"TRANSMISSION" ACCOMPLISHED? LATIN'S ALIMENTARY METAPHORS OF COMMUNICATION

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Abstract. Whereas communication is today conceived as the "transmission" of "signals" along a "conduit," Latin speakers' understanding of this concept was delivered by a system of metaphors recruiting images of cooking, serving, eating, and digesting food. More than providing simply colorful ways of speaking about thought and speech, however, these alimentary metaphors functioned together to deliver a coherent overall model of how mental representations come to be verbally shared among individuals. While it is not the only metaphorical model available to Latin speakers in conceptualizing communication, the alimentary model also represents a privileged model that informs scholarly and philosophical theorizing.

IT IS PERHAPS A TRUISM TO SUGGEST that ancient societies conceived of communication differently from modern ones and elaborated symbols of communication different from our own.[1] Whereas today communication tends to be associated symbolically with the radio, telephone, or computer, in Roman society—where these devices were obviously unknown—communication was figured through images of the human and even animal body: the weasel, for instance, functioned as a symbol of communication because, as the ancients believed, this creature conceived through its ears and gave birth through its mouth; likewise, the black-and-white plumage of the ibis represented complementary aspects of communication, namely, speech and silence.[2] Nevertheless, the progressive symbolic localization and objectification of communication is so marked in the history of Western cultures that "orality" in general, in being regularly linked to technological things, has also come to be understood in such terms.[3]

[1] Cf. Bettini 2011, 3–39. All translations are mine.

[2] Bettini 2011, 7–9.

[3] Ong 1982. See also Ong 1977; Goody 1987; Havelock 1988; and Olson and Torrance 1991. It is not only "orality" that undergoes this kind of technologizing, however: cf. Marx 1988.

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Reddy has argued that English speakers' conception of communication is in fact governed by a mechanistic metaphor in which thoughts and feelings are imagined as being "transmitted" via a "conduit" that runs directly between speaker and hearer.[4]

In contrast to English's transmission metaphor, evidence from Latin reveals that much of Roman culture's speaking and thinking about communication was delivered by alimentary imagery. Specifically, ways of talking in Latin about the sharing of mental representations (thoughts, ideas, feelings, meanings) from one individual to another by verbal means—what Goodwin and Holley refer to as "idea transfer"[5] and Harris, following John Locke, mockingly calls "telementation"[6]—are couched in terms of "preparing," "serving," "eating" and "digesting" food. In this article, I demonstrate the regular metaphorical patterning of Latin's vocabulary of thought and speech in such terms and then go on to show that these food metaphors, though conveying quite different aspects of mental and verbal activity, exhibit an overall structure that coherently models how these activities hang together in experience. In my view, this metaphorically structured model actually constitutes a significant part of Latin speakers' conceptualization of communication. What is more, while this model is certainly not the only one (and not the only metaphorical one) recruited by Latin speakers in their understanding of communication, I suggest it represents a privileged framework that influences other aspects of Roman cultural thought, including philosophical and scholarly theorizing.

I. LATIN'S ALIMENTARY METAPHORS OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH

Certain ways of talking about thought and speech in the Latin language reflect metaphors that recruit diverse, but systematically related food images. Consider, first, some expressions of the notion of mental elaboration—in other words, the careful formulation or, to use a different image, "construction" of thoughts in the mind:

[4] Reddy 1979. The "conduit" metaphor as described by Reddy provided direct inspiration for Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphor, and is one of the most widely cited and discussed examples in the literature: see, e.g., Johnson 1987; Sweetser 1990; Gibbs 1994; Krzeszowski 1997; and Grady 1998.

[5] Goodwin and Holley 1967.

[6] Harris 1981.

(1) *usque ero domi, dum excoxero lenoni malam rem magnam*, "I'll be at home as long as it takes to think up something big and bad for the pimp" (Plaut. *Pers*. 52);
(2) *iustitium illud concoctum atque meditatum est*, "That suspension of business was devised and meditated upon" (Cic. *Har. resp*. 55);
(3) *illic ante omnia clandestina cocta sunt consilia*, "Before anything else secret plans were devised there" (Liv. 40.11.2);
(4) *in occulto concoqui quod mox in omnium perniciem erupturum esset*, "Plans were being devised in secret which soon were to erupt to the ruin of the entire community" (Liv. 34.61.7);
(5) [*consilia*] *quae secreto ab aliis coquebant*, "[Plots] which they were scheming secretly from the others" (Liv. 3.36.2);
(6) *inter se principes occulte Romanum coquebant bellum*, "Among themselves the leaders were plotting war against the Romans" (Liv. 8.3.2);
(7) *consilia nefarii facinoris in amplissimi civis M. Leccae domo decoquebantur*, "Plans for a nefarious crime were being devised in the home of the outstanding citizen Marcus Lecca" (Porc. Latr. *Decl. in Cat*. 4.12 Z);
(8) *aras / ante omnes epulasque trucem secreta coquebat / inuidiam*, "At every shrine and banquet she (sc. Eriphyle) was secretly conceiving fierce jealousy" (Stat. *Theb*. 2.299–301);
(9) *iras cum fraude coquentem*, "(sc. Hannibal) contemplating rage with deceit" (Sil. *Pun.* 7.403);
(10) *ubi turpe malum Latioque extrema coquebant / coepta uiri*, "When the men were dreaming up a shameful crime and extreme undertakings against Latium" (Sil. *Pun.* 10.429–30);
(11) *cumque de diademate coniuratio Marcelliana coqueretur*, "When the conspiracy of Marcellus was being plotted concerning the crown" (Sid. Apoll. *Epist*. 1.11).

As these examples illustrate, words literally denoting the cooking of food (*coquere*, *concoquere*, *decoquere*) afford Latin speakers a figurative way of talking about such intellectual processes as devising plans, thinking up ideas, dreaming up plots, scheming, and so forth.[7] In terms of the metaphor, the mental activity (the devising, thinking up, scheming) is the act of cooking and what is devised, thought up, or schemed

[7] English "cook up," meaning "think up, devise," obviously continues this metaphor: see Kövecses 2010, 83–84. The Latin metaphor more often refers to negative, secret plans, however.

(the plan, plot, war) is construed as a kind of food. While "cooking" is clearly metaphorical in relation to mental activity, these expressions do not, however, seem particularly expressive, vivid, or poetic. The metaphor appears instead to be an entirely conventionalized, ordinary part of Latin speakers' vocabulary of the mind.

The special meaning of the "cooking" metaphor—and what distinguishes it from other (also metaphorical) ways of speaking about mental elaboration in Latin, such as the "shaping," "painting," or "sketching" metaphors[8]—is unmistakable from figurative uses of the participial form *coctus*. In Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, Periplecomenus describes Palaestrio hard at work devising his (initial, unsuccessful) plan to recover Philocomasium, assuring the audience that "whatever it is, he will not serve up something 'uncooked,' but will produce something well 'cooked.'"[9] A plan that has been "cooked" (*coctum*) is thus one formed through the kind of painstaking, effortful mental concentration that Palaestrio undertakes (cf. *curans . . . laborat*, 200–206). Accordingly, a plan that is "uncooked" (*incoctum*) has not been sufficiently worked out. (In English, using a similar image, we might say that Palaestrio's scheme is guaranteed not to be "half-baked" or "barely warmed over.") This is why Cicero (*De sen.* 28.8) can console himself that the orator in old age, though sure to lose some of his ability to project vocally, can still command attention by his "'cooked' and mild way of speaking" (*cocta et mitis oratio*): what in speech or writing is "cooked" reveals careful, intense, lengthy—and very often secretive, so also possibly deceptive—thought.

Tellingly, the metaphor is not a property of *coquere* and its compounds alone. As figurative usages of other verbs suggest, the metaphor operates at a more generic level of Latin's semantic system, structuring meaning across the lexical field of food preparation. Take, for example, *(ad)parare*. Roman authors provide numerous examples of this word used to refer to mental activity, when it again conveys notions of devising, planning, scheming, or contriving:

(12) *nunc hoc consilium capio et hanc fabricam adparo*, "Now I come up with this plan and devise this stratagem" (Plaut. *Poen*. 139);
(13) *uah, delenire apparas*, "Come now, you're scheming to soften me up" (Plaut. *As*. 434);
(14) *iam ut eriperes adparabas*, "You were just now contriving to take it away from me" (Plaut. *Aul*. 827);

[8] See Short 2012a, 115–16.
[9] Plaut. *Mil.* 208, *incoctum non expromet, bene coctum dabit*.

(15) *me globus iste meamque excindere gentem / apparat*, "That host is plotting to destroy me and my race" (Stat. *Theb*. 4.670–71);
(16) *in has* [*Africam et Sardiniam*] *. . . traicere ex Scilia apparantem continuae et immodicae tempestates inhibuerunt*, "Continuous large storms delayed him (sc. Octavian) as he was planning to cross over from Sicily to Africa and Sardinia" (Suet. *Aug*. 47);
(17) *cum in apparando acerrime esset occupatus*, "Since he (sc. P. Scipio) was greatly occupied in making plans" (Nep. *Hann*. 7.1).

Take also the meaning of *fabricari* as used in, e.g.:

(18) *fabricare quiduis, quiduis comminiscere*, "Devise something, come up with whatever you please" (Plaut. *As.* 102);
(19) *compara, fabricare, finge quod lubet*, "Contrive, devise, make up what you please" (Plaut. *Bacch*. 693);
(20) *age modo, fabricamini*, "Come now, we're hatching a plot" (Plaut. *Cas*. 488);
(21) *cogita, tu finge fabricare ut libet*, "Think up, make up, devise as you please" (Afran. *Tog.* fr. 169 R).

The similarity of *(ad)parare* and *fabricari*'s metaphorical (mental) sense to *coquere*'s is easily seen from (12) and (18). In (12), *fabricam adparare* explains and expands on *consilium capere* (literally, "take (hold of) a plan"), which expresses the notion of mental invention, the creation of a new mental representation or idea:[10] *adparare* is the effortful and time-consuming elaboration of the idea once it has been formed in the mind (Plautus' choice of *fabrica*, literally "a workshop," to designate what is devised mentally neatly underscores this sense of the verb, in a way that *dolus*, *fallacia*, *fraus*, *astutia*, etc., perhaps would not). In (18), the near-synonymy of *fabricare/i* and *comminisci* ("devise, invent, contrive (mentally)" < **men-* < **mn̥ti-*, "thought, mind") is underscored by the line's chiastic arrangement. Compare this to (2) above, where *concoquo* and *meditor* represent a typically pleonastic Ciceronian doublet.

The semantic parallelism of *(ad)parare*, *fabricari*, and *(con)coquere* can hardly seem coincidental, considering that *(ad)parare* and *fabricari* both occur in an alimentary sense that closely approximates the meaning of *(con)coquere.*[11] While the etymological (root) meaning of *parare*

[10] Cf. Plaut. *Men*. 847, *ni occupo aliquid mihi consilium*.

[11] The theory of polysemy I adopt here is the one developed in cognitive semantics, holding that word senses are systematically related by embodied principles of meaning extension (metaphor, metonymy, salience and construal effects, image schematic transformations, etc.) (see Croft and Cruse 2004; Geeraerts 2006); that semantic development

(< *prh_3-: "provide, give") obviously has nothing to do with "cooking" per se (indeed, it does not refer to the alimentary domain at all), the regular appearance of this word at all periods of the language in conjunction with terms denoting meals suggests that its specialized "cooking" sense (= "provide food for eating") was in fact highly salient to Latin speakers.[12] *Fabricari* (< *d^hHb^h-: "fit together"?) can also be used in this way, as *prandium fabricatur opipare* (Apul. *Met*. 7.11) demonstrates. The meaning structure of *(con)coquere* is thus mirrored by that of *(ad)parare* and *fabricari*, only that the metaphorical meanings of these last verbs appear to represent a secondary development after their broad literal senses have already undergone semantic narrowing; thus, "prepare (anything)" > "prepare (food)" > "devise (mentally)," or graphically, with a scale of literalness or figurativeness that runs from left to right (fig. 1).

Just as the vocabulary of food preparation provides a metaphorical way of talking about mental elaboration (especially when this entails a certain expenditure of time and energy), Latin speakers also use the vocabulary of food service to express notions related to verbal utterance. Consider *inferre*, *proferre*, *expromere*, and *adponere*, which can have the sense of "expressing" or "mentioning" or "stating" or "declaring" or "introducing" something verbally (or in any sort of discourse):

(22) *quae neque fieri possunt neque fando umquam accepit quisquam profers*, "You are talking about things that cannot happen and that no one has ever heard of" (Plaut. *Am*. 587–88);

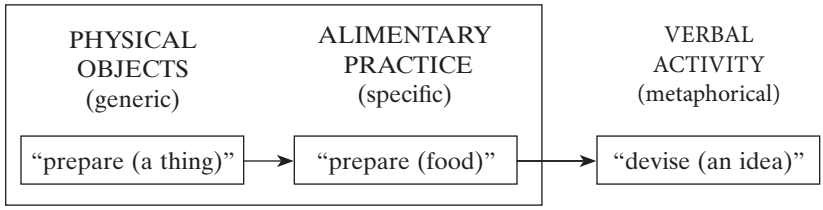

Figure 1. Semantic structure of *parare*, *fabricari*.

regularly proceeds from the concrete (literal) to abstract (figurative) (see esp. Sweetser 1990); and that word meaning is typically organized into networks characterized by one or more central or representative senses (entrenched meaning nodes) (cf. Langacker 1987).

[12] Cf. *prandium (ad)parare* (Plaut. *Cas*. 147; *Curc*. 252; *Men*. 174, 367, 598, 1137), *cenam adparare* (Ter. *Heaut*. 126), *conuiuium adparare* (Cic. *Ver*. 4.44), *epulas adparare* (Liv. 39.6.8) and *dapes apparare* (Hor. *Epod*. 2.48).

(23) *solebat Cotta narrare Crassum sermonem quendam de studio dicendi intulisse*, "Cotta was accustomed to relate that Crassus introduced the subject of oratory" (Cic. *De orat*. 1.30);
(24) *quid in quamque sententiam dici possit, expromere*, "to state what can be said in regard to each idea" (Cic. *Div*. 2.150);
(25) *eamne rationem igitur sequere, qua tecum ipse et cum tuis utare, profiteri et in medium proferre non audeas?* "Will you then adopt such a principle that you may apply in your own case and that of your fellows, but which you would not dare to speak and declare in public? (Cic. *Fin*. 2.76);
(26) *mentio primo sensim inlata a tribunis, ut alterum ex plebe consulem liceret fieri*, "The idea was expressed by the Tribunes, little by little at first, that the second consul should be chosen from the people" (Liv. 4.1.2);
(27) *intuleratque mentionem de uolonibus reuocandis ad signa*, "He (sc. Livius) had also made the suggestion of recalling the slave volunteers to their standards" (Liv. 27.38.8);
(28) *Scipio dixit . . . si qui . . . expromerent quid sentirent, cum bona uenia se auditurum*, "Scipio said that if they anyone should express his opinion, he would listen willingly" (Liv. 29.1.7);
(29) *et mater mentionem intulit, quid eo die, quid deinceps ceteris, quae ad sacra pertinerent, faciendum esset*, "His mother mentioned to him (sc. Publius Aebutius) what he had to do that day and on the following days in connection with the rites" (Liv. 39.11.1);
(30) *sermonem de Aebutio fratris eius filio infert*, "The consul (sc. Postumius) made an allusion to her brother's son Aebutius" (Liv. 39.11.7);
(31) *sermones inferet uel gratos uel nouos*, "It (sc. rest) will suggest pleasing or novel topics of conversation" (Sen. *Ira* 3.39.4);
(32) *ultro Votieni Montani mentionem intulistis*, "You yourselves mentioned Votienus Montanus" (Sen. *Contr*. 9.pr.1);
(33) *unus mentionem intulit, omnes adprobauerunt*, "One made the suggestion; all agreed" (Sen. *Contr*. 3.1.1);
(34) *designatum consulem Mammium Pollionem ingentibus promissis inducunt sententiam expromere*, "With huge promises they persuade the consul designate Mammius Pollio to state his opinion" (Tac. *Ann*. 12.9);
(35) *ad tua praecepta de meo nihil his nouom adposiui*, "I have introduced nothing new of my own to your instructions" (Plaut. *Mil.* 905);
(36) *habet quod adponat*, "He has something additional to state" (Sen. *Contr*. 1.7.13);
(37) *adposito exemplo*, "by introducing an example" (Plin. *Nat. hist.* 32.19).

Much as the mental sense of *coquere* ("devise") emerges from its alimentary sense ("cook"), the figurative verbal meaning of this set of terms ("express") likely arises from a more concrete and again alimentary sense referring to the serving of the courses of a meal. Although it may be tempting to explain this meaning by reference to English speakers' (also metaphorical) use of *bring up* in basically the same sense, that would be linguistically (not to mention historically) unsound: the meaning of *bring up* depends upon the combination of two metaphors pervasive in English but largely absent from Latin—namely, of what is new to knowledge or previously unknown as being "up" (cf. the sense of *up* in *what's up?* = "what's new?," *look up* = "find new information about," *think up* = "mentally devise a new idea," *talk up* = "make known to," *crop up* = "come to the awareness of," *turn up* = "be found again";[13] and of discourse as a "container" (cf. *chip into (a conversation)*, *not get a word in edgewise*, *leave out (a fact* or *detail)*, *put in*, *contribute*, *add to*).[14] Furthermore, the formulaic quality of expressions in which these verbs are paired with terms denoting meals suggests that the "food" reading is actually a strongly entrenched one.[15] Its centrality to the meaning structure of *inferre* in particular is indicated by the formation *infertor*, where the agentive, without any additional semantic material, is able to designate specifically "one who serves up dishes; a waiter."[16] In this way, paralleling the development of "cooking (food)" metaphorically to signify "devising (mentally)," Latin's semantic system includes the metaphor of "serving (food)" to mean "expressing (verbally)": i.e., "carry in (anything)" > "carry in (food)" > "express (verbally)."

Not only acts of mental elaboration and verbal utterance, but also those of auditory perception can be expressed metaphorically in Latin in alimentary terms, specifically, using the vocabulary of food consumption, as the following examples illustrate:

[13] See Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 20.

[14] Cf. Vanparys 1995, 28; Semino 2005.

[15] E.g., *cenam* or *mensam inferre* (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 95.24; Plin. *Nat. hist*. 9.120, 33.146), *ieientaculum inferre* (Plaut. *Cur*. 72); *inferre epulas* (Tac. *Ann*. 12.66); *cibi inferebantur* (Vulg. *Esth*. 1:7); *pateram proferre* (Plaut. *Am*. 769); *heminas expromere* (*Mil*. 831); *madida . . . adposita in mensa* (*Men*. 212); *apponite obsonium* (*Merc*. 779); *cena adpositast* (*Mil*. 753; cf. *Amph*. 804; *Trin.* 470; Ter. *Phorm*. 342, *cena dubia adponitur*); etc.

[16] Schol. ad Hor. Serm. 2.8.72, *infertor escarum minister*; cf. Glossarium Philoxeni, *infertor* παραθέτης; Schol. ad Juv. 5.83; 9.109.

(38) *auscultate atque operam date et mea dicta deuorate*, "Listen here and pay attention, and heed my words" (Plaut. *As.* 649);
(39) *nimium lubenter edi sermonem tuum*, "I have too enjoyably listened in on your discourse" (Plaut. *Aul*. 537);
(40) *quam orationem hanc aures dulcem deuorant*, "What sweet speech my ears attend" (Plaut. *Poen*. 967–68);
(41) *eius oratio nimia religione attenuata doctis et attente audientibus erat illustris, a multitudine autem et a foro, cui nata eloquentia est, deuorabatur*, "His (sc. Calvus') language, weakened by too great meticulousness, was famous to the learned and those listening closely, but by those in the crowds and the Forum, for whom eloquence was created, it was enthusiastically listened to" (Cic. *Brut*. 283).

Here, words literally denoting "eating" (*ēsse*) and "devouring" (*deuorare*) food are used to convey notions of listening, so that expressions such as *dicta deuorate* (literally, "devour words!") and *edi sermonem tuum* ("I ate (up) your speech") function effectively as synonyms for forms of *auscultare* or *audire.* Now, as I have shown elsewhere,[17] the metaphor of "devouring" speech is a special case of a more generic metaphor used in Latin to denote almost any act of "consumption" when this act involves eagerness and rapidity, such as an intense period of reading or the profligate spending of money.[18] Nevertheless, the singular importance of this image to the characterization of auditory perception is implied by its extension to other parts of the lexicon: for instance, words referring to "taste" or "flavor" (*gustare*, *sapere*, *sapor*, (*in*)*condītus*, *condimentum*, *dulcis*, *sal*) are used to convey notions having to do with the rhetorical qualities of (spoken or written) discourse.[19]

At the same time, "digesting" terms are used metaphorically in Latin to refer to mental reflection. As Bettini has recently stressed,[20] *ruminari* (or *ruminare*) is related etymologically to *rumen*, a word referring to part of the digestive system of a class of animals known precisely as "ruminants" because of this feature of their anatomy.[21] The verb thus literally refers to the ruminants' act of digestion, a process in which food is repetitively chewed and stored in the *rumen* until it is ready to be moved into the stomach proper: as Nonius Marcellus explains, "The

[17] Short 2009, 114–16.
[18] Cf. Cic. *Ep. ad Att*. 4.11.2; Plaut. *Trin.* 360, 417, 753; Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.177.
[19] Short 2009, 116–18.
[20] Bettini 2008, 358–59.
[21] Fest. 332.1 L; Paul. 33.8 L.

place in the stomach where food is stored and whence it is brought back up is called the *rumen*; and our word *ruminare* comes from this."[22] As the following expressions illustrate, "digesting" in the manner of a ruminant afforded Latin speakers a way of talking about "pondering," "reflecting," "contemplating," "mulling over," as in:

(42) *non solum absens de te quicquam sequius cogitabit, sed etiam ruminabitur humanitatem*, "Not only absent from you will he think something ill, but will also ponder life " (Var. *Men*. fr. IV Astbury = Non. 166.27 L);
(43) *nemo haec uostrum ruminetur mulieri*, "None of you would contemplate this for your wife" (Liv. Andr. *Aegisth.* fr. 4 R = Non. 166.29 L);
(44) *ebrius es, Marce . . . Odyssian enim Homeri ruminari incipis*, "You're drunk, Marcus . . . you're beginning to ponder Homer's *Odyssey*" (Var. *Men.* fr. 60 Astbury = Non. 612 L);
(45) *erras, inquit, Marce, accusans nos; ruminaris antiquitates*, "You are wrong to accuse us, Marcus; you're mulling over old news" (Var. *Men.* fr. 505 Astbury = Non. 480.23 L);
(46) *figuras habitusque verborum noue aut insegniter dictorum . . . ruminabamur*, "We were contemplating the figures of speech and use of words employed in new and unusual ways" (Aul. Gell. *Noct. Att*. 19.7.2);
(47) *dum carmina tua ruminas . . . fallitur doctis cogitationibus sensus laboris*, "While you mull over your poems, the sense of the work is lost in learned musings" (Symm. *Ep*. 3.13).

Other "digesting" terms are used in the same metaphorical sense as *ruminari*, albeit following more complex figurative pathways. *Digerere*'s frequent meaning of "digesting" is itself metaphorical, food digestion being understood in this case as the "scattering" or "carrying apart" (*dis* + *gerere*) of food and drink throughout the body.[23] But the term also refers metaphorically to mental reflection, suggesting the development "carry apart" > "digest (physically)" > "reflect upon (mentally)."[24] *Concoquere* has an even more elaborate semantic structure. I have already mentioned *concoquere*'s sense of "think up; devise (mentally)," which emerges from

[22] Non. *Comp. doctr.* 18.11 L, *rumen dicitur locus in uentre quo cibus sumitur et unde redditur: unde et ruminare dicitur*.

[23] Cf. Cels. *De re med.* 1.pr.19, [*cibus potioque*] *in omnes membrorum partes digeruntur.*

[24] Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.60, [*tabulas*] *legi atque discessi.* By the fourth century C.E., the mental reading of *digerere* appears to be the prevailing one: cf. Amm. Marcell. *Res gest.* 14.6.14, *digesto plene consilio*, "after long and mature deliberation"; 15.2.5, *digesta diu sententia*; 15.4.1, *digestis diu consiliis*.

the metaphorical understanding of mental elaboration as "cooking." At the same time, *concoquere* can be used in the sense of "digesting"[25]—probably through a "one-shot image metaphor"[26] in which the image of food being cooked in a container is superimposed on the understanding of food digesting in the stomach. This probably explains why in certain cases the required sense of this word is closer to *ruminari*'s or *digerere*'s intellectual reading:[27] the verb *concoquere* means "reflect upon (mentally)" when its secondary, metaphorical meaning of "digest" is again interpreted figuratively to apply to mental activity.

II. LATIN'S ALIMENTARY MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Considered separately, Latin's alimentary metaphors of mental and verbal activity may hardly seem to be of any great linguistic consequence. After all, the "cooking" metaphor, while frequent, denotes a concept ostensibly covered by the signification of other elements in Latin's vocabulary of mind, such as *(ef)fingere* or *formare*.[28] At the same time, the "construction" metaphor underlying the meaning of *machinari*, *contechnari*, and *moliri* furnishes a connotational structure that is basically analogous to that of the "cooking" metaphor, equally implying something about the exertion involved in mental elaboration.[29] The "serving" metaphor, meanwhile, is only one of many different words and expressions, both literal and figurative, conveying the notion of "expressing (verbally),"[30] while the "devouring" metaphor is not exclusive to auditory perception, instead figuring all manner of activities that involve enthusiastic or rapid consumption. And the "digesting" metaphor not only coincides in meaning with the "weighing" metaphor of mental reflection—e.g., *meditari*,

[25] For this meaning of *concoquere*, cf. Cat. *Agr*. 127.1; Cic. *Fin*. 2.64; Lucr. *DRN*. 4.631. Human food digestion is thus conceived of in two metaphorical ways, either as the "carrying apart" of food (*digerere*) or the "cooking" of food in the stomach (*concoquere*).

[26] Kövecses 2006.

[27] E.g., *deliberandum et concoquendum est* (Cic. *Q. Rosc*. 45), *bonum tuum concoquas* (Petr. *Sat*. 75.6), and *unum excerpe quod illo die concoquas* (Sen. *Ep. mor.* 2.4; cf. 84.7, *concoquamus illa*).

[28] On the meaning of these metaphors, see Short 2012a, 114–16.

[29] The metaphor likely entered Latin from Greek: see Onians 1992. Plautus' use of *aedificare* to describe Palaestrio's harried deliberation (*Mil*. 209, *ecce autem aedificat*) can probably be referred to Greek τεκταίνομαι, already in the sense of "contrive (a plot)" in Aristophanes (cf. Barchiesi 1969).

[30] Similar senses belong to *referre*, *(com)memorare*, *meminisse*, *loqui*, *dicere*, as well as *mentionem inducere*, *facere*, *habere*, *iacere*, etc.

pensare, *pendere*, *examinare*, *ponderare*, *deliberare*[31]—but also seems to be circumscribed temporally, evidenced by and large only in authors dating from before or after the classical period.

Taken together, however, I suggest these metaphors amount to a non-trivial and in fact indispensable part of Latin speakers' semantic and conceptual repertoire. The metaphors are non-trivial in the sense that they form a tightly integrated, structured body of expression in which alimentary concepts are recruited toward the metaphorical characterization of mental and verbal activity in both internally consistent and externally coherent ways. The metaphors, that is, draw on the terminology of alimentary experience not in any haphazard fashion, but systematically, so as to preserve the logical structure of this experience in its projection to the mental and verbal domains and thus to provide an organized way of speaking about such concepts. They are indispensable in that, by bringing under a single metaphorically defined logic a set of activities otherwise perhaps only loosely related in experience, they provide Latin speakers a model of how these activities hang together conceptually and so actually help constitute their understanding of "communication" as a discrete category of experience.

But what is the nature of these metaphors, and what—more exactly—characterizes them as a system? As the evidence above demonstrates, the metaphorical linguistic expressions fall into groupings defined by their utilization of discrete segments of Latin's alimentary lexicon. The groupings of metaphorical expression are not defined by the necessary presence of any specific word but by relationships between concepts: whole lexical fields (e.g., the range of terms variously referring to human or animal digestion) convey metaphorically determined meanings. Moreover, the expressions within each grouping involve systems of related concepts, whose metaphorical meanings are structured according to the logical interrelation of the underlying literal domain. For example, in the "eating" metaphor, a figurative relationship is set up not only between concepts of food consumption (eating, devouring) and those of auditory perception (listening, listening intently) but also between other aspects of these experiences, such as literal "flavor" or "taste" and a metaphorical kind, referring to rhetorical quality.

From the perspective of the cognitive linguistic theory of metaphor, the pervasive character of Latin's alimentary metaphors (metaphorical meanings pertain not to single words but to semantic fields) and the

[31] See Short 2012a, 117.

systematic way in which each metaphor recruits food concepts toward the characterization of mental or verbal activity (metaphorical meanings are logically patterned within each grouping of expression) suggests that Latin speakers actually conceptualize mental and verbal activity metaphorically in alimentary terms. Briefly, this theory states that the metaphorical expressions in any given language reflect the inherently metaphorical understandings that speakers of that language possess of different experiences.[32] In this view, metaphors—or more precisely, "conceptual metaphors"—are projections or mappings of conceptual structure that occur in cognition as a way of comprehending certain abstract experiences in terms of other more concrete experiences.[33] For example, in many (but not all) cultures anger is conceptualized metaphorically as hot fluid in a container. In English, this conceptualization is captured in expressions such as "blow one's stack," "flip one's lid," or "let off steam," where the notion of emotional intensity is mapped to that of the liquid's temperature, and anger's effects on the body to the pressurization of the liquid.[34] It is the very systematic nature of each of these metaphorical mappings, moreover—the fact that they involve the transfer of an organized system of concepts from one domain to another—that allows people to think, to reason, and to speak coherently about experiences that may be difficult to comprehend in and of themselves.[35]

Based on the linguistic expressions given above, Latin's alimentary metaphors of mind and speech can be equally represented as a series of mappings between different "food" concepts and their corresponding figurative concepts. Thus, the "cooking" metaphor can be represented as a conceptual mapping between the literal concept of cooking and the metaphorical concept of "cooking" an idea, namely, devising: i.e., "cooking (food) → devising (mentally)."[36] The "serving" metaphor of verbal utterance can also be represented as a mapping, "serving (food) → expressing (verbally)," while the conceptual correspondence underlying the "digesting" metaphor can be given as "digesting (food) → thinking over (mentally)." In the case of the "eating" metaphor, the system of

[32] The theory is developed esp. by Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987; Johnson 1987; and Kövecses 2002 and 2006.

[33] For the neural realization of mappings, see esp. Feldman 2006.

[34] Kövecses 1986; Quinn 1991, 61–65; Kövecses 2010, 198–206.

[35] On systematicity as a mark of conceptual metaphor, see Knowles and Moon 2006, 29–46.

[36] According to the conventions of cognitive linguistics, this metaphorical correspondence can be stated also in propositional form, namely as 'DEVISING IS COOKING', where capital letters represent concepts rather than words.

TABLE 1. Metaphorical Mappings in Latin's "Eating" Metaphor of Auditory Perception

FOOD CONSUMPTION	⇒	AUDITORY PERCEPTION
eating	→	listening
devouring (= eating eagerly)	→	listening intently
tasting (= not eating entirely)	→	listening briefly
tasting (= assessing gustatory quality)	→	assessing rhetorical quality
flavor	→	rhetorical quality
saltiness	→	cleverness of speech
sweetness	→	pleasantness of sound
seasonings	→	rhetorical embellishments

conceptual correspondences is actually more complex, consisting of a basic mapping and several subordinate mappings that elaborate upon or extend the basic one in various ways (see Table 1).

From these mappings, it is easy to see that what provides consistency to and hence creates sense in the metaphorically defined domain (auditory perception)—and therefore also the metaphorical linguistic expressions pertaining to it—is the logical structure of the underlying literal domain (food consumption). Based on a set of logically interrelated mappings, that is, Latin's idiomatic ways of talking about "listening" in alimentary terms preserve a conceptual framework that provides a model for—and so an understanding of—auditory perception in its various dimensions. In effect, then, it is the system of alimentary metaphors that, through mappings which provide a regular correspondence between concepts of the source domain (alimentary activity) and those of the target domain (verbal activity), gives Latin speakers a workable conceptual and linguistic handle on aspects of experience that might otherwise be difficult to articulate.

While Latin's alimentary metaphors of thought and speech demonstrate internal consistency in terms of their mapping structure, they also fit together to form an organized, coherent system in which each metaphor conveys an aspect of mental or verbal activity that is logically related to the others. The coherence of these mental and verbal activities, as conveyed metaphorically, is naturally determined by the relation of the literal concepts underlying the metaphors, which itself emerges experientially: i.e., it is embodied human experience of the world that defines the literal interrelatedness of alimentary activities and so also, through the mappings, the interrelatedness of these activities as metaphorically

interpreted. Acts of cooking, serving, eating, and digesting food tend to be related in experience by their sequencing in time, being activities that follow upon one another in regular temporal order. They are also activities linked together in understanding by the "food" that is seen as being preserved over their progression: in fact, independent of the form that any item of food takes during its cooking, serving, eating, or digesting (and usually independent of any interval of time separating these acts), human beings normally perceive such acts as occurring over the same "object" and thus conceive of them as forming a single structured event.

The conception of cooking, serving, eating, and digesting as a unitary experience may be described as what in lexical semantics is called a "script" or "frame": any structured unit of knowledge that emerges from repeated experience to spell out a kind of stereotyped procedure that guides both the performance and interpretation of behavior for the members of a language community.[37] The concept can also be described as what cognitive linguists refer to as a "prototypical scenario" or "idealized cognitive model": a highly schematized but structurally complex mental representation that presents these experientially related activities as an integrated whole.[38] This can be represented as in Figure 2, where the shaded area represents the global understanding of the alimentary process and the smaller boxes represent the constituent concepts related both by their temporal sequencing and by means of the "food" item in relation to which they occur (fig. 2).

But however we wish to describe these alimentary activities as a conceptually integrated whole, it is clear that in being carried over metaphorically to different aspects of mental and verbal activity, their logical cohesion in literal understanding contributes to, even determines the conception also of the metaphorically defined activities in a gestalt

[37] In this case, the "alimentary" script would represent a mental template defining the steps that are typically gone through or the set of conditions that are typically met in the completion of food ingestion events: cf. Mandler 1984; Raskin 1986. Described as a "frame" (see Fillmore 1985), the alimentary concept would constitute a mental representation having a series of "slots" or "attributes" that correspond to the metaphorically defined mental and verbal activities, providing a structure for the interpretation of lived experience.

[38] The concept of a "prototypical scenario" has been developed in relation to the theory of image schemas, to describe the basic imagistic "scenes" provided by image schemas to understanding and susceptible to visual and kinesthetic "transformations": see Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Holland and Quinn 1987; Quinn 1991. Such a scenario differs from an "idealized cognitive model" in that the latter tends to integrate conceptual materials and knowledge structures of different kinds, including propositional as well as image schematic content, metaphorical as well as metonymic mappings, etc.: cf. Lakoff 1987, 285–86.

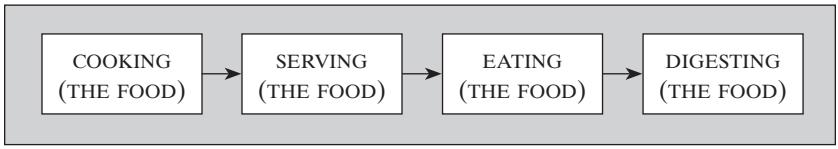

Figure 2. "Prototypical scenario" of the alimentary process.

fashion. It is not one or the other "food" concept that comes metaphorically to convey "devising" or "expressing" or "listening" or "thinking over"; rather, the concepts that are carried over to these aspects of mental and verbal activity relate to one another in clear, experientially defined ways, not only through their occurring in regular temporal succession but also through their having the same "object." In being projected metaphorically to the mental and verbal domains, the concepts thus preserve the logical relation that obtains in their literal understanding, so that what characterizes the metaphorical concepts too as a system is their obvious temporal relation as well as their linkage through the "meaning" that constitutes the object of cognition or of verbalization.[39]

Let me emphasize, then, that it is the alimentary metaphors as such that deliver certain meaning in Latin speakers' conceptual and linguistic system. As I see it, the metaphors actually "make sense of" Latin speakers' thinking and speaking about mental elaboration, verbal utterance, auditory perception, and mental reflection: like other expressions referring to these concepts, they construe the communication experience in specific (and different) ways and thus allow Latin speakers to get a handle on the diversity of this experience. More than this, however, they function together to provide an understanding of how these different activities relate to one another, bringing together experientially and conceptually quite distinct mental and verbal activities under a single (metaphorical) image and, in doing so, producing a logically cohesive model of those experiences. This metaphorical model can again be represented as a series of mappings (see Table 2).

[39]This correspondence, which can be expressed also in the form of a mapping, namely, "the food → the mental representation," is implicit in the sense that it does not actually appear to be reflected anywhere in Latin's semantics, at least during the classical period. Food terms such as *cibus*, *alimentum*, *cena*, while sometimes used in the more abstract sense of "sustenance" or "fuel," do not regularly signify mental phenomena until the Christian period, when they can be used to refer to (the content of) spoken and written language: e.g., Luke 14:24, *cena mea*; Prud. *Psychom.* 625, *lucifer pastus*; cf. the meaning of *ferculum* (lit., "course [of a meal]") in Walafrid Strabo. See Curtius 1953, 134–36.

TABLE 2. Latin's Alimentary Model of Mental and Verbal Activity

ALIMENTARY DOMAIN	⇒	THOUGHT OR SPEECH
[the food	→	an idea]
preparing (the food)	→	devising (an idea)
serving (the food)	→	expressing (an idea)
eating (the food)	→	hearing (an idea)
digesting (the food)	→	thinking over (an idea)

What this resulting model defines, I suggest, is Latin speakers' concept of "communication" or, at any rate, that part of their concept of communication relating to idea transfer by direct verbal interaction: namely, the process wherein a mental representation is first instantiated in someone's mind and expressed verbally by that person, then perceived aurally by another person and brought under their conscious awareness. The metaphors, in other words, as a system help pick out this particular dimension of communication as a distinct category of experience by implying in the interrelatedness of the literal concepts a way in which the metaphorical concepts also interrelate. Although the model itself remains unnamed in Latin—there is no word to denote the global concept of communication thus metaphorically construed, as there is no single term referring to cooking, serving, eating, and digesting as a unitary act—in this sense the metaphors, to borrow Burke's term, "entitle" a part of the communication experience, delineating it in conception and so making it real.[40] This metaphorically defined model can be represented as in Figure 3.

An onomasiological perspective tends to confirm that Latin speakers did not possess an overall understanding of verbal knowledge transfer independent of the model. To begin with, unlike English "communication," French "communication," Italian "comunicazione," Spanish "comunicación," and so on, which refer chiefly to the exchange of ideas by verbal or other means, Latin *communicatio* and its cognates signify a more generalized concept of "sharing" or "exchange" (of obligations). Although some instances of the related verb *communicare* can be read in the more specialized sense,[41] the root (etymological) meaning of these terms (< PIE *$*h_2moi\text{-}ni$* "exchange?") predominates at all periods, as the frequent use of *communicatio* as a synonym for *societas* or *coniunctio*

[40] Burke 1966, 359–79.

[41] E.g., Plaut. *Per.* 334, *communicaui tecum consilia omnia*.

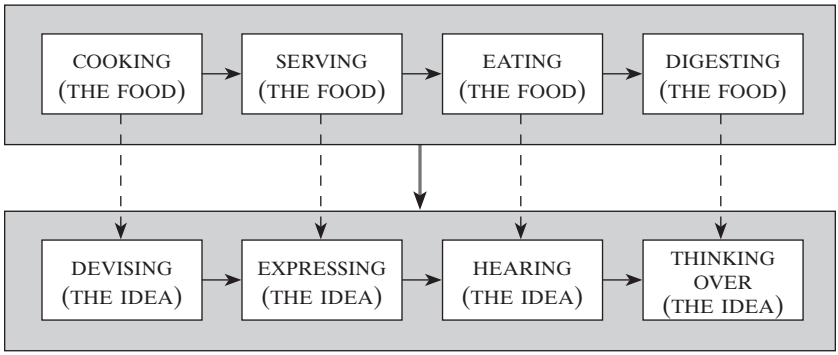

Figure 3. Metaphorical projection of the alimentary process to the conception of "communication."

shows.[42] As Peters writes, "Its sense is not in the least mentalistic: *communicatio* generally involved tangibles."[43] Similarly, other terms in Latin's lexicon may construe linguistic experience in a rich variety of ways and encode different subjectivities,[44] but none affords an image capable of capturing a comprehensive understanding of how knowledge is transferred verbally from one person to another:[45] a similar concept is conveyed by *notare*, *signare*, and *indicare*, for example, but the images of "marking" or "pointing out" underlying these concepts construe communication instead as a visual process (and only from the thinker/speaker's perspective), while the "linkage" metaphor underlying the linguistic meanings as well as the cultural value of *sermo* focuses instead on the relational functions of verbal communication.[46]

III. A FOLK MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Considering the importance of "orality" to Roman society,[47] it should hardly be surprising that Latin speakers possessed a rich variety of ways to speak about communication. And in fact the alimentary model coexists

[42] Cf. Cic. *Fin.* 5.65; Liv. 28.28.5; Front. *Ep.* 1.3.1; Plin. *NH.* 14.2; Justin. *Dig.* 17.2.1.1, etc.
[43] Peters 1999, 7.
[44] Cf. Poccetti 1999.
[45] See Wiseman 2003.
[46] See Short 2012b. Gavoille 2008 proposes a very different analysis, however.
[47] Cf. MacKay 1999; Habinek 2005; Bettini 2008.

with other—also metaphorical—ways of imagining such experience. I have already mentioned the weasel and ibis as models for ancient thinking about communication; the flight of the crane apparently also provided an image for understanding the invention of the alphabet.[48] Beyond these animalistic metaphors, Horace's "arboreal" and "engineering" metaphors employ the image of leaves falling from a tree and of man conquering the natural world (a harbor sheltering ships from a storm; a swamp drained and turned to arable land; the course of a river changed) to model processes of semantic shift.[49] His and Quintilian's "coinage" metaphors, meanwhile, help to explain the dynamics of neologism: while words, like coins, can be "minted" by individuals, it is by agreement of the collective that they receive their values.[50] A "weaving" metaphor is also common in Latin authors (Scheid and Svenbro 1996, 109–56), expressing various tensions, including those "of the poet's expertise with the imposed subject matter, of the Latin language with the Greek reality, of the Roman reality with the Greek language . . . the demands of the present with the fixed word of tradition" (150). And Cicero elaborated a "kinship" model of linguistic relations based on the language of marriage and filiation.[51]

But these metaphors are what cognitive anthropologists might call "expert" models, in the sense that they are theoretical models deliberately constructed and methodically developed by and for specialists, or out of specific contextual needs.[52] Like all mental models, they provide simplifying images to explain complex realities, but they are distinguishable in being explicitly formulated for the explication (and possible verification) of some phenomenon. Certainly, they do not enter Latin speakers' conventional talk in any kind of systematic way. (It is not regular in Latin to speak of words as "leaves," for instance—let alone as "ships." The "plowing" metaphor of writing is more linguistically embedded, however: cf. the meanings of *(ex)arare*, *uersus*, etc.).[53] The alimentary model, on the other hand, can be described as a "folk" model: that is, as a non-technical

[48] Bettini 2011, 7–9.

[49] Hor. *Ars* 48–69. See Oliensis 1998, 213–15; Brink 2011, 146–48.

[50] Hor. *Ars* 55–59; Quint. *Inst. Orat.* 1.6.2. On Horace's "coinage" imagery, see Dufallo 2005.

[51] See Short 2007, 153–57.

[52] Cf. Tileagă 2011. For definitions of, and a survey of scholarly literature related to, "expert" models within cognitive anthropology, cognitive linguistics and cultural semiotics, see esp. Gentner and Stevens 1983.

[53] The weaving metaphor also enters into the conventional language to some degree in expressions such as *sermonem (con)serere*, *copulare*, *iungere*, *texere*, *ordiri* (literally, "begin a web" but also "begin speaking"), etc.

"layman's" understanding that functions as a sort of "operating theory" of experience.[54] In Holland and Quinn's definition, folk models are "presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared (although not necessarily to the exclusion of other, alternative models) by the members of a society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behavior in it."[55] In other words, they are the "ready-made" ways of thinking that a society's members rely upon implicitly in organizing, reasoning, and hence speaking about their experience.

That the alimentary model played a part in Latin speakers' conventional, everyday way of thinking and talking about communication (in the sense of verbal knowledge transfer) is suggested by the diversity of contexts in which expressions reflecting this model occur, and from the kinds of evidence that can be used to reconstruct it, including etymologies and what seem to be idiomatic, fixed-form expressions. Differently from the "expert" models, the alimentary metaphor is also reflected throughout Latin's semantic system, structuring meaning across the domain of alimentary terms (not just of single, or of a highly circumscribed set of, lexical items). Moreover, this structuring is systematically coherent, occurring over a set of logically related terms in a way that is consistent with their literal meanings. Furthermore, again unlike the "expert" metaphorical models, the alimentary metaphor occurs in a great variety of authors and genres and is evidenced over an extensive period of time. And it appears to be culturally—not only contextually—motivated by the close symbolic relationship that speech and food appear to share in Roman thought, as suggested, for example, by Isidore of Seville's etymological connection of *os* and *ostium*: "[The mouth] is called *os*, because through it, as if through a door (*os-tium*), we both send food inside and we project spit out; or because food goes in and speech comes out there."[56] Perhaps most importantly, the model is employed even in cases when a theory of communication is not in any way at issue.

This is not to say that the model cannot and does not enter into the conscious construction of meaning in Latin literature. Quite the opposite. As a highly conventionalized aspect of Latin's semantic system, the

[54] On "folk" models, see esp. Holý and Stuchlík 1981; Shore 1996; Kövecses 1999; they are called "cultural" models by Holland and Quinn 1987; D'Andrade 1990; and D'Andrade and Strauss 1992.

[55] Holland and Quinn 1987, 4.

[56] Isid. *Etym.* 11.49, *os dictum, quod per ipsum quasi per ostium et cibos intus mittimus et sputum foris proicimus; uel quia inde ingrediuntur cibi, inde egrediuntur sermones.*

alimentary metaphor may be surfaced to play a part in imaginative, and sometimes quite sophisticated, meaning making. For instance, in Plautus' *Poenulus*, when Milphio mockingly refers to lawyers as *iuris coctiores* (instead of *doctiores*), "rather learned in the law" (586), the joke takes advantage of the double meaning of *ius* ("law" as well as "sauce").[57] Or consider again Plautus' use of *coctus* in the sense of "well considered; masterful" at *Miles Gloriosus* 208, *incoctum non expromet, bene coctum dabit* ("he will not bring out an uncooked [sc. plan], but will give a well-cooked one"). Why did the poet not use some other expression of comparable meaning—*catus*, *malus*, or *subdolus*, for example (all Plautine favorites for describing clever slaves), or *astutus*, or *callidus*, or even some construction with *pictus* or *graphicus*, which as Bettini has shown, in Plautus describes what is "perfected," especially in reference to the slave's trickery?[58] Part of the answer is that the "alimentary" image of mental cunning is strongly contextually motivated: Palaestrio will indeed produce something "cooked"—namely, a resolution to the plot that centers on the cook Cario, who will be a key instrument in Pyrgopolinices' comeuppance.[59] Something similar can be said of Plaut. *Pers*. 52, *usque ero domi, dum excoxero lenoni malam rem magnam* ("I will be at home as long as it takes to cook up something big and bad for the pimp"). As Chiarini suggested, the culinary metaphor of *excoquere* is particularly appropriate because it foretells (or even "evokes") the arrival on stage of Saturio, "the most gastronomic of characters."[60] Gowers has argued that Plautus uses cooking imagery as part of his authorial self-representation, especially in relation to his Greek models (cf. 52, "the cook . . . is a parallel for, or parody of, the comic author"),[61] following Barchiesi's suggestion that Palaestrio "represents the poet in the act of creating the comedy, and indeed . . . the poet Plautus."[62]

None of this should imply, however, that the metaphor is not also—or above all—a matter of linguistic convention, that the model does not operate at a level of cultural (in the sense of shared) meaning. In my view, the meaningfulness of the metaphor in Latin literature in fact depends on its being a highly conventionalized part of folk understanding in Roman culture at large. What makes such usages "literary"

[57] The pun is frequent in Plautus and others: cf. Gowers 1993, 77, esp. n. 98.
[58] Bettini 2003.
[59] Cf. Lowe 1985, 94–95.
[60] Chiarini 1979, 43.
[61] Gowers 1993, 87–107.
[62] Barchiesi 1969, 125.

(creative, imaginative) is that they elaborate, extend, and combine what is conventional and ordinary in novel ways.[63] If the meaning of these metaphors were entirely contextual, what basis would Latin speakers have for finding them immediately interpretable? Take Cicero's discussion of the seasonableness of speech, where he offers as a negative example the introduction of "dinner party" talk, or any kind of lighthearted subject, upon somber occasions (*Off.* 1.144): "For it is shameful and very disgraceful to mention things worthy of a dinner party or any delicate topic on somber occasions" (*turpe enim valdeque vitiosum in re severa convivio <verba> digna aut delicatum aliquem inferre sermonem*). His choice of *inferre sermonem* ("mention" < "serve up") here is surely related to the "alimentary" nature of his example of situationally inappropriate talk (the dinner party), since this permits an imaginative play on words. What provides the symbolic underpinnings for—and so what licenses—the pun is of course the convergence of contextually emergent and culturally situated meaning.

As a folk model of communication, Latin's alimentary metaphors can be compared to the "conduit" or "transmission" metaphor that Reddy has argued prevails in English speakers' own understanding of this domain. In this metaphor, captured in perhaps hundreds of conventional expressions, communication is envisaged as actually bringing about "the physical transfer of thoughts and feelings," asserting that words are "containers" for thoughts and that "language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one person to another."[64] So we "put thoughts (in)to words" that we try to "put" or "get" "across" or "through" to someone else, who may then "get," "catch," "absorb," "take in," or "internalize" what we have to say; or it may "go right over someone's head" or "go right past" them.[65] Traced by Carey to the Industrial Revolution in Britain, when the sharing of knowledge began to be viewed overridingly as a kind of commodity exchange,[66] this metaphor has been literalized in contemporary information theory, where meanings become fully objectified as "packets" or "bits" that can be "transmitted" along a "channel" said to "contain" or "hold" or "carry" the message.[67]

[63] Cf. Lakoff and Turner 1989, 67–72.

[64] Reddy 1979, 287, 290. As Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 10, characterize the metaphor, "The speaker puts ideas (objects) into words (containers) and sends them (along a conduit) to a hearer who takes the idea/objects out of the word/containers."

[65] Reddy 1979 provides an appendix of 141 formulaic English expressions based on the conduit metaphor; Lakoff and Johnson 1980 and Grady 1998 provide additional examples.

[66] Carey 1989.

[67] Day 2008, 38–59.

Latin's and English's metaphors of communication thus both set up a view of "messages" (e.g., ideas, thoughts, feelings, meanings) as kinds of physical entities: as "objects" generically or as "food" specifically. And yet a clear—and culturally significant—distinction can be made between them. In the mechanistic model, transmission of the message from one person to another takes place without much reference to those individuals. Messages are seen as passing back and forth along the channel in a stable and secure state;[68] the channel may contain "noise" that interferes with correct reception of the message, but the message itself remains perfectly intact; the sender "encodes" and the receiver "decodes" the message, but otherwise they are out of the picture: transmission occurs independent of any single person's involvement. The image of communication engendered by the alimentary model, by contrast, implies the direct involvement of the sender and receiver in the transmission process. According to the model, the mental operations by which the message is formulated by the sender (metaphorically speaking, the "cooking") and by which it is made use of by the receiver (the "digesting") are in fact of equal status within the system as the verbal processes through which the message is transferred (the "serving" and "eating"). More importantly, the model entails that once "eaten" and "digested," the message—like food—enters and is assimilated into the body of the recipient.

This "metaphorical entailment"[69] of Latin's alimentary model—that, in conversing, "meanings" actually become physically incorporated by those who hear them—constitutes a distinctive feature of Roman culture's thinking about communication.[70] Its influence is probably detectable, for example, in Cicero's (*Rep.* 2.7) explanation of the "corruption and alteration of morals" (*corruptela ac demutatio morum*) in maritime cities as in large part owing to interaction between speakers of different languages (*admiscentur enim nouis sermonibus*) as well as in Quintilian's discussion of memory techniques, when he compares the reading and re-reading of texts to "re-chewing the same food" (*eundem cibum remandendi*) and speaks of recollection (*recordatio*) as the process by which a memory is

[68] Cf. Reddy 1979, 306–9.

[69] For discussion of the entailment potential of conceptual metaphors, see Quinn 1991, 72–81.

[70] The model is similar in this way to the "eating" metaphor of communication found in Japanese, which also figures ideas as a kind of "food" to be "digested" by the (*hara*, "belly," of the) hearer: see Hiraga 2009. However, the main focus of the Japanese metaphor appears to be on the hearer's emotional reaction to the message as conveyed metaphorically in physical terms: the model, that is, "conceptualizes communication from a receiver's point of view" (180, n. 4).

"softened and digested" (*maturatur et concoquitur*, *Inst. orat.* 11.2.40–43). Quintilian explicitly likens the process of memorizing written texts to food digestion: "But let us repeat and go over them and, just as we send down food chewed up and almost liquefied so it may be more easily digested, so let a reading be given over to memory and imitation not raw, but softened and, as it were, ground up by much repetition."[71]

Seneca the Younger's understanding of the effects of literary study emerges perhaps most directly from this model (Sen. *Ep. mor.* 2.2–4):[72]

> illud autem uide, ne ista lectio auctorum multorum et omnis generis uoluminum habeat aliquid uagum et instabile. certis ingeniis inmorari et innutriri oportet, si uelis aliquid trahere quod in animo fideliter sedeat . . . non prodest cibus nec corpori accedit qui statim sumptus emittitur . . . "sed modo" inquis "hunc librum euoluere uolo, modo illum." fastidientis stomachi est multa degustare; quae ubi uaria sunt et diuersa, inquinant non alunt. probatos itaque semper lege, et si quando ad alios deuerti libuerit, ad priores redi. aliquid cotidie adversus paupertatem, aliquid adversus mortem auxili compara, nec minus adversus ceteras pestes; et cum multa percurreris, unum excerpe quod illo die concoquas.
>
> Take care, however, that your reading of many authors and of books of all kinds not become erratic and unbalanced. It is best to linger on and to be sustained by certain thinkers, if you want to obtain something you can trust will stay in your mind . . . Food that is thrown up immediately after it has been consumed gives no benefit, and does not enter the body . . . "But," you will say, "I want to read this book, and now this one." Tasting many things is bound to give you a stomach ache; if these things are of different and varied kinds, they harm rather than nourish. So always read proven authors—and if ever it pleases to turn to others, return to the previous ones. Everyday provide yourself some aid against poverty, against death and no less against other diseases; and when you have surveyed many things, choose one to reflect upon on that day.

Seneca's belief that one should "linger on and be sustained by" (*inmorari et innutriri*) a small number of authors is not only couched explicitly in the terms of, but also grounded implicitly in the logic of the alimentary model: the idea that when a message is received (in speaking or reading) it comes to be integrated physically into the body of the

[71] Quint. *Inst. orat.* 10.1.19, *repetamus autem et tractemus et, ut cibos mansos ac prope liquefactos demittimus quo facilius digerantur, ita lectio non cruda sed multa iteratione mollita et uelut confecta memoriae imitationique tradatur.*

[72] See Curtius 1953, 134–36; Horowitz 1998.

receiver. Thus he advises against "tasting many things" (*multa degustare*) because reading, like eating, brings about bodily effects: in the same manner as food, a thought "enters into the body" (*corpori accedit*) and when "reflected upon" (*concoquas*) then "sits in the mind" (*in animo sedeat*) where it can either "harm" (*inquinant*) or "nourish" (*alunt*).[73] Later, Macrobius found this alimentary image so compelling an explanation of the effects of literary study that it provided direct inspiration for the preface of his *Saturnalia* (Macr. *Sat*. pr. 6–7):

> nos quoque quicquid diuersa lectione quaesiuimus committemus stilo, ut in ordinem eodem digerente coalescat. nam et in animo melius distincta seruantur, et ipsa distinctio non sine quodam fermento, quo conditur uniuersitas, in unius saporis usum uaria libamenta confundit . . . quod in corpore nostro uidemus sine ulla opera nostra facere naturam: alimenta quae accipimus, quamdiu in sua qualitate perseuerant et solida innatant, male stomacho oneri sunt; at cum ex eo quod erant mutata sunt, tum demum in uires et sanguinem transeunt. idem in his quibus aluntur ingenia praestemus, ut quaecumque hausimus non patiamur integra esse, ne aliena sint, sed in quandam digeriem concoquantur: alioquin in memoriam ire possunt, non in ingenium.
>
> I will commit to writing whatever I have learned through my varied reading, so that it might come together into some order as I reflect upon it. For things are better preserved in mind when they are distinguished one from the other, and the very process of distinction, like a kind of fermentation that seasons the whole, blends different tastings into the experience of a single flavor . . . We see nature work the same effect in our bodies through no effort of our own: as long as the foods we eat remain in their original state and float about in our stomachs as solids, they cause indigestion; but when they are changed from what they once were, then finally they transform into blood and energy. Let us undertake the same process in matters of mental sustenance as well, so that what we consume we do not allow to remain whole, and so to remain apart from us, but let us reflect upon it as a kind of digestion. If we do not do so, it may become part of our memory, but not of our thought.

Latin authors' reinterpretation of the alimentary model of verbal communication to constitute a sort of "theory of the text" suggests that, contrary to the overall trend in Western thought,[74] in even strongly "bookish" Roman culture orality continued to be a dominant feature of Latin

[73] Cf. also Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 84.7, *concoquamus illa: alioquin in memoriam ibunt, non in ingenium*.

[74] Cf. Parks 1991.

speakers' ways of representing, conceiving, and being in the world.[75] More specifically, it shows that as a framework for understanding the concept of verbal idea transfer, the system of alimentary metaphors—"cooking," "serving," "eating," "digesting"—pervaded Latin speakers' symbolic order, guiding not only their choices of words but also their paths of reasoning. These metaphors worked their effects on Latin's semantic structures but delivered much more than simply colorful or unexpected ways of speaking about mental and verbal activity. Together, they constituted a model for thinking "communication" in Latin that in virtue of its metaphoricity remained crucial to, and irreplaceable within, the Roman worldview.

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[75] Thomas 1992, 151.

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