

DYNAMIC MEANING CONSTRUCTION THROUGH CONCEPTUAL INTERACTION: METONYMIC CHAINS AND METAPHORICAL AMALGAMS

Francisco José Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez

University of La Rioja

This keynote examines the dynamic construction of meaning by exploring how conceptual interaction and inferential mechanisms jointly shape figurative interpretation. Moving beyond static mappings, I argue that metaphor–metonymy complexes result from constrained cognitive operations acting on interacting cognitive models (Ruiz de Mendoza & Galera, 2014; Peña & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2022).

A central claim is that high-level metonymic operations, particularly EFFECT FOR CAUSE, play a decisive role in licensing and regulating inferential activity. Grounded in the fact that effects are often more perceptually salient than their causes (Littlemore, 2015), this operation accounts for non-congruent adjectival combinations (hypallage), such as *a sad story* or *a restless night*, where an effect is predicated of its cause (Kövecses & Radden, 1998; Ruiz de Mendoza, 2020). Similarly, in synesthetic expressions like *dull color*, cross-sensory mapping is facilitated through the similarity of perceptually salient effects (Strik Lievers, 2017).

Meaning construction is further illustrated by high-level metonymic chains. In Shakespeare's *His coward lips did from their color fly*, the expression *coward lips* arises from a chain combining INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION with EFFECT FOR CAUSE. Here, the instrument (*lips*) stands for an act of retreat, which serves as a telltale effect granting inferential access to the cause: Caesar's cowardice (Peña & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2022).

Finally, I address metaphorical amalgams. In *Death is a thief*, personification emerges from integrating LIFE IS A POSSESSION into (CAUSING) THE END OF A STATE IS (CAUSING) A LOSS. This amalgam is licensed by EFFECT FOR CAUSE, allowing death to be construed as both effect and agentive cause (Peña & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2022). Likewise, in *My boss is a pig*, the operation aligns domains through shared affective effects. Overall, this lecture advances an operation-driven account of figurative meaning as a dynamic, structured inferential process.

Keywords: figurative dynamics, conceptual interaction, metonymic licensing, metonymic chains, metaphorical amalgams, inferential mechanisms

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