Metonymical object changes: a corpus-oriented study on Dutch and German
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IV. METONYMY AND DUTCH AND GERMAN LEXICOGRAPHY

1. Metonymy and lexicography

Chapter II opened with the remark that traditional grammarians and lexicographers were the first to recognize the non-literary nature of metonymy. This shows that their linguistic insights were ahead of their time. In this chapter I will show that dictionaries support some of the theoretical insights I discussed in chapter III. Therefore, insights exhibited in dictionaries deserve to be taken into account in metonymy research.

The present chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 will show that dictionaries can be used to support the disentanglement of the different types of metonymies set out in chapter III. This previous chapter, which discussed the different ways in which metonymy affects language, in fact made use of examples taken from dictionaries. I will demonstrate that some traditional Dutch dictionaries in particular incorporate almost every type of metonymy (as set out in the classification in the previous chapter), i.e. every conventional metonymy on word or phrase level. Section 3 will show in more detail how dictionaries explain complex metonymies, such as predicative metonymies. This section will show that the labels used for predicative metonymies is in line with linguistic studies. Section 4 will discuss the complicated relationship between predicative metonymies and verb meaning. Again, it will be demonstrated that dictionaries parallel theoretical studies. Section 5 will discuss the reasons why direct objects are extremely sensitive for metonymy. This section clarifies the motivation for the focus of this study on predicative metonymies in direct object position. Section 6 will present some conclusions.

2. Metonymy in Dutch and German dictionaries

2.1 Metonymically tagged examples in Dutch and German dictionaries

The Dutch and German lexicographical tradition has used metonymy for a long time. Even the first attempts to compile a complete monolingual dictionary already make use of the notion “metonymisch” (‘metonymical’) to explain certain linguistic phenomena. Examples are the nineteenth-century dictionary of the Grimm brothers, das Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache (DWB), or Adelung’s Versuch eines vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuchs der hochdeutschen Mundart, with a tradition dating back to the end of the 18th century (Adelung et al. 1811; first
version 1774-1786). Dutch dictionaries, such as the historical *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (WNT) (1882-2001) or the contemporary Van Dale 2005 are even richer resources for metonymical material. In this section it will become clear that linguistic phenomena tagged as metonymical are highly diverse and support the classification of metonymical influences on language set out in the previous chapter.

First of all, the label “metronymisch” (‘metonymical’) is frequently used as a label to classify metonymical polysemy. Examples can be found in the DWB-entries *Tisch* (‘table’), *Traube* (‘grape’) or *Goldschmiedwerk* (‘work of a goldsmith’). *Tisch* metonymically denotes ‘dinner’ or ‘food’ and *Traube* metonymically refers to wine. In a similar way, *Goldschmiedwerk* does not only refer to the craft of a goldsmith, but can also refer metonymically to the product of this craft, such as a piece of jewellery.

An example of labelled metonymical polysemy in the Dutch WNT is the word *kroon* (‘crown’). This word can metonymically denote the wearer of the crown (i.e. the king) or refer to the royal power on a more abstract level (cf. WNT entry *kroon* under meaning 2 and 3 respectively). Both meanings are classified as metonymically related to the primary ‘headdress’-meaning. Van Dale gives the same description for *kroon* as the WNT with explicit metonymy tags. Another example is *klooster* (‘monastery’). According to the WNT, this word metonymically refers to the monastery administration or to the people living in the monastery (both meaning 4). The entry *abdij* (‘abbey’) in Van Dale shows a similar metonymical polysemy. *abdij* not only refers to the abbey itself as a foundation or an organisation, but also metonymically to the buildings. Van Dale even provides an example that Nunberg considered to be dense metonymy: The word *krant* (‘newspaper’) not only denotes the magazine but also metonymically refers to the producing company.

The label “metronymisch” is not only used for metonymical meanings of a word: Certain fixed expressions can also be considered metonymical. In Van Dale’s entry *boterham* (‘slice of bread’), the idiomatic expression *een dikke boterham verdienen* is classified as metonymical. The expression literally means ‘earning a large slice of bread’ and can be translated as ‘earning a very good salary’. The expression thus exhibits a RESULT-SOURCE metonymy (and additionally a pars-pro-toto metonymy, because one buys more than just slices of bread). This metonymical interpretation is inherent to the combination with *verdienen* (‘to earn’): It turns out to be difficult to find another appropriate context to use *een dikke boterham* for ‘a good salary’ (cf.

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92 Adelung’s dictionary is often considered to be the oldest German dictionary, although this is not strictly speaking true: In 1691 a dictionary by Kaspar von Stieler had already been published under the title *Der Teutschen Sprache Stammbaum und Fortwachs oder Teutscher Sprachschatz*. One of the first lexicographical works of Dutch are the Dutch-Latin dictionaries compiled by Cornelius Kiliaan in the 16th century.

93 Cf. example 2 in chapter II.

94 It is generally known that Van Dale often follows the WNT, since a lot of Van Dale’s material and entries are based on the WNT (cf. Geeraerts & Jonkers 2007 or Moerdijk & Tempelaars 1992).
also Sweep 2009a: 88 footnote 8). In a comparable way, the WNT describes the fixed combination *kerk en kluis* (‘church and hermitage’) as metonymically referring to religion (cf. WNT entry *kluis* under meaning 1).

It is also possible that only specific uses of a word in a certain context can be considered metonymical. Consider in this respect the third meaning in the entry *deur* (‘door’) in Van Dale.

*deur* 3. (in ‘t bijzonder) deur die toegang tot de woning verleent
synoniem: huisdeur
(metonymisch) in de deur staan op de drempel van het deurkozijn staan

In the interpretation of *deur* (‘door’) as a ‘front door’, the word can be used metonymically as the opening. This is not a different meaning but rather a metonymical interpretation. It could even be regarded as a facet of the word *deur*, similar to examples of a window as a sheet of glass and an opening (cf. above chapter III, §2.3; Cruse 2000: 115; cf. also Taylor 1989: 125).

Instances of metonymies that are used to denote concrete persons are sometimes also incorporated in a dictionary. Clear examples are entries of music instruments in Van Dale. In the dictionary entry *viool* (‘violin’) or *fagot* (‘bassoon’) we find the contiguity pattern *INSTRUMENT-PLAYER OF THE INSTRUMENT*. The first meaning is the instrument itself. The second meaning describes that the words *viool* and *fagot* can also be used to denote a player of those instruments. Illustrations of comparable interpretational shifts, which follow slightly different contiguity patterns, can be illustrated by Dutch words in Van Dale, such as *babyface* (a loan word from English) for a person with a babyface, *bajonet* (‘bayonet’) for a soldier or *vetkuif* (‘greased quiff’) for a person with a greased quiff.96

A subtle difference between these referent-oriented metonymies and concept-oriented metonymical polysemy can be illustrated by comparing *bajonet* and *vetkuif* with *kroon*. Although *kroon*, just as *bajonet* and *vetkuif*, is based on an ATTRIBUTE FOR PERSON-contiguity, it is not just referent-oriented: *Kroon* is not only used to refer to a specific king, but metonymically denotes the concept of a king in

95 The same metonymy can only be found in related sayings, such as *brood op de plank* (lit.: “bread on the shelf”, meaning ‘having enough money for buying food’) or *zijn boterham verdienen met...* (‘to earn one’s daily bread with...’). This fact is interesting, since normally only metaphors lead to a cluster of similar expressions, because a metaphor causes that “a whole schematic structure [...] is mapped onto another whole schematic structure” (Lakoff & Turner 1989: 103, cf. also Lakoff & Johnson 1980).

96 The WNT incorporates similar but rather old-fashioned examples, such as *knevelbaard* (‘type of moustache’) or *kornet* (‘traditional type of hat for females and housemaids’), which also metonymically refer to persons with these attributes.
general. In addition to this, kroon can even refer to royal power in a metonymical way. This example shows that the boundaries between referent-oriented and concept-oriented metonymies are fuzzy.

These examples also illustrate that comparable metonymical shifts occur with different lexical items: viol and fagot may both denote musicians by mentioning their instruments, vetkuit and babyface both denote persons with reference to their appearance. Similarly school and klooster both include contiguous meanings of persons and buildings. Contiguity-based meaning conventionalisations apparently occur independently of individual lexical items. Although dictionaries do not incorporate, for instance, the ‘musician’-meaning in the entries of all instruments (cf. Moerdijk 1993), it is always possible to refer to a musician by mentioning the instrument in a discourse (cf. Koch 2004: 27). For some instruments referring to the musicians is simply more common than for others. Metonymical connections, such as ATTRIBUTE FOR PERSON, can therefore be seen as a habitualised pattern or a lexical rule (cf. above chapter III, §2.2). Only the common conventionalised metonymical senses must be given in a dictionary.

Lexicalisation patterns can be restricted, as is the case with grinding. Lexicalised meanings which are based on the process of grinding have likewise been incorporated in Dutch dictionaries. The Dutch WNT, for instance, describes the meaning of konijn (‘rabbit’) as metonymically referring to the meat or the fur (cf. chapter III). Van Dale also provides examples of grinding, such as in the entry zilvervos (‘silver fox’). Apart from the animal or the breed of fox, the second metonymical meaning is the fur of this animal. As I discussed in the previous chapter, these conceptual shifts can be accompanied by grammatical effects. The shift in meaning from an animal or breed to the meat or the fur, for instance, is accompanied by differences in the use of determiners and plurals.

These grammatical effects can be even stronger for other metonymical meaning transfers. An example of metonymical polysemy which is accompanied by a grammatical effect can be found in the dictionary entry of the numeral tien (‘ten’) in the WNT. The numeral has a metonymical meaning referring to some token of the number (i.e. ‘X’ or ‘10’) or to ‘a domino or a playing card with the number ten’ (meaning B). In these two meanings, the word tien is a noun referring to an object instead of to a numeral. In contrast to the examples of grinding, this results in a grammatical change. In its metonymical sense the numeral tien can occur with a determiner and it can, as explicitly described by the WNT, be pluralized (viz. tienen, ‘tens’).

97 The same issue can be illustrated with the old-fashioned word kornet in the WNT (cf. previous footnote). This word is said not only to refer metonymically to a specific woman wearing it, but also to women in general.

98 The opposite metonymy following a MATERIAL FOR OBJECT-contiguity is also reflected within dictionaries. Illustrative are Van Dale’s fluweel (‘velvet’) for velvet pillows and blik (‘metal’) for cars, and in the WNT carbon (‘carbon, pressed coaldust’) for carbon paper and celluloid (‘celluloid’) for a reel of film (which has in a similar way been incorporated in Van Dale).
Grammatical effects caused by metonymical polysemy can even better be illustrated by the word *aubergine* (‘aubergine / egg plant’). The dictionary entry in Van Dale describes this word as metonymically denoting the colour of the egg plant, that is ‘aubergine purple’ (meaning II.1). The vegetable is grammatically feminine *(de aubergine)*, but the colour is either an adjective or a noun and has, as a nominalised adjective, neuter gender in Dutch. The colour name should therefore be referred to as *het aubergine*.

It could be argued that these grammatical effects are caused by a morphological conversion. For *ten* this is a conversion from numeral to noun. For *aubergine* the morphological conversion is even more obvious, since colour names do not only have neuter gender, but are even primarily used as adjectives. Therefore the metonymical shift from the number to the playing card or from the vegetable to the colour does not only seem to be accompanied by a shift in determiner but also by a shift in word class. These possible conversions are, however, clearly side-effects of the conceptual shifts: Even though these metonymies are paired with grammatical effects, they do not crucially differ from metonymical polysemy or other sense transfers within a grammatical word category.99

The example of polysemy occurring in the numeral *tien* furthermore supports the view that metonymical sense transfers are not limited to nouns only, but that words belonging to all parts of speech can in fact be metonymically transferred (cf. Koch 2001: 220; Koch 2004: 29). Metonymically polysemous verbs were discussed in chapter III, §4.7. Examples are *klateren* under meaning 1.b in Van Dale or *kuipen* (I) under meaning 2 and *tikken* under meaning 5 in the WNT, which are all marked as metonymical meanings (cf. above chapter III, §4.7).

However, in many verb entries the label “metonymisch” (‘metonymical’) does not denote a metonymical meaning of the verb, but applies to a metonymically interpreted argument that often occurs with that verb. Consider the dictionary entry of the verb *lesen* (‘to read’) in the DWB under meaning 4.i):

„häufig wird bei *lesen* metonymisch der Verfasser statt seines Werkes genannt“ [*‘with *lesen* (‘to read’) the author is often metonymically used instead of his work’*]

(DWB: entry lesen, meaning 4.i), cf. http://germazope.uni-trier.de/Projects/WBB/woerterbuecher/dwb/wbgui?lemid=GA00001; my translation)

In the historical WNT, exactly the same description can be found: With respect to *lezen* (‘to read’) the WNT tells us in its dictionary entry (published in 1916):

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99 These examples thus again clearly illustrate the issue of whether metonymy can cause conversions, as discussed in chapter III, §3.1-3.2: Even if metonymy could lead to a conversion, as seems to be the case for *aubergine*, this is by definition a side effect of the conceptual shift or sense transfer.
“Metonymisch met den naam van den schrijver als object”
[‘Metonymically with the name of the author as [direct] object’]
(WNT: entry lezen, meaning 4, http://www.wnt.inl.nl/iWDB/search?actie=article&wdb=WNT&id=M037033&lemmodern=lezen; my translation)

These dictionary entries refer to a habitualised use of the contiguity pattern AUTHOR FOR WORK (cf. Waltereit 1998: 27). Interestingly, by incorporating these examples in the verb entries, the dictionary implicitly stresses the important role of the verb in metonymical interpretations of a noun. The verb determines the context, and selection restrictions of the verb directly help to interpret the metonymical argument (cf. Waltereit 1999: 235).100

In Adelung’s dictionary the label “metonymisch” occurs almost exclusively in verb entries. No less then 101 out of the 104 dictionary entries in which the word metonymisch occurs as a lexicographical tag are verbs. In the three other entries, i.e. ab (‘off’), aus (‘out’) and die Ader (‘the vein’), a verb is still involved in the metonymy, because the label “metonymisch” is applied to combinations of these lexical items with verbs. Furthermore, Adelung applies the notion of metonymy to highly specific examples. An illustration is the following example:

[‘mow (lit.: “off-mow”), verb. reg. act. cut off with the scythe. To mow the corn, the grass. Metonymical, to mow the pastures, the field’]

The notion of metonymy in Adelung’s dictionary differs from the use in other dictionaries. In contrast to Grimm’s lesen-example, the direct object, the ‘pastures’ or the ‘field’, can be literally conceptualised in combination with to mow (lit.: “off-mow”). In fact, this literal conceptualisation of the direct object is possible in all of Adelung’s examples. The tag “metonymisch” does therefore not seem to refer to a direct object that has to be interpreted in a non-literal way, according to a lexicalised contiguity pattern. It is, however, also implausible that the label “metonymisch” is intended to denote a second, metonymical meaning of the verb, since Adelung incorporates it in a single meaning description of one specific action expressed by the verb (cf. Sweep 2010b or §4 below). Rather it is the case that the type of the direct object in combination with the verb has been shifted. In other words, the

100 Sometimes the same contiguity pattern can also be regarded by lexicographers as a lexicalised meaning of a nominal entry, cf. Van Dale’s entry auteur (‘author’), which in its plural form metonymically can mean ‘literature’ (illustrated by the example reading French authors).
metonymical transfer affects the direct object slot. Adelung’s metonymical verbs therefore fit the idea of predicative metonymies perfectly (cf. chapter III, §5).

This example of *abmähen* is often connected to the term “Objektsvertauschung” (‘object change’) or “Objektsverschiebung” (‘object shift’) by German linguists and German lexicographers (Reichmann 1989: 110; Carlberg 1948: 27, 39; DWB; Oksaar 1984). This notion in Dutch, i.e. “objectsverwisseling”, is also used in dictionaries, as can be seen in the entries for the Dutch equivalent of *abmähen*, i.e. *afmaaien*, in Van Dale and in the WNT.

afmaaien 1.(mbt. gras, koren enz.) met zeis of sikkels langs de grond afsnijden (met objectverwisseling) een akker, een stuk hooiland afmaaien het daarop groeiende koren, gras maaien

[‘mow (lit.: “off-mow”) 1. (with respect to grass, wheat, etc.) cut off with a scythe or sickle close to the ground; (with object change) to mow a field, a hayfield; to mow the wheat, the grass growing on it’]
(Van Dale 2005 [CD-ROM]: entry *afmaaien*; my translation)


[‘mow (lit.: “off-mow”)1. [...] a) Literally. Applied to grass, wheat and other plants which grow in a field and which are usually mown. Separate from the field by mowing, cut off on the ground with a scythe or sickle, so that it [i.e. the harvest] can be carried away. [...] 2. By extension, with change of object, by which the idea of taking off, expressed by *Off*, is changed into that of taking away (30, e, β). Applied to meadows or fields, on which grass, grain or other plants grow. Stripping them of these, emptying them by *mowing* it [i.e. the plants] off (in the meaning 1, a.).’]
(WNT: entry *afmaaien*
http://www.wnt.inl.nl/iWDB/search?actie=article&wdb=WNT&id=M002374&lemmodern=afmaaien; my translation)

Van Dale speaks of “objectsverwisseling” (‘object change’) and the WNT similarly describes the shift as “verwisseling van object” (‘change of object’). The dictionary entries tagged as “metonymisch” by Adelung consistently correspond to examples of “objectsverwisseling” in Van Dale and in the WNT. Prototypical examples marked as cases of object change are the Dutch and German equivalents of English *pack* and *unpack* [Dutch: *pakken*, *inpakken*, *ompakken*, *afpakken*, *uitpakken*; German: *packen*], which can be combined with the luggage as well as with the location;
unload [Dutch: afladen, ontladen, lossen; German: ausladen, lösen], which can be combined with the goods or with the ship, lorry or truck carrying the goods; clear (up) [Dutch: afruimen, opruimen, uitruimen; German: aufräumen, ausräumen], which can apply to a location or the things in that location; beat out [Dutch: uitkloppen; German: ausklopfen], which can combine with dust or the dusty object; press / squeeze (out) [Dutch: persen, uitpersen, uitdrukken; German: ausdrücken, auskeltern, auspressen], which can take fruit or fruit juice as its direct object or sweep (out) [Dutch: vegen, afvegen, uitvegen; German: kehren, abkehren, auskehren ausfegen], which can be combined with dirt or the location in which the dirt is found. All these examples are illustrations of verbs whose possible direct objects, such as the locations and what is in the locations (the so-called locatum), seem both to be conceptualised and interpreted literally.

Comparable shifts are possible with subjects. In the entry for German ausschlagen (lit: “out-hit/out-strike”), Adelung applies the tag “metonymisch” to subjects three times. First of all, Adelung uses “metonymisch” when the subject of the verb is a person (with a rash) instead of the rash itself (i.e. “Er ist am ganzen Leib ausgeschlagen”). Secondly, the use of ausschlagen in the meaning of ‘to point’ is called metonymical in combination with a balance instead of the pointer of the balance as its subject (i.e. “Die Wage schlägt aus. Die Wage ausschlagen lassen.”). Thirdly, the verb ausschlagen can, in the meaning of ‘to sprout’, be metonymically combined with trees instead of the buds or branches as its subject. The last example is also incorporated in the WNT and Van Dale as an instance of “subjectverwisselung”. For instance, the WNT tags uitlopen (lit: “out-walk”, ‘to sprout’) as allowing “subjectverwisselung”. Van Dale uses the same label for a comparable shift between trees, buds and flowers under uitkomen (‘come out”).

Fully in line with Adelung, Van Dale defines objectsverwisselung and also subjectsverwisselung as specific instances of metonymy (Van Dale 2005: entries objectsverwisselung and subjectsverwisselung). I will therefore use the term Metonymical Subject Changes (MSCs) and Metonymical Object Changes (MOCs) for this type of examples. In section 3 of this chapter, I will analyse this in more detail and demonstrate why the descriptions of these object changes in the dictionary are perfect examples of predicative metonymies.

2.2 The spectrum of metonymies reflected in dictionaries

The previous subsection showed that Dutch and German dictionaries contain a lot of linguistically tagged material, often supported by authentic language examples. These examples can therefore be used for research on metonymy. Interestingly, all the different dictionary examples discussed in the previous subsection directly reflect the types of metonymy that were disentangled on a theoretical basis in chapter III. Theoretically distinguished types of metonymy are therefore also recognised as metonymical in the longstanding lexicographical tradition of the last three centuries. Table 2 provides an overview.
Layer | Type of metonymy | Tagged dictionary examples
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Lexical | sense/facet | *deur* (Van Dale)
 | polysemy (sense-oriented) | *kroon; klooster; tien; tikken;* etc. (WNT) *abdij; kroon; krant; klateren;* etc. (Van Dale) *Goldschmiedwerk;* (WNT) *Traube; Tisch;* etc. (DWB) *konijn* (WNT); *zilvervos* (Van Dale) |
Discourse-semantic (habitualised) | convention of use | AUTHOR FOR WORK: *lezen* (WNT) & *lesen* (DWB) |
 | referent-oriented | *viool, fagot, babyface, bajonet, vetkuif* (Van Dale) |
Propositional | idioms & sayings (fixed metonymies) | *een dikke boterham verdienen* (Van Dale); *kerk en kluis* (WNT) |
Grammatical-semantic | predicative metonymy / argument place | labels used: ‘subjectverwisseling’; ‘objectverwisseling’; ‘metonymisch’ (WNT & Van Dale), ‘metonymisch’ (Adelung); ‘Subjectsverschiebung’; ‘Objectsverschiebung’; ‘metonymisch’ (DWB) |

Table 2: Types of tagged metonymies in Van Dale, WNT, DWB & Adelung

This table includes almost all the types of metonymy as discussed in chapter III (cf. Table 1, p. 84). In fact, the only metonymical transfers that cannot be found in dictionaries are excluded for clear reasons.

A first type of metonymy that is not included in dictionaries are metonymies beyond word level, such as speech act metonymies (cf. above chapter III, § 2.4). These are not incorporated because a dictionary gives the metonymical meaning of words, not of sentences. The only exception to this rule is idiomatic expressions and sayings. They can be found in dictionaries and are tagged as metonymical (cf. *een dikke boterham verdienen* in Van Dale or the fixed combination *kerk en kluis* in the WNT).

A second type that is not incorporated in a dictionary are discourse-dependent metonymies without lexical effects. This can be illustrated by the *ham sandwich* for ‘customer ordering a ham sandwich’ (cf. also Koch 2004: 27). However, some comparable referent-oriented metonymies are very common and they are therefore incorporated in nominal entries (cf. also García Velasco 2009: 5ff). The entries for *viool* (‘violin’), *fagot* (‘bassoon’), *babyface, bajonet* (‘bayonet’), or *vetkuif* (‘greased quiff’) in Van Dale illustrate this. These ways of referring to persons by their
attributes or properties are explicitly classified as metonymical meanings in the dictionaries. Other conventionalised contiguity patterns with default interpretational effects can be found in verb entries. I have shown, for instance, that in the German entry *lesen* in DWB, as well as in the Dutch entry *lezen* in the WNT (both meaning ‘to read’), the contiguity pattern AUTHOR FOR WORK, which often occurs in the direct object, has been incorporated.

These examples of metonymical sense or meaning shifts form a continuum from clear instances of nominal polysemy (such as *kroon*) to conventionally used contiguity patterns (as illustrated by *lesen/lezen* for AUTHOR FOR WORK), with examples such as *fagot* or *babyface* as in-between cases. Dictionaries even use metonymy tags for instances of a metonymical perspective within a meaning, as in the case of *deur* (‘door’). Examples such as these can be considered stepping stones to real polysemy (Taylor 1989: 124; cf. also chapter III example (13) on page 37).

Dictionaries thus clearly reflect theoretical linguistic insights. First of all, they show that some discourse-semantic or grammatical-semantic information cannot completely be excluded from the lexicon. The dashed lines between these linguistic layers in Table 2 illustrate this. Secondly, the metonymy tags are used for all kinds of lexical effects (ranging across real polysemy, referent-oriented contiguities leading to new senses, word facets and lexicalised contiguity patterns).

I have also demonstrated that dictionaries acknowledge that metonymical highlighting effects can be paired with grammatical effects, such as shifts in determiner or possibly even word class. The word *aubergine* is a clear example. At the end of section 1.2, I have demonstrated that traditional Dutch and German dictionaries even recognise fairly complex metonymies, classified as “metonymisch” or more specifically as “objectsverwisseling” / “Objektsverschiebung” or “subjectsverwisseling” / “Subjektsverschiebung”. The next section will investigate in detail how predicative metonymies are analysed by lexicographers.

### 3. A dictionary-based description of MOCs as predicative metonymies

#### 3.1 Object changes and subject changes as instances of metonymy

It is fascinating that lexicographers as far back as the eighteenth century understood that, from a theoretical point of view, object changes could be metonymy-driven. As I showed above, this idea is fully in line with the insights of modern studies on alternations (cf. not only Koch 2001; Waltereit 1998; 1999, but also Capelle 2005: 339 or Dowty 2000: 126) and with studies on logical metonymy (cf. e.g. Pustejovs'ky 1995; Verspoor 1997a). The labelling and explanation of these

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101 The DWB uses the orthography *Objektsverschiebung* and *Subjektsverschiebung.*
argument alternations in dictionaries can therefore probably help us to gain some insight into the exact nature of the metonymy involved.

In the previous section, we saw that the label “metonymisch” could appear in an entry of a verb for three different reasons. First of all, the notion is sometimes applied to a metonymically shifted argument that often occurs in a non-literal interpretation with the verb in question (cf. *lesen / lezen*). Secondly, the tag “metonymisch” is used to indicate that the meaning of the verb itself is metonymical, i.e. interpreted differently based on a contiguity-relation with another possibly more basic meaning (cf. the Dutch verbs *klateren, tikken, kuipen*). Last but not least, the type of argument of a verb could be metonymically shifted (cf. *abmähen*).

In examples of the last type, the verb and the argument could be regarded as being interpreted literally. Although this possibility sounds paradoxical, it is the type of metonymy that was referred to as predicative metonymy in chapter III, in line with the more recent work of Pustejovsky, Waltereit and especially Stallard. Predicative metonymy could best be defined as a shift in the type of argument, i.e. a shift of the direct object slot. In other words, the metonymy affects the combination of verb and direct object rather than the verb or object itself. This means that the metonymy affects the VP, rather than V or NP (cf. also Iwata 2005).

Adelung’s dictionary uses the label “metonymisch” very consistently, viz. almost exclusively for examples of this kind in which the argument can be interpreted literally and the verb does not have a metonymical meaning either. Virtually all instances of Adelung’s examples that he considers metonymical correspond to examples that are classified as “subjectsverwisseling” or “objectsverwisseling” in Van Dale and the WNT.

As also indicated in section 2 (subsection 2.1), similar terms exist in German, i.e. “Subjektsvertauschung” / “Objektsvertauschung” and “Subjektsverschiebung” / “Objektsverschiebung”. These terms should be literally translated as ‘subject / object change’ or ‘subject / object shift’. These notions are sometimes implicitly connected to metonymy, for instance by the description of relevant contiguity patterns (cf. Oksaar 1972: 146; Oksaar 1984: 178), and sometimes even explicitly (cf. Carlberg 1948: 24ff; Goebel 1997; Hundsnurscher 1986: 124-125). As I stated earlier, the connection between metonymy and subject or object change is also reflected in dictionaries: It is not only the case that many of Adelung’s metonymy-examples correspond with ‘subject changes’ or ‘object changes’, but Van Dale even defines *subjectsverwisseling* and *objectsverwisseling* as specific types of metonymy. Consider the following dictionary definitions:

**subjectsverwisseling** 1. (taalkunde) vorm van metonymie waarbij het bij een ww. verwacht onderwerp vervangen is door een aan de handeling in een andere functie gerelateerde constituent

[‘subject change 1. (linguistics) type of metonymy in which the expected subject of a verb has been replaced by a participant that is related to the action in another function’] (Van Dale 2005 [CD-ROM]: entry *subjectsverwisseling*; my translation)
objectsverwisseling 1. (taalkunde) bepaalde vorm van metonymie: verwisseling van het oorspronkelijke object bij een werkvwoord door een ander object (dat, naar de betekenis, lokaal, causaal of temporeel met het oorspronkelijke is verbonden)

["object change 1. (linguistics) specific type of metonymy: change of the original object of a verb by another object (which is, in meaning, locally, causally or temporally connected with the original object)"] (Van Dale 2005 [CD-ROM]: entry objectsverwisseling; my translation)

The brief definitions in Van Dale describe precisely that we are dealing with predicative metonymies: Only the type of argument has been changed on a metonymical basis. The Dutch and German labels “objectsverwisseling”, “verwisseling van object” and “Objektsvertauschung” or “Objektsverschiebung” thus refer to predicative metonymy concerning the direct object (MOCs).

Apart from the definition of the notion of objectsverwisseling as a specific type of metonymy, some predicative metonymies are directly marked as metonymical. The DWB for instance, classifies some predicative metonymies as instances of “Objektsverschiebung” but others as “metonymisch”. This can be illustrated by comparing lösen (‘to fire’) with träufen (variant of träufeln, ‘to drip’).

lösen b) einen schuss lösen, aus dem rohre abfeuern; und metonymisch ein geschütz lösen, kanonen lösen; ich lösete das pistol auf einen.
[‘fire b) fire a shot, let off from the barrel; and metonymical fire artillery, fire cannons; I fired a gun at someone.’] (DWB: entry lösen; my translation)

träufen A. transitiv. 1) flüssigkeiten in tropfen fallen machen [...] 2) ‘beträufeln, mit tropfender flüssigkeit bedecken’; diese objectsverschiebung, durch die das ursprüngliche object zur instrumentalen bestimmung wird, erscheint seit dem 15. jh.
[‘to drip A. transitive 1) make liquids fall in drops [...] 2) ‘to sprinkle, to cover with dripping liquid’; this object change, which makes the original object an instrumental destination, appears from the 15th century on.’] (DWB: entry träufen; my translation)

Van Dale also sometimes uses the notions of “metonymisch” and “objectsverwisselings” for exactly the same shifts. This can be illustrated by the Dutch synonyms or near-synonyms afkauwen, afkluiven, afknabbelen, afknagen, afpeuzelen, afpluizen and afvreten. All these verbs denote variants of “to gnaw on / off (/to eat away)”.

are eaten away as well as with words referring to the objects that are gnawed on. In
the cases of *afkauwen*, *afkluiven*, *afknabbelen*, *afknagen*, *afpeuzelen*, *afpluizen* Van
dale labels the latter possibility as “objectsverwisseling”, but in the case of *afvreten*
the same shift with the same object-example is tagged as “metonymisch”. Adelung
tags the equivalent shift in German with the verb *abnagen* as “metonymisch”, a tag
he uses solely for object change. The WNT is also very consistent: Although the
WNT does not include any shift for *afkauwen*, entries for the verbs *afkluiven*,
*afknabbelen*, *afknagen*, *afpeuzelen*, *afpluizen* and *afvreten* include the term
“verwisseling van object”.

In sum, the implicit and explicit connection between these shifts and metonymy
illustrates that subject and object changes are regarded as metonymy-based. The
examples given and the definition in Van Dale reflect the view that subject and
object changes are predicative metonymies. In the next subsection, I will
demonstrate the difference between predicative metonymies and other metonymies
by analysing differences between the use of “objectsverwisseling” and of
“metonymisch” in the WNT.

3.2 The difference between nominal metonymy and object change

The WNT is generally fairly consistent in its use of “objectsverwisseling” or
“verwisseling van object”, but also uses the lexicological tag “metonymisch”. This
points to a difference between the two, implying that “objectsverwisseling” must be
a specific type of contiguity-based shift. Interestingly, the WNT sometimes uses
both tags in one verb entry or for a single contiguity type. The use of these different
terms can be compared in order to see why “objectsverwisseling” is a specific type
of metonymy, i.e. an instance of predicative metonymy (cf. also Sweep 2009a).

In the verb entry for *villen* in the WNT, both labels, i.e. “metonymisch” as well
as “objectsverwisseling”, are used (cf. also Sweep 2009a: 89ff). The label
“objectsverwisseling” is used in the first meaning, which is defined as “van het vel
ontdoen” (‘to take the skin off’). In this interpretation the verb is normally combined
with a word denoting an animal, for example a hare: *een haas villen*. The verb can,
however, also be combined with a noun denoting the skin of an animal: *de huid van
de haas / de hazenhuid villen* (‘to strip the hare’s skin’). This combination is labelled
“objectsverwisseling”.

The verb *villen* can also be used in the meaning described as “iemand te veel
laten betalen of uitplunderen” (‘to let someone pay too much or to plunder
someone’), just like the English expression *to skin someone*. Under this
interpretation the verb can be combined with a location, such as a country or a city,
instead of a person in direct object position. This locative object, which should
actually be interpreted as the inhabitants of the country of the city, is classified as
“metonymisch”.

The fact that within a verb entry one object shift is classified as metonymical,
whereas the other is seen as an instance of metonymical object change, points to a
difference between normal metonymies and MOCs. This difference can easily be
found: In the first example both elements, i.e. the hare as well as its skin, play a crucial role within the meaning of the verb, since one strips the skin from the hare (cf. also abmähen / afmaaien). The same is not true for the second example, because someone is fleeced of his money and the location does not play a direct role in this event. This is also reflected in the fact that the location in the latter example is really interpreted as the people living there. In the former example, the hare as well as the skin seem to be interpreted literally, which is possible exactly because they are both fundamental for the verbal meaning.

A comparable contrastive use of metonymy and MOC is sometimes applied to a single contiguity type. This can be illustrated with CONTAINER-CONTENT shifts. The use of “metonymisch” with the CONTAINER FOR CONTENT pattern is used in the WNT in toedrinken (lit.: “to-drink”, i.e. ‘to drink to someone / to toast’). Under meaning 1, the verb is combined with two arguments, a person and a drink, as in iemand een wijntje toedrinken (lit.: “someone a wine to-drink”, i.e. ‘to raise a glass of wine [lit.: “a wine”] and drink someone’s health’). Very often, however, the drink is metonymically expressed by the container, as in iemand een glaasje toedrinken (lit.: “someone a glass to-drink”). The metonymy in the last example causes a very common re-interpretation of the direct object (glaasje for ‘drink’).

However, the same CONTAINER FOR CONTENT contiguity type is described as “objectsverwisseling” in a different verb entry in the WNT. This is the case with omschenken (lit.: “over/around-pour” for ‘to decant’ / ‘to pour something into something else’). The WNT dictionary entry tells us that in these cases the verb cannot only be applied to a liquid, but also to its container. The latter is classified as a case of “objectsverwisseling”.

The explicit WNT-descriptions of the objects with toedrinken on the one hand and with omschenken on the other clearly differ. In the case of toedrinken, it literally states that the direct object can be metonymically expressed by the container: “Ook metonymisch met den beker enz. als object” (‘Also metonymical with the cup, etc. as direct object’). In the case of omschenken, the entry only states that the verb is able to apply to the container. In this verb entry, an opposition is made between the verb applied ‘to something that is poured, viz. different drinks’ (“van iets dat geschenken wordt, t.w. verschillende dranken”) and the verb applied ‘to the vessels, in which the drinks that are poured are located’ (“van het vaatwerk, waarin zich de drank bevindt, die geschenken wordt”). In other words, the verb omschenken can be applied to drinks, but also to vessels.

This difference between the CONTAINER-CONTENT contiguity of toedrinken and omschenken parallels the difference between “metonymisch” and “objectsverwisseling” in the case of villen. In the context of toedrinken the container is conceptually implied with its content, but it is not directly involved in the activity expressed by the verb. In the case of omschenken on the other hand, the container is necessary for the activity of decanting liquid. Both the content and the container are crucial for the action expressed by the verb.

The question of whether a shifted direct object plays an independent role within the general meaning of the verb has crucial consequences for the interpretation of the direct object: The shifted direct object will only be interpreted literally, if it is
directly involved in the verbal action. Therefore, rather than the direct object itself, it is the argument slot of the verb that has been metonymically transferred. For these cases, the label “objectsverwisseling” as opposed to “metonymisch” has been used by Dutch lexicographers.

It is possible to explain both types of metonymy as highlighting effects within a conceptual structure. In normal metonymies, the verb only has a supporting role, defining the context in which the metonymical re-interpretation occurs (cf. chapter II). In the example of *toedrinken*, for instance, the verb needs to be combined with a liquid. This verb supports the metonymical highlighting effect, i.e. the onomasiological expression of the container rather than the content, and therefore the semasiological re-interpretation of the container as liquid. For predicative metonymies, however, the verb crucially determines the conceptual structure in which the highlighting effect occurs (cf. Waltereit 1998; Waltereit 1999). The contiguity relation is of fundamental importance within this structure. Because the contiguity of the objects is based on the action expressed by the verb, only the combination of verb and object should be regarded as shifted. I will work this dictionary-based view out in detail in chapter VIII.

### 3.3 The continuum between nominal metonymy and object change

It is not easy to distinguish between MOCs and other types of metonymy. It is often difficult to identify whether an object is interpreted literally or not. Well-known diagnostic tests, such as co-predication or anaphoric reference, are problematic, as I showed in chapter III, §4.3-4.6. The idea that the object is not re-interpreted if it is crucially involved in the verbal action (the frame evoked by the verb) only helps to a certain extent, since we have to answer the question, how we know whether both possible direct objects are crucially involved in the action expressed by the verb.

The German verb *ausblasen* and the Dutch verb *uitblazen* (lit.: “out-blow”, ‘to blow (out)’) can be used to illustrate the fuzzy border between a metonymically re-interpreted argument and a real transfer of the predicate argument’s place. Adelung, who consistently uses the lexicological tag “metonymisch” for predicative object metonymies, such as MOCs, analyses *ausblasen* as follows:

**ausblasen** 1) Durch Blasen hinaus schaffen. Das Inwendige eines Eyes ausblasen. Ingleichen metonymisch, ein Ey ausblasen.

 ['*to blow out* 1) Remove to the outside by blowing. To blow [lit.: “out-blow”] the inside of an egg. Likewise metonymically, to blow [lit.: “out-blow”] an egg.’] (Adelung: entry *ausblasen*, http://lexika-digitale-sammlungen.de/adelung/lemma/bsb00009131_3_3_3969; my translation)\(^{103}\)

\(^{103}\) In modern German “Ingleichen metonymisch” would be “desgleichen metonymisch” or “ebenso metonymisch”, i.e. ‘like wise metonymical’ or ‘in a similar way metonymical’.
The WNT, however, has a more complicated description for uitblazen (lit.: “out-blow”).

**uitblazen** 4. Door blazen (uit iets) verwijderen, wegblassen; uit deze bet. ontstaat met objectsverwisseling de bet. 6. [...] 
6. Door blazen leegmaken, leegblazen; door blazen zuiveren (van stof, kruit, e.d.), schoonblazen, doorblazen. [...] — Een ei (of meton. eierschalen) uitblazen.

[‘to blow out’ 4. Remove (out of something) by blowing, blow away; meaning 6) comes into existence on the basis of this meaning with object change [...] 6. Empty by blowing, to blow [lit.: “empty-blow”]; clear (of dust, powder, etc.) by blowing, to clean [lit.: “clean-blow”], blow through [...] — Blow [lit.: “out-blow”] an egg (or meton. eggshells)] (WNT entry uitblazen; my translation)

Because this dictionary entry correctly reflects the linguistic complexity of the related senses of this verb, the description is a little confusing at first sight. It says that meaning 6 (‘empty by blowing’) is similar to meaning 4 (‘remove by blowing’). The description under 6 equals meaning 4 with MOC: In 6 the direct object slot is shifted, because the verb is applied to containers interpreted literally instead of their contents. The relatedness of 4 and 6 is illustrated in 6 by the example to blow an egg (lit.: “to out-blow an egg”) and its metonymical connection with to blow an eggshell. Because it is ambiguous whether the word egg refers to the content or the shell, the difference between MOC (“objectsverwisseling”) and metonymy (“metonymisch”) is blurred in these examples.

The study by Carlberg makes a similar observation with respect to the German equivalent of to blow (out) an egg / eggshell (Carlberg 1948: 23). Carlberg divides “Objektsvertauschungen” (‘object changes’) into ‘Objektsverschiebungen’ (‘object shifts’) on the one hand and “Objektsverwechslungen” (‘object swaps’) on the other. Carlberg’s explanation of an ‘object shift’ (“Objektsverschiebung”) corresponds to a predicative metonymy. An object swap (“Objektsverwechslung”) would be a more common instance of metonymy, in which the interpretation of the noun is swapped (Carlberg 1948: 23).

Two different observations make it difficult to decide whether ein Ei ausblasen (‘to out-blow an egg’) is a predicative metonymy or not. First of all, a noun such as egg can denote the yolk and white, but also the shell. As I explained in chapter III (§2.3), this could be defined as a zone activation type of metonymy. Secondly, a verb such as ausblasen (‘to out-blow’) can be applied to contents as well as to containers. This can be illustrated by the phrase Wasserleitungen ausblasen (‘to blow out water pipes’), in which, strictly speaking, it is what is in the water pipes and not the water pipes themselves that is blown out. In other words, ausblasen allows MOC.

The combination of these two facts makes the analysis of a phrase such as ein Ei ausblasen very complicated. If the word Ei (‘egg’) in this phrase refers to the yolk, we are dealing with an object swap, i.e. a metonymy-based interpretation of the
noun. If, on the other hand, *Ei* (‘egg’) refers to the shell, the combination with *ausblasen* (i.e. to blow (out)) is an example of object shift. Thus, this example shows that in practice, as was also suggested by Carlberg (1948: 23, 88), the difference between object shifts (i.e. MOCs) and swaps (i.e. nominal metonymy) cannot always be determined.\(^{104}\) This example also shows how closely MOCs and nominal metonymies are related.

Interestingly, Dowty addresses the same problem almost half a century after Carlberg. Dowty labels sentences with a metonymical subject change in which a location occurs as a shifted subject “LS-sentences”, and he observes that for some CONTAINER-CONTENT examples “it is impossible to draw any well-motivated boundary between ‘container metonymies’ [...] and LS-sentences” (Dowty 2000: 126). This quote shows that Dowty has re-discovered the insights of Carlberg and of lexicographers of the early 19th century, in that it touches upon the idea that instances of “subjectsverwisselung”, and therefore in all probability also instances of “objectverwisselung”, should be seen in line with metonymy. Linguistic studies on this subject written in English hardly ever mention this idea (cf. e.g. Levin 1993).

Dowty even explicitly discusses the option of regarding these direct object alternations as Nunberg-like predicate transfers (Dowty 2000: 26), i.e. more precisely as similar to Stallard’s predicative metonymies (cf. chapter III, §5).

It is important to note that Dowty does not claim that no boundary at all can be drawn between standard metonymical shifts and MOCs or MSCs. He only says, as does Carlberg, that in some examples no motivated boundary can be made.\(^{105}\) Dowty’s quotation and the example *een ei uitblazen / ein Ei ausblasen* show that the boundary between standard metonymical shifts and MOCs or MSCs is fuzzy by nature. The fact that object changes seem to form a continuum with more prototypical instances of metonymy fits their conceptual character. We have seen before that all types of metonymies seem to form one large spectrum of related semantic-conceptual shifts without clear-cut boundaries between them.

4. MOC, verb meaning and dictionaries

4.1 MOCs and verb meaning: P-meaning vs. L-meaning

Another complicated issue is the question of exactly how predicative metonymies are interpreted. According to Carlberg, there are two possible analyses for MOCs: Either the direct object is interpreted metonymically, or the verb meaning must be shifted (Carlberg 1948: 26-27, 90). However, in concrete cases it is not always easy to decide which analysis applies, as was illustrated in the previous section by

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104 In the rest of his work, Carlberg therefore simply neglects the difference between the two (1948: 23 and seems to discuss “Objektsvertauschungen” as if they all are “Objektsverschiebungen”, i.e. MOCs (cf. Carlberg 1948: 28).

105 Dowty refers to a forthcoming article, which will discuss this topic in more detail, though unfortunately it does not seem to have been published.
Carlberg’s discussion of *ein Ei ausblasen*. Contrary to Carlberg’s explicit claim that either the verb or the noun must be reinterpreted, he does leave space for some kind of intermediate analysis. In fact, he explicitly states that MOCs have a double influence on the semantics of verb and noun: The meaning of the verb can be shifted by some multi-faceted interpretation of the noun, and as a consequence of this interpretational shift the noun is interpreted in one of its specific facets (cf. e.g. Carlberg 1948: 60, 79-80, 80-81). This sounds fairly enigmatic, but a concrete example will make clear what he means:

“[…] werden bei der Umdeutung z.B. des Ausdrucks *ein Glas eingießen* nicht ein, sondern zwei Elemente der Totalanschauung ausgewechselt, der Inhalt gegen das Gefäß, das Gießen gegen das Füllen.” (Carlberg 1948: 92)

[‘not one but two elements of the overall picture are swapped in the meaning reconstruction of, for example, the expression *ein Glas eingießen* (‘to in-pour a glass’), the content with the container and the pouring with the filling’ (my translation)]

This quotation shows that in the case of MOCs it cannot be said that either the meaning of the verb or the meaning of the noun has been reinterpreted but rather the combination of the two (cf. also Croft 1993). In other words, the combination of words or phrases can have a richer interpretation than the individual words themselves, because they are reciprocally dependent on one another. This is an old insight, which linguists often forget (or rediscover), as is also noted by Carlberg:

“Daß die Bedeutungen der einzelnen Wörter eines Gefüges bis zu einem gewissen Grade in gegenseitigem Abhängigkeitsverhältnis zueinander stehen, wußten bereits Paul und Stöcklein. Diese Tatsache wird wohl allgemein anerkannt, aber von den Bedeutungsforschern in der Praxis nicht immer genügend beachtet.” (Carlberg 1948: 91)

[‘Paul and Stöcklein were already aware of the fact that the meanings of single words in a phrase are to a certain extent in a reciprocally dependent relationship. This fact is generally known, but in practice not always sufficiently taken into account by semanticists.’] (Carlberg 1948: 91, my translation)

Carlberg furthermore suggests that with MOCs the phrases as such, i.e. the combination of verb and a certain type of direct object, refer to the same event (cf. also Moerdijk 1994: 139). Consider:

“In beiden Fällen deutet der Ausdruck nach wie vor auf einem im ganzen unveränderten Vorstellungskomplex hin, indessen die Betontheit der einzelnen Teilvorstellungen variiert.” (Carlberg 1948: 92)
[‘In both cases [JS: i.e. in combination with both types of objects] the expression refers, as before, to a single, complex construct of concepts. This complex whole is not changed itself, rather the single conceptual parts of it receive a different emphasis.’] (Carlberg 1948: 92, my translation)

I agree with the view that in cases of MOC (and also in cases of MSC), the phrases as a whole (i.e. the VPs) generally refers to an unchanged, complex unity of concepts, however with a different perspective or focus on its parts (cf. also Iwata 2005).

However, most scholars claim that these verbs reflect two different meanings, when they are combined with different types of direct objects. In Russian linguistics, for instance, arguments shifts including cases of MOC are analysed as instances of regular polysemy (“регулярная многозначность”) (cf. Apresjan 1992: 240-249).

Similar opinions are expressed in Anglo-Saxon linguistics by scholars who analyse instances of locative alternations, i.e. CONTAINER-CONTENT/LOCATION-LOCATUM MOCs (cf. e.g. Levin 1993; Pinker 1989; Rappaport & Levin 1988). There are two different reasons why polysemy is assumed in such shifts.

First of all, it is claimed that the combination of a verb with a certain direct object is interpreted in a holistic or completative way. This means that the DO must be wholly involved in the action expressed by the verb. Some scholars claim that whereas to load the car with boxes, for instance, implies that the car ends up totally filled with the boxes, the phrase to load boxes into the car only implies that boxes are loaded. In other words, it is assumed that alternations have different semantic implications (cf. Rappaport & Levin 1988: 19, 24). However, other scholars have shown that the holistic effect does not have to be connected with the meaning of the verb itself, because the holistic meaning is determined by many factors (such as definiteness of the direct object, cf. Schwartz-Norman 1976; Brinkmann 1995; Laffut 1998). In fact, the holistic interpretation occurs as a pragmatic effect: If a certain entity is used as a direct object, it must be totally affected by the verbal action. The pragmatic character is in line with the fact that not everyone (myself included for Dutch) has the intuition that a direct object always has to be affected totally (cf. Jackendoff 1990: 172ff for English and Olsen 1994: 217ff for German; cf. also the discussion on to pack a suitcase in chapter VI, §4.3).

In addition to this, scholars claim that a verb has two different meanings, depending on the type of direct object. The verb to load, for instance, is said to express something like ‘to put by means of loading’ if combined with some content, but it is said to mean something like ‘to fill’ when combined with a container.

106 However, even Apresjan discusses the possibility of considering these examples as instances of monosemy (cf. also Willems 2006: 591): According to Apresjan “there are linguistic facts which can be described fully and without contradiction in two ways - as facts of lexical polysemy and as facts of monosemy.” (1974b: 15). Thus, for examples of regular polysemy, including MOCs, there are “two theoretically conceivable descriptions”, of which a polysemous description is said to be preferred (Apresjan 1974: 16). In this section, ponderous arguments for the monosemic solution will be presented.
However, is not the shift made possible precisely by the fact that the semantic properties of to load include both meaning aspects simultaneously?

In line with this rhetorical question, Iwata explicitly rejects the view that the only two possible options are polysemy of either the verb or the noun (Iwata 2005; Iwata 2008). He distinguishes L-meaning and P-meaning. L-meaning is an abbreviation for lexical head level meaning. It refers to the general lexical meaning of the verb, i.e. the general frame or scene which the verb evokes. P-meaning, i.e. phrase level meaning, is the meaning of the combination of verb and direct object (the meaning on VP level). The difference between L-meaning and P-meaning provides a very precise account of what verb meaning actually is.

It is difficult to explain what the meaning of a verb refers to. From a conceptual point of view, all verbs that allow MOCs denote actions. Actions cannot, however, be conceptualised without their participants. A verb that denotes a specific action therefore also expresses a certain relation between objects, which are the participants of the action, and which correspond to the arguments of the verb.

If MOC is claimed to change verb meaning, this assumed polysemy must be connected to the relation between a verb and its participants. Waltereit therefore speaks of verbal polysemy concerning semantic roles: cf. “Verbale Polysemien, die sich auf Aktantenrollen beziehen” (Waltereit 1998: 56). Although he claims that the semantic roles of a verb are considered to be a “part of the verb’s lexical content” (Waltereit 1999: 235), he speaks at the same time about a contiguity effect within the frame embodied by the respective verb” (Waltereit 1999: 238-239). However, if a verb evokes a particular frame, this could be considered its lexical meaning (cf. Sweep 2010b).

The question can therefore be asked what Waltereit actually means, when he says that MOCs lead to verbal polysemy. Especially, since it remains vague what the semantic roles of both possible objects actually are. As I explained in the chapter III (§5.3), both types of direct object are often considered patients or themes. When Waltereit speaks about “the respective verb’s frame” (Waltereit 1999: 238) or “the frame activated by the verb” (Waltereit 1999: 238), he implicitly refers to the single L-meaning of the verb. His polysemy rather seems to apply to the combination of verb and direct object, i.e. to the level of P-meaning.

In a similar way, Brdar-Szabó and Brdar make a distinction between lexical polysemy and grammatical-relational polysemy. The last term is defined as “the occurrence of several different argument-structures linked with a single predicative expression and presenting basically the same state of affairs from different points of view” (Brdar-Szabó/Brdar 2004: 324; Brdar 2007: 181). In my view, the term ‘polysemy’ is somewhat confusing in this respect, since it does not directly apply to several meanings but only to different grammatical-relational structures. Metonymical processes often induce changes in the grammatical-relational structures, which “may” but do not have to “correlate with lexical polysemy proper” (Brdar 2007: 183; Brdar-Szabó/Brdar 2004: 330). In the rest of this section, I will demonstrate that it is problematic for several reasons to claim that in cases of MOCs the lexical meaning of the verb changes.
First of all, the most fundamental meaning component, which is the action expressed by the verb (its L-meaning), does not change in most cases of MOC. The factual action performed by an agent and expressed by MOC-verbs such as *den Tisch / die Teller aufräumen; de tafel / de borden opruimen* (‘to clear the table / the plates’), *den Zelt / das Sand auskehren; de tent / het zand uitvegen* (‘to sweep the tent / the sand (out)’), *den Text / das Papier abdrucken; de tekst / het vel afdrukken* (‘to print the text / the page’), *das Holz / den Feuer anzünden; het hout / het vuur aansteken* (‘to light the wood / the fire’), *Trauben / Wein keltern; druiven / wijn persen* (‘to press grapes / wine’), *Eier / Küken ausbrüten; eieren / kuikens uitbroeden* (‘to hatch eggs / chicks (out)’), *Rohr / Körbe flechten; riet / manden vlechten* (‘to weave reeds / baskets’), *Löcher / Socken stopfen; gaten / sokken stoppen* (‘to darn holes / socks’), *de spreker / de presentatie onderbreken* (‘to interrupt the speaker / the presentation’) or *het schrijven / het boek continueren* (‘to continue writing / the book’) and so on is independent of the kind of object it is combined with.

Seen from this perspective, the verb clearly has only one lexical meaning. The verb meaning combined with the conceptually close connection between both relevant objects makes the MOC possible. The metonymical relationship, or the link based on reality, between ‘plates’ and a ‘table’, ‘wood’ and a ‘fire’ or ‘reeds’ and ‘baskets’, for instance, is endorsed by actions expressed by *aufräumen / abräumen* / to clear, *aansteken / anzünden* / to light and *vlechten / flechten* / to weave respectively.

Both possible direct objects are clearly related in reality, because of the fact that they are both crucial participants in the verbal action and because they form a conceptual unity or gestalt (such as a set table, a wood fire or wicker baskets).

Secondly, both possible direct objects (both thematic roles) are necessary for the action expressed by the verb. This poses, apart from the classification of both direct objects as patients or themes, a problem for the view that the thematic roles of the verb are actually changed by MOC, as claimed by Waltereit. With MOC allowing verbs, the semantic roles are the same in all direct object combinations. Only the expression of these roles (the argument realisation) is different.107

This could be compared with passive constructions, where the patient is expressed as a subject and the agent can be expressed in a *by*-phrase. In spite of the different syntactic forms the underlying thematic roles of the verb remain the same. Another parallel is transitive verbs that are used intransitively, such as in *he is reading*. Although no object is expressed in this example, it is conceptually implied and neither the ‘reading action’ nor the necessary participants are changed from a conceptual point of view. The same goes for MOCs.108 Since both possible direct objects are necessarily involved in the verbal action, it is doubtful whether the

107 I would like to thank Wim Honselaar for exhaustively discussing this idea and possible parallel examples (cf. the next paragraph) with me.

108 Interestingly, the same parallel has been observed by Levin and Sells for object changes with particle verbs (Levin & Sells 2007: 4).
thematic roles are actually changed. Only the actual expression of the specific roles seems to be modified.\textsuperscript{109}

On the other hand, it is indeed true that when a speaker shifts the direct object, the perspective on the event as a whole changes. However, this raises the question of whether this affects the meaning of the verb (L-meaning) or only the meaning of the combination of verb and direct object (P-meaning). In each case the agent performs the same action, in which both possible direct objects play a crucial role. The analysis that the use of a location-object leads to a locative meaning of the verb or that a verb combined with a created direct object leads to a creation sense of the verb, is wrong, because it projects the meaning of the object onto the verb where it need not (cf. also Willems 2006: 591).

The MOC and the new perspective can actually be seen as evidence of the fact that the verb has only one general lexical meaning. The verb meaning provides the necessary context or, in other words, the verb evokes the frame in which the MOC and the perspectivisation (cf. Koch 2001: 203; Koch 2004: 8) are possible. Interestingly, Waltereit’s and Koch’s analyses seem to be perfectly compatible with this view. Koch gives the French example \textit{chasser} as having two different ways of highlighting, i.e. two senses (‘chase’ or ‘chase away’), within one frame (Koch 2001: 203-204, cf. also Taylor 1989: 126-127). These interrelated senses must therefore belong to one general meaning (cf. Janssen 2003: 96). Waltereit defines some of the above examples of MOCs explicitly as frame-based alternations within “the frame embodied by the respective verb” (Waltereit 1999: 238-239). This shows that if metonymy can be treated as giving a different perspective on the same cognitive material or as a perspectivisation within a frame, the verb seems to evoke this particular frame. This frame therefore represents the single lexical meaning of the verb (i.e. its L-meaning). In the next sections, I will show that some well-known diagnostic tests and also dictionaries support this idea.

\textbf{4.2 Polysemy tests}

There are various diagnostic tests we can make use of when we want to know whether a word is used in a single sense or whether it is polysemous. Three types of tests are generally used for this purpose: definitional, linguistic, and logical tests (Geeraerts 1993; Tuggy 1993). These tests are not watertight in any way: Sometimes different tests give different results and a single test sometimes reveals conflicting results across different speakers (cf. Geeraerts 1993, cf. also Wojciechowska- Bartkiewicz 2007). The tests can only be used in combination with each other and they can only be used as supporting evidence for polysemy or monosemy.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{109} Therefore, even if one considers verbs to express relations (i.e. refer to sets of entities), still no real change applies. If two objects are contiguous to each other, the relation of the MOC allowing verb to one of them, implies that this verb also stands in a relation to the other. I will illustrate this below by means of the so-called logical test.

\textsuperscript{110} Cf. in this respect also Tuggy (1993: 277ff) who discusses these tests for the combinatorial possibilities in the direct object slot of \textit{to paint}. 
A linguistic test simply indicates whether an item is polysemous or not on the basis of its linguistic behaviour. Many linguistic tests make use of the semantic restrictions on the occurrences of a lexical item. So reduction is, for instance, well-known in this respect (cf. Geeraerts 1993: 229). If one could use *and so is or and so did* a lexical item is not polysemous. The problem with this test is that these paraphrases replace the VP as a whole. Given that they cannot be applied to a transitive verb without its object, this test cannot be used effectively for MOCs.

Tests that make use of anaphoric reference or coordination of predicates could also be regarded as linguistic tests. They can be used to test the interpretation of NPs. These tests and their limitations were already discussed in the previous chapter (III, §4.3-4.6). The use of anaphoric reference is problematic, since in cases of metonymy anaphors can be used to refer to related entities. In cases of MOC, coordination of different types of direct objects could be used to test whether the verb is polysemous or not. But as with all kinds of coordinations, this often does not make sense from a pragmatic point of view in cases of MOC (cf. chapter III, §4.6). Since there are pragmatic reasons to choose one object over another, it is difficult to find a single context in which both can simultaneously be used.\(^\text{111}\) This is, however, not impossible. Sporadically, coordination does occur, as illustrated in examples (1)-(3) (taken form the DWDS-corpus, from the ANW-corpus and from internet\(^\text{112}\)).

(1) Die Argentinier mußten es
the argentineans must it
mit einem Riesenarsenal an Raketen und Kanonen aufnehmen,
with a giant-arsenal on rockets and cannons on-take
die von Schiffen -[...]- gegen sie abgefeuert wurden
which from ships against them off-fired were
‘The Argentineans had to fight a huge arsenal of rockets and cannons, which were fired at them from ships.’

(2) Alle gaten, loszittende bepleistering, barsten en scheuren
all holes loose-sitting plaster cracks and gaps
worden voorafgaandelijk uitgekrabt
are in advance out-scratched
‘All holes, loose plaster, cracks and gaps should be scratched out in advance’

\(^\text{111}\) In fact, this is also the case for nominal metonymies. Consider, for instance, *John and the ham sandwich are waiting for their checks;* *He read Langacker and some papers by Slobin;* or *a fleet of 100 sails and 20 rowboats.* It should be remarked that I could not find internet or corpus examples of this kind.

\(^\text{112}\) Source: http://www.grootgezin.nl/Thema070800.php [March 2009].
As the children want to do something which they enjoy, then they should first tidy up their room and their own stuff.

In example (1) the German verb *abfeuern* (‘to shoot off’) is combined with an anaphoric expression (*die*), which is plural and must refer back to *Raketen und Kanonen* (‘rockets and cannons’). This is interesting, given that the cannons are used to shoot fire ammunition out of them, while the rockets themselves are really fired at the Argentineans. The anaphor therefore combines both types of direct objects with a single verb. In example (2), the verb *uitkrabben* (lit.: ‘out-scrape’) is simultaneously connected with the plaster that is actually scraped out as well as with the holes and cracks, which are the locations from which substances are scraped away. In a comparable way, the Dutch verb *opruimen* in example (3) is simultaneously combined with a location and with the things in a certain location. These are natural sentences and clear examples of coordination. Examples like these therefore support the idea that no real polysemy of the verb need to occur with MOCs (cf. also chapter VIII, §3, examples (10) and (11), p. 286).

The logical test also illustrates that we do not have to regard an MOC as causing polysemy. The logical test says that if a lexical item is polysemous, it must be possible to use “p but not p”. If a lexical item is not polysemous, this is impossible. In the case of MOCs, we can never use “p but not p”. If two objects are contiguously related, we cannot say that ‘someone baked a loaf of bread, but didn’t bake bread dough’, that ‘someone cleared the tableware, but didn’t clear the table’, that ‘someone loaded a car, but didn’t load things into the car’, or that ‘someone wiped the crumbs (off the counter), but didn’t wipe that counter’ nor the other way around. In general, not one verb allowing MOC with two contiguous objects allows the phrase “V-object1 but not V-object2;” or “V-object2 but not V-object1.” In other words, the combination of a particular verb allowing MOC and a direct object always entails that this verb also applies to the other type of object. Therefore, if the verb expresses a relation with one object, it simultaneously denotes the relation with the contiguous one.

Linguistic tests and logical tests are purely diagnostic. A definitional test on the other hand is claimed to go beyond mere diagnostics (cf. Geeraerts 1993: 237). A definitional test simply claims that for a lexical item to be non-polysemous it should be possible to define it with a single paraphrase. There are, however, a few problems with this test.

First of all, when one paraphrases the meaning of a word, the object language is often described with the same or similar meta-language, which are both natural languages. Therefore, if two synonymous verbs allow the same MOC, one of them could always be used as a meaning description for the other. Suppose, for instance, that we could substitute one verb allowing MOC with another one that allows the same MOC. According to the test, this would indicate that both verbs are non-polysemous. But this would be a clear case of circular reasoning. The same polysemy can simply apply to both verbs (cf. also Geeraerts 1993: 252ff).

A second problem is that it is not always easy to give synonym paraphrases. So, although I do agree with Geeraerts that it is a pity that the definitional test is not taken into account more often (cf. 1993: 237), I also acknowledge that it is a complicated test to use. In order to avoid this problem, we could turn to the work done by lexicographers. If a dictionary incorporates an MOC within one single meaning description, it seems possible to describe the verb meaning by using a single paraphrase. This will support a monosemic analysis. If, however, a tendency can be found among lexicographers to describe MOCs with different descriptions as belonging to different meanings, this tendency clearly supports polysemy of the verb. In the next section I will therefore analyse how dictionaries incorporate MOCs (cf. also Sweep 2010b).

4.3 Meaning descriptions in dictionaries

MOCs, which are labelled in dictionaries, can be described and incorporated in different ways. We have already seen, for instance, that an object that is metonymically combined with lösen (‘to fire’) is considered to belong to one meaning description by the DWB, while the MOC with träufeln (‘to drip’) is incorporated as a new meaning in the same dictionary. These differences can also be found for the same verb-object combination across dictionaries; whereas the entry for afmaaien (lit.: “off-mow”) in Van Dale gives a single meaning description independently of the type of direct object (just as Adelung’s abmähen), the WNT gives two different meaning descriptions for afmaaien.

The same can be observed in the definitions of afhalen (lit.: “off-take”, i.e. ‘to strip’), afharken (lit.: “off-rake”, i.e. ‘to clear by raking’), afgruizelen (lit.: “off-shatter”, i.e. ‘to break pieces off’) or afkammen (lit.: “off-comb”, i.e. ‘to comb’). The WNT states that the concept of separating one part changes to breaking up the entire object (cf. entry afgruizelen) or that the concept of taking away changes into the concept of disposal (cf. entries afhalen, afharken) or into the concept of cleaning (cf. entry afkammen). All these descriptions are connected to a difference that is made in the dictionary entry af.

af [...] e. Het verwijderen van iets kan beschouwd worden als eene wegneming, waardoor een voorwerp wordt ontdaan of gereinigd van hetgeen er van weggenomen wordt. Af duidt in een aantal ww. zulk eene wegneming
aan, welk begrip in dat van ontdoening of reiniging overgaat, wanneer […] verwisseling van object plaats heeft.

['off […] e. The removal of something can be considered to be taking away, by which action an object is disposed or cleaned of whatever is taken away. In a number of verbs off refers to such a taking away, a concept which changes into disposal or cleaning, when MOC takes place.'] (WNT: entry *af* http://www.wnt.inl.nl/iWDB/search?actie=article&wdb=WNT&id=M002374&l=emmodern=afmaaien; my translation)

This description of *af* (‘off’) as a particle seems to indicate polysemy. However, this description is in clear contrast with Adelung’s entry for *ab* (‘off’).

**ab** [...] 3) der Begriff der Trennung oder Absonderung […], wie in abbeißen, abblasen, abpflücken, abbürsten, abstreifen, abschneiden u. s. f. wobey sich die Partikel ab so wohl auf diejenige Sache beziehet, welche angesondert wird, als auch metonymisch auf die, von welcher die Absonderung geschieht.

['off […] 3] the concept of separation or exclusion […], as in to bite off, to blow off, to pluck, to brush, to strip, to cut off [lit.: “off-bite”, “off-blow”, “off-pluck”, “off-brush”, “off-strip”, “off-cut”], etc., in which the particle off can be applied to the object that is separated, but it can also be metonymically applied to the object, from which something is separated.’] (Adelung: entry *ab*, my translation)

Rather than assuming a changed concept, Adelung states that the same concept is metonymically applied to an object (‘bezieht sich metonymisch auf’). This idea is even more clearly expressed in the case of *aus* (‘out’).

**aus** [...] a) In dem ersten Falle stehet es für heraus [...] wo es auch oft metonymisch derjenigen Sache beygefüget wird, auf welcher die Handlung vorgehet, mit Verschweigung derjenigen, welche eigentlich in Bewegung gesetzet wird; z. B. den Hut ausbürsten, das Kleid ausklopfen, die ganze Schüssel ausessen, sich ausziehen, ein Ey ausblasen […]

['out […] a) In the first case, it signifies outside […], in which it is also often metonymically combined with the entity, which is actually put in motion; e.g. to brush a hat off (lit.: “the hat out-brush”), to shake a rug out (lit.: “the rug out-beat”), to eat up/to empty the whole bowl (lit.: “the whole bowl out-eat”), to undress oneself (lit.: “oneself out-pull”), to blow an egg (lit.: “an egg out-blow”)”] (Adelung: entry *aus*, my translation)
Again, these meaning descriptions directly illustrate the concept of a predicative metonymy, in which the metonymical shift applies to the combination of the two elements.

Most examples of MOCs are not explained in the entry of the preposition corresponding to a particle, but are directly incorporated within the entry for the verb. In those verb entries, there are three possible ways in which an example of a direct object that is explicitly labelled as an MOC can be represented. Firstly, it can just be given as an example (labelled MOC) under the heading of a general meaning description among other examples with the other type of object. Secondly, the MOC can be added as a sub-meaning (marked by a Latin or Greek letter) related to a more basic meaning without object shift. A third way of incorporating the MOC in dictionary entries is by putting it into a separate verb meaning with a new number and an own separate meaning description.

In this section, I will show that in practice dictionaries, such as Van Dale, the WNT and Adelung’s, incorporate MOCs within one meaning description in the vast majority of the cases (cf. also Sweep 2010b). As I suggested in the previous section, this can be seen as a clear indication of monosemic nature of the verb in question, in line with the so-called definitional test.

Before discussing in detail how examples of MOC are incorporated in an entry of a verb, three preliminary remarks must be made. First of all, it should be noted that a single meaning description does not always have to correspond to a single paraphrase. We will see that this is especially the case in some WNT-entries. For these examples, however, it will become clear that this is not a real problem: We will see that even if different paraphrases are used, the general meaning in these entries is presented as a single one.

Secondly, only tagged examples will be considered in this comparison. It is of course possible that MOCs are explicitly tagged because they are incorporated in a single description. In other words, it could be expected that verbs which allowing MOCs which were split up into two different meanings were not tagged as cases of metonymy. A third problem is that, although the number of meaning descriptions in a dictionary entry is a good indication of monosemy or polysemy, it is not conclusive in deciding how many meanings or senses a lexical item has. There can be practical rather than theoretical reasons why a lexicographer chooses to split or group certain uses and combinatorial possibilities.

On the one hand, therefore, one should always bear in mind that there is not necessarily a one-to-one-correspondence between the number of meanings in a dictionary and verbal polysemy (cf. also Tuggy 1993: 277-278), given the fact that dictionaries are intended for practical use. On the other hand, dictionary entries clearly give information on different senses of the verb. Therefore, if Adelung as well as Van Dale and the WNT all give two types of direct object in a single meaning description, it can be assumed that the verb need not necessarily be considered polysemous.

114 I would like to thank Fons Moerdijk for pointing these last two objections out to me.
Although modern German dictionaries do not make use of metonymy tags and systematically incorporate the two different objects under two different meaning descriptions with their own numbers (cf. e.g. DWDS or Duden, cf., however, Goebel 1997: 187-188), Adelung’s dictionary incorporates almost all tagged MOCs in single meaning descriptions. Out of his 101 verbs with an explicitly labelled MOC, he only gives the MOC within a separate meaning in four cases (abseihen ‘to sieve’, abspülen ‘to rinse off’, abwetzen ‘to wear off’, abwischen ‘to wipe off’). In other words, in 96% of the cases Adelung’s meaning descriptions indicate that MOC does not cause polysemy.

When we look at the Dutch dictionaries Van Dale and the WNT, some interesting differences emerge. Of the 137 instances labelled “objectsverwisseling” in Van Dale\textsuperscript{115} only eighteen cases of MOC (13%) are represented as autonomous meanings of the verb. Fourteen examples (10%) are described as sub-meanings and 105 instances (over 75%) are given as an example within one general meaning which also includes non-shifted objects. Clearly, there is a very strong tendency in Van Dale to describe the meaning of the verb as non-polysemous, independently of the shifted or non-shifted direct object it is combined with.

At first sight, the WNT shows a different picture, since only 123 instances of the 279 MOC-labels\textsuperscript{116} (44%) are treated under one general meaning. However, the number of MOCs treated under autonomous meanings, marked by Arabic numerals, is even lower at sixty-four (22%). In the remaining ninety-two instances, the MOC is considered to be a sub-meaning, marked by a letter (Greek or Latin) as subordinate to a higher general meaning.

This is not the whole story though, since in fifty-eight of these sub-meanings the WNT follows a very interesting strategy: The MOC belongs to a sub-meaning of one general meaning description that covers examples with unchanged objects, as well as with MOCs. So, in each of these cases the combination of the verb with an unchanged direct object is considered to be one sub-meaning, and the MOC another, both belonging to one general meaning description. An example of this is uitpakken (‘to unpack’), which has the general meaning described under 1 as “uit een [...] verpakking nemen resp. [...] die van goederen ontdoen; ontpakken” (‘to take out of packaging or to empty the packaging of goods; unpack’). The use of the verb without MOC, e.g. ‘unpack goods’, can be found under 1.b and the MOC itself, e.g. ‘unpack a suitcase’ (literally: “to pack a suitcase out”), is incorporated in 1.c.\textsuperscript{117} Therefore, the verb is analysed as having one general meaning in these fifty-eight cases, leading to several syntagmatic combinations.

\textsuperscript{115} Which includes, more precisely, 130 examples tagged with objectsverwisseling and 7 examples tagged with objectswerv. Note that these numbers do not refer to dictionary entries, but to actual MOCs, which can occur more than one time within one verb entry.

\textsuperscript{116} For this specific study done for XIV Euralex conference (cf. Sweep 2010b), I took into account shifts tagged with obj. -verwisseling, objectswerv, objectswerv., objectsverwisseling, objectsverwisseling, objectsverwisseling, objectsverwisseling, verwisseling van obj., verwisseling van object.

\textsuperscript{117} 1.a. describes a less relevant and more specific meaning, i.e. the use of uitpakken in combination with herring packers and ships.
We may therefore conclude that Adelung, Van Dale and WNT treat the vast majority of MOCs as if they fall under one general meaning description, which also includes examples with unchanged objects. In the previous sections, I have shown that theoretical considerations support this strategy.

The way the WNT incorporates MOCs, in one general meaning description to which all combinatorial possibilities of the verb belong, is a very elegant one. From a theoretical point of view the dictionary correctly treats the verb as monosemous on a general level. The general meaning description reflects the fact that the verb denotes one action or frame which includes both objects as necessary conceptual participants. From a practical point of view, the verb entry provides dictionary users with all necessary grammatical-relational information, which is that both participants can be given the status of the direct object. In this way, the WNT is fully in line with the theoretical distinction between L-meaning and P-meaning: The general meaning description incorporates the L-meaning, while the two sub-meanings correspond to the P-meanings (including the different perspectives on the event).

5. The metonymy-sensitivity of the direct object

5.1 Theoretical exploration of the significance of the DO

This dissertation attempts to shed light on the nature of metonymy by answering the question of how the choice of a particular type of direct object can be influenced by metonymy. In other words, the primary interest of this work is predicative metonymy concerning the direct object. In this section, I will discuss why the direct object (DO) is so important with respect to metonymy.

It has more often been claimed that the direct object is of special importance in relation to metonymy (Waltereit 1998; Waltereit 1999). One reason for this is the fact that the direct object in languages such as Dutch and German is a semantically opaque argument, as is the subject (cf. also Carlberg 1948: 58). This also makes them special from a more semantic point of view: In contrast to, for instance, the indirect object which is generally interpreted as a beneficiary, and in contrast to prepositional phrases, which usually denote locative, temporal or other adjuncts, subjects and direct objects can have a variety of interpretations. Therefore, they facilitate all kinds of contiguity-based shifts more easily than indirect objects or prepositional phrases (cf. Waltereit 1999: 248).

This effect is stronger for direct objects than for subjects (cf. Waltereit 1998: 106-107; Waltereit 1999: 248-249). This can be explained by the fact that subjects are often interpreted fairly specifically. Subjects can be interpreted as agents, instruments or experiencers, especially in transitive sentences.

Direct objects only occur in transitive sentences. The direct object, on the other hand, is the general theme or patient of the action expressed by the verb. A general theme or patient can be interpreted fairly freely and direct objects can therefore
easily accommodate metonymical shifts.\textsuperscript{118} The same cannot be said for subjects in transitive sentences, since agents, instruments or experiencers are fairly specific semantic roles. The agent, for instance, is specified as the doer of the action denoted by the verb and is therefore semantically less flexible.

A further reason why objects are sensitive to metonymical shifts is the fact that metonymies are only used if they can be easily understood. Since a concrete instance of metonymy is not only contiguity-based but also of a contingent or accidental nature (cf. chapter II, §3), a contiguity-based shift can only be understood in a certain context. This context is determined by world knowledge and by the general non-linguistic situation, but it is often also partly made explicit by the linguistic context (co-text). The explicit linguistic context strongly hinges on the verb of the sentence. The direct object is the argument that is most closely connected with the verb in standard transitive sentences (it is its internal argument) and therefore again most sensitive to metonymy.

In sum, the sensitivity of the direct object to metonymy is caused by the interplay between its syntactic position, its connection with the verbal action and its possible thematic roles. Because of these factors, the direct object is semantically flexible. Existing studies on specific instances of metonymy reflect the sensitivity of the direct object to metonymy: Almost all the examples of metonymy discussed so far can occur in direct object position. Except for diachronic changes and metonymies above phrase level that cannot be connected with any specific syntactic position, all other metonymy types can easily occur in the direct object. Lexicalised metonymies that are connected to a specific word or morpheme can occur in all syntactic positions, including the direct object slot. On a discourse-semantic level metonymies often occur as direct objects, because of the reasons discussed above. The two types of metonymical transfers on argument structure discussed in chapter III, viz. logical metonymy and Waltereit’s shifts based on contiguity on semantic role level (i.e. predicative metonymies), primarily affect the direct object slot. These types of predicative metonymy will therefore be analysed in detail in this study.

5.2 Corroboration by dictionaries for the primacy of the DO

The significance of the direct object for metonymy is not only reflected in modern studies (Waltereit 1998; 1999) but can also be supported by data extracted from traditional dictionaries. Except for the metonymical shifts that occur in all kinds of arguments, metonymical conventions of use incorporated in dictionary entries for verbs (cf. Table 2, p. 97) almost exclusively concern the direct object. The same is true for predicative metonymies, i.e. shifts of the argument place (cf. Stallard 1993: 89) or of the argument slot. Although it also seems to be possible to shift the subject position, according to dictionaries predicative metonymies occur in the direct object on a much larger basis. The sensitivity to metonymy of the direct object can be

\textsuperscript{118} Fass also stresses the importance of the patient role for metonymies (cf. also Fass 1991b: 43), without however analysing the reasons why this is so.
illustrated by the exact numbers of metonymical subject and object changes, as shown in Table 3. 119

The proportion of object changes as compared to subject changes is striking. As Table 3 shows, the DWB is an exception to the rule. However, the number of tagged predicative metonymies is generally very low in the DWB. The other dictionaries support the direct object’s sensitivity to metonymy. In the WNT, for instance, the number of verbs that allow object change is no less than four times as great as the number of verbs that allow subject change. The same is reflected to an even greater degree in Adelung’s dictionary, although this is not directly visible in Table 3: Out of the 104 dictionary entries in which Adelung uses the lexicographical tag “metonymisch”, 102 entries show MOCs (109 of 114 tokens, i.e. actual uses of the lexicological label). The word “metonymisch” is used twice for a different meaning of a verb, and three instances of the term “metonymisch” are used to denote metonymical subject changes in only one verbal entry (i.e. ausschlagen) (as discussed in section 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dictionary</th>
<th>metonymisch</th>
<th>abbreviations (meton.)</th>
<th>objectswisselvang / Objektsverschiebung</th>
<th>abbreviations/variants</th>
<th>‘object change’</th>
<th>subjectswisselvang / Subjektsverschiebung</th>
<th>abbreviations/variants</th>
<th>‘subject change’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DWB (1854-1960)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adelung et al. (1811)</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>WNT (1882-2001)</td>
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<td>1747</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Dale (2005)</td>
<td>1405</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Metonymy tag(s) in DWB, Adelung, WNT, Van Dale

Table 3 also shows that the examples discussed so far are a mere handful of the total number of examples tagged as metonymical in dictionaries. In the traditional,

119 The variants and abbreviations taken into account for Dutch objectsverwisseling are: obj. - verwisseling; obj.-verwisseling; objectverschuiving; objectverw; objectverwiss; objectswisseling; objectverwisseling; objectwisseling; verwisseling van obj; verwisseling van object; verwisseling van voorwerp. The variants and abbreviations taken into account for Dutch subjectsverwisseling are: subj. - verwisseling; subj.-verwisseling; subjectverschuiving; subjectverw; subjectverwiss; subjectswisseling; subjectverwisseling; subjectwisseling; verwisseling van subj; verwisseling van subject; verwisseling van voorwerp. German variants are Objectserweiterung and Obejctaustauch and Subjectserweiterung or Subjectsaustauch (variants without ‘s’ do not occur).
historical Dutch WNT, over 1500 dictionary entries have one or more meanings or ways of use which are explicitly classified as instances of metonymy. In the contemporary Dutch Van Dale, over 400 predicative metonymies are explicitly tagged as metonymical. On the basis of these numbers, another advantage of using dictionaries in linguistic metonymy research emerges: Apart from support for theoretical insights into metonymy and for the different levels affected by metonymy, dictionaries also provide a set of basic material for further quantitative and qualitative corpus analyses. This is especially true for metonymies in direct object position, as I argued in this section and illustrated in Table 3.

Examples extracted from dictionaries will therefore form the basis of this study. I have analysed corpus examples on the basis of predicative metonymies concerning the direct object found in dictionaries. I will discuss this analysis in detail in the rest of this dissertation.

6. Dictionaries reflecting linguistic insights

This chapter has shown that in the study of metonymy lexicography and linguistic research can benefit from each other. Whereas linguistic research is useful in creating a theoretical basis for lexicography, dictionaries at the same time contain much analysed data and corroborate linguistic insights.

This chapter has discussed the following issues: Section 2 illustrated that Dutch and German lexicographers recognise all types of metonymies that were distinguished on a theoretical basis in the previous chapter. Their work acknowledges that metonymy is involved in complex metonymies affecting grammar. Section 3 demonstrated that information in dictionaries on specific grammatical metonymies is in line with the idea of predicative metonymies, which can be defined as a shift of a verb’s argument slot rather than the interpretation of the argument itself or of the verb meaning. Specific labels used for metonymies of this type in dictionaries are “subjectsverwisseling” or “Subjektsverschiebung” and “objectsverwisseling” or “Objektsverschiebung”. The last type of predicative metonymy, Metonymical Object Changes (MOCs), will be analysed in the rest of this dissertation.

On the basis of entries in Dutch and German dictionaries we have been able to analyse some properties of MOCs. Section 3 showed, for instance, that Dutch dictionaries use specific tags for MOCs and other, more prototypical, examples of metonymy, while acknowledging the continuum between them. The description in the entry for *uitblazen* in the WNT clearly shows this continuum, which has also been discussed in theoretical studies.

In section 4, I discussed in greater detail the question of whether a verb allowing MOC evokes some general action or scene, independently of the kind of object it is combined with. I argued that it cannot be denied that the same action, scene or frame is evoked by the verb, independently of its type of direct object. In addition to the general action, the relationship between the objects and the verb can be considered stable, given that the relation with one of the objects expressed by the verb implies a
relation with the other. This is confirmed by the so-called logical test (Geeraerts 1993). The linguistic behaviour of verbs that allow MOC also supports monosemy, as was illustrated by some examples of coordination of different types of direct objects. For the definitional test, dictionaries can be used once again. The fact that the large majority of tagged examples of MOC are subsumed under a single meaning supports the view of a general lexical meaning. Some dictionary entries in the WNT even directly reflect Iwata’s distinction between L-meaning and P-meanings. I will come back to this point in chapter VIII.

Apart from incorporating different types of metonymy, acknowledging predicative metonymies, and showing in their definitions that these alternations do not have to correspond to lexical polysemy, dictionaries also show that the direct object is sensitive to predicative metonymy. Section 5 showed that among the many examples that are tagged as instances of metonymy or predicative metonymy, a large number could occur, or could only occur, in the direct object. Dutch and German dictionaries therefore do not only reflect many linguistic insights, but can also be used for data extraction. Data extracted from dictionaries will be presented and discussed in the following chapters.