Metonymical object changes: a corpus-oriented study on Dutch and German
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II. DEFINING METONYMY IN LINGUISTICS

1. Metonymy: Merely a literary phenomenon?

The word metonymy literally means "change of name" (from the Greek metonymia). Stylistic textbooks and literary lexicons usually define metonymy as involving the use of one term for another on the basis of a real world connection between the two underlying concepts (see e.g. Van Gorp 1980: 253). This real world relation is called a relation of contiguity (or proximity). A metonymical word is therefore said to be contiguous with another word and the meaning of the latter is actually interpreted in the text. Consider the following prototypical examples:

1. a fleet of a hundred sails
2. The power of the crown was mortally weakened (cf. www.britannica.com)
3. I am reading Goethe.
4. The red shirts won the match. (cf. Paradis 2004: 246)
5. The ham sandwich is waiting for his check. (cf. Fauconnier 1985: 143)

These examples show how pervasive metonymy is. They are normal linguistic expressions occurring in every-day texts and conversations rather then in literary language. It is therefore surprising that it took such a long time for linguists to begin to show an interest in metonymy.

Research on metonymy has been carried out for a very long time, but this cannot be said of linguistic research on this phenomenon. From the ancient Greeks onwards metonymy has been viewed as one of the principal figures of speech (cf. Arata 2005), therefore belonging to the realm of rhetoric and literature. Although some traditional grammars and dictionaries use the label 'metonymy' to explain certain constructions and meaning configurations, there are not many linguistic studies on metonymy predating the 1970s.2

The first publications in which the notion of metonymy was applied not just to literary but also to non-literary language were studies on semantic change and dictionaries (cf. e.g. Adelung; DWB; WNT). Dictionaries with a tradition dating back to the end of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century already make use of the notion 'metonymy' to explain certain constructions and meaning configurations, if not to account for certain specific syntagmatic combinations. The influence of metonymy on grammar is a rather modern, recently examined, idea (cf. Brdar 2007; Dowty

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1 A modified version of this chapter was published as Sweep (2012).
2000: 126; Panther & Thornburg 2000; Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001; Waltereit 1998). By recognising that metonymy does not only influence meaning but also linguistic structure and grammar, dictionaries were way ahead of their time (cf. Sweep 2009a).

Early linguistic studies were almost exclusively concerned with metonymy as a mechanism underlying semantic change and polysemy (cf. e.g. Bréal 1897; Roudet 1921; Ullmann 1967: 80, 89, 231ff; studies discussed by Moerdijk 1989; Nunberg 1979: 144-145). In the next chapter, I will discuss these conventionalised instances of metonymy in more detail under the name ‘lexicalised metonymies’ (§2.1). For the moment, it is only relevant to note that these first linguistic studies define metonymy in line with the literary tradition.³ Metonymy is seen as a mechanism involving a shift in interpretation on the basis of contiguous concepts corresponding to entities which are related in the real world. Especially the notion of contiguity remains crucial in later linguistic definitions of metonymy (cf. among many others Nunberg 1996; Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006), which will be discussed in the following sections.

2. Metonymy as a conceptual mechanism

Although it is astonishing that the research tradition on metonymy as a linguistic device is relatively young, fortunately a lot of relevant studies have been published in the past few decades. The growing interest in metonymy has no doubt been inspired by Lakoff & Johnson’s (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*. This book is primarily devoted to metaphor, which has aroused more interest than metonymy, but it contains one chapter on metonymy (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 35-40). This chapter gave rise to a new research tradition of metonymy in the field of cognitive linguistics. Lakoff and Johnson define metonymy in this chapter as “using one entity to refer to another related to it” (1980: 35). With this definition Lakoff and Johnson also essentially follow the literary tradition, where metonymy is seen as involving the use of one term for another, with the underlying concepts being contiguous.

Although the growing number of cognitive linguistic studies following this publication (cf. e.g. Barcelona 2000; Croft 1993; Dirven & Pöring 2002; Langacker 1993; Panther & Radden 1999; Steen 2005) have considerably contributed to a better understanding of what metonymy actually is, it still seems hard to provide an exact definition of it. Most definitions seem to be mere working definitions, used to contrast metonymy with metaphor (cf. also Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001: 323). The most important difference between metaphor and metonymy is that the former is based on a conceptual comparison between two things belonging to two different semantic domains, whereas the latter establishes a link between two concepts based

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³ Strangely enough, studies on semantic changes and metonymical polysemy often cited the philosophical-literal work of Bredin (cf. Moerdijk 1989; Blank 1999; Koch 2001), which, however, explicitly rejects the idea that metonymy can lead to changes in meaning (Bredin 1984: 46).
on a relation in the real world. This difference is in line with traditional accounts which define metaphor as a relation based on similarity or analogy and metonymy as an association based on contiguity (cf. Panther & Thornburg 2007: 237).

The idea of metonymy as an association or inference based on contiguity is also reflected in one of the most famous definitions of metonymy, given by Kövecses and Radden. They write:

“Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the domain or ICM [idealized cognitive model]” (Kövecses & Radden 1998: 39).

With this definition Kövecses and Radden essentially follow Langacker (cf. also Panther & Thornburg 2007: 241), who analyses metonymy as a reference point phenomenon (Langacker 1993: 30). According to Langacker, the metonymical expression (often called the source or vehicle) serves as a “cognitive reference point” which establishes mental access to the interpreted object (the target) within a conceptual structure (or, in Langacker’s terms, “dominion”). In (3), for example, the expression Goethe is the reference point that gives access to ‘a book by Goethe’ within the context of reading. Similarly in, for instance, (5) the customer’s order is used to give mental access to the customer himself within a restaurant context.

Not all accounts make use of the terms ‘mental access’ or ‘cognitive reference point’. Because an inference has to be made from one concept to another, related concept (i.e. from source to target) other scholars speak of a conceptual mapping within a semantic domain or conceptual structure (Barcelona 2005; Ruiz de Mendoza 2000: 130, cf. also Lakoff & Turner 1989: 103; Lakoff 1987: 288; Taylor 1989: 123-124).

In essence, all accounts are the same or at least very similar. They all consider metonymy to be a process or mechanism that establishes an association between two concepts and which has its reflections on language. The only difference between them is that they originate at different starting points:4 A definition in terms of conceptual mapping focuses directly on the link between concepts (the literally expressed source concept and the intended target concept), whereas a definition which uses concepts such as ‘mental access’ or even ‘reference points’ concentrates on language users and the inferences they have to make from one concept to another.

Croft analyses in detail how conceptual mappings within a domain actually work. He explains that this domain-internal mapping can be understood as “domain highlighting” or, in the case of several embedded domains, highlighting within a domain matrix (Croft 1993: 348, 350; Croft 2006: 320-323).5 The term

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4 As we will see in detail in the next chapter, scholars also have different opinions on which linguistic phenomena they consider to be influenced by metonymy.

5 Although domain highlighting is often cited as a definition for metonymy given by Croft, according to Croft himself domain highlighting cannot be a sufficient characteristic for
‘highlighting’ is used in the sense of Cruse, meaning that certain semantic traits of a concept receive a greater than normal emphasis (cf. Cruse 1986: 53). Croft illustrates domain highlighting with the various meanings of *Time magazine*, which, depending on the highlighting, can denote the newspaper itself, its publishing company, and so on. Another of Croft’s examples is the use of *Proust* to refer to Proust’s books (where the author himself is less prominent than his work). These definitions of metonymy in terms of shifts within conceptual structures are compatible with earlier linguistic accounts, especially with those in which the focus lies on metonymy as a mechanism for explaining certain instances of polysemy (cf. the studies discussed in Moerdijk 1989). More recent studies on semantic change and polysemy analyse metonymy in a comparable way by defining the metonymical process of highlighting as a figure/ground effect within a frame (cf. Blank 1997: 242-243; Koch 1999: 152; Koch 2001: 203, 208; Koch 2004: 8; Waltereit 1998: 25).

Contrary to most earlier accounts, definitions in terms of highlighting parts of conceptual structures do not follow the classical rhetorical-literary tradition in all respects. Since metonymy is analysed as involving more than the use of one word instead of another, it is no longer considered as just a way of name-giving or a ‘deviant’ way of referring. Croft explicitly breaks with the idea that metonymy necessarily has to induce a referential shift. Whereas Lakoff and Johnson’s definition, cited at the beginning of this section, hinges on the word “refer”, Croft notes that a referential shift is something that occurs “in the most prototypical examples [of metonymy]” only (1993: 349).

Prototypical cases of metonymy do indeed involve a referential shift. This is the case, for instance, in all examples in (1)-(5), where the italicised expressions do not refer to the entity which they denote literally, but to some other related entity. It would, however, be an oversimplification to state that in these examples one expression ‘stands for’, or ‘is used instead of’, another expression, despite the fact that they all involve referential shifts. In (1) *sails* does not just refer to ‘boats’, but to ‘sailing boats’, (3) does not refer to just a ‘book’, but to ‘a book by Goethe’. In (2) and (4), *crown* and *red shirts* refer to the people who wear them and in (5) *ham sandwich* refers to the customer who has ordered this specific sandwich. There is no simple ‘stand for’ relation (cf. Warren 1999: 128); rather, the meaning of the metonymical expression is a complex combination of the literally expressed concept and a related one (cf. Radden & Kövecses 1999: 19; Panther 2006: 147).

Ruiz de Mendoza (2000) also claims that a ‘stand for’ relation and a referential shift are not essential ingredients for the definition of metonymy. The only truly
The definitional property is that metonymy establishes a link between concepts within the same conceptual structure or domain (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza 2000: 113). This contrasts sharply with the definition of metaphors. Since metaphors are used to structure an abstract concept in terms of a concrete one, there are always two entirely different semantic domains involved. For example, abstract concepts such as ‘time’ or ‘relationships’ can be structured with the help of ‘moving objects’ (e.g. time flies) and ‘journeys’ (e.g. in our relationship was at a crossroads) respectively (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 42, 44). Metaphorical linking is based on similarity, not on contiguity. The metonymical domain-internal linking is an automatic result of contiguity: Since metonymy establishes a link between two concepts that are related in the real world, these automatically have to belong to the same conceptual structure.

Many cognitive linguists base their theories on the idea that metonymy is a conceptual mechanism which establishes an association or mapping within one semantic-conceptual structure (domains, frames, ICMs, etc.). Such analyses are, however, not without problems. First of all, it is unclear what the status of ‘one domain’ actually is (cf. Panther & Thornburg 2007: 240). Metonymical relations and mappings also seem to exist within domain matrices, i.e. simultaneously evoked domains, since a concept can be “simultaneously profiled against multiple domains” (Croft 2006: 321). Metonymy as a domain-internal mapping is thus actually a mapping within a domain or a mapping within a domain matrix. The latter, however, blurs the distinction between a metonymical, domain-internal mapping and a metaphorical mapping across several different domains.

Furthermore, how concepts are profiled against a domain or which conceptual structures are actually evoked by a specific expression usually remains implicit. In order to understand mapping or a highlighting within a conceptual structure, these structures should be defined precisely. The fact that notions such as conceptual structure, domain or domain matrix remain vague has often been criticised and is problematic, since all the above definitions of metonymy heavily rely on these notions (cf. e.g. Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006: 270-271).

According to Peirsman and Geeraerts, there are two different strategies in defining metonymy that avoid these problems (2006: 272ff). First of all, one could try to identify the conceptual structures involved. One could, for instance, replace the vague notion domain by more concrete notions, such as frame or ICM (2006: 273), and try to specify these. A second strategy is giving up the notion of a domain-internal mapping and defining metonymy by focusing on the nature of the conceptual relationships. If metonymy is an association based on contiguity, it must be possible to deduce definitional aspects of metonymy on the basis of various contiguity relations. Peirsman and Geeraerts opt for the latter approach. In the next section, I will have a closer look at both strategies and their compatibility.
3. Contiguity relations and frames

Traditional pre-structuralistic accounts specify instances of metonymy by distinguishing different patterns of contiguity (cf. Brdar 2007: 26). Illustrative examples of metonymy as given in examples (1)-(5) (page 7), for instance, follow the metonymical patterns PART FOR WHOLE, AUTHOR FOR WORK and ATTRIBUTE FOR PERSON (such as PIECE OF CLOTH, HEADDRESS or even ORDER FOR PERSON). There are, however, some problems with such patterns, which have led linguists to abandon such characterisations of metonymy.

First of all, recent studies of metonymy have made clear that metonymy involves a more specific association than just a contiguous one. Contiguity is not precise enough. Hyponymy, entailment and synonymy, for example, also evoke contiguous concepts, but it would be wrong and incompatible with the above discussion to claim that use of, for instance, synonyms provides examples of metonymy. One can only speak of metonymy, when the contiguity relation is not a necessary kind of contiguity (an ontological one). Rather, a filled in contiguity relation must be relevant in a context, meaning that the two specifically filled in concepts could also have been non-contiguous (Panther & Thornburg 2007: 240-241). In other words, the contiguity relation between the used concept (source) and the associated one (target) should be of an accidental or “contingent” nature, meaning that the “metonymic links do not exist by conceptual necessity” (Panther & Thornburg 2007: 240; cf. also Panther & Thornburg 2003a: 3). This requirement excludes the use of the expression steed instead of horse (i.e. synonymy) or using horse to denote a ‘mare’ (i.e. hypernymy) from the realm of metonymy.

Secondly, it remains unclear to what extent one should specify contiguity patterns. Different generalisations or levels of abstraction of the contiguity relation are often possible for one and the same type of metonymy. The patterns PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT as well as AUTHOR FOR WORK, for instance, are both generally known and used, although the latter can be seen as a specific instance of the former. The same goes for the well-known CONTAINER FOR CONTENT, which could also be labelled more generally as LOCATION FOR LOCATUM, even though there are obvious conceptual differences between containers and locations in general. The same issue has already implicitly been illustrated above by mentioning the contiguity pattern

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6 Fauconnier’s pragmatic connectors roughly correspond to contiguity patterns (cf. Fauconnier 1985: 143-144).
7 This does not, however, mean that every contingent contiguity relation can actually lead to a metonymical expression. Using metonymies is only possible if the contiguity relation is relevant. In other words, a metonymy must be salient in context before it can be used as such, since it is awkward to use metonymical expressions without a reason. In this section, I will only analyse some properties of the nature of the contiguity relation as such and not discuss when contiguity between two concepts can actually lead to linguistic metonymies. In §6, I will discuss some pragmatic reasons which can lead to the actual use of metonymical expressions (cf. also chapter VI §4).
8 The connection between locations and what is in the location, i.e. the locatum, has been analysed in detail in connection with argument structures by Levin (Levin 1993). She writes, however, that the term ‘locatum’ originates form Clark and Clark 1979 (cf. Levin 1993: 81).
ATTRIBUTE FOR PERSON, which can be split up in more specific patterns. However, it remains impossible to decide to which level of abstraction the contiguity pattern of a metonymical expression should be analysed. In addition to this, the level of abstraction between different contiguity patterns varies strongly. Whereas the contiguity between an author and his work or a container and its content refers to rather concrete concepts, a metonymy of the type EFFECT FOR CAUSE is described in terms of much more abstract notions. Metonymical patterns can therefore said to be hierarchically structured from abstract ‘high-level’ metonymies to more concrete patterns or ‘low-level’ metonymies (cf. Panther & Thornburg 2007: 257; Ruiz de Mendoza & Diez 2001: §2; Ruiz de Mendoza 2007: 18).

A third problem that follows from the previous one is the fact that it turns out to be impossible to give an exhaustive list of metonymical patterns. The traditional solution to this is to try to classify all metonymies under the three types SPATIAL, TEMPORAL and CAUSAL CONTIGUITY. Unfortunately, this solution does not work, since these three categories do not cover all instances of metonymy and there is always a large rest-group which needs to be accounted for (cf. Blank 1999: 177). What seems to be more important is the fact that all metonymically related concepts are conceived as one “experiential ‘togetherness’” (Waltereit 1999: 234) or as one ‘gestalt’, i.e. an experienced complex whole that cannot be perceived in exactly the same way by experiencing its parts.9 Hilpert similarly claims that “[t]he different ways of ‘belonging together’ are called contiguity relations” (2006: 127).

Along these lines, it has been suggested that PART-WHOLE and WHOLE-PART (and sometimes also PART-FOR-PART) are the only relevant metonymical mappings (cf. Kleiber 2007: 180ff; Kövecses & Radden 1998: 49). Two concepts seem to be contiguous only if they can be conceived as a whole in a given context (cf. Kleiber 2007/Kleiber 1995), i.e. if they form one gestalt. Ruiz de Mendoza and his collaborators distinguish two types of metonymical mappings in this respect, that is source-in-target and target-in-source (cf. e.g. Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001: 325).10 In the first type of metonymy, the metonymical expression is a sub-domain of the intended concept. An example of such a source-in-target metonymy is she tied her shoes (the target ‘shoelaces’ is a sub-domain of the shoes). In target-in-source metonymies it is the other way around, such as in the ham sandwich is waiting for his check, where the target ‘customer’ includes the sub-domain ‘order’.11

Blank provides an alternative approach for a reduction of contiguity patterns. He does not trim down contiguity relations solely to PART-WHOLE or WHOLE-PART mappings, but instead explains contiguity in terms of co-presence or succession

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9 The similarity between being cognitively contiguous and forming one gestalt has already been described within the context of grammar by Talmy in 1988 (cf. Talmy 2006: 98).
11 It has sometimes been claimed that the ham sandwich is a metonymical mapping within the restaurant domain (cf. e.g. Kövecses & Radden 1998: 58), but I fully agree with Ruiz de Mendoza that this is actually not true: The ORDER FOR CUSTOMER metonymy is a mapping within the customer-domain that is often used within a restaurant-context (Ruiz de Mendoza 2000: 115; cf. also Kleiber 2007: 169, Nunberg 1996: 116).
In fact, the same idea had also been presented some years previously by Ullmann, who distinguishes between “simultaneous” and “successive contiguity” (Ullmann 1967: 232-233). Instead of making a descriptive list of contiguity relations which can never be complete and will show an enormous variation in abstraction, Blank pleads for a more cognitive explanation of how we derive these contiguity relations. Concepts can generally be contiguous in two different ways, depending on the kind of conceptualisation of a certain gestalt. In the case of stative conceptualisations, concepts are contiguous if they are co-present. However, if something can only be conceptualised dynamically, as is often the case for certain sequences of events (scenarios), concepts turn out to be contiguous in a successive way. Co-present relations exist, for instance, between the actors and the action they perform (such as between AGENTS and INSTRUMENTS), between PLACES and PEOPLE, or between a WHOLE and its PARTS (cf. Blank 1999: 179-180). Successive relations on the other hand exist between, for example, an ACTIVITY and its AIM/GOAL, a CAUSE and its RESULT or between a MATERIAL and its PRODUCT (Blank 1999: 181-182). Such classifications, which make a distinction between these two fundamental types of contiguity, avoid an analysis of metonymy through innumerable contiguity patterns with great variety in the level of abstraction.

Because relations such as co-presence or succession are connected to human modes of conceptualisation of gestalts (dynamic or static), they are reflected in
semantic-conceptual structures (Blank 1999: 178). In other words, all contiguity relations can be found reflected in frames (or scenarios). Contiguity is more often defined as the relation between elements of one frame (cf. e.g. Koch 2001: 202). Therefore, Blank’s account and comparable approaches automatically fit the view on metonymy as a conceptual link within one internal structure. Starting with a structured analysis of contiguity, Blank ends up in line with the above cognitive definitions, since metonymy is considered as a device that establishes links between concepts within a frame, or even between frames (Blank 1999: 182). Unfortunately, this also brings in problems discussed above: Links between different frames blur the distinction between metaphor and metonymy and in order to explain the mapping exactly, one needs to know what these frames look like.

As already mentioned in the previous section, Peirsman and Geeraerts criticise scholars who use frames in the definition of metonymy without specifying them. In the spirit of cognitive linguistics, they draw the conclusion that contiguity, and therefore also metonymy, should be seen as a prototypical category (Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006). Metonymy should be accounted for by revealing the crucial aspects of this prototypically structured concept. This analysis makes it possible to define metonymy in a cognitive linguistic way without the need to use the vague notion of a domain or frame and therefore without the problems attached to such definitions of metonymy.

On the basis of an analysis of various contiguity patterns found in pre-structuralistic literature, Peirsman and Geeraerts find that crucial dimensions for metonymical concepts appear to be ‘strength of contact’ and ‘boundedness’ (Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006: 279, 284). These notions play a fundamental role for spatial objects as well as assemblies and collections that are perceived as wholes (2006: 301ff). These more or less spatial notions, especially ‘strength of contact’, can even be extended to the temporal domain (2006: 286ff).

Although their analysis of metonymy as a prototypically structured category beautifully avoids vagueness and is an important contribution to the field of metonymical research, it is unfortunately solely based on lexical contiguity patterns, i.e. semantic changes or polysemy caused by metonymy (Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006: 309, 310). Peirsman & Geeraerts are aware of this problem and they stress the fact that their study neglects types of metonymy that influence grammar, which in their opinion deserve further investigation (2006: 292, 310). One can doubt, however, whether their prototypically structured category is useful for this purpose, precisely because it is designed solely on the basis of lexicalised metonymies (cf. also Croft 2006: 324). For the present research this question is of crucial importance, since this study analyses how metonymy affects the choice of the direct object type.

Interestingly, Peirsman and Geeraerts describe their own approach as “quite similar” to Blank’s study (Peirsman & Geeraerts 2006: 274), because Blank also tries to give a more exact definition of metonymy by specifying contiguity relations.

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14 Actually, Blank does not directly use the notion gestalt. He only speaks about conceptualisations and frames. A frame can, however, be seen as the representation of a gestalt (cf. Koch 1999: 151).
This quote is surprising in some respects, since Blank directly connects contiguity to frames through the notions ‘co-presence’ and ‘succession’, which is exactly what Peirsman and Geeraerts try to avoid. Apparently, the strategy of analysing metonymy as a prototypical category and the solution of specifying frames involved in metonymical mappings do not exclude each other. I will therefore not only take into account the important dimensions of Peirsman’s and Geeraerts’ prototypically structured category in the analysis of metonymical influences on the type of direct object, but in addition elaborate upon the other solution, i.e. making the contiguity explicit by specifying the conceptual structures or frames.

Peirsman and Geeraerts, however, are justified in their criticism that most, if not all, cognitive linguistic studies leave implicit what conceptual structures or frames look like. This is remarkable, since there is a databank on the internet with developed frames by the research project FrameNet (https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/). Based on Frame Semantics, i.e. on Fillmore’s concept of a frame, scholars have developed semantic-conceptual structures as precisely as possible on the basis of real linguistic data. These frames in FrameNet are designed independently of theoretical research on metonymy, but strangely enough they are never taken into account in examining metonymy. However, if metonymy is a cognitive process that highlights parts of a conceptual structure, it must be possible to analyse it with the help of existing frames as they are developed by the frame semantics-based FrameNet, since a frame in FrameNet is defined as “a script-like conceptual structure that describes a particular type of situation, object or event” (Ruppenhofer et al. 2006: 5). The fact that the conceptual structures of FrameNet are designed on the basis of linguistic data makes them especially useful. Metonymy is, after all, a mechanism that establishes connections between contiguous concepts and which has its reflection upon language. Therefore, metonymy operates on the underlying concepts as well as on linguistic form. I will discuss this twofold effect in more detail in the next section.

4. Linguistic effects of metonymy on content and on form

It is not without reason that Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez observe that most definitions of metonymy are working definitions (Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001: 323). Apparently, it is difficult to characterise metonymy in a specific way. This is probably caused by the fact that metonymy concerns different levels. Concepts are contiguous on the basis of how things are related in reality and this influences our way of expressing ourselves. In order to understand what metonymy is, one should look at the relation between concepts, reality and language, i.e. the classical semiotic

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15 Cf. also Blank’s comprehensive definition of metonymy “die Metonymie [ist] eine sprachliche Realisierung der Kontiguitätsassoziation” [JS: Metonymy is a linguistic realisation of the contiguity-based association] (Blank 1997: 235).
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The three different levels of the semiotic triad (thinking, reality and language) should not be overlooked or mixed up in a definition, but in practice they cause a great deal of confusion. The interaction between the three levels leads to disagreements on very basic notions. Even cognitive linguists do not agree when it comes to the question of whether metonymy is primarily conceptual in nature or merely a linguistic device. Whereas Kövecses and Radden define metonymy as “a cognitive process” (1998: 39), Koch describes metonymy purely as “a linguistic effect” or “a dynamic linguistic process” (Koch 2001: 205, 231, cf. also his discussion on 230-233).

However, even if one considers metonymy primarily as a linguistic phenomenon, it is still possible to approach metonymy from two different perspectives. A first way of examining metonymy linguistically is to analyse whether a given linguistic sign is used metonymically or not. This is the approach which most linguists employ. This perspective could be called semasiological, because one starts with a linguistic sign and analyses its meaning. It is therefore analogous to the perspective of the hearer, who has to interpret a given metonymical expression. Because of the fact that the focus lies on one specific linguistic sign, metonymy can be defined from this point of view as “a linguistic effect upon the content of a given form” (Koch 2001: 205).

Another way of thinking about metonymy as a linguistic effect, however, is by analysing how we can linguistically express the same state of affairs in a metonymical and in a non-metonymical way. In this line of approach, one does not start from some linguistic sign that can be used metonymically or not, but one compares a metonymical expression in its context with non-metonymical possibilities of saying the same thing. As a consequence, the effect of the cognitive metonymy process should not be described as an effect on the content or the meaning of an expression, but instead as the use of the metonymical expression, that is the choice of the speaker for the metonymical way of expressing something. Seen from this perspective, metonymy can be described as the use of one phrase instead of another (cf. Verspoor 1997a: 166). Because one starts with the meaning and analyses corresponding ways of expressing the same state of affairs, this perspective on metonymy is of an onomasiological nature (cf. Sweep 2010a: 12; Sweep 2010b: 1430; Sweep 2011: 8, 24; Sweep 2012).

Onomasiological approaches analyse what the relations between alternative expressions are and which pragmatic factors determine the choice of an alternative expression (Grondelaers & Geeraerts 2003: 70; cf. also Geeraerts 2010: 23-24). An answer to such questions is of course fundamental to our understanding of

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16 This triangle was first proposed by Ogden and Richards (1923) and can be found in all subsequent philosophical and linguistic semantic textbooks.
17 I want to thank Wim Honselaar for pointing this out to me.
metonymical effects on language and communication. Although this approach sometimes turns out to be even more fruitful for understanding metonymical phenomena than a semasiological analysis (which we will see in full detail below), it is often neglected or overlooked. A reason for this could be the fact that the notions semasiology and onomasiology are uncommon terms in Anglo-Saxon linguistics (cf. Grondelaers, Speelman & Geeraerts 2007: 988).

But even linguists from a continental tradition do not directly incorporate this side of metonymy in their research. If the connection between metonymy and onomasiology is discussed, an onomasiological perspective is often explicitly not taken into account. Illustrative in this respect is the sophisticated work of Koch. He is definitely not blind to the onomasiological side of contiguity and of figure/ground effects (Koch 1999: 159; Koch 2001: 203; cf. also Koch 2008), but in his view figure/ground effects are only semasiologically related to metonymy (Koch 2001: 203). Indeed Koch’s definition of metonymy as a “frame-based figure/ground effect with respect to an invariant linguistic form” (Koch 2004: 8) or as a “linguistic effect upon the content of a given form” (Koch 2001: 205) only applies to the semasiological side of metonymy. This poses no real problem for his research, since it is primarily focused on semantic changes and metonymical polysemy, where there is only one form to deal with (i.e. the polysemous word). However, a purely semasiological approach to metonymy totally neglects or even has to deny the fact that other instances of metonymy, especially metonymies affecting grammar (cf. below chapter III, §5), do not only cause a shift in semantic features, but also and, in fact, primarily cause a shift in the expressions used (the linguistic structure).

In the next sections, I will illustrate the semasiological and onomasiological perspective with several examples of metonymy and clarify why the traditional semasiological as well as the onomasiological perspective are in fact both crucial for our understanding of metonymy.

5. The onomasiological side of metonymical shifts

A close examination of real instances of metonymy easily illustrates why the onomasiological point of view is of crucial importance. An example of a general metonymical pattern that is often exploited is AUTHOR FOR WORK. A linguistic sign, such as Goethe, can be interpreted as the famous writer with the name Goethe or metonymically stand for ‘(some) work written by Goethe’. If we start with the

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**Endnotes**

18 This perspective is primarily connected to the speaker, since it is the speaker that chooses the metonymical expression instead of the non-metonymical one. However, hearers also have to analyse the fact that a metonymical way of expression has been chosen (cf. the discussion of example 13 below).

19 However, compare below.

20 The AUTHOR FOR WORK metonymy is sometimes considered as the basis for AUTHOR FOR A CERTAIN BOOK (OR POEM) WRITTEN BY THAT AUTHOR. The latter contiguity pattern is thus derived in two steps, the first mapping is AUTHOR FOR WORK and the second mapping follows the route from the work in general to a specific part of this work (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza &
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analysis of an invariant linguistic sign, i.e. Goethe, we can thus indeed state, in line with Koch, that metonymy has the linguistic effect of modifying the content of the expression by metonymy. Instead of standing for a person, the expression metonymically refers to some specific works.

This semasiological linguistic effect of metonymy can be illustrated very well by sentence (6), which has two different interpretations. If Goethe heard Charlotte von Stein say this, he probably would have thought of the non-metonymical option (interpretation a), whereas if I utter this sentence, it will be interpreted as me loving Goethe’s oeuvre (interpretation b).

(6) I love Goethe.
    (a) ‘I love that man with the name Goethe’
    (b) ‘I love books by Goethe’

The metonymical b-interpretation can, however, be expressed more explicitly, as in (7).

(7) I love books by Goethe / I love Goethe’s oeuvre.

Instead of contrasting a metonymical and a non-metonymical interpretation of one and the same linguistic sign (e.g. comparing (6)a with (6)b), it is also possible to compare a metonymical and a non-metonymical expression with the same content (comparing (6) with (7)). Seen from this latter, onomasiological perspective the linguistic effect of metonymy is not primarily a modification of content but a modification of form, i.e. the choice of (6) instead of (7) (which could in turn be based upon a shifted conceptualisation by the speaker). In other words, metonymy does not only cause the interpretational shift (interpretation (6)b instead of (6)a), but also shifts the expressions themselves (expressing (6) instead of (7)). An onomasiological perspective has to be taken into account in order to explain metonymy fully. Defining metonymy merely as ‘an effect upon the content of a given form’ neglects the fact that metonymy, as a cognitive-linguistic process, determines this form at the same time.

In addition, an onomasiological perspective is necessary, even without directly analysing changes in linguistic form. The onomasiological point of view has to be taken into account in order to understand why metonymical expressions are available (the speaker’s perspective) and how they can be interpreted (the hearer’s perspective).

Pérez 2001: 338ff). For the moment, I will disregard this difference and discuss an example such as I am reading Goethe (meaning ‘some work by Goethe’) as a similar type of metonymy as I love Goethe (meaning ‘his oeuvre’), even though this is not, strictly speaking, the case.
perspective). Sentence (8) can be used to illustrate this. In this example the same contiguity pattern as in (6) has been exploited, with the difference that the metonymical interpretation is the only available interpretation, simply because the other option does not make any sense.

(8) I am reading Goethe.
(a) ‘I am reading that man with the name Goethe’
(b) ‘I am reading books by Goethe’

In this sentence, Goethe has to be interpreted as a book or poem by Goethe. This is not only so because a hearer knows that Goethe is a famous author, but also because one knows that it is only possible to read texts (in its literal sense). The context of the verb can thus be of crucial importance (cf. also Croft 1993: 354). In a sentence such as (8) it is clearly contextual information that triggers the metonymical interpretation of the word Goethe. Interestingly, in such sentences, a hearer can even understand the metonymy without having ever heard of the author, as in (9).

(9) I am reading Jones.

If a hearer does not know Jones, he/she cannot know that Jones is a writer and therefore a domain highlighting in Croft’s or Cruse’s sense, which makes the text-domain of the Jones-author-concept more prominent, is not very plausible as a first interpretational step. Rather the inference seems to function the other way around: The hearer realises that Jones must be used to refer to some text and therefore understands that the author-domain of the text-concept is explicitly expressed.22

Figure 1 shows this bilateral effect. Because of the close relationship between texts and authors, metonymy allows speakers to use the name Goethe instead of the words Goethe’s oeuvre (= arrow 1: the use of one phrase instead of another) with the result that in a given context a hearer interprets Goethe not in its literal sense as ‘the

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21 Koch also discusses the connection between metonymy and the hearer perspective versus the speaker perspective (Koch 2004: 12, 19, 42-45; 2001: 227-228), but he uses these notions in a different way than I do. Since Koch primarily takes the semasiological side into account, he addresses the question of who creates the metonymy. Normally speakers produce metonyms, but hearers can also create metonyms by reanalysing or interpreting a non-metonymically used expression as metonymical. Koch’s hearer-induced metonyms thus only correspond to the creation of (ad hoc) metonyms on the basis of expressions that were meant by the speaker as non-metonymical. What I call hearer perspective has to do with the way in which a hearer should deal with an, in Koch’s terms, ‘speaker induced metonymy’. More concretely, my use of the hearer’s perspective concerns the way in which a hearer understands that the expression Goethe should not be interpreted as the author but as his works or how a hearer knows that ham sandwich can be used to name a customer.

22 The metonymy is automatically inferred under the assumption that the hearer understands reading literally and does not interpret Jones as the title of a book.
famous author’ but instead as ‘work(s) by the specific author (= arrow 2: a shift in interpretation).

Figure 1: Metonymical effect on content (2) as well as on linguistic form (1)

This demonstrates that the connection between authors and texts or books is, just as all kinds of metonymical connections, a very tight one. In the first place, one understands that the name of an author can be used to refer to his works, since one knows that authors write books, i.e. the concept of an author includes a ‘text’-aspect. However, the connection also works the other way around: The concept of a book or text includes an ‘author’-aspect, since it is known that texts have to be written by someone. This may sound redundant, but both directions are crucial in order to explain the metonymy AUTHOR FOR WORK fully. The first direction from author-concept to book-interpretation is necessary in order to explain why it is possible to interpret Goethe as ‘work by Goethe’. This direction corresponds to the semasiological side; it explains the linguistic effect of metonymy upon content of a given form. The other direction, the fact that the book-concept includes an author-element, explains why a speaker does not have to make the book explicit for the hearer. Furthermore, it explains how it is possible to understand a sentence such as (9) without knowing who Jones is.

For a full understanding of what metonymy is and what it does, both a semasiological and an onomasiological perspective should be taken into account. In some metonymies the semasiological effect will be more relevant, as in case of (lexicalised) metonymical polysemy, whereas in others the onomasiological effect will be stronger. An analysis of a semasiological effects can for some metonymical expressions be complicated, because metonymies often simultaneously denote target and source as an integrated whole, without a clear referential shift (cf. Radden & Kövecses 1999: 19; Panther 2006: 147; Warren 1999: 128). In addition to this, the onomasiological side of metonymy is necessary to understand why people actually use metonymical expressions. I will discuss this pragmatic side of metonymy in the next section.
6. Reasons for using metonymical expressions

Analysing metonymy from an onomasiological perspective is also necessary to identify the reasons why speakers use metonymical expressions (Grondelaers & Geeraerts 2003: 70). There are not many studies that address the question of why metonymies are actually used. Only occasionally tentative reasons for the choice of a metonymical expression are mentioned. Although it goes beyond the present dissertation to analyse pragmatics reasons of metonymy in full detail, I will discuss some of these reasons in order to show that an onomasiological stance is taken in identifying those reasons.

The most frequently mentioned reason for the use of a metonymical expression is linguistic economy (cf. e.g. Dölling 1999: 33, 47; Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001: 325; Schifko 1979: 242; Warren 1999: 128). A comparison of (6) and (7), for instance, suggests that the metonymy could indeed be used to express oneself more economically.

However, not all metonymies are simply shorter expressions. This becomes directly clear if the metonymical expression is compared with its non-metonymical counterpart. In (10) and (11), for instance, the metonymical expressions in the b-sentences are not shorter than the non-metonymical ways of expressing the same content in the a-sentences.

(10) a. I have a fever
    b. I have a temperature        (cf. Seto 1999: 114)

(11) a. The author began writing
    b. The author began the book    (cf. Pustejovsky 1991)

Rather than being an economic way of referring to reality, these sentences highlight a relevantly involved concept, thereby simultaneously evoking the target-concept.

Rather than purely for reasons of linguistic economy (i.e. shorter expressions), Nunberg has suggested that metonymical expressions can only be used if the literal concept corresponding to the expression used is ‘noteworthy’ (cf. Nunberg 1996: 114). In other words, there must be relevant reasons to use a metonymical expression.

Noteworthiness could lead to linguistic economy (cf. also Blank 1999: 176). This can be illustrated by an example such as (5). The order *ham sandwich* is noteworthy for denoting a customer because “customers acquire their most usefully distinctive properties in virtue of their relations to the dishes they order” (Nunberg 1996: 115). It is therefore the easiest and shortest way for waiters in a restaurant to refer to a specific customer; if one did not use the order for the customer, one would have to provide a very precise, long nominal description to refer to the specific customer (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza & Pérez 2001: 325).
Such analyses are onomasiological in the sense that reasons with respect to the specific situation in reality are examined to analyse why a metonymical expression has been used.

Kövecses and Radden provide some other reasons why metonymical expressions are used instead of literal ones (i.e. why sources are noteworthy). One principle is, for example that humans are cognitively salient to such a large extent that expressions referring to humans are often selected over the literally interpreted words. Kövecses and Radden illustrate this with metonyms following PRODUCER-PRODUCT, as in the Goethe-examples; following POSSESSOR-POSSESSED as in I am parked out back or following CONTROLLER-CONTROLLED as in Schwarzkopf defeated Iraq (cf. Kövecses and Radden 1998: 64). Other patterns revealed by Kövecses and Radden are, for instance, the use of words literally corresponding to concrete concepts to denote abstract ones (1998: 64), immediate visual things for immediate concepts (1998: 65), or the use of words denoting typical things and actions to refer to a category as a whole (1998: 69). Such patterns are onomasiological principles, in the sense that they reveal how meaning can be expressed in a metonymical way and why this is done.

Highlighting a relevant concept can also have a humorous (Honselaar p.c.) or euphemistic (cf. Blank 1999: 175-176) effect. The Dutch examples (12)b and (13)b illustrate this: Compared to (12)a, the expression in (12)b is more colloquial and has some joking flavour and the metonymical meaning of klateren in (13)b avoids the use of a word such as plassen ‘to urinate’.

(12) a. Even de leerlingen tellen...
    just the pupils count
    ‘Just counting pupils (/heads)’

b. Even de neuzen tellen...
    just the noses count

(13) a. Hij plaste tegen de kerk
    he urinated against the church

b. Hij klaterde tegen de kerk
    he splashed against the church
    ‘He urinated against the church’

Although this section has only tentatively touched upon the pragmatics of metonymical expressions, all metonymical expressions seem to have a specific pragmatic effect, such as referring in the most economic and relevant way, causing differences in focus, evoking a certain conceptualisation, expressing things in a euphemistic or funny way, and so on. Such effects can only be analysed by comparing the metonymical expression with its non-metonymical counterpart (i.e. a-sentences with b-sentences). In other words, an onomasiological point of view has to

23 Cf. also the example The gardener mows the lawn, which is discussed in the next section.
be taken into account if one analyses which effect the metonymy has and why the metonymical expression has been used.

7. Defining metonymy as a twofold highlighting effect

The previous sections have touched upon different aspects of metonymy. Crucial notions, such as contiguity-relations, metonymy as a domain-internal mapping and the linguistic effect of metonymy have all been discussed. In this section, I will combine these aspects and the role they play into a fully fledged definition of metonymy.

First of all, it has repeatedly been explained that metonymy is the linguistic reflection of a contiguity-based association between two concepts (cf. Blank 1997: 235). The contiguity relation, i.e. a tight, conceptual connection based on reality, can be analysed on several levels of abstraction. The contiguity relation is furthermore reflected within frames. Unsurprisingly, several scholars use the notion ‘frame’ in their definition of metonymy. They do this either directly, for instance by defining metonymy as a “frame-based figure/ground effect” (Koch 2004: 8) or indirectly by considering metonymy as a way of highlighting domains (cf. Croft 1993). A domain-internal highlighting could also be described as highlighting certain elements of a frame.

Furthermore, I have explained above (§4) that metonymy as a cognitive process causes not only an effect upon content (from given form to meaning), but also an effect upon linguistic form (from intended or expected meaning to form). I have argued that research on metonymy should take into account both perspectives, i.e. a semasiological as well as an onomasiological point of view (cf. Sweep 2010a: 12; Sweep 2010b: 1430). This has crucial consequences, however, for the notion of metonymy as a highlighting effect (Croft 1993). The highlighting should not only be defined as ‘making a certain domain (of the expressed concept) primary for the interpretation’, but also as ‘making a certain domain (of the intended concept) explicitly primary in the sentence’.

Although the metonymical effect in terms of ‘highlighting’ is never explicitly defined in an onomasiological way, i.e. as a shift in or choice of the expression used, this idea is often implicitly reflected in some linguistic studies. Kövecses and Radden, for instance, write about the sentence The gardener mows the lawn: “The metonymy involved here is controller for controlled, and this wording appears to be a natural way of expression because it highlights the human participant.” (1998: 39, emphasis mine). Here the word highlights does not denote the semasiological highlighting of the instrument aspect within the gardener-concept, but in fact refers to the explicit highlighting in the sentence of the human participant connected to the mowing-machine. Leaving aside the question of whether metonymy is really involved in the subject of this sentence, the description of the metonymical highlighting-effect clearly does not describe an effect upon the content of the words used, but analyses the explicit choice of the metonymical expression.
A similar use of the word *highlight* in an onomasiological sense can be found in Panther and Thornburg, illustrated by the sentence *She is just a pretty face*. According to Panther and Thornburg, this metonymical expression “is not just a substitute expression for *a pretty person* but also *highlights* the prettiness of the person’s face” (2007: 238, emphasis mine). Again, this use of *highlights* is not the standard semasiological highlighting in terms of Croft and Cruse. In that sense, the highlighting effect should be explained as the interpretational shift of ‘pretty face’ to ‘person with a pretty face’.24 This word *highlights* refers, however, to a simultaneously occurring but opposite effect, i.e. an explicit focus on the person’s face within the intended whole person interpretation. Implicitly, this is an onomasiological view on highlighting, because it reasons from intended interpretation to form.

In addition, I have argued in line with Peirsman and Geeraerts that, if one sees metonymy as a highlighting effect within a frame, the frames involved need to be specified. I will use existing frames from the on-line database of FrameNet for this purpose (http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/). Interestingly, an analysis with the help of the frames found in FrameNet makes the twofold highlighting (i.e. the shifted interpretation as well as the explicit focus) clear directly.

The traditional AUTHOR FOR WORK metonymy as in *I am reading Goethe* can be used to illustrate the issue. According to FrameNet the main verb of this sentence evokes a “Reading” frame. This frame has two Core Elements, which are “conceptually necessary components of a frame” (Ruppenhofer et al. 2006: 26). The Core Elements of the “Reading” frame are a ‘Reader’ and a ‘Text’ (cf. http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/). The reader-element is directly expressed by the word *I*. The text-element is not directly presented in the sentence, but expressed by means of *Goethe* (illustrated by the thin arrow in Figure 2). This shows that metonymy causes a content-shift from author to book, as well as an explicit highlighting of the author within the needed book/text-element evoked by the verb (cf. Figure 2).

24 I will discuss this sentence in more detail in chapter III, §4.2, cf. especially footnote 63.
The *Goethe*-example illustrates that Croft’s semasiological “domain highlighting” (that is making the *book*-element primary in the interpretation of the expressed author) is paired with an onomasiological highlighting (that is expressing the author connected to the book frame instead of the book itself). The onomasiological perspective on metonymy has similar consequences for a definition of metonymy as a figure/ground effect within a frame (Koch 2001). Koch’s figure/ground effect occurs within the frame that is literally expressed (interpreting an author as a book) as well as within the frame of interpretation (expressing a book by means of its author). In other words, the figure/ground effect can be explained from the point of view of the source-frame (the author) as well as from the target-frame (the book).

In fact, Koch himself also sometimes locates the contiguity relation or the figure/ground effect in the frame corresponding to the expression used (the semasiologically evoked frame), and sometimes in the intended frame (the target-frame). In his discussion of German *im Griechen*, he explains that the Greek-concept establishes a conceptual connection to the Greek restaurant (Koch 2004: 11-12). The inference is thus made within the frame corresponding to the literally used expression, i.e. the source-frame. The metonymy-induced polysemy of *garage*, on the other hand, is explained in a different way. The contiguity relation between the garages and service stations which is reflected in the two senses of French *garage* is located within the service station frame, since “service stations prototypically have [...] garages” (Koch 2004: 12). The figure/ground effect thus occurs within the concept of the shifted meaning, i.e. the target-frame. Koch’s analysis of *im Griechen* is thus of a semasiological nature starting with the literal meaning of the expression.

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**Figure 2: Metonymy explained in terms of Frame Semantics**
used, whereas the analysis of garage could be seen as onomasiologically oriented, since it relates the intended concept to the literal expression.\textsuperscript{25}

The same confusion is reflected in the explanation of the different senses of French \textit{vitesse} (i.e. ‘speed’ or ‘gear’). In Koch’s illustration of the metonymical figure/ground effect (Koch 2004: 8), the highlighting of the figure/ground is located not only within ‘speed’ but also within ‘gear’. The former describes the figure/ground effect with respect to the literal or original concept. It could therefore be considered as semasiologically oriented. The latter figure/ground effect, on the other hand, takes the shifted meaning as the basic point of view.\textsuperscript{26} Both analyses are true in each case, however, and both perspectives (semasiological or source-oriented as well as onomasiological or target-oriented) are essential. Since metonymy is a cognitive device anchored in our way of perceiving things and reflected in the way in which we express ourselves, the onomasiological perspective is crucial.

In a way, the present definition of metonymy combines insights from the rhetorical-literary tradition, which focuses upon changed expressions, as well as insights from the cognitive linguistic tradition that correctly analyses the conceptual side of metonymy. Metonymy should be seen as a cognitive process of contingent contiguity associations with the linguistic effect that a closely related concept is expressed instead of the concept that makes most sense literally. In this way, metonymy can lead to a reinterpretation. The expression used plays a crucial role without necessarily being interpreted literally. Metonymy should not simply be considered as an effect upon content, since it also causes a shift in linguistic form.

\textsuperscript{25} Ruiz de Mendoza is the only scholar who explicitly notes that metonymical mappings are sometimes located within the frame or domain corresponding to the source and in other cases within the frame or domain corresponding to the target (cf. Ruiz de Mendoza 2000: 116; cf. also Geeraerts 2010: 216). His theory of source-in-target metonymies and target-in-source metonymies can be used to explain this difference: The mapping always occurs within the highest domain. This would mean that garage must be a source-in-target type of metonymy (a ‘garage’ is included in a ‘service station’) and \textit{im Griechen} should be an example of target-in-source. Unfortunately, as also illustrated by the latter example, it is not always clear whether we are dealing with source-in-target or target-in-source metonymy. I will discuss this issue in detail in the next chapter. Another problem with this explanation for the different frames is that it cannot account for the fact that metonymy causes two types of shift, viz. a shift in meaning as well as a shift in the expression used, as illustrated above by the \textit{Goethe}-example.

\textsuperscript{26} In addition to this double highlighting, the semantic change or polysemy is explicitly said to be “due to a figure/ground effect within a frame, say MOTOR CAR” (Koch 2004: 8). This frame is, however, not at all reflected within the visualisation of the figure/ground effect (Koch 2004: 8, table 1). The mentioning of the ‘motor car’ can be compared with the misconception that \textit{the ham sandwich} is a metonymical mapping within the restaurant frame (cf. footnote 11).