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The Metaphor–Metonymy Relationship: Correlation Metaphors Are Based on Metonymy

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Do metonymies play any role in the emergence of metaphors? There is a debate between scholars who suggest that many metaphors are based on, or derive from, metonymies, versus those who do not see such connection between the two. “Resemblance metaphors” do not seem to have anything to do with metonymy. However, in the case of “correlation metaphors” (see, e.g., Grady, 1997a, 1997b, 1999; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999), several researchers argue that metaphors arise from, and are not independent of, metonymies. My specific proposal in the article is that correlation-based metaphors emerge from frame-like mental representations through a metonymic stage. I suggest this happens when one of the elements of a frame-like mental structure is generalized (schematized) to a concept that lies outside the initial frame in a different part of the conceptual system. The generalization process leads to sufficient conceptual distance between the initial and the new frame on which metaphors can be based.

The general issue I would like to explore in this article is what the relationship is between metaphor and metonymy in our conceptual system. This issue is perhaps as old as the study of metaphor and metonymy, but I do not wish to approach it from a historical perspective. The more specific question that I address here is whether metonymies play any role in the emergence of metaphors. My starting point will be the debate taking place in especially cognitive linguistic circles between scholars who suggest that many metaphors are based on, or derive from, metonymies, as opposed to those who do not see such connection between the two.

The issue is relatively uncontroversial in the case of what are called “resemblance metaphors,” which do not seem to have anything to do with metonymy—unless we take the partial structuring of a target domain by a source domain metonymic in character, where the inevitably partial structure of the source, B, is used to conceptualize an equally inevitable part of the target, A, resulting in the metonymies “A PART OF B FOR THE WHOLE OF B and A PART OF A FOR THE WHOLE OF A,” given the general metaphor format *A IS B* (see, especially, Barcelona, 2000). However, in the case of another kind of metaphor, called “correlation metaphors” in the cognitive linguistic literature (see, e.g., Grady, 1997a, 1997b, 1999; Kövecses, 2002, 2010a; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999), metonymy appears to be more clearly and importantly connected with metaphor, as argued by several researchers, such as Lakoff and Kövecses (1987), Barcelona

(2000), Brdar and Brdar Szabó (2007), Radden (2002), Kövecses and Radden (1998), Radden and Kövecses (1999), Kövecses (2002, 2010), Taylor (1989), and others (e.g., contributors to Dirven & Pörings, 2002). In contrast, several recent influential researchers within the conceptual metaphor paradigm believe that correlation metaphors (best known as “primary metaphors”) come into existence independently of, or without any recourse to, metonymy (most notably, Grady, 1997a, 1997b; Grady & Johnson, 2002; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

As will be clear from the article, I align myself with the former group and suggest that many metaphors (of the correlational kind) derive from metonymies, that is, they have a metonymic basis. What distinguishes my position from the view of the other proponents in the group that favors a metonymy-based emergence for many metaphors is that I attempt to establish the relationship between metaphor and metonymy by relying on several particular characteristics of the conceptual system, as we know it today.

I take the conceptual system to be a structured organization of concepts and a set of cognitive operations that are used to make sense of the world. In the article, I make especial use of certain aspects and certain cognitive operations of the system. In particular, I assume that the conceptual system is hierarchically organized (see, e.g., Rosch, 1978), consists of frame-based concepts (see, e.g., Barsalou, 1999; Fillmore, 1982; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 1987), is dynamic in its functioning (see, e.g., Barsalou, 1999; Gibbs, 2003; Gibbs & Cameron, 2008; Langacker, 1987), and is embodied in nature (see, e.g., Gibbs, 2006; Johnson, 1987; Lakoff, 1987). In addition to focusing on the cognitive operations of metaphoric (see, e.g., Gibbs, 1994; Kövecses, 2002, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999) and metonymic conceptualization (see, e.g., Benczes, Barcelona, & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2012), I will also rely on two further cognitive operations in this article: (1) generalization (or schematization), and (2) specialization (or elaboration), as these have come to be used in cognitive linguistics (see, especially, Langacker, 1987, 2008).

A BRIEF SURVEY OF RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE CONCEPTUAL SYSTEM

There are two kinds of structure that characterize the conceptual system. Conceptual systems are organized “vertically,” which, essentially, provides for a thematic structure in the system (see, e.g., Rosch, 1978) and also “horizontally,” which, essentially, defines individual concepts and consists of smaller domains, or frames, or idealized cognitive models (see, e.g., Barsalou, 1999; Fillmore, 1982; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 1987).

Superordinate-level concepts define large thematic groups in the system (e.g., *VEHICLE*, *FURNITURE*, *EMOTION*). The concepts in such groups belong to particular hierarchies because they share features with a higher-level conceptual category. Thus, people set up the thematic groups on the basis of perceiving similarities between levels. For example, *CAR* would be assigned to the conceptual category of *VEHICLE* on the basis of sharing with other prototypical vehicles such features as “transportation” and “motion” and *JOY* would be regarded as belonging to the higher-level conceptual category of *EMOTION* on the basis of sharing with other prototypical emotions such features as “a cause producing certain facial expressions” and/or “a generalized arousal.”

We can think of these thematic groups as hierarchical taxonomies. Such taxonomies probably exist both for entities and relations—the basic conceptual units in Langacker’s (1987) cognitive grammar. Thus, verbs of *MOTION* at the highest level would include *WALK*, *RUN*, *LEAVE*,

SWIM, *SKI*, *DRIVE*, and many others at the basic level, as well as many additional ones at the subordinate level.

Clearly, such thematic groups are numerous in the conceptual system, and they provide a wide range of potential themes, or topics, in the conceptual universe of conceptualizers (speakers). However, it is also clear that the “entity system” is closely connected with the “relation system.” After all, users of conceptual systems want to conceptualize such situations as, say, the motion (relation system) of vehicles (entity system). This means that the system must allow for an organization of concepts other than the thematic groups in the form of hierarchical taxonomies.

In addition to their vertical, or hierarchical, organization, concepts are organized “horizontally” into frames (e.g., Barsalou, 1999; Fillmore, 1982), or domains, or idealized cognitive models (Lakoff, 1987). The horizontal organization of concepts in the form of frames, or domains, may crosscut several “vertical hierarchies,” or thematic groups of the conceptual system. The most explicit proposal to this effect in cognitive linguistics was made by Langacker (1987, 2008). Langacker suggests that a concept represented by a frame evokes several additional frames, or, as Langacker prefers to call them “domains.” Such domains constitute the “domain matrix” of a concept.

To see the “horizontal” organization of concepts, as well as some additional characteristics of the conceptual system, which, as I will argue below, are relevant to the discussion of the “metaphor–metonymy relationship” issue, let us take the concept of *EMOTION* (Kövecses, 2000). The schematic frame for *EMOTION* can be given as follows:

Cause → Emotion (Person) → Attempt at Control over Emotion (Person) → Action (Person)

This is a language-based folk theory of emotion (i.e., not an expert theory). In it, a situation is conceptualized as a forceful entity that leads to the emotion and the emotion itself is conceptualized as another forceful entity that produces some kind of action or set of actions. (On force dynamics in general, see Talmy, 1988.) In other words, the conceptualization of emotions relies on one of our most fundamental image schemas: the *FORCE* schema, in which two forceful entities are in interaction. The schema applies twice in the case of emotion: a cause (one forceful entity) affecting a person (another forceful entity) as a result of which emotion comes about, on the one hand, and emotion (one forceful entity) affecting the same person (another forceful entity) who tries to control it as a result of which actions are produced, on the other. Thus, the most fundamental component of our understanding of emotion is this force-dynamic pattern that derives from our early preconceptual experience and that is constantly reinforced in our everyday living. This lends the concept an *embodied* character, which is a general feature of concepts in the view I am working with.

But the concept of *EMOTION* so described evokes a large number of additional concepts in the conceptual system. This is what Langacker (1987) would call a “domain matrix.” Because emotions often arise in social situations, they are associated with the notions of *SOCIAL RELATIONS*, *SOCIAL NORMS* and that of *SOCIETY* itself. Because emotions are commonly displayed through bodily behavior, the concept of *EMOTION* is also associated with the *HUMAN BODY* and *ITS FUNCTIONING*. Because emotions are commonly based on moral ideas, the concept also evokes notions of *RIGHT* or *WRONG*, *APPROPRIATENESS OF RESPONSE* and the *APPROPRIATE MEASURE OF FEELING*, and *MUTUALITY* or a lack of it. Because emotions can be pretended, it can evoke the concepts of *TRUTH*, *SINCERITY* (of feeling), and *GENUINENESS*. Some of these are more easily and commonly evoked, or activated, than others when people conceptualize

and discuss their emotional experiences. For example, the body, including bodily responses, and the appropriateness of responses seem to be more closely tied with the concept of *EMOTION* than, say, issues of truth and sincerity in emotion. It thus appears that concepts in the domain matrix of emotion can be more or less central.

This kind of flexibility, as seen in connection with using emotion concepts, lends our conceptual system a *dynamic* character. Mental representations of concepts are not fixed and stable, but vary according to context, which is another general feature of the conceptual system.

INTERACTION OF VERTICAL HIERARCHIES AND FUNCTIONAL DOMAINS

There are many cases where it is difficult to distinguish metaphor from metonymy, given “standard” definitions of metaphor and metonymy (see, e.g., [Goossens, 1990](#)). A common definition of metaphor in conceptual metaphor theory is that in metaphor we conceptualize one domain in terms of another ([Lakoff & Johnson, 1980](#)). In metonymy, an element in a domain, or frame, provides mental access to another element within the same domain, or frame ([Kövecses & Radden, 1998](#); [Radden & Kövecses, 1999](#)). The cases where metaphor and metonymy are difficult to distinguish are those where it is not clear whether we deal with one domain, or frame, or two (see also [Croft, 1993](#)). My suggestion is that in order to be able to resolve the dilemma, we have to take into account the larger structure of the conceptual system; namely, the structure consisting of both thematic hierarchies and frames, as well as the cognitive operations of generalization (schematization) and specialization (elaboration).

A Frame That Becomes the Metaphoric Target Domain Involves an Element That Becomes the Metaphoric Source Domain

This element is generalized to a concept outside the original frame. For an initial illustration of the difficulty concerning whether particular expressions are metaphoric or metonymic, consider as an example some emotion-related expressions:

He is in low spirits. (sadness)

She is feeling up. (happiness)

He is a hothead. (anger)

Are these metaphoric or metonymic expressions? We could argue both that they are metonymic and metaphoric. To be physically down is a part of our folk theory of sadness, to be upward-oriented is a part of our conception of happiness, and an increase in body heat is an important ingredient of our everyday idea of anger. And, of course, our folk theories of sadness, happiness, and anger constitute a single coherent domain, or frame, mentally representing the concepts, in which we have the elements of being physically downward-oriented, upward-oriented, or characterized by a higher than normal body temperature, respectively, for sadness, happiness, and anger. In other words, in all these cases we have a single domain, or frame, for the concepts of *SADNESS*, *HAPPINESS*, and *ANGER*, where an element of the frame is used for the whole frame; that is, we have to do with metonymies, given our definition above.

But we know that, for example, in the 1999 Lakoff and Johnson view as presented in their *Philosophy in the Flesh*, these are some of the prime examples of conceptual metaphors. Following Lakoff and Johnson, we would not hesitate to assign them to the conceptual metaphors “*SAD IS DOWN*,” “*HAPPY IS UP*,” and “*ANGER IS HEAT*.” So what is the appropriate way of thinking about such cases? Should we claim that the expressions are based on the conceptual metonymies *THE DOWNWARD ORIENTATION OF THE BODY FOR SADNESS*, *THE UPWARD ORIENTATION OF THE BODY FOR HAPPINESS*, and *AN INCREASE IN BODY TEMPERATURE FOR ANGER*? Or should we suggest, instead, that they are based on the conceptual metaphors “*SAD IS DOWN*,” “*HAPPY IS UP*,” and “*ANGER IS HEAT*”?

Let me offer the following solution to the dilemma: We have certain behavioral responses associated with these emotions. For example, sadness includes drooping body posture, mouth turned down, etc. These are generalized into the concept of “downward bodily orientation.” Given the general *EFFECT FOR CAUSE* metonymy (on schematic metonymies, see Ruiz de Mendoza & Mairal, 2007) and given that behavioral responses function as metonymies in emotion concepts (Kövecses, 1986, 1990, 2000, 2008; Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987), we get the specific metonymy *DOWNWARD BODILY ORIENTATION FOR SADNESS*. All of this happens inside the *SADNESS* frame, since *DOWNWARD BODILY ORIENTATION* is one of the behavioral responses associated with sadness.

But downward bodily orientation can also lead to metaphoric conceptualization in two, possibly successive, ways. The first is that “downward bodily orientation” can be generalized to the concept of *DOWN(WARD)*. This (i.e., *DOWN*) is a spatial concept that, in virtue of the process of generalization (or schematization) from behavioral responses characterized by a downward spatial orientation in sadness, is divorced and distinct from the actual behavioral responses associated with sadness inside the *SADNESS* frame. The generalized, or schematized, concept of *DOWN(WARD)* is in the *SPACE* thematic hierarchy, and not in the *EMOTION* one, where the more specific responses characterized by a downward orientation can be found. And since it is divorced and distinct from them (i.e., is outside the *SADNESS* frame), it can now be seen as a (source domain of a) metaphor for sadness: hence the conceptual metaphor “*SAD IS DOWN*.” *SADNESS* is in the *EMOTION*-dominated part (target) of the hierarchy, whereas *DOWN(WARD)* is in the (more concrete) *SPACE*-dominated part (source).

The conceptual metaphor “*SAD IS DOWN*” resulting from the generalization, or schematization, of various behavioral responses motivates, or, to use different cognitive linguistic terminology, licenses, or sanctions, a number of metaphorical linguistic expressions, such as “to feel down,” “to be in low spirits,” and the like. But, possibly based on this generalization, we can develop further metaphorical conceptualizations in the following way: The notion of *DOWN* can be elaborated by a large number of more specific instances of space that have nothing to do with sadness as conceived in the *SADNESS* frame, including places with a downward orientation, such as pits (resulting in “be in the *pits*”), dumps (resulting in “be down in the *dumps*”), and the like.

Thus, given the example above, we can suggest that metaphor appears to be based on and derive from metonymy (as suggested by Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987, for anger and by other authors; e.g., Barcelona, 2000; Radden, 2002). The details of this development in many cases, such as the *SAD IS DOWN* metaphor, involve the process of generalization, or schematization, from specific bodily responses characterized by a downward orientation (leading to a more general spatial concept, *DOWN*, in the case of *SADNESS*) and (then) the process of specialization, or elaboration (leading to elaborations of the same schematic spatial concept). Kövecses and Radden (1998)

make a similar argument for the source domain of *HEAT* in relation to anger in the conceptual metaphor “*ANGER IS HEAT*” (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987).

Consider now another example—the relationship that obtains between closeness and intimacy. This is usually conceptualized, and viewed, as the metaphor “*INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS*.” But, similar to the previous cases, we can also conceptualize the relationship between the two concepts as metonymy. Since children and adults in general who are in an intimate relationship with each other tend to be physically close (and, as a result, be able to touch each other, feel the body temperature of the other, be able to smell the other, etc.), we can think of it as a metonymy: *CLOSENESS FOR INTIMACY*. However, the physical closeness that characterizes intimacy is specifically between two people—with the several specific consequences just mentioned. Thus the less generic version of the metonymy is *PHYSICAL CLOSENESS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE FOR INTIMACY*. Similar to the generalization process we have seen for sadness above, the *PHYSICAL CLOSENESS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE* is then generalized, or schematized, to the concept of *CLOSENESS*. The words “close,” “distant,” “remote,” and others, describe closeness (or a lack of it) between any two physical objects, not just people. Since *PHYSICAL CLOSENESS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE* is a conceptual element of a single coherent functional domain, the *INTIMACY* frame, we can think of the relationship between this element and intimacy as a metonymic one.

At the same time, the more general concept of *CLOSENESS* is part of a taxonomic, or thematic, hierarchy – the “vertical” domain of *SPACE*. When this more general concept is used in the mapping, we get the metaphor “*INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS*.” In addition, the generalized, or schematized, concept of *CLOSENESS* can undergo specialization (elaboration). When this happens, we get more specific linguistic expressions to talk about intimacy (or a lack of it), including “bond,” “tie,” “tight as a glove,” and “remote.” It is clear that “bond” and “tie” represent instances of closeness, in that they are manifestations of two objects being close. “Remote” is special because it primarily obtains between physical places—not physical objects. In other words, the relationship between *CLOSENESS* and *INTIMACY* can be analyzed in the same way as that between *DOWN* and *SADNESS*.

This analysis leads to the conclusion that, in at least some cases, metaphors derive from metonymies through the application of the cognitive processes of generalization (schematization) and specialization (elaboration). The way this can happen is that there is a particular frame with a specific element inside the frame, and the element can be used to provide access to the whole frame, i.e., it can be used metonymically. This is the metonymic stage of the process. Further, the element inside the frame involves or is characterized by a particular frame-specific concept, which is, then, generalized, or schematized, into a concept that exists outside the frame (often in a different taxonomic hierarchy). When this happens, we have to do with metaphor, i.e., where the initial frame, or domain, is conceptualized in terms of another, conceptually distant frame, or domain (where conceptual “distance” derives from being in a different taxonomic hierarchy).

It could be asked how general this account is. Can it be that it only applies to emotion metaphors and metonymies? To see this, let us now take another metaphor that comes from outside the emotion domain. Consider now “*CONTROL IS SEEING*” (see Sweetser, 1990), as exemplified by expressions like “see to something” (“I’ll see to it . . .”), “keep an eye on something” (“I’ll keep an eye on it for you.”). It can be suggested that we have a frame (or scene) in which visual monitoring is one of the things we do when we guard or otherwise keep control over an entity. In the initial frame, there is a correlation between visual monitoring and guarding.

Since the correlation occurs within the same frame (or scene), we can use one element of the frame (visual monitoring) to have access to the whole frame (guarding) – a situation that yields the metonymy *VISUAL MONITORING FOR GUARDING* (or other kinds of *CONTROL*).

Visual monitoring is a kind of seeing, just as guarding and other forms of keeping control are kinds of control. Given the initial frame in which they are correlated, when visual monitoring is generalized (schematized) as *SEEING* and when various forms of control, such as guarding, are generalized (schematized) as the notion of *CONTROL* in very different vertical hierarchies of the conceptual system (control vs. vision), we conceptualize *CONTROL* through *SEEING*. We can think of this relationship as a metaphor, rather than metonymy, because *SEEING* and *CONTROL* are in distant parts of the conceptual system (perception vs. social relation, or the like). But, in all probability, they are brought together in the metaphor in the first place because their more specific versions (visual monitoring and guarding) are both parts of the same (initial) frame, or functional domain (or scene). Without this co-occurrence in the same frame (yielding a metonymy), we would probably not have thought of conceptualizing the control domain as seeing, yielding a metaphor.

Given this analysis, the following general picture seems to emerge: One of the events or states within a single initial frame (the original frame that becomes the metaphorical target domain, such as *INTIMACY* or *GUARDING/CONTROL*) gives rise to a distinct frame that becomes the metaphorical source. In the examples we have seen so far, there is a correlation between two events or states within the same frame, or scene (e.g., physical closeness between two people and being in an intimate relationship within the *INTIMACY* frame or visual monitoring and guarding within the *GUARDING* frame), such that one of the events or states (e.g., being in an intimate relationship or guarding someone or something) is accompanied by the other event or state (e.g., being physically close to another person and visually monitoring someone or something) that is generalized, or schematized (e.g., as closeness and seeing). In other words, in such cases the original frame that becomes the metaphorical *target gives rise to the source* in the metaphor.

A Frame That Becomes the Metaphorical Source Involves an Element That Becomes the Metaphoric Target

This element is generalized to a concept outside the original frame. However, in another set of well-known metaphors, we find the opposite process: The original frame that becomes the metaphorical *source gives rise to the metaphorical target*. There is a correlation between two events or states within the same frame, or scene, such that one of the events or states gives rise to the event or state that becomes the target domain. In such cases, one of the events or states in the original frame, or scene, that becomes the *source domain* of the metaphor *gives rise to the target*. One such metaphor is “*KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING*.”

When we see something, it enters our awareness, and we can examine it, identify its size, weight, color, etc., we can describe it; thus, we can find out about it, we can know it. Seeing something physical commonly makes knowledge about things possible and knowing something commonly requires seeing things. The relationship between seeing something physical and knowing it can be thought of as a correlation between two experiences (seeing and knowing) within the same frame-like structure, and we can think of one event (seeing) as enabling the other (knowing). When seeing something physical and knowing the thing are co-present in the same

frame-like mental structure, we can regard their relationship as a metonymic one and use one for the other, where the metonymy would be *SEEING SOMETHING PHYSICAL FOR KNOWING THE THING*.

However, not all forms of knowledge involve physical things that can be known by seeing. Our knowledge regarding nonphysical things, such as ideas, theories, facts, feelings, memories, are of an entirely different sort. We do not know and understand them because we physically see them, but we can conceptualize how we know or understand nonphysical things on the basis of what happens when we see something physical and know it. This requires that we generalize the concept of knowledge as based on physical things to a concept of knowledge that is independent of our perceptual experience. Knowledge thus becomes a concept (representable by means of a frame-like mental structure) that exists independently of our perception-based experiences (such as seeing). This highly schematic concept can become the target domain, and we can conceptualize knowing something nonphysical as seeing something physical; hence the metaphor “*KNOWING IS SEEING*.” (A similar argument, following and reassessing Traugott and Dasher, 2002, for the development of this metaphor can be found in Sullivan, in press.)

Just as in the previous cases, the question arises whether the course of development outlined above for the “*KNOWING IS SEEING*” metaphor is a unique feature of this metaphor or it applies to other metaphors as well. As a further example, let us take the “*ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS ARRIVING AT A DESTINATION*” metaphor (better known as “*PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS*”). We can suggest that here as well we have a frame-like mental structure, in which there are two correlated events: arriving at a destination and achieving a purpose. In those cases where our only goal is to get to a destination, arriving at the destination implies achieving our goal. Thus there is a fundamental correlation between destination and purpose that characterizes the “going to a destination” frame. But in other cases, we want to reach a destination because we have additional purposes to achieve at those destinations. These two types of situation indicate that, often, reaching a destination is necessary to achieve our goals (either getting to the destination or getting to the destination to do something else there). Thus, the relationship between the two events can be taken to be based on a conceptual metonymy, where an element of the frame can be used for the other element, yielding the metonymy *ARRIVING AT A DESTINATION FOR ACHIEVING A GOAL*.

This kind of direct goal achievement can be extended to cover still other cases, where we have goals that have nothing to do with going a destination. There exists an extended and general meaning of the concept of purpose that is entirely independent of going to a destination. We may have goals that have nothing to do with going to destinations. Thus, the purpose is outside the “going to a physical destination” frame; it is distinct from it and is in a distant taxonomic hierarchy. This is a highly generic and schematic idea of purpose—the kind of purpose that can be conceptualized metaphorically by means of the “going to a physical destination” frame, or scene. This way, the “physical destination kind of purpose” leads to a highly schematic concept that becomes the target domain of the “*ACHIEVING A/ANY KIND OF PURPOSE IS ARRIVING AT A DESTINATION*” metaphor (or “*PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS*” for short).

In other words, in the kinds of cases we have seen in the section, given a frame, an event or state (e.g., seeing) that becomes the source domain of a metaphor gives rise to an event or state (e.g., knowing) that becomes the target. This is the opposite of the previous cases discussed in 3.1, where, given a frame, an event or state that becomes the target domain gives rise to an event or state that becomes the metaphoric source. However, in both cases, given two events or states

in an initial frame, one event or state stands metonymically for the other event or state within the same frame, and, then, one of the events or states is generalized (schematized) in such a way that it becomes independent of the original frame. When the latter happens, we find the two initially co-occurring events or states within the same frame emerging in two distinct and conceptually distant frames in different parts of the conceptual system. We can now think of such cases as metaphoric connections between the frames.

DISCUSSION

The idea that an event or state can stand metonymically for another event or state within the same frame, or frame-like mental structure, and that one of the events or states can be generalized, or schematized, to a concept that exists independently of the original frame (thus leading to a metaphor) is compatible with several approaches that provide accounts of how metaphors and metaphorical meanings emerge.

One such approach is Grady and Johnson's (2002) work, where they note that some metaphorical usages are associated with scenes where the literal and metaphorical meanings of words (like the visual and cognitive senses of "see") are not initially distinguished by children; the two meanings of a word are conflated. Later on, however, the meanings are distinguished by children, that is, deconflated. The notions of conflation and deconflation are Grady and Johnson's way of accounting for the emergence of primary metaphors. A primary scene, such as that of "becoming aware by seeing," consists of two subscenes: in this case, the perceptual subscene of seeing something and the cognitive subscene of becoming aware of something. For example, in the process of the emergence of the metaphorical sense of "see," the child learns to differentiate the cognitive subscene and the perceptual one, which gives rise to the primary metaphor "*KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING*." In the account I am proposing, the stage of deconflation could be seen as being preceded by a metonymic stage, where one of the events or states stands metonymically for the other within the same primary scene. Furthermore, I would also suggest that deconflation can occur after the generalization, or schematization, of one of the events or states has taken place. This stage can be seen as opening the way to the emergence of metaphors—the stage where an event or state is generalized to a concept that exists independently of the scene, or frame-like mental structure, in a distinct and distant part of the conceptual system.

Several other authors make a more or less similar argument concerning the metaphor-metonymy relationship, but they all use conceptual machinery that is different from the one I use here (see, e.g., Barcelona, 2000; several papers in Dirven & Pörings, 2002; Taylor, 1989). For example, a piece of work that seems fully compatible with the approach advocated here is Radden (2002). Radden argues that in a large number of cases metaphors derive from metonymies and that they emerge through a continuum involving literal meaning through metonymy to metaphor. He distinguishes four cases where metaphorical meaning, and more generally, metaphors, can derive from metonymy: (a) correlations in experience, (b) conversational implicature, (c) taxonomic structure of categories, and (d) cultural models. The obvious similarity between his approach and mine is that we both see many metaphors as deriving from metonymy. As a matter of fact, several of the examples discussed in his article are the same as the ones discussed here. An important difference, though, between his proposal and mine is that while Radden identifies four different sources for the emergence of metaphors from metonymy, I offer a more unified view that

crosscuts his four sources and that accounts for metonymy-based metaphors in terms of two events or states being correlated in experience, a situation which is represented conceptually by means of a frame-like mental structure. In other words, I view correlations between two events or states as involving or underlying three of his four proposed metonymic sources. (Radden also recognizes correlation as a metaphor-producing source in his first group of sources.)

The view of the metonymy–metaphor relationship as based on correlations between elements of a frame would bring the account I propose closer to Grady’s notion of primary metaphor that is also based on the notion of correlation. However, Grady’s view and mine are different on a number of points. Grady and Johnson (2002) define primary metaphors as follows:

Primary metaphors are motivated by tight correlations between distinguishable dimensions of recurring, locally defined experience types. We refer to these dimensions, which unfold dynamically over very brief time spans, as subscenes. (p. 540)

In the same paragraph they continue:

Note that because subscenes are co-occurring aspects of simple scenarios, our account might be taken to suggest that primary metaphors arise from metonymies; it is important to consider, however, that a metonymic relationship concerns conceptual and referential association, whereas our proposal refers to correlations at the level of experience, and to truly metaphoric patterns of conceptualization which arise from these correlations.

Here Grady and Johnson explicitly deny the possibility that primary metaphors arise from metonymies—the claim I have made. They base their argument on the idea that while metonymy “concerns conceptual and referential association,” primary metaphors concern correlations in experience. But in order to become linguistically coded, experiential correlations must be conceptualized, and once conceptualized, experiential correlations also become conceptual (associations). Grady and Johnson also argue that primary scenes and the subscenes that constitute them have a unique status among the conceptual tools (such as domains, frames, mental spaces, schemas) used to represent categories in the conceptual system. If valid, this argument could be used to suggest that since metonymies can be found in frames, and since primary scenes are different from frames (and other similar conceptual structures), primary metaphors cannot derive from metonymies (which are tied to frames). However, it is notoriously difficult to distinguish frames, mental spaces, domains, schemas, scenarios, scripts, and, importantly, scenes from each other in such a way that a distinction between primary metaphor and metonymy could be based on the distinction. All of these conceptual structures are mental representations of coherent aspects of human experience. As such, despite their various differences in abstractness and the kinds of aspects of the world they are taken to represent in the various disciplines (see, e.g., [Andor, 1985](#)), they are all coherent mental representations of aspects of the world consisting of parts and being conceptualized as wholes. (This is why in several places in the article I have used the term “frame-like mental structure” that fits the general, overarching definition.) The correlations between events, states, actions, etc. (the subscenes) that make up primary scenes may be thought of as coherent organizations of human experience (i.e., frame-like conceptual structures) as well, with parts constituting wholes. Because of this, metonymies may be based on primary scenes as well, and, as proposed above, may in turn lead to metaphors (for an early formulation of this idea, see, e.g., [Kövecses, 2002](#); [Kövecses & Radden, 1998](#); [Radden & Kövecses, 1999](#)).

In a more recent paper, Grady (2005) is careful to point out that many metonymies are also correlations between concepts (such as *AUTHOR FOR WORK*, *PLACE FOR INSTITUTION*, *MEANS FOR ACTION*), or to put it differently, not all correlations lead to metaphoric connections but to metonymic ones. Grady proposes that those correlations in experience lead to primary metaphors that meet three conditions: (a) the correlation is between a sensory and a nonsensory (mental) experience; (b) the two correlated experiences share highly schematic structure; and (c) the correlated experiences co-vary, that is, if there is a change in one, there is a similar change in the other.

In other words, on this view, a small group of correlations (characterized by the three properties) gives rise to metaphor, not to metonymy. As an alternative account, I would propose to consider this special correlation type as deriving from metonymy because, as I argued, the components of primary scenes function as parts (elements) within a single frame-like mental structure conceptualized as a whole, where a component part can provide access to either another component part or to a whole (and then, through generalization, paving the way for the emergence of full-blown cases of metaphor). As a matter of fact, the sensory–nonsensory condition that characterizes metaphors in the theory of primary metaphor may well be thought of an equally good condition for metonymy. Given a frame or (primary) scene, the conceptual element that represents something sensory in the frame or scene is typically selected to stand for something nonsensory. That is, the sensory–nonsensory distinction can be regarded as a further member of the series of factors (or conditions), such as “human over nonhuman,” “visible over nonvisible,” “specific over nonspecific,” and the like, that are commonly evoked to explain which element can provide access to another element in the most typical manifestations of metonymy (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Radden & Kövecses, 1999).

Components of Scenes

I tried to argue above that scenes are like other frame-like mental structures that can lead to metonymy (and then metaphor). The question I would like to take up now is what the components are, or can be, that make up such frame-like structures. One way in which primary scenes are distinguished from other frame-like structures is that they consist of two subscenes of events, actions, or states, both involving at least one entity and one relation (e.g., *x* sees *y* and *x* knows *y*). These events, states, and the like (the subscenes), are then taken to be correlated and form the basis of primary metaphors. But can we distinguish primary scenes from other frame-like representations on this basis? Is it the case that frame-like mental structures that can give rise to metonymy consist of entities (representing individuals and relations) only and that they cannot include (pairs of) combinations of entities and relations (i.e., subscenes) of the kind we have seen, for example, for “*KNOWING IS SEEING*”? This is not the case. Recent metonymy researchers commonly work with notions like complex events and subdomains in their studies of metonymy, which often contain combinations of entities and relations (similar to “*x* sees *y*”). In other words, it appears that the proposed nature of subscenes does not distinguish primary scenes from other frame-like mental structures. It would perhaps be more expedient to think of frame-like representations as being composed of either individual entities and relations, combinations of entities and relations, complex events consisting of simple ones (such as cooking or speaking), or subdomains constituting larger domains. For the purposes of the study of metonymy, we could conceive all of

them as *elements* of frame-like structures that can give rise to metonymies. The elements can be of any complexity and either one can be used for another element or the whole (given the conditions, including “sensory over nonsensory,” mentioned in the previous paragraph). However, it is clear that for metaphor to emerge from such frame-like structures we need two elements that have more complexity than simple entities, as Grady and Johnson correctly observe. But this complexity may derive not only from subscenes but also from any complex events or subdomains.

The Nature of Correlations

Another question we should consider in connection with the “metaphor–metonymy relationship” issue is what we mean by correlation. Proponents of the theory of primary metaphors appear to limit correlations to dimensions of experience which are “tight” and “which unfold dynamically over very brief time spans.” There are, however, many other correlations in experience that are less tight and that occur over much longer time spans. Such less tight and less brief correlations in experience can also bring together elements (of any complexity) in frame-like mental structures and can, at least initially, produce metonymies within the frame, and, then, metaphors that are based on the metonymies. It might turn out that some of our concepts that form conceptual metaphors today may be (or may have been) based on correlations in experience that are less tight and that have worked through historical time (for example, correlations between symbols and their referents, between models and what they are models of). The evolution of particular cultures and systems of categories can probably also produce metaphors that emerge over long time spans through a metonymic stage in the process. If this suggestion is valid, a number of conceptual metaphors that are now taken to be nonprimary and not based on correlations may turn out to be correlational ones, thus further blurring the distinction between primary and nonprimary metaphors.

CONCLUSIONS

In the article, I suggested that many metaphors arise from, and are not independent of, metonymies. My proposal was that correlation-based metaphors emerge from frame-like mental representations through a metonymic stage. This is, I assume, a perfectly natural process. It is in line with how correlations in general produce a large number of metonymy types. Indeed, we can think of experience types as being constituted by several more basic correlated elements (parts). Given the elements of experience constituting experience types, there are a large number of metonymy-producing relations that underlie the metonymies we use.

When do the elements that are metonymically-related lead to metaphors? I proposed this happens when one of the elements of a frame-like mental structure is generalized (schematized) to a concept that lies outside the initial frame in a different part of the conceptual system. The generalization process leads to sufficient conceptual distance between the initial and the new frame on which metaphors can be based. In order for metaphors to emerge, in the typical cases, distant vertical taxonomies are involved. This explains the importance of taxonomic hierarchies and frames in our conceptualization of the “metaphor–metonymy relationship.”

The generalization (schematization) process can apply to either the element in a frame that becomes the source or the target domain of a metaphor. When it applies to an element that

becomes the source, the other element will be the target of the metaphor (e.g., “*SADNESS IS DOWN*”). I described this situation as “target giving rise to the source.” In the other case, the generalization applies to an element that becomes the target, and the other element will be the source (e.g., “*KNOWING IS SEEING*”). I described the situation as “source giving rise to the target.” Furthermore, when either the source or the target is generalized (schematized), we can get elaborations. For example, *HEAT* as the source of *ANGER* can be elaborated as “fire,” “stew,” “boiling water,” “blood,” “piss,” “volcano,” “lava,” and so on. And when, say, *DIFFICULTY* as target is elaborated in the metaphor “*DIFFICULTY IS WEIGHT*,” we get “problems,” “emotions,” “responsibilities,” and so on (and hence we get the metaphors “*PROBLEMS ARE WEIGHTS*,” “*EMOTIONS ARE WEIGHTS*,” and “*RESPONSIBILITIES ARE WEIGHTS*”). Needless to say, the source *WEIGHT* can also be elaborated (as, e.g., “burden” and “baggage”)—often in culture-specific ways.

I believe the view outlined here provides a coherent overall account of why many metaphors can be interpreted as metonymies and why many metonymies can be taken to be metaphors. The reason seems to be that, in the case of correlational metaphors, between a nonfigurative and a metaphoric stage there is a metonymic one. Given a frame in which the correlations apply between two elements, there must be a logically prior metonymic relationship between the elements before one element is moved out of the initial frame to establish a new and independent frame, which will form either a metaphoric source or target. Only future research can decide whether this explanation can be extended to cases of conceptual metaphors not analyzed (only hinted at) in the present study.

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