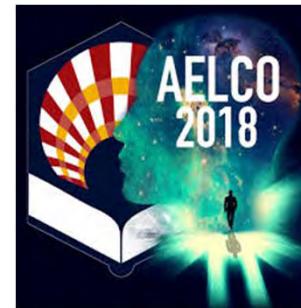

On the novelty of novel metonymies

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1 Introduction

- looking at things in retrospect, it might be justified to say that metonymy has recently become more fashionable as a topic of research
- however, what goes hand in hand with the growing popularity is a sort of general paranoia – people see metonymy everywhere, and too much of it
- one aspect of this is that the topic of novel metonymy has cropped up in the literature

- discussions of novel or creative metonymies do not still abound in the literature, but a number of recent publications (e.g. Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro & Kang 2013a & b, 2016; Van Herwegen, Dimitrou & Rundblad 2013; Falkum Lossius, Recasens & Clark 2017) take up this issue
- all these articles take it for granted that there is such a thing as novel metonymy
- however, this very assumption is in the focus of my presentation today
- consequently, my main question is:

Are there really any novel (or creative) metonymies?

- the long and short of my answer to the first part of this question is:

NO!!!

- as for the second part of the question, the answer depends on what we mean by creativity, a phenomenon to be discussed in brief presently

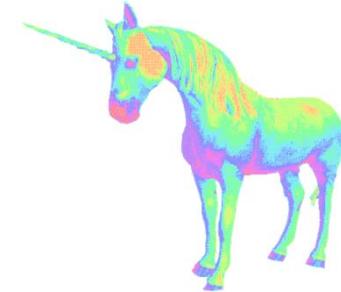
Slabakova, R., Cabrelli Amaro, J. and Kang, S.K., 2013. Regular and novel metonymy in native Korean, Spanish, and English: Experimental evidence for various acceptability. *Metaphor & Symbol*, 28(4): 275-293.

Slabakova, R., Cabrelli Amaro, J. and Kang, S.K., 2013. L2 regular and novel metonymy: How to curl up with a good Agatha Christie in your L2. In: S. Baiz, N. Goldman and R. Hawkes (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 37th Boston University Conference on Language Development*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press, pp. 397-409.

Slabakova, R., Cabrelli Amaro, J. and Kyun Kang, S., 2016. Regular and novel metonymy: Can you curl up with a good Agatha Christie in your second language? *Applied Linguistics*, 37(2): 175-197.

Van Herwegen, J., Dimitriou, D. and Rundblad, G., 2013. Development of novel metaphor and metonymy comprehension in typically developing children and Williams syndrome. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 34(4): 1300-1311.

Falkum, I.L., Recasens, M. and Clark, E.V., 2017. "The moustache sits down first": on the acquisition of metonymy. *Journal of Child Language*, 44(1): 87-119.



- in this presentation I argue that, unlike novel or creative metaphors, novel metonymy is actually somewhat of a unicorn of cognitive linguistics
- whether we find it or not, depends mostly on what we understand under novel metonymy
- in contrast to conceptual metaphor, I claim, conceptual metonymy can hardly be novel
- however, I show in the second half of my presentation, i.e. Part 4, that metonymy may be involved in the creation of novel metaphors metaphtonymies, and that metonymies can be used/combined creatively

- we should actually consider briefly how novelty, creativity and productivity relate to each other
 - in morphological theory it is customary to distinguish between productivity, on the one hand, and creativity, on the other
 - the former is rule-governed (and pattern-based), while the latter is rule-breaking (i.e. non-rule-governed)
 - productivity may simply be defined as a feature of human language which allows a native speaker to produce an infinitely large number of sentences, or other constructions, including complex words, many (or most) of which have never been produced before, but which follow some rules or patterns
 - creativity is in general the native speaker's ability to extend the language system in a motivated, but unpredictable way
 - creativity and novelty could in the context of morphological theory be said to describe competence and performance, respectively, the former being ability, the latter the realization of the former in words, constructions, etc.
-

- these notions could be applied to metaphors and metonymies as well, but we should add the notion of creative use
- for example, established metonymic (and perhaps metaphorical) patterns can be used more or less productively
- metaphors can clearly be novel, as a result of human creativity, but both the new ones and the already existing ones could be used creatively (put to use in a different context)
- metonymies can of course also be used creatively, but I would like to argue today that there is very little genuine novelty when it comes to metonymies
- of course, all metonymies must have been at one point novel, resulting from creativity, but there is little room for that in the present, for reasons to be presented somewhat later
- one could expect more novelty occasionally as we move towards more specific, low-level metonymies, but hardly any at the high-level end of the continuum

- for example, there is a well established metonymic pattern in which humans stand for something that is a salient result of their activity, such as AUTHOR FOR HER/HIS WORK, INVENTOR FOR HER/HIS INVENTION, etc.
- one could as well envisage a situation where an art collection is simply called by the name of the art collector who compiled it – this would be a metonymic pattern closely related to the above
- for example, we could then be able to refer to the collection of Greek sculptures collected by Lord Elgin by saying something like *He spent hours admiring Lord Elgin*
- that could then rightly be considered a novel type of a low-level, fairly specific metonymy
- however, this is not how art collections are actually referred to
- they often become whole museums and are referred to as such

- for example, the collection started by Heinrich Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza de Kaszón has grown into a museum called the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza) in Madrid
- it is sometimes referred to as *the Thyssen*, but it is an elliptical form of the name of **the museum, the reference is not made to the collection as such**
- it appears that for some reason this remains a metonymy-in-spe, but were this pattern activated we would first have a novel metonymy that might later become productively used

2 Novel metaphors

- novel and/or creative metaphors seem to abound, and are quite easy to find
- in Pedro Calderón de la Barca's play *Life is a Dream* (*La vida es sueño*), one of the main protagonists, Segismundo ends his famous monologue at the end of Act 1 by saying:

*What is life? a tale that is told;
What is life? a frenzy extreme,
A shadow of things that seem;
And the greatest good is but small,
That all life is a dream to all,
And that dreams themselves are a dream.*

*¿Qué es la vida? Un frenesí.
¿Qué es la vida? Una ilusión,
una sombra, una ficción,
y el mayor bien es pequeño:
que toda la vida es sueño,
y los sueños, sueños son.*



Life is like box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get.





**Life is like a roll
of Toilet Paper.
The closer you get
to the end, the
faster it goes.**

Creative Commons Image from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/hygenematters/5505655550/lightbox/>

Life is Like a Bath
the Longer you're in it
the more Wrinkled
you get.





Life is Like a Pizza

Pizza Always Confuses you:

It Comes in Square Box

When you open, it's Round

When you Start eating, it's Triangle

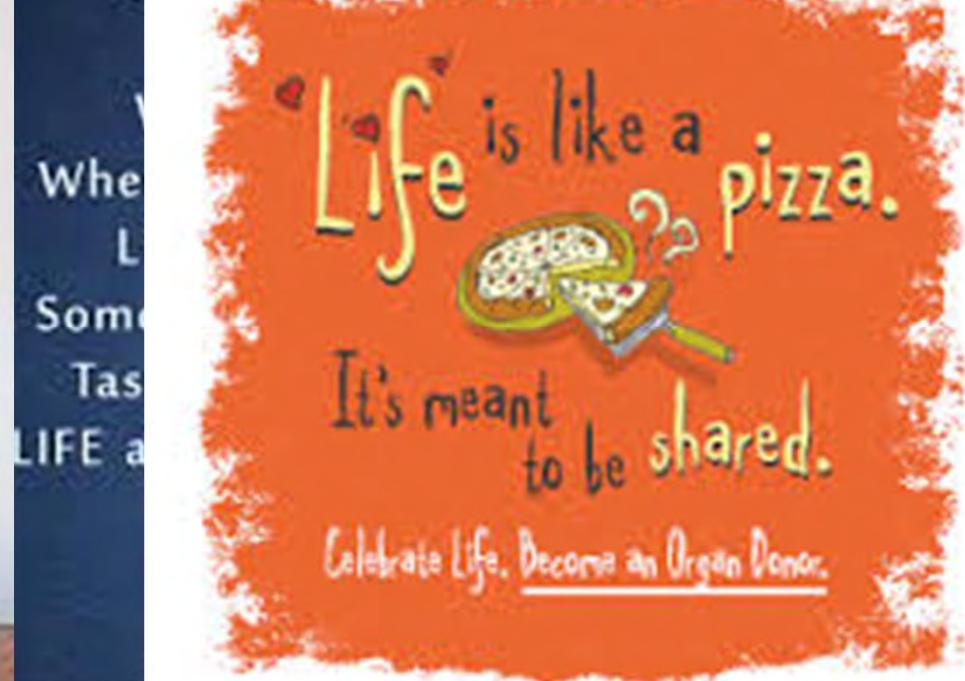
Life is Also Like Pizza, Looks
Something, Appears Something and
Tastes Something. So Enjoy your
LIFE as HOT and HAPENING as Pizza.

On

OyeHoye.com



Life is Like a Pizza



Celebrate Life. Become an Organ Donor.

OyeHo

LIFE
IS LIKE
FACEBOOK
PEOPLE

WILL LIKE YOUR PROBLEMS  OFTEN COMMENT ON THEM

BUT
ONLY A FEW WILL TRY AND SOLVE THEM
WHILE EVERYONE ELSE IS TOO BUSY TRYING TO

UPDATE THEIR
STATUS

JustForQuotes.com

OyeHo

Life is like a roller coaster.
It has its ups and
downs. But it's your choice
to scream or enjoy
the ride.



JustForQuotes.com

OyeHo

LIFE IS A BEACH

You can dive into the water when the sun is bright and scorchy

You can rebuild sand castles when some fool steps on it blindly

You can stare all day at girls in bikini when you are feeling horny

You can spit and pee in the water when you're just too fuckin' lazy



LIFE IS A BEACH

Life is like a Camera

Just focus on what's important

Capture the GOOD TIMES

Develop from the negatives

and if things don't turn out

- just take another shot.





Life is a tragedy
when seen in close-up,
but a comedy in long-shot.
Charlie Chaplin

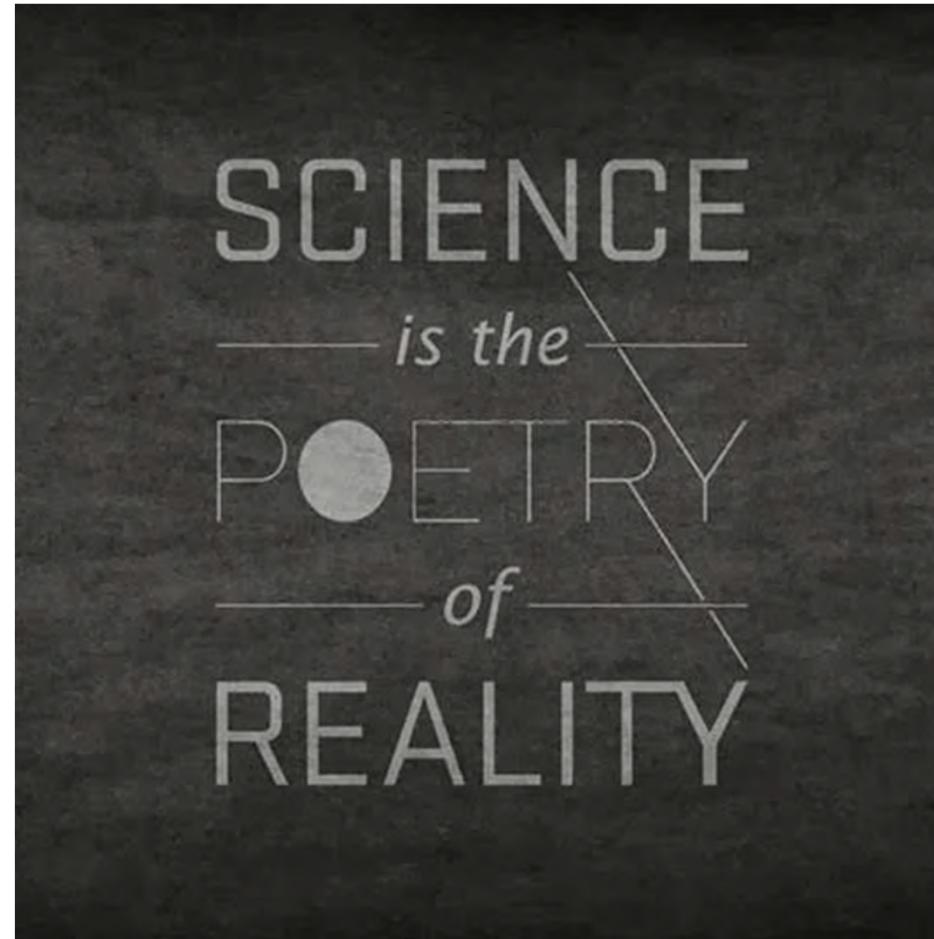
Learn to let it go
and find peace within you.
www.peacerevolution.net



“LIFE IS A DISEASE:
SEXUALLY
TRANSMITTED,
AND INVARIABLY
FATAL.”

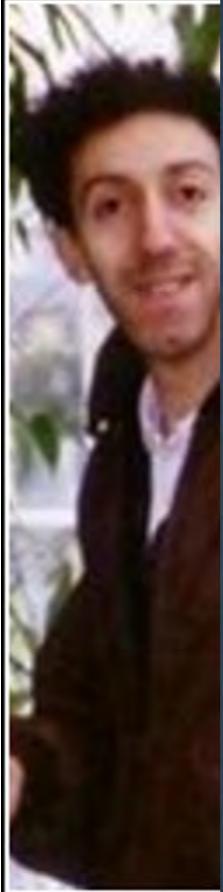
NEIL GAIMAN





Science is like a hungry furnace
that must feed from the the forest
of ignorance that surrounds us.

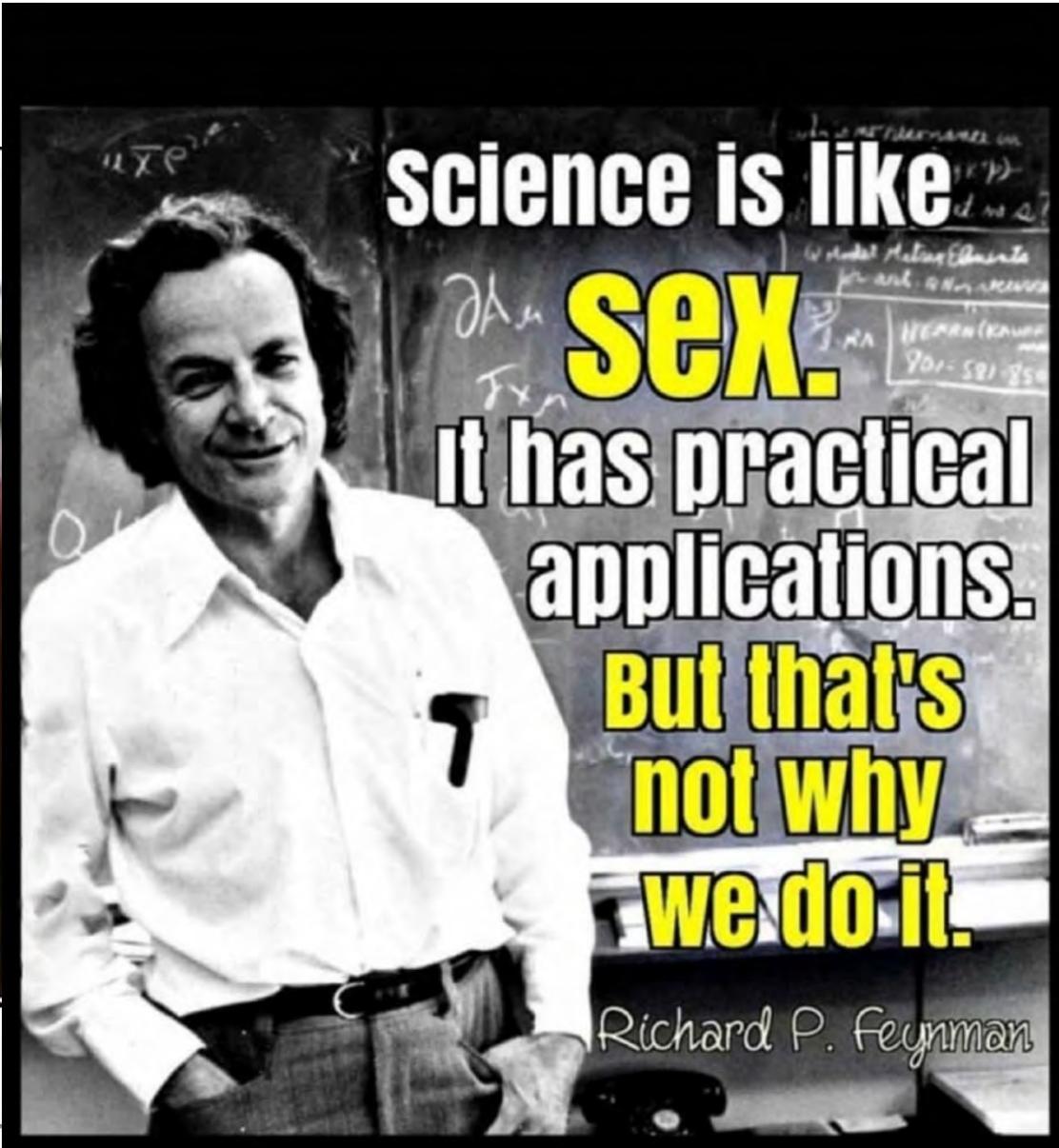
-Matt Ridley (Author)



Data Science is like teenage sex:

everyone talks about it,
nobody really knows how to do it,
everyone thinks everyone else is doing it,
so everyone claims they are doing it...

sky;
st; it
und;
an!
ure!



ws the sky;
e forest; it
derground;
the ocean!
d creature!



Science is a seagull, it knows the sky;
it is a squirrel, it knows the forest; it
is a mole, it knows the underground;
it is a dolphin, it knows the ocean!
Science is a multi-talented creature!

— Mehmet Murat Ildan —

AZ QUOTES

- this plethora of novel metaphorical expressions (and conceptual metaphors) is no wonder if we bear in mind the fact that metaphors, unlike metonymies, involve mappings across two distinct conceptual domains
- in other words, because we have a large number of such domains that can function as either source domains, or target domains, or perhaps as both, we also have an even larger number of their possible combinations, i.e. conceptual metaphors
- needless to say, some of these conceptual metaphors have become conventionalized, but there are still many out there that have not yet been utilized
- we also know that conceptual metaphors are always part of a larger system of figurative network, i.e. they can be more or less general or specific

- this means that there are in many cases a number of hierarchical levels in terms of which the system is organized, and the more levels there are, the more possibilities we have for the appearance of new, i.e. novel metaphors
- it is therefore possible that, as we move downward in that hierarchy, i.e. towards more specific levels, the more likely it becomes that some more specific subtypes of a conceptual metaphor may occasionally emerge as new metaphors
- it is often claimed that the metaphorical mappings themselves represent the most specific level, i.e. they are most specific metaphors

**GOD IS A DJ
LIFE IS A
DANCEFLOOR
LOVE IS
THE RHYTHM
YOU ARE
THE MUSIC**

LIFE IS LIKE A
GRINDSTONE -
WHETHER IT WEARS
YOU DOWN OR
POLISHES YOU UP
DEPENDS ON WHAT
YOU ARE MADE OF.

- UNKNOWN



**Life is like a flute.
It may have many holes
and emptiness. But if
you work on it carefully
it can play magical
melodies.**



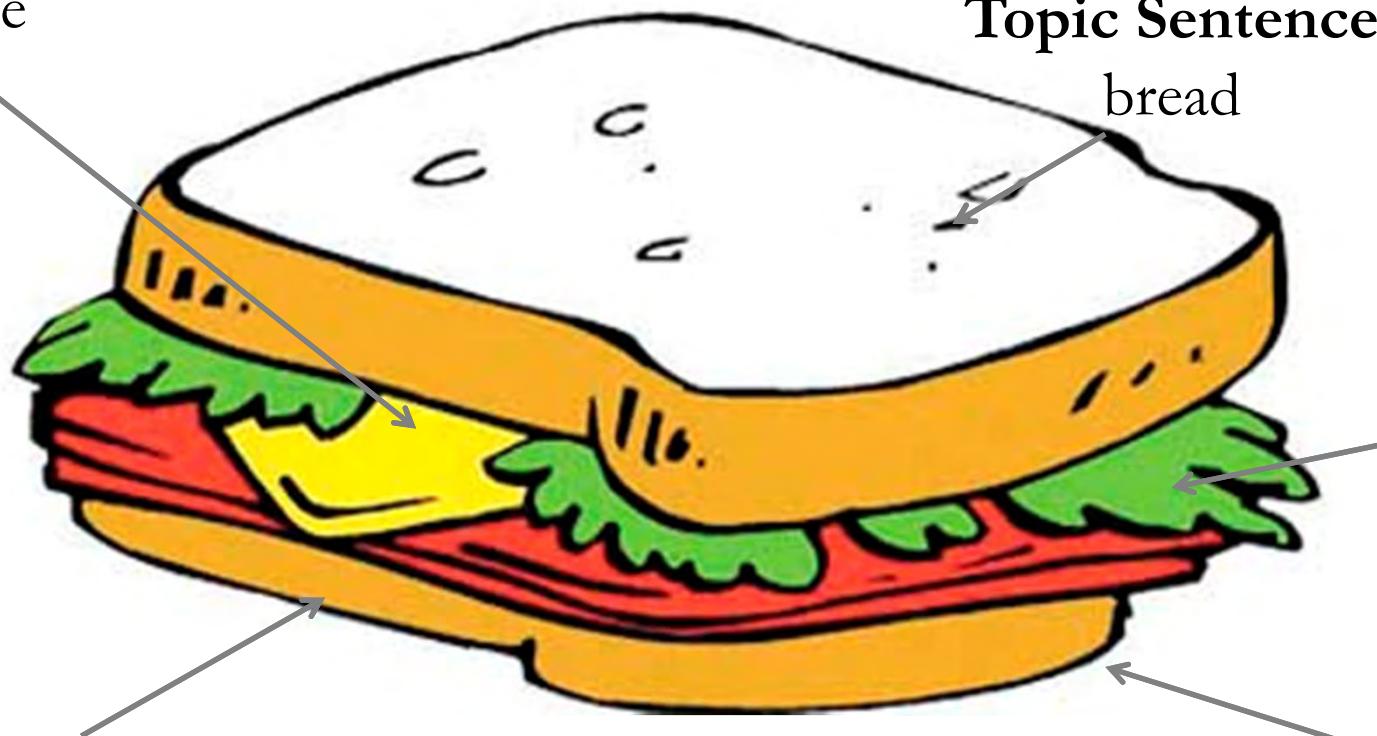
LIFE IS LIKE A PIANO.
WHITE KEYS ARE HAPPY MOMENTS.
BLACK KEYS ARE SAD MOMENTS.
REMEMBER...
BOTH KEYS ARE PLAYED
TOGETHER
TO GIVE SWEET MUSIC.

melodies.

The Paragraph is a Sandwich

Transition

cheese



Conclusion

bread

Topic Sentence

bread

Detail
lettuce

Support Sentence

meat

Diver writer

The diver leaps straight in and starts the writing process early on, in order to find out what they want to say. The diver starts anywhere to see what emerges, before working towards a plan.



Patchwork writer



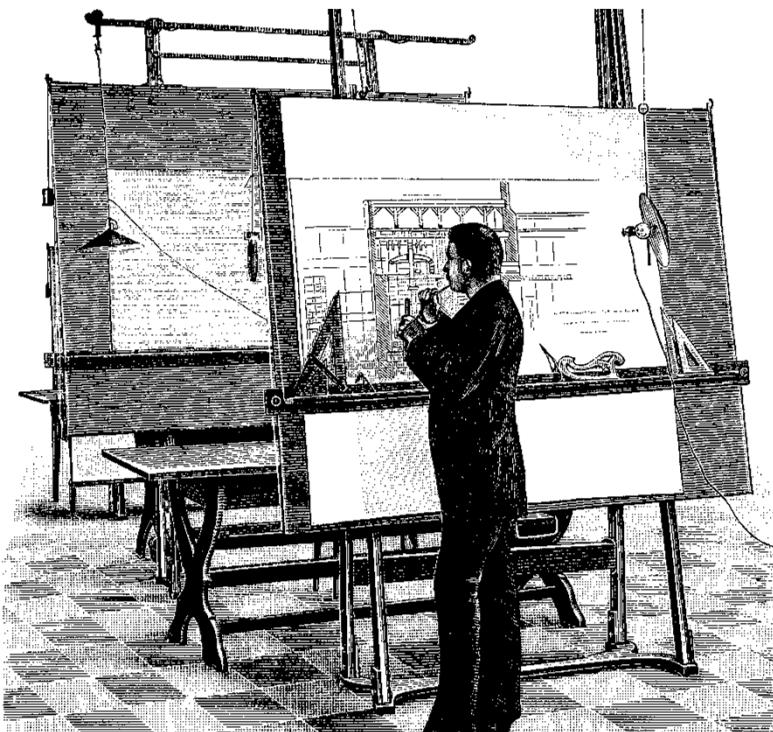
The writer works on sections (perhaps using headings) quite early in the process, and combines with linking ideas and words later.

Grand plan writer

This person reads and makes notes, and leaves writing a plan or beginning writing until they have an almost complete picture of the essay ready in their head.



Architect writer



The architect has a sense of the structure (perhaps before the content) and could produce a complex plan or spider diagram early in the process.

- what is more, we know that primary metaphors can be combined into complex ones (even form cascades), and these combinations may result in further novel complex metaphors
- but, as we very well know, a single conceptual metaphor can be lexicalized in more than one way, which means that novelty may occur not only at the level of type, but also at the level of token or instance
- in other words, we may have novelty at the metaphor type level, but also novelty at the metaphor token or expression level

3 Novel metonymies would be a genuine novelty

- let us now take a look at what is discussed in literature under the heading of novel/creative metonymy
- we first look how these are defined, or, if not defined in any particular way, how they are described, and also at the specific cases of novels considered to be novel/creative
- Frisson & Pickering (2007: 597, 600), to which most of these recent studies refer to back, talk about novel senses of metonyms, i.e. unfamiliar metonyms (contrasting these with lexicalised senses and familiar metonyms, respectively)
- it is clear that they are NOT talking about NOVEL METONYMY
- note their careful phrasing: a **novel metonym** is an instance of a(n existing) metonymy type or pattern; metonyms can develop **novel senses**

Frisson, S. and Pickering, M.J., 2007. The processing of familiar and novel senses of a word: Why reading Dickens is easy but reading Needham can be hard. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 22(4): 595-613.

- Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro & Kang (2013 a & b, 2016) do not actually define novel metonymies, but just contrast what they call “regular metonymies,” i.e. widely conventionalized metonymies such as *Paris is in a buff* (capital for government), with those that are “not widely conventionalized although they use the same mental processes” (2013a: 226)
- at the same time, they admit being “mindful of the fact that regular and novel metonymy are not mutually exclusive, but rather two opposites on a cline of metonymy conventionalization.”
- this effectively means that novelty of a metonymy is equated with its conventionalization, which is tightly linked to the frequency of its use
- it follows that the metonymy novelty that Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro & Kang (2013a) keep talking about is not a phenomenon of the type level, but only the novelty at the instance or token type
- this is a sort of rule-governed creativity, and not a rule-breaking type

- what they call novel metonymies are just analogical formations on the basis of what the current system allows
- thus, to give an example, we could say that according to Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro and Kang's logic, the incorporation in the USA of Kia Motors America in 1992, and the subsequent appearance of Kia cars on the American market, produced a novel metonymy, i.e. the expression *Kia* was added to a set of items such as *Ford*, *Chevrolet*, etc., where the name of the company producing cars metonymically stands for cars produced by those companies
- although Tesla Inc. (originally Tesla Motors), eponymously called after Nikola Tesla, was founded in 2003 as a producer of electric cars, solar panels and energy storage, it is now synonymous with high-class electric cars, and the shortened form of the company name has also been added to the above set in this century
- ironically, this is precisely where and how metonymies can be regular

- this is a well-established subtype of the widely used metonymy type
PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT
- so what Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro & Kang see as novel, as opposed to regular, actually belongs to the realm of the completely regular
- it has been noted in literature that, in contrast to metaphor, metonymy can be quite regular, or logical
- this is the reason why some patterns of metonymic shifts are referred to as regular or logical (and producing regular polysemy) (cf. Brdar, Zlomislić, Šoštarić & Vančura 2009; Sweep 2010, 2012; Jódar Sanchez 2014)
- in the case of cars and car makers, as we have seen above, the appearance of a new car maker would automatically result in metonymy, i.e. in the addition of a new instance to the already existing set of metonymic expressions realizing a given metonymic type

Brdar, M., Zlomislić, J., Šoštarić, B., & Vančura, A. (2009). From metaphorical *banana skins* to metonymic *rittbergers*: On two types of polysemy. In M. Brdar, M. Omazić, & V. Pavičić Takač (Eds.), *Cognitive Approaches to English: Fundamental, Methodological, Interdisciplinary and Applied Aspects* (pp. 151-169). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Sweep, J. (2010). A frame-semantic approach to logical metonymy. *Constructions and Frames*, 2(1), 1-32.
doi:10.1075/cf.2.1.01swe.

Sweep, J. (2012). *Metonymical Object Changes: A corpus-oriented study on Dutch and German*. Utrecht: LOT.

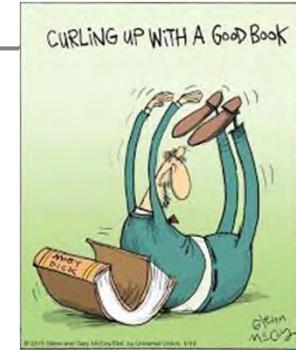
Jódar Sánchez, A. J. (2014). *Que comenca ja la pel·li! A frame-based study of Catalan and Spanish begin-verbs and the situation-entity metonymy*. (MA), San José State University.



Too cold to go outside? Try curling up with a good book instead! reading winter



MQ



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- similarly, when Czechoslovakia dissolved into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993, Bratislava emerged as a new instance of the CAPITAL FOR GOVERNMENT METONYMY, but it could hardly be considered a novel one
- the system itself is in no way changed, apart from the fact that certain metonymic patterns in it are further strengthened
- this becomes clear when we take a look at the actual examples that Slabakova, Cabrelli Amaro & Kang discuss as novel metonymies
- there is hardly anything novel about *a good Agatha Christie*, metonymy that forms part of the title of their 2016 article
- this is a well-known type of metonymy, WRITER FOR HIS/HER WORK, examples of which can be easily found (even for authors far less well-known than Agatha Christie)

-
- (1) *Egan, who also wrote *The Keep* and *Look at Me*, is a writer of solid, plainspoken prose. Saying that seems like a diss when it isn't. But the connections she's trying to make among characters don't hold a candle to the brilliant plotting of a **Kate Atkinson** or a **David Mitchell**.*
- one of the conditions favourable to the metonymic use seems to be that the author should be fairly prolific, which apparently makes quite felicitous the premodification by means of *good (old)*, which is very common:
- (2) *I've got a **good old Christie** listed today.*
- (3) *Possibly a **Salinger** or a **Steinbeck** who I would have been discovering just around then, or a **good old Austen** or a **Hardy**.*
- (4) *I mean, I enjoy a **good Austen** or even an action-romance, but historical romance?*
- (5) *Much like when you read a **good Dickens**, when you read *Crooked Heart* you relax into a colourful, imaginative, well-paced period drama.*
-

- metonymic uses are found even with authors far less well-known than Agatha Christie:

(6) *Egan, who also wrote The Keep and Look at Me, is a writer of solid, plainspoken prose. Saying that seems like a diss when it isn't. But the connections she's trying to make among characters don't hold a candle to the brilliant plotting of a **Kate Atkinson** or a **David Mitchell**.*

- these metonymic uses are not novel even if further extended as in:

(7) *We adore watching **Agatha Christie** and have a large collection.*

to refer to a film based on a work by the author in question. Sometimes the name of a character from a series of novels, or from a film based on these novels, can be used in the same way

- occasionally, this pattern can be mixed with the metonymy AUTHOR FOR HIS/HER WORK, as can be seen in (15) below
- it is quite possible (even quite likely, to the best of my knowledge) that this type of metonymy, CHARACTER FOR A (TYPE OF) LITERARY/CINEMATIC WORK, has not yet been discussed in literature, but this is not what counts here
- the fact is that this low-level metonymy type can be neatly situated with a more general type of metonymy, and there is a long history of its use.

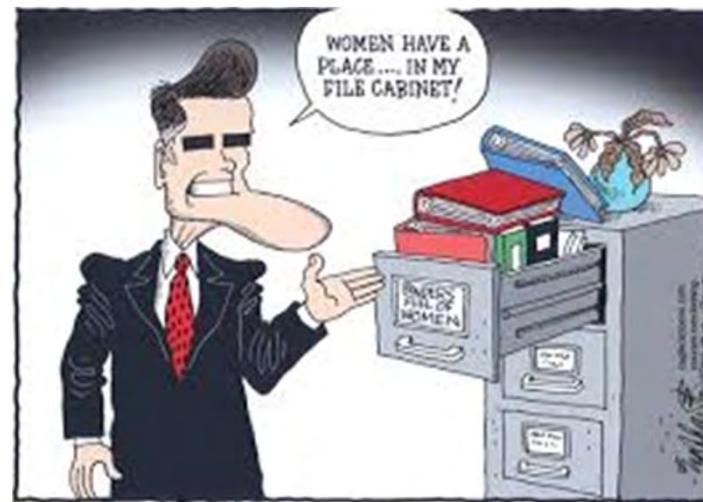
- (8) *I like **a good Poirot or Sherlock Holmes** (Jeremy Brett version) every now and again. We'll probably watch *The Blue Carbuncle* at some point this weekend (the plot revolves around a Christmas goose).*
- (9) *The story apes all the hallmarks of **a good Poirot or Miss Marple**, to a frighteningly comforting degree.*
- (10) *I think the hallmark of his show is the twists and turns that **a good Sherlock Holmes or a good (Raymond) Chandler** has.*

- another example they discuss in (2013a) is *binders full of women*



Election 2012 Romney on pay equity

(11) *And I said: ‘Well gosh, cant we find some women that are also qualified?’ And we took a concerted effort to go out and find women who had backgrounds that could be qualified to become members of our Cabinet. I went to a number of women’s groups and said: “Can you help us find folks?” And they brought us whole **binders full of women**. (Mitt Romney, 2012)*



- this again hardly qualifies as novel
- it may leave such an impression because it is demeaning and insensitive towards women

- this again hardly qualifies as novel
- it may leave such an impression because it is demeaning and insensitive towards women
- this is just another instance of the well-known metonymy of the type CONTAINER FOR THE CONTAINED. Note, however, that this is not a simple metonymy, as *women* do not directly constitute the CONTAINED. Rather, it is documents as containers standing for CVs as their contents, and these in turn represent people. This apparent complexity may lend it some additional novelty flair, but it is not genuinely novel:

- (12) “*I did some research — several **bookshelves full of women of the Bible** — and I carefully went through the books if I was going to do ‘such and such’ woman.*
- (13) *The world I live in, one with two women senators representing my state, **bookshelves full of women writers**, music with women’s voices — all of that is the fruits of our own Girl Effect, of investing in women’s education and employment.*

- Van Herwegen, Dimitrou & Rundblad (2013: 1032), too, adopt a similar procedure:

“Novel metaphors and metonyms differ from lexicalised ones in that their meaning has never or rarely been encountered before.”

- (14) *The apron burned the dinner*



- such equating novelty with the frequency of use of metonymies could be shown to have some absurd consequences in research contexts other than language learning and acquisition
- it is well-known that metonymic patterns can be attested in many languages, but that their productivity is subject to some, more or less severe, constraints, which means that they are less frequent in some languages than in some others
- we might then ask ourselves whether such metonymies are more novel in one language than another?

- we also know that metonymies can function both as euphemisms and dysphemisms (Gradečak-Erdeljić 2005; Gradečak-Erdeljić & Milić 2011; Milić 2009), and the latter could be more systematically avoided in one language than in another
- the difference in their frequency of use can hardly be said to have anything to do with their novelty
- even one of the most frequent metonymies, CAPITAL FOR GOVERNMENT, can exhibit cross-linguistic differences in their use due to reasons that have nothing to do with their novelty
- these reasons can range from grammatical ones to stylistic and pragmatic ones, often combining
- some metonymies may be even blocked by the presence of some word-formation patterns in a given language

Gradečak-Erdeljić, Tanja. (2005). Euphemisms in the language of politics or how metonymy opens one door but closes the other." In: *Pragmatics Today* (P. Cap, ed.). Frankfurt a. M., Berlin, Bern: Peter Lang, 287–299.

Gradečak-Erdeljić, T., Milić, G. (2011). Metonymy at the crossroads: A case of euphemisms and dysphemisms. In: *Defining metonymy in cognitive linguistics: Towards a consensus view* (R. Benczes, A. Barcelona and F. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, eds.). Amsterdam - Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 147–166.

Milić, G. (2009). Of chickens and eels: A cognitive-contrastive look at English and Croatian dysphemisms. In: *Cognitive approaches to English: Fundamental, methodological, interdisciplinary and applied aspects* (M. Brdar, M. Omazić and V. Pavičić Takač, eds.). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 299–320.

- Falkum Lossius, Recasens & Clark (2017: 92) approach the problem in a slightly different manner:

“When children acquire lexicalized metonyms (e.g. Lego, where the name of the brand is used to refer to the toy bricks), they do not necessarily make the association that renders the metonym transparent; rather, the metonym could be acquired as a conventional term for the referent in question – only later will they learn that Lego is a brand name. While understanding a novel metonym requires pragmatic skill and relies on contextual knowledge to license the metonymic association, comprehension of a lexicalized metonym may simply depend on whether the child has already acquired its conventional meaning.”

- the above begs for a couple of comments:
- first of all, one of the two types of metonymies Falkum Lossius et al. distinguish, the one that is excluded from their research, are lexicalized metonymies that children are not yet aware of, and as such are the acquisitional mirror image of so-called dead metonymies, or what Riemer (2002) calls post-metonymies
- all other metonymies were treated as novel metonymies
- it clear that what these studies examined were not novel, but just ordinary transparent metonymies, seen from the perspective of the linguistic system
- however, these could be interpreted as novel in a special sense of the term, if we assume the perspective of individual language acquisition
- i.e. they might be novel to the extent that a language learner is first exposed to a given pattern of metonymic extension
- however, in the study in question transparent metonymies are still considered novel even if they are not encountered for the first time by the language learner

Riemer, Nick. (2002). When is a metonymy no longer a metonymy? In: *Metaphor and Metonymy in Comparison and Contrast* (R. Dirven and R. Pörings, eds.). Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 379–406.

- it transpires from what we have seen so far that discussions of novel metonymies in recent literature are actually NOT discussions of what we would expect novel metonymies to be
- in fact, we could say that this is not really surprising in light of the fact that there could be hardly any genuinely novel metonymies, i.e. they are as common as unicorns
- there are several reasons why novel metonymies should in principle not exist
- first of all, note that metonymy is an intra-domain phenomenon that exploits a very limited range of relationships, just PART FOR WHOLE, WHOLE FOR PART and perhaps PART FOR PART
- discounting the third type, and working only with the first two possibilities, applied to 5 domains, we end up with 10 metonymies
- The result would be the same in the case of conceptual metaphor: it would only take 5 different domains to produce ten different combinations of two domains (without permutations)

- the formula for the number of combinations consisting of two elements from a set containing n elements (without permutations)

$$\frac{(n)(n-1)}{2}$$

- if 10 domains are involved in metaphorical mappings, there are 45 different possibilities, whereas there are only 20 potential metonymies
- with 100 domains there are 4,950 potential metaphors but only 200 metonymies
- the things change “a little” if we allow for permutations
- metaphors are normally unidirectional, but in some cases the role of domains can be reversed, so ANIMAL and HUMAN can both be source and target domains
- further, the number of hierarchical levels in the system is different for metaphors and metonymies

- clusters are typical of metaphors, while metonymies can be high-level, low-level, and very often nothing in between
- admittedly, the number of parts that can potentially be metonymically used to evoke the whole, and the other way round is potentially infinite, but in practice the choice is considerably limited by a number of cognitive principles of salience discussed by Kövecses and Radden (e.g. relevant over irrelevant, concrete over abstract, human over non-human, etc.)
- on the other hand, in the case of metaphors, there is just a general tendency for source domains to be more concrete than the target domains
- all this means that there is a clear contrast between conceptual metaphors and conceptual metonymies in this respect, as new types, i.e. genuine novelty, can only arise with the former
- it seems that we can at best have only novel instances of metonymies

4 Metonymy and creativity: metalepsis as complex metonymies and visual metaphonymies

- now I return to the topic of metonymic creativity, showing that metonymies can be used in creative ways in order to achieve a number of goals, from producing humorous effect by means of euphemisms, hyperboles, framing, to poetic purposes
- in this part I briefly consider how several metonymies can be creatively combined into complex metonymies or combined with metaphors to produce further figurative amalgams

4.1. Metalepses as complex metonymies

- metalepsis is in classical rhetorical tradition sometimes considered to be a subtype of metonymy, just like synecdoche
 - it is often treated as a poorly understood rhetoric ragbag of a sort, including multiple, i.e. stacked or tiered metonymies, and even what is considered to be run-of-the-mill metonymies like EFFECT FOR CAUSE
 - it is certainly strange, if not indicative, that ancient rhetoricians felt CAUSE and EFFECT metonymies to be somehow special
 - metalepsis is defined as a figure of speech in which an expression makes indirect reference to another figure of speech, or as a “figure of speech consisting in the substitution by metonymy of one figurative sense for another” (Merriam Webster)
-

- Harold Bloom takes it to be “the trope of a trope” (1975: 74), “a scheme, frequently allusive, that refers the reader back to any previous scheme” (ib.)
- he (1975: 102) goes on to say that metalepsis can be called “maddeningly, but correctly, a metonymy of metonymy”
- Cummings (2007: 219) describes metalepsis as a “process of transition, doubling, or ellipsis in figuration, of replacing a figure with another figure, and of missing out of the figure in between in order to create a figure that stretches the sense or which fetches things from far off”
- put more simply, Cummings claims that metalepsis is a complex which appears to involve a mental jump over several figurative steps somewhere in the middle
- what seems to emerge from all this is:
 1. that in all cases of metalepsis there is some metonymic link, i.e. that it involves, metonymy and another figure of speech, or several metonymies
 2. there is an implicit metonymic link (very often of the cause-effect type)

Cummings, B. (2007). ‘Metalepsis’ in *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, ed. Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander and Katrin Ettenhuber. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 217-233.

- let us now provide some examples:

(16) '*Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
and burnt the topless towers of Ilium?*' (Ch. Marlowe: *Dr Faustus*)

(17) *A lead foot* is driving behind me.

- in example (9), the face of metonymically stands for the whole person, which happens to be Helen, abducted and brought to Troy
- she is presented here as the cause and a thousand ships launched and the destruction of the towers of Ilium as the effect
- however, stating that we have here a simple case of a CAUSE FOR EFFECT metonymy or its opposite, would be wrong
- for one thing, it is in the nature of metonymy that we explicitly refer to the concepts serving as the source, but not also to the target – here we have both
- further, it was not Helen who caused the whole thing but the event of her abduction, so this is another metonymic tier

- in an another tier, her abduction leads to an armed conflict, and armed conflict has some accompanying circumstances, such as sending troops (or ships) and consequences (or effects), such as the destruction of cities
- in example (10), the *lead foot* refers to someone who drives fast
- we again seem to have a cause and effect relationship, but again, it is not achieved directly
- a salient property of lead is that it is heavy, and the implication is that anything made of or constituted of lead exerts a lot of pressure on the supporting surface, so *lead foot* exerts a lot of pressure onto the accelerator
- in consequence of this, the car whose accelerator is handled this way moves with great speed
- needless to say, (lead) foot as a body part stands metonymically for the whole person, i.e. the driver
- it seems that in such effective examples there is actually more than meets the eyes, i.e. figurative complexity giving birth to creative expressions

4.1. Metonymic input to visual metaphonymies

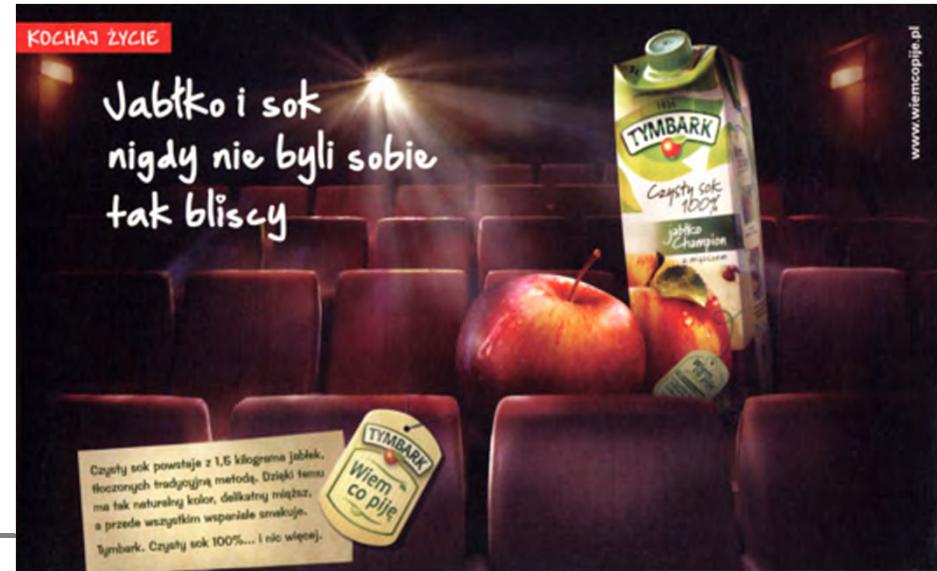


- in a series of advertisements warning about the dangers of unofficial servicing we can identify a conceptual metaphor and several metonymic layers
- the wrench in the picture stands metonymically for all tools in general (a member of a category for the whole category), and tools than metonymically represent the activity performed by using it, i.e. servicing a car
- the wrench is metaphorically conceptualized as a dangerous predatory animal due to the shadow it casts in which we can recognize the profile of an alligator with numerous sharp teeth
- teeth metonymically point to danger and potential negative consequences of unofficial service

- the second ad is very similar to the first, while the third and the fourth metaphorically present tools as something else, as the hangman's noose and as a cold weapon (knife), otherwise the metonymic contribution is msimilar to what we have observed in other ads



- in the following Polish advertisement for fruit juice a conceptual metaphor (PHYSICAL CLOSENESS IS EMOTIONAL CLOSENESS) plays a very important role, and it is realized in two modalities, both textually and visually (the apple and the juice container are next to each other)
- what is more they are personified, metaphorically conceived as two humans
- they sit in a room about which we can safely infer that it is a movie theatre (metonymic inference because of the arrangement of seats, dimmed lights, and the ray of light coming from the projector)
- the close bodily contact in a movie theatre metonymically evokes the well known stereotypical scenario of two lovers coming closer during the film projection



5 Some concluding remarks

- the concept of novel metonymy is not only poorly understood
- but actually highly suspect on theoretical grounds
- there is and there can hardly be any novel metonymies, at least at the type level, while studying individual examples is a fairly trivial task
- however, some well established metonymic models can combine to produce creative, and very effective complex metonymies
- metonymies can also contribute the creation of creative metaphonymic expressions
- needless to say, metonymic models, in particular paragon models, can underlie the creation of novel metaphors like the following:

(18) *MIT Student Invents “Smart Gun”, Called The “Zuckerberg Of Firearms” — Can We Stop, Please?*

Geology is the Kardashian of sciences
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g486zZn3ZLo>)



Thanks !

