Semantic theory SSem 05
Exercise sheet: Metaphor and metonymy
28-06-05

1 Metaphor

For each of the following types of metaphor from the Master Metaphor List (`http://cogsci.berkeley.edu/lakoff/`), give one real-world example, either from a corpus or from the web, with an exact description of where the example is from. Do not use the examples provided on the Master Metaphor List page.

(a) A Problem Is A Body Of Water   (b) Competition Is War
(c) Change Is Motion   (d) Society Is A Body
(e) The Conduit Metaphor
(f) Emotional Stability Is Contact With The Ground

2 Metonymy

a) Use the Linguist Search Engine (`http://lse/umiacs.umd.edu:8080`) to find instances on the web instances

> [NP] finished [NP]   or
> [NP] began [NP]

for example "He finished the book". Extract 12 different instances, at least 6 of them metonymic.

For each instance, state whether it is metonymic, and if so, whether it can be interpreted using the Generative Lexicon's Telic Role or Agentive Role.

b) In your own words, explain briefly how you used the Linguist Search Engine to accomplish this.

3 Text analysis

At `http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20050628/RSWAPPING28/TPBusiness/Canadian` you will find a business news text with the title "U.S. court shuts door on Internet file-sharing". Analyze the title, subtitle, and first four paragraphs (up to "that it can sue software companies that intend their product to be used for illegal downloading of popular music and movies.") for metaphor and metonymy:

- Mark each metaphoric expression as metaphoric. If you are not sure whether an expression is metaphoric, you can mark it with a question mark.

  For each metaphoric expression you find, either give the matching entry in the Master Metaphor list, or characterize source and target domain yourself.

- Mark each metonymic expression as metonymic. If you are not sure whether an expression is metonymic, mark it with a question mark.

  Characterize each metonymic expression you find by the relation between the metonymy and its referent (e.g. part for whole, producer for product).

If you are not sure whether an expression is metaphoric or metonymic, give both analyses.

4   Using WordNet for interpreting metonymies

Markert and Hahn used a domain-specific ontology to generate possible metonymic interpretations of expressions. Among other things, their ontology encodes part-of relations as well as producer-produce relations.

Using the online version of WordNet at `http://wordnet.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn`, explore whether WordNet could also be used for generating possible metonymic expressions. For example, WordNet has meronymy (part-of) and holonymy (whole-of) links between synsets. Another fact that can be exploited is that for some words involved in location-for-people or institution-for-people metonymies, WordNet has synsets for both the literal and the metonymic reading.

Give 5 sentences containing metonymies that can be interpreted using WordNet, and 5 sentences with metonymies that cannot. Give a short explanation.