METAPHOR AND METONYMY

- The substitution of the existing names approved by long usage and fixed in dictionaries by new, occasional, individual ones, prompted by the speaker's subjective original view and evaluation of things is traditionally referred to as *transference,* for, indeed, the name of one object is transferred onto another, proceeding from their similarity (of shape, colour, function, etc.), or closeness (of material existence, cause/ effect, instrument/result, part/whole relations, etc.).

- Each type of intended substitution results in a *stylistic device (SD)* called also a *trope.* The most frequently used, well known and elaborated among them is a *metaphor* - transference of names based on the associated likeness between two objects, as in the "pancake", or "ball", or "volcano" for the "sun"; "silver dust" for stars.

Metaphor

- The expressiveness of the metaphor is promoted by the implicit simultaneous presence of images of both objects - the one which is actually named and the one which supplies its own "legal" name. So that formally we deal with the name transference based on the similarity of one feature common to two different entities, while in fact each one enters a phrase in the complexity of its other characteristics. The wider is the gap between the associated objects the more striking and unexpected - the more expressive - is the metaphor.

- If a metaphor involves likeness between inanimate and animate objects, we deal with *personification,* as in "*the face of London*", or "*the pain of the ocean*".

Metonymy

- Transference of names in metonymy does not involve a necessity for two different words to have a common component in their semantic structures, as is the case of metaphor, but proceeds from the fact that two objects (phenomena) have common grounds of existence in reality.

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- Such words as "cup" and "tea" have no linguistic semantic nearness, but the first one may serve the container of the second, hence - the conversational cliché "Will you have another cup?", which is a case of metonymy, once original, but due to long use, no more accepted as a fresh SD.

- Similar to singling out one particular type of metaphor into the self-contained SD of personification, one type of metonymy - namely, the one, which is based on the relations between a part and the whole - is often viewed independently as *synecdoche* /sɪˈnɛkdəki/.

COGNITIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF METAPHOR AND METONOMY

- Stylistics has since its earliest days set great store by the use of detailed linguistic analysis as a basis for the interpretation of literary texts. This focus on the methods of compositional technique has tended to make stylistics writerly in its general theoretical orientation. However, what has largely been missing from this approach has been any account of the mental processes that inform, and are affected by, the way we read and interpret literary texts.

- Stylistics borrowed heavily from developments in cognitive linguistics and Artificial Intelligence, and this new emphasis in research method saw the emergence of cognitive stylistics or cognitive poetics.

- An important feature of cognitive stylistics has been its interest in the way we transfer mental constructs, and especially in the way we map one mental representation onto another when we read texts. Stylisticians and cognitive poeticians have consistently drawn attention to this system of conceptual transfer in both literary and in everyday discourse, and have identified two important tropes, or figures of speech, through which this conceptual transfer is carried out. These tropes are metaphor and metonymy.

Metaphor

- A metaphor is a process of mapping between two different conceptual domains. The different domains are known as *the target domain* and *the source domain*. The target domain is the topic or concept that you want to describe through the metaphor while the source domain refers to the concept that you draw upon in order to create the metaphorical construction.

She really blew her lid.

Thus, in an expression like:

1). She really blew her lid.

The target domain is our understanding of the concept of anger because it is the concept we wish to describe through the metaphor. The source domain for the metaphor can be conceptualized as 'heated fluid in a container' because that is the concept which provides the vehicle for the metaphorical transfer. The metaphor as a whole can be represented, using the standard notation of small capital letters, by the formula: ANGER IS A HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER. This type of formulation is useful because it abstracts out of the particular linguistic structure of the metaphor its underlying organization.

- Importantly, the relationship between metaphor and linguistic form is an indirect one, which means that we can express the same conceptual metaphor through a variety of constructions. Consider, for instance, an alternative version of example (1):

- (2) Talk about letting off steam . . . She really blew her lid, I mean really blew her top. She just exploded!

- Although this example comprises four grammatical clauses, this is not to say that it contains four metaphors. All of the clauses in fact express the same source and target domain, which means that the single underlying conceptual metaphor ANGER IS A HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER is being played out through a variety of linguistic constructions.

- Metaphor plays the important part in our everyday conceptual thought. Metaphors are not some kind of distorted literal thought, but rather are basic schemes by which people conceptualize their experience and their external world. Indeed, the fact that many metaphors pass us by in everyday social interaction is well illustrated by the unwitting slip by a British sports commentator:

- 3).We didn't have metaphors in my day. We didn't beat about the bush.

- *beat around the bush*

- **to avoid talking about what is important**

- Metaphor is simply a natural part of conceptual thought and although undoubtedly an important feature of creativity, it should not be seen as a special or exclusive feature of literary discourse.

- If we accept that metaphors are part and parcel, so to speak, of everyday discourse, an important question presents itself. Are there any qualitative differences in the sorts of metaphors that are found in different discourse contexts? An important criterion in this respect is the degree of novelty exhibited by a metaphor. As with any figure of speech, repeated use leads to familiarity, and so commonplace metaphors can sometimes develop into idioms or fixed expressions in the language.

- Your claims are indefensible.

- He attacked every weak point in my argument.

- His criticisms were right on target.

- I've never won an argument with him.

- You disagree? Okay, shoot!

- He shot down all of my arguments.

- ARGUMENT IS WAR

- I'm feeling up.

- That boosted my spirits.

- My spirits rose. You're in high spirits.

- Thinking about her always gives me a lift.

- I'm feeling down.

- I'm depressed.

- He's really low these days. I fell into a depression. My spirits sank.

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ORIENTATIONAL METAPHORS

HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN

Metonymy

- In contrast with metaphor, metonymy is based on a transfer within a single conceptual domain. Staying within the boundaries of the same domain, metonymy involves transpositions between associated concepts and this commonly results in transfer between the part and the whole, a producer and the produced, an institution and its location and so on.

- Metonymy in which the part stands for the whole – a trope known as synecdoche – is found in expressions like 'hired hand' or 'a fresh pair of legs'. Alternatively, constructions where a location substitutes for the particular institution which it houses can be found in expressions like 'Buckingham Palace is thought to be furious' or 'The Pentagon refused to comment on the story'. Metonymies where the producer of something is associated with what is produced occur in expressions like 'Have you read the new Kate Atkinson?' or 'There's a good Spielberg on tomorrow night'.

- It is not always easy to spot the difference between metaphor and metonymy but a useful test to distinguish one trope from the other is to try to convert the expression into a simile. A simile makes an explicit connection between two concepts through the use of the IS LIKE formula. Applying the test serves therefore to draw attention to the conceptual space between a target and a source domain in metaphor, but the same test will collapse when applied to metonymy. For example, (1) converts easily into simile:

- (1) ANGER IS LIKE A HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER

- By contrast, the metonymy 'hired hand' cannot support the parallel simile 'A worker is like a hand', nor does 'a fresh pair of legs' convert to 'A substitute is like a pair of legs'.

Like metaphors, metonymies find their expression in everyday discourse practices.

• The ham sandwich is waiting for his check.

• The Times hasn't arrived at the press conference yet.

• We need a couple of strong bodies for our team.

METAPHOR OR METONYMY?

- His income fell last year

- There are a lot of good heads in the university.

- You'll never get the university to agree to that.

- She is easily crushed.

- I'm going to pieces.

- THE MIND IS A BRITTLE OBJECT.