

## **A study of metonymical and metaphorical shift of meaning In selected examples**

**دراسة للاختلاف الاستعاري والكنائي في تغيير المعنى في أمثلة مختارة**

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### **الملخص**

لوحظ أن اللغة قابلية اكتساب أو فقدان المفردات المعجمية ، علاوة على ذلك فإن المعنى أو التمثيل الدلالي للكلمات يمكن أن يتغير ليصبح بالمعنى الواسع أو المحدد أو المتغير . قد تتعرض المفردة لتغير في المعنى ، فمثلاً كلمة "الفتى" مرة تعني شاباً من الفتوة ومرة تعني المقاتل الشجاع . وكلمة "ساذج" استعملت لتعني سعيد في الانكليزية القديمة ولكن المعنى تغير في الفترة الوسطى ليعني "بسيط" إما في فترة الانكليزية الحديثة فان المعنى تغير ليصبح يعني "أحمق"

تحاول الدراسة الحالية إن تبين الاختلاف الاستعاري والكنائي لتغيير المعنى في الأمثلة المختارة . افترض إن الكناية والاستعارة هي من الأساليب البلاغية ، الأول يعمل بالمعنى المجاور للمفاهيم بينما الآخر يعمل بالتشبيه . ان الخطوات التي اتبعت في الدراسة هي اكتشاف المعنى الدلالي ، التعريف بأنواعه واكتشاف التغيير الاستعاري والكنائي مبيناً الاختلافات والترابط في معنى الأمثلة المختارة .

تحليل المعطيات بين ان الاستعارة والكناية بالرغم من اختلافهم يمكن ان يعملوا سوية . الاستعارة تنتج مفهوم جديد للهدف المقصود مفهوم مشابه للمجال الأصلي للمعنى لأنه يحتوي على عناصر معينة من المفهوم الأصلي . تختلف الكناية عن الاستعارة فعندما نتحدث كنائياً فإننا نبقي في المجال ذاته فنستعير عنصراً من المفهوم الأصلي ولكن ارتباطاته بعناصر أخرى تكون واردة . تبقى العلاقات بين الأشياء العامة والمفاهيم التي

تعود إليها ممكنة في مجال واحد فالتحول الكنائي يغير معنى الكلمة من المفهوم أو المعنى القياسي إلى عنصر أساسي أو جوهري للمفهوم الضمني. وأخيرا فإنه من الضروري على وجه الحصر ملاحظته التبادل المشترك والمكمل بين الكناية والاستعارة وفي مجال التطبيق فأنهما يتفاعلان لانهما تعزيز تماسك وترابط قدره الكلام.

#### **Abstract**

It has been seen that a language may gain or lose lexical items . Additionally , the meaning or the semantic representation of words may change, by becoming broader or narrower, or by shifting. A lexical item may undergo a shift in meaning . For example, the word knight once meant 'youth' but shifted to 'mounted man -at- arms'. Silly used to mean 'happy' in old English. By the middle English period it shifted to mean "naïve", and only in modern English does it mean 'foolish'.

The present study tries to identify the main differences between the metonymical and metaphorical shift of meanings used in the selected examples. It is hypothesized that both metonymy and metaphor are figures of speech; the former works by contiguity(association) between two concepts, while the latter works by the similarity between them. The steps to be followed in this study are exploring semantic change , identifying its types and investigating the metonymical and metaphorical shift of meanings, showing their differences and correlation used in the selected examples.

The analysis of the data has shown that metaphor and metonymy, though quite different in their mechanism, may work together seamlessly. A metaphor produces a new concept in the target domain, a concept that is similar to the origin concept of the source domain because it contains certain elements of the source concept. Metonymy is quite different from metaphor- when talking metonymically, the same domain is remained. An element from the original concept is borrowed, but the links to the other elements are remained. The relations between the general objects and the things or aspects belonging to it are only possible within one domain. A metonymical shifts shift the reference of the word from a standard referent to an essential element of the underlying concept. Finally, it is necessary to observe that metonymy and metaphor are not mutually exclusive, but rather complemented one another . They are

interacted in practice to achieve and enhance cohesion and coherence of the utterances.

### **1. Semantic change**

Semantic change in the context of words describes the gradual shift in the conventional meaning of words, as people use them in new types of context and this usage become normal. Often in the course of semantic change, a word shifts its meaning to the point that the modern meaning is radically different from the original usage. In diachronic(or historical) linguistics, semantic change is a change in one of the meanings of a word. Every word has a variety of senses and connotations which can be added , removed or altered over time, often to the extent that cognates across space and time have very different messages. For example, 'awful' originally meant awe- in spring ,filling(someone) with deep awe, as in the awful majesty of the creature. At some point, it came to mean breath-takingly bad; so bad that it fills a person with awe and amazement . People began to use the word in contexts where the awe felt was due to something's extreme negative qualities, as in awfully bad performance . But now, the intensity of the expression has faded somewhat and an awful tasting medicine need not inspire any deep sense of awe. The word in informal usage now just means 'very bad'. Similar developments are found with terrible 'inspiring terror' and its onetime synonym terrific. The first kept its negative meaning, but lost some of its intensity; the second been associated with positive qualities and only then weakened its intensity. The result is that the later two words have gone from being synonyms to almost exact antonyms (Blank,1999:61).

#### **1.1 Types of semantic change:**

A number of classification schemes have been suggested for semantic change. The first major works of modern times were Reisig (1839), Darmesteter(1887),Breal(1899),Paul(1880),Stern(1931),Bloomfield(1933 ) and Stephen Ullmann. Studies beyond the analysis of single words have been started with the word field analysis of Trier(1931), who claimed that every semantic change of a word would also affect all other words in a lexical field. His approach was later refined by Coseriu(1964). The most widely accepted scheme in the English –speaking academic world is from Bloomfield(1933), who classifies these types of semantic change as the following:

##### **1.1.1 Narrowing**

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It is a change from superordinate level to subordinate level. Narrowing is the opposite of extension. If the area of the meaning of a word becomes smaller than before , it is known as narrowing. At one time the word 'accident' for example, was a word for any chance event, for anything that happened all on a sudden –but nowadays this word is generally used for an unfortunate and undesirable chance event. The word 'corpse' is a graphic variation of the old French cors, which meant body. The medial 'p' and the final 'e' in this word were inserted much later . The original meaning of this word can still be seen in the word corpus borrowed from Latin. With the passage of time the meaning of this word become restricted in its scope and in present-day English it is used only for dead bodies (internet:2).

The noun 'desert' referring to a sandy area with little or no rain and the verb desert meaning leave, abandon, forsake are both derived from the same Latin root and initially the noun desert was used for any place which had been abandoned for any reason. In modern English usage, this word is used only for those uninhabited places where there is little or no rain. In Latin, the word 'doctor' was used for a teacher, for someone who was known for his scholarship, for his expertise in any of the branches of knowledge.

Now, the word is used for someone who has specialized in medicine. In old English and early middle English, the word 'girl' was used either for a youth or for a maiden but later the meaning of this word was narrowed and its use was restricted to female children. In old English, the word 'hund' has been restricted and now it refers only to hunting dogs of a particular referred to dogs in general but in modern English, the meaning of this word

breed. Liquor and liquid are both derived from the same Latin root and in its early use the word liquor was used for any liquid substance but since about the eighteenth century this word used mostly for alcoholic drink.

The old English word meant 'food'. That old meaning of this word is still preserved in the word "sweetmeat" and in old proverbs like 'one man's meat is another man's poison'. Originally, the word science meant 'knowledge' but since about the 14th century, this word has been used in the restricted sense of technical knowledge obtained on the basis of observation and experiment. Until about the end of the fourteen century,

an undertaker was a helper, someone who undertook to do anything that he was asked to do. In present day English , the word undertaker is used only for a funeral undertaker (ibid).

### **1.1.2 Widening**

It is a change from subordinate level to superordinate level. In such cases, the meaning of a word is changed in its scope. The denotation of the word becomes wider and the new meaning of the word refers to a much wider range of people, objects or activities than before. In historical semantics, this phenomenon is known as extension or widening. The word "allergy" for ,example, was first introduced as a medical term. If a person became ill because of eating or coming in a contact with something which did not cause any illness in others , he was said to be allergic to that material. During the last few years the meaning of this word has been extended in its scope and now it refers to a strong dislike for something (Thakur,1999:130).

In middle English, the word 'bridde', for example, meant 'young birdling'. Bird, the modern English form of that word, refers to birds in general, young or old alike. The word 'butcher' has its origin in bouc, the French word for a goat and originally the word butcher referred to someone who slew the goat . These days this word is used for someone who slaughters, cuts up and sells animals like goats, sheep and cows for food. The etymological meaning of the word companion 'someone who shares breads with' but in modern English this word is used for someone whom you spend time with, someone who shares the load of your professional work or your joys and sorrows or the boredom of your journey (ibid).

The word 'junk' was originally used by sailors to refer to old and discarded ropes. In present-day English, this word has acquired a much wider range of meaning and can be used for anything that is considered useless. In early modern English, the word 'rubbish' meant rubble but in present-day English its meaning has become much wider and now it refers to anything that is worthless. Originally, the word 'sail' was used in the context of a boat moved by the wind but the meaning of this word has been extended and now it can also be used in the context of a steamship or a ship propelled by a diesel engine. The English word 'uncle' was derived , through French, from the Latin word avunculus, which meant 'the mother's brother' , patruus being the word for 'father's brother'. In

modern English , the word 'uncle' refers not only to one's mother's brother but also to one's father's brother. The word 'virtue' is another example. This word is derived from the Latin word *virtus*, which meant 'manliness'. The Latin word *virtus* is a derivative of Latin *vir* from which words like *virile* and *virility* are derived. *Virtue*, a modern derivative of *vir*, refers not only to the quality of manliness but to good moral qualities in general (Blank,1999:70).

### **1.1.3 Degeneration**

Degeneration is the process by which a word's meaning worsens or degenerates, coming to represent something less favorable than it originally did. It is also called pejoration ,and some philologists use the term deterioration for such semantic changes. In old English, the word 'crafty' meant skilful but during the last few centuries the meaning of the word has been drastically changed and nowadays this word is used for cunning people, people skilled in deceiving others. Until about the 13th, century the word *cunning* was used for a learned person. In the 14th, century the meaning of this word underwent a slight modification and was used for persons who were skillful, but not necessary wise. In modern English this word is used for those who are clever at deceiving others (Blank,1999:75).

The word 'knave' is one of the numerous examples of this phenomenon in English. In modern English, the word *knave* means a 'dishonest man'. In old English, this word did not have an elevated meaning either but it did not have at that time the pejorative connotations that it has these days. In old English the word 'villain' was used for peasants who lived a simple and rustic life in villages but in modern English it is a word used for scoundrels (internet: 3).

Most of the words in Suffield's poem have undergone pejoration. For instance, the word 'silly' begins Suffield's poem and meant in old English times 'blessed'. How did a word meaning a 'blessed' come to mean silly? Well, since people who are blessed are often innocent and guileless, the word gradually came to mean 'innocent'. And some of those who are innocent might be innocent because they haven't the brains to be anything else. And some of those who are innocent might be innocent because they knowingly reject opportunities for temptation. In either cases, since the more worldly-wise would take advantage of their

opportunities, the innocent must therefore be foolish, which of course is the current primary meaning of the word 'silly' ( Geeraets,2002:9).

#### **1.1.4 Amelioration**

Amelioration is the process by which a word's meaning improves or becomes elevated, coming to represent something more favorable than it is originally referred to. Some philologists use the term elevation instead of amelioration. In Greek, the word *angelos* meant 'messenger'. It was because of the influence of Christianity that the meaning of this word was elevated from 'messenger' to 'God's messenger'. The word 'chancellor' is derived from the late Latin *cancellarius* meaning 'porter , secretary'. In Latin this word was used for a person stationed at the bar for a law court. But nowadays the chancellor of the Exchequer is the person having the highest responsibility for finance in Britain and a vice-chancellor is the head of a university. The word 'knight' is a good example of this semantic phenomenon. In modern English, this word is a word of great respect in the sense that in Britain the title of knighthood is conferred only on a person who has made remarkable achievements in his field or has done something remarkable for his country. The person who has been knighted is entitled to using 'Sir' before his name. The old English ancestor of this word did not have that elevated meaning. The word *chihit*, the old English form of knight, meant only 'boy'. Even now the German word *knecht* means 'servant'. Similarly, in popular Latin the word 'marshal' was used for a servant who looked after horses. In the united states, these days, a marshal is a police officer who looks after a particular area. In many other countries the word 'marshal' is used for the highest officer of the army or the air force. The word minister is another good example of amelioration. Very few ministers feeling proud of their status in society these days know that the word used for them is originally a Latin word and that in Latin it meant 'servant'. In the 13th century, the word 'nice' meant foolish , ignorant. During the last few centuries, the meaning of this word has undergone a radical change and nowadays it is used in the Case of pleasant and agreeable persons and things. In Greek, ' paradise' was a word for a park, a garden. Because of the impact of Christianity, the meaning of this word was elevated , like the meaning of angel, and now the word means 'heaven', the place where good people hope to go after their death. ( internet:3).

#### **1.1.5 Weakening**

The change in the semantic content of certain words can be understood in terms of a movement from a stronger to a weaker meaning. Nowadays, if someone says that he is astonished or astounded, he meant that he is amazed. The word "astonish", like the word "astound" expresses a high degree of surprise but nothing more than surprise. Similarly, when it is said that someone is stunned to hear the news of someone's death, it is meant to say that he is shocked to hear that news. To be stunned is to be shocked or pained; the word stun does not mean anything stronger than that. The etymology of these three words traced that each of these words has been derived from the Latin root *tonare*, which means 'thunder'. Thus, it can be deduced from the etymology of these words that at one time their meaning was much more intense than what it is today. To be astonished at that time was to be struck by thunder (Hebron,2004: 148).

The word 'pest' the diminutive of pestilence, is another good example of this semantic phenomenon. In modern English, this word is used for insects, rats or other small animals like snails which change crops or food supplies. The etymology of this word can be traced back to the Latin word *pestis*, which meant 'plague'. In the sixteenth century, the word pest was used in that etymological sense only. Its meaning changed with the passage of time and its present-day meaning is a much weaker from its original meaning (internet:5).

During the fourteenth century, 'quite' meant 'completely, entirely'. An expression like 'I quite agree with you' that early meaning of this word is still retained. In present-day expressions like 'quite good' (meaning good to a certain extent), we find a weakened version of that early meaning (ibid).

#### **1.1.6 Intensification**

In many cases, the change of meaning is described in terms of intensification, change from a weaker to a stronger meaning. During the middle English period the word *disease* meant 'lack of ease, discomfort'. Later on, this word acquired a greater intensity of meaning and nowadays it is used as a synonym for 'illness'. The old English word "kill", for example, meant strike, beat, torment". It was in the 14th century that this word acquired the more intensive meaning of 'put to death'. Some linguists (e.g., Bloomfield) use the term *litotes* for this type of semantic change (Hebron,2004:147).



### 1.1.7 Synecdoche

Synecdoche is another substitute, not operating between separate concepts but between two elements of the same concept: in other words , we refer to a thing by naming a part of it , or a greater thing to which it belongs. The basic principle is one of scale: small stands for big, big for small. Mortals for men substitutes a large set for a smaller one : two thousand souls for people is little for big. A vehicle referring to a car is a synecdoche as there are other kinds of vehicles besides car; silver for money substitutes the substance for the thing made from it. In each case, there is a perceived shared identity between the two things (Hebron,2004: 148).

In certain cases the meaning of a part is shifted to the meaning of the whole or the meaning of the whole is shifted to the meaning of its parts. Bloomfield(1933) uses the term synecdoche, a term used in the traditional rhetoric, for semantic changes of this type.

The word 'town', for example, is the modern English version of the old word tun derived from the old high Germanic word tunaz, which meant 'fence, hedge'. Fences were parts of towns. With the passage of time the meaning of the part was transferred to the meaning of the whole ( internet:4).

The word 'redbreast' is another example introduced here. This word is used for the bird called robin, though it refers only to a part of its body . This kind of semantic change can be illustrated with the help of the secondary meanings of certain words referring to parts of the human body. The primary meaning of the word ' hand' , for example, is 'the extremity of the arm including the palm and the fingers'. Over the years, this word has developed a number of secondary meanings, one of the secondary meanings being ' a person, an individual man or woman'. In all probability, it was in the seventeenth century writings that this meaning of the word appeared for the first time. The use of this word in sentences like the following can be quoted as examples of this meaning (Thakur,1999:120).

The hands that rocks the cradle rules the word  
The devil finds work for idle hand to do

### 1.1.8 Metonymy

Metonymy is the use of one word with the meaning of another with which it is typically associated. Metonymy works by contiguity rather

than similarity. The name for one thing is applied with the meaning of a different, but spatially and/or temporally associated thing. When someone uses metonymy, they don't wish to transfer qualities as you do with metaphor, but to indirectly refer to one thing with another word for a related thing. The common expression "the white house said today ....." is a good example metonymy. The term white house actually refers to the authorities who work in the building called the white house (internet:2).

Metonymy is a figure of speech where one word is substituted for a related words. The relationship might be that of cause and effect, container and contained, part and whole. For instance, Shakespeare's comment "is it not strange that sheep's guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?". Uses 'sheep guts' to refer to the music produced by harp strings. Had guts come to mean 'music', then the meaning would have shifted due to metonymy (internet:3).

Crystal(2003, 291) defines metonymy as a term used to refer to a figure of a speech in which the name of an attribute of an entity is used in place of the entity itself. People are using metonyms when they talk about the bottle (for the drinking alcohol) or the violins( in the second violins are playing well).

George Yule (1996,122) sees metonymy as a relationship whereby the meaning of a word is recognized, a relationship based simply on a close connection in every day experience. That close connection can be based on a container- content relation(bottle- coke; can- juice), a whole-part relation( car-wheels; house-roof) or a representative-symbol relationship(king-crown; the president- the white house).

Many other examples of metonymy depend on our inferences, context, and background knowledge. It is our familiarity with metonymy that makes him drink the whole bottle easy to understand, although it sounds absurd literally ( i.e. he drank the liquid, not the glass object). We also accept the white house announced .....or Downing street protested....without being puzzled that buildings appear to be talking. You use metonymy when you talk about filling up the car, having a roof over your head, answering the door, giving someone a head, or needing some wheels(Yule,1996:122).

### **1.1.9 Metaphor**

A metaphor is a trope, or figurative, in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes a new

meanings. It is based on similarity and it originates from the Greek word ( carrying from one place to another). (internet:10).

Metaphor is a complex cognitive phenomenon. It is traditionally thought of as a kind of comparison, although how one can make instant and internally consistent comparisons between quite disparate things is not really understood. No artificial system, such as models in artificial intelligence, can decode metaphors, and certainly no such system can produce them. Examples of metaphors in every day language abound. The expression you bask in the sunshine of my life compares someone's beloved with sunshine; something that is impossible in literal terms unless that person becomes a ball of nuclear fusion. The expression candle in the wind likens life to a candle flame that may easily be blown out by any passing draft or gust. The fragility of life is thus emphasized- but metaphor is not just associated with poetic language or especially high-flown literary language. Metaphor is an extremely common and pervasive process in language usage and its results frequently become conventionalized(internet:2).

Metaphor is considered by cognitive scientists to be a very powerful conceptual tool because it allows language users to express abstract concepts by referring to more concrete concepts which are more accessible and understandable. For example, many words for concepts without visible correlates, such as temporal terms, are taken from the vocabulary of spatial language. The words long and short describe a spatial dimension (of, for example, a table) but they also describe a span of invisible time(ibid).

## **2. Metonymical shift: a change in the meaning of words**

In some cases, the meaning of an object changes in such a way as to be applicable to another object associated with it. In old English, the word *ceace*, for example, meant 'jaw'. The meaning of the word as well as its spelling has changed during the last few centuries and it has been handed down to us in the form of the modern English word *cheek*. Similarly, the word '*joue*' in the old French meant 'cheek'. The meaning of this word changed as it moved from French to English and from the early stages of English to modern English. The English word *jaw* is the modern English descendent of the word in old French. So, the word that meant *jaw* during the old English period means *cheek* in modern English

and the word that meant cheek in old French means jaw in modern English (Thakur,1999:142).

The English word 'bead' is another example of this kind of semantic change . Bedu, the old English ancestor of this word, meant ' prayer'. It was customary during the medieval period, as it is at many places even now , to count one's prayer with the help of a string of beads. The word beads acquired its present meaning because of this close association between beads and prayers at that time. Another example to show this change is the word 'horn'. For along time during the old English period, horns of animals were used for making musical instruments. Because of this close association between the musical instrument and the material out of which the instrument was made , a shift of meaning took place . and horn became the name of the musical instrument itself. Nowadays horns are made of brass or some other metal and not of the horns of animals but the word horn continues to be used for musical instruments of certain types(ibid).

### **2.1 The Process of Metonymical shift**

To explain metonymical shift, let us take many examples . The word 'university' in the following example shows many different readings and shift in the meaning:

**A-**The university lies in the eastern part of the town.

**B-**The university has closed down the faculty of agriculture.

**C-**The university starts again on 15 April.

In (A) the subject 'university' refers to the campus, to the administration(institutional body) in (B), and to the courses at the university in (C).

If we take a clear look at the meaning shifts involved, the term 'the university' , in each case, can be seen to refer to something that belong s to a university. As it is already shown, the university refers to campus, administration and courses. We do not have to know each of them. Many other words with similar meanings exhibit the same kind of variation. Schools, opera, parliament.... The same kind of variation is parallel in other languages. Apparently, a term that denotes objects of a certain kind can also be used to refer to certain things that usually belong to such objects. The use of terms is called metonymy: a term that primarily refers to objects of a certain kind is used to refer instead to things that belong to objects of this kind . The corresponding type of

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meaning shift will be referred to as metonymical shift. A metonymical shift shifts the reference of the word from a standard referent , a university, to an essential element of the underlying concept. A concept which specifies that a university is an educational institution with a location, teaching , teachers students, an administration, and so on (Lobner,2002:49) .

Here is the second example concerning metonymical shift of meaning:

James Joyce is difficult to understand.

This sentence has at least four readings. It may mean the writings of

James Joyce are difficult to understand when the sentence is related to

James Joyce the writer. But the sentence might as well mean that the way he talks; the way he expresses himself ; or the way he acts is difficult to understand . In the other readings, it refers to the writer himself. In principle, all names of persons can be used for referring to their published work. The interpretation in context is due to a meaning shift generally available for all names of people (ibid:48).

The third example is presented here to show how the term 'fishing' help clarify the distinction between metonymical and metaphorical approach. The phrase 'to fish pearls' uses metonymy , drawing from 'fishing' the idea of taking things from the ocean. What is carried across from 'fishing fish' to 'fishing pearls' is the domain of metonymy(Driven,1996:2).

In contrast, the metaphorical phrase 'fishing for information' transfers the concept of fishing into a new domain . If someone is 'fishing' for information, we do not imagine that the person is anywhere near the ocean, rather we transpose elements of the action of fishing(waiting, hoping to catch something that cannot be seen) into a new domain (a conversation).Thus, metonymy works by calling up a domain of use and an array of associations(in the example above , boats , the ocean, gathering life from the sea), whereas metaphor picks a target set of meanings and transfers them to a new domain of use (ibid).

### **3. Metaphorical shift: extension in the meaning of words**

Metaphorical extension is the extension of meaning in a new direction through popular adoption of an originally metaphorical meaning. Metaphorical extension is almost a natural process undergone by every word. It is even not seen as meaning change. In its less obvious

instances, it is not seen as extending the meaning of a word. For example, the word illuminate originally meant ' to light up' , but has broadened to mean ' to clarify' , ' to edify'. These meanings seem so natural as to be integral parts of the words , where senses such as 'to celebrate ' and 'to adorn a page with designs' seem like more obvious additions(internet:3).

In many cases the shift of meaning operates through metaphor in the sense that the new meaning of the word is a metaphorical extension of its old meaning. The word bitter, for example, is derived from the Germanic word 'bitan' which meant 'bite'. The sense of biting was later transferred metaphorically to the word bitter. So, when we say that a particular item of a food is bitter in taste we say in that metaphorical sense that item of food bites us when we eat it. Similarly, a hippopotamus (hippos=horse; potamus=river) is so called because the people in ancient Greece thought it to be partly like a tiger and partly like a lion . The Latin word aster means 'star' .The meaning of this word was metaphorically transferred to the name of the flower called aster. This flower is so called because it looks like stars. Daisy is a modernized form of an old English expression meaning 'day's eye'. Daisies are so called because they open their petals in the morning and close in the evening. The word carnation is derived from the Latin caro, which means 'flesh'. The carnation is so called because it has the colour of flesh. A pansy is a garden plant which gives flower with very large , rounded petals. The word pensee is the French word for "thoughtful", pansies are so called because they look like thoughtful faces(Walpole,1940:142).

### **3.1 The process of metaphorical shift**

To clarify this process , the following sentences are introduced which are

taken from an article in an American news magazine (news week,19 October1998,p.30):

**A-** They were china's cowboys.

**B-** The swaggering , fast-talking dealmakers threw around grand projects and big figures as if many would never stop flowing.

**C-** Then the sheriff came to town.

**D-** Last week Beijing said it was shutting down one of the flashiest in investment institutions.

These sentences are about Chinese investment institutions and they are full of metaphorical language . Although the first sentence can

be literally read, shows that the next sentence shows that (a) refers to certain 'deal makers'. The expression China's cowboys is, therefore, used metaphorically: the persons referred to are not claimed to be cowboys, but to be like cowboys. In this case, according to (b), they resemble cowboys because they are swaggering, fast-talking and throwing things around. The metaphor has another development in (c) when the sheriff appears. Sentence (d) explains who the 'sheriff' is: Beijing (the name of the Chinese capital metonymically stands for the Chinese government). The sentence is literally interpreted away from the metaphor. (Lobner, 2002: 49).

Metaphor is defined as concepts, notions, models, pictures from one domain, the source domain, that are borrowed for the description of things in another domain, the target domain. In these examples (as illustrated in table 1) the source domain is the wild west and the target domain is the international investment scene of China. Every metaphor is the construction of a parallel: the deal makers are likened to cowboys in certain respects, mainly their public behaviour, and the Chinese government takes the role of the Sheriff in exerting its authority. As a whole, metaphorical language can be characterized as talking about things in the target domain in terms of corresponding things in the source domain (ibid).

A metaphor produces a new concept in the target domain, a concept that is similar to the original concept of the source domain because it contains certain elements of the source concept. Metonymy is quite different from metaphor. When talking metonymically, the same domain is remained. An element from the original concept is borrowed, but the links to the other elements are remained. In the previous example University in the campus meaning remains immediately related to university in its institution meaning, James Joyce, work remains related to the person James Joyce. The relations between the general objects and the things are aspects belonging to it are only possible within one domain (ibid:50).

As with metonymical shifts, the meaning variation caused by metaphorical use is not a matter of lexical ambiguity. We would not say that the word cowboy is lexically ambiguous between cowboy and someone who is not a cowboy but in certain respects like a cowboy. Words that can undergo metaphorical shifts are tens of thousands.

Metaphorical shifts in other languages occur in the same way as in English (ibid:51).

#### **4. The Distinction and correlation of metaphor and metonymy**

Metaphor is the substitution of words based on similarity while metonymy is the association of words based upon contiguity. Metaphor utilizes condensation or suppression of ideas while metonymy uses combination of ideas . In using metaphor the meaning of the word is being transferred to the metaphorical word being used . however, in metonymy no qualities are being shifted or conveyed from the original word. A metaphor extends a word through similarity of thoughts or meaning while metonymy extends a particular word based on association (internet:6).

With a review to the previous examples, it is seen that the James Joyce in example(2) is relevant in one more respect . The four readings mentioned differ in the way the verb understand can be interpreted in the context. It may relate to the author's work , to his articulation, his way of expressing himself and the way he behaves . Although in each case the word 'understanding' is directed to different kinds of objects , it is reasonable to assume that the verb understand in all these cases just means understand. Not, for example , that understanding a sentence may relate to its articulation when uttered, its syntactic structure, its descriptive meaning or its utterance meaning. The different readings can be better explained if one assumes that to understand someone or something in a certain respect that is determined by the context (Lobner,2002:49).

Sometimes, metaphor and metonymy may both be at work in the same figure of speech or one could interpret a phrase metaphorically or metonymically( see table 1) . For example , the phrase 'lend me your ear' could be analyzed in a number of ways: (Geeraerts,2002:2)

A- Analyze 'ear' metonymically first 'ear' means ' attention' (ears are used to pay attention to someone's speech). Now when the phrase 'lending an ear' (attention) is heard, the base meaning of 'lend' (to let someone borrow an object) is stretched to include the lending of non-material things(attention),

B- Imagine the whole phrase literally- imagine that the speaker literally borrows the listener's ear as a physical object(and the person's



head with it). Then, the speaker has temporary possession of the listener's ear, so the listener has granted the speaker temporary control over what the listener hears. Then, interpret the phrase 'lend me your ears' metaphorically to mean that the speaker wants the listener to grant the speaker temporary control over what the listener hears.

C- The verb phrase 'lend me your ear' is analyzed metaphorically to mean 'turn your ear in my direction', since we know that ,literally , lending a body part is nonsensical. Then, analyze the motion of ears metonymically-we associate 'turning ears' with paying attention', which is what the speaker wants the listeners to do (ibid).

Here are some other examples to show the difference and connection between metonymy and metaphor:

- When a building is used metonymically to stand for the people who work in it. 'The white house is worried about..' . It is not the building that is worried about something, but the people in it. That is example of conventional type of metonymy whose meaning can be easily understood. Unconventional metonymies are usually more obscure and can only understood with reference to the context. 'Steam irons never have any trouble finding roommates'. Means that the type of person who owns a steam iron will always be in demand as a roommate (internet:7).

- It is widely believed that the most common metaphors have their basis in physical experience of the world. This experiential basis indicates an overlapping with metonymy . To have 'cold feet' when used to mean to lose courage and fail to go through with something is a metaphor indicative of intra- domain mapping and so could be said to be metonymically based . It is not wholly metonymical, however, as in the example referring to the white house (internet:1).

- 'The ham sandwich left a big tip' involves identifying the ham sandwich with the thing he or she ate and setting up a domain in which the ham sandwich refers to the person. This domain is separate from the real world, in which the phrase "ham sandwich refers to ham sandwich. This distinction between the real world and the metonymical world can be seen in this sentence : " The waitress spoke to the complaining ham sandwich and then she took it away".

This sentence does not mean sense; it uses the phrase 'ham sandwich' to refer both to the person (in the metonymic world) and a ham sandwich (in the real world). (internet:8).

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• 'Let's go to bed now'. Going to bed is typically understood metonymically in the sense of "going to sleep". This metonymic target forms part of an idealized script in our culture : when I want to sleep, I first go to bed before I lie down and fall asleep. Our knowledge of this sequence of acts is exploited in metonymy : in referring to the initial act we evoke the whole sequence of acts , in particular the central act of sleeping (ibid).

• 'Suddenly the pilot comes over the intercom' .This sentence may be interpreted metonymically in the sense that the pilot's voice comes over the intercom or it may be interpreted metaphorically in the sense that the pilot announces something over the intercom. Both interpretations are well- founded: a whole may metonymically stand for an " active zoon" part, and an action may be metaphorized as notion. So, the sentence should be analyzed as both metonymic and metaphoric (internet:9).

**Table (1 ) kinds of meaning shifts**

Text No.	Types of shift	Lexical meaning	Shifted meaning	Process of correlation
1	metonymy	The university starts in April □ educational campus Institution → administration As an object	- - - courses	Building a new concept out of an Element of the original concept
2	metonymy	James Joyce is difficult to understand □ perceive the meaning Of the verb in author's work Context is due to → way he talks Meaning shift way he Expresses himself	- - the - the	Adding conditions to the original concept. A meaning Shift which results in a special case of what the expression denotes in

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		he behave - The way	its lexical meaning.
3	metonymy + metaphor	<p>To fish pearls □ perceive the Meaning of the verb→ drawing from</p> <p>Fishing the idea of Taking things from The ocean As a literary meaning Of the verb referred to→ fishing for Information, element Of the action of fishing</p>	<p>It is a work of association within the same domain .It is a reference from standard reference to an essential element of the underlying concept.</p> <p>Picks a target set of meanings and transfers them to a new domain of use.</p>
4	metaphor	<p>They were Chine's cowboys □ man who herds cattle→ person</p>	Building a new concept in the target domain by borrowing

		Behaving like A cowboy	parts of the concept in the source domain.
5	metonymy  +  metaphor	" Lend me" your ear □ perceive the meaning→ means Of "ear" attention Lend me your ear □ as a physical → means turn your ear in Object my direction.	It is association with the same domain .we associate "turning ears " with paying attention. Building a new concept in the target domain similar to the original concept of the source domain.

## 5. Conclusions

In view of what has been discussed earlier, the following are the main findings:

1- Metaphor is the substitution of words based on similarity while metonymy is the association of words based upon contiguity. Metaphor utilizes condensation or suppression of ideas while metonymy uses combination of ideas. In using metaphor, the meaning of the word is being transferred to the metaphorical word being used. However, in metonymy no qualities are being shifted or conveyed from the original word.

2- A metaphor extends a word through similarity of thoughts or meaning while metonymy extends a particular word based on association. For

example, the sentence " he is a tiger in class" is a metaphor , here the word tiger is used in substitution for displaying an attitude of character of the person. The sentence " the tiger called his students to the meeting room" is a metonymy . Here, there is no substitution ; instead the person is associated with the a tiger for his nature.

3- Throughout the analysis of the selected examples, it can be said that the process of metonymical and metaphorical shift are used as a device to investigate and explicate the different readings of sentences and words at the level of utterance meaning that results from meaning shifts. Several types of shifts including metaphor and metonymy are illustrated to the fact that the interpretation of words and sentences in their context obeys a principle of consistent interpretation.

4- Metaphor and metonymy though quite different in their mechanism, may both be at work in the same figure of speech . In metaphorical shift a metaphor builds a new concept in the target domain by borrowing parts of the concept in the source domain. When talking metonymically , within the same domain is remained. An element from the original concept is borrowed, but the links to other elements are remained. Metonymical shifts shift the reference of the word from a standard referent, to an essential element of the underlying concept.

5- Metonymy has a referential function : a method of naming or identifying something by mentioning something else which is a component part or symbolically linked. In contrast , metaphor is a bout understanding and interpretation: it is a means to understand or explain one phenomenon by describing it in terms of another.

6- In human language, it is necessary to observe that the two are not mutually exclusive , but rather complemented one another. They are interacted in practice to achieve and enhance cohesion and coherence of the utterances.

7- Metaphoric and metonymic concepts structure not just our language , but our thoughts, attitude and actions . Also they are grounded in our experience.

8- It is necessary to observe and capture these conceptual relations of words (whether in the case of similarity or association) to understand

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many things in our life ,to facilitate communication , and to reach the intended meaning of many vocabularies and expressions.

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