor researchers disagree about many things, there is widespread agreement that comparison plays a role when interpretation takes place. This may not be necessary with the processing of conventional linguistic metaphors, but when a metaphor is novel, some kind of comparison is necessary for an adequate interpretation. This agreement may also help to explain why there is relatively little research

concerned with interpretation: If comparison is involved in all theories, then it becomes difficult to distinguish them by studying the products of casual, off-line interpretation.

One aspect of interpretation that has been researched is the question of whether CMs play a role. Gibbs (1994; 2006) discusses evidence from his own research to show that they do. Some of this is concerned with idioms. Of course, L1 speakers would not normally bother to interpret idioms in detail because they already have a clear sense of the idioms' conventional meanings. However, Gibbs (2006) reports that when L1 speakers are asked to describe the 'mental images' (p. 182) evoked by anger idioms such as *flip your lid* or *hit the ceiling*, they typically 'imagine some force causing a container to release pressure in a violent manner' (p. 182). As Gibbs points out, the interesting thing to note here is that the linguistic metaphors themselves do not include any reference to containers or pressure. However, his subjects mentioned these things anyway, even though alternative causes for hitting a ceiling or flipping a lid can easily be imagined. The CM Anger Is Hot Fluid In A Container (see above) provides a basis for explaining why the idioms are specifically understood with reference to pressure in a container.

McGlone (1996) reports a series of studies that were designed to challenge Gibbs's conceptual view of metaphor. In the process, he also hoped to find evidence in support of another view: Glucksberg's Attributive Categorization view (see Glucksberg, 2001, for a detailed discussion). This view is often contrasted with comparison views of metaphor because it treats metaphor as a phenomenon related to categorization rather than comparison. The idea is that metaphor involves the creation of an ad hoc category: 'a category (a) to which the topic concept can plausibly belong, and (b) that the vehicle concept exemplifies' (McGlone, p. 545). Thus, in the metaphor *My lawyer is a shark*, the ad hoc category of 'vicious, cunning beings' (McGlone, p. 545) is appropriate: The vehicle 'shark' exemplifies this category, and the topic 'lawyer' can belong to it. In this way, the metaphor attributes the properties of viciousness and cunning to the lawyer.

To compare the two views of metaphor, McGlone (1996) created metaphors like the following: 'Dr. Moreland's lecture was a three-course meal for the mind' (p. 553). If CM theory is correct, then interpretations of this metaphor should include some reference to food, so McGlone claims, because it is related to the CM Ideas Are Food. In contrast, if the Attributive Categorization view is correct, then interpretations should refer to 'stereotypical properties of three-course meals that can be attributed to lectures, such as "large quantity" and "variety" ' (McGlone,

p. 554). To investigate these predictions, McGlone got different groups of 30 Princeton University students to write metaphor paraphrases (experiment 1) or alternative metaphors that expressed roughly the same idea (experiment 2). The number of CM-consistent interpretations was rather low in both experiments: 24 per cent in experiment 1, and 41 per cent in experiment 2. In contrast, experiment 2 provided support for the Attributive Categorization view. A large number of the students' alternative metaphors reflected the idea of 'large quantity' by means of expressions such as 'flood, full tank of gas, truckload' (McGlone, p. 554) as alternatives for 'three-course meal'.

One problem with McGlone's study is that he ignored an important aspect of CM theory: entailment. McGlone suggests that the Attributive Categorization view is unique in predicting 'large quantity' as an interpretation of 'three-course meal for the mind', but unfortunately, this is simply not true. The 'large quantity' interpretation is also an entailment in CM theory. Our real-world knowledge tells us that a three-course meal represents a relatively large quantity of food, and together with the CM Ideas Are Food, this leads to the entailment that a 'three-course meal for the mind' represents a large quantity of ideas. Thus, the research design fails to distinguish the two views properly, and the 'large quantity' interpretation that McGlone found provides as much support for CM theory as it does for Attributive Categorization.

The interpretation of metaphor and other figurative language can also be studied with reference to socio-cultural factors such as age, gender, or profession (see Katz, 2005, for a review). In L2 research, there has been a substantial amount of interest in one of these factors: cross-cultural differences in interpretation. Much of this research has been concerned with idiomatic language, and Charteris-Black (2002) is probably the best-known recent example in this tradition. His study used CM theory as a framework for investigating Malaysian students' interpretations of English idioms. In order to do this, Charteris-Black categorized English idioms into six groups mainly on the basis of whether they were instantiations of a cross-culturally shared CM and whether they had a formally (near-)identical counterpart in Malaysian. For example, the idiom *in hand* is identical in form in English and Malaysian, and it is also based on the CM Hand Is Control in both cultures. Idioms like this are unlikely to cause interpretation problems. In contrast, the idiom *to get the wind up* has a near-identical formal counterpart in Malaysian, but the underlying CM is different: Fear Is Wind in English, but Anger Is Wind in Malay. In cases like this, cross-cultural interference is likely to cause interpretation problems and produce anger- instead of fear-related

interpretations. Charteris-Black's study confirmed this prediction. He asked 36 English majors at the National University of Malaysia to choose interpretations for 24 English idioms in a multiple-choice task, and as predicted, he found that the most problematic items were those with 'an equivalent linguistic form but a different conceptual basis' (p. 127).

Another interesting study in the CM tradition is Boers and Demecheleer (2001). This study focuses on cross-cultural differences in salience of so-called metaphoric themes. The participants were native speakers of French, and the study investigated their ability to guess the meanings of English idioms related to four metaphoric themes: Hats, Sleeves, Food, and Ships. These are all used as source domains of idioms in English and French, but there is a difference in salience. The Food domain is a richer source of French idioms than the Ship domain, and this makes it more salient for French speakers. Similarly, the source domain Hats is less salient in French than it is in English while the Sleeves domain is of approximately equal salience in the two languages. Against this background, Boers and Demecheleer predicted that their subjects would be better at guessing the meanings of English idioms related to domains with a higher salience in their L1. Prior to the study, they also asked five judges to rate idioms related to the four domains for their degree of interpretability, and they used these ratings to select a balanced corpus of items. Seventy-eight French-speaking undergraduates at a Belgian university participated as subjects, and significant differences in the predicted direction were found in their ability to guess idioms from salient and less-salient domains. For example, Food-related idioms such as *have egg on one's face* were guessed correctly in approximately 40 per cent of the cases, but Ship-related ones such as *take something on board* were only correct in approximately 17 per cent of the cases.

Various other studies in the cross-cultural tradition can be mentioned: Deignan, Gabryś, and Solska (1997) investigated Polish students' problems with the translation of English idioms into Polish. Nesi (1995) reports on cross-cultural differences in the metaphorical use of animal terms such as *cow* and *cat*. Curcó (2005) discusses the interpretations of Spanish proverbs by L2 students of Spanish from various cultures. Littlemore (2003) investigated interpretations of metaphors that were actually used by English lecturers teaching a special course for civil servants from Bangladesh. This study found no major interpretation problems among the students, but there were problems related to evaluation: Metaphors that were intended to convey something negative were incorrectly evaluated as positive metaphors, or vice versa. This finding is relevant to Chapter 6, which is about metaphor evaluation.

5.2.2 L1 and L2 interpretation of metaphor in literature

In Chapter 2, research by van Peer (1986) and others on the relationship between foregrounding and interpretation was discussed. This research is clearly relevant to research on the interpretation of metaphor in literature because metaphor makes an important contribution to foregrounding. Nevertheless, it is necessary to distinguish metaphor-related research from foregrounding research because the latter is concerned with all devices involved in foregrounding—not just metaphor. Against this background, the present section complements the discussion in Chapter 2 by covering research that is specifically concerned with the interpretation of metaphor in literature.

In the CM tradition, theoretical work by Lakoff and Turner (1989) (see Chapter 3) claims that CMs guide our interpretations of metaphor in literature. This claim has been investigated in a series of studies reported in Gibbs and Nascimento (1996). Two of these used multiple-choice questions, and this method could be criticized on the grounds that it limits the participants' freedom to interpret the poetic fragments that the MCQs were related to. However, the final study cannot be criticized on these grounds because the talk-aloud format that was used allowed the study's 16 participants to express themselves freely. These participants, who were American college students, were asked to read fragments from 10 different poems line-by-line and to comment on 'the ideas expressed about love' (Gibbs & Nascimento, p. 303).

In their analysis of the data, Gibbs and Nascimento (1996) concentrated on finding entailments of the CMs that the fragments were related to—that is, they looked for comments that 'went beyond what was explicitly stated' (p. 304). For example, in one stanza-length fragment from a Pablo Neruda poem, the speaker talks to his lover about discovering 'the secret road/that gradually brought your feet/closer to mine' (as cited on p. 303). In the comments on the stanza, one student referred to the true love and happiness that was found by the lovers. These ideas may well be implied by the poem's reference to the road that brought the lovers 'closer' to one another, but there is no explicit reference either to happiness or to true love in the stanza itself. Gibbs and Nascimento found entailments like this 'in 78% of all statements in the talking-out-loud protocols' (p. 304), and they interpret this as evidence for a significant role of CMs in the interpretation of poetry.

A number of other metaphor interpretation studies do not use CM theory as a framework. The best known of these is Steen's (1994) book-length study of the processing of metaphor in literature. The relationship

between metaphor and literature as a genre is a major concern of Steen's research: Do we respond to metaphor in literature in a special way because we have been trained to think that literature is a special genre, or is there something distinctive about metaphors in literature that causes us to respond to them in a special way? Against this background, many of Steen's studies compare responses to metaphors in two texts: an excerpt from a Dutch novel and an excerpt from a newspaper article. The former describes a clash between police and demonstrators in Amsterdam on the day when Beatrix was crowned queen, while the latter describes events in the streets of Berlin in the two days that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Most of Steen's (1994) studies with these two texts followed a format similar to one that Zwaan (1993) used (see Chapter 2): Some of Steen's subjects responded to the texts on the basis of accurate characterizations of their respective (literary and journalistic) genres, while others were misinformed and told that the literary text was journalistic or that the journalistic text was literary. By using these correct and inaccurate genre identifications, Steen hoped to be able to tease out the effect of genre on people's responses to metaphors in these genres. Steen also hoped to relate his subjects' responses to qualities of the actual metaphors in these two texts, but this aspect of the research proved to be problematic. When the metaphors were rated for anticipated differences in literary quality, hardly any differences were found. In other words, the two texts turned out to be just about equally literary in terms of the qualities of their metaphors.

Regardless of the problem with the metaphors, Steen's (1994) research design still allowed him to investigate the effect of genre on responses to metaphor. In one study, Steen used a talk-aloud design in which he asked 37 Dutch academics to read his two texts and 'verbalize everything that occurred to them' (p. 136). The talk-aloud comments that were related to the metaphors in the texts were analysed, and Steen found evidence that the metaphors were processed differently depending on how the texts had been classified. For example, his subjects explicitly identified metaphors as metaphors with significantly higher frequency when they were told that a text was literary. As explained earlier in the chapter, Steen was particularly interested in the difference between simply explaining what a metaphor stands for—for example, by explaining that a metaphor about mermaids 'riding' the waves stands for 'floating'—and processing a metaphor in greater detail by means of an analogy. He found significantly higher levels of the former process when readers had been told that a text was literary, but unfortunately it proved to be impossible to

identify the latter kind of analogical processing in a reliable way. As a result, this aspect of the analysis had to be abandoned. Steen also found significantly higher levels of explicit evaluation of metaphors in texts identified as literary. This finding is relevant to Chapter 6, which focuses on metaphor and evaluation.

Schumacher's (1997) study of the processing of poetic metaphors bears a certain resemblance to Steen's in the sense that Schumacher also distinguishes between a fairly superficial kind of metaphor comprehension, which he calls 'Erfassen', and a deeper kind of analogical processing or interpretation, which he calls 'Verstehen'. His prediction was that poetic metaphors would be as easy to *comprehend* as non-metaphorical statements (including conventionally metaphorical ones), but that differences would be found in the time required to fully *interpret* them. In order to investigate this, he collected a corpus of 27 poetic metaphors from anthologies of twentieth-century German poetry, and he also constructed a range of non-metaphorical or conventionally metaphorical statements to compare them with. Translated from Schumacher's German, 'Children are our hearts' (p. 172) is an example of a novel metaphor, 'Monkeys are our ancestors' (p. 172) is a non-metaphorical statement, and 'Vultures are our leaders' (p. 172) a conventionally metaphorical one.

To investigate his thesis, Schumacher (1997) asked groups of Basel University students to read his metaphorical and non-metaphorical statements under different reading conditions, and he measured their reading speeds. One group was asked to read the sentences as quickly as possible without trying to understand them at all, while the other groups read for different degrees of understanding. One of these groups looked for the very first sign of understanding. This seems close to what Steen (1994) calls comprehension—working out what a metaphor refers to in context. A second group was instructed to aim for a satisfactory level of understanding. This suggests a more elaborate kind of processing, which could include analogical processing of the kind that Steen calls interpretation.

One surprising finding of Schumacher's (1997) study was that the poetic metaphors were read significantly faster than non-metaphorical statements when the students just read them as quickly as possible without aiming for understanding. In the reading conditions that required some degree of understanding, however, the poetic metaphors were always processed significantly more slowly. This is hardly surprising, of course. The interesting thing is that the most significant speed difference was found with the reading condition that involved the

most superficial kind of understanding, that is, reading for the very first sign of understanding. This may indicate that it requires considerable effort just to comprehend poetic metaphors and develop some minimal sense of what they stand for, but that little extra effort is necessary to interpret them in a personally satisfactory way once comprehension has taken place. Schumacher himself does not make this point, however.

One final research tradition that needs to be mentioned briefly is research that uses rating scales to analyse and compare properties of metaphors. Steen (1994) conducted research of this nature in a comparison of metaphors selected at random from journalistic texts and from novels. The literary metaphors were found to be conceptually more difficult than the journalistic ones in two studies—one with English metaphors and one with Dutch ones. Katz, Paivio, and Marschark (1985) is another example of research in this tradition. One aspect of this study is a comparison between metaphors constructed for research by the researchers themselves and authentic metaphors culled from anthologies of English poetry. The poetic metaphors were judged to be less easy to interpret than the constructed ones, but surprisingly they were also found to be less good. The latter finding will be considered further in Chapter 6, which is concerned with metaphor evaluation.

Taken together, the studies suggest that metaphor in literature tends to be more difficult to interpret than metaphors from other sources. In addition, Steen's (1994) research indicates that people are prepared to make more of an effort to interpret metaphor in texts that have been identified as literary. The research by Gibbs and Nascimento (1996) is consistent with the position that CMs play a guiding role in the interpretation of metaphor in poetry.

There is hardly any research on the interpretation of metaphor in literature by L2 learners. Goodblatt (2001) used Israeli L2 students of English in research on the interpretation of metaphor in three English poems. However, this study completely ignores the L2 side of things. In other words, Goodblatt treats her subjects as interpreters rather than as L2 interpreters. Chang (2002) reports a qualitative study of two Chinese students' interpretations of metaphors in a Chinese poem and in an English poem called 'Metaphors' by Sylvia Plath. The latter consists of a sequence of metaphors that describe the (pregnant) narrator as, for example, 'a riddle in nine syllables' (as cited in Chang, p. 80). In Chang's study, both of the Chinese students, who were on MA courses at Nottingham University's School of English, had considerable trouble making sense of Plath's poem. Although they realized that some of the words in the poems were metaphor vehicles, they were unable to think

of topics that these vehicles might be related to. For example, one of Chang's subjects recognized that the vehicles 'elephant' and 'ponderous house' both represented something 'huge and heavy' (p. 77), but she could not work out exactly what this huge thing might be. Chang found that both subjects benefited strongly from cues to interpretation. In particular, interpretation was stimulated when Chang drew attention to Plath's metaphor 'a riddle in nine syllables' and related this to time. This cue immediately triggered the idea of a (nine-month) pregnancy in both cases.

5.3   L2 metaphor interpretation studies

This section covers my own research with Japanese students on metaphor interpretation in two broad areas. The first of these is an analysis of the students' ability to recognize patterns of metaphorical lexis in short texts by relating them to a relevant source domain. In particular, this study aims to identify whether the students' ability to recognize source domains varies in a principled way depending on the treatment of these domains in the EFL curriculum. The second area of research builds on the 'Carpathia' studies discussed in Chapter 4 by investigating the effect of metaphor awareness-raising on the students' ability to interpret relatively invisible metaphors in a metaphorical way. This research, which is also discussed in Picken (2005), is particularly concerned with the effect of CM awareness-raising on the students' ability to interpret metaphors in literature.

5.3.1   L2 recognition of patterns of metaphor

Patterns of metaphor are frequently discussed in formal stylistic interpretations of literature. For example, in a discussion of a passage from Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, Verdonk (1995) draws attention to the pattern of religion-related metaphor. Ostensibly, the passage is about someone sitting down to work at a typewriter, but lexical items such as 'nun', 'veils', 'devotions', and 'purified' add a sense of monastic austerity to the character's labours at the keyboard. This metaphorical pattern could be characterized as Typewriting Is Religious Devotion. Similarly, in Goodblatt and Glicksohn's (2003) empirical research on poetry interpretation, metaphorical interactions of lexis related to the semantic fields of nature and of humanity are a central concern. One of Goodblatt and Glicksohn's main research questions was whether their students would explicitly identify these semantic fields in the course

of interpreting a poem's metaphors. Werth (1999) has coined the term 'megametaphors' (p. 323) for large-scale patterns of metaphor like this.

Clearly, the ability to recognize patterns of metaphor is an important aspect of literary interpretation, and against this background it is worth asking how good L2 students of English are at recognizing these patterns. Cieślicka's (2006) research on the salience of literal meanings for L2 students (see Chapter 4) suggests that they may well be comparatively good at this. If literal meanings are salient for them, then L2 learners should be quick to notice cases when lexical items are used not in a literal but in a figurative sense.

Reformulated in terms of CM theory, Cieślicka's literal salience view amounts to the claim that source domain usage of vocabulary is normally learned prior to figurative usage of the relevant vocabulary in the target domain. For example, learners normally encounter *face* and *feet* as terms for parts of the human body before they learn figurative extensions such as *the face of the earth* or *the foot of the mountain*. This order of learning can be related to the CM Landscape Is A Human Body (Goatly, 1997): The students learn vocabulary usage related to the source domain Human Body prior to figurative extensions of this vocabulary in the target domain Landscape.

While it certainly seems plausible that source domain usage will normally precede target domain usage in the EFL curriculum, it is clear that this will partly depend on the order in which students are taught related topics. EFL curricula tend to cover topics that are expected to be of practical value. The Threshold Level curriculum (van Ek, 1976), for example, focuses on the practical needs of learners who want to communicate 'with foreign language speakers in everyday situations on topics of general interest' (p. 2), and against this background, the curriculum emphasizes practical topics such as food, health (including vocabulary related to the human body), and the weather. These topics remain common in contemporary EFL textbooks such as *True to Life Pre-Intermediate* (Gairns and Redman, 1995). These topics also happen to be important as CM source domains (although this is not the reason for teaching them). Thus, early coverage of these topics ensures that literal source domain lexis (for example, *foot*, and other terms for parts of the human body) precedes figurative target domain usage (for example, *foot of a mountain*).

In other cases, however, learning may not follow such an orderly pattern. The Machines domain is an important source domain of CMs (see Kövecses, 2002), for example, but it is not normally covered at an early stage of learning. As a result, the students' pattern of exposure

to related vocabulary will be less predictable. Of course they might first encounter *input, output*, and *program* in connection with the topic of computers, but instead of this, they might also first encounter these items as metaphorical extensions based on the CM Human Is A Machine (Goatly, 1997, p. 157). For example, in classroom instruction, teachers may well advise students to get *input* from other students on compositions that they have written. Similarly, *programmed* might also be encountered first in human-related usage like the following: 'We have been programmed from an early age to rush our activities and are only interested in the end product' (example obtained from the British National Corpus at < http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>). As a result, students may well have a less clear sense of the connection between this vocabulary and the Machines domain.

   Against this background, the study presented below is concerned with the associative meaning (Leech, 1981) of lexis, especially with people's ability to associate words like *feet* or *input* with other words and domains like Human Body or Machines. In particular, this study was designed to compare students' associative knowledge of lexis related to high-priority domains that tend to get taught at an early stage in the EFL curriculum (Weather, Food, Human Body) with lower-priority domains that are not normally taught early (Plants, Machines, Animals). The study's design was partly inspired by Boers's (2000) investigation of Belgian university students' ability to associate metaphorical idioms with source domains. However, Boers's study did not use the distinction between high-priority and lower-priority domains.

Patterns of metaphor in 'textoids'

Participants: Twenty-four first-year students in an English department at a women's college in Japan participated in the study.

Materials: The students were given six invented passages or 'textoids' like the following:

> The lecture had a lot of meat, but the ideas were difficult to digest even though John chewed on them for a long time.

This example contains three lexical items related to the Food domain (*meat, digest*, and *chewed*) and uses them in a conventionally figurative way to refer to the ideas expressed in a lecture. The items were selected from Goatly's (1997) analysis of Food-related lexis for the CM Ideas Are Food (p. 70). The lexical items used in the other textoids were selected in

a similar way from relevant analyses in the CM literature, notably Goatly (1997) and Kövecses (2002). Three of these textoids contained metaphorically used lexis related to high-priority domains (Weather, Food, Human Body). These domains were classed as high priority both because van Ek (1976) mentions them as important topic areas for the Threshold Level curriculum, and because they continue to be common in EFL textbooks. The three lower-priority domains were Plants, Machines, and Animals.

The domains and related lexical items are displayed in Table 5.1. An effort was made to select as many high-frequency lexical items as possible in order to increase the chance that the students would be familiar with them. However, as column 3 in Table 5.1 shows, the number of lower-frequency items remained substantial. The items in this column are not included in the top 2000 vocabulary headwords or the Academic Word List (see Nation, 2001). Cobb's online vocabulary profiler *VP English* was used to identify word frequencies. (This is based on Nation and Heatley's Range profiler—see Nation, 2001.) Surprisingly, it turned out that there were more low-frequency lexical items in the high-priority domains than in the lower-priority ones.

In writing the textoids for the study, attention had to be paid to the issue of salience. CMs like Ideas Are Food have traditionally been identified on the basis of highly conventional figurative patterns of lexis. Because of this conventionality, people may have difficulty noticing food-related metaphor when someone says, for example, that an idea is difficult to *digest* because it is so conventional to use *digest* in this way. In contrast, it could be much more noticeable if a piece of music were characterized as difficult to *digest*, because this is less conventional. This

Table 5.1   Domains and lexis used in the patterns of metaphor study

High-priority Domains	Lexical items	(Low-frequency items included)
1. Weather	atmosphere, frosty, gloomy	(atmosphere, frosty, gloomy)
2. Food	meat, chew, digest	(chew, digest)
3. Body	face, bare, scarred	(scarred)
Lower-priority Domains		
4. Plants	roots, cultivate, budding	(budding)
5. Machines	drive, adjust, wreck	
6. Animals	grip, growl, snap	(grip, growl, snap)

issue of salience had to be taken into account in order to avoid having, say, relatively unconventional passages for the high-priority domains and relatively conventional ones for the lower-priority ones, because this would have been a confounding factor. Against this background, two textoids were written for each set of lexical items: a conventional one, based on one of CM theory's standards such as Ideas Are Food, and an unconventional one. Thus, the conventional textoid for the Food domain (see above) was based on Ideas Are Food, and the unconventional version used a novel Music Is Food CM as follows:

> The music had a lot of meat, but after John had chewed on it for a while, he found it difficult to digest.

This Music Is Food CM is not mentioned in Goatly's (1997) or Kövecses's (2002) lists of common CMs. The two sets of conventional and unconventional textoids were assigned at random to the two task sheets that were used in the study. The overall order of the items was also randomized to ensure that the students did not, say, get all items related to high-priority domains before the items related to lower-priority domains, or vice versa.

Method: The students were asked to read the textoids on their task sheets, and to write question marks above words that they did not know. They were also asked to look for a 'comparison' in the passages and to complete a statement like this: 'The writer compares the lecture with _____.' (This statement followed the Ideas Are Food item that was cited above.) The task sheets included an example to clarify the task and this was discussed with the students. They were allowed to use English or Japanese for the tasks, and they were instructed not to use dictionaries.

Results: The analysis of the data only included cases in which students had indicated that they knew all three of the relevant words in a given item, that is, cases in which they had not used question marks to show that they did not know a word. Boers (2000) used a similar method of analysis. The data that remained was analysed in two ways: The first analysis focused on Exact associations—cases, for example, when students specifically chose Food as the domain associated with *meat, digest,* and *chew.* This analysis has the advantage of being highly reliable, but it fails to recognize realistic alternatives. Thus, it does not recognize Eating or Meals as realistic alternatives for Food. Against this background, a second analysis took place. This analysis focused on Close

associations and it included all domain choices that were close enough to the Food and other domains to be accepted. Inevitably, this analysis is less reliable than the Exact analysis, but it probably provides a more valid picture of the students' associative lexical knowledge. The analysis of Close associations still included exact choices like Food, of course, but it also included synonyms, subordinate terms, metonyms, and collocates. Thus, Climate was accepted as an alternative (a synonym) for Weather, Dog was accepted as an alternative (a subordinate term) for Animals, and Eating was accepted as an alternative for Food because it is an important collocate of Food. Metonyms of the part-whole variety were also accepted. For example, Skin is a part of a Body, and this made it an acceptable alternative choice for Body. The analysis used specific tests for accepting or rejecting the students' choices. For example, Rodale's (1978) *Synonym Finder* was consulted for decisions regarding synonyms.

The findings of the two analyses, which are displayed in Table 5.2, provide clear support for the predicted differences in associative knowledge of lexis in the two groups of domains. For reasons explained above, the analyses only used cases in which students had indicated their familiarity with the relevant lexis. There were 48 cases of this among the high-priority domain items and 38 such cases among the lower-priority ones. The figures in both the Exact and the Close Associations columns reveal substantial differences in the students' associative knowledge of the lexis in these two groups of domains. In the Exact analysis, 25 per cent of the students identified the domains by their exact names in the high-priority domains group, but this only happened in 7 per cent of the cases in the lower-priority domains. The differences in the Close analysis were equally pronounced. Close identifications of the domains occurred 50 per cent of the time in response to the items in the high-priority domains but only 29 per cent of the time with items in the lower-priority domains. The *p*-values (probability values) in the bottom row of Table 5.2 give an indication of the statistical strength of these differences. The differences are not statistically significant because they

Table 5.2 Associative knowledge of metaphorical lexis in the high-priority and lower-priority domains

	Exact Associations	Close Associations
High-Priority Domains	25% (12 out of 48)	50% (24 out of 48)
Lower-Priority Domains	7% (3 out of 38)	29% (11 out of 38)
***p*-values (chi-square)**	.0735	.0797

are above the level of .05, which is normally required for significance. However, the *p*-values are both close enough to .05 to indicate a strong statistical trend in support of the predicted differences in associative knowledge of lexis in the two groups of domains. (For a discussion of statistical trends, see Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991, p. 232.)

One statistical issue needs to be mentioned: Students with an extensive vocabulary contributed more frequently to the data (five or six times), because it was more often the case that they knew all the relevant vocabulary in the six items used. Hatch and Lazaraton (1991) discuss how chi-square is affected when 'certain *Ss* contribute more than their fair share' (p. 409). This problem can largely be overcome by ignoring the extremes and only looking at the data from the sub-set of middle-range students who contributed three or four times to the data. There were 14 students in this group, and when chi-square is used with their items, the *p*-value in the Close analysis actually improves to .0522—just above the significant level of .05.

Discussion: Although the study's findings were not significant, they do suggest that the salience of literal meanings may well be variable for students of the kind used in the study and that this affects the students' ability to identify patterns of metaphorical lexis. Further research is necessary, of course, and this should include research with excerpts from real literary texts instead of textoids like the ones used in the present study. The selection of lexis for research of this nature is another issue. The present study used items selected from analyses of a range of CMs found in the CM literature. In future studies, it would be desirable to triangulate the selections by consulting large-scale corpora in the kind of way that Deignan (2005) has proposed. This would help to identify the linguistic strength of the association between the lexical items selected and the domains that they are claimed to be primarily associated with.

5.3.2   CM awareness-raising and L2 recognition and interpretation of linguistic metaphor

The studies in Chapter 4 found that linguistic metaphors are often comprehended literally when they are comparatively invisible. The study in the preceding section indicated that associative knowledge of lexis may be another problem area: When associative knowledge is weak, patterns of metaphor in text may not be noticed. Both of these problems suggest that teachers may need to help L2 students to notice and interpret metaphors in literature. Inspired, in part, by Boers's (2000) work on

metaphor awareness-raising, the studies reported in the present section specifically investigate the value of help offered in the form of metaphor awareness-raising and how this affects L2 students' interpretations of relatively invisible metaphors in literature. The idea is simple: If learners are, for instance, made aware of CMs like Life Is A Journey, it seems likely that they will use this awareness when they encounter potentially metaphorical journey-related language in literature (and elsewhere). In other words, metaphor awareness-raising may positively affect the students' ability to notice and interpret metaphors.

The research should not be viewed as a simplistic attempt to help students to make 'the' correct interpretation of metaphors in literature. Literary interpretation is problematic in theory and practice (see Fish, 1980, for example). Consequently, Widdowson (1975) argues for the position that teachers' efforts should not be geared towards reaching one specific interpretation but towards bringing the learner 'to the point where he is capable of teasing out meanings for himself' (p. 124). The research presented here should be viewed in this light. By raising students' awareness of CMs, the teacher will ideally be engaged in developing learners' abilities to 'tease out' metaphorical meanings on their own. At the same time, CM theory and the research (reported above) by Gibbs and Nascimento (1996) suggest that CMs guide and constrain interpretations of linguistic metaphors. If this is the case, then a reasonable degree of consistency in interpretation may be expected in response to CM awareness-raising. This would provide further support for the view that foregrounding guides interpretation.

Rather than just focus on the general question of whether metaphor awareness-raising helps to trigger metaphorical interpretations of linguistic metaphors, the research was designed specifically to find initial answers to three questions: (1) How much awareness-raising is necessary to trigger metaphorical readings in the short term? (2) Does relatively extensive awareness-raising trigger metaphorical readings even when students have no reason to expect that a CM is relevant? (3) Is awareness-raising a potential source of confusion due to the fact that a single source domain (such as Journey) can be used in a number of different CMs? Thus, when students encounter journey-related language in a poem, will they be able to decide between relating this language to Life (via Life Is A Journey) or to Love (via Love Is A Journey)?

Thus, the orientation of the research is pedagogical. It is designed to clarify how much work is necessary to help students with the immediate task of processing metaphors in a specific literary text, and it should also provide information on whether this help benefits students in the longer

term by improving their processing skills and making them more independent as interpreters of literature. The 'Woods' study focuses mainly on question 1, although it also provides some information related to question 2. The 'Road' study focuses exclusively on question 2, and the Love/Life study on question 3.

The 'Woods' study

> The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
> But I have promises to keep,
> And miles to go before I sleep,
> And miles to go before I sleep.

> (Final stanza of Robert Frost's
> 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy
> Evening')

Participants: Forty-nine first-year students in an English department at a women's college in Japan participated in the study.

Task and materials: All the students were given the task of reading Robert Frost's poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' (henceforth 'Woods') and writing interpretations in Japanese of its final two lines. However, the students were given a different amount of help in preparation for this. In connection with research question 1 (see above), groups 1, 3, 4, and 5 are the relevant ones. Table 5.3 provides an overview of the research design and findings of the 'Woods' study.

As noted in Chapter 3, Frost's line 'miles to go before I sleep' can be viewed as an instantiation of the CM Life Is A Journey. The variation in the help given to the five groups of students is related to this CM.

Table 5.3   Research design and findings of the 'Woods' study

Group	Preparation	Reading task	Metaphorical readings
1	Taught about LIAJ + given examples of LIAJ	interpret lines with reference to LIAJ	10 (out of 10)
2	+interpretation practice	interpret lines	4 (out of 9)
3	No preparatory work	interpret lines with reference to 'life'	8 (out of 10)
4	No preparatory work	interpret lines with reference to LIAJ	9 (out of 10)
5	No preparatory work	interpret lines	1 (out of 10)

Note: LIAJ = Life Is A Journey

Group 1 students got the greatest amount of help. Prior to the task, they were taught explicitly about Life Is A Journey and given examples of conventional linguistic metaphors related to this CM, and after this, they worked in groups discussing how to interpret some novel linguistic metaphors related to the CM. In addition to this, the instructions in their task sheet explicitly connected Frost's poem to Life Is A Journey.

No preparatory work took place in groups 3, 4, and 5, but the groups got different kinds of help from their task sheets. The task sheet for group 4, like the task sheet for group 1, made an explicit connection with Life Is A Journey as follows: 'Many experts think that this poem expresses an idea about life by comparing life to a journey, especially in the poem's final lines.' Group 3 students were only told that, according to experts, the 'poem really expresses an idea about life'. In other words, their help was limited to information about the target domain of the CM (Life); the source domain (Journey) was not given. Group 5, finally, got no help at all. Their task sheet just explained that the poem is 'famous' and that 'poetry experts around the world have written about it'.

Results: While Table 5.3 clearly shows that extensive metaphor awareness-raising helps to trigger metaphorical readings (all 10 students in group 1 produced them in their interpretations of the final lines), it is also clear that less help is enough to produce almost identical results (respectively 9 and 8 metaphorical interpretations out of 10 in groups 4 and 3). At the same time, it is also clear that metaphorical readings hardly occurred when no help was given: There was only one such reading among the 10 students in group 5. Some students in this group did not interpret the lines at all, while others commented on the lines in terms of a real physical distance that needed to be travelled.

With regard to the students' actual interpretations, there was a high degree of consistency. Among the overall total of 32 metaphorical readings, there were a couple of surprises (for example, the suggestion that 'miles to go' refers to the fact that people 'continue to evolve'), but the vast majority of the interpretations treated 'miles' in terms of life's duration or obligations and 'sleep' in terms of death. This suggests that CMs do indeed guide interpretations once the CMs have been activated in the minds' of readers.

CM awareness-raising may be valuable as a one-off way of helping students to make metaphorical sense of a particular text, but ideally, its value should extend beyond this. The CM Life Is A Journey is used in many literary (and non-literary) texts, and it would contribute substantially to the students' independence as interpreters if CM awareness-raising could help them to make sense of linguistic metaphors related

to this CM even when they have no reason to expect that it may be relevant. (See research question 2 above.) Group 2 in Table 5.3 provides some insight into this question. These students, like their classmates in group 1, had been involved in an earlier interpretation study, and at the beginning of the 'Woods'-related class I announced that there would be another interpretation study at the end of the class. Most of the 90-minute class itself was concerned with Carter, Goddard, Reah, Sanger, and Bowring's (1997) unit on metaphor in *Working with Texts*, and the extensive work on Life Is A Journey was introduced against the background of this unit. In other words, the CM-related work was set up as a normal component of class work, and during the class it was not connected to the interpretation study in any way. In the final 20 minutes of the class, the students got the 'Woods' task sheets. While the task sheet for group 1 made an explicit connection with Life Is A Journey, the task sheet for group 2 did not. Their sheet, like the one given to group 5, provided no help at all. Nevertheless, the group had just done extensive work on Life Is A Journey, and as a result, 4 of the 10 students in group 2 interpreted the final lines of the poem metaphorically (compared with 1 of the 10 students in group 5, who got the same task sheet but did no preparatory CM-related work). This difference between groups 2 and 5 is obviously a small one, but the trend suggests that CM awareness-raising helped to trigger metaphorical readings in group 2 even though the students had been given no reason to expect that the CM in question would be relevant. The 'Road' study below follows up on this finding.

Overall, the difference between the groups that got help from the explanation on the task sheet (groups 1, 3, and 4) and the groups that did not (groups 2 and 5) is a highly significant one: The chi-square value with Yates correction for 2×2 designs is 18.107. This value is significant even at the .0001 level.

The 'Road' study

> I shall be telling this with a sigh
> Somewhere ages and ages hence:
> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference.
>
>> (Final stanza of Robert Frost's
>> 'The Road Not Taken')

Table 5.4 Metaphorical interpretations in the 'Road' study

Processing/ Group	LIAJ group (= groups 1 and 2 in Table 5.3)	Non-LIAJ group
Metaphorical readings	13 (72%)	14 (56%)
Literal readings	5	11
Total:	18	25

The follow-up 'Road' study was carried out approximately three months after the 'Woods' study.

Participants: A total of 43 students participated. Eighteen of these were from groups 1 and 2 in the 'Woods' study. In other words, these students had had an extensive awareness-raising session related to Life Is A Journey three months earlier. These students reappear as the LIAJ group in Table 5.4. The 25 students in the non-LIAJ group had not been taught about Life Is A Journey. *Materials and task*: The text used in the study was Robert Frost's 'The Road Not Taken' (henceforth 'Road'). This poem, like 'Woods', has been linked to the CM Life Is A Journey (in Lakoff, 1993, for instance). The task consisted of writing an interpretation in Japanese of the poem's final stanza.

Results: This second study provided fairly strong support for the idea that CM awareness-raising helps to trigger metaphorical readings even when students have no reason to expect that a CM is relevant. As Table 5.4 shows, roughly two-thirds (72 per cent) of the students in the LIAJ group interpreted Frost's lines metaphorically in terms of life and making choices in life. In contrast, only 56 per cent of the students in the non-LIAJ group produced such readings. (The remaining literal readings in both groups were mainly direct line-by-line translations of the stanza into Japanese.) Unfortunately, this difference is not statistically significant: A 2×2 chi-square analysis with Yates correction factor is not significant even at the 0.10 p-value level, but Fischer's exact test approaches significance at a p-value level of 0.3475. Nevertheless, the trend strongly suggests that CM awareness-raising has a long-term effect and contributes to EFL students' ability to interpret metaphor and literature independently. This confirms the trend found among group 2 students in the 'Woods' study. As in the 'Woods' study, there was also a high degree of consistency in the metaphorical interpretations of the final paragraph of 'Road'. These referred almost invariably to choices in life that had to be made. Finally, it is worth noting that Gibbs and Boers (2005) also used 'Road' in an interpretation study with L1 students, and

that 72 per cent of their students revealed a metaphorical understanding of the poem. The design of this study was quite different from mine, but it is still interesting to note that their percentage of metaphorical interpretations was equivalent to the percentage found in the LIAJ group in my study.

The Love/Life study

The preceding studies investigated the value of CM awareness-raising with a focus on a single CM: Life Is A Journey. In practice, however, hundreds of CMs have been identified. (For a partial list, see Kövecses, 2002, pp. 281–285). Against this background, it is reasonable to ask whether CM awareness-raising remains beneficial when students have been taught more than one of them. One particular issue is whether an awareness of multiple CMs can be a source of confusion. This is clearly a possibility given the fact that the same source domain may be used in a range of CMs. Thus, the Journey source domain is shared by the two CMs chosen for the present study: Love Is A Journey and Life Is A Journey. The study investigated whether an awareness of both of these CMs would be a source of confusion among students who were asked to interpret Frost's 'Woods'.

Participants: Seventeen third-year students participated in the study. Like the students in the previous studies, they were Japanese students in a women's college's department of English. *Materials and task*: The task sheet contained a copy of 'Woods' and a brief explanation, with examples, of the two CMs. The connection with 'Woods' was made as follows:

> The ideas that love is a journey or that life is a journey are often used in poems and other literary texts. Please read the following poem by Robert Frost and decide whether either of these ideas is used. Then do the tasks that follow.

There were two tasks: In an MCQ task, the students had to circle the CM that they considered relevant (or circle (c) if they felt that neither CM was relevant), and they also had to interpret Frost's final lines with reference to their chosen CM.

Results: It turned out that the relevant choice of CM was not an obvious one for the students. The choice divided the group down the middle, with nine students choosing Love Is A Journey and seven students choosing Life Is A Journey. (One student did not circle anything on her

task sheet.) One can only speculate why Love Is A Journey was such a popular choice, but the poem's focus on 'he' in the first stanza may be one reason. This 'he' is the owner of the woods in the poem, and he is mentioned three times in the first four lines, which makes it clear that he is very much on the speaker's mind. Why is the speaker thinking about him so much? It is easy to see why students might think that romantic motives are involved.

Viewed as a love poem, 'Woods' was mainly interpreted as a poem about an unhappy love relationship, especially one of unrequited love. Many students also saw the woods as a symbol of the poem's 'he', the loved one. As a result, they worked out the idea that the speaker is attracted to the wood but admiring it from a distance. This distance was then taken to represent the distance in their feelings: The speaker loves 'the woods/the loved one' from a distance. In the final line, 'miles to go' was also interpreted in terms of this 'distance' or 'gap' in their feelings in some cases. Thus, there was a recognizable pattern of interpretation in which physical distance was interpreted metaphorically as emotional distance.

Discussion of the CM awareness-raising studies

The overall picture is that CM awareness-raising substantially affects the likelihood that metaphorical interpretations will occur in the immediate task of making sense of a linguistic metaphor in a specific literary text. With awareness-raising, students almost invariably arrived at metaphorical interpretations of the final lines of 'Woods'. Without awareness-raising, only one student in ten managed to do this in the 'Woods' study. The amount of awareness-raising hardly mattered. Extensive awareness-raising only produced slightly more metaphorical interpretations of the poem's final lines than the bare-bones explanation that the final lines are viewed as a comment on 'life'.

The value of extensive awareness-raising was reflected in another finding in the 'Woods' study: Extensive work on Life Is A Journey produced four metaphorical readings in a group of nine students even though the task sheet gave no indication that this CM was relevant. In contrast, only one metaphorical reading occurred among ten students who received the same task sheet but who had not had any CM-related instruction prior to the task. This difference suggests that CM awareness-raising helps to trigger metaphorical interpretations even when students have no reason to expect that a CM is relevant.

Further evidence for this second finding was produced in the 'Road' study. Three months after an extensive awareness-raising session on Life

Is A Journey, a group of students was asked to write interpretations of the final stanza of Frost's 'Road'. Seventy-two per cent of the students in this group interpreted the lines metaphorically. This contrasted with a rate of 56 per cent of such readings in another group of students who did this task without the benefit of prior CM awareness-raising. This, again, suggests that CM awareness-raising contributes to EFL students' ability to make independent interpretations of metaphors in literary texts.

In one sense, the Love/Life study provided further support for the value of CM awareness-raising. The students in this study also arrived at metaphorical interpretations of the final lines even though their interpretations varied substantially depending on the CM that they selected as relevant. However, the study was mainly designed to investigate whether awareness-raising can be a source of confusion due to the fact that a single source domain (such as Journey) can be used in a number of different CMs. The study shows that confusion can indeed occur: Nine students interpreted 'Woods' with reference to Love Is A Journey while seven students chose Life Is A Journey, and these choices led to dramatically divergent interpretations. Note, however, that this divergence may well have resulted from idiosyncratic qualities of the poem itself, such as the poem's focus on a significant but unidentified 'he'. It seems unlikely that love-related interpretations would have occurred if 'Road' had been selected for the study because this poem only has an 'I'; the poem has no 'he' character with the potential status of a significant (romantic) other. Thus, further research with other texts and CMs is clearly necessary to build on this finding.

5.4   Conclusion

Reformulated in terms of foregrounding theory, the chapter provides a fairly high degree of support for the idea that interpretation is guided by foregrounding. CM theory itself is closely compatible with foregrounding theory in the sense that the theory predicts that CMs constrain interpretations of linguistic metaphors. Research reported by Gibbs (1994; 2006) and by Gibbs and Nascimento (1996) provides empirical support for this view. Steen's (1994) research adds to the picture by showing that when texts have been identified as literary, readers are willing to process the metaphors in the texts in a relatively elaborate way. Research on L2 metaphor interpretation has tended to focus on cultural differences, especially differences related to CMs. Although this research is not concerned with literature or foregrounding, it does

suggest that differences in interpretation follow identifiable patterns, and this is certainly in line with foregrounding theory.

My own research on L2 metaphor interpretation also provides some support for foregrounding. First, there was support for this in the study on L2 students' ability to recognize CM-related patterns of metaphor in short textoids. The students tended to be better at this when the source domains of the CMs were related to topics that are taught at an early stage in the EFL curriculum. For example, students proved to be quite good at recognizing patterns of metaphor related to the source domain Human Body because vocabulary for the human body tends to be taught early in the EFL curriculum. In other words, this vocabulary stands out: It is salient or foregrounded for L2 students when it is used metaphorically in a patterned way. However, the salience of the patterns of metaphor dropped considerably when the relevant lexis was related to other source domains such as Machines or Plants. These domains tend not to be included as topics at an early stage in the curriculum, and it seems likely that this reduces the salience of the related vocabulary. When this vocabulary is used metaphorically, L2 students are less likely to notice it.

Qualified support for foregrounding theory was also found in the three studies on CM awareness-raising. The 'Woods' study shows that foregrounding alone is not necessarily enough as a trigger for metaphorical interpretations. The repetition of 'And miles to go before I sleep' at the end of 'Woods' is a classic example of foregrounding, but it only triggered a small number of metaphorical interpretations among the students in groups 2 and 5 in this study. However, when metaphorical interpretations did take place in these groups and the others, there was a high degree of consistency in the interpretations. For example, 'miles to go' was almost invariably interpreted in terms of life's duration or obligations. In contrast, the Love/Life study produced a picture of consistency within variance: There were clear differences in interpretation between the students who used Love Is A Journey and those who used Life Is A Journey to interpret 'Woods', but within these two groups of students, the amount of variation was limited.

The studies with 'Carpathia', 'Woods', and 'Road' show that when foregrounding is subtle due to low metaphor visibility, L2 students may not manage to arrive at metaphorical interpretations on their own. In cases like these, teachers may wish to help the students in one way or another, and CM awareness-raising would appear to be one effective way of doing this. The studies in the present chapter show very clearly

that awareness-raising helps to stimulate interpretations of metaphors in specific texts. They also provide suggestive evidence that awareness-raising helps students to develop their interpretative skills as such. This deserves to be investigated further because the development of interpretative skills was identified as one of the key arguments for WWL in Chapter 2.

6
Evaluation of Metaphor in Literature

6.1 Introduction

For teachers who work with literature, it is important to know whether
their students actually value doing this work and if so, what they value
it for. In literary theory it has been argued that foregrounding plays a
central role in evaluation, and empirical research in support of this rela-
tionship was reviewed in Chapter 2. Studies by both van Peer (1986) and
by Miall and Kuiken (1994) provide good evidence that foregrounding
affects the evaluations of L1 readers in the predicted manner, but there
is virtually no research on how it affects L2 evaluations. The present
chapter investigates L2 evaluation of literature against this background.

The chapter begins with an overview of research on the evaluation
of metaphor and of metaphor in literature. Some of this is closely
related to Cook's and Semino's theoretical work on foregrounding as
'schema refreshment', which was discussed in Chapter 3. The overview
also covers research on metaphor awareness-raising and evaluation that
is directly relevant to the teaching of literature. The remainder of the
chapter discusses some of my own research. The first study investigates
L2 evaluation of literature in general by asking students to evaluate a
poem and to motivate these evaluations. The related second study is
concerned with the effects of metaphor awareness-raising and of group
discussion on students' evaluations of this poem. The third study invest-
igates how evaluation is affected by variation in the form of metaphors
in two short stories. This study, which builds on the metaphor expli-
citness studies discussed in preceding chapters, is directly relevant to
the question of what role foregrounding plays in L2 evaluations of
literature.

6.2   Metaphor and evaluation

In the discussion of metaphor evaluation in Chapter 3, the point was made that there are at least two research traditions: the aptness tradition, which is concerned with contemplative judgements of an aesthetic nature, and the emotion-oriented affective-response tradition. Gibbs (2002b) explicitly distinguishes the two, but he also recognizes that they may be related in the sense that emotional responses to metaphors may significantly shape 'readers' judgements of aesthetic appreciation of metaphors' (p. 111). In contrast, as we saw in Chapter 2, Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) specifically treat aesthetic response as a kind of emotion. In their view, an aesthetic response is a so-called A-emotion or Artefact emotion, which is triggered by the form of the text. By extension, an A-emotion may also presumably be triggered by the form of individual metaphors in a text. The relationship between aesthetic and emotional responses is also debated in philosophy. Scruton (2006) distinguishes two schools of thought: the aesthetic of sympathy and the aesthetic of autonomy. The former views aesthetic responses to art as primarily emotional and suggests that art gives rise to 'feelings of sympathy, or emotional associations, which are both pleasant in themselves and also instructive' (Scruton, 2006). The aesthetic of autonomy, in contrast, draws a line between aesthetic response and feeling, arguing that the former involves 'an attitude of pure contemplation' (Scruton, 2006).

Regardless of the disagreement, there is one constant factor: Our response to art, literature, or metaphor involves a value of some kind. We evaluate literature aesthetically and/or emotionally. Against this background, it will be practical to use metaphor evaluation as an umbrella term for all value-related metaphor research discussed in the following pages. This will be organized into sub-sections on how evaluation is affected by schema refreshment, by the degree of similarity between metaphor topic and vehicle, by context, and by genre. The overview concludes with a sub-section on research related to the effects of teaching methodology on metaphor evaluation.

6.2.1   Evaluation and schema refreshment

Cook (1994) and Weber (1992) argue for the position that literature is valuable because it can change the way we perceive the world. In Cook's terms, literature is 'schema-refreshing'. Semino (1997) applies this theory to metaphor and suggests that metaphors can be distinguished with reference to their high or low schema-refreshing potential. Sylvia Plath's comparison between a baby and a 'fat gold watch'

(see Chapter 3) is an example of a metaphor with high potential for schema refreshment because this comparison is neither linguistically nor conceptually conventional. In contrast, Semino suggests that few readers are likely to experience schema-refreshing change from Seamus Heaney's metaphors of dawn in a poem about a childbirth because dawn is a comparatively conventional metaphor for birth. Semino also discusses the affective aspect of metaphor and suggests that positive or negative emotional associations get carried over from the source to the target domain.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no empirical research on the evaluation of metaphor that directly uses schema refreshment as a framework. However, research by Shen (2002) and Giora (2003) can be closely related to this idea. The connection with Giora's research is particularly strong because she explicitly draws a connection between her research and foregrounding, which was the source of inspiration for Cook's work on schema refreshment. Broadly speaking, Shen's and Giora's research is concerned with the relationship between figurative language, including metaphor, and degree of innovation or creativity. Shen is mainly interested in cognitive constraints on innovation, while Giora draws a connection between degree of innovation and evaluation.

Shen (2002) suggests that there are cognitive constraints on creativity in poetic discourse. Up to a point, creativity is desirable, but the creativity needs to be constrained in order to ensure that communication still takes place. Shen uses synaesthetic metaphors as an example of such constraints. These are metaphors such as 'cold light' (Shen, p. 220), which 'refer to a concept from one sensory domain using terms from another sensory domain' (Shen, p. 220). Shen's research suggests that a metaphor such as 'sweet melody' (p. 221) is more likely to occur than the reverse form 'melodious sweetness' (p. 221) because of a cognitive constraint. This constraint is based on a hierarchy of the senses running from touch, to taste, to smell, to sound, and finally to sight, which is the 'highest' sense. Because the sense of taste is more basic or accessible than the sense of sound, 'sweet melody' is preferable to 'melodious sweetness', according to Shen. Note that this idea is compatible with CM theory and the view that CMs use basic, concrete source domains metaphorically to talk about and give structure to more abstract target domains. It is also compatible with the idea of schema refreshment: 'Melodious sweetness' could be called more innovative and schema refreshing than 'sweet melody' because it defies cognitive constraints.

One source of evidence for Shen's (2002) Cognitive Constraints Theory is corpus research. Shen's research with a corpus of modern

Hebrew poetry and a number of other studies of literary corpora revealed that synaesthetic metaphors tend to conform to the proposed low-to-high hierarchy of the senses. Shen also conducted empirical research to investigate how this hierarchy related to memorability and to judgements of naturalness. This study found that low-to-high synaesthetic metaphors were both more memorable than their high-to-low counterparts and judged to be more natural.

Giora (2003) builds on Shen's research in developing her ideas on optimal innovation and aesthetics. Like Shen, she argues that the success of linguistic innovation depends on constraints: Beyond a certain point, linguistic innovation will be evaluated negatively. In line with her Graded Salience Hypothesis, she proposes that this point is defined by salience. Innovation cannot succeed unless a salient meaning is evoked. The following joke illustrates this function of salience:

> Q: Do you believe in clubs for young men?
> A: Only when kindness fails.

> (Giora, p. 167)

Giora suggests that we enjoy this joke because it misleads us: It forces us to shift our perspective from the initially salient meaning of (social) clubs to the less salient (wooden) clubs. In the process, it may rearrange our cognitive furniture slightly by strengthening the conceptual connection between social clubs and wooden clubs. When we next encounter a reference to social clubs in discourse, we may be reminded of wooden clubs more easily than we would have prior to hearing the joke. This is a basic kind of schema refreshment.

Evidence for Giora's (2003) optimal innovation view comes from research with Hebrew idioms such as *not knowing your right from left*, which has the salient idiomatic meaning of 'feeling confused' (p. 181) in Hebrew. Idioms like this were presented to Hebrew students, and these were followed by sentences that biased either towards this idiomatic meaning or towards a non-idiomatic one. Giora gives the following example:

> You don't know your right from left?
> a. *The Comprehensive Lexicon* will teach you whatever you don't know.
> b. Buy *The Comprehensive Guide for the Political Factions in Israel*.

> (p. 181)

Item (b) here is not compatible with the salient 'feeling confused' meaning of the *right-from-left* idiom, and because of this, the idiom has to be interpreted in a less salient political sense. Giora found that items like (b) were evaluated as 'significantly more pleasurable' (p. 181) than items like (a). Giora explicitly relates her optimal salience view to fore-grounding theory by proposing that linguistic innovation is 'induced by de-automatizing salient meanings' (p. 179). Note that in this case it is a salient figurative meaning rather than a salient literal one that is de-automatized.

In a general way, the optimal innovation view can also be related to novel metaphors such as Gibbs's (1994) 'My marriage is an icebox' (p. 117). According to the Graded Salience Hypothesis, the literal meaning is the salient one in the case of novel metaphors like this, and the metaphor de-automatizes this salient meaning. Thus, it would be predicted that people would evaluate the metaphor more highly than a literal counterpart such as *My favourite electrical appliance is an icebox*. However, it is unclear how optimal innovation could be used to make further distinctions so that predictions could be made about evaluations of different metaphors such as Black's (1993) *Marriage is a zero-sum game*. Again, this would be predicted to be evaluated more highly than a literal counterpart such as *Chess is a zero-sum game*, but there is no way of predicting whether Black's relatively abstract *game* metaphor would be considered more or less apt than Gibbs's comparatively concrete *icebox* one. Research of the kind carried out by Shen (2002) is necessary at this point to make more specific predictions.

Finally, there is also some research relevant to Semino's (1997) intriguing proposal that the positive or negative affective associations of metaphor source domains play a role in determining the emotional effect of a metaphor. Such associations can be important in L2 learning. As Littlemore (2003) has shown, even when L2 learners understand a metaphor, they may misunderstand its associations and attach negative associations to metaphors intended to have positive ones, or vice versa. However, there is little evidence to suggest that these associations neces-sarily derive from the associations of a metaphor's source domain. Deignan's (2005) corpus research suggests that one cannot really gener-alize about the positive or negative associations of whole domains such as Hunting and that one really needs to look at the associations carried by individual domain-related words such as *hunt*. Even with individual words, there are problems. For example, MacArthur (2001) found that her Spanish learners associated positive qualities such as 'loyalty' with real dogs but that idiomatic uses of *dog* in Spanish do not reflect these

positive qualities. Her research investigated a range of animal terms in this way, and MacArthur concluded that the match between associated qualities and idiomatic uses of animal terms was rather poor in general.

6.2.2   Evaluation and similarity

Giora's (2003) research suggests that degree of innovation is one factor in metaphor evaluation, and cognitive constraints of the kind identified by Shen (2002) appear to play a role in deciding how innovative a given metaphor is. Tourangeau and Sternberg's (1982) research can also be viewed from a cognitive constraints perspective. This is research on the cognitive quality of metaphorical comparisons and how this affects aptness judgements. In carrying out their research, they were influenced by Richards (1936), who proposed that a successful metaphor not only requires similarity but also dissimilarity or tension between the topic and the vehicle terms. In effect, Tourangeau and Sternberg build on this by suggesting that aptness judgements are cognitively constrained by both similarity and tension.

In line with CM theory, Tourangeau and Sternberg (1982) take the view that metaphor involves two cognitive domains such as the Human domain and the Animal domain. Against this background, they define both metaphor similarity and metaphor tension with reference to domains, and they make predictions about how these two aspects of a metaphor will affect aptness ratings. Similarity is defined as the similarity of entities with regard to their conceptual positions within their respective domains. For example, a lawyer's position within the Human domain is probably quite similar to the position of a shark within the Fish domain but dissimilar to the position of a sardine within this domain. Because the within-domain positions of lawyer and shark are similar, Tourangeau and Sternberg would predict that *A lawyer is a shark among human beings* will be judged as more apt than *A lawyer is a sardine among human beings*. The dissimilarity or tension of a metaphor is related to the distance between the domains involved. The Human domain is presumably closer to the animate Fish domain than it is to the inanimate Ship domain, for example. Against this background, Tourangeau and Sternberg suggest that Fish domain metaphors for human beings will display a lower degree of metaphor tension and be treated as less apt than comparable Ship domain metaphors. Thus, the Fish domain metaphor *A lawyer is a shark among human beings* would be expected to be judged less apt than the Ship domain metaphor *A lawyer is a privateer among human beings*.

Tourangeau and Sternberg used a ratings method to investigate their prediction. Different groups of raters provided ratings of within-domain distance, of between-domain distance, and of metaphor aptness. Correlations of these ratings supported both of their predictions: High aptness ratings correlated significantly with low within-domain distance ratings and also with high between-domain distance ratings. Against this background, it also becomes possible to make predictions about aptness judgements of Black's and Gibbs's metaphors for marriage. Because the 'zero-sum game' metaphor is more abstract and distant from marriage than the 'icebox' metaphor, one would predict that the former would be judged as more apt.

6.2.3   Evaluation and context

Without context, *A lawyer is a sardine among human beings* may be a poor metaphor, but in the context of a story that pokes fun at lawyers, the metaphor could easily be evaluated in a different way. In other words, the role of context in metaphor evaluation also needs to be considered. Tourangeau and Sternberg (1982) recognized this, but they only used decontextualized metaphors for their research on similarity and metaphor aptness. McCabe (1983) followed up on their study with a series of experiments designed to establish whether similarity continues to be a factor when metaphors are evaluated in context. This research also relied on ratings, but it needs to be noted that McCabe only used a single similarity rating. In other words, she did not use Tourangeau and Sternberg's distinction between within-domain and between-domain distance in her rating system.

In her experiments, McCabe (1983) got one group of students to rate pairs of words for similarity, while other groups of students were asked to rate metaphors based on these word pairs for their aptness in different conditions: with context and without context. In three of her experiments, McCabe found that similarity ratings only correlated well with aptness ratings of metaphors presented without context. However, in the third experiment, similarity ratings also correlated with aptness ratings of metaphors in context. The interesting thing is that this was also the only experiment in which metaphors were presented in authentic fictional contexts: The metaphors were culled from novels by writers like John Steinbeck and Stephen Crane and presented in the original passages from these novels. The correlation was not as strong as the correlation between the similarity judgements and the aptness judgements of the literary metaphors in the no-context condition. Nevertheless, it suggests that degree of similarity is one factor in the evaluation of metaphors in literature. Context, clearly, is another one. However, the exact role

of context remains unclear. McCabe's research only shows that context affects aptness judgements; it tells us nothing about how it does this. In other words, the research does not allow us to predict how context could make a metaphor like *A lawyer is a sardine* seem more or less apt.

6.2.4   Evaluation and genre: Metaphor richness and clarity

Gentner's (1982) research makes it possible to make slightly more precise predictions about the effect of context on evaluation. This research suggests that context at the level of genre plays a role. Gentner concentrates on two genres—scientific writing and literature—and she proposes that different metaphor qualities are relevant to evaluations of metaphors in these two genres. Metaphors in science are likely to be valued for clarity, while literary metaphors will be valued for richness: 'in expressive analogy, a rich collection of associations is valued; while in explanatory analogy, an abstract, well-clarified, coherent system of relations is valued' (Gentner, p. 123). This intuition seems highly plausible. In scientific discourse, clarity is a desirable quality in general. Inevitably, it is also desirable in explanatory analogies such as the well-known comparison with the solar system that is used to explain relationships between a nucleus and an electron in an atom. In literature, however, this kind of clarity may be less welcome. For example, it is unlikely that Shakespeare's 'Juliet is the sun' would have attracted much attention if it had been written as an explicit comparison: 'Juliet is like the sun to me in the sense that I am attracted to her as strongly as a planet is attracted to the sun.' Here, the explicit focus on attraction removes many of the other potential meanings of the original metaphor—meanings related to Juliet's warmth, or to her centrality in Romeo's universe, or to the visual impression that she leaves on Romeo's retina. As a result, the explicit comparison lacks the richness of Shakespeare's original even though it is clearer.

Gentner's proposal is supported by empirical research. With regard to literary metaphors, Gentner reports the following finding in her own research: 'Good literary metaphors are rated high in richness and poor literary metaphors, low in richness' (p. 124). Steen (1994) provides further evidence. In two studies that compared metaphors from literary and journalistic texts, Steen found that literary metaphors tended to be viewed as more beautiful and tasteful than journalistic ones and also as more difficult. Steen explains the latter finding with reference to richness, which he calls the higher 'polyvalent processing' (p. 207) potential of literary metaphors.

Katz, Paivio, and Marschark (1985), however, present contradictory findings. In their research on a corpus of metaphors culled from poetry, they found that higher ratings were given to metaphors that were felt

to have only a small number of interpretations. In other words, metaphors that were not rich in meaning were judged to be good. Katz *et al.* relate this finding to the fact that they only used a single measure of goodness instead of measuring aesthetic quality separately. As a result, the meaning of the goodness judgements is unclear: The subjects may have judged ' "goodness" in (nonaesthetic) comprehensibility terms' (Katz *et al.*, p. 380). It should also be noted that, unlike Steen, they presented their metaphors without any surrounding context. In addition, the authenticity of their corpus of literary metaphors was affected by that fact that they rewrote an unidentified number of them to make them 'conform to the form an "A is a B" ' (Katz *et al.*, p. 368).

6.2.5 Evaluation and teaching

Little research is available on the effects of teacher intervention on metaphor evaluation, but a recent study by Gibbs (2002b) suggests that metaphor awareness-raising might have a positive effect. Gibbs frames this research with reference to his own experience of being asked to identify metaphors in poetry in his high school days. Although Gibbs disliked this activity, his research suggests that this kind of awareness-raising actually affects evaluation in a positive way. He investigated this by getting different groups of students to read two poems and to do different tasks in connection with this. One group was asked to underline metaphors in the poems, and another group underlined verbs instead. After completing this task, all participants were asked to evaluate eight specific metaphors in each poem. The students used a seven-point scale to indicate their degree of aesthetic appreciation, and Gibbs found that significantly higher ratings were given to those metaphors that the participants themselves had identified as metaphors in the preceding metaphor-underlining task. He obtained similar findings in a second study when he asked his participants to rate the metaphors not for aesthetic appreciation but for how emotionally 'moved' (p. 108) the metaphors had made them feel. However, a replication study by Csatár, Pethö, and Tóth (2006) failed to find a similar effect: Metaphor identification did not affect evaluation positively or negatively. Unfortunately, these researchers do not provide a list of the metaphors that they focused on, so it is impossible to decide whether differences in the qualities of the metaphors used in the two studies may be related to the difference in their outcome. This being said, it seems safe to conclude from the two studies that metaphor awareness-raising does not have a negative effect on evaluation and that it can have a positive effect in some cases.

A recent study by Gibbs and Boers (2005) provides suggestive evidence for the intuition that interpretation and evaluation are related: If readers

fail to find a satisfactory metaphorical interpretation of a poem, it seems likely that this will have a negative effect on their evaluations. In this study, American college students wrote interpretations of two poems, and after doing this, they also rated themselves on their degree of enjoyment of the poem they had read and their degree of understanding of its message. The scores were significantly higher in both cases for one poem (by Robert Frost) than for the other (by Maxime Kumin). This is suggestive evidence for a relationship between interpretation and evaluation. As Gibbs and Boers put it, 'participants' difficulty in discerning allegorical meanings for Kumin's poem may have interfered with their enjoyment of it' (p. 22). From the teacher's point of view, this finding also suggests that evaluations may be positively affected by interpretation-oriented work in the form of metaphor awareness-raising, for example. This is one of the questions addressed in my own research, which is described in the next section of this chapter.

6.3   The value of (metaphor in) literature in the L2 classroom

The studies discussed in this section share an interest in the relationship between (metaphor) interpretation and evaluation, but they differ in their methodological approach. If one wants to find out more about how L2 students evaluate literature, one obvious approach is simply to ask them to explain their views directly. The 'Woods' evaluation study below used this bottom-up approach. This study gathered raw data on what motivated my students' evaluations of 'Woods', and it also included a teaching angle: Do activities like metaphor awareness-raising or group-work discussion have a positive effect on evaluation? The studies discussed later in the chapter investigated whether the relationship that Gentner (1982) found between evaluation and metaphor richness also holds for L2 readers. For this study, metaphors in short stories were made more or less explicit in a way that affected their richness in order to establish how this would affect evaluations.

6.3.1   'Woods' evaluation study: What motivates L2 students' evaluations?

In the preceding chapters, I have described a number of studies that were strictly concerned with aspects of the processing of metaphor in literature by L2 students. The 'Woods' study described here (and previously in Picken, 2003a) casts a wider net although the data that it gathered remains relevant to metaphor. The design of the study is extremely

simple: Students were asked to write short interpretations of Robert Frost's 'Woods' (see Chapter 5), to evaluate the poem on a five-point scale, and to motivate their evaluations in writing. In analysing the data, I was particularly interested in comments related to interpretation and its effect on the students' evaluations. However, the bottom-up method of data gathering inevitably revealed other factors that contributed to these evaluations, and these will also be discussed.

Participants: Fifty-six students in a department of English at a Japanese women's college participated in this study. Twenty of these were first-year students and the others were in third-year courses. *Tasks and materials*: The students received a task sheet with Robert Frost's 'Woods' and they were asked to do three tasks: (1) Write short interpretations of the poem's final stanza, (2) evaluate the poem on a five-point scale running from one (absolutely not worth reading) to five (very well worth reading), and (3) explain their evaluations. The task sheet explained that they could write their comments in Japanese, and it included Japanese translations of seven words or phrases from the poem.

Results: To categorize the students' evaluations, a system had to be developed, and Miall (2006) proposes that there are two basic ways of doing this: One can use a 'previously designed category system' (p. 30), or one can develop categories in response to what is found in the data. I mainly used the former approach by taking categories of evaluation criteria from van Luxemburg, Bal, and Weststeijn (1981) as a starting point. However, two changes were made in the course of operational-izing these categories for the analysis and applying them to the data. As a result, the categories developed from a combination of Miall's two methods although the first method was the more important of the two. The categories are listed in Box 6.1, and the relevant connection with van Luxemburg *et al.*'s categories ('vLB&W') is indicated in parentheses.

Box 6.1   Categories of evaluation criteria in the 'Woods' evaluation study

1. **Cognitive focus**: The student comments on how the poem made her *think*, on *interpretation*, or *understanding*, or *meaning*; there may also be an explanation of the thoughts/ideas that the poem led to—that is, an explanation of *what the poem teaches*, or *expresses*, or *tells*. (vLB&W's 'cognitive criteria', a sub-category of realism/mimesis.)

Box 6.1 (Continued)

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2. **Emotional focus**: The student comments on the *feelings* that the poem evoked in her, including *feelings evoked by the words*. (vLB&W's 'emotiveness'.)
3. **Representational/imaginative focus**: The student comments on the (*description* of the) *scenery*, or on the things that the poem made her *imagine*—its effect on the *imagination* or the *image* that it produces. (vLB&W's 'realism/mimesis'.)
4. **Formal focus**: The student comments on formal, linguistic aspects of the poem such as the *rhyme*, the *construction*, or *formal qualities of the language*. Comments on *metaphor* and on the *beauty of the language* are also included here. (vLB&W's 'structural criteria'.)
5. **Author focus**: The student comments on what the *author* or *writer* wanted to say or express. (vLB&W's 'expressiveness'.)
6. **Genre focus**: The student makes a general comment on (the value of) *poetry* or *literature* as such. (vLB&W's 'tradition'.)

The main difference between the list in Box 6.1 and van Luxemburg, Bal, and Weststeijn's (1981) is that it does not contain a category for political, moral, and religious criteria. This change was driven by the data: There were no clear cases of students commenting with (dis)approval on the poem's moral, political, or religious position. The second main difference concerns cognitive criteria, which van Luxemburg *et al.* treat as a sub-category of 'realism/mimesis' (p. 123). Many students commented separately on the poem's description of the scenery (realism/mimesis) and on what the poem taught them (cognitive), and it was necessary to separate the categories to bring this out.

Overall, the students appreciated the experience of reading the poem: The mean evaluation score was 3.71 with a standard deviation of 0.59. The vast majority of the scores were 3s and 4s. The motivations for these scores are categorized in Table 6.1. Many students gave a number of reasons for their evaluations, and each of these reasons has been included separately in the table. This is similar to the method used by Gibbs and Boers (2005) in their categorization of L1 students' responses to two poems.

The comments were mainly categorized as positive or negative on the basis of their association with high and low evaluation

Table 6.1 Six evaluation categories in the 'Woods' evaluation study

	Positive effect	**Negative effect**	**Total**
1. Cognitive	14	18	32
2. Emotional	8	2	10
3. Repr/Image	17	0	17
4. Formal	14	1	15
5. Author	3	0	3
6. Genre	1	6	7

scores: Comments associated with high scores of *5* or *4* were normally categorized as positive, while comments associated with scores of a *3* or lower were categorized as negative. However, these associations were ignored when students specifically indicated that a factor had played a negative or positive role in an evaluation. For example, one student gave the poem a relatively high evaluation score of *4*, but her comments make it clear that interpretation problems had affected this evaluation in a negative way. She explains that if she had understood the meaning better, it would have been 'possible to enjoy it more'. Nevertheless, she enjoyed the poem because she felt it had been good for her imagination to read it. In contrast, some students wrote positive things about inter- pretation itself, but they still gave poor evaluation scores of *3* or lower to the poem.

It is clear from Table 6.1 that comments with a cognitive focus represent the largest category. These were comments that related the evaluations of the poem to interpretation. In slightly less than half of the cases, interpret- ative work was viewed in a positive light. In particular, students liked the fact that, as one student put it, 'there are many ways of reading' the poem. However, in just over half of the cases, interpretation played a negative role because students found the poem difficult to understand.

While the interpretative challenge had a mixed effect on evaluations, comments in all other categories except for those with a genre focus were mainly positive. The students were particularly positive about imagin- ative work (category 3), the second largest category. These are comments about how the students enjoyed the imaginative activity of building 'a picture of the world in your head', as one student put it. The students were also overwhelmingly positive about formal aspects of the poem (category 4). Some students admired the poem's rhyme scheme while others commented in more general terms on the aesthetic beauty of the language. The poem also evoked a variety of positive feelings (category 2). One student thought that the poem was 'heartwarming', for example,

and another liked the 'feeling of stillness' that it gave her. Genre-related comments (category 6) were mainly negative, however. These students explained that they did not really enjoy poetry or literature as such.

Discussion: Interpreting a poem includes interpreting metaphors in a poem, but more is involved. Because of this, it would be inappropriate to treat the students' comments on interpretation as direct comments on the interpretation of metaphor. This being said, it is clear that interpretative work had a positive effect on evaluations in some cases and a negative effect in others. Other aspects of the reading experience often played a compensatory role in the latter cases so that the overall evaluation of the poem remained positive. It was particularly interesting to note that many students enjoyed imagining the scenery described in the poem and that formal, aesthetic appreciation of the poem's language was also common.

6.3.2   Teaching and evaluation: Metaphor awareness-raising and group-work discussion

The 'Woods' evaluation study was also designed to investigate the effect of different teaching methods on evaluation: the effects of CM awareness-raising and of discussing the poem in small groups. CM awareness-raising was an obvious thing to follow up on against the background of the research on awareness-raising and interpretation reported in Chapter 5. It is also related to Gibbs's (2002b) research on awareness-raising: As we saw earlier in the chapter, Gibbs found that focusing students on metaphors in two poems had a positive effect on their responses to the poems. A number of reasons for investigating group-work discussion can be mentioned. In general, group-work discussion is a staple in L2 teaching, and this makes it an obvious candidate for research. Maley (2001) specifically suggests that literary texts are excellent for discussion work on the grounds that 'they invite multiple interpretation' (p. 182) and introduce an interpretation gap that provides a fine starting point for a discussion. From the research point of view, this kind of exposure to multiple interpretations can also be related to evaluation, especially metaphor evaluation. As we saw earlier in the chapter, metaphor richness or what Steen (1994) calls the 'polyvalent processing' (p. 207) potential of metaphors in literature is viewed as an important factor in evaluation. Thus, a positive effect on evaluation may be expected to result from the exposure to multiple interpretations (including metaphor interpretations) in the course of group discussion.

The effect of CM awareness-raising was introduced into the 'Woods' evaluation study in the following way: The task sheet for one group of third-year students explicitly related 'Woods' to the Life Is A Journey CM, while the task sheet for the other group of third-year students provided no help whatsoever. This is similar to the design used in the 'Woods' study in Chapter 5. The effect of group-work discussion was investigated by getting one of these groups of third-year students to discuss the poem after they had completed the evaluation task. At the end of this discussion, they were asked to evaluate the poem a second time.

Participants: Thirty-six English department students in two third-year classes at a Japanese women's college participated. These students also provided data in the related 'Woods' evaluation study described above. The 20 first-year students that also participated in that study are not included here in order to eliminate age difference as a potential factor in the present study. *Tasks and materials*: The tasks and materials have already been described in the 'Woods' evaluation study above. The main point that needs to be added is that there was a difference in the task sheets for groups B and C: Group C's task sheet included the explanation that 'Woods' is thought to express 'an idea about life by comparing life to a journey, especially in the poem's final lines'. The task sheet for group B did not contain this explanation. In other words, there was CM awareness-raising in group C but not in group B.

After completing the 'Woods' evaluation task, the students in group C discussed 'Woods' in small groups. They were asked to discuss (1) their ideas about the meaning of the poem and (2) their evaluations of the poem: why they thought it was or was not worth reading. No time limits were set for this discussion beyond the fact that the students were asked to make sure they would have enough time to write a second evaluation of the poem before the class ended. This second evaluation was included to investigate the effect of small group discussion on evaluation. As in the first evaluation, they rated the poem on a five-point scale. In addition, they were asked to explain why their second evaluation was higher, lower, or unchanged.

Results: The results are displayed in Table 6.2, and they show that CM awareness-raising had no effect on evaluations but that group discussion had a substantial effect. For CM awareness-raising, rows 2 and 3 are the relevant ones. Group B received no help from the task sheet, and the mean evaluation score in this group was 3.75. This is only just below the mean of 3.81 in group C, where the task sheet explicitly drew a link between the poem and the CM Life Is A Journey. In other words, CM

Table 6.2 The effects of CM awareness-raising and of group discussion on evaluations of 'Woods'

Class	Condition	Scores	Mean score
B. (20 ss.)	No help	$(2 \times 5) + (11 \times 4) + (7 \times 3) = 75$	3.75 (*s.d.* .639)
C. (16 ss.)	Life/Journey CM	$(1 \times 5) + (12 \times 4) + (2 \times 3) + (1 \times 2)$ $= 61$	3.81 (*s.d.* .655)
C'. (16 ss) —2nd evaluation	Discussion	$(8 \times 5) + (7 \times 4) + (1 \times 2) = 70$	4.375 (*s.d.* .806)

awareness-raising did not lead to higher evaluations in this group, but it does not appear to have had a negative effect either.

Group discussion gave rise to a substantial jump in evaluation scores in group C's second evaluation of the poem: The mean score rises from 3.81 in the first round (see row 3) to 4.375 in the second (see row 4 with the scores for group C'). This gain of over 0.5 points is statistically significant: A z-value of 2.666 is obtained on the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, well above the value of 1.96 that is necessary for significance at the 0.5 level. The opportunity to discuss the poem in groups evidently made a substantial contribution to evaluation. Some reasons for this jump are suggested by the evaluation score explanations that the group C students gave when they evaluated the poem a second time.

Discussion: The students' explanations of their second evaluations of 'Woods' were again categorized using the categories listed in Box 6.1. Table 6.3 displays the numbers of comments in each category in a way that allows for a comparison between the first and the second evaluations of the poem. The main shift to be noted is that comments with a cognitive focus gained substantially in importance while comments on the representational/imaginative aspects of reading the poem and

Table 6.3 Categories of comments in two consecutive evaluations of 'Woods'

	First evaluation	Second evaluation
1. Cognitive	10	16
2. Emotional	0	2
3. Representational/Imagin.	8	2
4. Formal	8	1
5. Author	0	1
6. Genre	1	4

comments on its formal aspects disappeared almost completely. Thus, the opportunity to discuss the poem in groups appears to have caused a shift towards a focus on issues of meaning and interpretation among the students. This shift also appears to be connected to the overall rise in evaluation scores. The students' explanations of their second evaluations make this connection in two ways: Some raised their scores because they felt that they understood the poem after the discussion, while others gave higher evaluations because they felt that they had developed a richer understanding of the poem's possible meanings. For example, one student wrote that because she now understood the meaning, she realized that it was a 'wonderful poem', and another motivated her higher score on the grounds that the 'poem has a lot of meaning'.

There was also a noticeable interest in the details of interpretation: The *woods, horse, lake, bell, wind*, and the identity of the poem's *he* were all mentioned more than once. Two students commented explicitly on their interest in the 'symbolic' value of these elements of the text world, but it was clear from all comments that at this stage most of the students were interested in (particular ideas about) what these things represented, not in imagining what they looked like in the text world that the poem refers to. These ideas, furthermore, were not necessarily ones that they agreed with. One student, for example, commented on how she was interested in the interpretation that ' "he" stands for God', which had come up in her group, but she concludes that even though these other interpretations were interesting, she had mainly enjoyed filling out the ideas from her first reading of the poem in more detail.

Thus, the general picture that emerges from these two rounds of evaluation is that students appreciate different things at different stages. In the earlier stages, meaning and interpretation play a variable role: Some appreciate the poem's rich meaning potential while others feel frustrated by their inability to 'see through' the poem in a way that makes sense to them. At this stage, other factors may play an important compensatory role, notably aesthetic appreciation of formal aspects of the poem, and the pleasurable experience of building up an imaginative picture of the poem's text world. At a later stage, interest in imagining what the text world looks like disappears almost completely: The focus switches from this to thinking about what this world and its entities represent symbolically. In the process, interpretation becomes a new source of pleasure. For some, this is the pleasure of discovering an interpretation that makes sense, while for others it is the pleasure of discovering new meaning potential in the poem, even if they do not necessarily accept the new meanings proposed. This also provides indirect evidence that

getting help with interpretation in some form or another can contribute positively to evaluation. In the second round, the students were exposed in detail to their fellow students' interpretations, and in many cases this resulted in higher evaluations.

6.3.3   Metaphor explicitness and the evaluation of short stories

In the review of metaphor evaluation research at the beginning of this chapter, various factors were identified: degree of innovativeness, degree of (dis)similarity, context, and the genre-related factors of richness and clarity. All these factors may play a role in L1 evaluations of metaphor, but very little is known about how or whether they affect L2 metaphor evaluations. This makes it an obvious area for further research. Such research is also necessary with reference to foregrounding theory. As a foregrounding device, metaphor is supposed to de-automatize our responses to literary texts in a way that readers find valuable. Ideally, L2 readers of literature will also value this experience, but at present it is unclear whether they actually do this. This makes research on the evaluation of metaphor in literature particularly necessary from the point of view of L2 teachers and researchers with an interest in WWL. The studies in the present section attempt to address this need. This research is also discussed in Picken (2006).

The studies discussed below build on the metaphor visibility studies reported in Chapter 4. Metaphor visibility or explicitness can be related to foregrounding theory in a fairly obvious way. As we saw in Chapter 4, low-visibility metaphors pose a greater challenge to comprehension than higher-visibility ones. Cieślicka's (2006) research also demonstrates that literal meanings interfere with L2 comprehension of conventionally figurative language. This is fully in accordance with the prediction that foregrounded language slows down processing. As a result, in line with foregrounding theory, one can also predict that more challenging metaphors in literature will be valued more highly. This prediction was confirmed in van Peer's (1986) foregrounding-based research with L1 readers (see Chapter 2).

This prediction about the effect of metaphor explicitness on evaluation can also be motivated more precisely with reference to the metaphor evaluation research discussed earlier in this chapter. In the first place, metaphor explicitness is related to metaphor richness. This was already pointed out in the discussion of Shakespeare's 'Juliet is the sun'. The rich meaning potential of this metaphor is substantially reduced if it is turned into an explicit comparison such as 'Juliet is like the sun to me

in the sense that I am attracted to her as strongly as a planet is attracted to the sun.' Here, the comparison's explicit focus on attraction removes many of the other potential meanings of the original metaphor, such as the idea of warmth.

Metaphor explicitness can also be related to schema refreshment and to Giora's (2003) research on optimal innovation. In essence, Cook (1994) suggests that schema refreshment is valuable because we learn something from it: It rearranges our mental furniture (schemata). Giora makes the same point when she suggests that innovative uses of language are valued because the human mind 'is constantly in search of novelty, regardless of whether it is figurative or literal' (p. 179). Novel metaphor is a clear case of this kind of novelty. However, a metaphor's degree of explicitness can affect the amount of novelty. When 'Juliet is the sun' is turned into an explicit comparison, it is likely to reduce a reader's chances of discovering the rich meaning potential of the original metaphor. As a result, again, the prediction is that an inexplicit metaphor should be valued more highly than an explicit one.

Thus, there are good reasons for predicting from foregrounding theory and L1 research that less explicit versions of metaphors will normally be valued more highly. However, the research presented earlier in this chapter also suggests that the relationship may not be this simple. The challenge of interpretation had a negative effect on students' evaluations of 'Woods', and this kind of effect may also occur in response to differences in metaphor explicitness. In other words, it may turn out that explicit metaphors are valued more highly than inexplicit ones because they are less challenging. Against this background, the following studies with two short stories were designed to investigate the nature of the relationship.

The 'Night' evaluation study

Participants: Seventy-eight third- and fourth-year students of English at a women's college in Japan participated. They came from five intact groups taking required courses for their major. *Materials*: Two versions of a very short story called 'Night' (Lott, 1992; see Box 6.2) were used. One version ended with the inexplicit metaphor 'a dream that ended in darkness'. The other ended with an explicit comparison: 'it was like having a happy dream that ended in the darkness of his life's reality'. The additions of 'happy' and 'of his life's reality' also serve to make the meaning more explicit.

Box 6.2   Summary of 'Night' and the story endings in the 'Night' evaluation study

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Summary

A father wakes up at night and thinks he can hear his son breathing in his sleep in the next room. He gets up and goes to the room. When he switches on the light, the narrator explains that the 'room, of course, was unchanged. They had left the bed just as their child had made it, the spread merely thrown over bunched and wrinkled sheets, the pillow crooked at the head'. The father switches off the light and returns to his own room with 'his hands at his sides, his fingertips helpless'.

Endings

a. Challenging, inexplicit metaphor: 'He experienced this every night—a dream that ended in darkness'.
b. Less challenging, explicit metaphor: 'He experienced this every night—it was like having a happy dream that ended in the darkness of his life's reality'.

Tasks: The two versions of the story were distributed at random, and the participants were given approximately 20 minutes to read the stories and do the following tasks:

> *Task a*: Choose an interpretation of the final line from the four choices in an MCQ. Item *d* was expected to be the most common choice:
>
> > [MCQ item d]: The man's son had died, but every night the man woke up and imagined that his son was still alive. This was like a happy dream but in the end, the man always returned to his sad, dark reality.
>
> *Task b*: Evaluate the story on a seven-point Likert scale running from 1 (the story was absolutely not worth reading) to 7 (the story was very well worth reading).
>
> *Task c*: Indicate whether you changed your interpretation of the final sentence while reading the story or doing the MCQ task. (Note: This was included as an indirect measure of the interpretative challenge. A change of interpretation would indicate that a student had had to make more effort to reach a satisfactory interpretation than a student who had not needed an interpretation change to reach it

due, for example, to familiarity with the metaphorical potential of 'darkness'. By extension, the latter kind of student would have a lesser sense of the 'richness' of the metaphor or a lesser sense of schema refreshment.)

Task d: If your interpretation changed, please also indicate the effect of this change on your evaluation: Did your evaluation go up, go down, or remain unchanged?

Task e: The students were also asked to write explanations of their evaluations of the story.

Results: The results of the study are summarized in Table 6.4. These results only cover the responses of the 73 students who selected interpretation *d*—the expected interpretation (see *Task a* above). These results will be discussed together with the results of the 'Carpathia' evaluation study, which was designed in the same way.

The 'Carpathia' evaluation study

Participants: The participants were 31 first-year students of English at a women's college in Japan taking a required reading course. *Materials*: 'Carpathia' (Kercheval, 1996), the very short story that was used in the research in Chapter 4, was used again. The explicit and inexplicit versions of the metaphor that were used in the present study are included at the end of the summary of the story in Box 6.3. *Tasks*: The tasks were identical to those used in the 'Night' study, but the expected choice of interpretation in the MCQ task was item *c*:

Table 6.4 Findings in the 'Night' evaluation study

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a. The mean evaluation of the story among all students was 5.096 (*s.d.*:1.002).

b. The inexplicit, challenging version was evaluated slightly more highly (Mean: 5.132; *s.d.*: .991) than the less challenging, explicit version (Mean: 5.057; *s.d.*, 1.027), but no statistical significance can be attached to this difference.

c. Of the 50 students who experienced interpretation change, a large majority of 42 students reported that their evaluations of the story went up as a result (see tasks c and d). Two students reported that their evaluations went down, 3 evaluations remained unchanged, and the remaining 3 cases could not be categorized. With a one-way chi-square value of 66.428, this is significant at a probability level of .001.*

d. The evaluation of the story among the 50 students who experienced interpretation change was also slightly higher (Mean: 5.120; *s.d.*, .982) than it was among the 23 students who reported no such change (Mean: 5.043; *s.d.*, .1065), but no statistical significance can be attached to this difference.

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* The 3 cases that could not be categorized were excluded from this analysis.

Box 6.3 Summary of 'Carpathia' and the story endings in the 'Carpathia' evaluation study

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Summary

The narrator tells the story of her parents' honeymoon and its aftermath. The parents sail on the Carpathia, and they witness the distressing scene of the Titanic's shipwreck and the rescue of its survivors. The Carpathia returns to port with the survivors, and the parents return home from their honeymoon earlier than planned. At a welcome home party, the father gets drunk and makes the following comment about the Titanic: 'They should have put the men in the lifeboats. Men can marry again, have new families. What's the use of all those widows and orphans?' His pregnant, 18-year-old wife is standing next to him, and she turns away when she hears this.

Endings

a. Challenging, inexplicit metaphor: 'She was drowning. But there was no one there to help her.'
b. Less challenging, explicit metaphor: 'She was deeply upset and drowning in her heart. But there was no one there to help her.'

[MCQ item c]: The mother's feelings were hurt so badly by her husband's heartless words that she felt as if she were drowning in a cold sea.

Results: The results of the study are displayed in Table 6.5. This only covers the data of the 29 students who chose interpretation *c*—the expected choice.

Discussion: Although the two studies present a different picture, they both provide evidence that the challenge of interpretation played a significant role in the students' evaluations of the two stories. The difference in metaphor explicitness played a substantial role in the evaluations of 'Carpathia' although it had no apparent role in the evaluations of 'Night'. In contrast, the experience of interpretation change overwhelmingly raised evaluations of 'Night', but this experience appeared to have little effect on evaluations of 'Carpathia'. Thus, taken together, the findings in the two studies were somewhat contradictory.

Table 6.5 Findings in the 'Carpathia' evaluation Study

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a. The mean evaluation of the story among all students was 5.310 (*s.d.*: 1.072)
b. The less challenging, explicit version was evaluated substantially more highly (Mean: 5.688; *s.d.*: .793) than more the more challenging, inexplicit version (Mean: 4.846; *s.d.* 1.214). This difference is significant on the non-parametric median test with a T value of 2.256.*
c. Of the 7 students who experienced interpretation change, 3 reported that their evaluations went up. (Remainder: 1 down, 2 unchanged, 1 unclear)
d. The evaluation of the story among the 7 students who experienced interpretation change was slightly lower (Mean: 5.286; *s.d.*, .951) than among the 23 students who reported no such change (Mean: 5.318; *s.d.*, 1.129), but no statistical significance can be attached to this difference.

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* It is significant if scores at the median are not counted and also if scores at the median are counted together with scores above the median (T = 2.129), but it is not significant if scores at the median are counted together with scores below the median (T = 1.701). The issue of using scores at the median in the median test is discussed in Hatch and Lazaraton (1991).

Of these two main findings, the one related to metaphor explicitness is more important because it has solid grounding in the metaphor research on the relationship between metaphor explicitness and richness that was discussed earlier. Unfortunately, this finding is inconclusive: Metaphor explicitness only appeared to play a significant role in the 'Carpathia' study. The second finding regarding the effect of interpretation change on evaluation is also inconclusive: A strong relationship was found in the 'Night' study, but there was no apparent relationship in the 'Carpathia' study. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the subjective experience of interpretation change can have an overwhelmingly positive effect in some cases. Some aspect of this experience appears to have been schema refreshing from the point of view of the students in the 'Night' study.

At the very least, the findings suggest that further research would be worthwhile, because significant differences were found in both cases. However, different stories were used in the two studies, so there may be a story factor that needs to be controlled for in future research. For example, Brewer (1996) suggests that story evaluations may be influenced by readers' feelings about whether a story ending is fair and just and by whether readers like the characters in a story. Factors like these may have played an intervening role in the 'Carpathia' and 'Night' studies. Indeed, there is some evidence of this in the comments that the students provided about their evaluations. Many of the students in the 'Carpathia' study, who were all approximately the same age as the 18-year-old mother in 'Carpathia', strongly sympathized with her. Against

this background, one student wrote that the father's male chauvinist comments about putting more men in the lifeboats made her 'seethe with anger'. Another student's evaluation was related to the fact that the 18-year-old mother's feelings were 'expressed so clearly that it hurt'. Under the circumstances, an ending with a clear and explicit expression of the mother's feelings may well have been evaluated more highly than the inexplicit metaphor 'she was drowning'.

Age may also have been a factor that affected the results in the two studies: There was a 2- to 3-year age difference between the first-year students in the 'Carpathia' study and the third- and fourth-year students in the 'Night' study. Thus, age (and the presumable difference in English proficiency related to it) also needs to be controlled in future research. Metaphor explicitness itself could also have played a role: Although variation in explicitness was used in both studies, the actual degree of this variation was not controlled. Thus, the difference may have been more pronounced in one of the studies, and this could also have affected the results. It may be possible to control for this to some extent by controlling the method of making metaphors explicit and only using explicit similes for this purpose, for example.

6.4   Conclusion

Although the research reported in the present chapter did not always produce neat, clear-cut results, it does appear to support the following generalizations about L2 students of the kind that participated in the studies. First, all the studies support the idea that these learners value work with literature, in absolute terms at least. Even though evaluations varied in response to factors like metaphor explicitness, the mean evaluations of 'Woods', 'Night', and 'Carpathia' were invariably above the median of the five- or seven-point evaluation scales that were used. A second well-supported generalization is that interpretation plays a significant role in the evaluation of literary texts by L2 learners. This is clear both from the comments in the 'Woods' evaluation study and from the story evaluation studies at the end of the chapter. At the same time, these studies also provided evidence that other factors play a role. The comments in the 'Woods' evaluation study revealed that many students enjoyed building a mental image of the scenery as they read 'Woods' and many also appreciated qualities of the poem's language. These things were valued even when the students were having trouble interpreting the poem in a way that made sense to them. The contradictory findings in the evaluation studies with 'Night' and 'Carpathia'

provide further, indirect evidence that other factors play a role. Manipulating the explicitness of an important metaphor at the end of each story had a significant effect on evaluation in both cases. However, the direction of this effect varied, and this indicates that metaphor explicitness alone cannot account for the results. Given the fact that metaphor evaluation and story evaluation have been linked with various other factors, this is hardly surprising of course. Further research is necessary, but at the very least it seems fair to say that both studies are compatible with foregrounding theory because variation in the form of a metaphor had an effect on evaluations in both cases.

The 'Woods' evaluation study included a pedagogical angle by investigating the effects of metaphor awareness-raising and of group discussion on evaluation. Metaphor awareness-raising turned out to have no effect whatsoever, but evaluations of 'Woods' rose significantly after students had had an opportunity to discuss their interpretations and to compare their evaluations of the poem. Their comments suggested that the exposure to other interpretations during this group discussion had been a particularly important aspect of this activity. The students related their higher evaluations to this exposure either because it had helped them to understand the poem better or because it had made them more aware of its rich meaning potential.

7
Metaphor: Curriculum, Methodology, and Materials

7.1 Introduction

The picture that emerges from the preceding chapters is that fore-grounding of the metaphor-related kind does work more or less in the predicted manner among L2 learners. As predicted by foregrounding, metaphor gives rise to impeded response: Among other things, L2 comprehension of metaphor appears to be impeded by the competition between literal and metaphorical meanings. As predicted, interpretation is also guided by foregrounding. In particular, conceptual metaphors seem to play a role in providing this guidance. Metaphor-related foregrounding is also related to evaluation: Variation in the form of linguistic metaphors affects L2 students' evaluations of literary texts. However, there is also one finding that goes against foregrounding: Metaphors appear to impede L2 students' responses regardless of novelty and regardless of whether they are used in literary discourse or not. This is evident, for example, in Cieślicka's (2006) research on L2 responses to conventional figurative expressions in minimal, non-literary contexts. In other words, there is a literary element even in L2 learners' responses to non-literary, conventional figurative language. This appears to be due to the fact that the figurative meanings of these expressions often lack salience from an L2 learner's perspective.

The research also provides support for both reader-response and stylistics-based approaches to WWL, but the support is not unequivocal for either approach. Stylisticians can take heart from the evidence relating metaphor and interpretation, but this is only one part of the picture. Students' feelings about interpretative work are mixed, and many students value WWL for reasons that have little to do with stylistic, interpretation-oriented work. For example, they enjoy building an

imaginative picture of the world that the literary text refers to. Reader-response supporters, in turn, can be encouraged by the fact that L2 students value the experience of being engaged with literature and by the fact that they value it for a variety of reasons. However, interpretation and form-related aspects of language are also among these reasons even though these aspects of literature tend to be de-emphasized in pedagogical practice that is informed by reader response. In short, an eclectic approach appears to be indicated: Attention needs to be paid both to interpretation and to value-related responses to literature. In doing so, however, it needs to be recognized that interpretation and evaluation are not necessarily in opposition. Instead, interpretation is one aspect of what makes literature valuable. However, this is not formal interpretation of the kind that professional critics engage in but informal interpretation of a personal kind.

Against this background, eclecticism informs the following teaching-focused discussion of metaphor in literature. In other words, the discussion tries to strike a balance between the need for comprehension-, interpretation-, and evaluation-oriented classroom work on metaphor. It also attempts to do this in a way that places work on metaphor in literature within a broader context by discussing general ideas about work on metaphor and figurative language in the L2 classroom. The discussion is divided into three sections that are concerned respectively with the curriculum, with methodology, and with materials.

7.2   Metaphor and the curriculum

So much has been written about (conceptual) metaphor and figurative language teaching in recent years that it seems fair to say that these are now mainstream topics. Indeed, Littlemore and Low (2006a) have recently made a persuasive case for the idea that metaphor has 'an important role to play in *all* areas of communicative competence' (p. 268). Inevitably, this concern with figurative language has meant that an increasing number of ideas have become available on how to approach metaphor in curricular, methodological, and materials-related terms. The present section begins with general ideas on metaphor in the curriculum before considering the more specific links between metaphor, literature, and the curriculum.

In order to discuss metaphor in curricular terms, it is useful to step back briefly and recall Widdowson's (1975) ideas on the place of literature in the language curriculum. As we saw in Chapter 2, Widdowson had two main proposals. First, there should be a comparative aspect to WWL

because language use in literature is understood better by comparing it with language use in non-literary discourses and vice versa. Secondly, WWL serves the broader pedagogical purpose of helping language learners to develop their interpretative skills. McCarthy and Carter (1994) reformulate these two ideas in curricular terms by proposing a number of general principles for curriculum design. Widdowson's point about the need for comparative work is reflected in two of McCarthy and Carter's principles: Together, their contrastive and continuum principles formulate the idea that the curriculum should include comparative and contrastive work on language use in literary and non-literary texts. Widdowson's point about interpretative work is reflected in McCarthy and Carter's third principle, the inferencing principle. This expresses the idea that curriculum time should be 'devoted to teaching actual procedures for making sense of texts' (p. 167).

Metaphor-related work in the curriculum can be discussed usefully with reference to McCarthy and Carter's (1994) principles. First, CM awareness-raising activities can be related to their contrastive and continuum principles. As discussed in Chapter 3, CMs are linguistically instantiated in conventional and novel ways. By making students aware of these things, a basis is provided for the comparison of conventional and novel linguistic metaphors across discourses—from literary discourses to non-literary ones. Secondly, McCarthy and Carter's inferencing principle can be specifically related to metaphor interpretation skills. Littlemore and Low (2006b) argue that these skills require careful attention in all language teaching. WWL is one way of doing this, of course, but it is certainly not the only way of including the development of inferencing skills in the curriculum.

First, then, there is the issue of how to include CM awareness-raising work in the curriculum. The general idea of doing this as a tool in vocabulary teaching has become well established since Nattinger (1988). However, it is only in recent years that researchers have started to consider the details. From a curricular point of view, two obvious questions can be asked: (1) Which CMs should be taught, and (2) which order should they be taught in? In addition, factors like the proficiency level and age of the learner need to be taken into account, and the distinction between learning for understanding and for production also needs to be considered.

Work by Kövecses (2002) provides the beginning of an answer to the first question: Which CMs should be taught? Kövecses makes the important observation that there are certain CM source domains that are used in a large number of CMs. These source domains include the

Human Body, Health and Illness, Animals, Plants, Buildings, Machines and Tools, Games and Sport, Money, and Cooking and Food. All these domains have a wide 'scope', in Kövecses's terms. For example, the Buildings source domain has a wide scope because it is used in Theories Are Buildings, Relationships Are Buildings, Careers Are Buildings, and Economic Systems Are Buildings (Kövecses, p. 108).

Source domains with a wide scope are obvious candidates for inclusion in any L2 curriculum. In fact, many of them are already taught at an early stage—as topics, that is, not as source domains. This point was already made in Chapter 5. For example, it is quite normal to find units on the human body, on health and illness, and on food in pre-intermediate EFL textbooks. Units like these can provide a good basis for later CM awareness-raising activities related to CMs that fall within the scope of these source domains/topics. However, in Chapter 5 it was also suggested that other wide scope source domains (such as Animals, Plants, and Machines) tend to get less attention at an early stage of language learning. In addition, some research presented in that chapter appeared to indicate that this difference was also reflected in the students' ability to notice patterns of metaphor in text: They were better at recognizing patterns related to high-priority topics/source domains such as Human Body and Weather than they were at recognizing patterns related to lower-priority domains such as Animals or Machines. Against this background, a case can be made for introducing these neglected wide scope source domains at an earlier stage in the curriculum too. Littlemore and Low (2006b) also argue that an early focus on specific source domains (such as Journey) will help to 'get the learners a long way with minimal effort' (p. 24). In addition, they make the more general point that, whenever possible, learners should be taught words in their basic, literal senses first.

Aside from these broad ideas about including wide scope source domains as topics at an early stage in the curriculum, I am not aware of any work that is specifically concerned with the question of order: Which order, if any, should CMs be taught in? Presumably, this will partly depend on the topics that get covered at a more advanced level. Topics taught at a more advanced stage are likely to be more abstract, and a range of CMs will be used to talk about them in a concrete way. In economic discourse, for example, common CM source domains are 'building, plants, journey (movement, direction)' (Kövecses, 2002, p. 22). These CMs deserve attention in ESP courses for students of economics. The same kind of point can be made about L2 students aiming to specialize in literature as an object of study. Literary discourse

tends to be preoccupied with major themes such as love and death, and against this background, it may be desirable to pay particular attention to important CMs related to the target domains of Love and Death (see Lakoff & Turner, 1989, for the latter) when working with L2 students of literature. Corpus research on metaphor in literature is likely to provide important insights for this purpose. Steen and Gibbs (2004) outline some of the main questions that need to be addressed in corpus studies of this nature.

Other curriculum-related issues such as the age and proficiency level of learners also need to get more attention in research. To date, CM awareness-raising activities have mainly been studied with fairly proficient, university-level students (Boers, 2000, for example). It remains to be seen how younger, less proficient learners respond to activities of this nature. It would also be useful to have more research on the differences between teaching metaphor for understanding and for production. Littlemore and Low (2006b) offer many valuable insights into these differences. Corpus research reported in McCarthy (1998) suggests that the productive use of idioms is relatively limited among speakers below the age of 25, and he suggests that 'this may make their teaching as *productive* vocabulary for younger age-groups inappropriate' (p. 145).

McCarthy and Carter's (1994) inferencing principle expresses the idea that curricular time needs to be devoted to 'actual procedures for making sense of texts' (p. 167). This is another curricular principle that can be related to metaphor, because metaphor processing is an important kind of inferencing. Work by Littlemore and Low (2006b) is helpful here. They discuss a number of different aspects of metaphor processing that teachers can work on with their students in order to help them to develop their interpretative skills. For example, teachers may be able to help students to develop their ability to notice metaphors in discourse, and there may also be ways to help them to become better at interpreting metaphors after they have noticed them. These ideas, which will be considered in more detail in the methodology section of this chapter, have a curricular aspect. For example, it would appear to be possible to include work on noticing and work on interpretation separately in the curriculum. As noted earlier, work in the area of evaluation also deserves a place in the curriculum, but Littlemore and Low pay little attention to this.

The relationship between metaphor and the WWL curriculum needs to be considered next. In other words, it is necessary to consider metaphor as a potential factor in the selection and sequencing of literary materials for WWL. Many factors are relevant for this purpose, and

Lazar (1993) provides a useful list of the main ones: Attention needs to be paid to the students' age, their intellectual and emotional maturity, their cultural background, their linguistic proficiency, and their literary background. An obvious point to make here is that metaphor is actually a component of many of these factors. This is self-evident with linguistic proficiency: If students are unfamiliar with much of the vocabulary in a given text, then they will inevitably also face problems if any of this vocabulary is used metaphorically in the text. Metaphor is also a component of cultural background. To give a stereotypical example, students from non-cricket cultures are likely to be 'stumped' if a text makes an extensive use of cricket metaphors. A more sophisticated discussion of cross-cultural differences in metaphor can be found in Kövecses (2005). Finally, metaphor is also related to developmental factors such as age and intellectual development—see Cameron (2003) for a discussion of the problems of young L1 learners with metaphor in educational discourse.

Even though metaphor is directly connected with Lazar's (1993) text selection factors, it may also be useful to consider it as a factor in its own right. In the first place, teachers can do this by identifying the main CMs used in a given literary text and deciding how useful they are likely to be for their students. At the early stages, texts that use important CMs such as Life Is A Journey would probably be a better choice than texts that use conceptually unconventional ones such as Life Is A Mirror (Kövecses, 2002, p. 32). This point is related to the research in Chapter 5: Work on the CM Life Is A Journey in one literary text appeared to help learners when they encountered instantiations of this CM in other texts. Work on a CM like Life Is A Mirror would not pay off in the same kind of way because students may never encounter this CM again.

Rosenkjar (2006) draws attention to another metaphor-related factor in text selection: Does a text 'contain many instances of linguistic foregrounding that can be readily found by students' (p. 128)? With metaphor, this question is related to linguistic form and metaphor visibility, which can be a problem for L2 students as we saw in Chapter 4. Thus, at an early stage it may be desirable to work with texts in which the metaphors are relatively explicit, thanks to the use of lexical cues, for example (see Chapter 4). Goatly (1997) suggests that word class may also affect explicitness and that nominal metaphors are more likely to be recognized than metaphors in other word classes. Thus, texts with relatively salient nominal metaphors may be better for WWL at an early stage. Some data in Cameron (2003) provides support for the idea that word class affects processing: L1 elementary school students in her research

appeared to process nominal and verbal metaphors in a different way. However, this research is best viewed as exploratory because it is based on the comments of two students only.

7.3   Metaphor and methodology

This section begins with a discussion of general aspects of metaphor-related teaching methodology before considering methodological approaches to metaphor in literature. However, it needs to be acknowledged at the outset that this is not a clear-cut distinction. In practice, general metaphor-related work in L2 teaching may include the kind of deep, detailed processing that is normally associated with metaphor in literature. In addition, it continues to be argued that work with literary texts is excellent for helping L2 students to develop their general metaphor processing abilities.

In the preceding section, it was suggested that certain CM source domains deserve to get particular attention because of their wide scope, but how does one go about teaching these source domains and the CMs related to them? The concept 'main meaning focus' (Kövecses, 2002, p. 109) is useful in thinking about this. Kövecses observes that specific aspects of a domain tend to be used again and again when the domain functions as a CM source domain. This is what he calls the main meaning focus of the source domain, and he adds that this 'represents some basic knowledge concerning a source that is widely shared in the speech community' (Kövecses, p. 110). For example, the Building source domain is used to talk about various target domains in terms of 'their creation, their structure, and the stability of their structure' (Kövecses, p. 109). Thus, when talking about Theories, people use Building-related lexis like *construct* to talk about the creation of a theory and *foundations* to refer to an aspect of the theory's structure. If the theory proves to be badly flawed, people may say that it is *in ruins*. Most of this lexis can be used in similar ways when talking metaphorically about companies or careers, for instance, so this lexis deserves to get particular attention in work on the Building domain. Kövecses (2001) discusses the advantages of using the main meaning focus to present information about this kind of patterned relationship between one source domain and a set of target domains.

Methodologically, it would also seem to be necessary to work on the main meaning focus in a way that highlights the 'logic' of the relationship between people's basic schematic knowledge of the source domain and the relevant target domains. In the case of the source domain Fire,

for example, this basic knowledge encompasses knowledge and vocabulary related to the cause and beginning of a fire, the intensity of a fire, and the end of a fire (Kövecses, 2001)—the 'life cycle' of a fire, as it were. Vocabulary teaching that is organized around this life cycle will presumably help students to see the logic of metaphorical extensions of this vocabulary into the domain of Anger, which has a similar life cycle: Anger can be sparked, it can smoulder or flare up, and it can be extinguished.

An interesting recent proposal by Littlemore and Low (2006b) is that teachers can help learners to develop their 'metaphoric thinking' (p. 11) ability by working in a focused way on different aspects of this. One of these aspects is the ability to notice metaphors. This can be a problem for learners, as we saw in Chapter 4. However, linguistic cues are sometimes used to draw attention to metaphors, and learners can be made aware of these cues to help them to develop their noticing abilities. Many cues are lexical (*as it were; so to speak; figuratively speaking;* and so on) but orthographic devices such as scare quotes can also draw attention to the fact that a word is being used in a special way. A comprehensive discussion of these cues can be found in Chapter 6 of Goatly (1997).

Littlemore and Low (2006b) also discuss various group brainstorming activities that can be used to help learners to activate their source domain knowledge and develop their 'associative fluency' (p. 55) and their 'analogical reasoning' (p. 56) abilities. Among other things, the purpose of these activities is to encourage students to explore alternatives and not just settle for the first plausible interpretation that occurs to them. A metaphor like 'Juliet is the sun' has a rich set of potential interpretations (see Chapter 6) and it can be valuable in itself to explore this. In the process, teachers and students may discover interesting things about cross-cultural differences. For example, Littlemore and Low discuss cross-cultural differences that made it difficult for Japanese learners to make sense of the expression *the cream of*. This suggests something like 'the best of' in English, but one group of Japanese students came up with associations such as ' "sugary" and "short-lived" ' (Littlemore and Low, p. 52). They also appeared to lack the image of cream as something that can be found at the top of a milk bottle.

Littlemore and Low (2006b) pay more attention to interpretation than to evaluation-related work, but in practice, their interpretation-oriented brainstorming activities may well contribute to evaluation by helping students to discover the rich meaning potential of metaphors. However, activities that are directly concerned with evaluation also need to be encouraged. Students can discuss their feelings about metaphors and

explain why they do or do not like them. This kind of work may include or lead to metaphor evaluation of a critical kind. For example, students could be encouraged to think critically about flower- or food-related metaphors for women. When I did this with some of my own first-year students, I was surprised to discover how many of them quite liked flower metaphors and did not condemn them for their ideologically dubious foregrounding of 'beauty' as a significant property. Further examples of critical work on metaphor can be found in Carter *et al.* (1997) and Goatly (2000).

With regard to work on metaphor in literature itself, it will be useful to begin by taking a critical look at three methodological approaches that have already been introduced: Widdowson's, Hanauer's, and my own. Widdowson's (1975) ideas on how to approach metaphor in Robert Frost's 'Dust of Snow' were explained in Chapter 2. In his approach, the teacher identifies a pattern of metaphorically related words or phrases in a text and selects some or all of these for a brainstorming activity. The students make lists of all the denotations and connotations they can think of for each of the selected items, and after doing this they try to identify meanings that are shared by all these items. The items that Widdowson selected for 'Dust of Snow' shared metaphorical overtones of death, for example.

Clearly, Widdowson's approach retains its value today. Indeed, it represents the kind of brainstorming activity that Littlemore and Low (2006b) continue to advocate. However, like most methodologies, it appears to be better for some purposes than for others. It should be excellent for developing interpretative aspects of metaphoric thinking, but as it stands, it neglects metaphor noticing and metaphor evaluation. Teachers could compensate for this in various ways. For example, if a text contains a relatively large number of metaphorically related words, then teachers could select some of these for Widdowsonian brainstorming and reserve the others for follow-up work concerned with noticing. In other words, after the students have discovered that three lexical items in a text can all be associated with death in some way, they could be asked to look for other items in the text that share this association.

Zapata (2005) was used as an example in Chapter 2 to illustrate Hanauer's (2001b) focus-on-cultural understanding approach. In this example, L2 students of Spanish discussed an Argentinian short story in groups and tried to reach a consensus on how to interpret this story. Then they read interpretations of this story by Argentinian cultural informants and in the process they discovered cross-cultural similarities and differences in interpretation. The value of this activity was

not measured directly, but Zapata did find some evidence that it had had a positive effect on student attitudes towards Spanish culture and language learning.

The Hanauer/Zapata approach also seems appealing and worthwhile if handled with sensitivity. Its strength, clearly, lies in the exposure that it gives students to a rich range of interpretations both during group-work discussion and afterwards, when the students read the Argentinian informants' interpretations. However, it is not specifically concerned with metaphor, and teachers would need to adapt the approach for this purpose. For example, the teacher could highlight specific metaphors in a text and ask students and informants to focus on these. Alternatively, if the teacher wants students to work on metaphor noticing, she or he could ask students and informants to look for significant metaphors in a text and to exchange ideas on what they think the metaphors mean and why they feel they are significant. This would also add an element of evaluation to the activity.

In the course of the book, I have personally advocated using CM awareness-raising as a method of approaching metaphor in specific texts and of helping students to develop their metaphor processing skills by doing so. The evidence from the reported research suggests that the method is effective for metaphor noticing and for guiding interpretation but that it has a neutral effect on evaluation. One obvious shortcoming of CM awareness-raising is that it does not automatically involve students in sharing and discussing their interpretations and evaluative responses. A discussion component needs to be added for this purpose, and one of the studies in Chapter 6 provided evidence that this contributes substantially to L2 students' evaluations.

In the studies discussed in preceding chapters, CM awareness-raising was used before students read literary texts with linguistic instantiations of specific CMs. This order was suggested by the research goals of these studies, but there is no reason why classroom practice should always follow this order. CM-related work could equally well be introduced after other work on a poem has taken place. For example, it could be used as a follow-up to a Widdowsonian brainstorming session. After students have had the chance to identify and discuss a pattern of, say, death-related metaphor in a text, the teacher could draw attention to the Death-related CM (or CMs) that the pattern draws on and mention some conventional instantiations of the CM in everyday speech. This would be in line with McCarthy and Carter's (1994) contrastive and continuum principles of curriculum design.

Even though a range of metaphor-related methodologies have been reviewed in the preceding section, the review is far from complete. Many additional ideas can be found in Littlemore and Low (2006b). These include computer-based activities and activities that involve the use of images. Holme (2004) is also fond of using images in metaphor-related work. Excellent ideas can also be found in many L2 practitioners' accounts of their metaphor-related WWL practices. Of course it would be possible to review these ideas here, but space is limited, and new ideas are bound to appear anyway. Against this background, it seems preferable to suggest that teachers should use the discussion in the present section and the book as a whole as a starting point for their own critical evaluations of different ideas. In doing so, it may be helpful to use Gibbs's (1994) four stages of metaphor processing as a framework for analysing a given activity: Is an activity mainly geared towards online comprehension, metaphor identification (or 'noticing', in Littlemore and Low's terms), interpretation, or appreciation (evaluation in my own terms). Littlemore and Low break down interpretation into a number of distinct steps, and this allows for a finer-grained analysis of interpretation-related methodologies. My earlier discussion of Widdowson's (1975) and other methodologies already serves as an illustration of how Gibbs's and Littlemore and Low's concepts can be used for analytical purposes. Ideas on metaphor-related work in Paran's (2006a) recent collection of case studies in WWL can also be analysed in this way in order to get a sense of current practices in the reader-response, stylistics, and eclectic approaches to WWL.

Some of the articles in Paran's (2006a) collection are textbook examples of the stylistics approach. Rosenkjar's (2006) article, for example, illustrates that Widdowson's ideas are still alive and well, including his ideas on interpretative work with metaphor. Rosenkjar introduces a slight variation on these ideas by selecting a relatively large number of words and phrases from a poem and asking students to divide these into two or three meaning-related groups. For example, there is a large group of words related to warfare and/or violence. This variation on Widdowson's approach also seems useful as a way of helping students to develop the ability to identify or notice patterns of metaphor: While the teacher pre-selects the vocabulary (and foregrounds it for the students by doing so), it is still left up to the students to discover patterns of relationships between groups of words in the teacher-selected vocabulary. Thus, Rosenkjar's variation is one way of compensating for the lack of attention to metaphor noticing skills in

Widdowson's approach. After categorizing the metaphorical vocabulary, interpretation- and evaluation-related activities become possible, but Rosenkjar does not discuss activities of this nature in any detail. This is a pity because the poem (Maxine Kumin's 'Woodchucks') has considerable potential for this kind of work. For example, one metaphor compares an attempt to gas some woodchucks (who are playing havoc with a vegetable patch) to the Nazis' use of gas chambers. This has a rich potential for interpretative work (What similarities are there between the Nazis and their victims and the woodchuck exterminator and his/her victims?) and also for evaluative work because the metaphor is such an emotively charged one.

Other articles in Paran (2006a) are strongly inspired by reader-response theory, especially Rosenblatt's work. One interesting thing to note here is that there is very little about metaphor in these articles. However, it does figure to some extent in Tutaş (2006). This is a research-oriented article comparing two approaches to English literature at a Turkish university: a reader-response course and a traditional, teacher-centred course. Adopting Rosenblatt's (1994) terminology, Tutaş calls the former the 'aesthetic group' and the latter the 'efferent' group, and she reports suggestive evidence that students in the aesthetic group learned to respond in a more 'personal and emotive' (p. 141) way to the literary texts that they read. By the same token, students in the efferent group became more heavily oriented towards interpretation, which often turned out to be a 'repetition of what their teacher said in the classroom' (p. 141).

Tutaş's (2006) research is valuable for demonstrating how teaching practice influences and potentially distorts students' responses to literature, but it also raises a question about reader-response attitudes towards 'literary devices' (p. 138) such as style and, presumably, metaphor. Tutaş asked students in both the aesthetic and the efferent group to keep reading logs, and for her research she categorized their comments as efferent or aesthetic. The way Tutaş categorized literary devices is worth highlighting: These were treated as efferent or focused on the 'information to be carried away from reading' (p. 135). This appears to be an unduly negative attitude towards literary devices, and clearly a questionable one in the case of metaphor. At the very least, a distinction needs to be made between interpretative (= efferent?) and evaluative (= aesthetic?) responses. Even this, however, would fail to recognize the relationship between interpretative work and evaluative response (see Chapter 6). The regurgitation of a teacher's interpretation may not be the kind of 'interpretative' work that has this potentially positive effect

on evaluation, but this is not a reason for being suspicious of interpretative work *tout court*.

Hess (2006) is rather eclectic in approach. She is clearly in sympathy with reader-response goals such as 'illumination and self-awareness' (p. 27), but this does not exclude the use of stylistic work in her sequence of tasks related to a short story by James Joyce called 'Eveline'. This includes work on metaphor, particularly work on noticing metaphor. One useful activity draws attention to unusual collocation. Before reading the story's opening paragraph, the students are asked to brainstorm for collocations of *The evening*, and for collocations of *invade*. This helps the students to notice an unusual collocation in the opening sentence: 'She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue.' Afterwards, Hess discusses this 'invade' metaphor for what it suggests about Eveline's feelings. In another activity, Hess gives students two lists of quotations from the story and asks them to work out differences between the lists. This is designed to bring out a difference between Eveline's language and the narrator's: The former is relatively simple and non-figurative; the latter is saliently metaphorical. By doing this, Hess also draws attention to the function of metaphors in the text. Steen (1994) calls this 'metaphor functionalization' (p. 104): an aspect of casual metaphor processing that involves relating 'metaphor to suprasentential features like character and mood' (p. 104). Metaphor function also appears to be the focus of a third activity discussed by Hess: When the students read the final section of Joyce's story, Hess asks them to underline everything that gives expression to Eveline's 'confusion and unhappiness' (p. 37). This is likely to yield a rich harvest of the narrator's metaphors such as 'All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart' (p. 43).

Hess (2006) does not spell out the reason for her emphasis on the function of metaphors, but this emphasis can be related to her reader-response goal of enabling students to learn 'a great deal about themselves as they vicariously inhabit literary lives' (p. 40). This relationship can be seen immediately in Hess's approach to the 'invade' metaphor at the beginning of the story. In addition to getting her students to notice this metaphor, she also wants them to consider what it reveals about Eveline's feelings. By focusing on the metaphor's function in this way, Hess is indirectly encouraging students to 'vicariously inhabit' (p. 40) Eveline's life. This engagement is clearly designed to stimulate an affective response to Eveline's predicament and contribute to the students' evaluation of the story. Activities of this nature demonstrate that stylistics and reader response can be profitably combined in the L2

classroom. One point to note, however, is that Hess appears to pay little attention to interpretative work. Brainstorming about the rich meaning potential of some of Joyce's metaphors would be one way of enhancing the students' emotional appreciation of the conflicts that Eveline faces in the story.

7.4   Metaphor and materials

Commercial materials have a major impact on what goes on in L2 classrooms, and because of this, the evaluation and selection of materials is an important aspect of an L2 teacher's work. Many factors can play a role in the evaluation process, but the present section will only cover evaluation from the point of view of metaphor and metaphor interpretation skills. It includes a brief discussion of dictionaries and textbooks, but it is mainly concerned with graded readers on the grounds that these materials are particularly relevant to the development of the ability to make sense of metaphor in literature.

Dictionaries inevitably cover both basic, core senses of words and figurative extensions of these core senses. This coverage makes them a key resource for learners in their encounters with figurative language. However, the degree to which learners actually benefit from this resource is likely to depend on two things: how the dictionaries present their information and how learners use them. Work on the development of learners' metaphor interpretation skills (see preceding section) is one way of trying to ensure that learners do not immediately reach for a dictionary when they encounter a word that is used in an unfamiliar sense. However, even with such training, learners will need to consult dictionaries to confirm their guesses in some cases and to overcome guessing problems in others. At this point, the way in which dictionaries present information about word senses and their metaphorical relationships becomes an issue.

With regard to presentation, one positive development is that publishers are paying explicit attention to metaphor. In the context of the Cobuild project, *Collins Cobuild English Guides 7: Metaphor* (Deignan, 1995) is one example of this. More recently, Macmillan has incorporated special metaphor boxes into its *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2002). For example, the entry for *argument* includes a metaphor box with instantiations of the CM Argument Is War. Metaphor is also included in the Language Awareness section of the dictionary: The two-page discussion of computer words in this section covers metaphors in computing such as the office-based *desktop, file*, and *folder*

metaphors. One general benefit of entries like these is that their explicit use of the word *metaphor* may contribute to metaphor awareness among learners. More specifically, the metaphor boxes are likely to be particularly helpful for productive work: Learners encounter the Argument Is War CM in the entry for *argument*—the target domain of the CM. Thus, when they are writing about an argument, the related metaphor box will give them access to an organized War-related set of expressions to do this. Productive metaphor use would be more difficult for learners using Deignan (1995), as Littlemore and Low (2006b) point out, because this book organizes CMs on the basis of their source domains instead.

One issue in presentation is the order in which word senses are presented, especially the presentation of the basic senses of words. The benefit of paying early attention to basic senses is that this may make it easier for learners to see how conventionally metaphorical senses are related to them. Against this background, Littlemore and Low (2006b) make the following recommendation: 'where feasible, teach basic senses first' (p. 26). Ideally, then, dictionaries should also follow this order so that, for example, the tree-related sense of *branch* precedes metaphorically related senses as in *branch office* or *branch of science*. This order also allows for a systematic presentation of metaphorical extensions. For example, the *Oxford American Dictionaries* on my computer moves from concrete to abstract in its presentation of various senses of *branch*: from physical division (in roads, and so on), and division in an organization (*our Boston branch*), to conceptual sub-division (*a branch of mathematics*). However, under the influence of corpus linguistics, frequency of use has become an increasingly important factor in the ordering of senses, and sometimes this means that the core sense no longer comes first. According to Carter (1998), frequency is the determining factor in the sense ordering of the *Cobuild* dictionaries, while the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* treats frequency as one factor in selecting an order 'which is most likely to help the learner' (p. 175).

Clearly, order of presentation is not the only point to consider in dictionary selection (see Carter, 1998, p. 177, for a list of other considerations), but it certainly needs to be kept in mind. Van der Meer (1999) makes a particularly strong argument against frequency-based ordering on the grounds that it fails to help foreign learners to 'increase their awareness of the richness of the entry words involved' (p. 195). In addition, he suggests that more attention needs to be paid to the form of the entries: Basic meaning should not only precede figurative extensions, but ideally the definitions should also be closely parallel so that the reader can easily see their relationship. The entry for *branch* in my *Oxford*

American Dictionaries does this quite well by repeating '(sub)division' in its definitions of the word's various senses: a branch can be 'a division or office of a large business or organization' or 'a conceptual subdivision of something' (*a branch of mathematics called graph theory*).

Textbooks also need to be evaluated for what they contribute to the development of metaphoric competence. A good, up-to-date survey can be found in Littlemore and Low (2006b). In this survey, they pay attention to two main points: (1) Does the textbook integrate work on figurative language with other things? (2) Does the book use CM theory to organize and present information? They prefer an integrated approach because this reflects the idea that figurative language is an organic part of language. Of course there may be good reasons for using a text that is dedicated to idioms or phrasal verbs, for example, but dedicated textbooks like this may indirectly convey the idea that figurative language is something 'special' and unusual rather than a normal part of everyday language. The use of CM theory makes it possible to show patterns in the way basic meanings have been extended figuratively. A unit called 'What animals do' in McCarthy and O'Dell's (1994) *English Vocabulary in Use* illustrates both of Littlemore and Low's points. This unit covers vocabulary for animal sounds and movements, and it also integrates this with figurative language by showing a patterned relationship between animal- and human-related vocabulary: animal-based adjectives that are applied to humans (such as *mousy* and *dogged*) and verbs for animal sounds and movements that can also be predicated of human beings (such as *bark* and *grunt*). This pattern reflects the CM Human Behaviour Is Animal Behaviour even though the unit does not actually mention this CM.

Littlemore and Low (2006b) only discuss books written for the international market, but books written for the local market also need to be considered. For example, McCagg's (1997) *Speaking Metaphorically* was written for students in Japan. In principle, books like this have the advantage that they can highlight specific cross-linguistic similarities and differences, but McCagg exploits this advantage only in a limited way. The first unit introduces the idea that English and Japanese share many CMs, and it includes an exercise based on the CM Time Is Money to show that CM-related English expressions such as *save time* may also have close counterparts in Japanese. However, the remaining chapters do not have a cross-linguistic element. The book's English–Japanese glossary makes up for this to some extent by using near-equivalent Japanese expressions for translations when they are available.

Ungerer (2001) suggests that the way in which groups of vocabulary items are conceptually organized also deserves attention in textbook

analysis. In a corpus-based analysis of vocabulary in EFL textbooks for German secondary school students, he found two conceptual patterns of organization: taxonomic and meronymic. For example, animal terms can be introduced as a taxonomy that includes cows, pigs, snakes, lions, and so on, but they can also be covered in a meronymic manner in connection with a topic such as 'farm'. By choosing the latter approach, farm animals can be introduced together with other things that are loosely a 'part of' a farm: meadows, animal feed, and so on. In other words, the advantage of the latter approach is that animals are intro-duced in a way that shows how they live and behave in a specific environment. From the point of view of CM theory, Ungerer's distinc-tion is worth keeping in mind. Animal-related metaphor, for example, appears to require both kinds of conceptual organization. Taxonomic-ally, we use knowledge of all kinds of animals to refer metaphorically to fellow humans: farm animals (*pig, cow*) and also wild animals (*wolf, fox*). Meronymically, we use knowledge of animals in a specific environment such as the farm when we use expressions like *put someone out to pasture* or *be cooped up*. Thus, it would appear to be useful to pay attention to the role of both kinds of conceptual organization in the design and evaluation of CM-related teaching materials.

Graded readers, finally, deserve particular attention for their poten-tial role in the development of metaphoric competence. These series of readers are widely considered to be beneficial for language acquisi-tion (vocabulary, reading proficiency), and they also give many students their first exposure to narrative prose in a foreign language. Graded readers, in other words, offer students their first approximation of an L2 literary reading experience. Ideally, L2 students should both value this experience and be able to develop their interpretative skills in the process. Metaphor plays a key role here, as we have seen, and the ways in which graded readers deal with metaphor are worth examining against this background. Another good reason for paying attention to graded readers is that they could, in principle, help to fill a gap in metaphor-related materials at the lower end of the L2 proficiency scale: According to Littlemore and Low (2006b), there is 'practically no coverage of figurative language at lower levels' (p. 209). Because graded readers are available even at the beginner's level, they are in a good position to compensate for the lack of coverage in other materials.

Some graded readers are original texts, but most of them are modified versions of original texts by well-known writers. Because of these modi-fications, there has been some debate about whether the texts retain any of the literary quality that their original counterparts may have

had. Carter and Long (1991) argue that they do not: 'literature cannot be taught from simplified text' (p. 151). Day and Bamford (1998), in contrast, believe that well-written graded readers can offer something close to the literary experience. Their claim, like Carter and Long's, is based on a stylistic analysis of the language in graded readers. Day and Bamford point out that there are many well-written texts that retain 'poetic and figurative expressions' (p. 76) and suggest that these texts offer L2 readers an opportunity to 'work out and appreciate such use of language' (p. 76). This places figurative language at the centre of the debate: If it is there, then it can give readers the kind of interpretative and value-related experience that is called literary. Against this background, the treatment of metaphor in a couple of texts from two popular series of graded readers will be examined next to exemplify the kind of thing that teachers can pay attention to when evaluating series of readers for classroom use. The graded readers in question are *Vanity Fair* (Thackeray, 2007) and *The Crown of Violet* (Treese, 2000). In the course of the discussion, reference will also be made to the original texts that they were based on—Thackeray (1996) and Treese (1952)—when I illustrate how metaphors may be revised in the course of writing graded readers for L2 students.

When evaluating series of readers it is worth looking not only at the stories themselves, but also at introductions, glossaries, exercises, and pictures because all of these may play a role in mediating metaphor for the L2 learner. Thus, if there is a metaphor in the title of a graded reader, then the introduction may include an explanation of this metaphor. For example, the Macmillan Readers version of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* explains the title as follows: 'In this book, "Vanity Fair" means a community, or a part of society, where people are only interested in themselves and the things which please them' (p. 6). This partial explanation of the metaphorical title identifies 'community' as the topic of the 'fair' vehicle, but it does not identify any similarities between a fair and a community. In other words, some room is left for interpretative work on the part of the reader. The introduction to the Oxford Bookworms version of Geoffrey Treese's *The Crown of Violet* helps the reader with the book's metaphorical title in a similar way by identifying the Acropolis as the topic of the metaphor: Athens's 'beautiful Acropolis Hill—the city's crown of violet'. It is conceivable that explanations like these affect the reading experience in a way similar to CM awareness-raising (see Chapters 5 and 6).

The graded version of *Vanity Fair* includes a range of metaphors in the story itself. One example is the use of the metaphor 'sheep-dog' to

refer to a woman who functions as a chaperone for Becky Sharp, one of the main characters. This metaphor is also in Thackeray's original story. The graded reader retains this metaphor, but it also elaborates on it to make the meaning clear. When Becky first says that she needs a sheep-dog, her interlocutors think she means a real dog. Thus, the metaphor is invisible until Becky explains that she does not mean 'a *real* dog' (p. 73) but a 'moral sheep-dog' (p. 73). She further elaborates by explaining (1) that she needs a 'lady companion—someone who will be with me in polite society' (p. 73) and (2) 'someone to keep the wolves away from a poor little lamb—me!' (p. 73). This is more elaborate than Thackeray's original, where Becky just explains that she needs a 'moral sheep-dog', 'A dog to keep the wolves off me,' and 'A companion'. In principle, the graded reader could also have mediated the metaphor by means of an additional strategy: simplification. This would have involved using *dog* or some other higher-frequency alternative to substitute for 'sheep-dog'. (See Yano, Long, & Ross, 1994, for a discussion of simplification and elaboration in reading materials for L2 readers.)

The graded version of *The Crown of Violet* also uses elaboration in its treatment of a 'gadfly' metaphor. 'Gadfly' refers to Socrates, who plays a significant role in this historical novel. Treese's original novel uses this metaphor in a chapter entitled 'The Gadfly'. Oxford's graded version of the novel elaborates this by adding 'Socrates' so that the chapter title becomes 'Socrates the gadfly'. This example and the 'sheep-dog' metaphor both make it clear that in practice, elaboration involves an increase in what has been called metaphor explicitness in earlier chapters. The potential effects of this on comprehension and evaluation were discussed in Chapters 4 and 6. However, the effects of metaphor simplification on the processing of metaphor in literature have yet to be examined.

In addition to elaborating the 'sheep-dog' metaphor in the story itself, the *Vanity Fair* graded reader also pays attention to it in the glossary and in the comprehension exercises at the end. The glossary elaborates on the grounds of the metaphor by focusing on 'moral' as follows:

> **sheep-dog**—*moral sheep-dog* (page 73)
> a *sheep-dog* guards sheep against fierce animals, e.g., wolves. The rules for people's correct behaviour are *morals*. If Becky has a companion who is with her all the time, no one will talk about her bad behaviour.

This interpretation suggests that the companion will guard Becky against people who criticize her behaviour instead of, say, guarding her against

men who have wolfish designs on her. In contrast, the Bookworms version of *The Crown of Violet* only gives the basic sense of 'gadfly' in its glossary, even though it is used as a metaphor for Socrates in the story itself. The glossary simply explains that a gadfly is 'a kind of fly which bites cows and horses' (p. 58).

In *Vanity Fair*'s comprehension exercises at the end of the book, there is also a question about the 'sheep-dog' metaphor: 'Who is the *moral sheep-dog*' (p. 133). However, this question is not related to page 73, where the metaphor is used first, but to page 93, where one of Becky's male admirers says, 'Get rid of that sheep-dog of yours, or I'll get rid of her myself.' This task may help to remind readers of the first occasion when the metaphor was used. The graded version of *The Crown of Violet* has a wider variety of exercises, which are divided into Before Reading, While Reading, and After Reading sections. One question in the Before Reading section draws attention to the book's metaphorical title by asking, 'Why is the Acropolis Hill in Athens called "the crown of violet"? Can you guess?' (p. 60). Readers can choose from four answers, all of which are plausible at this point. It seems likely that this task will raise their awareness of the metaphor in preparation for later encounters with it in the course of the story. There is also metaphor-related work in the While Reading and After Reading sections. For example, one task asks readers to choose a different title for *The Crown of Violet* and to explain their choice. One of the titles that they can choose from is 'Alexis and the Gadfly' (p. 67). Because this alternative title is related to the 'gadfly' metaphor for Socrates, readers who choose it will probably need to discuss this metaphor when they motivate their choice.

Pictures with captions are occasionally used in a way that may help learners to make sense of figurative language in the text. There are no clear cases of this in *Vanity Fair* or *The Crown of Violet*, but there is an example in the Macmillan Readers version of Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (Dickens, 2002). In this novel, the moving scene of the death of a boy called Jo ends with the sentence 'Jo had moved on for the last time' (p. 74). On the opposite page, there is a picture of a boy who is lying in bed with his eyes closed while a sad-looking man holds his limp arm. 'Jo had moved on for the last time' is used as the picture's caption. This caption + picture combination makes it clear that the lifeless Jo's last 'movement' is not physical, and this may help readers to work out that one can also 'move on' metaphorically in the journey of death.

As the preceding discussion makes clear, a metaphor-related evaluation of a series of graded readers needs to cover both the stories and the apparatus accompanying the stories—the introduction, and so on.

With regard to the stories, it is worth paying attention to the quantity of metaphorical language. Crystal (1998) also pays attention to this in his lively analysis of language play in L1 graded readers for children. Ideally, this kind of analysis should be sensitive to the L2 learner's perspective. As Claridge (2005) points out, graded readers may sometimes seem linguistically bland from a native speaker's point of view, but relative to the restricted mental lexicon of L2 target readers, the vocabulary is actually quite rich and varied. Thus, in order to take the learner's perspective into account, it seems advisable to pay attention not only to novel metaphors such as *Vanity Fair*'s 'sheep-dog', but also to highly conventional ones. These may seem equally novel from an L2 reader's perspective. Indeed, when I analysed my students' comments on metaphor in their book reports for an extensive reading class, I found that conventional metaphors could be a source of considerable pleasure for them. For example, one student reported that she had enjoyed reading the description of a young boy 'wolfing down' food because she found it so easy to imagine the sight of this boy 'swallowing without chewing like a hungry wolf' (Picken, 2003b, p. 162). Another student wrote that she liked the way a novel described leaves as 'dancing' in the trees.

Some quantitative research on metaphor in graded readers is available. With two of my colleagues at Tsuda College, I am engaged in a corpus study of conventional and novel metaphors in graded readers. Picken, Althaus, and Wright (2006) is an interim report on this research. This covers our work on metaphors in six readers from the Oxford Bookworms series and compares aspects of our corpus with Goatly's (1997) corpus of metaphors in modern novels. Among other things, this comparison revealed that the proportions of conventional nominal, verbal, and adjectival metaphors in our corpus are very close to the proportions reported by Goatly. In other words, the Bookworms series has a fairly authentic balance of conventional metaphors in terms of their word class. Note that this balance differs from genre to genre. For example, Goatly reports that both news writing and popular science texts have higher proportions of nominal metaphors than modern novels do.

The apparatus accompanying the stories in the graded readers also needs to be evaluated because, as we have seen, introductions, glossaries, and exercises can play a key role in mediating metaphorical language in the stories. Thus, it is necessary to consider how the apparatus interacts with the story to do this. It is difficult to suggest an 'ideal' here because there are many other factors to consider—the level of the students, the organization and goals of a reading course, and so on. However, in many

cases it will probably make sense to look at whether a series manages to strike a useful balance between helping students to make sense of figurative language on the one hand and offering them opportunities to develop their interpretative skills on the other. Help with metaphorical titles is likely to be important, for example, but should this take the form of a comparatively detailed explanation (as in *Vanity Fair*) or is it preferable to use a combination of explanation and pre-reading activities (as in *The Crown of Violet*)? Personally, I like the latter combination of using the introduction to identify the topic of the book's metaphorical title and using a pre-reading activity to encourage students to brainstorm for reasons why the Acropolis is called the 'crown of violet'. However, the potential value of this combination may well be lost in situations where students mainly read on their own because the chances are that they will ignore the pre-reading activities or just do them quickly and half-heartedly.

The way glossaries deal with figurative language also deserves close attention. *The Crown of Violet*'s glossary only explains the basic sense of gadfly, while *Vanity Fair* not only explains the basic sense of sheep-dog but also gives a contextually relevant explanation of the meta-phor's topic (a companion) and of the grounds of the metaphor (the 'sheep-dog' companion will protect Becky against criticism of her bad behaviour). The advantage of the former method is that it leaves the interpretative work to the learner but the problem is that learners may be stuck if they fail to find a relevant interpretation. This would be a particular problem for students who are mainly expected to do their reading on their own. Glossary entries like the one for 'sheep-dog' ensure that this kind of problem does not occur, but the price they pay for this is that they hardly leave room for interpretative work. This could be undesirable in classes where pair- and group-work discussion of the texts is encouraged. A middle ground between the two approaches is also conceivable. The glossary could mention the topic of a metaphor and refer to a related exercise for additional work concerned with the grounds of the metaphor, for example.

The quality of glossary entries also needs to be considered. If glossaries provide explanations of metaphors, then it is also necessary to check how they do this. The earlier comments about dictionary entries are relevant here: When glossary entries give explanations of metaphors, do they also mention the basic meaning of the metaphorical term, and do they do this in a way that makes the relationship between basic meaning and metaphorical extension clear? Information about conventionality

is another desideratum. A person who regularly provokes others by challenging their way of thinking may conventionally be called a 'gadfly', but 'sheep-dog' is not conventional as a metaphor for a chaperone like Becky's companion in *Vanity Fair*. L2 learners need to be made aware of these things.

With regard to activities, finally, *Vanity Fair* offers comprehension questions while *The Crown of Violet* has a greater variety of activities for pre-, while-, and after-reading discussion. Metaphor-related work is included in the activities in both of these readers. It seems likely that activities of the kind found in *The Crown of Violet* will work best when students have the opportunity to work on them in pairs and groups. However, there are no less than eight pages of activities so that students will need to work selectively. Guidance will normally be required and when teachers provide this guidance, they have an opportunity to ensure that metaphor-related work is included among the tasks set. When students are mainly expected to read on their own, there may be no need for a rich variety of activities, but teachers may wish to selectively assign activities—including metaphor-related ones—in some cases.

7.5 Conclusion

This final chapter of the book has attempted to strike a balance between various things in its overview of the curriculum, methodology, and materials. It has attempted to find a middle ground between stylistics and reader response by emphasizing the need to pay attention both to interpretation and to value-related work. It has also attempted to place this work within a broader language teaching context by relating WWL to the curriculum in general and by discussing WWL methodology and materials against the backdrop of relevant non-literary materials and methodologies. It has emphasized metaphor-related work in doing this. Finally, it has attempted to introduce new research while maintaining a clear connection with the research covered in earlier chapters of the book.

Although there were many worthwhile studies to refer to in the course of the discussion, substantial gaps in the research continue to exist. For example, various studies have investigated how L2 reading comprehension is affected by the simplification and elaboration of texts (Oh, 2001; Yano, Long, & Ross, 1994), but much less is known about how these same changes affect L2 students' evaluations of reading materials or the development of their interpretative abilities. It may well be that there is a trade-off here: The elaboration of texts may well make

them more comprehensible, but if elaboration reduces the need to make inferences in the process, then students will have fewer opportunities to develop their interpretative skills when they work with elaborated texts. Metaphor is a clear case in point: It may be easier to understand a metaphor (in a particular way) when it has been elaborated and made more explicit, but the rich interpretative potential of the metaphor is reduced in the process, and evaluation can be affected by this, as my own research has shown. In making this point, I am not suggesting that elaboration should be avoided but that care needs to be taken to ensure that the L2 reading diet is properly varied and includes at least some chunks of text that students will need to chew on at length. Thus, with regard to metaphor at least, some graded readers appear to be more elaborated and helpful than others. By including graded readers of both kinds in class libraries, teachers can help to ensure that a balanced reading diet is available. Work with carefully selected literary texts is another way of ensuring this, as numerous writers have pointed out before.

Throughout the book I have emphasized that there are many gaps in the research and that more research is needed. In conclusion, I also want to emphasize that there is a particular need for research that is informed by what goes on in real classrooms with real teachers and students. When researchers lose touch with these things, they run the risk of ending up with an exclusive audience of specialists talking about issues that only members of their small, enchanted circle are in the position to understand or care about. Miall (2006) argues that this is exactly what has happened to literary theory: 'Divorced from the interests and concerns of those outside the academy' (p. 12), literary theory has alienated readers and even made people suspicious of literature. Empirical research should avoid ending up in the same position. Research that remains firmly rooted in classroom practice is also necessary for another reason: It can be an essential kind of reality check. Teachers may have all kinds of beliefs about the value of WWL, but beliefs can turn out to be partially or completely mistaken. A reality check is necessary, and as Hall (2005) points out, 'doubts about teaching and learning' (p. 216) provide an excellent starting point for research-based investigations of reality. I hope that my own efforts in this direction have served to exemplify this point and that they will encourage more efforts of a similar nature.

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