SEMANTIC FEATURES AND THE USAGE OF METONYMY IN THE LANGUAGE

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Abstract: *The article is devoted to explore the workings of various types of metonymy in scientific linguistics, defining it as a verbal expression of the epistemic situation commonly found in scientific communication. This encompasses all linguistic and non-linguistic factors and is manifested through both spoken and written texts. The article examines metonymy through the lens of langue/parole dichotomy: lexicalized metonymy in langue functions as a mechanism of semantic transposition based on contiguity, serving as a means of terminological identification; whereas discursive metonymy in parole emerges as a result of the syntagmatic contiguity of syntactic structures.*

Keywords: *substituted term,the intended term,poetic device,synecdoche,metalepsis, polysemy,rhetorical device,discursive metonymy,sentence structures,langue/parole dichotomy*

INTRODUCTİON

Metonymy, (from Greek metōnymia, "change of name," or "misnomer"), figure of speech in which the name of an object or concept is replaced with a word closely related to or suggested by the original, as "crown" to mean "king" ("The power of the crown was mortally weakened") or an author for his works ("I'm studying Shakespeare"). A familiar Shakespearean example is Mark Antony's speech in Julius Caesar in which he asks of his audience: "Lend me your ears."[1]

Since 1980, the advancement in cognitive linguistics has led to a shift in the academic community's perception of metonymy. A significant revelation is the recognition that metonymy, like metaphors, extends beyond being a mere linguistic tool—it is also a reflection of how we think and a cognitive process.

Metonymy is closely related to synecdoche, the naming of a part for the whole or a whole for the part, and is a common poetic device. Metonymy has the effect of creating concrete and vivid images in place of generalities, as in the substitution of a specific "grave" for the abstraction "death." Metonymy is standard journalistic and headline practice as in the use of "city

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hall" to mean "municipal government" and of the "White House" to mean the "president of the United States".[1]

Metonymy can elevate your writing by crafting fresh imagery, intensifying the impact of words, and succinctly expressing intricate ideas or emotions.Metonymy can enrich a basic word selection by infusing it with deeper significance or complexity. For instance, using "the crown" to represent the monarch in a kingdom is a common metonymic expression. Similarly, phrases like "the church" symbolize broader systems or traditions.[3]

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which one term is substituted for another term with which it is closely associated. Some semantic features of metonymy include:

1. Association: Metonymy relies on the close association between the substituted term (vehicle) and the intended term (target). For example, using "The White House" to refer to the U.S. government.

2. Contextual Dependence: The interpretation of metonymy often relies on the context in which it is used. The meaning may not be immediately clear without considering the context.

3. Comprehension: Understanding metonymy requires the ability to identify the intended target based on the relationship between the vehicle and the target.[4]

4. Direct Connection: Metonymy establishes a direct connection between the vehicle and the target, allowing for a more direct and concise expression of an idea.

5. Cognitive Process: Metonymy involves a cognitive process of understanding one concept through another concept that is closely related or associated with it.[4]

What is the purpose of metonymy?

Metonymy is prevalent in daily conversations as it simplifies vast concepts. Writers employ metonymy to introduce fresh visualizations, strengthen their prose, and condense complex notions for clearer expression.Metonymy, along with related figures of speech like synecdoche and metalepsis, is commonly found in both everyday language and writing. These linguistic devices play a crucial role in creating various meanings and nuances in communication. Polysemy, the ability of a word or phrase to have multiple meanings, can sometimes emerge from metonymic relationships. In metonymy, words are substituted based on understood associations or connections, while metaphor relies on specific analogies between objects.

Literary theorist Kenneth Burke categorizes metonymy as one of the essential "master tropes," along with metaphor, synecdoche, and irony. He

explores these tropes in-depth in his work "A Grammar of Motives." While some scholars, like Roman Jakobson, view metaphor and metonymy as the main dichotomy in tropes, Burke emphasizes the dichotomy between irony and synecdoche, highlighting their roles in representation and perspective.

Metonymy is not only prevalent in everyday speech but also serves as a significant rhetorical device in poetry and rhetoric.Metonymy, a rhetorical device, involves substituting the name of one thing with another closely associated attribute or concept. It is distinct from synecdoche, where a part represents the whole. While metonymy uses words linked to the intended subject, they are not literal parts of it. The term "metonymy" originates from the Latin word metonymia and the Greek metōnumia, translating to 'change of name.' It was first recorded in 1547. Ancient Greek and Latin scholars made notable contributions to the understanding and use of metonymy in communication and literature. They recognized its power in creating vivid imagery and conveying complex ideas in a concise and impactful manner.[2]

The main goal of using metonymy is to highlight a particular quality or aspect of an object through a rhetorical reference. For instance, referring to a psychiatrist as a "whitecoat" is a metonymy that emphasizes the clinical or technical side of the profession, rather than its emotional or personal aspects.Cognitive linguistics views metonymy not only as a rhetorical device but as a fundamental feature of language and cognition. Metonymy is considered a universal linguistic phenomenon and a natural cognitive process.[3] According to Lakoff, metonymy involves representing a whole or its parts by using elements within the same cognitive domain that are easily perceived and understood. In metonymy, these elements act as reference points and facilitate comprehension of the intended target. Langacker suggests that metonymy effectively reconciles two conflicting aspects: ensuring the listener focuses on the target of discussion while aligning with our natural thought and communication patterns. Metonymy is prevalent in various linguistic levels, including vocabulary, sentence structures, and discourse.

Metonymy at the lexical level.The most prevalent type of metonyms stems from broad lexical meanings. Other metonyms arise from specific lexical meanings through the transition of proper names to common nouns. Some scholars view this kind of reference as a distinct form of relativity, where the derived value is contingent on the perception of the reference as a whole. It involves a straightforward mapping where a characteristic from one domain is linked to a characteristic in another domain. By emphasizing a

specific feature, the target domain gains conceptual depth through referential usage, enhancing its potential for reference.When it comes to sentence level,politeness often leads to the use of indirect speech acts to convey intentions. Panther & Thornburg suggest that indirect speech acts operate similarly to metonymy. They propose that verbal communication mirrors non-verbal actions in daily life, requiring suitable conditions and stages for completion. According to their view, indirect speech acts follow metonymic principles, where one speech act is substituted for another. For instance, when Peter, a colleague from a tech company, requests help with a crucial design task, and you decline due to a prior appointment.

The analysis of metonymic usage of the word revealed intricate yet relatively limited patterns. Synecdoche was the predominant type of metonymy identified. Most metonymic extensions of the word extended beyond the level of the grammatical word, with a few examples where the word represented units below the grammatical word level. In the illustration, part-for-whole metonymies expand upwards, while whole-for-part metonymies move downward, with the core indicating the fundamental meaning. The extensions from part-for-whole metonymies connect to various common associations on the right side.In line with the researcher's findings, through typical metonymic shifts, a lexical unit gains a secondary implication, which subsequently becomes part of the lexicon. Discursive metonymy doesn't generate semantic alterations but rather emphasizes the word's usage over introducing novel meanings.Taken from the newspaper, Vietnam symbolizes a significant moment in American history, with the reference not being to the country itself, but to the war that occurred there.[5] In understanding this concept, individuals G. Redden and Z. Kovech should consider the process of metonymy, where one idea or entity (the vehicle) is used to access another related concept or entity (the target) within the same cognitive framework. Put simply, metonymy involves shifting focus from one idea to another. This cognitive process helps in achieving a specific goal, showcasing the mental nature of metonymy.[6]

Reflected metonymy is known for the intricate differentiation of meanings, often leading to a blending of the original and metonymic interpretations. In a sentence where the same noun is used, an adjective can convey two distinct relationships: one to the object directly referred to by the noun, and another to the object implied by the metonymic association of the noun.

Overall, metonymy adds depth and nuance to language by allowing for indirect and creative ways of expressing ideas and representing concepts.

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