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Sommario/riassunto

Metaphorical and metonymical compounds - novel and lexicalised ones alike - are remarkably abundant in language. Yet how can we be sure that when using an expression such as land fishing in order to speak about metal detecting, the referent will be immediately understood even if the hearer had not been previously familiar with the compound? Accordingly, this book sets out to explore whether the semantics of metaphorical and metonymical noun-noun combinations can be systematically analysed within a theoretical framework, where systematicity pertains to regularities in both the cognitive processes and the products of these processes, that is, the compounds themselves. Backed up by recent psycholinguistic evidence, the book convincingly demonstrates that such compounds are not semantically opaque as it has been formerly claimed: they can in fact be analysed and accounted for within a cognitive linguistic framework, by the combined application of metaphor, metonymy, blending, profile determinacy and schema theory; and represent the creative and associative word formation processes that we regularly apply in everyday language.
