Metonymy and Pragmatic Inferencing

Edited by

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Volume 113

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We dedicate this volume to Dr. William M. Thornburg, in his 92nd year, and to the memory of Hermann and Charlotte Panther.

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K.U.P. L.L.T. Hamburg, April 2003

Introduction

On the nature of conceptual metonymy

Klaus-Uwe Panther and Linda L. Thornburg

1. Background and purpose of the volume

The chapters in the present volume may be roughly characterized as contributions to pragmatics from a cognitive linguistics perspective. Cognitive linguistics and modern pragmatics share a number of objects of inquiry, although their theoretical assumptions are often at odds. Both fields are, among other things, concerned with the investigation of principles of language use, the organization and functions of discourse, the conceptual and inferential nature of rhetorical tropes and figures of thought such as metaphor and metonymy, and the relationship between language function and grammatical structure.

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to point out some commonalities and differences between contemporary pragmatic approaches and cognitive linguistics, focusing on the relation between metonymy and pragmatic inference (for a useful overview of pragmatics and cognitive linguistics, see Marmaridou 2000; for conceptual metonymy see the contributions in Panther & Radden 1999, Barcelona 2000, Dirven & Pörings 2002, and the monograph by Ruiz de Mendoza and Otal Campo 2002). We undertake this task at the risk of somewhat simplifying the issues at stake – given that neither pragmatics nor cognitive linguistics (especially the former) constitutes in itself a unified field of inquiry and theoretical orientation.¹

2. Some properties of conceptual metonymy

In what follows we undertake to define some properties of metonymy, focusing specifically on the problem of how metonymy differs from other semantic relations and how it relates to types of pragmatic implication such as implicature and explicature (for a more detailed discussion, see Panther & Thornburg, forthcoming).

Metonymy as a conceptual phenomenon first caught the attention of cognitive linguists in 1980, the publication date of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's influential book Metaphors We Live By, in which the linguistic function of metonymy is claimed to be mainly one of indirect reference (e.g. the crown standing for 'the monarchy'), i.e. as a relationship where one entity "stands for" another. A few years later Lakoff (1987:68ff.) introduced the notion of idealized cognitive model (ICM). ICMs are structures that represent speakers' conceptual (including their semantic) knowledge. Lakoff posits four types of such ICMs: image-schematic, propositional, metaphorical and metonymic models, the latter being the basis of prototype effects. For example, Lakoff observes that in Western culture many people associate the concept MOTHER with the concept HOUSEWIFE MOTHER, i.e., they regard mothers who stay at home, organize the household, raise the children, etc. as the typical representatives of mothers. There seems to exist a metonymic model in which the superordinate category MOTHER (stereotypically) evokes the subordinate category HOUSEWIFE MOTHER. Lakoff contrasts metaphor as an isomorphic mapping between two distinct domains - a source and a target - with metonymy, which is seen as operating only within a single conceptual domain. Lakoff's conception of metonymy is an important step forward - away from the traditional view of metonymy as a relation of "real-world" contiguity/association to an abstract view of metonymy in which 'contiguity' is understood as closeness in a conceptual model.

Metonymy is often regarded as a referential phenomenon where the name of a referent is used to stand for another referent. In accordance with the contributors to this volume, we argue below (Section 2.2) that this view is too narrow. Furthermore, the characterization of metonymy as a 'stand for' relation suggests that metonymy is a substitution relation, a reflection of which is that metonymies are usually represented by the schema x for y, where x represents the source (also called 'vehicle') and y symbolizes the target of the metonymic operation. It should however be borne in mind that the substitution view of metonymy is inadequate because the source of a metonymy is not simply replaced by the metonymic target, except in cases involving historical semantic change. Recent work on metonymy has shown that metonymy is better viewed as a cognitive trigger providing access to a targeted concept (see Section 2.1 below). This is the view, which in some variant or other, is shared by most cognitive linguists working on metonymy, including the con-

tributors to this book. Nevertheless, throughout the book the 'x for y' notation will be maintained because it has become an established convention in cognitive linguistics. The use of small capitals is meant to reflect the assumption that metonymy is a relation between concepts, rather than between real-world denotata or referents.

2.1 Metonymy as a contingent relation

On the basis of George Lakoff's (1987) and Ronald Langacker's (1993) work, which emphasizes the conceptual nature of metonymy, Günter Radden and Zoltán Kövecses (1999: 21) have proposed a widely accepted characterization of metonymy: "Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle [also often called the 'source', KUP/LLT], provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same cognitive model."

In what follows, we adopt this definition as a convenient starting point for our discussion of metonymy. However, we see a need to constrain the scope of this definition somewhat because it covers some linguistic phenomena that are arguably very different from clear cases of metonymy. Consider, for example, the italicized referential noun phrases in (1) and (2):

- (1) The piano is in a bad mood.
- (2) The loss of my wallet put me in a bad mood.

In sentence (1) the subject noun phrase has the standard metonymic interpretation 'the musician playing the piano', with the meaning of piano providing mental access to the concept of piano player. In sentence (2), the sense of the loss of my wallet provides access to the concept of 'non-possession (of the wallet)'. Are we therefore entitled to conclude that the relation between the concept of loss and that of non-possession is a metonymic relationship, just as the relation between the concept of piano and that of piano player is metonymic? Intuitively, the answer seems 'no'; and in fact, there is an important difference between the two cases. In sentence (2) the relationship between 'loss' and 'non-possession' is conceptually necessary, i.e., the proposition presupposed by the referring expression in (1), 'I lost my wallet at time t', entails 'I did not have my wallet for some time span beginning at time t'. In sentence (1), the relationship between the piano and the piano player is contingent; the presupposition 'There is a piano' does not entail 'There is a piano player'. In other words, there is no metonymy loss for non-possession, but there is an often exploited metonymy musical instrument for musician.

2.2 Metonymy and speech acts

The notion of metonymic model, as developed by Lakoff (1987), suggests that metonymy does not occur only on the referential level as in

(3) General Motors is on strike.

where the company name is used to refer to the automobile workers who walk out of the work place. Pragmatically, metonymies are also found on the predicational, propositional (where referential and predicational metonymies occur in combination), and illocutionary levels, respectively. An example of a predicational metonymy is

(4) General Motors had to stop production.

where the necessity or obligation to stop production stands for the actually occurring event of stopping production (OBLIGATION TO ACT FOR ACTION). The metonymy involved is an instance of a high-level metonymic principle that is very common in English and other languages: A potential event (e.g. the ability, possibility, permission, obligation to undertake an action) is metonymically linked to its actual occurrence. Events are conceptualized here as ICMs that contain as subcomponents the modalities of their realization. Sentence (4) is also a propositional metonymy because *General Motors* metonymically refers (in this case) to the executive officers of the company.

Finally, an example of an illocutionary metonymy is given by the well-known phenomenon of conventionalized indirect speech acts as in (5a), in contrast to (5b):

- (5) a. I would like you to close that window.
 - b. Close that window.

where the expression of the wish with regard to the action to be carried out by the addressee (signaled by would like you to) metonymically evokes the request (5b) itself (see Gibbs 1994, 1999; Thornburg & Panther 1997; Panther & Thornburg 1998). The basic idea is that an attribute of a speech act can stand for the speech act itself in the same way that an attribute of a person can stand for the person (see also Panther & Thornburg's and Radden & Seto's contributions in this volume).

2.3 Do referential, predicational, and illocutionary metonymies form a "natural class"?

Our contention that the relation between the piano and 'the piano player', on the one hand, and that between General Motors had to stop production and 'General Motors stopped production', on the other hand, is of the same kind, viz. metonymic, may look surprising at first sight. One might object that the target meaning of (4) is really an implicature that comes about through pragmatic strengthening of the proposition expressed in (4).²

However, note first that a metonymic analysis does not preclude a pragmatic analysis in terms of conversational implicature. On the contrary, we assume that conversational implicatures, or more generally, pragmatic inferences, are often guided by preexisting metonymic principles.³

Second, and more importantly, referential, predicational, and illocutionary metonymies share the property of *highlighting* or *foregrounding* their respective target meanings. The source of a metonymy serves as a "reference-point" (see e.g. Langacker 1993) whose sole purpose is to provide access to a target meaning. That metonymy involves highlighting is a common assumption among cognitive linguists (see e.g. Croft 1993). To illustrate, consider the following larger context for sentence (4):

(6) General Motors had to stop production on Monday but they resumed it on Thursday.

The but-clause in (6) only makes pragmatic sense if the clause General Motors had to stop production on Monday has the foregrounded target meaning 'General Motors stopped production on Monday'. Obviously, the backgrounded source meaning of the first clause in (6) (the 'obligation' sense) is still activatable, but this holds for standard cases of referential metonymy as well, i.e., it is a general property of metonymy that source meanings are "active" to some degree.

Third, the same metonymy can be triggered predicationally and referentially. The OBLIGATION TO ACT FOR ACTION metonymy triggered in (4) and (6) can also be derived from the nominalized (referential) counterpart of (4):

(7) General Motor's obligation to stop production had a devastating effect on the economy.

The target meaning of the referring expression in (7) can be paraphrased as 'the fact that General Motors stopped production'. This meaning is very

strongly foregrounded given the ensuing predication had a devastating effect on the economy.

Finally, what we call illocutionary metonymies can also be triggered in referential positions. For example,

(8) I am willing to lend you my car.

is often understood as an *offer* of the speaker to lend her car to the hearer (for a metonymic treatment of speech acts, see Panther & Thornburg, this volume). In utterance (9) a proposition analogous to the one in (8) is nominalized and used referentially.

(9) My willingness to lend you my car surprised everybody.

The referential noun phrase in (9) lends itself quite readily to the (fore-grounded) target meaning 'My offer to lend you my car'. We see no reason to treat the pragmatic implication of the noun phrase in (9) differently from the target meaning of uncontroversial metonymies as in *Table Four wants another Chardonnay* where *Table Four* stands for 'the customer sitting at Table Four'.

2.4 Strength of metonymic link

The link between a metonymic source and its target may vary in strength. The strength of a metonymic link depends on how conceptually close source and target are to each other (cf. Panther & Thornburg 1998). The relevance of the strength factor becomes obvious when an utterance like (5a) – where the conceptual link between the mental attitude literally conveyed by the utterance, i.e. the speaker's wish that the addressee perform the action, and the targeted actual request itself is very strong – is compared to the relatively weak metonymic connection between the contents of (10a) and (5b) (repeated below as (10b)):

- (10) a. There's a draft in here.
 - b. Close that window.

Utterance (10a) is in many contexts understood as a request such as (10b). However, different from the fairly straightforward metonymic connection between (5a) and (5b) where the mental attitude associated with the speech act provides direct access to the speech act itself, the conceptual distance between (10a) and (10b) is much greater. One may assume a metonymic *chain* with at least the following *links*: $P \rightarrow NOT-DESIRABLE (P) \rightarrow DESIRABLE (NOT-P) \rightarrow CAUSE (Q, NOT-P) \rightarrow DO (Q), where P represents the propositional con-$

tent of the assertion (10a) and Q stands for the propositional content of the request (10b).

2.5 The ubiquity of metonymy

Metonymy is found in both what is usually considered to be the domain of linguistic meaning (semantics) and the domain of linguistic use (pragmatics). In fact, the existence of metonymy is evidence that a strict borderline between semantics and pragmatics may be difficult to draw. A metonymy such as SALIENT BODY PART FOR ANIMATE BEING is completely conventionalized in the compound redbreast as the designation for a bird; but a person with very little ornithological knowledge may describe birds she has seen in the woods to a friend whose conventional names she does not know by using unconventional "names" like yellowbeak, purplehead, bluetail, etc. The same holds for cases of conventionalized polysemy: Metonymies that statically distinguish conventionalized senses of a lexical item such as potbelly ('large round stomach' vs. the metonymically derived 'person with large round stomach') may be dynamically used to yield pragmatically derived meanings such as balloonnose, fatface, skinnylegs, etc.

2.6 Summary

To summarize the above observations, metonymy in our view is minimally characterized by the following properties:

- Conceptual metonymy is a cognitive operation where a source content provides access to a target content within one cognitive domain.
- The relation between source content and target content is contingent (conceptually non-necessary), i.e. in principle defeasible.
- The target meaning of a metonymy is foregrounded (highlighted); the source content is backgrounded.
- Metonymy performs various functions in speech acts: It is operative on the levels of reference, predication, proposition, and illocution.
- The strength of metonymic link between source and target may vary, depending on, among other things, the conceptual distance between source and target.
- Metonymy is a conceptual phenomenon that cuts across the traditional distinction between semantics and pragmatics.

3. Metonymy and pragmatic inferencing

The characterization of metonymy given in Section 2.6 reveals a common object of inquiry of pragmatics and cognitive linguistics: inferencing. A thesis that most likely all authors of the present volume share is that the knowledge of metonymic principles such as CAUSE FOR EFFECT, RESULT FOR ACTION, PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT, MANNER FOR ACTION, SALIENT PARTICIPANT OF EVENT FOR EVENT, etc., play an important role in utterance interpretation. Metonymies may be called *natural inference schemas*, i.e. easily activatable associations among concepts that can be used for inferential purposes (see Panther & Thornburg 1998). Metonymic links may become completely conventionalized, i.e. result in lexical polysemy as pointed out in Section 2.5. Diachronically, the source concept may be backgrounded or vanish completely with only the target concept left behind. An example of the latter is the illocutionary verb *implore*, which etymologically contains the sense 'in tears' no longer necessarily present in present-day English.

3.1 Metonymy and implicature

If metonymies function as guideposts in pragmatic inferencing, the question immediately arises how they relate to conversational implicature in the Gricean or neo-Gricean sense. On closer inspection, some interesting parallelisms emerge between Lakoff's (1987) metonymic models and Levinson's (2000: 37) *I*-Heuristic (where *I* stands for 'Informativeness'). Levinson argues that lexical items routinely implicate stereotypical pragmatic default readings: "What is expressed simply is stereotypically exemplified." He relates this heuristic to Grice's (1975) second Maxim of Quantity "Do not make your contribution more informative than is required." For example, a defeasible I-Implicature of *drink* in English is 'alcoholic beverage'. An utterance like

(11) I need a drink.

would normally not be understood as expressing the (adult) speaker's desire for a glass of milk. Nevertheless the 'alcoholic beverage' reading is cancelable as becomes evident in (12):

(12) I need a drink, but no alcohol, please.

Defeasibility also holds for the metonymically evoked stereotypical meanings discussed by Lakoff (1987:77ff.) (see Section 2 above): Although the concept HOUSEWIFE MOTHER is almost automatically activated when the word *mother*

is used in linguistic communication, the metonymic link between the two concepts can be explicitly canceled without contradiction: She is a mother of two daughters but she is not a housewife is semantically well-formed. A meaning that, in cognitive linguistic terms, is stereotypically evoked via metonymy (see Radden & Kövecses 1999:27) or, in neo-Gricean parlance, via a generalized conversational implicature, is generally not expressed through a separate lexical item; e.g., there are no simple lexemes for the concepts housewife mother or alcoholic beverage in English, and, in fact, it would be redundant to have such lexemes because their senses are easily accessible via metonymically based conversational implicatures.

Regrettably, so far, there has been relatively little dialogue between scholars working in a neo-Gricean framework and cognitive linguists, although the objects of inquiry and even the analyses proposed do not seem incompatible to us but point to possible avenues of convergence.

3.2 Metonymy and explicature

The main competitor of neo-Gricean pragmatics, relevance theory, has generally been critical, if not dismissive, of cognitive linguistic approaches to metonymy (and metaphor). Papafragou (1996a, b) and Song (1997) argue that metonymy and other figures of speech can be subsumed under general principles of pragmatic inferencing (in their framework, deductive inferences) and that there is no need to postulate the existence of a separate domain of metonymic reasoning. Papafragou (1996a: 181) criticizes the cognitive 'associationist' approach to metonymy as suffering "from serious drawbacks on both descriptive and explanatory levels" because this approach supposedly cannot handle creative ad hoc uses of "metonymy". Papafragou does not grant any special status to metonymic elaborations but regards them as explicatures, i.e. as pragmatic inferences derived from underspecified (decoded) semantic contents to yield the explicit content of an utterance. The opposite view is held by probably most authors of this volume: The retrieval of utterance meaning requires the activation of metonymic relations from long-term memory as interpretive guideposts (see e.g. Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez Hernández, this volume, who argue that metonymic mappings are activated in explicature derivation). The aim of researchers is to find a reasonably restricted set of metonymic inference schemata that can be quickly accessed and be exploited by language users in utterance interpretation (see e.g. Norrick 1981 for a list of such metonymic principles).

4. The contributions to this volume

The contributions to this volume have been organized into four parts. Part I is concerned with defining the role of metonymy in inferential utterance interpretation (Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez Hernández, Barcelona) and conceptual blends (Coulson & Oakley). Part II focuses on the metonymic motivation of grammatical structure (Stefanowitsch, Panther, & Thornburg, Köpcke & Zubin). Part III explores the role of metonymic inferencing in linguistic change (Ziegeler, Okamoto). Part IV closes the book comparing the exploitation of metonymies from a cross-linguistic perspective (Radden & Seto, Brdar & Brdar-Szabó).

4.1 The place of metonymy in cognition and pragmatics

The first three chapters of the volume demonstrate the significance of metonymy as a conceptual tool for guiding inferencing in language and other cognitive domains. Ruiz and Pérez's paper sets the stage relating work on metonymy in cognitive linguistics to relevance theory; Coulson and Oakley's and Barcelona's papers are case studies that show the power of metonymic principles in conceptual integration and the interpretation of humorous discourse, respectively.

In the first chapter "Cognitive Operations and Pragmatic Implications," Francisco Ruiz de Mendoza and Lorena Pérez Hernández link work on conceptual metonymy in cognitive linguistics to Gricean pragmatics and relevance theory. The authors start with the assumption generally accepted in cognitive linguistics that metonymy and metaphor are tools for understanding and reasoning about the world. They reduce metonymy to two basic types: metonymies where the target concept is part of the source concept (targetin-source metonymies) and metonymies where the source is part of the target (source-in-target metonymies). Relying on recent work by Papafragou and Carston, Ruiz and Pérez argue that metaphor and metonymy are part of what is said, rather than what is implicated - in contrast to previous relevance-theoretic and Gricean analyses. However, the authors strongly object to Carston's idea that metonymy and metaphor are "loose" ways of speaking with the principle of relevance as sufficient to account for their interpretation. Rather, Ruiz and Pérez propose that the principle of relevance must be supplemented by metaphoric and metonymic mappings, i.e. cognitive operations available to speakers and hearers that are part and parcel of the their semantic and conceptual knowledge. The authors also argue for a view of metaphor and metonymy as a continuum. They present an interesting new analysis of

anaphoric relations in discourse that involve referential metonymic shifts as in *The ham sandwich is waiting for his check and he is getting upset* where the grammatical form of the anaphoric pronouns *his* and *he* is determined by the targeted referent of *ham sandwich*. In contrast, in *Nixon bombed Hanoi and he killed countless civilians*, it is the source expression *Nixon* that determines the grammatical properties of the coreferential pronoun. Ruiz and Pérez account for such examples by means of a principle that they call the *Domain Availability Principle*, according to which the larger domain (matrix domain) – be it the source or the target – determines the domain of coreference.

In Chapter 2, "Metonymy and Conceptual Blending," Seana Coulson and Todd Oakley explicate the role of metonymy in the process of conceptual blending. The theory of conceptual blending has been developed since the 1980s by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner and their collaborators. Blending involves several operations for combining cognitive models in a network of mental spaces and is guided by a set of constraints, known as optimality principles. To understand a blend, it is important to identify the mappings between different aspects of the model in the blended space and their counterparts in the input spaces. These mappings can be based on identity, similarity, analogy, and many other sorts of pragmatic functions, including metonymy. Indeed, one advantage that Coulson and Oakley see in the blending framework is that it allows the treatment of complex examples in which many sorts of conceptual mappings operate in parallel. Coulson and Oakley analyze a number of diverse phenomena ranging from ordinary language idioms like blowing your own horn, literary blends in the writings of Ernest Hemingway, to metonymic blends in works of sculptural art (Viktor Schreckengost's Apocalypse '42). Their study shows that conceptual metonymies are important in conceptual blending by "tightening" metonymic relations thus contributing substantially to integrating "juxtapositions of conceptual structure from distally related domains." Metonymies thus help satisfy one of the optimality principles postulated by Fauconnier and Turner (1999) and Turner and Fauconnier (2000), viz. the integration principle, which demands that the events in the blended space form an integrated mental scene. Metonymy accomplishes this conceptual integration at the expense of the topology principle, which requires that models in each of the mental spaces be structurally as isomorphic as possible. In general, the presence of metonymic connections in the blend performs the crucial function of "holding together" the network of mental spaces that are necessary for reasoning on a particular topic over a period of time.

The contribution in Chapter 3, "The Case for a Metonymic Basis of Pragmatic Inferencing: Evidence from Jokes and Funny Anecdotes" by Antonio

Barcelona, presents four case studies of the humorous mechanisms of jokes and anecdotes. The interpretation of these genres requires - as has been pointed out by a number of humor theorists like Attardo (1990) and Raskin (1985) - complex inferential work on the part of the hearer. Barcelona wonders how it is possible that listeners often arrive at the intended humorous reading of a joke or anecdote at "lightning speed." For him, this feat cannot be explained on the basis of Gricean maxims alone (or their variants in the discourse world of humor). Adopting a conception of metonymy that is inspired by Radden and Kövecses (1999) (cf. Section 2.1 above) Barcelona proposes that in many if not all cases the inferential work is facilitated by pre-existing metonymic connections in a cognitive frame or domain or by pre-existing metaphorical connections across frames. Metonymies thus help achieve the frame adjustment (cf. Attardo 1990; Raskin 1985) that is necessary in order to grasp the punch line of a joke or anecdote. Barcelona shows that the value of metonymy for pragmatic inferencing can be appreciated only if one discards the traditional view of conceptual metonymy as a purely referential phenomenon. As to the question whether pragmatic inferencing can be reduced entirely to metonymic reasoning, Barcelona is not willing to commit himself to a wholly affirmative answer, but he certainly thinks that metonymically based inferencing plays an essential role in utterance interpretation.

4.2 Metonymic inferencing and grammatical structure

The chapters in Part II of the volume are concerned with the interaction between metonymy and grammatical structure (see also the contributions in Part III and Brdar & Brdar-Szabó in Part IV). In the three studies summarized below metonymic origins of the linguistic phenomena under investigation are still visible, but the metonymic relationship in many cases has become such an integrative part of grammatical meaning that it is no longer defeasible.

In Chapter 4 "A Construction-Based Approach to Indirect Speech Acts" Anatol Stefanowitsch offers an account of conventionalized indirect speech acts (ISAs), specifically, requests such as Will/can you close the door? in terms of Construction Grammar (see e.g. Goldberg 1995). Using some of Sadock's (1974) collocational criteria for conventionalized indirect requests (e.g. the possibility to insert politeness markers like please, kindly, the conditional would/could, and preposed reason clauses), Stefanowitsch shows that certain aspects of conventionalized indirect requests are not predictable from their form and meaning components and that they therefore qualify as constructions. Stefanowitsch calls them ISA constructions and contrasts them with

utterances such as Are you able to close the door?, which can in certain contexts be used as an indirect request, but does not qualify as an ISA construction because the above-mentioned test criteria fail to apply to it. Stefanowitsch argues that ISA constructions are completely conventional, but that, despite their partially unpredictable properties, they are motivated metonymically in the sense of Panther and Thornburg (1998). However, there is no need for the speaker/hearer to process them metonymically because their pragmatic function is part of their meaning. The metonymic motivation is captured in the construction grammar framework by positing metonymic inheritance links between direct questions and conventionally indirect requests. Stefanowitsch's analysis amounts to postulating that there are two constructions of the form Can you do A? One of them signifies a question and the other a conventional request. In the last part of his paper Stefanowitsch tests the predictions of the construction grammar analysis against the neurolinguistic literature on indirect requests. Although the psycholinguistic evidence is not conclusive in all respects, there are some interesting indications that individuals with right-hemisphere damage, who generally have trouble recovering nonliteral meaning, have no problems interpreting indirect request constructions as requests, but they do have trouble interpreting other non-conventionalized indirect requests as requests.

In Chapter 5 "Metonymies as Natural Inference and Activation Schemas: The Case of Dependent Clauses as Independent Speech Acts" Klaus-Uwe Panther and Linda L. Thornburg investigate some if-clauses that look "incomplete," i.e. lack a syntactically realized consequent clause. Many such "truncated" conditional clauses qualify however as constructions in the sense of Goldberg (1995) because they have a non-compositional conventional sense associated with them. Panther and Thornburg identify three kinds of conventionalized pragmatic functions of such if-clauses: deontic (involving speaker commitment or hearer obligation) as in If you would like a cookie (offer) or If you will come to order (request); expressive (e.g. surprise, shock, etc.) as in Why, if it isn't Susan! (expression of surprise); and epistemic (reasoning, expression of belief) as in If it was a warning (challenge of a prior assumption). Using the concept of mental space from conceptual blending theory and an approach to indirect speech acts as conceptual scenarios, Panther and Thornburg make extensive use of the cancelability test known from Grice's work on implicature to determine the degree of conventionalization of the if-clause types they investigate. They argue, quite in line with Stefanowitsch's analysis of indirect requests (this volume), that many truncated conditionals do not require any inferential work on the part of the hearer even though the metonymic motivation of their

pragmatic meaning is still transparent. Panther and Thornburg claim that, on the one hand, conceptual metonymies constitute natural inference schemas that are exploited by participants in linguistic communication to arrive at utterance meanings; on the other hand, such metonymic inference schemas may become completely entrenched and are then automatically activated in the interpretation process. Whatever the degree of routinization, the availability of metonymic links within conceptual scenarios enables interlocutors to access intended meanings quickly and effortlessly.

In Chapter 6 "Metonymic Pathways to Neuter-Gender Human Nominals in German" Klaus-Michael Köpcke and David Zubin show that metonymic principles interact in complex ways with grammatical gender in German. They observe that certain neuter-marked nominals referring to human females evoke complex affective metonymic models. The assignment of neuter gender to female human referents is somewhat surprising - given the otherwise highly systematic masculine-feminine gender distinction in German between male and female humans. Köpcke and Zubin identify nine subtypes of metonymic grounding that account for about 80% of their exhaustive sample of neutgender human nouns. Many of these often derogatory or dismissive designations for females are found as early as in Middle High German, e.g. das Luder ('loose woman', originally 'bait') or das Reff ('skinny old woman', originally 'skeleton'). Other neuter nouns designating females trigger negative affect such as disapproval, scorn, and the like, such as das Weib 'woman' or das Aas 'nasty woman', originally 'carcass'). The female human referent can also be viewed as a mere visual object on display (e.g. das Mannequin 'female model' or Revuegirl 'show girl'. The class of neuter-gender female referents is still productively enlarged in present-day German with e.g. Anglo-American loanwords such as das Groupie, das Model, das Bunny, etc. Especially these latter neutergender loanwords from English can be regarded as a strong indicator of a metonymically motivated gender assignment. At the end of their contribution, Köpcke and Zubin explore the role of metonymic scenarios in the selection of anaphoric pronouns in discourse referent tracking in some contemporary journalistic sources and also in an in-depth analysis of a narrative by Karl Heinrich Waggerl.

4.3 Metonymic inferencing and linguistic change

The contributions of Part III of the volume are concerned with the role of metonymy and implicature in linguistic change, i.e. with the implicatures and metonymic inferences associated with modals and their periphrastic counterparts in English (Ziegeler), and the role of metonymy in certain grammaticalization processes in Japanese (Okamoto).

Debra Ziegeler's contribution in Chapter 7 on "The Development of Counterfactual Implicature: A Case of Metonymy or M-inference?" discusses the problem that statements of past ability or potentiality sometimes metonymically evoke the actuality but also sometimes the non-occurrence (counterfactuality) of the event expressed in the infinitival complement clause. She challenges Levinson's (1995, 2000) view that an utterance like John could solve the problem implicates John solved the problem on the basis of the second Gricean quantity maxim (Q2), and that John had the ability to solve the problem conveys the complementary implicature that John did not solve the problem. The latter is supposed to be an M-implicature, an inference that, according to Levinson, applies to the more marked (periphrastic) member of a manner set <can, have the ability to>. M-implicatures are not metonymic inferences in the prototypical sense, since they are not content-to-content relations but associate a comparatively marked form with the negation of the content that is assigned to the unmarked member of the set. Ziegeler provides empirical evidence against Levinson's analysis, which seems to be based on made-up examples. She questions the tacit assumption that could and had the ability are synonymous concepts that contrast in "prolixity" in the same way as pairs like drink/beverage or house/residence. Among other things, she shows that could is hardly ever used in present-day English in connection with single past events and that the more marked "alternative" of could, the periphrastic was/were able to, does not produce an implicature of non-actuality (via M-implicature) as predicted by Levinson's model - on the contrary, the latter has a strong suggestive force of actuality. Ziegeler arrives at the conclusion that the opposite directionality of the metonymies potentiality for actuality vs. potentiality for non-ACTUALITY is due to principles that "appear to be founded in pragmatics and the notion of scalar relationship between items."

In Chapter 8 on "Metonymy and Pragmatic Inference in the Functional Reanalysis of Grammatical Morphemes in Japanese," Shigeko Okamoto focuses on the reanalysis of complementizers of subordinate clauses (COMP) as sentence-final particles (SFP) expressing a certain modality or illocutionary force. In Japanese, both grammatical categories occur in final position in subordinate clauses. She argues that the complementizer *koto* has developed into a marker of either exclamatory or directive speech act force. Okamoto proposes that underlying the shift from COMP to SFP is a part-whole metonymy that is motivated by rhetorical and social concerns of appropriateness of expression. The use of the subordinate clause [S koto] suggests that the comple-

ment is the most important part of the message, thereby "bring[ing] about a certain expressiveness, that is, to perform a given speech act with particular stylistic nuances [...]." More formally, Okamoto proposes a metonymic inference that the addressee draws "on the basis of his/her knowledge of certain frames and understanding of the specific context." There is thus a metonymic shift from '[S koto]' to '[[P koto] Modality]' where 'Modality' is supposed to stand for the pragmatic function of the proposition P. For example, the use of [S koto] as a directive speech act as in Mainichi ha o migaku koto 'You brush your teeth every day-koto' is more indirect; and an exclamation such as Maa oishii koto 'Oh, it is delicious-koto' is "less imposing and 'feminine'." The original subordinate clause construction [S koto] develops thus into an independent construction analogous to the if-clause constructions analyzed by Panther and Thornburg (this volume). The illocutionary function of koto-clauses in these constructions seems comparable to that of the German clauses introduced by the complementizer dass in directives such as Dass du das nicht noch einmal machst! ('Don't ever do that again') or exclamations such as Dass ich das noch erleben durfte! ('That I would live to see this').

4.4 Metonymic inferencing across languages

The last two contributions to this volume demonstrate that the use of metonymic principles may vary cross-linguistically and that metonymy interacts with and is constrained by grammatical structure (see also Stefanowitsch, this volume; Panther & Thornburg, this volume). Radden and Seto's paper is more pragmatically oriented comparing commercial events in English-speaking and Japanese-speaking cultural contexts; Brdar and Brdar-Szabó analyze the role of metonymy in coding linguistic action in English, Croatian, and Hungarian from a typological perspective.

In Chapter 9, Günter Radden and Ken-ichi Seto investigate "Metonymic Construals of Shopping Requests in Have- and Be-Languages." The classification into Have- and Be- languages derives from how the concept of possession is encoded. Have languages include English, German, Lithuanian, and Croatian; Be languages are Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Finnish, Hungarian, Polish, and Hausa. The authors focus especially on the wording of shopping requests in English and Japanese. An English sentence such as John has two children would have to be rendered in Japanese as 'At/To John are two children'. This structural difference has consequences for how the two languages linguistically code certain stages in the shopping scenario. Radden and Seto distinguish two main phases in the shopping scenario: (i) the precondition, i.e. the availability

of the requested articles and (ii) the transaction, which is further subdivided into (a) the transfer of the article from the salesperson to the customer, (b) the reception of the article by the customer, and (c) the result, i.e. the customer's possession of the article. They then show that the metonymic coding of the speech acts that characteristically occur during these stages is partially dependent on the structural resources of the language in question (see also Brdar & Brdar-Szabó for grammatical constraints on metonymy). For example, stage (i) of the shopping scenario is typically referred to in both languages by means of a metonymy, which, in a HAVE-language like English, is POSSESSION FOR AVAILABILITY (e.g., Do you have 40-watt light bulbs?) and, in a BE-language like Japanese, Existence for availability (40 watto no denkyuu (wa) ari-masu ka 'Are there 40-watt light bulbs?'). Radden and Seto also point out that in English a question about the possession and thus (metonymically induced) availability of an article can stand for the requested transaction itself, i.e. stage (ii) of the shopping scenario, whereas in Japanese the same pragmatic function is achieved by means of a question about the existence of the article. The authors demonstrate that politeness factors may actually cut across the typological properties of languages. Thus an English speaker would avoid a direct expression of stage (iia) (#Give me "The Times"!) whereas in other HAVE-languages, such as Lithuanian and Croatian, this wording would not be considered inappropriate; analogously in a BE-language like Hungarian the literal translation of the above would be infelicitous whereas in Japanese a direct reference to the requested transfer would not sound offensive if it is used in combination with deference markers.

Chapter 10, Mario Bdrar and Rita Brdar-Szabó's contribution "Metonymic Coding of Linguistic Action in English, Croatian and Hungarian," is a detailed study of English sentences like *The President was clear on the matter* and their equivalents in Croatian and Hungarian. What is peculiar about the verbal locution to be clear on some matter is that it is conventionally used to refer to a speech act ('to speak clearly on some matter') where the speech act itself is not explicitly coded in the expression but conventionally evoked via a metonymy manner (of linguistic action) for linguistic action. The degree of conventionalization of this metonymy varies from a strongly implicated but still cancelable target meaning to complete lexicalization that defies defeasibility. Brdar and Brdar-Szabó demonstrate that this predicational metonymy is much more constrained in Croatian and Hungarian than in English. Thus the above sentence would have to be rendered in Hungarian as Az elnök világosan nyilatkozott ezzel az üggyel kapcsolatban ('The president spoke clearly on that matter'). Both Croatian and Hungarian are more likely to explicitly code

the linguistic action itself. The authors see a more general typological tendency for these languages to avoid predicational metonymies, whereas referential metonymies of the type Beijing's difficulties in Tibet are also systematically exploitable in Croatian and Hungarian. Bdrar and Brdar-Szabó suggest an implicational relationship between referential and predicational metonymies: Languages that systematically exploit predicational metonymies will also make extensive use of referential metonymies; some languages will be largely restricted to referential metonymies. In fact, Brdar and Brdar-Szabó argue that cases such as I'll be brief (without a complement like about NP), which actually have literal counterparts in Croatian and Hungarian, are really reducible to referential metonymies of the type SPEAKER FOR UTTERANCE, a subtype of the more general metonymy AGENT FOR ACTION. These cases would thus not constitute counterexamples to the generalization proposed by the authors.

5. Prospects for studies in metonymy

The authors of this volume share the belief that the study of conceptual metonymy provides important insights into language use and language structure. Metonymy appears to be on a par with metaphor as far as its conceptual import is concerned. Promising projects for further research on the role of metonymy in natural language would include a more systematic comparison of the exploitation of metonymies from a typological perspective (cf. Radden & Seto, Brdar & Brdar-Szabó, this volume), the role of metonymic thinking in language acquisition, discourse-pragmatic conditions of metonymic uses, constraints on the creation of metonymic links, and, last not least, a hierarchically organized taxonomy of conceptual metonymies found in human language.

Notes

- 1. Compare e.g. Verschueren's (1999:1) definition of pragmatics as the "study of linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their usage properties and processes" [italics in original] with Levinson's (2000) neo-Gricean approach and Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory (1995).
- 2. This argument has in fact been made by an anonymous reviewer of the volume.
- 3. That metonymic principles guide the production and comprehension of pragmatic inferences is argued for by Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez Hernández (this volume) for explicature derivation and by Barcelona (this volume) for more indirect pragmatic implications.

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Part I

The place of metonymy in cognition and pragmatics