

tion suggests ways that MIP may be employed in disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies of metaphor.

## PROCEDURE AND EXPLICATION

The MIP is as follows:

1. Read the entire text—discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text—discourse
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
- (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
  - More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
  - Related to bodily action.
  - More precise (as opposed to vague)
  - Historically older.
 Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.
- (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current—contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

We now demonstrate the MIP by applying it to the first sentence of a newspaper article from “The Independent (internet edition)” titled “Sonia Gandhi stakes claim for top job with denunciation of Vajpayee” (see Appendix). A reading of the whole article, step 1, reveals that it is concerned with contemporary Indian politics, and particularly with Sonia Gandhi’s controversial role as a politician. The first sentence focuses specifically on Gandhi’s difficulties in being accepted by Indians as a political leader and potential future Prime Minister:

For years, Sonia Gandhi has struggled to convince Indians that she is fit to wear the mantle of the political dynasty into which she married, let alone to become premier.