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The shaping of complex meanings depends on punctual and relational coding and inferencing. Coding is viewed as a vector which can run either from expression to content or from concepts to (linguistic) forms to mark independent conceptual relations. While coding relies on systematic resources internal to language, inferencing essentially depends on a layered system of autonomous shared conceptual structures, which include both cognitive models and consistency criteria grounded in a natural ontology. Inference guided by coding is not a residual pragmatic device but it is a direct way to long-term conceptual structures that guide the connection of meanings. The interaction of linguistic forms and concepts is particularly clear in conceptual conflict where conflictual complex meanings provide insights into the roots of significance and the linguistic structure of metaphors. Complementing a formal analysis of linguistic structures with a substantive analysis of conceptual structures, a philosophical grammar provides insights from both formal and functional approaches toward a more profound understanding of how language works in constructing and communicating complex meanings. This monograph is ideally addressed to linguists, philosophers and psychologists interested in language as symbolic form and as an instrument of human action rooted in a complex conceptual and cognitive landscape.

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