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A Difference in Non-truthfulness between Metaphor and Metonymy[*]

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ABSTRACT

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For the non-truthfulness of metaphor, a delinking mechanism has previously been proposed. For that of metonymy, an implicit modifier-head construction has previously been advanced. Based on these two different mechanisms, this paper addresses a contrast that Warren (2003) observes. That is, a non-metaphoric reading and a metaphoric reading cannot be VP-conjoined sharing the same target subject. However, a non-metonymic reading and a metonymic reading can be VP-conjoined in a sentence with the same subject. We have explained this contrast with the fact that the delinking process for metaphors brings about a semantic contradiction when a non-metaphoric reading and a metaphoric reading are conjoined while the implicit head approach to metonymy does not ordinarily evoke a contradiction when a non-metonymic reading and a metonymic reading are conjoined even though there are some cases where a contradiction can indeed occur when the two readings are coordinated.

KEYWORDS

metaphor, metonymy, delinking, modifier-head construction, conjunction

1. Introduction

Warren (2003) observes a contrast in the following sentences. In (1a), the non-metonymic reading in the first conjunct and the metonymic reading in the second conjunct are conjoined and the entire sentence is grammatical. However, in (1b), when the non-metaphoric reading in the first conjunct and the metaphoric reading in the second conjunct are conjoined, the whole sentence is judged to be ungrammatical. Of course, we can point out the polysemous nature in the sentence in (1b) but I think that the polysemous nature is derived metaphorically.

(1) a. Caedmon is a poet and difficult to read.
    b. *The mouse is a favorite food of cats and a cursor controller.

Warren (2003) explains the contrast in the following way. For the sentence in (1a), the referent accessed in the first conjunct is retained in the second conjunct with an implicit addition which is evoked by the predicate in the second conjunct. Thus, the reference in the first conjunct and that in the second conjunct are the same. However, in (1b), she argues that the source cannot be assigned a contextual referent and thus cannot serve as an argument. I believe that this argument is based on the assumption that a contextual referent cannot function as an argument. This is why (1b) is unacceptable, according to Warren (2003).

Yet, her explanation based on the concept of referent is dubious since she deals with various types of referents which are not elegantly and theoretically distinguished for the examples. Also, the point that a contextual referent cannot function as an argument is not robustly supported empirically. Thus, this paper will try to provide an alternative account for the contrast in (1). The alternative account will be based on the fact that the non-truthfulness of metaphor and that for metonymy are not identical and the difference has been addressed by different mechanisms in the literature. Using the already proposed mechanisms, we will try to explain the contrast observed in (1).

To do so, this paper is organized as follows. First, in section 2, we will examine what metonymy and metaphor are and how they basically differ from each other based on Kövecses (2010). In section 3, we will begin with discussing another difference between metonymy and metaphor and how the literature has addressed them. Then, this section will go on explaining the contrast observed in (1) based on the difference between metonymy and metaphor that is discussed in section 3. Section 4 will first discuss other proposals related to the delinking process for metaphor and examine why the delinking process is better suited. Then, in the second part of section 4, we will discuss some potential counterexamples regarding the combination of the metonymic reading and the non-metonymic reading and then show how we can address them. Moreover, this sub-section will point out how previous works such as Warren (2003) and Schumacher (2019) can further be developed based on the discussion in this sub-section. Finally, section 5 will conclude this paper.

2. Metaphor and Metonymy

This section will discuss basic properties of metaphor and metonymy and spell out their fundamental differences, based on Kövecses (2010), even though they also share some common properties. First of all, the examples from (2) to (6) are illustrations of metaphors. The bald-faced ones are conceptual metaphors in the form of "A is B" and the examples listed in (a) and (b) are metaphoric expressions that are used on the basis of the conceptual metaphors. Metaphors are characteristically involved with two separate domains which are in a similarity relation to each other.

(2) AN ARGUMENT IS WAR
    a. Your claims are *indefensible*.
    b. He *shot down* all my arguments.

(3) LOVE IS A JOURNEY
    a. Our relationship is *a dead-end street*.
    b. We're just *spinning our wheels.*

(4) LIFE IS A JOURNEY
    a. He's *without direction* in life.
    b. She'll *go places* in life.

(5) THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS
    a. The theory needs more *support*.
    b. We need to *construct a strong* argument for that.

(6) IDEAS ARE FOOD
    a. I just can't *swallow* that claim.
    b. Let me *stew* over that for a while.

Kövecses (2010) also provides examples of metonymy, which are in the form of "A for B," as follows. Here, the domain A and the domain B reside within one domain under the contiguity relation.

(7) THE PRODUCER FOR THE PRODUCT
    a. I'm reading *Shakespeare.*
    b. She loves *Picasso.*
    c. Does he own any *Hemingway*?

(8) THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT

    a. America does not want another *Pearl Harbor.*

    b. Let's not let *El Salvador* become another *Vietnam.*

    c. *Watergate* changed our policies.

(9) THE PLACE FOR THE INSTITUTION

    a. *Washington* is negotiating with *Moscow.*

    b. The *White House* isn't saying anything.

    c. *Wall Street* is in a panic.

    d. *Hollywood* is putting out terrible movies.

(10) THE CONTROLLER FOR THE CONTROLLED

    a. *Nixon* bombed Hanoi.

    b. *Ozawa* gave a terrible concert last night.

(11) AN OBJECT USED FOR THE USER

    a. We need a better *glove* at third base.

    b. The *sax* has the flu today.

Kövecses (2010) points out that there are two major differences between metaphor and metonymy. The first difference concerns how domains work. For metaphor, there are two separate domains but for metonymy two realms are closely related to each other within one domain. Second, metaphor is on the basis of the similarity relation while metonymy is based on the contiguity relation. Kövecses (2010) notes further differences between metaphor and metonymy. For instance, for metaphor, systematic correspondences are observed between the source and the target. However, for metonymy, merely one mapping relation characterizes the correspondence between the vehicle and the target. Lastly, metaphors necessarily involve two concepts but metonymy can be evoked across diverse realms such as not only concepts but also referents, word forms, etc.

3. A New Account

Although Kövecses (2010) detects major differences between metaphor and metonymy as discussed in the previous section, this section will examine one more key difference between them. This different property has been addressed by different mechanisms in the literature. Then, based on the different mechanisms, we will explain why there is a contrast in the examples in (1).

3.1. Another Difference between Metaphor and Metonymy

This section will introduce another difference between metaphor and metonymy concerning their

non-truthfulness and what mechanisms can address the different kinds of non-truthfulness.

3.1.1. Delinking for Metaphor

Joh (2017) claims that metaphors are composed of delinking and revaluing processes. This claim is plausible but not yet verified. However, the fact that this mechanism can explain related data can serve as evidence that the mechanism can indeed work. Thus, this paper will start with the assumption that the metaphors in (12), in fact, have the structures in (13). The ordinary form of metaphor is "A IS B." Yet, its underlying form is "A IS NOT C BUT B." In the underlying structure, the ordinary value C of A is disassociated first. Then, the new value B is provided. This sequence of delinking and revaluing creates metaphors. Yet, the delinking process can be either explicit or implicit.

(12) a. My grandfather is a baby.
     b. Subtracting is plus.

(13) a. My grandfather is not an adult but a baby.
     b. Subtracting is not minus but plus.

Joh (2017) further claims that, without the delinking process, regardless of its implicitness or explicitness, metaphors cannot be recognized. For instance, the utterance in (14a) is not a metaphor even though it has the form "A is B." The reason is that the delinking process is not perceived in (14a) even implicitly. Thus, it is simply an ordinary linguistic use in that it only evokes a valuing process, rather than a revaluing process that is based on the prerequisite delinking process. On the other hand, the utterance in (14b) is a metaphor since we can assume an implicit delinking process for the utterance such as "not an adult." In (14b), the source domain *a baby* is a new value for the target domain *my grandfather* which is acquired through a revaluing process. The revaluing process is possible since the delinking process that negates the original value *an adult* has been preceded. In a word, the delinking process can basically make us distinguish true metaphors like (14b) from ordinary language in the mere form of "A IS B" like (14a).

(14) a. My grandfather is a man.
     b. My grandfather is a baby.

Joh (2017) claims that this sequence of delinking and revaluing processes are explicitly manifested in some advertisements that Kim (2013) discusses. The examples in (15a) and (16a) have the overt structures of "A IS NOT C BUT B." They are all used as metaphors and evoke enriched meanings described in (15b) and (16b), respectively.

(15) a. Buddingtons is not beer; but it's the cream of Manchester.
     b. The taste of Boddingtons beer is rich and full-bodied.

(16) a. Ivory is not soap; but it's purity itself.

b. The use of ivory makes us clean and free from contamination.

Some advertisements are stated as in (17a) and in this case we can reconstruct the metaphor as in (17b), as Kim (2013) argues. This paper views the sentence in (17a) is not a smile even though the expression *like* is used but rather a metaphorical linguistic expression since we can reconstruct the underlying metaphoric relation delineated in (17b), in which, the source and the target are, of course, not systematically related as metonymy does but are based on similarity or create similarity.

(17) a. No one grows ketchup like Heinz.

b. Heinz tomato ketchup is not an industrial product, but a natural and fresh tomato.

However, Kim (2013) claims that the constructions in advertisements above are the connections of irony and metaphor. Yet, Joh (2017) refutes this claim, pointing out the following problems in Kim's (2013) claim. First, irony usually does not employ the form "not" overtly. Negation for irony is only expressed implicitly to convey the speaker's subtle attitude like contempt or ridicule. However, the first part of the advertisements above does not deliver such attitudes in a subtle way. Related to this point, irony is widely known to be simply echoed, not announced, as far as the Relevance Theory is concerned. Yet, the first part of the advertisements is hard to be seen as echoed but is more likely to be explicitly stated or announced. Also, irony evokes the opposite meaning but the first part of the advertisements does not seem to generate the opposite meaning. Thus, Joh (2017) claims that the first clause of the advertisements illustrated above is not irony refuting Kim (2013) but the manifestation of the delinking process.

Joh (2017) also discusses the reason why such a sequence of delinking and revaluing processes is overtly expressed especially in advertisements. She claims that the main purpose of advertisements is to maximize the cognitive effects among consumers. To maximize the cognitive effects of metaphors, they tend to make the very underlying structure of metaphors explicit and clear.

Yet, Glucksberg and Keysar (1990) argue that metaphors are cases of multiple or cross classification. According to them, we do not need such a process as delinking since the original value and the new value can co-exist. However, Joh (2017) refutes this claim and insists that the previous categorization needs to be delinked when a new value is inserted. She finds the supporting evidence in Davidson (1978) who argues that metaphors are generally false statements. According to Davidson (1978), the falsity judgment of metaphors is what makes them a figurative language. Joh (2017) claims that the delinking process is responsible for the blatant falsity judgment of metaphors since it negates the true original value for the insertion of a new value.

Some might argue that the metaphor in (18a) is true on a subjective basis but, if we judge it on an objective basis, we can evoke the structure in (18b) where the original value *religious talks* is negated and the new value *sleeping pills* is provided. Thus, Joh (2017) claims that metaphors are false statements in nature and the delinking process explains the falsity nature of metaphors. To put it differently, the falsity nature of metaphors is the evidence for the delinking process of metaphors.[1]

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(18) a. Sermons are sleeping pills.

    b. Sermons are not religious talks but sleeping pills.

3.1.2. Implicit Head for Metonymy

Warren (2003) discusses two types of metonymy: propositional metonymy and referential metonymy. The examples in (19) and (20) are examples of propositional metonymy and those in (21) and (22) are illustrations of referential metonymy.

(19) A: How did you get to the airport?
    B: *I waved down a taxi*. [A taxi took me there.]

(20) It won't happen while I still *breathe*. [live]

(21) She married *money*. [rich person]

(22) Give me a *hand* [help] with this.

One difference between propositional metonymy and referential metonymy is that the former connects two propositions while the latter connects two entities. A more crucial difference between propositional metonymy and referential metonymy is that the former does not involve violation of truth conditions but the latter does. What we will concern in this paper is referential metonymy since the example we will explain is of this type. Yet, what is important about referential metonymy is the fact that Warren (2003) emphasizes: referential metonymy brings about "superficial" violations of truth conditions, different from metaphors.

In the section above, we explained the non-truthfulness of metaphors through the delinking device. Yet, the non-truthfulness of referential metonymy seems different from that of metaphor. For metaphor, the non-truthfulness could be described as "blatant" falsity. However, for referential metonymy, the non-truthfulness can merely be described as "superficial," as Warren (2003) emphasizes since, as Warren (2003) argues, not only the source but also the target are retained when it comes to metonymy. Thus, we need another mechanism for the non-truthfulness of referential metonymy and we can find it in Warren (2003) itself.

Warren (2003) argues that (referential) metonymy can be explained by the implicit modifier-head construction. By proposing this account, she highlights that the target in (referential) metonymy is merely implicit, as summarized in (23), for the metonymic examples in (24).

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[1] A reviewer gave me a very insightful comment on the fact that the new value *sleeping pills* can go with the original value *religious talks* in (18b). The reason I can think of is that it depends on the conventionality of the metaphor. If the metaphor is already conventionalized, we might not think that the sentence in (18b) is not true any more. Thus, the negating process might not be necessary since it can be pretty much common sensical that sermons are sleeping pills. However, to those who perceive the metaphor less conventional, the non-trufulness can still be felt stronger and can process the negating part. This issue should be further investigated.

(23) the implicit modifier-head construction for metonymy

Target		Source
implicit head	**link**	**explicit part of modifier**
that which is	in	the kettle
that which is	by	Caedmon
that which is part	of	the shoes

(24) a. The kettle is boiling.

    b. Caedmon is difficult to read.

    c. The shoes are neatly tied.

To be specific, for the metonymic expression in (24a), the construction is interpreted as in "that which is in the kettle is boiling," where the implicit head is to be translated into "the water." Yet, the head is present implicitly. For the example in (24b), the construction gets the interpretation "that which is by Caedmon is difficult to read." In this reading, the implicit head refers to "his poetry." In the metonymic sentence (24c), the implicit modifier-head construction that is evoked is as follows: "that which is part of the shoes are neatly tied." In this case, the head implicitly means "the laces." The reason why we cannot apply the delinking process to explain metonymy is that "the work of Caedmon" is hard to interpret when we negate Caedmon is a poet.

3.2. Account

Summarizing the previous section, we usually talk about the common non-truthfulness of metaphor and metonymy since they are indeed figurative languages. However, the characteristics of the non-truthfulness of metaphor and metonymy differ from each other. When it comes to metaphor, we deal with "blatant" falsity as Davidson (1978) argues. However, in cases of (referential) metonymy, as Warren (2003) argues, the non-truthrulness is merely "superficial." To cope with the difference of the non-truthfulness between metaphor and metonymy, we have introduced two different mechanisms in the literature. For metaphor, Joh's (2018) delinking process would work while for metonymy Warren's (2003) implicit head claim would work. Based on this discussion, we would like to explain the contrast mentioned in (1), repeated in the following.

(25) a. Caedmon is a poet and difficult to read.

    b. *The mouse is a favorite food of cats and a cursor controller.

The essence of the contrast at issue is that a non-metonymic and a metonymic reading can occur at the same time for the same subject in a sentence. However, a literal and a metaphoric reading occurring at the same time for the same subject is impossible. To provide an account for this contrast, let us first look at properties of conjunction.

In principle, conjunctions do not allow different syntactic categories to be conjoined as the following examples show. Thus, what is conjoined has to belong to the same syntactic categories such as VPs,

NPs, APs, PPs, etc.

(26) a. Kate questions the verdict and how it has been reached.
b. Kate likes apples and eating bananas.
c. Kate hates the city and destroying the city.

What we concern in this paper is VP conjunctions. Thus, let us look at an important property of VP conjunctions. VP conjunctions, in principle, allow readings of different types to be conjoined. The example in (27) shows us that VP conjunctions can allow different readings in each conjunct. In the first conjunct, we have the group reading while in the second conjunct we have the individual reading for the same subject, since the most prominent reading of (27) is that Bill and Kate made a cake together and ate it individually. As is widely discussed in the literature, the example (27) clearly shows us that the group reading and the individual reading can be VP-conjoined.

(27) Bill and Kate made a cake and ate it.

Extending the case above, we can also easily observe that VP conjunctions allow the following different readings in each conjunct. In (28), the first conjunct has the object reading for the referent *teacher* but the second conjunct has a person reading for the referent *teacher*. We can see that these two different readings can be conjoined for the same subject.

(28) A teacher is my father's job and a person I hate.

Thus, in fact, the metonymy case which does not evoke any awkwardness from the conjunction of the non-metonymic reading and the metonymic reading can be regarded as the ordinary case. Also, if we reconstruct the sentence in (25a) with Warren's (2003) proposal on the implicit modifier-head construction, the following sentence in (29) is the reading for (25a). There seem to be no problems in this reading since, for metonymy, target's value is not negated but the head is present merely implicitly. Thus, in (29), the first subject *Caedmon* and the second subject *that which is by Caedmon* are compatible with each other.

(29) Caedmon is a poet and that which is by Caedmon is difficult to read.

However, for metaphor, the delinking process applies. Then, the target's original value is negated as in the following sentence. This shows us that a contradiction occurs in the interpretation spelled out in (30). That is, the conjoining the non-metaphoric reading and the metaphoric reading results in a contradiction since the non-metaphoric reading keeps the subject's original value but the metaphoric reading negates the target's original value. Thus, the information *the mouse* in the first conjunct and the information *not a mouse* in the second conjunct are contradictory to each other, being conjoined by *and.*

(30) The mouse is a favorite food of cats and not a mouse but a cursor controller.

In sum, metonymy seems like non-truth conditional as a figurative language but when we consider metonymic interpretations reconstructed with their implicit head, we can see that they are merely superficially non-truth conditional since the head is merely implicitly present. However, when it comes to metaphor, the non-truthfulness is robust. Thus, the non-truthfulness of metaphor has to be dealt with through such a strong mechanism as delinking. Then, the delinking brings about a contradiction when the metaphoric reading is conjoined with a non-metaphoric reading since one negates and the other keeps the same value.

4. Discussion

In this section, we will discuss two issues. The first one is to point out how the current account is more advantageous over related previous studies. Then, we will go on to present some potential counter-examples discussed in the literature and show how we can deal with these examples under the current study, pointing out a possible limitation in Warren (2003), even though we heavily rely on the theory of Warren (2003) for our account. Furthermore, we will try to explain why more conventional (referential) metonymy is likely to be non-reference-shifting while less conventional (referential) metonymy tends to be reference-shifting, an observation previously made.

4.1. Advantage over previous studies

In the above, we have resorted to the delinking process for metaphors to explain the contrast at issue in this paper. Yet, there are related studies in the literature. In this section, we will introduce the related studies on so-called the feature addition/deletion thesis and examine how the delinking mechanism can be better off in explaining the data at issue in this paper.

Kittay (1987) nicely summarizes some studies that have tried to address the non-truthfulness of metaphor, under the term "Feature Addition/Deletion Thesis." In this section, we will introduce what they have claimed based on Kittay (1987) and show that this line of studies is hardly able to explain the contrast at issue in this paper. Thus, we lean toward the conclusion that Joh's (2018) delinking mechanism has a better explanatory power than the studies on the feature addition/deletion thesis.

There are various accounts centering around the feature addition/deletion thesis. The gist of the thesis is that a metaphorical understanding has to do with the addition/deletion or transfer of features between components of metaphors. What this thesis tries to explain via the addition/deletion or transfer of semantic features is that metaphors bring about semantic deviance, which amounts to non-truthfulness in our description above.

Basically, what they argue is that metaphors violate so-called selection restrictions. Thus, the metaphorical interpretation we can get from (31a) is calculated under the similar operation that we use for the sentence like (31b), which is in clear violation of selectional restrictions.

(31) a. The champagne chased away the blues.
   b. The blackboard chased away the yellow.

According to Kittay (1987), Mathews (1971) claims that the violation of selectional restrictions is not only the necessary but also the sufficient condition of being a metaphor given that every utterance has some meanings. It is claimed that the selectional restrictions guide us to de-emphasize some features when interpreting metaphorical expressions.

However, Weinreich (1966) argues that selectional restrictions are not the right system that leads us to the interpretation of metaphorical utterances. Instead, he claims that transfers of features are responsible for metaphorical interpretations. Yet, Kittay (1987) claims that Weinreich's feature-transfer mechanism has almost the same information as rules of selectional restrictions.

According to Kittay (1987), Levin (1977) suggests the most sophisticated version of the feature addition/deletion thesis since he claims that semantically deviant utterances such as (32) need as many as six semantic rules as below.

(32) The stone died.

Levin's (1977) first four construal rules described in (33) all involve adjoining features and lead us to the following interpretations: 'the natural physical object died' for (33a), 'the humanized stone died' for (33b), 'the stone ceased to exist' for (33c). For the rule in (33d), no clear interpretation is arrived at but such a rule can be applied to a sentence like "His ego died."

(33) a. If we adjoin features of the verb to the noun and disjoin these in the semantic representation of (32), we get the construal which will attempt to find something which is both [human] and [mineral], such as a natural physical object.
   b. If we adjoining features of the verb to the noun and conjoin these in the semantic representation of (32), we get a construal in which the transferred feature is fused with the host term. Thus we get a humanized, animalized or plantified stone, depending on whether from the term 'died' we choose to transfer the feature [human], [animal] or [plant].
   c. We adjoin features of the noun to the verb and disjoin these in the selection restriction of the verb. In the semantic representation of (32), the transferred feature, let us say [mineral], is disjunctively adjoined to such other disjuncts as [human] in the selection restriction on the subject of the verb 'die.'
   d. We adjoin features of the noun to the verb and conjoin these in the selection restriction of the verb. In the case of (32), we find it difficult to get a construal in which the transferred feature is fused with the host term.

On the other hand, the construal rules delineated in (34) all involve displacing features and they bring about the following interpretations: 'An unfeeling person died' for (34a), and 'the stone disintegrated' for (34b).

(34) a. We displace features of the verb to the noun. If we take the reading of 'stone' as follows:
stone: [[[object][physical]][natural][mineral][concreted]]]
We can displace [mineral] with one of the disjunctive selection restriction on 'died,'
<human>, to get stone: [[[object][physical]][natural][human][concreted]]]

b. We displace features of the noun to the verb. If we take the reading of 'die' to be die:
[[process] [[result][[cease to be][living]]]X]
<[human] v. [animal] v. [plant]>]
Then, replacing the selection restriction disjuncts with [mineral], we get die: [[process]
[[result][[cease to be][living]]]X] <Mineral>]

In the above, we have briefly introduced studies on the feature addition/deletion thesis that are previously proposed to deal with semantic deviance or non-truthfulness of metaphor. As is obvious, the feature addition/deletion thesis only adds/deletes or transfers features which are smaller components of semantic values. However, in the delinking and revaluing mechanisms, we have seen that the whole value is negated or reinserted. Then, which seems to be the right approach?

We believe that the current study is in favor of the delinking mechanism since the feature addition/deletion thesis is not sufficient to account for the contrast at issue in this paper. That is, we have explained the grammatical anomaly of the following sentence based on the contradiction between the information in each conjunct.

(35) *The mouse is a favorite food of cats and a cursor controller.

The contradiction is strongly felt around when the entire value is negated. Yet, merely the addition/deletion or transfer of features is hard to bring about enough contradictory strength. For instance, the semantic deviance of the second conjunct is brought about by deleting the [animate] feature of the mouse but by adding the [inanimate] feature. However, this kind of operation would hard to evoke a contradiction with the first conjunct which still has the animate reading since the inanimate reading and the animate reading of the same noun can be conjoined as the example (28) above has shown, which is repeated in the below. In the following example, the teacher has the inanimate reading in the first conjunct but has the animate reading in the second conjunct but they do not give rise to a contradiction.

(36) A teacher is my father's job and a person I hate.

Furthermore, between animacy and inanimacy, such rules as personification and objectification work so that they do not necessarily result in a contradiction even when they are conjoined. From this perspective, we can also point out the inadequacy of the feature addition/deletion thesis in explaining the data at issue in this paper. Thus, we believe that the delinking proposal can better explain the sentence in (35) than the feature addition/deletion thesis which only deletes or transfers features.

4.2. Dealing with potential counterexamples

This section will briefly discuss plausible counter-examples detected in the literature. Schumacher (2019) points out a difference between polysemy and metonymy with the following examples. Usually, polysemy licenses the co-ordination of the two different but related senses being combined in one utterance as in (37a). However, for metonymy, such cases result in awkward sentences as in (37b). According to Schumacher (2019), this contrast is attributed to the fact that metonymy renders its basic meaning inaccessible when it derives another interpretation but polysemy simply allows access to the representation that is underspecified so that both the basic meaning and the derived meaning are equally accessible.

(37) a. The newspaper was in shreds and full of typographical errors.
     b. #Tim fed and carved the chicken.

Schumacher (2019) further presents the following examples where we can clearly see that the metonymic reading and the non-metonymic reading cannot be coordinated, unlike the data we have dealt with in the above. These examples can serve as potential counter-examples to our study.

(38) a. The hamsandwich is sitting at Table 20 (#and has been burnt.)
     b. The scalpel was sued for malpractice (#and was made of high carbon steel.)

Yet, Schumacher (2019) further adds discussion on two metonymic profiles. That is, there are reference-shifting cases and there are non-reference-shifting cases. In the former, the original meaning is not available any more while in the latter, both the basic sense and the derived sense are equally accessible in the lexical representation. Thus, in the former, coordination is blocked between the original meaning and the derived meaning. However, in the latter, coordination is possible since two senses are both available. Then, the contrast between (39) and (40) can be viewed based on the difference between non-reference-shifting and reference-shifting.

(39) Caedmon is a poet and difficult to read.

(40) a. #Tim fed and carved the chicken.
     b. The hamsandwich is sitting at Table 20 (#and has been burnt.)
     c. The scalpel was sued for malpractice (#and was made of high carbon steel.)

Schumacher (2019) also claims that conventionality is a factor that makes such a difference above since he claims that the examples in (40b) and (40c) are unlicensed for coordination since they are less conventional. Then, we might be able to deal with the contrast between (39) and (40) by saying that the example in (39) is a more conventional case of metonymy while the examples in (40) reveal less conventionality.

Conventionality is a matter of degree and a relative term so that this account can encounter the problem of non-refutability until it can further be verified by making judgments on the conventionality with objective criteria and methods. Yet, this line of explanation might be what Schumacher (2019) would provide if she encountered the example like (39). Thus, the account for the potential counter-examples discussed in this section is not entirely novel since it is along the line of reasoning in Schumacher (2019).

However, this discussion leads us to make an important point regarding Warren (2003) who argues for the implicit modifier-head construction which is supposed to explain all the cases of referential metonymy. As introduced above, basically, she makes a distinction between propositional metonymy and referential metonymy. As pointed out before, she claims that the former does not give rise to violation of truth while the latter does so that she insists that the implicit modifier-head construction account discussed above applies only to referential metonymy, not to propositional metonymy.

This distinction between propositional metonymy and referential metonymy might not be a problem. However, we might need to make further fine-grained distinctions for referential metonymy probably in terms of its conventionality. That is, we need to somehow address the fact that there are two types of referential metonymy that are identified from the behaviors with coordination at least. Thus, to reflect the empirically attested two types of referential metonymy, we need to modify Warren (2003) and we believe we can do so in terms of the views of Schumacher (2019). To be more specific, we might need to further make the distinction between some metonymic expressions where the SOURCE, the explicit part of modifier, is accessible and other metonymic expressions where the SOURCE is no longer accessible after the implicit head is constructed. This can be my future research question to delve in more deeply.

Furthermore, to develop Schumacher (2019), it might be desirable to explain why more conventional (referential) metonymy is non-reference-shifting so that the original meaning is available while less conventional (referential) metonymy is reference-shifting so that the original meaning is no longer available since this issue is left unexplained in Schumacher (2019). At a first glance, this contrast is somewhat counter-intuitive since words tend to lose their original meaning when some derived senses become conventional while some derived senses which are non-conventional tend to keep their relation with the original meaning alive. This issue is another related question we need to tackle in the future.

Yet, in the future, we can approach this question from the following perspective: to be more conventional, the metonymy needs to have a more experientially-based and more deeply rooted relation with its original meaning. This might be the reason why more conventional metonymy can more easily access their original meaning. However, some metonymy being less conventional means that the metonymy has a less tight and less cognitively cohesive relation with its original meaning so that less conventional metonymy has a harder time accessing their original meaning.

However, to make this claim, we need to first make sure that the metonymic relation in (41), THE PRODUCER FOR THE PRODUCT, is somehow more conventional while the metonymic relations in (42) such as AN OBJECT(ANIMAL) FOR THE PRODUCT, AN OBJECT(FOOD) FOR THE USER(ORDERER), and AN OBJECT(TOOL) FOR THE USER are less conventional.

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(41) Caedmon is a poet and difficult to read.
     [THE PRODUCER FOR THE PRODUCT]

(42) a. #Tim fed and carved the chicken.
        [AN OBJECT(ANIMAL) FOR THE PRODUCT]
     b. The hamsandwich is sitting at Table 20 (#and has been burnt.)
        [AN OBJECT(FOOD) FOR THE USER(ORDERER)]
     c. The scalpel was sued for malpractice (#and was made of high carbon steel.)
        [AN OBJECT(TOOL) FOR THE USER]

One way to see the difference between (41) and (42) is that THE PRODUCER cannot exist independent of THE PRODUCT in the former. However, AN OBJECT can exist independent of its user and its product. Possibly, this can be one of the reasons why the metonymic relation in (41) is felt to be more conventional on the basis of the tight and experientially more cohesive relation between the vehicle and the target while the metonymic relations in (42) are perceived to be less conventional since the dependency between the target and the vehicle is less strong. Ordinarily, conventionality of metonymy is not determined by the degree of correspondences between the vehicle and the target. However, there is a higher chance of metonymy becoming conventional when the vehicle and the target cognitively fit tight with each other.

Somehow, we could observe some semantic differences between (41) and (42) and, interestingly, the semantic differences are observed to be manifested as syntactic differences. Thus, this can be a good research topic to pursue in the future.

5. Conclusion

This paper has tried to explain a contrast Warren (2003) observes between metaphor and metonymy. When it comes to metaphor, a non-metaphoric reading and a metaphoric reading cannot be conjoined in a sentence with the same target subject. However, in the case of metonymy, a non-metonymic reading and a metonymic reading can appear in VP conjunctions that share the same subject. We have explained this contrast based on the difference in the perception and the operation of the non-truthfulness. For metaphors, the non-truthfulness involves blatant falsity while for metonymy the non-truthfulness is merely superficial. Thus, in the literature, two different mechanisms have been proposed to address the different types of non-truthfulness. Depending on the two different mechanisms, we have claimed that the conjunction of a non-metaphoric reading and a metaphoric reading results in a semantic contradiction while that of a non-metonymic reading and a metonymic reading does not. Making this claim, we have also examined the advantage of Joh's (2017) delinking device in comparison to the studies on the so-called feature addition/deletion thesis. Then, we have tried to address potential counter-examples and discuss a direction for future research on how to develop Warren (2003) and Shumacher (2019) a bit further.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Level: All