THE INTERPRETATION OF METAPHOR

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to explain exactly how it is that we interpret metaphor. A brief historical overview of the substitution, comparison and interaction methods is offered. Then the basic steps within these theories are aligned with current thoughts on the interpretation of metaphor from within semantic theory. Because of the self-imposed restrictions within semantic theory, a semantic interpretation of metaphor is an extremely limited one. The problems of definition of meaning, the allowance of deviant language and the nature of the relationship between syntax and semantics are considered before adapting Samuel Levin’s *Semantics of Metaphor*. Levin offers a formula, based on semantic theory, whereby a good basic framework is provided to outline the steps involved in the understanding of metaphor.

By extending Levin’s theory and by testing this extended version against complex metaphor, a more comprehensive approach to the interpretation of metaphor is offered. Furthermore, application of the extended theory to increasingly complex metaphors reveals a consistent and predictable pattern traceable throughout the interpretation process which, in turn, can only be reflective of the organizational patterns of human thought.
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CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As metaphor so predominantly appears in so many different types of discourse, metaphor and thought seem to be interrelated. Potentially, a fuller understanding of metaphor would contribute to a better understanding of human thought and human nature. Existing theories attempt to account for particular aspects of metaphor, but within the complex, or extended metaphor numerous interactions occur. By considering the linguistic features of metaphor, both semantic and contextual, a more comprehensive and precise depiction of how we process metaphor can be offered.

To date, linguistic models have perpetuated a dichotomy between scientific/ordinary and poetic metaphor. By applying a linguistic model to poetic metaphor, I will at once dispense with the linguistic dichotomy and extend semantic theory. Furthermore, by offering a synthesis of semantic and contextual principles at work, I will demonstrate an accurate account of both the simple and the more complex or extended metaphor. This
will, in turn, reveal highly consistent patterns within the complex metaphor which support the presupposition that metaphor and thought patterns are related. Thus, essentially, I will take a linguistic approach in an attempt to outline the rhetorical or actual use of metaphor.

Initially, it is necessary to assume that the patterns within metaphor mimic or stem from the patterns of thought that lead us not only to create, but also to interpret the complexity of our creation. Metaphor is significant because the result of pairing word "A" alongside word "B" is not A + B. Rather, through interpretation, the result is an altogether new concept "C". This new concept "C" is directly in line with the "constructionist" point of view which subscribes to the position that "knowledge of reality...is a result of going beyond the information given."¹ Just how we go beyond the literal information given, A + B, to arrive at the figurative or intended "C" meaning of metaphor, is the subject of discussion here. Thus, a theoretical explanation is offered as to what exactly it is within the metaphor and the steps we go through that lead us to arrive at a standard interpretation which is the intended meaning, beyond the literal, with the resulting new concept "C". Furthermore, I am operating on the assumption that there is no differentiation between scientific or ordinary and
poetic language, as it is the use of the language and not the language itself which is distinctive.² Primarily, then, an accurate account of metaphor would describe the principles at work within the language itself and would thus account for any given usage to which the language is applied, be it scientific, poetic or just plain everyday usage.

No account of metaphor would be complete, however, without considering the three most widely held theories of metaphor: substitution, comparison and interaction. In tracing their development, it becomes evident that they are indeed influential in having formed today's highly compatible theories within semantics and pragmatics. An examination of the historical development that leads to today's views not only reveals the current trends of thought on metaphor, but also sheds light on present limitations, and thus suggests steps that need to be taken in order to extend existing theories.

It was as early as the 3rd Century B.C. that metaphor was singled out and addressed as a unique and prevalent form of expression. According to Aristotle, "proper or regular [terms] and the metaphorical...are used by everybody in conversation."³ Because Aristotle was concerned with the appropriate usage of language, he frequently strove to explain the workings of metaphor in terms of delivery, interpretability and overall
effect. It was Aristotle who initially laid the groundwork for the "comparison" and "substitution" theories of metaphor that persist even today. Furthermore, traces of the "interaction" theory, which was more fully developed in the twentieth century, can be found in his writings as well.

The comparison theory, as it is known today, basically maintains that a metaphor functions to compare or to liken one thing to another, very much in the same way that a simile operates. In the Topics, in his discussion on the nature of definition, Aristotle points out that metaphor "does make...meaning to some extent clear because of the likeness involved; for those who use metaphors do so always in view of some likeness" (emphasis mine). The use of the word likeness here is significant, for Aristotle does indeed intend that metaphor and simile be viewed as parallel, which, as we shall see later on, he makes clear in his Rhetoric.

Max Black, in his Models and Metaphors, refers to the comparison theory as "a view of metaphor as a condensed or elliptical simile." This, of course, can be traced back directly to Aristotle's own words in Rhetoric, where he states that "The simile also is a metaphor; the difference is but slight." About this "difference", Aristotle further expands by saying that metaphor differs from the simile "only in the way it
is put...it [the simile] does not say outright that 'this' is 'that'." Thus a parallel is drawn whereby the simile and the metaphor are both seen as operating in a very similar way, that is by comparing one thing to another, with the only difference being in the phrasing itself. The metaphor states the comparison directly, saying that one thing is another, while the simile makes its comparison using the words "as" or "like" in its phrasing. From Black's point of view (the comparison theory), a metaphor such as "Richard is a lion" can be translated literally as "Richard is like a lion (in being brave)".

The substitution theory has a component of literalness in it as well. While the comparison theory offers a complete paraphrase of the metaphor, the substitution theory offers a direct word-for-word replacement. For example, in the metaphor, "Richard is a lion," "lion" is directly substituted with the word "brave," and the metaphor becomes "Richard is brave." Now certainly, with metaphors as obvious as this one, the substitution theory can adequately account for such a relatively simple interpretive process. However, as is more often the case, the metaphor is not always quite as obvious, and the more extraordinary the comparison, the more complex is the process required to appropriately interpret the intended meaning of such a metaphor.
It is with this in mind that the interaction theory was developed to better account for a more complex processing of metaphor. I. A. Richards first outlined this principle of metaphorical interpretation:

...meaning [is]...the delegated efficacy of signs by which they bring together into new unities the abstracts, or aspects, which are the missing parts of their various contexts...a word is normally a substitute for (or means) not one discrete past impression but a combination of general aspects. ...In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction.  

At the basis of all this exists an acknowledgement of both the comparison and the substitution theories. For at once, there is a comparison required with "two thoughts of different things active together" and there is a substitution process whereby "a word is normally a substitute." Richards does, however, go beyond mere comparison or substitution by combining these two processes and by admitting the existence of "new unities" from a combination of general aspects." In other words, new ideas are created with a combination of features taken from the two concepts involved in the comparison format of the metaphor. This
results in a dynamic theory which has the capacity to explain more adequately the intricacies involved in the processing of metaphor.

Max Black contributes to the interaction theory further by emphasizing the "new meaning" that a metaphor creates:

[it]...is not quite its meaning in literal uses nor quite the meaning which any literal substitute would have. The new context...imposes extension of meaning...[and] the reader...must attend to both the old and new meanings together.\(^{10}\)

According to Black, we have a new meaning which is not a literal one. Black objects strongly to the notion of "literalness" in metaphor for two reasons. First, he sees the new resultant meaning as something other than literal. On the basis of this, he describes the interaction theory as being in opposition to both the comparison and substitution theories.\(^{11}\) Black sees the need to include not just the literal denotation of a word, but also its system of "associated commonplaces." He prefers to see the meaning of a word as a system of things rather than as a thing in and of itself. The system includes "associated" meanings which may be derived from some knowledge that may be commonplace or which may have been previously established by the writer. So it would appear that he is arguing to include
connotations, among other things, as part of the system of legitimate features of a word which may then be selected to interact with and ultimately to affect some change in another word.

As stated previously, Black sees the interaction theory as incompatible with comparison and substitution. Certainly, if comparison and substitution operated only with the literal denotative aspects of the words involved in the metaphor, then they would be inadequate owing to such a restriction.\textsuperscript{12} Black further objects to the comparison and substitution theories on cognitive grounds:

...the set of literal statements so obtained will not have the same power to inform and enlighten as the original [the metaphor]. ...One of the points I most wish to stress is that the loss in such cases is a loss in cognitive content; the relevant weakness of the literal paraphrase is not that it may be tiresomely prolix or boringly explicit (or deficient in qualities of style); it fails to be a translation because it fails to give the insight that the metaphor did.\textsuperscript{13}

Black may not be altogether incorrect on this matter; Aristotle's view is similar on this point. Aristotle would hold that the difference between the literal and the metaphorical would be a
matter of style and, of course, that style can do much to create
effect. Although a translation is not exactly the same as an
original, it most certainly can be acknowledged as a reasonable
substitute, and thus offers some similarity to the original. The
same is true of translation in moving from language to language.
For if it is done carefully, it can be accepted as faithful to
the original, although the translation itself can never be
exactly the same as the original. This is not to say that every
translation is a failure; it is rather the expression of a
similar concept expressed in a different mode.

Black does, however, recognize the usefulness of the
comparison and substitution theories for what he calls the more
"trivial" cases of metaphor. These so-called "trivial" metaphors
are those which operate on a much simpler level; therefore, a
direct literal replacement does no harm to the original intended
meaning. One might argue that "trivial" is not the correct word,
and that perhaps "simple" would better describe such metaphors;
however, it is useful to recognize that there are varying degrees
of complexity among metaphors. It is the interaction theory
which is capable of handling such complexity and more adequately
explaining the working principles of metaphor.

At about the same time as Richards was voicing his opinions on
meaning and metaphor, linguists were beginning to formulate
theories that would eventually bring another perspective to the study of meaning through a field of study called "semantics." Likewise, it was during the 1960's, that Black developed his theory of interaction and that semanticists started detailing the principles of their theory. It is no small coincidence that the interaction theory and some of the working principles behind semantics have a great deal in common.

Basically semantics can be defined as the study of meanings and of the meaning-relationships between the words and the varying structures within the language. In an effort to provide a theory that is fixed and empirically sound, early semanticists set up distinctions to clearly define their approach to the study of language. One of the most significant distinctions, echoed by both the Russian Formalists and the Prague School, is explained by Saussure as the "langue/parole" distinction, whereby "langue" refers to the ordinary or every day usage of language that the linguist is dealing with, while "parole" consists of such things as dialect and literature. The crucial distinction here is that parole contains extralinguistic features, which the linguist does not deal with. Modern day linguists refer to the "classical distinction" of "language" and "speech." By distinguishing between "normal" literal uses of language and "deviant," figurative uses of language, the linguist is
attempting to deal with a pure form of the language, which in turn, would lend itself well in establishing universals about the language.

But a major difficulty arises for linguists in making the distinction between normal and deviant uses of language. For in so trying to fix language as a static entity, they have restricted themselves to such an extent that they can handle only certain aspects of meaning. Fodor and Katz, for example, try to delimit meaning to the use of "dictionary" definitions. Consequently, only particular aspects of meaning are handled, and common knowledge about the subject, or associated (connotative) meanings are not allowed for within this framework. Thus, there is an inability on the part of the theory to handle the processing of expressions that are called "deviant." Fodor and Katz state the limitations as follows:

...a complete theory of this kind is not possible in principle because...it would be required that the theory represent all the knowledge speakers have about the world.

But Chomsky, aware of the shortcomings of the theory, points out that it is necessary to provide an interpretation for some of those deviances that occur, even though they are presently
seen by the theory as breaking the rules. Of particular interest here is Chomsky's reference to metaphor:

Sentences that break selectional rules can often be interpreted metaphorically...or allusively in one way or another, if an appropriate context is supplied.¹⁹

One of the key words here is context; this theoretical attention to context parallels Black's earlier argument to allow associated meaning within the realm of possible features which can be transferred from one word to another. Linguists would refer to this problem as one of defining "semantic fields".

The major problems that linguists face in establishing semantic theory are threefold. First, there is a need to align existing theories of the more detailed and rule-bound study of generative syntax with that of the still to be formed semantics. That there is a relationship between the two is certain, but the exact nature of that relationship is yet to be clearly defined. It is well known that syntax is rule-based, but this is not necessarily the case with semantics. If it could be accepted that semantics is tendency based, as John Lyons suggests²⁰, a greater flexibility would logically follow when setting up parameters for the study of semantics. (One possible link between syntax and semantics is suggested in Chapter 3, when I
discuss the role of function-words and their qualities of "interrelatedness" within the extended metaphor.

Secondly, there is a need to more clearly define meaning. If particular aspects of meaning, such as connotation, do take part in the construction of newly-formed concepts, then they most certainly must be dealt with in one form or another. It is not enough to dismiss them as trivial or as too numerous to be dealt with.

Chomsky very aptly outlines these two problems as follows:

...one should not expect to be able to delimit a large and complex domain before it has been thoroughly explored. A decision as to the boundary separating syntax and semantics (if there is one) is not a prerequisite for theoretical and descriptive study of syntactic and semantic rules. On the contrary, the problem of delimitation will clearly remain open until these fields are much better understood than they are today. Exactly the same can be said about the boundary separating semantic systems for systems of knowledge and belief....One can hardly achieve significant understanding of this matter in advance of a deep analysis of systems of semantic rules, on the one hand, and systems of belief, on the other.21
The approach to the study of meaning is, of course problematic, for as Leech points out, the semanticist would attempt to answer the question, "What does X mean?" whereas the pragmatist asks, "What did you mean by X?". Any interpretation of metaphor would, of course, have to answer both of these questions. Leech goes on to explain that:

...meaning in pragmatics is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language, whereas meaning in semantics is defined purely as a property of expressions in a given language in abstraction from particular situations, speakers, or hearers.

One of Leech's postulates highlights this difference in approach:

Semantics is rule-governed (= grammatical); general pragmatics is principle-controlled (= rhetorical).

A clear understanding of metaphor requires both approaches, but the methodology employed by semanticists sets up restrictions which severely limit their ability to handle meaning outside the literal domain. Granted, the attempt to discount any confounding variables is done in an effort to attain a valid and exact study of the language; however, when these variants are determined to be highly significant contributing factors in the normal
functioning of all language use, it is time that the definition of word meaning be more fully addressed.

Obviously, linguists must somehow make allowance for so-called "deviant" language. Most definitely, from the point of view of literature this is a concern, but if we hold Aristotle's observation that metaphor is used by everybody in conversation to be true, then "everyday" conversation (perhaps synonymous with ordinary language) is filled with metaphorical expression. Thus there is a need, as Chomsky has already pointed out, to provide interpretation for metaphor.

There has been some response on the part of the linguistic community to deal with some of these problems. Weinreich's proposal\(^25\) seemed to hold some promise in allowing the grammar to generate and accept deviant sentences of the nature discussed earlier. But, as yet, this approach has not gained recognition. This is evidenced in the numerous studies undertaken by linguists, (of which Katz (1972) is but one) in which sentence structure and the rules of generative syntax hold firm to discount deviance. In Katz's study,\(^26\) he maintains a position on deviance, whereby if the sentence does not fit into his construct of selection restrictions, the reading is blocked and thus receives no interpretation at all. The study is a most insightful one, but it does not account for deviance. Metaphor
most certainly falls into this category of deviance, as it is often disregards the literalness of the language. The sentence, "She is a bachelor," for example, could not be given a reading within Katz's restrictions, because of the incompatability in features of the [+ female] and [+ male] features of "she" and "bachelor". Metaphorically, it is easily interpreted as we quite readily drop the [+ male] requirement of "bachelor" and pick up on all the other qualities bachelorhood implies. It is this move from the literal to the non-literal that the interpretation of metaphor involves, and it is therefore this process that needs to be examined.

What would be most useful is a semantic approach that could formulate rules which reflect the way language actually works. Any true reflection of language takes into account just what it is behind the language that makes it work, and of course, that is the language users and their thought patterns.

One of the most promising studies by far has been Samuel Levin's *The Semantics of Metaphor*. In his treatment of the subject, Levin recognizes some of the major difficulties linguists must face. Although he does not try to solve all these difficulties, he does focus on a semantic interpretation of metaphor, which proves to yield some fruitful results. With some loosening of Katz's restrictions, he proposes a schema which outlines six
modes of construal. In this way he provides a good basic framework as to how we understand metaphor. With some further adaptation and extension, the working principles of metaphor can be more fully understood.

Notes


2Ortony, 1.


8Black, 36.


10Black, 39.
While I would agree that the resultant meaning goes beyond the literal aspects of the words involved, I would argue that the interaction is a constructive process whereby we begin with the literal, with that which is known. By making a comparison we select and combine features from the words involved to arrive at a new meaning, which is indeed a form of substitution. It is not a substitution of one to one literal meanings but rather a substitution from the literal, through the constructive interactive process, to the figurative or newly formed concept.

I would argue that whether we are comparing the literal or the associated meanings, a comparison is taking place, nonetheless. For what we do when we compare is hold up two objects, or in this case two words, and examine them for similarities and/or differences. Once this has been established, the next step in making sense of the metaphor is to substitute selected qualities from one word to the other, and thus we reorganize our thoughts on the matter. A substitution does indeed take place within the interaction process, and it may or may not involve literal meanings. So, in fact, comparison and substitution are not in the least incompatible with interaction, but rather are part of the actual process.

Black, 46.


18Fodor and Katz, 488-489.


20Chomsky, 159-160.


23Leech, 6.

24Leech, 5.


CHAPTER 2

SEMANTIC THEORY EXTENDED

In this chapter, Levin's semantic theory of metaphor will be outlined and related to linguists' previous attempts to deal with "deviance." The most significant aim will be to test and extend Levin's theory to provide a more comprehensive base with which the workings of metaphor can be more accurately depicted.

Basically, semantic feature theory operates on the principle that word meanings consist of features based on the particular qualities represented in the referent of the word. Nouns have been assigned "inherent" features which by definition would suggest that their qualities are somehow permanent and inseparable. Verbs, on the other hand, have "selectional" features; therefore verbs are the acting force with the ability to select only those nouns that have features compatible with their own. In this way, anomalous and contradictory statements are not generated by the grammar and deviance is avoided. Take, for example, a verb such as "gallop". It would consist of features such as [+ NONHUMAN, + MOTION], etc. The [+ NONHUMAN] feature would be a selectional restriction in that
the verb would opt to select a [+ NONHUMAN] subject. The noun "man," however, consists of the following features: [+ HUMAN, + MALE, + ADULT] etc. According to the rules of the grammar, the verb can only select a noun which has compatible features, thereby eliminating deviance in the form of anomalous or contradictory statements. In this case, when combining "man" and "gallops" it is clear that the verb's selection of subject is restricted by the [+ HUMAN] of "man" and the [+ NONHUMAN] attribute of "gallops". This, then, would be viewed as a selection restriction which blocks the combinatorial ability of the two items involved.

If we strictly adhere to these rules as they have been set up, it is logically obvious why a statement such as "The man gallops" is problematic. This apparent conflict between the [+ human] and the [+NONHUMAN] attributes needs be resolved in order to derive a reading for the statement. But the rules of the grammar allow no resolution; what happens here, is that the incompatibility of features is recognized and the sentence is written off as deviant and consequently disregarded. Such a sentence does not comply with the rules and is unable to be read or interpreted within the confines of such restrictions. Obviously this limited scope of operation holds restrictions
that are too confining for what is normally applied and accepted quite readily within actual use of language.

Metaphorically, of course, a statement such as "The man gallops" can be explained very easily. Within the framework of the interaction theory, what we do, simply, is suppress the [+nonhuman] feature of "gallop" somewhat, and add it and all of its other features to the word "man". The result of this is that we reorganize our view of "man" in light of the features now being subscribed to it by the word "gallop". Clearly, in this particular instance, the verb is indeed acting upon the noun to produce a salient change. "Man" retains its original [+HUMAN] quality but now takes on additional qualities such as (being in) motion and (taking) long strides attributed to it by the verb "gallop".

Thus, semantic theory is very useful in that it helps to clearly define the features of the words involved in an expression. However, if the theory is too rigid, and tries to impose rules upon the language to which the language does not comply, then it is time to revise the theory. What is necessary here is first to accept that language is not a static entity, but one that is ever-changing and accumulating of the needs of human expression. For if we were to delimit meaning as Fodor suggested earlier, we would certainly limit the range
of expressions that the grammar could treat. What is required by semantic theory is a built-in flexibility such as the flexibility offered within the interaction theory whereby the so-called deviant expressions that do occur naturally in everyday language can be allowed and can be interpreted as indeed they are in everyday usage.

Once we recognize the need to break loose of the constraint that only dictionary definitions be allowed, the next problematic area to be dealt with is that of transference. In traditional syntactic-semantic theory nouns have inherent features, and it is the verb, with its selectional features that determines the degree of grammaticality of the noun-verb combination. Indeed, this is actually the case in a great many expressions, as the example of "the man gallops" has pointed out. The noun in this particular instance undergoes a change to take on additional features not normally subscribed to it. The verb "gallop" remains unchanged but has affected a change in meaning in the noun by its association with the noun. But, as Levin is quick to point out, this is not always the case, and he argues that a complete reversal of the above procedure is just as likely to occur. Levin argues that nouns, too, have the ability of affect change in verbs, and do not always remain
the passive receivers as has been previously thought by semanticists.

In thus restricting the scope of transfer features, he [Weinreich] is apparently influenced by Chomsky (1965) where nouns are furnished with inherent features and selectional features are reserved for verbs and other predicates...But if the purpose of grammar is, among other things to permit construal of deviant expressions, then...the transfer of (inherent) features must be allowed to originate from nouns.¹

This is a significant contribution, for now we can recognize nouns as actively producing changes within verbs. So the transfer of features moves from nouns to verbs in addition to the previously held verb to noun transference of features only. One example that makes the noun to verb feature transfer clear is the statement "The rose melted."² Within this construct it is clear that the noun "rose" remains unchanged while the verb "melted" undergoes a metamorphosis, dropping its [+LIQUID] requirement, thus becoming more akin to a word such as "wilted". Numerous other examples of noun to verb feature transfers abound, and it is this that prompts Levin to call for a "freer functioning of feature transfer"³ so that we no longer
have only verb to noun (N <-- V) transfers, but noun to verb (N--> V) feature transfers as well.

Thus Levin develops his six modes of construal as follows:

4.1 **Adjunction**

There are four possibilities within this category whereby features are "adjoined" as follows:

4.1.1 N <-- V; disjunctive reading
- verb to noun, with verb constant
- noun altered by fusion with selectional feature of verb
- noun becomes generalized
- (i.e.) *I wouldn't do that for love or money* = anything

4.1.2 N <-- V; conjunctive reading
- verb to noun, with verb constant
- noun altered by fusion with selectional feature of verb
- noun becomes particularized (personified, animalized or plantified)
- (i.e.) *Fate laughs at us all* = Personification

4.1.3 N --> V; disjunctive reading
- noun to verb, with noun constant
- verb altered by inherent feature of noun
- verb becomes generalized
- (i.e.) His courage evaporated = vanished

4.1.4 N --> V; conjunctive reading
- noun to verb, with noun constant
- verb altered by inherent feature of noun
- verb becomes generalized (dispersonification results)
- (i.e.) The earth trembled = Dispersonification

4.2 Displacement

Transferred feature not shifted, but displaced.

4.2.1 N <-- V
- verb to noun, with verb constant
- noun displaced due to feature of verb
- (i.e.) The wolf is engaged to be married =
  the man with wolflike characteristics

4.2.2 N --> V
- noun to verb, with noun constant
- verb displaced due to feature of noun
- (i.e.) The wheat sang in the wind = rustled

The displacement category fits the substitution model discussed earlier, whereas the adjunction category fits the interactive model with features being combined. Levin has
further subdivided adjunction according to whether features are "disjoined" or "conjoined." A disjunctive reading is one in which the host has features "disjoined" or taken away from it, and consequently it becomes generalized. A conjunctive reading, on the other hand, is one in which the host has features "conjoined" or added to it and it thus becomes particularized. There is some inconsistency here, however, in that construal 4.1.4 the noun to verb conjunctive reading does not fall into this pattern. This will be dealt with later, upon examination of the individual construals with regard to poetic metaphor.

Throughout his discussion of the modes of construal, Levin has chosen to use metaphors from everyday language. In order to test and validate his theory, I have chosen to apply the construals to poetic metaphor. The reasoning behind this is twofold. First, I am assuming that a valid theory of metaphor should be able to account for any type of metaphor, be it "ordinary", everyday type of language usage or the more "deviant" or poetic variety. Secondly, poetic metaphor tends to receive a somewhat standard, or widely accepted interpretation. If Levin's theory is a valid one, it should in fact be able to yield these standard interpretations. In order
to ease the analysis, the poetic metaphors have been taken from Brooke-Rose's *A Grammar of Metaphor*.\(^5\)

First it is important to note that Levin applies his construals only to simple, noun as subject/predicate combinations. This does indeed aid clarity, as was his objective, but metaphor can be constructed in a large variety of combinations. For example, the following shows a metaphor in which the transaction takes place entirely within the predicate with the verb "give" acting on the object noun "heart":

1. Thou canst not every day give me thy heart

Donne 10
(B-R 251)

Poetic metaphor does offer a wide variety of possibilities, as the numerous examples to follow will show, and as long as the construals are able to offer a valid reading, Levin's theory is maintained.

Metaphor (1) above fits into the 4.1.1 construal, the N <-- V disjunctive reading. The verb "give" maintains its selectional feature of [TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP], while the noun "heart" is "disjoined" from its literal feature of [MUSCULAR ORGAN] and thus becomes generalized to "love". The disjunctive process, in this case, takes a specific feature away from the
noun and leaves it with a generalized sense of meaning which can then be read appropriately alongside the verb and its selectional feature(s).

The conjunctive process, on the other hand, works in a manner directly opposite to that of disjunction. With conjunction a specific feature is "conjoined", or added, to the word undergoing alteration, and consequently particularization results. In construal 4.1.2, it is the noun that becomes particularized by taking on a feature from the verb.

The following metaphors can be read by the 4.1.2 construal, the N <-- V conjunctive reading:

2. Especially when the October wind
   with frosty fingers punishes my hair...  Thomas 2
   (B-R 197)

3. The Figtree...spreads her Armes
   Braunching so broad and long...  PL. ix, 1101
   (B-R 188)

In both of these cases, the result is personification, as the noun is particularized and combined conjunctively with the [+ HUMAN] selectional feature of the "predicate." It is important to note here that while Levin refers to "verbs" in his formulae for the construals, he does in effect mean "verb" to include the entire predicate. This is evident in his
discussion of Katz with reference to "selection feature of Predicate," and within his own examples whereby he does provide a gross treatment of the entire predicate as verb.

So in (2) above, the [+ HUMAN] attributes are given to the noun "wind" by the verb "punishes" and also by the noun "fingers," which falls into the category of predicate as it is contained within an adverb phrase. Likewise, in (3), the noun "Figtree" receives the [+ HUMAN] attribute from the predicate as well, although in this case it stems mainly from the object noun "Armes," since the verb "spreads" does not necessarily carry a [+ HUMAN] quality. A similar transaction to that of (3) takes place in the following metaphor though the end results in "plantification" rather than personification:

4. And since my love doth every day admit

    New growth...

    Donne 10

    (B-R 194)

Here, the subject noun "love" interacts with predicate "admit new growth," and as in the previous example, it is not so much the verb "admit" which contributes the [+ PLANT] quality, as it is the object noun and its modifier "new growth." So, "love" does indeed become more particularized as it takes on this trait of [+ PLANT].
Construal 4.1.3, the N --> V disjunctive reading, accurately describes the process in the following:

5. When I dyed last, and, Deare, I dye
   As often as from thee I goe...    Donne 12
   (B-R 214)

6. On the ground I lay
   Passing through many thoughts    Prel. I/79
   (B-R 222)

7. the condemn'd Pompey
   Rich in his father's honour     AC. I/iii/49
   (B-R 241)

In every case, the verb is altered by an inherent feature from the noun. The verb is "disjoined" from one of its selectional features and is generalized into a meaning of a more abstract nature. In (5) above, I brings along with it the feature of [+ LIVING], and as it is a human subject, it obviously goes on living, so the verb "dye" loses its feature of [TERMINATION] and is generalized into "suffer desperately." In (6) the verb "passing" responds to the [+ ABSTRACT] feature of "thoughts" and loses any sense of the [+ PHYSICAL], and is thus read as "considering." Likewise, "rich," in (7) above, loses any sense of physicality as its [+ MATERIAL] wealth is dropped in
response to the object noun "honour's" feature of [+ ABSTRACT] value.

Construal 4.1.4, the N --> V conjunctive reading, poses some difficulty in that it is a conjunctive process, but, according to Levin, it results in generalization. This is inconsistent with the pattern previously set up for conjunction whereby the addition of a specific feature tends to particularize the meaning in some way. In the 4.1.4 construal the noun is acting on the verb to affect a change, which in this case results in a "dispersonification" of the verb.

With one exception, the circumstances within this 4.1.4 dispersonification process are exactly the same as those in the 4.1.2 conjunctive construal which results in personification. In both cases, a nonhuman noun is matched with a human selecting verb. The difference lies in the combinatory process itself whereby in 4.1.2 the noun changes by taking on the [HUMAN] characteristic from the verb, but in 4.1.4 the verb changes in response to the [NONHUMAN] feature of the noun. The verb's [HUMAN] feature is not altogether lost, but rather is de-emphasized as its other features come to the foreground. The noun, on the other hand, maintains its "nonhuman-ness" while highlighting the other [NONHUMAN] aspects of the verb.
The end result is still in question. Is the verb generalized, as Levin suggests, or is it actually particularized? Levin provides the following as examples:

The earth *trembled*...

The tree's bark had been wounded'

To generalize would be to give general rather than specific character to the meaning involved; what is happening here is that there is a shift in focus which diverts attention away from the [HUMAN] attribute to the core meaning of the verb. This meaning is not a general one but a very specific one indeed. With trembled, for example, any human element implied within the word, such as fear or any other emotional reaction, no longer applies since it is now paired with the nonhuman subject "earth." The focus is now on the "physical shaking" characteristic of the word "trembled." This is not a generalization at all, but rather a selective process is taking place whereby an appropriate meaning is selected from within the verb, and is thus featured in conjunction with its particular subject.

The same is true of the second example using the verb "wounded." Again human emotion and response is barred as a result of its nonhuman subject, and the remaining aspects of meaning come to the fore. The notion of "physical damage" is
selected and highlighted to provide an appropriate reading for the metaphor. The result is one of greater focus and specificity in meaning, and not one of generalization, as Levin suggests. This selective process certainly is one of "dispersonification" of the verb, but it is indeed achieved through particularization as a result of "conjoining" a nonhuman subject with an otherwise human selecting verb.

Likewise, the following poetic metaphors can be read effectively by construal 4.1.4:

8. Light hath no tongue, but is all eye
   Donne 15
   (B-R 194)

9. His hope all clene out of his herte fledde
   Tr. V/1198
   (B-R 223)

10. A blade of grass longs with the meadow
    Thomas 8
    (B-R 223)

The 4.1.4 N --> V conjunctive construal read as a selective, particularizing process accounts for the dispersonification and resulting change in meaning of the verb. In every case a nonhuman noun retains its original meaning while causing a shift in focus of the verb's aspects of
meaning, with the result being a de-emphasis of humanness and a highlighting of the remaining core meaning.

In (8), for example, "light" is paired with the [+ HUMAN] "eye," but it essentially retains its nonhumanness, so "eye" must undergo some adjustment to accommodate that dominant characteristic. Thus "eye" retains and highlights all of its other qualities such as [SIGHT], [RANGE OF VISION], [OBSERVATION] and [DEDUCTIONS MADE FROM THOSE OBSERVATIONS]. Therefore, while minimizing the human physical features, "eye" still retains some of the [HUMAN] abstract qualities, like the knowledge gained from observation, and attributes these to its nonhuman subject. "Light" takes on an added dimension and "eye", while not losing all of its humanness, rather features those appropriate to its abstract subject.

The same can be said of the two other examples, (9) and (10). In every case, human physicality is dropped, while the human abstract qualities are maintained, and so meaning is enhanced in a very particular way. In (9) with "hope" and "fledde," the verb "fledde" no longer holds its physical feature of running away, but rather maintains the notion of vanishing in conjunction with the human reaction of avoidance of danger or of the undesirable.
Likewise in (10), the noun "grass" paired with the verb "longs" results in something less than human action, though the human notion of desirability is maintained. Here a human emotional response is paralleled to an actual natural need, as in "thirst." Once again, the nonhuman subject remains nonhuman while the human selecting verb de-emphasizes its most obvious (human) trait and foregrounds its other features which are compatible to its subject, be they human or nonhuman. In this and every other example cited here for construal 4.1.4, the verb reacts to its nonhuman subject and glosses over its own humanness. As a result, the focus is shifted to the other more particular aspects of meaning within the verb’s semantic field.

Finally, this brings us to the displacement category and the last two modes of construal within Levin’s paradigm of metaphorical constructs. Displacement, as stated earlier, fits the substitution model and is, as such, a simpler and more direct way to account for metaphor. In the case of displacement, features are not transferred from word to word, but rather a word is actually displaced due to the features of the word which is acting upon it, as in the following metaphor:

12. But Mercy chang’d Death into Sleep

Blake SE. 10
(B-R 135)
The verb "chang'd," with its features of [EXCHANGE] and [FLEXIBILITY], displaces "death" and its [PERMANENT] feature with "undesirable," while "sleep" and its [TEMPORARY] feature becomes "desirable". It is also worth noting here that the subject noun "mercy" with its [ABSTRACT] character does indeed affect the nature of the displacement. For "death" and "sleep" are not only displaced to become more in line with the verb, they are displaced with words which reflect the more abstract characteristics of the subject noun. This particular phenomenon, of the possibility of a noun influencing another noun, will be treated in detail upon completion of the displacement category. In the meantime, it is reasonable, at least in part, to refer to the 4.2.1, the N <-- V displacement construal, as having satisfactorily explained the process of substitution that takes place in metaphor (12).

Likewise, in the reverse procedure, the 4.2.2 N --> V displacement, a substitution takes place, but of course now, it is the predicate that is being displaced.

13. the mid forest brake,

Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms

End. I/18

(B-R 243)
14. The Sun doth arise,
   And make happy the skies;...          Blake SI. 2
   (B-R 247)

In (13), "rich" is taken along with the implied verb "is" to yield "plentiful," because of the [+ COUNT] feature of the noun "blooms." In (14), "happy" is replaced with "shine," which works well with both the subject noun "sun" and object "skies." Both of these cases reveal obvious substitutions that are relatively simple and direct. As in all previously cited metaphors in this, and in Levin's study, they show a fairly straight-forward noun/verb relationship, but this particular pattern does not always exist.

In the following metaphors, for instance, the interest clearly lies in the noun to noun relationship:

15. Make not your thoughts your prison
   AC. V/ii/184
   (B-R 137)

16. Although the summer sunlight gild
   Cloudy leafage of the sky
   (leafage and sky are the nouns of interest here)
   Yeats 19
   (B-R 151)
17. Into the labyrinth of another's being

Yeats 2
(B-R 159)

18. Aye such a breathless honey-feel of bliss

End. I/903
(B-R 200)

These metaphors are not patterned with the noun across predicate. The nouns here are positioned closely to one another and define themselves without being channeled to, or across a verb. As a matter of fact, in (17) and (18), there is no verb at all, but a reading of the metaphor can be taken all the same.

Levin emphasizes that "the enunciation of the principle that features should be allowed to transfer out of nouns is important;" I suggest that not only is the transfer out of nouns important, but an even freer restriction needs to be allowed whereby the transfer out of nouns be allowed not only into verbs, but into nouns, as well.

If it is true that:

the construal of a deviant expression may proceed by moving in either direction between elements in the construction that are involved in the deviation'

(emphasis mine)
I would suggest that the elements be recognized properly as nouns and that the movement be labeled Noun to Noun. Thus, I would extend Levin's six modes of construal to eight by adding two under the category of adjunction as follows:

4.1.5 N <-- N; disjunctive reading
- noun to noun, with abstract noun constant
- concrete noun altered by inherent feature of abstract noun
- concrete noun becomes generalized

4.1.6 N <-- N; conjunctive reading
- noun to noun, with concrete noun constant
- abstract noun altered by inherent feature of concrete noun
- abstract noun becomes particularized

In metaphor (15), for example, the relationship between "thoughts" and "prison" can be determined by the 4.1.5 N <-- N disjunctive reading. The concrete noun "prison" is altered by dropping its [PHYSICAL] distinction and by adding the [ABSTRACT] feature of "thought". It is no longer a prison per se, but a conceptualized prison, built out of thoughts, and thus it has moved to the same level of abstraction as "thought".

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The N <-- N construal of the 4.1.6 conjunctive reading is also a highly productive one with abstract nouns becoming more particularized. The second line of (16), "Cloudy leafage of the sky", links the [ABSTRACT] "sky" with the [CONCRETE] "leafage" to alter perception in a clearly defined concrete manner. A comparison between leaves and clouds in the sky thus successfully creates the perception of leaf-like images in the sky.

(17) shows no verb at all but the fusion of the more [CONCRETE] noun "labyrinth", or [PUZZLE], to the [ABSTRACT] "being" is readily made via 4.1.6. Similarly, the desirability of the [CONCRETE] "honey-feel" in (18) is added to the [ABSTRACT] bliss to produce a more concrete or particularized sense of an abstract concept. In both of these cases, an abstract noun adjoins with a feature of a more concrete noun to provide a more particularized description.

The identification of construals as noun to noun provides a more accurate and direct formula to explain the exact nature of the transfer of features in numerous metaphorical operations. In this way, the actual source of feature transfer is accurately pinpointed. While many metaphors do actually occur within the simple noun/predicate structure, they are just as likely to occur in different patterns such as the noun/noun
construct discussed above. Similarly, while many metaphors do operate simply and can be explained thoroughly by just one construal, there are those, of course, that will vary not only in structure but in levels of complexity as well. With eight construals now in place, Levin's six plus the two additional noun to noun adjuncts, the more complex and the extended metaphor will be examined next.

Notes

2Levin, 24.
3Levin, 39.
4Levin, ch. 3-4, 33-77. Please note that the examples given here are ordinary language and they are taken directly from section 4.4 of Chapter 4.

6 Levin, 35.

7 Levin, 50.

8 Levin, 26-27.

9 Levin, 34.
Chapter 3

Patterns Within Metaphor

The poetic metaphors presented in the previous section were read satisfactorily by one construal, although it was evident that they could vary a great deal in structure, and hence the necessity to introduce the noun to noun construals. Now just as metaphors may vary in the structure of their composition, they will also vary in levels of complexity. In this section, with the eight construals in place, we will examine metaphors of increasing complexity, from those that operate on two levels, to an extended type of metaphor, to a conceit. As we examine the metaphors of increasing complexity, the patterns unfold.

First, we will examine several examples of metaphor that operate on a duplicity of levels to establish that there is some consistency in patterning that takes place. Then we will apply these findings to the more complex metaphor to see if we can further establish predictability in the course of unravelling the interpretation process of metaphor. The following metaphors fall into the first category of duplicity:
19. Goldsmith deliberately sipping at the honey-pot of his mind... Yeats 6 (B-R 159)

20. Still drink the delicious poison from the eye EA. 122 (B-R 178)

21. And Paradise was open'd in his face AA. I/30 (B-R 178)

22. We'll build in sonnets pretty roomes Donne 8 (B-R 178)

Note that structurally in every case a prepositional phrase is involved. In three of the four metaphors above, (19) through (21), the processing of the metaphor is very much like a chain reaction, an action-reaction effect: the sentence is read, and because of the features of the noun in the prepositional phrase, we have to go back and make the necessary adjustments to one part of the sentence which in turn triggers another reaction in another part of the sentence. Only then can we arrive at a reasonable interpretation of the metaphor as a whole.

The prepositional phrase necessitates the two construals in order for the reading to be completed. In Yeats' metaphor
(19), a double disjunct is required whereby both the verb and the object noun undergo changes to a more general level. Without the prepositional phrase, the sentence could be taken literally:

Goldsmith deliberately sipping at the honey-pot...

A regular subject - verb - object relationship exists, and all can be taken literally. However, when we add the prepositional phrase "of his mind," it acts as an adjective and as it modifies, consequently it alters the head noun "honey-pot." For "mind" most definitely carries its [+ ABSTRACT] feature with it, so "honey-pot" loses its [+ CONCRETE] feature and becomes generalized into something like "highly desirable source." What has just been described here is the 4.1.5 noun to noun disjunctive construal and as such the abstract noun "mind" remains constant and acts on the concrete noun "honey-pot" in a disjunctive manner so the concrete noun disjoins from, or drops its concrete features.

The relationship between the object "highly desirable source" and the verb "sipping" must be altered since the abstract quality of the object now makes it incompatible with its [+ CONCRETE] verb. Thus construal 4.1.3 is applied, and the noun acts disjunctively on the verb to generalize "sipping at" into "taking from," and the metaphor can be interpreted as
follows:

Goldsmith deliberately taking from the highly desirable source of his mind.

Notice that what started out with one disjunctive reading, led to another disjunctive reading. From this example, we can hypothesize that there is indeed a significant patterning effect taking place. If tested against other examples, we may be able to predict that a complex metaphor follows one type of processing throughout its entire interpretation. What starts as a disjunct, remains disjunctive throughout the entire process, and, conversely, what starts out as a conjunct requires further processing of a conjunctive nature. In other words, one generalization leads to another, and vice versa - one particularization demands further particularizations. As we shall see, the remaining examples do indeed support this hypothesis.

Metaphor (20), "Still drink the delicious poison from the eye," parallels the double disjunct construal of (19) exactly in that two generalizations are required; 4.1.5 on the object noun, "poison," and 4.1.3 on the verb, "drink." Again, we have a situation in which the prepositional phrase, "from the eye," has created a chain reaction, for without the modification brought on by the noun "eye," the sentence could be read
literally:

Still drink the delicious poison...

The prepositional phrase, "from the eye," acts as an adjective modifying the head noun "poison;" and thus, some adjustment is required as the features of "poison" are incompatible with that of "eye." Here we have a noun to noun reaction whereby the concrete noun "eye" remains stable and affects a generalization to the [dangerous chemical] "poison." For it is not literally a concrete noun "poison" that is being referred to here, but rather it is a "dangerous quality" which is in fact being transmitted "from the eye". In this case, "eye" is the controlling noun which has the ability to reduce the totality of the concrete noun "poison" to a few mere features with adjectival properties and thus the compatibility between the two is aligned. Furthermore, because the properties of "poison" are being altered, its modifier "delicious" must now be adjusted to reflect this shift in meaning. The actual features of the "delicious poison," [DESIRABLE] [DANGEROUS], are generalized to reflect features compatible with "eye," which in this case is "tempting look". Construal 4.1.5 effectively disjoins the concrete features of [TASTY] + [CHEMICAL] from "delicious poison" and thus allows it to be raised to the more abstract "tempting look." The reading
is not complete yet, however, since the verb "drink" requires generalization in order to correspond to the abstract features of its object. As in (19) above, one disjunctive reading leads to another. In this case the 4.1.3 disjunctive construal is applied, and the verb "drink" drops its [LIQUID] feature and is generalized to "take in," in order to comply with its abstract object, "penetrating look." Two disjunctive construals later, the complete metaphor reads:

Still take in the penetrating look from the eye.

Metaphor (21) operates in a similar manner with two mandatory disjunctive construals, only this time it is a prepositional phrase acting as an adverb which triggers the chain reaction. First, in accordance with the literal meaning of the noun "face," construal 4.1.3 is applied to verb "open'd" to drop its concrete feature of [PASSAGE], and "open'd" becomes generalized to "evident." Next, the literal qualities of the subject noun "paradise" are dropped as a noun to noun transaction takes place between "paradise" and "face." As a result, "paradise" is generalized to "happiness" via construal 4.1.5, and the reading yields:

And happiness was evident in his face.

Finally metaphor (22) parallels (21) with its adverb phrase triggering the two disjuncts required for its reading. Without
the adverb phrase the line would be read literally:

We'll build pretty roomes

But, with the addition of abstract modifier "in sonnets," both
the verb "build" and the object noun "roomes" become
generalized to meet with the abstract qualities of the
modifier. Once again, like metaphor (21) above, construals
4.1.3, the noun to verb disjunct, and 4.1.5, the noun to noun
disjunct, are applied to bring about this generalizing
transformation.

Similar action/reaction effects can be witnessed within the
conjunctive process. The following metaphors also demonstrate
a duality in their level of complexity, although in these cases
a "particularizing" pattern is established. Within this next
set of metaphors, once the conjunctive process begins, it is
carried through until the entire metaphor is read in its
entirety. Notice how in every case, the initial conjunctive
process of personification extends itself quite readily into
another conjunct with a further particularizing effect.

23. ...the fairest of all Rivers, lov'd

To blend his murmurs with my Nurse's song

Prel.I/272

(B-R 188)
24. A current under sea

Picked his bones in whispers.                 WL. 315

(B-R 252)

25. Breathe, body of lovely Death                 WD. 25

(B-R 266)

In each metaphor above, a verb acts on a noun and produces a personified effect. A conjunctive process via construal 4.1.2 takes place and the noun becomes particularized by adding the [+ HUMAN] feature from the verb. Then, a second transaction, construal 4.1.6 is applied and a noun to noun conjunct completes the reading of the metaphor.

With metaphor (23) for example, the noun "rivers" is affected by both the verb "lov’d" and the noun "murmurs." Because the initial noun to verb transaction establishes the personification of "rivers," the metaphor is easily extended along the same vein. Thus "murmurs" effectively picks up on the newly added [+ HUMAN] feature, and builds on this aspect of the now personified "river."

The same process can be traced through metaphors (24) and (25) as personification is initially established via a conjunctive reading, and is then extended one step further with a second conjunct completing the process. In metaphor (24), the noun "sea" interacts with the verb "picked," via construal
4.1.2, and thus takes on the [+ HUMAN] feature, which is then extended further by construal 4.1.6 with the noun to noun interaction of "sea" and "whispers." Similarly in metaphor (25) the noun to noun and the verb to noun conjuncts take place via construals 4.1.6 and 4.1.2 respectively, as the noun "death" interacts with both noun "body" and verb "breathe."

Once again, personification and the extension of the personification results.

Since a highly consistent patterning is evident within the doubly construed metaphor, it should follow that the same type of processing takes place within the more complex or extended metaphor. Our next step is to trace the construals that take place within an extended metaphor, in order to validate our hypothesis of predictable patterning one step further. The following examples, taken from Shakespeare’s Hamlet, prove our case in point.

9 HAMLET Do not believe it.
10 ROSENCRANTZ Believe what?
11 HAMLET That I can keep your counsel and not mine own.
12 Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?
13 ROSENCRANTZ Take you me for a sponge, my lord?
15 HAMLET Ay, sir, that soaks up the king’s countenance,
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end. He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you and, sponge, you shall be dry again.¹

Initially, the metaphor appears in line 12, when Hamlet refers to Rosencrantz as a "sponge." Here, a noun to noun transaction is taking place, whereby the qualities of a sponge are added to that of a human being. Construal 4.1.6, the noun to noun conjunct, accounts for this transaction with Rosencrantz becoming somewhat reduced as a human being, while he is particularized by the features of the sponge.

The very nature of this particular metaphor calls for some repetition and clarification since the comparison is so outlandish. Furthermore, the comparison between Rosencrantz and the "sponge" is not obvious as it is made so indirectly by Hamlet, without any reference between the two. Thus it is directly repeated by Rosencrantz in the form of a question in line 14. The same transaction that occurred previously occurs here, as construal 4.1.6 goes into operation, and the concept of Rosencrantz as sponge is established. With the metaphor in place, it is then easily extended.
The qualities of the sponge are then singled out and further developed in line 15. The sponge's ability to "soak up" is capitalized upon, and is transferred to the human being. The transaction here shows a noun to verb interaction as the verb "soaks up" undergoes a transformation to agree with its [+ human] subject, Rosencrantz. The metaphor is made indirectly by Hamlet since Rosencrantz is not mentioned directly, but the reference to Rosencrantz is clear with the relative pronoun "that" making the link back to the intended subject. And now that the [+ HUMAN] Rosencrantz is established as sponge, it is necessary to adjust the verb "soaks up" in line 15. Rosencrantz as "sponge" does not "soak up" any [+ LIQUID] as the verb's literal feature would imply, but rather he "soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities," all of which are objects with nonliquid features. As a result, "soaks up" is particularized and line 15 can be read as:

Ay, sir, that takes the king's countenance,

his rewards, his authorities.

One aspect of the verb is highlighted as it is undeniably particularized and it is the conjunctive reading, 4.1.4., that accounts for the noun to verb interaction in this instance.

The sponge's characteristics are yet again brought to the fore as the metaphor is further extended in lines 19-20. Once
again a conjunctive reading takes place on a noun to verb interaction and this time verb "squeezing" becomes particularized via construal 4.1.4. So "squeezing" can be read as "demanding," since the king receives information from Rosencrantz:

When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but pressing or demanding of you...

Furthermore, within this line Rosencrantz is referred to as a "sponge" again, and the initial noun to noun 4.1.6 conjunct is repeated.

The metaphor is then extended yet one step further, as a sponge's quality of being "dry" is played upon. In this case, we are actually dealing with an adjective, but since an adjective's function is to describe a noun, it can be treated like a noun in the metaphorical process. The adjective is actually part of the noun as it outlines or defines the actual qualities of the noun, and thus contributes significantly to the substance of the noun. Thus, for our purposes here, the adjective shall not be differentiated, but rather will be treated like a noun of substance. In this particular case the "dryness" of the sponge can be attributed to the void of information on Rosencrantz's part, once it has been "pressed" out of him by the king. The noun to noun conjunct, 4.1.6,
allows for the particularization of "dry" to "void."

To summarize, the above passage shows six conjuncts as follows:

1. (12): Sponge to Rosencrantz / Noun to Noun / 4.1.6
2. (14): Sponge to Rosencrantz / Noun to Noun / 4.1.6
3. (15): Soak to Take / Noun to Verb / 4.1.4
4. (20): Squeeze to Press / Noun to Verb / 4.1.4
5. (20): Sponge to Rosencrantz / Noun to Noun / 4.1.6
6. (20): Dry to Void / Noun to Noun / 4.1.6

Clearly a definite pattern is established within this extended metaphor as the initial conjunctive reading leads to other conjuncts. In other words, once the thought pattern is established as particularization, this type of processing continues throughout the whole metaphor, until the entire train of thought is completed.

Let us see if the same is true when going in the opposite direction. That is, does the generalization process continue throughout an extended metaphor once it has been initiated? Once again, Shakespeare's Hamlet provides an example:

330 Enter the player with recorders
331 O, the recorders. Let me see one. To withdraw with
332 you - why do you go about to recover the wind of me,
333 as if you would drive me into a toil?
GUILDENSTERN  O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

HAMLET  I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN  My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET  I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN  Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET  I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN  I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET  It is as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music.

Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN  But these cannot I command to any utt'rance of harmony. I have not the skill.

HAMLET  Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet you cannot make it speak. "Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though
357 you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.²

The first metaphor here, in a long string of metaphors that follows, is one that results in generalization. The series of metaphors begins on line 332 when Hamlet begins by asking Guildenstern why he goes about "to recover the wind of me." In other words, Hamlet is asking Guildenstern why he is "making (or forcing)" him "to speak." Working backwards through this metaphor we find that two disjunctive construals are in operation here to produce this interpretation. (Please see Table 1 for a detailed listing and summary of construals.)

Then, from lines 336 to 346, Hamlet sets up the next set of metaphors by literally referring to the playing of the recorder with such phrases as:

...play upon this pipe (l. 336)
...give it breath with your mouth (l. 344 - 345)
...it will discourse (l. 345)
...these are the stops (l. 346)

Some of these same words ("play," "stops") and ideas ("breath"->"speak," "discourse"--->"communicate") are then used metaphorically in reference to Guildenstern's behavior of trying to get information out of Hamlet. In line 350 Hamlet makes the accusation that Guildenstern is trying to get something out of him, or in his words, "You would play upon
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<td>to recover the wind of me</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V recover/wind&lt;br&gt;4.1.5 N-N wind/me</td>
<td>to make (or force) me to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>play upon me</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V me/play</td>
<td>manipulate me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>my stops</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N recorder stops/&lt;br&gt;my stops</td>
<td>my controls (or limits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>pluck out the heart</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V heart/pluck</td>
<td>take the core (or basis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>my mystery</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N my/mystery</td>
<td>my secrets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>sound me</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V sound/me</td>
<td>hear me - make me reveal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>lowest note</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N recorder's/my lowest note</td>
<td>greatest sorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>top of my compass</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N recorder's/my compass</td>
<td>ultimate happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>played on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>call me what instrument</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N me/instrument&lt;br&gt;4.1.3 N-V call/instrument</td>
<td>treat me anyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>play upon me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Construals for Hamlet’s lute scene
me." Furthermore, he states that Guildenstern "seems to know my stops" or he seems to know how to control my responses. And again, all of these metaphors are construed via the disjunctive process, to result in the generalized interpretation.

The generalizing trend continues as "you would pluck out the heart of my mystery" is interpreted as "you would take the very basis of my secrets." Then, returning to the features of the recorder, "you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass" becomes "you would make me reveal my greatest sorrow and the extent of my highest ambitions." It is at this point that the focus of attention switches from Hamlet as recorder, to recorder as [+ HUMAN], and with this shift in focus comes a shift in processing. The recorder is referred to literally when Hamlet says "and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak." A couple of conjunctive construals are employed here as "voice" is interpreted as "sound," and "cannot you make it speak" becomes "you cannot make music with it." Then once more, we return to the allusion of Hamlet as recorder and the metaphors are again construed disjunctively, as the generalization process continues to in order to complete the overall interpretation.
A clear pattern is established in this recorder scene, as one generalization leads to another. This is very similar to the sponge scene which resulted in one particularization leading to another. Now we can assume that within an extended metaphor, a definite pattern in terms of processing is indeed taking place. But just how the links are made, from one metaphor to another, is yet to be examined. A poem might serve best as an example here, as its concise use of language can be readily exposed. To this end, John Donne's "The Sun Rising" has been selected.

Busy old fool, unruly sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows and through curtains call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late school boys and sour prentices,
Go tell court huntsmen that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.
Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long;
    If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,
    Whether both th’ Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw’st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She is all states, and all princes, I,
    Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honor’s mimic, all wealth alchemy.
    Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world’s contracted thus;
    Thine age asks case, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that’s done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
    This bed thy center is, these walls, thy sphere.³
At the very beginning of the poem, in line 1, the sun is
personified as a "busy old fool," and from then on human
attributes are continually developed with reference to the sun.
(See Table 2 for the complete detailed listing and summary of
construals.) There are a total of 26 metaphors in the poem,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIKE</th>
<th>METAPHOR</th>
<th>CONSTRUAL</th>
<th>INTERPRETATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>busy old fool</td>
<td>4.1.6 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>unruly</td>
<td>4.1.6 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>call on</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>lover's seasons run</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>saucy pedantic vretch</td>
<td>4.1.6 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>go chide</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>go tell</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>call</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Love...knows</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>think</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1...eclipse</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1...cloud</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>her eyes blinded</td>
<td>4.1.3 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>thine (eyes)</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Look</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>leftst</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Indias...lie</td>
<td>4.1.1 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>saw'st</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>hear</td>
<td>4.1.2 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>kings...lay</td>
<td>4.1.1 N-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>She is all states</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>all princes, I</td>
<td>4.1.5 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>sun...happy</td>
<td>4.1.6 N-N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>duties</td>
<td>4.1.6 N-N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Construals for Donne's "The Sun Rising"
and of these 18 directly involve the sun. All of the 18 sun metaphors serve to personify and particularize traits of the sun further. Since personification does particularize by adding features, all construals are of the conjunctive nature. The majority of these metaphors (12) are of the noun to verb variety, while the remaining six are noun to noun. So the pattern of continual processing in one direction, either that of particularization or generalization, is reinforced here. In the case of the poem above, of course, particularization is the means of establishing and extending the personification of the sun. Initially the sun is personified via the conjunctive process, and then, whether it be a noun to verb or a noun to noun transaction, features are continually added to the sun by way of the conjunctive process.

Also worth noting within the poem is that any break in the pattern is done with a high degree of consistency. For whenever we experience a shift from particularization to generalization, we note a change in subject. In lines 1 to 10, the subject is the sun while the nature of processing the metaphor is conjunctive, with the resulting particularization of the subject. But in lines 11-13 we have switched our focus, and the subject is no longer the sun. It is now an actual human subject, and consequently, a complete reversal in the
construal processing follows to disjunctive processing and the resulting generalizations. Throughout the poem, whenever there is a shift away from the main subject of the sun, as is shown again in lines 18 and 22-24, a distinctive shift in processing marks any of these changes in subject.

Finally, in our last item of analysis, interaction and interdependence of meanings are obvious. In this particular case, as in all the others examined above, it is the context which makes all the difference. It is the relationship of words through their grammatical function and the sensitive interplay of meaning upon meaning which when combined, leads us to the appropriate interpretation. Our example here is Edmund Spenser’s Sonnet 14, which operates very much like a doubly construed metaphor in that one relationship causes us to go back and reread (and construe) our initial interpretation of the meanings that preceded. And thus the chain reaction effect described earlier goes into effect. The first part of the poem, from lines 1-9, could in fact be read literally were it not for the key relationship in the metaphor in line 10. This is the turning point whereby battery to her heart triggers a back-take on a series of displacement metaphors.

Retourne agayne, my forces late dismayd,

unto the siege by you abandon’d quite:
great shame it is to leave like one afrayd
so fayre a peece for one repulse so light.
Gaynst such strong castles needeth greater might
then those small forts which ye were wont belay;
such haughty mynds enu'd to hardy fight
disdayne to yield unto first assay.
Bring therefore all the forces that ye may,
and lay incessant battery to her heart,
playnts, prayers, vowes, ruth, sorrow, and dismay;
those engins can the proudest love convert.
And if those fayle, fall downe and dy before her;
so dying live, and living do adore her. 4

First, we realize that heart is not meant to be taken
literally. The use of the pronoun "her" causes us to identify
the object, her heart, as belonging to a female pursued for the
purposes of love. This is in turn confirmed in line 12 with
the actual use of the word "love." Thus, "heart" is
generalized into the abstract concept of "center of love." So
it is that we have a concrete noun "heart" generalized by the
abstract "love," and an apt example of the disjunctive noun to
noun construal, 4.1.5, in action.

With this transaction completed, it then becomes necessary
to go back and complete the chain of reactions required to
interpret the poem successfully. With "heart" redefined in an abstract manner, one metaphor bounces back on another and so, working backwards through the poem, using construal 4.1.5, all of the following nouns are generalized as follows:

- **battery** (1.10) becomes **attempt**
- forces (1.9) -> efforts
- fight (1.7) -> opposition
- forts (1.6) -> protests
- castles (1.5) -> resistance
- peece (1.4) -> acceptance of love
- siege (1.2) -> courtship
- forces (1.1) -> efforts

The only transactions left to complete are those of **dy** (1.13) and **dying** (1.14). Like the metaphors that break the pattern in "The Sun Rising," when there is a change in subject such as from sun to human, a change in the direction of processing is to be expected. In this case, particularization results through the conjunctive reading of 4.1.4, and "dy" and "dying" can then be interpreted as "surrender."

In the case of Sonnet 14 above, one generalization resulted in a backspin of eight more. In "The Sun Rising," the original personification of the sun led to a total of eighteen particularizing metaphors, while Hamlet's lute scene showed
eleven generalizations, and the sponge scene, six particularizations. The only break in pattern occurred because of a change in topic. That is, we move from one metaphor to another, as in "The Sun Rising" with a switch from the sun as central metaphor to the lovers themselves. With this switch in the tenor of the metaphor comes a switch in the actual type of processing, from a particularizing of the sun to a generalizing of the lovers.

The interactive quality and the interdependence of meanings are revealed as the context actually determines the links between one meaning and another. A highly consistent and predictable pattern is demonstrated within extended metaphor. Even within the metaphor of double complexity a clear pattern is established. It has been demonstrated that once a feature is removed, as in the disjunctive process, further removal of features follows. Likewise, the addition of a feature in the conjunctive process leads to further additions. In other words, one disjunct leads automatically to another, while a conjunctive reading springs naturally into another conjunct. If the metaphor starts out with a generalization, this trend of thought becomes the mode of operation and is carried throughout the entire interpretation of the metaphor. Conversely, once a particularization occurs, this same mode of operation continues
until the reading of the metaphor is complete.

In the case of Sonnet 14 above, one generalization resulted in a backspin of eight more. In "The Sun Rising," the original personification of the sun led to a total of eighteen particularizing metaphors, while Hamlet's lute scene showed eleven generalizations, and the sponge scene, six particularizations. The one break in pattern that occurred because of a change in topic. That is, as we move from one metaphor to another, we continue to process in the same way, until an actual change in the topic of the metaphor takes place, whereby we actually change our method of processing, be it the conjunctive particularization, or the disjunctive generalization. Furthermore, the interactive quality and the interdependence of meanings is revealed as the context actually determines the links and types of construals between one meaning and another.
Notes


Conclusion

A complete analysis of the interpretation of metaphor involves the following steps:
1. We recognize that a comparison is taking place.
2. With a simple metaphor, a direct substitution of features is employed.
3. With the complex metaphor, an interaction and selection of features takes place. It is here that a theory of construals assists in outlining the process clearly, with a systematic, step by step approach.
4. The extended metaphor or conceit is processed as is the complex metaphor, but in addition, a chain reaction effect occurs whereby a highly predictable patterning is evident.

Levin’s six modes of construal assist us in clearly defining the processing of metaphor. These construals account for both the substitution method under the heading of displacement and for the interaction that takes place within the complex metaphor under the heading of adjunction. Further within adjunction, two distinct types of processing are established.
The first of these is the more common of the two - the disjunctive reading whereby features are removed in the selection process and the result is generalization. The second is the conjunctive reading which is exactly opposite to the disjunctive reading in that it adds features and results in particularization.

But Levin's theory requires some adjustment and extension if we are to adequately account for the processing of metaphor. This is done as follows:

1. Align construal 4.1.4 to the pattern of processing indicated above, whereby it is indeed a conjunctive process of adding features but the end result is a particularization, not a generalization as Levin has suggested.

2. Just as Levin extends semantic theory to include Noun to Verb feature transfers, we must now extend this one step further to allow Noun to Noun feature transfers. This results in the addition of two more construals:

   4.1.5 - the Noun to Noun disjunct which removes features to result in generalization.

   4.1.6 - the Noun to Noun conjunct which adds features to result in particularization.
By applying the eight modes of construal to the more complex metaphor, a definite patterning is evidenced. First, it was demonstrated that numerous complex metaphors require two transactions. Furthermore, whenever this is the case, both of those transactions will be of the same processing type. In other words, one disjunctive generalization will lead to another, and, conversely, a conjunctive particularization leads to another.

With this principle in place, we examine the conceit to determine whether or not such a patterning as initiated in the complex metaphor can be applied and anticipated throughout the numerous transactions that are required here. With very few exceptions, we see that that is exactly the case. In other words, a chain reaction takes place whereby the initial transaction springs further transactions of the same processing type. (A disjunctive generalization leads to further disjuncts, just as a conjunctive particularization leads to further conjuncts.) This leads us to conclude that this type of patterning mimics or parallels the thought processes of the users involved. For the interpretation of the conceit relies on the ability to establish the initial transaction and the extension of that same type of processing throughout the numerous transactions for the resultant interpretation and
understanding of the passage as a whole. It follows that human thought and indeed the human mind operate in such highly organized and predictably linked chains of similar design.

Our study here is merely a glimpse of the possibilities that exist; it opens questions in numerous areas that require further exploration and more substantiated explanations of the intricacies of language at work and of human thought itself.

In the field of linguistics, for example, it is certainly evident that many areas remain to be established and clarified. The exact relationship between syntax and semantics is yet to be determined. Of course, the entire concept of meaning needs to be further examined and broadened so that semantics can accommodate the irregularities that exist in all types of language use. This might prompt semanticists to consult other areas of language study in order to revamp their approach to and their definition of meaning and consequently their method of study. Furthermore, detailed studies of Levin’s construals and the extensions applied to them could further reveal structural relationships that exist between words and phrases. Questions such as the following might be answered.

- Within metaphor, how are the word that remain the same, and the word that changes determined?
- What causes one word to become dominant in meaning while the other is readily adapted?
- Exactly what role does context have and how does it influence meaning?
- How important is word order and phrasal construction and positioning?
- Exactly what role do function words play and how does their relationship to those words of substance influence meaning?
- How and why are certain features of meaning selected to be highlighted while others are repressed?

That a definite patterning exists within complex metaphor and the conceit has been established, but exactly how predictable these patterns may be is yet to be determined. It would also be very revealing to investigate exactly how and why breaks in the patterns exist. It has been observed in Chapter 3 that breaks do occur with a change in topic. Of course, further studies would need to be done to determine the consistency and variations in the patterning.

Any study that involves human thought leads quite naturally into other fields of study that are directly related. If the mind does operate in such highly organized and predictable blocks of linked chains, what are the implications to learning
theory, for example? How can psychology use this information to further explain other areas of human behaviour? More indirectly, does a similar type of thought processing exist in other fields of study such as mathematics and music? And if so, how would they vary from one another? Would they, for example, exhibit greater or lesser amounts of consistency and/or variation? One can only surmise that the implications are endless as the avenues of human thought begin to be explored.
Bibliography


