

METAPHOR AND METONYMY

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ANNOTATION

This article provides information about the use of metaphor and metonymy in grammar and literature, the history of their origin and their importance in sentences. The opinions of great world scientists about metaphor and metonymy and their contributions to science are also described.

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Metaphor in literature is regarded as a figure of speech. It is traditionally based on the notions 'similarity' or 'comparison' between the literal and the figurative meaning of expressions. This can be explained by means of the word 'eye': Whereas 'eye' is a part of the body of people and animals, located in the head, organ of sight and locus of production of tears the word 'eye' can be involved in a figurative use, too:

For example: *The expression the eye of heaven refers to the sun*

The term "metaphorical expression" refers to a linguistic expression (a word, phrase or sentence) that is the surface realization of a cross-domain mapping, that will be explained in the final draft.

In literature, Metonymy is a figure of speech in which the name of an attribute of a thing is substituted for the thing itself (e.g. the crown for a monarchy, the White House for the US Government [President]). Rather than naming a thing by its proper name, you only name a part of it, which, then, replaces the thing as a whole. Important to note is that the correct understanding of metonymy is highly dependent on the context in which it is uttered.

Take, for example, the following sentence:

Buckingham Palace denied the rumours.

Here you see that the building (Buckingham Palace) stands for the institution (the monarch). It is, of course, not the building itself that denied the rumours, but the monarch. As we all know that the monarch resides in the palace, we all understand that it was him/her, who denied them (Place for Institution). Metonymy is always characterised by a schematic form: B for A

Differences between Metaphor and Metonymy

When we use a metaphor, we say that A is B. We do not only compare two object (as is the case with similes), but express one word in terms of another. The thing with

which another one is compared is called the vehicle, the feature that both terms have in common is called the tenor.

In metonymy, the formula "B to A" is represented. In contrast to metaphor, metonymy does not refer to the similarity between two objects but to their similarity in function. In metonymy, however, we do not say that two terms are alike, but use a term as substitution for the other, which only represents a certain feature of the term compared.

The scheme is not "A is B" but rather "A for B"!

Cognitive semanticists argue, that metonymy is not a purely linguistic device but is central to human thought.

The couple metaphor-metonymy had a prominent role in the renewal of the field of rhetoric in the 1960s. In his 1956 essay, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles", Roman Jakobson describes the couple as representing the possibilities of linguistic selection (metaphor) and combination (metonymy); Jakobson's work became important for such French structuralists as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes. In his essay, Jakobson also argues that metaphor is the basis for poetry, especially as seen in literary Romanticism and Symbolism, whereas metonymy forms the basis for Realism in literature. For non-linguists, a metonym can be considered a low-imagination metaphor, an allusion via an actual property (or close approximation/association of) the concept being substituted (the too on-the-nose referent). E.g., writing by pen and violence by sword in the pen is mightier than the sword.

Etymology of Metaphor and Metonymy

The English metaphor derived from the 16th-century Old French word *métaphore*, which comes from the Latin *metaphora*, "carrying over", in turn from the Greek *μεταφορά* (*metaphorá*), "transfer", [5] from *μεταφέρω* (*metapherō*), "to carry over", "to transfer" and that from *μετά* (*meta*), "after, with, across" + *φέρω* (*pherō*), "to bear", "to carry".

The words metonymy and metonym come from the Greek *μετωνυμία*, *metōnymía*, "a change of name", from *μετά*, *metá*, "after, beyond" (more precisely = "between", "inside"), and *-ωνυμία*, *-ōnymía*, a suffix that names figures of speech, from *ὄνομα*, *ónoma* or *ὄνομα*, *ónoma*, "name".

According to Freud's work (1900), condensation and displacement (from German *Verdichtung* and *Verschiebung*) are two closely linked concepts. In the unconscious, through the dynamic movement of cathexis (charge of libido, mental or emotional energy), it is possible that an idea (image, memory, or thought) passes on its whole charge to another idea; Freud called this process "displacement." It is also possible that a single idea takes the whole charge of more than one other ideas; Freud called this

process "condensation." In other words, a condensation is when more than one displacement occurs towards the same idea.

In 1957, Jacques Lacan, inspired by an article by linguist Roman Jakobson, argued that the unconscious has the same structure of a language, and that condensation and displacement are equivalent to the poetic functions of metaphor and metonymy.

Roman Jakobson's Concepts of Metaphor and Metonymy

In his 1956 essay, *Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances*, Jakobson proposes that language has a bipolar structure, oscillating between the poles of metaphor and metonymy, and that any discourse is developed along the semantic lines of the metaphoric, where one topic leads to another through similarity or substitution, and metonymic, where one topic suggests another via contiguity (closeness in space, time and psychological association). Jakobson holds that poetry is metaphoric, in that, it focuses on signs and on the principle of similarity, while prose is metonymic, as it focuses on the referent and is based on contiguity — an idea that was later taken up by the French Structuralists. Jakobson notes that in literary Romanticism and Symbolism, metaphor has been widely used, while metonymy has been predominant in Realism. He further observes that in any symbolic process, there is always the competition between the metaphoric and the metonymic devices. Analysing the structure of dreams, Jakobson illustrates this conflict by highlighting the question whether the “symbols and temporal sequences are based on contiguity (Freud’s metaphoric dispensation or synecdochic condensation) or on similarity (Freud’s ‘identification and symbolism’). Here Jakobson anticipates Lacan’s analysis of Freud’s condensation and displacement in terms of metaphor and metonymy. His notion of the binary oppositions being the elements of structure, also informed Mikhail Bakhtin’s dialogic criticism and Levi Strauss’ Structural Anthropology.

“Metaphor and metonymy are often thought of as lexical phenomena, a matter of words and how they are used. This book challenges this assumption and proposes that the grammar -- syntax and morphology -- reflect metaphorical and metonymic processes of conceptualization. It offers an exciting and innovative perspective on a variety of topics in a wide range of languages and is an important addition to the growing literature on the conceptual and functional basis of grammar.”

John Taylor

University of Otago, New Zealand

“Metonymy and Metaphor in Grammar is a fascinating collection of thought-provoking chapters offering a new understanding of what we mean by grammar of natural languages. Grammar is not the solid, unassailable, hard rock that formal grammarians imagine it to be, and figurative devices like metonymy and metaphor are not the soft, slippery, and dangerous paths to be avoided at all costs. Instead, figurative

devices like metonymy and metaphor infuse and permeate grammar, massively, and must be confronted at every turn. This volume argues eloquently and forcefully for this view of grammar, drawing upon a diverse array of languages and lexicogrammatical phenomena, including gender, case, compounds, tense, and a variety of construction types. I wholeheartedly recommend *Metonymy and Metaphor in Grammar* to all linguists who are open to rethinking the basics of their discipline.”

John Newman

University of Alberta

“For a long time metonymy and metaphor were seen as ornaments to make language more varied and beautiful. With this volume edited by Panther, Thornburg, and Barcelona, we have moved as far as possible from this idea. The startling new insight of the book is that the huge complexity of linguistic structure depends, in large measure, on such natural, automatic, and hard-to-notice cognitive processes as metonymy and metaphor.”

Zoltán Kövecses,

Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

“The greatest value of this volume lies in the fact that it represents an integrated attempt at elucidating the extent and depth of how specifically metonymy and metaphor underlie conceptual structuring of grammar. Although the contributions reflect the diversity of possible approaches in identifying ways in which metonymy and metaphor, seen as conceptual phenomena, interact and influence lexicogrammatical structures, they are held together by a well-defined theoretical framework of Cognitive Linguistics, carefully explicated in the Introduction. This volume enriches our understanding of the conceptual make-up of lexicogrammatical structures and will definitely trigger further research into the complex mechanisms that hold between metonymy and metaphor in grammar.”

Milena Žic-Fuchs

University of Zagreb

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