Arguing for a "wider" view of metonymy in word-formation

Petr Kos

University of South Bohemia

Within the morphology group, two different views on the role of metonymy in word-formation have been proposed – one which derives from the form of lexemes and sees metonymy as a complementary process to word-formation, and one whose starting point is a concept to be named and which sees metonymy as an inherent part of every act of naming. This presentation will argue for the latter.

I will first describe an onomasiological approach to word-formation and the role of metonymy in naming within this approach. Within this approach, the parts of the concept's ICM which the given concept shares with other members of an already existing category lead to the classification of the concept to the existing category (the process of categorization). Other parts of the concept's ICM which are specific for the concept within the selected category serve as a source for the actual naming. This part, or parts, of the ICM thus provide(s) mental access to the whole concept by the PART OF ICM FOR WHOLE ICM metonymy (see Radden & Panther 2004: 8). This initial metonymy may be followed by other subsequent metonymies or metaphors. From this it follows that this initial metonymy is always instrumental in naming and may serve as the starting point for further conceptualization.

This theoretical introduction will be followed by analyses of examples from the English corpus illustrating the role of metonymy in the formation of these lexemes.

As this presentation will be complementary to the one given by Carmen Portero Muñoz, who will be arguing for the former approach, I will also present analyses of some of the Spanish examples in order to show the differences within the two approaches (if any, after all).

The two presentations can thus be seen as a dialogue that may lead to finding a common ground for understanding the role of metonymy in word-formation.