Eliciting the shape of human reasoning from its echo in text-frequency data

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Abstract

Many modern linguistic theorists describe metaphor as the place where most human reasoning occurs. Though commonly thought of as a literary device, we will take metaphor to be any non-literal description - namely one that utilizes literal-descriptive relationships from a superficially unrelated domain. We will derive a grammar-independent linguistic similarity metric, and use this metric to partition data from various electronic corpora into structural classes. We will then survey humans to determine the group-perceived partition meanings and thereby find, for each distinct identified mode of reasoning, the corpus-extent of its usage.

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