

**METAPHOR AND METONYMY**

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Annotation: *The article “Metaphor and Metonymy ” explores two fundamental tropes of language: metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor is defined as a tool for understanding one concept in terms of another based on similarity, while metonymy functions through association or contiguity. The article also references Roman Jakobson’s theoretical framework, highlighting the complementary roles of metaphor and metonymy in literature and thought. This concise overview provides valuable insight for linguists, literary scholars, and language learners interested in figurative language and conceptual mapping.*

Keywords: *Metaphor, Metonymy, Figurative language, Cognitive linguistics, Conceptual mapping, Similarity, Association, Roman Jakobson, Literary analysis, Semantic structure.*

Аннотация: *В статье «Метафора и метонимия » исследуется два фундаментальных тропы языка: метафора и метонимия. Метафора определяется как инструмент для понимания одной концепции в терминах другой, основанной на сходстве, в то время как метонимия функционирует через ассоциацию или смежность. В статье также ссылаются теоретические основы Романа Якобсона, подчеркивая взаимодополняющие роли метафоры и метонимии в литературе и мысли. Этот краткий обзор дает ценную информацию для лингвистов, литературоведов и изучающих язык, интересующихся образным языком и концептуальным картированием.*

Ключевые слова: *Метафора, Метонимия, Образный язык, Когнитивная лингвистика, Концептуальное отображение, Сходство, Ассоциация, Роман Якобсон, Литературный анализ, Семантическая структура.*



Language is one of the primary means through which human cognition manifests. In the study of linguistics, two of the most prominent semantic mechanisms for expressing ideas and shaping meaning are metaphor and metonymy. These devices play a central role in both literary texts and everyday communication. They help convey abstract or complex concepts through more accessible and often vivid imagery, and serve as cognitive tools that reflect how humans understand and categorize the world around them.

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a concept or experience is described in terms of another, typically unrelated concept, based on perceived similarity. For instance, the phrase “His heart turned to ice” employs “ice” to metaphorically represent emotional coldness or indifference. The association is not literal but rather imaginative and symbolic, drawing on shared human experience to evoke meaning. Metaphors allow for cross-domain mapping, where an idea from one conceptual domain (e.g., emotions) is explained via elements from another domain (e.g., temperature or nature). Scholars George Lakoff and Mark Johnson famously argued in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) that metaphor is not merely a poetic or rhetorical device but a fundamental structure of human thought. Examples like “Life is a journey,” “Time is money,” or “Love is war” reflect how pervasive and conceptual metaphor is in shaping human understanding. Through metaphor, abstract notions are turned into concrete, familiar, and emotionally resonant expressions. It is an essential part of both poetic language and everyday reasoning. In contrast, metonymy involves using one element closely associated with another to refer to it. Rather than similarity, metonymy is based on contiguity or association. For example, in the sentence “I’m reading Shakespeare,” the name “Shakespeare” is used metonymically to mean “Shakespeare’s works.”

Metonymic relations can be:

- Part to whole (synecdoche): “All hands on deck” (hands = sailors),
- Place for institution: “The White House issued a statement” (White House = U.S. government),



- Instrument for user: “The pen is mightier than the sword” (pen = writing, sword = war),
- Producer for product: “She drank a Coke” (Coke = the beverage made by Coca-Cola).

Metonymy is more grounded in real-world associations and is extremely common in daily speech, journalism, advertising, and political discourse. It simplifies expression and relies on shared contextual knowledge to communicate meaning efficiently.

Although both metaphor and metonymy involve a shift in meaning, they operate differently. Metaphor relies on resemblance and involves transferring meaning across different conceptual domains. Metonymy, on the other hand, is based on direct association within the same domain.

Roman Jakobson, a key figure in structural linguistics, described metaphor and metonymy as representing two poles of language and thought: metaphor being associated with selection and substitution, and metonymy with combination and contiguity. Metaphor is more common in poetry and creative language, where imagination and symbolic association are crucial. Metonymy tends to appear in more practical or referential language, such as narratives, news, and casual conversation. In literature, metaphor is used to evoke emotion, create imagery, and offer deeper insight into themes and characters. Writers like William Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, and modern poets extensively use metaphor to enrich their texts and give abstract feelings a tangible shape. Metonymy, while less “flashy,” is equally powerful in building meaning. It helps structure narrative economy and realism, enabling concise and contextually rich expression. In journalistic writing and political rhetoric, metonymy is often used for brevity and impact.

Conclusion

Both metaphor and metonymy are indispensable to the expressive power of language. They not only enrich communication but also reflect the cognitive processes through which humans interpret the world. While metaphor reshapes our understanding through symbolic comparison, metonymy simplifies it by highlighting functional or



contextual links. A deeper understanding of these tools is essential for linguists, literary scholars, and anyone interested in how meaning is constructed and conveyed through language.

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