

(Visual) metaphors

M^a del Mar Suárez - CAV

Metaphor: definition

- "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them" (Mish, 1984, p. 746)
- "...understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff, 1993, p. 5)
- Cliché metaphors:
 - Time is money - Life is a journey - Computers are like human brains -
 - World Wide Web - Family tree - Foretelling the weather
- Others? (in pairs)

Visual metaphor: definition

- a visual metaphor is one image or set of images used in place of another to suggest an analogy between the two images or sets of images

Time is money.



The family tree



Life is a journey.



Foretelling the weather



Creating a visual metaphor

- We all have different
 - life experiences
 - prior knowledge
 - observations
 - cultural backgrounds

Time is money.



The family tree



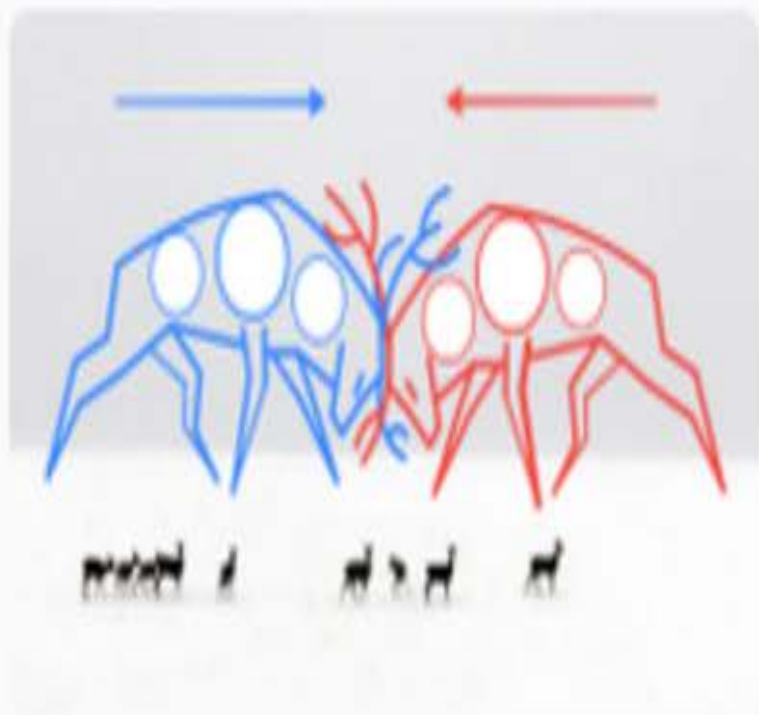
Life is a journey.



Foretelling the weather



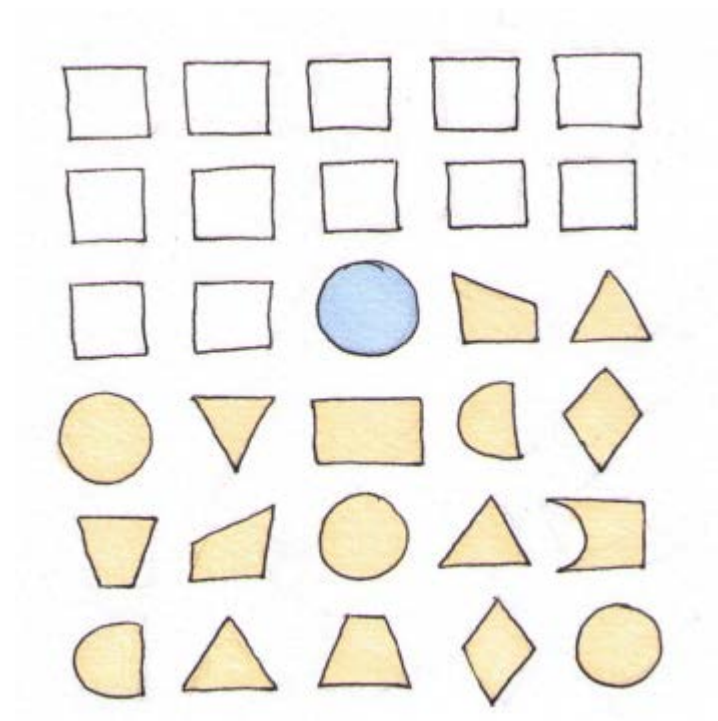
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- Stairs to an open door: process
- A path/road bifurcating: a decision to be made
- A clash: two opposite ideas

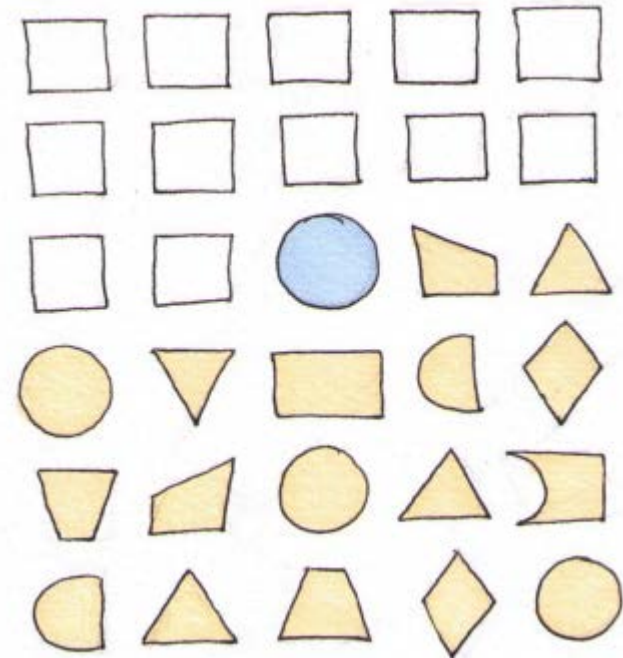
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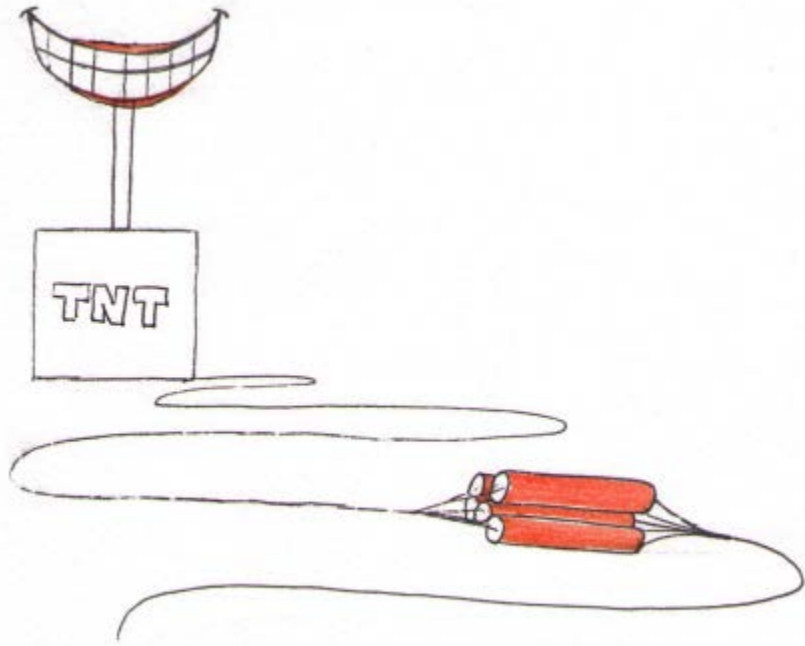
*Quien no tiene alas no debe tenderse
sobre abismos.*

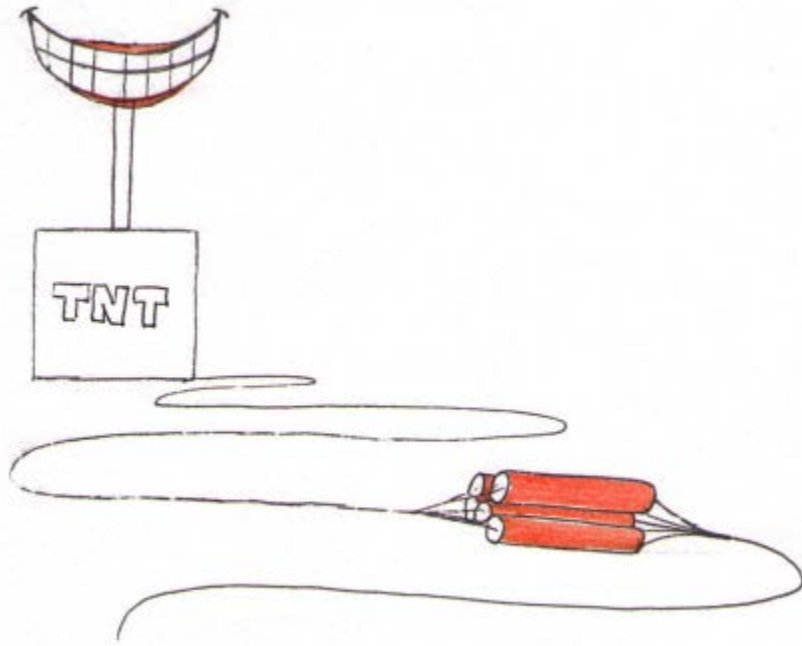
Those with no wings should not
hover above abyss.



Aunque nada cambie, si yo cambio, todo cambia.

Although nothing might change, if I do, everything else changes.





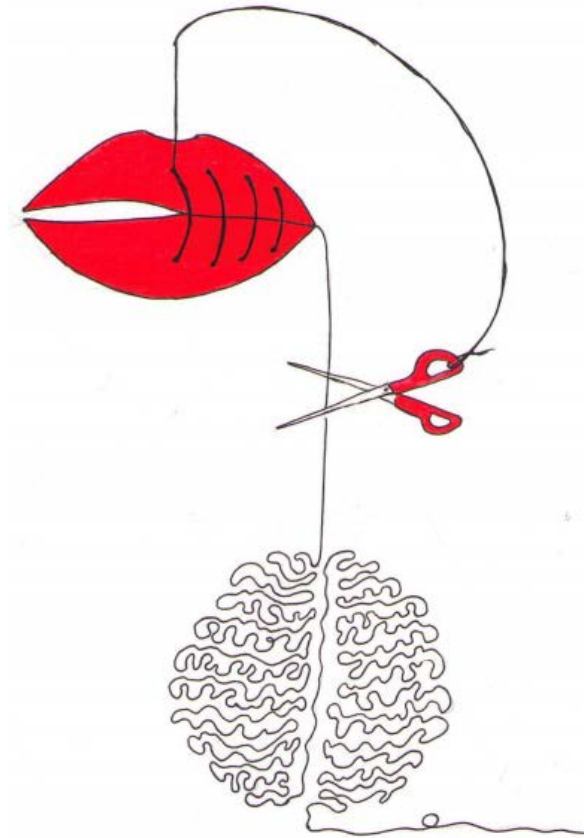
La raza humana tiene un arma verdaderamente eficaz: la risa.

Human race has a truly effective weapon:
laughter.



La vejez comienza cuando el recuerdo es más fuerte que la esperanza.

Old age starts when memories are stronger than hope.



Es mejor estar callado y parecer tonto que abrir la boca y despejar dudas.

Better keep quiet and look like a dumb person than open your mouth and clear up doubts.

Chema Madoz



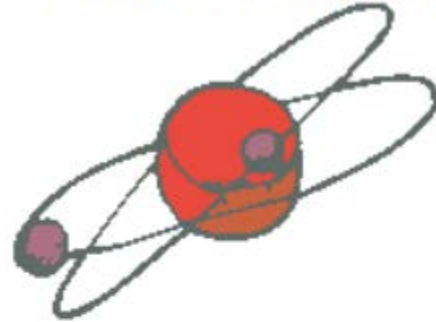


Creating a visual metaphor: Make it (and take it) easy

- An image or set of images should be appropriately simple enough to be easily interpreted, but include enough detail so that the viewer can process the metaphor quickly.
- Keep it balanced: neither too much nor too little detail.
- Keep your audience in mind.

Creating a visual metaphor: Make it (and take it easy)

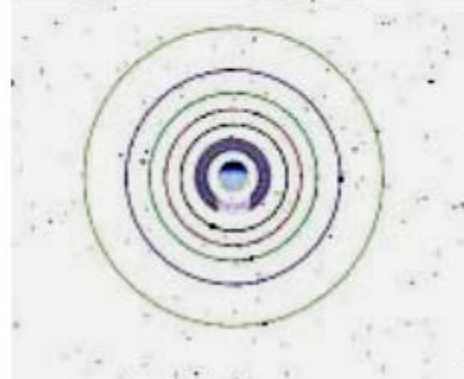
Simple Solar System



Simple Atom



Complex Solar System



Complex Atom



Lange's *Indonesia*



- What do you see, think, and feel when you look at this photograph?
- What sort of response do you think Lange wanted you to have?
- How did Lange "frame" her picture of these children?
- What patterns or repeating motifs can you find in this picture?
- Why do you think that Lange included only her subjects' feet in this picture?
- What can you say about the people in this photograph just by looking at their feet?
- What is the relationship between the feet and the title of the photograph? What do the feet tell you about Indonesia?



Indonesia, Dorothea Lange, 1958.
© Oakland Museum of California,
City of Oakland

Captions for metaphors

- The judicious use of text along with the visual metaphor may assist in the interpretation.
- Which is more telling or powerful: written or visual metaphors? Or rather, do they both have unique strengths?
- If you were going to express Lange's metaphor in words, how would that read?

For me, learning English is (like)

≈

My relationship with English so far

- 1. Upload an image or set of images in a Word document (no pdf or pages). Make sure it has a Creative Commons License or that it is free. Alternatively, choose an image you took/drew yourself and then protect it with a CC license too. This image should describe your feelings towards learning English. That is, the picture should match the statement "**For me, learning English is like...**". This time we are NOT TO use pictures with any Copyright issues.
- 2. Upload as well a short text in which you justify your choice, following the points below:
 - give your image a title
 - explain why you have chosen this image
 - explain how this image reflects **your feelings towards learning English so far**, i.e. the **metaphor** behind the picture
- **3. Do not forget to cite the source of the image following the academic conventions** (see APA document - block 0 on Moodle). Make sure you can use the image (i.e. it's not protected by copyright). If you took the picture yourself (or it's someone's you know), you should also protect it with a CC license and cite it following the APA conventions.

Sources

- Williams, V. S. (n.d.) Creating Effective Visual Metaphors. Retrieved Oct. 4, 2017 from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.571.8182&rep=rep1&type=pdf>