

they are not a separate phenomenon, but another aspect of the general phenomenon of metaphor, like the ideational metaphors discussed in the first part of the chapter. They can be represented in the same way, by postulating some congruent form and then analysing the two in relation to each other. Some examples are given in Figure 10-18.

Note that the last of these examples, Figure 10-18 (d), embodies both interpersonal and ideational metaphor; it is interpreted here as a statement realized in the imperative, but this also involves interpreting it as an identifying clause 'the evidence is . . .', related to 'look at the way . . . via 'consider (the fact) . . .'. Depending on the context, it might be functioning congruently as a request, in that case only the ideational metaphor need be recognized, with *consider the fact that they cheated before* taken as the congruent form.

The concept of grammatical metaphor, itself perhaps a metaphorical extension of the term from its rhetorical sense as a figure of speech, enables us to bring together a number of features of discourse which at first sight look rather different from each other. But when we recognize the different kinds of meaning that come together in the lexicogrammar, and especially the basic distinction between ideational and interpersonal meaning, we can see that what look like two different sets of phenomena are really instances of the same phenomenon arising in these two different contexts. In all the instances that we are treating as grammatical metaphor, some aspect of the structural configuration of the clause, whether in its ideational function or in its interpersonal function or in both, is in some way different from that which would be arrived at by the shortest route — it is not, or was not originally, the most straightforward coding of the meanings selected. This feature is not to be interpreted as something negative or deviant; it is partly in order to avoid any such connotations that we have used the term 'metaphorical' rather than 'incongruent'. But it is something that needs to be accounted for in an adequate interpretation of a text.

How far we go in pursuing metaphorical forms of discourse in any given instance will depend on what we are trying to achieve. In the most general terms, the purpose of analysing a text is to explain the impact that it makes: why it means what it does, and why it gives the particular impression that it does. But within this general goal we may have various kinds and degrees of interest in exploring this or that specific instance; sometimes a note to the effect that the expression is metaphorical is all that is needed, whereas at other times we may want to trace a whole series of intermediate steps linking the clause to a postulated 'most congruent' form. These are not to be thought of as a 'history' of the clause; as we have seen, in some areas the metaphorical form has become the typical, coded form of expression in the language, and even where it has not, there is no way of tracking the process whereby a speaker or writer has arrived at a particular mode of expression in the discourse. What the metaphorical interpretation does is to suggest how an instance in the text may be referred to the system of the language as a whole. It is therefore an important link in the total chain of explanations whereby we relate the text to the system. A text is meaningful because it is an actualization of the potential that constitutes the linguistic system; it is for this reason that the study of the grammar that lies behind it.

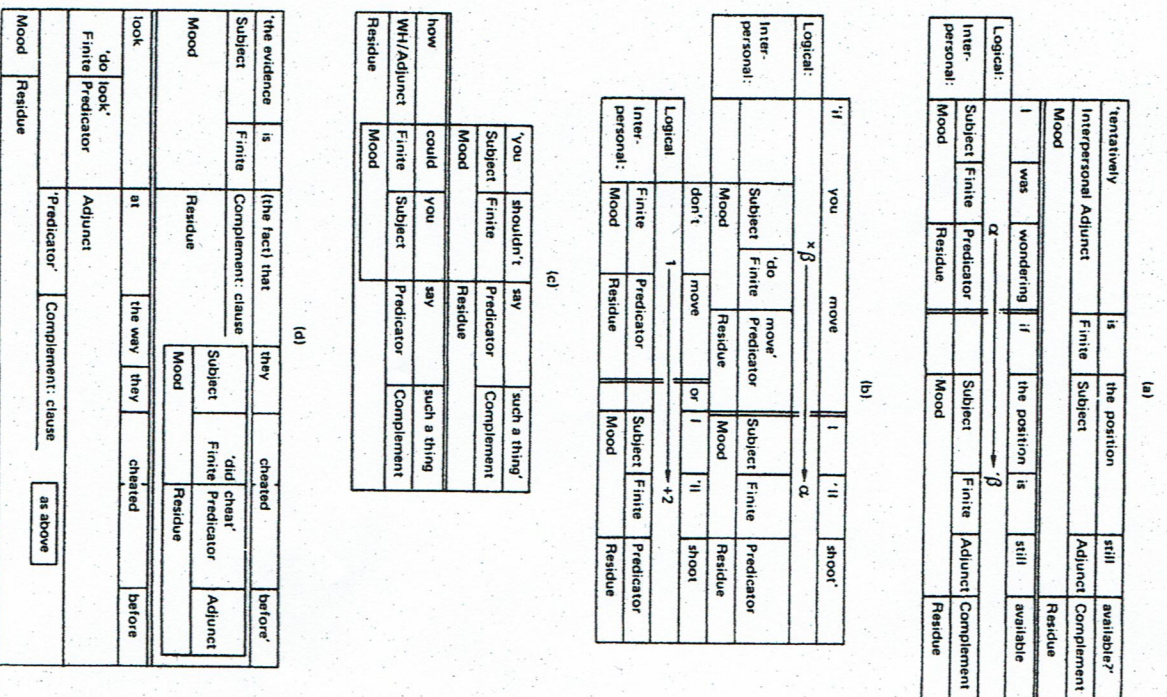


Fig. 10-18 Further examples of interpersonal metaphors