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INTRODUCTION

People use figurative non-literal language with the aim of being more cooperative and efficient on communication. Specific metaphors change through time in different cultures, languages and across generations with effects on semantic and conceptual change. Mainly for this research, metaphorical mappings become an increasingly conventionalized semantic categorization mechanism (Gentner & Bowdle, 2001; Gentner & Wolff, 1997) evoked when selecting the meaning of words and sentences. Gibbs (1993) proposes that conceptual metaphors would remain unconscious in the mind when processing idioms. This research hypothesizes that testing alternative references of figurative expressions helps to explore the vitality of the tested metaphorical mappings for a specific population.

OBJECTIVE

The aim of the present research is to visually explore the change and social distribution of some metaphors in Uruguayan Spanish. Particularly, this study tested figurative expressions for the Uruguayan metaphor **BEING IN THE OVEN IS DIFFICULTNESS/HAZARDNESS** and **BANKING SOMETHING/SOMEBODY IS BEARING IT**.

METHOD

Participants. 267 female Uruguayan Spanish speakers (Age: M = 29,7, SD = 10,8; Residence: M = 28,2, SD = 10,8; Schooling: 205, undergraduated, 65, secondary; 6 other alternatives).

Materials. 2 Spanish figurative expressions for expressing 2 different alive standard metaphors in Uruguayan Spanish. These stimuli were part of a larger set of 22 figurative expressions not reported on this paper. The figurative expressions were checked in lexical entries of the Uruguayan Spanish Dictionary ((ANL, 2011) and corpora and databases (Corpus del Español (Davis, 2001), CREA (2019) and CORDE (2019).

Procedure. A questionnaire designed and available on the Google forms tool. Participants were claimed for select one of five alternative responses (metaphorical, opposed to metaphorical, literal, non related and unknown) about the meaning of the Spanish figurative expressions presented individually.

After that, by a seven-points Likert scale, participants were claimed for responding about the frequency in which they believe to perceive auditorily (listen) or to produce orally (say) figurative expressions as those previously tested.

BE IN THE OVEN IS DIFFICULTNESS/HAZARDNESS Hoy viene el profesor Pérez, estamos en el horno "Today comes Professor Pérez, we ARE in the OVEN"
BANKING SOMETHING/SOMEBODY IS BEARING IT No me banco un examen más "I do not BANK one more exam"

RESULTS

Design: Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) with figurative expression meaning (five levels), listening frequency and saying frequency (seven levels), age (seven levels) and years of residence in Uruguay (eight levels) as categorical variables.

MCA gives the opportunity to identify and visually test the way these associations create pervasive privileged interactions and dimensions (Carvalho, 2008; Greenacre, 2007).

DIMENSIONS				
CATEGORIES	METAPHORICAL PROFICIENCY	CONTRIBUTIONS	CULTURAL IMMERSION	CONTRIBUTIONS
AGE	0,607	26,5	0,645	32,3
RESIDENCE	0,668	29,2	0,637	32,0
REFERENCE	0,014	0,60	0,110	0,50
LISTENING	0,480	21,0	0,281	14,1
SAYING	0,519	22,7	0,321	16,1
TOTAL	2,761	100	2,084	100
INERCIA	0,458		0,399	
EXPLAINED VARIANCE PERCENTAGE	9,59		8,35	

DIMENSIONS				
CATEGORIES	METAPHORICAL PROFICIENCY	CONTRIBUTIONS	CULTURAL IMMERSION	CONTRIBUTIONS
AGE	0,685	28,8	0,828	41,7
RESIDENCE	0,672	28,3	0,824	41,6
REFERENCE	0,021	0,9	0,017	0,8
LISTENING	0,519	21,8	0,187	9,4
SAYING	0,481	20,2	0,128	6,5
TOTAL	2,378	100	1,983	100
INERCIA	0,476		0,397	
EXPLAINED VARIANCE PERCENTAGE	8,17		6,81	

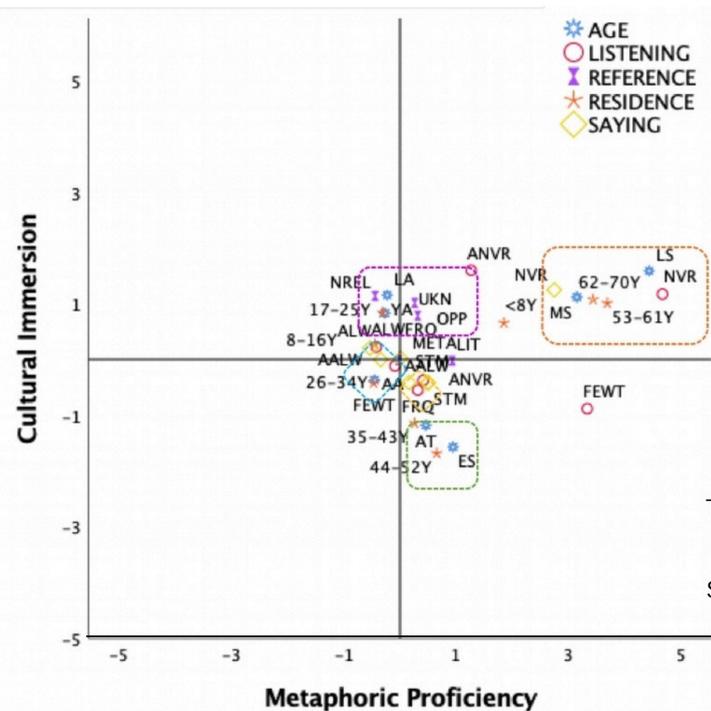


Figure 2: Topological contribution of active variables for the BANKING SOMETHING/SOMEBODY IS BEARING IT

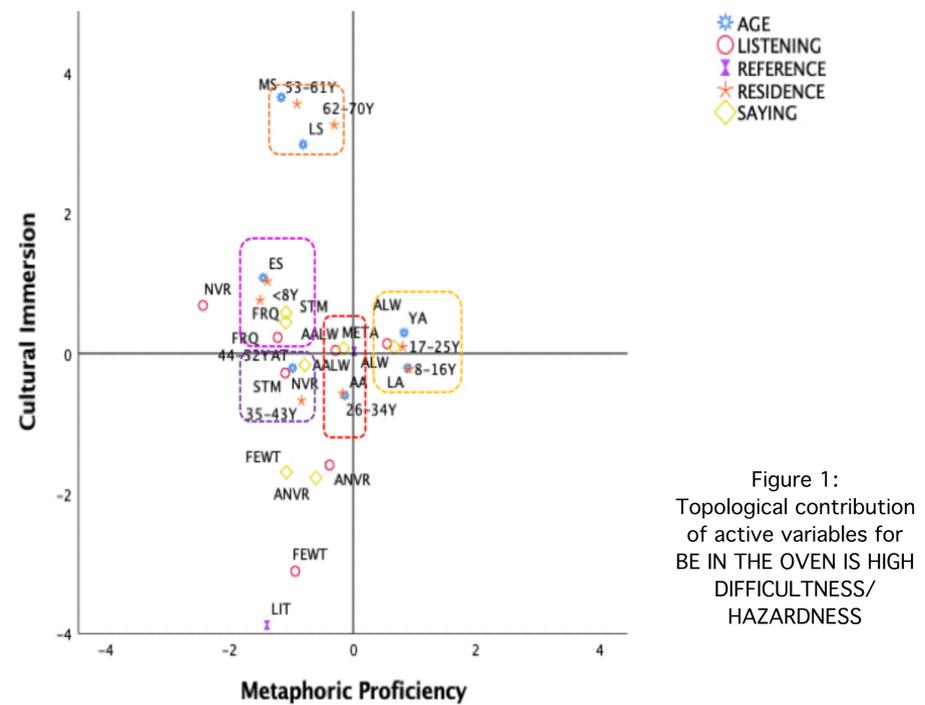


Figure 1: Topological contribution of active variables for BE IN THE OVEN IS HIGH DIFFICULTNESS/HAZARDNESS

DISCUSSION

This research explored how two metaphorical mappings evolve through time by the speakers self-evaluation on how frequently they auditorily perceived or orally produced these metaphors. The findings suggest that the metaphors are not conventionalized with the same strength in the different age and residence groups. Results prompt strong relations between residence and age by identifying metaphorical literacy generations. The groups Adolescence-Early Adulthood, Middle Adulthood, Mature Adulthood and Senior remain active in the explored metaphors. The study highlights two outlier groups: a middle and late senior aged group living for over 55 years in the Uruguayan society and a fuzzy cross-aged group of less than 8 years residents. When clustering the data of the registered categories in two dimensions, the short percentage of the variance explained by the dimensions CI and MP (around 15-19%) suggests introducing additional categories for getting an adequate proportion of this variance. Additionally, non included cognitive individual differences on processing metaphors should be added, at least indirectly on a more informative self-administered questionnaire (Trick & Katz, 1986; Kazmerski, Blasko, & Dessalegn, 2003). These recommendations would help to distinguish between CI, MP and something like Individual Cognitive Differences as three main dimensions for future research. Mainly of our interest, MCA seems to offer a useful statistical strategy for organizing, weighting and modeling the privileged associations of the set of factors involved in the vitality and evolution of metaphorical thinking.

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