

The Use of Synecdoche in Social Speech Interaction

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Abstract

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole and vice versa (Nordquist;2014:1) or it is identified as substituting a more inclusive term for less inclusive one or vice versa such as **fireside, hearth**-refer to a part of the fire place.

The present paper deals with the problem of how to understand the true meaning of synecdoche in the language of the society and how the native speakers use synecdoche in their speech and do they use it just in casual conversation or informal conversation?

The paper concludes that people and writers, employ synecdoche in their speech by giving common ideas and objects deeper meanings and thus draw readers' attention. Furthermore , synecdoche is used in different fields of life such as social, political, educational etc..

Finally ,Synecdoche ,like any other figure of speech, when it is used appropriately it adds a distinct color to words making them appear vivid .To insert this “life “ factor to literary, political, educational as well as casual conversation. Speakers and writers describe things in new ideas to enable speakers of English language to understand the true meaning of the used words.

Introduction

Figurative speech refers to the use of non-literal wording or verbiage to communicate a point. Figurative speech often makes a comparison using verbal images to illustrate the speakers attention (Reeser, 2013: 1).Rhetoric is a related term that refers to the used of the figurative speech and the use of the literary language and terms such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony etc.(Ibid).

Hornby (2015:1570) states it as a word or phrase in which a part of something is used to represent a whole ,or a whole is used to represent a part of something .Example , in Australia lost by two goals , " Australia is used to represent the Australian team .

While Burke(1945:305)defines synecdoche as part of the whole, whole for the part, container for the contained, sign for the thing signified ,material for the thing made...Cause for the effect, effect for the cause, genius for species, species for the genius . Nordquist(2006:2) clarifies synecdoche as a figure of speech in which a part is use to represent whole for example, (**ABC s, for alphabet**) or the whole for a part (**England won the world cup in 1966**). Synecdoche is often treated as a type of metonymy “ **Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread**” synecdoche is the lord's prayers “ **bread** ” represents all food .(Ibid).

Also Brook (1958:167,177) clarifies that there are two figures of speech, metonymy and synecdoche. So he defines synecdoche as the figure by which the name of a part is applied to the whole, or , conversely, the name of the whole is applied to apart of it. e.g. “hand” to describe the people working in a factory.It is used figuratively and synecdoche is closely related to two extremely processes; these are extension specialization.(See also,Trask1996:44)

The Origin of theWord Synecdoche:

The word “synecdoche” is derived from the Greek word =together-out accepting, from the prepositions and the verb (= I accept) originally meaning accepting a part as responsible for the whole or vice versa.(Int;2014 : 2).It means " shared understanding" (Nordquist 2006:1), also it literary means a change of name (khan,2010:1).In addition ,synecdoche known as :intellectio ,quick conceit(Nordquist 2006:1).

Metonymy and Synecdoche

Metonymy resembles and is sometimes confused with the trope of synecdoche . Synecdoche is a rhetorical trope and a type of figurative speech similar to metonymy – a figure of speech in which a term that denotes one thing is used to refer to a related thing. Indeed , synecdoche is sometimes considered a subclass of metonymy (Khan;2010:1) . It is more distantly related to other figures of speech , such as metaphor (Int.2014:1).More rigorously , metonymy and synecdoche can be considered sub –species of metaphor ,intending metaphor as a type of conceptual substitution (Gallagher;2013:3)

According to Brook (1958:177) these two figures of speech are based not on similarity but on contiguity .It is often based upon the association of ideas .Synecdoche is often treated as a type of metonymy (Burke;1969:p507-508)

Hornby (2015:803) defines metonymy as the act of referring to something by the name of something else that is closely connected with it,

for example using " the white House " for the US president ", the use of the word " tongue " for language is also carried out by the native speakers .Some writers such as Larson (1984:116) , believes that a metonymy is in some ways like euphemism .

While Brook(1958:178) mentions that synecdoche is generally defined as a figure by which the name of the part is used to denote the name of the whole or vice versa .(See also,Trask,1996:44) e.g., the use of the word "rhyme " to refer to " poem".

Burke (1969:509)states that synecdoche in a very comprehensive and accurate way when he said that synecdoche is "...part of the whole , whole for the part , container for the contained , sign for the thing signified , material for the thing madecause for the effect ,effect for the cause , genus for species , species for the genus ... as well as suggests that synecdoche patterns can include reversible pairs such as disease –cure and can be substituted for the word representation . e.g. the "**gray beard**" to refer to the old man,"**the long hair**" to refer to a hippie , "**wheels**" to a complete vehicle, '**London** ' to British Government , "**hands**" to the workers in a factory ,"**steel**" to sword , "**plastic** " for credit card , "**book**" for the **Bible** , "**john Hancock**" for the signature of any person (Ibid).

As a way of an example, the saying that " the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world " illustrates the difference between metonymy and synecdoche .Here' **the hand**' is a synecdochic representation of the mother of whom it is a part , while '**the cradle** ' represents a child by close association.(Nordquist ;2014:6)

Sometimes people make an absolute distinction between a metonymy and a synecdoche, treating metonymy as different from ,rather than inclusive of, synecdoche .There is a similar problem with the use of simile and metaphor.

When the distinction is made ,it is the following : when "A" is used to refer to "B", it is a synecdoche if A is a component of B or if B is a component of A ,and a metonym if A is commonly associated with B but not part of its whole or a whole of its part .thus,"20,000 hungry mouths to feed "is a synecdoche because Australia is a whole of which the people who voted are part.On the other hand ," the White House said " is metonymy ,but not synecdoche ,for the president and his staff ,the building is not a part of the people .(Ibid)

The Uses of Synecdoche

Synecdoche is often used as a type of personification, by attaching a human aspect to a non-human thing .This is used in reference to political relations, including “ **having a foot**” used to mean a country or “ **the**

wrong hands” to describe opposing groups, usually in the context of military power. (Int;2014: 3) Synecdoches are part of the general cultural heritage and exist in literature .Archetypes ,mythic characters , gods and goddess have all been viewed as synecdochical ,as have some literary characters , such as Hamlet , Macbeth ,Othello , Desdemona , Romeo ,Juliet , Jane Eyre and Willy Loman (Nordquist 2014:8) .Thus, synecdoche can be used to emphasize an important aspect of a fictional character for example, the X-Files character **the Smoking Man**. Sonnets and other forms of love poetry frequently use synecdoche to characterize the beloved in term of individual body parts rather than a coherent whole. This practice is especially common in the Petrarchan Sonnet. Where the idealized beloved is often described part by part, from head to toe . (Ibid, see also Nordquist 2006: 2,3) for example:

Shakespeare's Sonnet 116

"O no! it is an **ever –fixed mark**

That looks on tempests and is never shaken "

The phrase " **ever –fixed mark**" refers to a light house .

(Ryan;2011:10)

"Take thy **face** hence ' (**William Shakespeare , Macbeth**)

-Robert Louis Stevenson, Treasure Island

Land ho! All **hands** on deck!" (Ibid)

He uses "Hands " as a synecdoche to refer to the persons on the deck.(Ibid)

It is also popular in advertising. Since synecdoche uses apart to represent a whole, its use requires audience to make associations and “**fill in the gabs**”, engaging with the “**ad.**” by thinking about the product. Moreover , catching the attention of an audience with such as “ **getting eyeballs**” (Nordquist 2006:4)

Within the science writing , synecdoches are common as well. For example ,DNA is a synecdoche for life ,the test tube for experiment ,the statistical test for proof ,and Tally's corner for a kind of social organization (Nordquist 2014:14).

More and more synecdoche is very common in spoken English especially in reference to sports. The name of cities are used to describe events and their outcomes. Such as “ **Denver won Monday's game**” ,when specifically a sports team was victorious Nordquist(2006:5) .

The Classification of Synecdoche according to its Use:

1- A part referring to the whole (pars proto)

a-features of people :” the gray beard” representing an older man

“ the long hair” representing a hippie . This leads to **bahuvrihi” compound**

b-Things :

"wheels"describing a complete vehicle or motorcycle (Burke;2014: 2) a handle bars .

-The word **sails** refers to whole ship (**Rhetoricae,2013:3**)

-**Suits** refers to the business man

c-"**Bodyparts**" : referring to the people by using the body parts e.g , head count , counting noses, or all hands on deck or eyeballs. (Burke; 2014: 2)

-**Head** is used to refer to the cattle or assistants are referred to as hands.

d-"**politics**" :referring to country (or its government) using the name of its capital city .Council or police officers refers to the “**law** “ .E.g: **London** when referring to the **British Government**(or the **United Kingdom**).

Beijing , when referring to the **Chinese Government** (or of **China**), and **Washington** , when speaking of the United States Government (including the United States Congress or President).**Australia votes** , because Australia is a whole of which people who voted are apart.(Ibid:3)

-**The bench** in the middle ages, judges sat on a wooden bench. The (bench) itself has come to represent an entire court or legal system. Supreme Court justice are said to sit on or read their verdicts form the bench.

Example: Barack Obama nominated Elena Kagon to the bench of the Supreme Court.(Galaphor,2013:4)

-**Lobbyist**:A lobby is the main entry way in a large building in the early days of American government people wishing to gain favor from politicians waited in the lobbies of governmental building to visit the legislators. Later the term lobbyist referred to these people hopping from special favors from the government.**Example:** Health care advocates claim that tobacco company lobbyists kept the dangerous of smoking from public view for many decades (Ibid)

-**Pentagon** it refers to a few decision makers .(**Khan,2010:1**)

-**Boot** usually refers to the soldier .(Burke1945:507)

E-Things: describing a small portable radio as a transistor (though that may simply be an abbreviation for “ transistor radio “ or a CRT – based television receiver as “the tube”)

F-Historical Synecdoche :

-**The Holy Roman Empire** was commonly referred to as Germany, due to the domination of it by German leaders and that the most of it was centered upon territory considered Germany.

- **The kingdom of Sardinia** in the nineteenth century was commonly referred to as **Savoy** because its ruling house was from savoy.

-**Austria. Hungary** was commonly referred to as Austria.

-**The Soviet Union** was commonly referred to by its largest and most well-known member, Russia ,**The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** later named.

-**Serbia and Montenegro** was commonly referred to by the name of its largest constituent republic **Serbia** (Ibid:3)

The Island Nation of **Trinidad and Tobago** is commonly referred to by its largest island .**Trinidad**

Livonia the used of this name (after the minor ethnic group of the Livonians) to mean the entire territory medieval **Estonia** and **Latvia**.

-**Great Britain**(the geographical name of the main island)to mean the entire **United Kingdom**.This term is criticized for excluding **Northern Island**, a constituent country of the UK, which is not located on the island of Great Britain .

-**Holland**, a region of the **Netherlands**, to refer to the entire country.

G-Abbreviation:

- Using **CPU** to refer to the enclosure that houses all the core components of a home desktop computer.

-Saying **bubbles** or **bubbly** to refer to **Champagne** or any other **sparkling wine**(Ibid)

- " **Arabian Sands**“ to refer to the Arabian deserts.

2- **A General Class Name used to denotea specific members of that or an associated class:**

-“ **The good book**” or “ **the book**” for the bible.(Ibid)

(“ Bible” itself comes from the Greek for **book**.

-Things:

-“ **truck** “ for any four- wheel drive vehicle (as well as long hand trailers) etc.

-“ **He is good people**” . (Here- the word “ people” is used to denote a specific instance of people i.e. a person so the sentence would be interpreted as “ He is a good person”).

-“ **Le Football**” French term for **Association Football**, literally **the football** “, which is only one of many forms of **football**. Adopted into U.K – English via French as **football**.

3 -A Specific Class Name that refers to a general set of associated things :

“ **John- Hancock**” used in the United States for the signature of any person.

-A **generalized trade mark**.g.“**Coke**” for any variety of **Cola** (or for any variety of soft drink, as in the **Southern States**).”

-**Band -Aid** for any variety of **adhesive bandages** or **Styrofoam** for any product made of expanded **polystyrene**.

4-The material that a thing is (actually, historically, or supposedly) made of referring to that thing :

-**Brass** for brass instruments.

-**Cement** for concrete, cement being just the binder in concrete.

-**Flint**(the sparking bit in a lighter) for Ferro cerium (which is not made of flint).

-**Glasses** for spectacles.

-**Irons** for shackles placed around prisoners'wrists or ankles to restrict his movement.

-**Ivories** for a piano.

-**Lead** for bullets

-**Pigskin** for an American or Canadian football

.-**Plastic** for a credit card.

-**Rubbers** for a condom .

-**Silver** for table ware - cutlery or the dishes or other dishes that were once made of silver metal.

-**Steel** for a sword.

-**Strings** for a string of instruments .

-**Threads** for clothing .

-**Tin** for container made with tin plating.

-**Wax or vinyl** for **vinyl record** (successor to wax phonograph cylinders)

-**Willow** for cricket bat.

-**Wood** for a type of club used in the sport of golf.

-**Coopers** refers to coins

5 -A Container is used to refer to its contents:

-**barrel** for a barrel oil

-**Keg** for a keg of beer.

“**He drank the cup**” to refer to his drinking of the cup's contents.

More examples of synecdoche from everyday life or what we can hear from casual conversations:

-**20000 hungry mouth to feed**, mouths are a part of the people referred to.

-The word **bread** refers to food or money as in “ **writing is my bread and butter or sole bread winner**”.

Hey man, nice threads, threads, here refers to cloths

“ **The stage was nearly setup, but the conductor did not have enough space for the strings**, here, ‘**strings**’ is synecdoche for a single unit “**the string section** “

“**The bartender** is giving away the bar” means that he or she is giving into too many free drinks, which is the stuff the bar contains .(Galaphor,2013:4)

9 /11 as a date , is both singular and essentially repeatable ...when it is used it refers to this day 9/11/2001 , as if citation of this date is enough by the power of its referent , to understand that day and to be affiliated with all that this day entails."(Nordquist ;2014:2) . Likewise ,if someone asks "Are you wearing Kevlar? "you might know from watching enough action movies that this is synecdoche for bulletproof vest ,while using "plastic at the grocery store means putting the bill on your credit cards are made of plastic. As with materials ,containers can sometimes come to refer to the objects they contain-another form of synecdoche .As,'Nazie drank the cup "which does not literally mean that Nazie swallowed a small cup, but rather that she drank the contents of the cup. Likewise ,"the bartender is giving away the bar , 'means that she or he is giving out too many free drinks, which is the stuff the bar contains (Burke ,1969:509) .

Conclusion

Synecdoche is a special form of a figurative language. Synecdoche has many complex patterns and may use larger groups to refer to smaller groups or vice versa .It may also call a thing by the name of the material it is made of or it may refer to a thing in a container or packing by the name of that container or packing .

So , synecdoche is a rhetorical trope and a type of figurative speech similar to metonymy –a figure of speech in which a term that denotes one thing is used to refer to a related thing. Indeed, synecdoche is sometimes considered a sub class of metonymy. It is more distantly related to other figures of speech , such as metaphor. It is noticed that synecdoche is used in different field in our life in social conversation such as things **bottles** or describing the features of people such as the parts of body like hand or heart to refer to “**love**” or material things such as **leather**, synecdoche is also used to refer to the historical things such as **Great Britain** and in

abbreviation as well as its use in politics such as **boots** to refer to soldiers , in newspaper and magazines, radio , TV broadcasts and also in literature.

Thus, synecdoche is used in our speech community in our everyday life in casual conversation, informal address and in political speech.

This research concludes that the understanding of synecdoche for the students those that include native or non- native English speakers or students of many different disciplines , as well as teachers or professors of linguistics ,journalism,politics is so important and they have to know more about synecdoche which is often very confusing to those who do not live in US. This research will learn them to know and understand the true meaning of the word and the intended meaning of the speakers to make the conversation and can benefit from understanding how synecdochic words are used in newspapers and magazines as well as radio and TV broadcasts and to speak with native speakers.

Finally, it is used to add a distinct color to words making them appear vivid .It is used to give common ideas and objects deeper meanings and thus draw readers and speakers attention so synecdoche make everyday speech more colorful ,more creative i.e the speaker describes objects in new ideas which extend the imagination of the readers and attract them for this use or new use of the word.

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إستخدام المجاز المرسل في تفاعل الخطاب الاجتماعي

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الملخص

المجاز المرسل هو احد أشكال الكلام والذي يشير الى استخدام الجزء لتمثيل الكل والعكس صحيح (نوردكوست ٢٠١٤:١) هذاو يمثل استبدال المصطلح الاكثر شمولية بالاقبل شمولية والعكس صحيح مثل الموقد ومكان ايقاد النار والتي تشير الى جزء من مكان ايقاد النيران.

يتناول البحث مشكلة كيفية فهم المعنى الحقيقي للمجاز المرسل في لغة المجتمع وكيفية استخدام المجاز المرسل من قبل الناطقين الاصليين للكلام وهل يستخدمون المجاز المرسل فقط في المحادثة الغير رسمية والمحادثة الرسمية؟

يخلص البحث الى ان المتحدثون والكتاب يضمنون المجاز المرسل في كلامهم من خلال اعطاء الافكار والمواضيع الشائعة معاني اعمق ولهذا يتمكنون من جذب انتباه القراء. إضافة الى ان المجاز المرسل يستخدم في مجالات الحياة المختلفة مثل الاجتماعية والسياسية والتعليمية الخ.

واخيرا،فأن المجاز المرسل مثل أي شكل من أشكال الكلام عندما يستخدم بصورة صحيحة فانه يضيف لونا مميزا للكلمات تجعلها تبدو اكثر وضوحا . لأدراج هذا العامل الحياتي الى المحادثة الادبية والسياسية والتعليمية وكذلك الغير رسمية .فأن المتحدثين والكتاب يصفون الاشياء في افكار جديدة وبهذا يتسنى لجميع الناطقين باللغة الانكليزية فهم المعنى الحقيقي للكلمات المستخدمة.

