

A common source for sentential and pictorial meaning: preconceptual experiential contrarities

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Without either demeaning or overstating the distinction between sentences and images, it may be enlightening to search for a common source that is utilized both by verbal and visual meaning generation. Determining such a source might help us, not only understanding the origins of pictorial meaning and its relation to verbal meaning, but also casting light on how imagination, verbal imagination in particular, works.

Imagination and imagery is essential for *all* meaning generation. Any naturally evolving and unfolding verbal discourse, a dialogue for example, isn't viable without the ability of introducing new and altered meanings for words and other expressions, and new and altered concepts to be applied to unpredictably changing situations. Any genuine discourse, from everyday talk to religious and scientific discussion, introduces and determines unforeseen entities to be considered. This ability to generate new worlds requires spontaneity and flexibility of language, but it is hardly an overstatement that these properties are not valued in most of the prevailing linguistic and logical theories of natural language.

It is suggested that preconceptual experiential oppositions, *aconceptual contrarities*, comprise the lowest level of all meaning generation. Therefore it provides also the common ground from which both pictorial and verbal meaning must be generated. By *aconceptual experiential contrarities* we mean such primordial experiential dualities as desire-aversion; pain-pleasure; similar-different; male-female; old-new; real-irreal; warm-cold; now-earlier; near-far; above-below; inside of something-outside of it, and so on.

The list is, of course, infinite, though not denumerably so. *Aconceptual contrarities* comprise a kind of 'givenness' which isn't yet conceptually structured. However, the emergence of a totality of *contrarities* isn't a subjective experience, not at least in any normal sense of 'subjective,' but requires a community, its social order and a way of life, to arise. Because *aconceptual contrarities* are inherently contradictory and seriously ambiguous, explaining the processes in which *contrarities* are conceptualized, requires a contradiction-tolerant approach. In practice this means a version of dialectics, *aconceptual dialectics*.