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Metaphor and Metonymy

This article has two main aims. One is to describe in some detail the structure of metaphor and metonymy. While the structure of metonymy is straightforward, there are three main types of metaphor, each with a different structure. I shall call these substitution metaphor, extension metaphor and appositive metaphor, for reasons that shall become clear below. The point of this distinction is that various definitions of metaphor often apply to only one of these three types. I shall show how a number of conflicting definitions can be reconciled within a more comprehensive theory of metaphor that takes this structural diversity into account.

My second aim is to relate this account to the use Jacques Lacan makes of the terms 'metaphor' and 'metonymy' when he claims that condensation is metaphor and displacement metonymy. The best approach to this is through the work of Roman Jakobson, to whom Lacan acknowledges a clear debt for his work on metaphor and metonymy.

In 1956 Roman Jakobson's "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances" appeared as part two of Jakobson and Halle's, *Fundamentals of Language*. Approaching the question of the relation of language and speech, Jakobson argues that the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes of language, which relate the units of a language to one another in two series of relations known by Saussure as *in absentia* and *in praesentia* mean that speech involves the double operation of the selection of linguistic units from a paradigmatically related series and their syntagmatic combination into units of a higher degree of complexity. It follows from this, he continues, that each side of this speech operation is in taro double. The isolation of one unit from a number of units (whirl

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involves the possibility of having been able to select another) implies that others could be substituted for it, while the combination of units into larger ones implies that each unit occurs within a context that is provided by further units. The paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, also described as relations of similarity and contiguity, are, Jakobson says, the metaphoric and metonymic poles of language. Jakobson suggests this has clear implications for the study of aphasiac, since "toute forme de trouble aphasique consiste en quelque alteration, plus ou moms grave, soit de la faculte de selection et de substitution, soit de celle de combinaison et de contexture . . . La metaphore devient impossible clans le trouble de la similarite et la metonymie dans le trouble de la contiguite."¹ The moral of this is that any account of organically based speech disorders cannot, if it hopes to be descriptively adequate, afford to ignore linguistic studies, given that aphasiac manifest themselves in ways that can best be understood in terms of the structure of language.

The following table sets out the relations between the above terminology:²

axis	paradigm	syntagma
mode	selection substitution	combination context
relation (Saussure)	in absentia	in praesentia I
relation (Jakobson)	similarity	contiguity
trope	metaphor	metonymy

"Le developpement d'un discours," Jakobson continues, "peat se faire le long de deux lignes semantiques differentes: un theme (topic) en amene un autre soit par similarite soit par contiguite. Le mieux serait sans doute de parler de proces metaphorique dans le premier cas et de proces metonymique daps le second, puisqu'ils trouvent leur expression la plus condensee, Fun dans la metaphore, l'autre dans la metonymie."³

However, before passing from the relations of similarity and contiguity to metaphor and metonymy, he needs to distinguish the two aspects he calls semantic and positional. This gives positional similarity and positional contiguity, and semantic similarity and

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semantic contiguity. Now, Jakobson offers an adequate definition of positional similarity: "la capacite qu'ont deux mots de se remplacer Fun Fautre".⁴ And it is easy to see that positional contiguity would then be the possibility of two words to combine with one another. However, for semantic contiguity and semantic similarity, it is not at all clear how they should be defined.

The particular examples he offers and his discussion of them show that for there to be a metaphor ('den' for 'hut') or a metonym ('thatch' for 'hut') in his sense, there has to be positional similarity between the two terms, underpinning semantic similarity in metaphor and semantic contiguity in metonymy. The difference between metaphor and metonymy is thus a difference between *semantic* similarity and *semantic* contiguity. So, since both metaphor and metonymy rely upon positional similarity, they would both appear to be rhetorical devices that preserve syntactic structure while modulating the paradigmatic axis of selection and substitution. In this respect, the distinction between the semantic and the positional is obviously vital to Jakobson's account of metaphor and metonymy (and, perhaps, to his account of the very existence of the tropes), since it has been introduced solely for that purpose. So how should it be understood?

The distinction does not seem to me to be a clear one, but the following seems to be what Jakobson has in mind. If positional similarity is the capacity of two words to replace one another and positional contiguity the possibility of two words to combine with one another, then

Whatever stirs this mortal frame contains a metaphor because 'frame' and 'body' are positionally similar and related by semantic similarity. On the other hand,

Oh had he been content to serve the crown is a metonym because 'crown' and 'king' are positionally similar and semantically contiguous.

This characterization of metaphor and metonymy is noteworthy for its attempt to relate the tropes (where by 'trope' I mean, following the OED, the use of a term in a sense other than what is proper to it) to the (semantic) structure of language. While it may well be feasible to describe the tropes by means of the relations between the objects to which the terms refer (part to whole, the container for the contained, the cause for the effect, etc.), Jakobson's account is valuable for attempting to show that tropes are made possible by relations internal to language - namely semantic contiguity and semantic similarity; but he has given no clear

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definition of semantic contiguity and semantic similarity. While we may have an intuitive grasp of the distinction in examples like the above "frame" and "body" may seem to be semantically similar and "crown" and "king" semantically contiguous - the distinction still stands in need of explanation; particularly if, as Jakobson's analysis suggests, they are meant to be mutually exhaustive of all the possible pairs of positionally similar signifiers. Even if these signifiers are restricted to nouns and noun phrases it does not seem possible to make a clear distinction so that all pairs would be either semantically contiguous or semantically similar.

The notion of similarity has played an important role in theories of metaphor. From Aristotle onwards metaphor has been described as based on "similarity," "resemblance" or "analogy," and this is perhaps what Jakobson's term means to capture. Doubtless some things are perceived as more similar than others; similarity is clearly involved in what is called the "metaphoric extension" of meaning to new cases ("mouth" said of rivers, bottles, caves, volcanoes, etc.), though here our being aware of a similarity is still an effect of language, not of any natural resemblance between things. We shall return to the extension metaphor below. There is another type of semantic similarity, described by Lakoff and Johnsons,⁵ where the perceived similarity is much more clearly structured by the signifier itself. Here associatively related themes ("argument is war," "theories are buildings," "language is a vehicle or conduit") facilitate certain metaphoric discourses ("his argument came under fierce attack," "That position is indefensible," "He demolished my thesis," "He gets his ideas across nicely").

However, Jakobson's notion of semantic similarity is not the similarity of the classic works, and neither similarity reduces to the other. Indeed, on comparing Jakobson's view on metaphor and metonymy to one such as that proposed by Pierre Fontanier,⁶ the following points emerge. First, Fontanier, highly classificatory, distinguishes between metonymy and synecdoche on the grounds that metonymy involves a relation of "correlation" or "correspondence" in which the objects are separate "wholes," while synecdoche involves a relation of "connection" where the two objects together form a "unit" (*ensemble*) or a "whole." But if we call them both "metonymy," - the classification of metonymy as the substitution of (the sign of) the part, cause, container, etc. for (the sign of) the whole, effect, contained, etc., so that "crown" appears in place of "king" or "country," and "sail" in place of "ship" - then this

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classification is essentially the same as Jakobson's category of metonymy. Both stress the relations between the "manifest" and "latent" terms. The difference would then be that Jakobson shows how the relation that Fontanier describes as holding between things can be accounted for in terms of the semantic relations within language. If this is right, then Jakobson's "semantic similarity" is meant to reflect the classical characterization of metaphor as involving a relation of "resemblance," "similarity," or "analogy"

But it seems more correct to say that a metaphor depends upon no particular semantic relation between signifiers. For instance, neither Emily Dickinson's description of a snake as

A narrow Fellow in the Grass,
or Keat's calling Autumn the

Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun, ,

depends upon an already existing semantic relation between these signifiers in the way metonymy does; the situation is rather that a new relation (and perhaps a new meaning) is created by these metaphoric descriptions.⁷

The second point that emerges is that metaphor may or may not involve substitution. While "the twin pillars" may be substituted for "the basis" of society, and "the sifting" for the "examination" of evidence, there is also the much more common metaphor that emerges not through the substitution of signifiers but through their juxtaposition: examples are "Silence is golden," "Love is war," or "You will be the death of me." Let us call this type of metaphor the "appositive metaphor," in contrast with the substitution metaphor. Notice that "of" in the expression 'A of B' has two uses in English; namely the appositive use (as in "a sea of blood," "a wave of nostalgia," "a heart of gold") and the genitive use (as in "the

scales of justice," "the hand of God"). These two uses correspond respectively to appositive and substitution metaphors. "The twin pillars of law and order" is an appositive metaphor, but the same expression is used genitively, thereby producing a substitution metaphor, when Shakespeare has Julius Caesar describe Mark Antony as

The triple pillar of the world transformed
Into a strumpet's fool

The appositive use says that A is B, that the sea is (made of) blood, that the heart is (made of) gold, that the wave is (that is, consists in) nostalgia, while the genitive use can be transformed, typically with the use of the possessive, into the form "justice's scales," or "God's hand." This shows, then, that a metaphor is not necessarily the

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result of a substitution (compare Lacan's "L'amour est un caillou riant dans le soleil"). This contrasts markedly with metonymy, however, since a metonym can only be produced by substitution.

These two points - that there is a semantic relation that may prove characterizable in metonymy but not in metaphor, and that all metonyms, but not all metaphors, are produced by substitution indicate a disymmetry between metaphor and metonymy, which is already discernible in a study like Fontanier's. Having described synecdoche and metonymy in terms of specific relations (part to whole, etc.), he then describes metaphor as the trope of resemblance, which consists in "présenter une idée sous le signe d'une autre idée plus frappante ou plus connue, qui, d'ailleurs, ne tient à la première par aucun autre lien que celui d'une certaine conformité ou analogie."⁸

As it stands this definition does not tell us much; any pair of terms will fall under it since everything resembles everything else in one aspect or another. But what it does suggest is that there are no specifiable semantic relations involved in metaphor as there are in metonymy. This dissymmetry is important, but it is disguised by Jakobson's semantic opposition of contiguity and similarity.

The third point to be made about Fontanier's theory of tropes is that there are metaphors that Jakobson fails to take into consideration - for example, the qualifying or adjectival metaphor and the verbal metaphor - produced by the juxtaposition of positionally contiguous signifiers: "smouldering rage," "downy windows" (as Christine Brooke-Rose points out,⁹ a double metaphor of substitution: "windows" for "eyes" and "downy" metaphorically qualifying "eyes"), "green thoughts," or the above "Silence is golden." Examples of the verbal metaphor are "He ploughed her and she cropped" or "A crowd flowed over London Bridge," where again the relation between the metaphor terms is juxtaposition rather than substitution. There seems no obstacle to considering all parts of speech as susceptible to metaphors. We have already suggested two differences between metaphors and metonyms, and now we have a third difference: all metonyms are substantives, while metaphors extend to all parts of speech. I shall only be dealing with noun metaphors here, since they are the most important kind. All others are either appositive metaphors ("Silence is golden") or extension metaphors ("The mouth of the river"), and their most striking characteristic is that they displace their semantic effect, Lacan's "effet de sens," onto nouns.

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The differences between substitution, extension, and appositive metaphors are important since a failure to appreciate them is the reason for the limitations of most theories of metaphor.

A number of authors have attempted to give a general account of metaphor in terms of the concept of semantic deviance. They include Paul Ziff, Hilary Putnam, perhaps Noam Chomsky, and, it would seem, J.-E. Lyotard. The idea is that a sentence may be syntactically but not semantically well-formed. A metaphor is a semantically deviant sentence which requires a non-standard, hence "metaphoric" semantic interpretation. Putnam gives the example from Dylan Thomas: 'A grief ago I saw him there.' These theories which base metaphor on semantic deviance are at their most plausible where the appositive metaphor is concerned, but have trouble accommodating extension and substitution metaphors. Substitution theories have come to grief on the appositive metaphor because attempts to account for it as a case of substitution metaphor have led to trying to replace the metaphor with the literal words that have supposedly been supplanted. But this is to confuse exegesis or explication of an appositive metaphor with the eliciting of the latent term in a substitution metaphor.

The most promising account of metaphor is the "interactionist" view, proposed most notably by I. A. Richards and taken up by Max Black.¹⁰ According to Richards, "In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a result of their interaction."¹¹ The inadequacy of this view is that it fails to distinguish between the ways that differently structured metaphors achieve the "interaction" in question. I return to this below.

It may not be a serious drawback for Jakobson's account not to agree well with the traditional classifications; a better explanation of the tropes may easily lead to a theory that cuts across standard groupings. But the limitation of his account is that it disguises certain properties of both metaphor and metonymy that are crucial to an adequate account of their functioning; to an account, that is, of the syntactic means by which tropes are brought about and of the semantic effect they produce. One thing, for example, that has not been appreciated by Jakobson is precisely the different syntax and semantics, and their connection, of metaphor and metonymy. Surely the fact that metaphor displays no particular semantic relation while metonymy does is related to the fact that not all

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metaphors are substitutions (there are also appositive and extension metaphors) while all metonyms are substitutions.

Metonyms and substitution metaphors require that the latent term, which does not appear in the chain of signifiers, be somehow implied by what does. And a semantic connection between a manifest and a latent term (container and contained, part and whole, etc.) helps to secure the latent

term. In the appositive metaphor ("Silence is golden"), however, where there is no latent term, this requirement is not needed. The unusual juxtaposition of terms just is the metaphor, without any special semantic relation between the two being required.

The reason there are no appositive metonyms is simply that the semantic relation between signifiers in metonymy is not appositive but genitive. The appositive use of metonymy is excluded by the nature of the semantic relation between the two terms, while the genitive use, which is possible, fails to produce a trope. For example, "sail" and "glass" are respectively metonyms for "ship" and "wine." But used in apposition, "the sail of the ship" or "the glass of wine," no appositive reading is possible. In "the wave of nausea" the nausea is a wave, but in "the sail of the ship" the sail is not the ship. While the appositional reading is not possible in the case of metonymy, the genitive reading is; except that in this case it fails to produce a trope. The "sail of the ship" is appositive since it can be transformed into "the ship's sail." But because of the semantic relation between "ship" and "sail," this is not a trope.

On the other hand, however, there is no impediment to the construction of appositive metaphors, because there is no special semantic relation between the metaphoric terms.

While Jakobson's analysis can be applied to metonymy, I believe it is unable to account for any form of metaphor. In the case of the substitution metaphor, specifically, an account needs to be given of the means by which the metaphor is effected, because we cannot rely on there being any special semantic relation present. Jakobson's analysis has to be supplemented by an account of the syntactic means used to do this. Lyotard points out that simply substituting one term for another does not produce a metaphor or a metonym but a new sentence.¹² He considers this to be a major objection to an attempt like Jakobson's to give a purely structuralist account of tropes. Jakobson's account is certainly deficient, but not for the reasons Lyotard suggests. We have given reasons why the expression "semantic similarity" cannot account for the structural diversity of metaphor. But even if we limit ourselves to the substitution

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metaphor ("the triple pillar of the world") and the metonym ("this mortal frame") for which Jakobson's account was devised, his theory will still not do. For what remains to be explained is the fact that in the substitution metaphor and in the metonym the replaced word is still latently present; it is only partially obscured, and a trace of what has been eclipsed remains.

Let us take a step back for an overview of the different issues involved at this stage. The first issue concerns the substitution tropes. Here some account has to be given of how it comes about that a latent signifier remains attached to the manifest chain of signifiers in the case of the metonym and the substitution metaphor. One has also to explain the *difference* between substitution metaphor and metonymy. A second is to give some account of the appositive metaphor. A third issue is that of non-noun metaphors. An account is required of the metaphor where the metaphoric term is not a noun phrase. Concerning the first issue Jakobson provides no answer. He gives no account of how a latent signifier remains attached to the manifest chain. He explains the difference between substitution metaphor and metonymy, however, in terms of semantic similarity and semantic contiguity. But he seems not at all to have considered either the appositive metaphor or metaphors not involving nouns. So, only one of these different issues does Jakobson consider; that is the difference between the substitution metaphor and the metonym. Now, we have been able to give an account of semantic contiguity, but semantic similarity has proven to be more elusive. However, there is a reason for this elusiveness, which is just that metaphor does not contain a particular semantic relation. So it is not possible to describe any kind of "similarity" or "resemblance" that would apply to all substitution metaphors. The result of this is that we can describe metonymy as a special case of substitution metaphor in which certain relations hold between two signifiers, and simply dub all cases in which none of these relations hold "metaphor." We shall then have metonyms, substitution metaphors, extension metaphors, and appositive metaphors of various kinds (verbal, nominal, adverbial, etc.). What I now intend to show is that Lacan uses "metonymy" in this sense of a case of substitution metaphor in which special relations hold, and "metaphor" in the sense of substitution metaphors where these relations are absent.

It is well known that Jakobson's article on aphasia found an immediate echo in Lacan's "L'instance de la lettre ou la raison depuis Freud," stimulating Lacan's claim that metaphor and

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metonymy are poetic functions equivalent to the unconscious mechanisms first uncovered by Freud of condensation and displacement. Nowhere prior to 1957 does Lacan attach any particular importance to metaphor and metonymy, even though as early as 1952 the influence of Jakobson's work is apparent.¹³

It has also been remarked that Lacan and Jakobson differ in the way they compare condensation and displacement to rhetoric: Jakobson puts displacement and condensation along the paradigmatic axis of similarity. The French translator of this article writes,

On remarquera que ce rapprochement ne coïncide pas avec celui fait par J. Lacan . . . [qui] identifie, respectivement, condensation et métaphore, et déplacement et métonymie. Roman Jakobson . . . pense que la divergence s'explique par l'imprécision du concept de condensation, qui, chez Freud, semble recouvrir à la fois des cas de métaphore et des cas de synecdoque.¹⁴

Lyotard disagrees that this divergence is due to Freud's imprecision and argues that it results from two other factors: the application of linguistic concepts onto the field of the unconscious, and the wish to rediscover the operations of speech in dream-work.¹⁵ He takes this lack of agreement to undermine Lacan's claim that the unconscious is structured like a language. In my opinion, though, the difference between the two is rather the result of different views about how best to categorize metaphor and metonymy. Despite his clear, and acknowledged, debt to Jakobson, Lacan ultimately offers a different account, and if the claim that metaphor is related to condensation and metonymy to displacement is to be understood this difference has to be appreciated.

Lacan is happy enough to consider the substitution of "sail" for "ship" a case of metonymy: "The connection between the ship and the sail is nowhere else but in the signifier, and . . . it is in the *word to word* of this connection that metonymy is based."¹⁶ The metonymic relation of semantic contiguity defined above makes this example, though hackneyed, a genuine case of metonymy. The passage continues: "We shall designate as metonymy the first slope of the effective field that the signifier constitutes, so that the sense [*sens*] may take place there,"¹⁷ which is an allusion to the Saussurian syntagmatic axis, so important for Jakobson's account of metonymy. On metonymy, then, Lacan appears to be quite standardly adopting Jakobson's analysis.

Lacan gives the stanza from "Booz endormi,"
(1) Sa gerbe n'était pas avare ni haineuse

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as an example of metaphor. But if, as Lacan rightly points out, "gerbe" stands in the place of "Booz," the semantic relation should be one of contiguity (classically, "a thing for its owner"); and so the example should be one of metonymy. But the example is indeed a metaphor. Consider first Lacan's remark on the importance of the possessive: "Mais une fois que sa gerbe a ainsi usurpé sa place, Booz ne saurait y revenir, le mince fil du petit sa qui l'y rattache y étant un obstacle de plus, à lier ce retour d'un titre de possession qui le retiendrait au sein de l'avarice et de la haine."¹⁸ This in itself seems no reason to regard the example as a metaphor, since the semantic relation between "Booz" and "gerbe" is still one of contiguity. The key phrase, though, is the "titre de possession," for not here but in another place Lacan makes it clear that what "gerbe" stands directly in place of is not Booz but the phallus.¹⁹

So, Booz is represented in this passage by another signifier, the phallus. Therefore, the example is a metaphor because there is no semantic relation between the sheaf and the phallus.

A remark is called for here about the phallus as a symbol, since there is an obvious natural resemblance between the "gerbe" and the imaginary phallus. However, it is important not to confuse this natural resemblance of two objects with the notion of semantic similarity. The "natural" contiguity in space and time between ship and sail no more founds metonymy than, as David Hume saw, constant conjunction founds causality. Natural contiguity has to be subtended by semantic contiguity for metonymy to be possible, and not all relations of semantic contiguity are so subtended.

Similarly the fact that the "gerbe" and the phallus resemble one another will not establish a relation of semantic similarity between them. In fact, things that really do look alike make difficult metaphors for one another, as is recognized by the suggestion that a "striking" or "new" resemblance is what characterizes metaphors; though, it is true, novelty is generally taken more as a mark of quality than as being important to the actual making of a metaphor. Here again we need to distinguish between the extent to which things naturally resemble one another and the extent to which a metaphor has been used and banalized. The former is a fact about the world, the second about language.

Novelty in good metaphors is not just a question of use. Striking metaphors make unexpected comparisons, and it is precisely the metaphor itself that makes us notice something new. This is why it is correct to say there is no semantic relation ("resemblance," etc.)

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between latent and manifest signifiers that could account for the substitution metaphor.

Lacan says, in a passage that grasps the crucial element lacking from Jakobson's account, that the occurrence of the metaphor depends upon the relations that the latent signifier maintains, not with the signifier that has replaced it, but with the other signifiers in the chain to which it is related by contiguity:

"L'étincelle creatrice de la métaphore ne jaillit pas de la mise en présence de deux images, c'est-à-dire de deux signifiants également actualisés. Elle jaillit entre deux signifiants dont l'un s'est substituée à l'autre en prenant sa place dans la chaîne signifiante, le signifiant occulte restant présent de sa connexion (métonymique) qui reste de la chaîne.

Un mot pour un autre, telle est la formule de la métaphore."²⁰

In "Sa gerbe n'était pas avare ni haineuse," "Booz" remains present not through a relation of semantic similarity with "sa gerbe" (there is none), but through its link, which Lacan calls metonymic, with the rest of the chain. The predicate clearly applies to Booz, which illustrates how the substitution metaphor is well able to function without there being any semantic relation between the two signifiers involved.

The above-quoted passage contrasts Lacan's own view of metaphor with that of Breton.²¹ One of Breton's examples of a "strong image" is:

Sur le pont la rose a tête de chatte se ber-ait, which corresponds to what I have described above as the appositive metaphor, where there is not substitution but juxtaposition of terms. Although Lacan might deny that this is a metaphor, because he has only the substitution metaphor in mind, his "modern metaphor,"

l'amour est un caillou riant dans le soleil

is no less appositive. (Its modernity is due to the semantic juxtaposition that makes it a case on the borderline of sense, since the appositive metaphor is, of course, as old as language.) Lacan says it has the same structure as (1), but, it is in fact much closer to the structure of an appositive metaphor like "Silence is golden" or "Love is war."

Lacan describes metonymy as the "word to word connections between signifiers." Some of these connections are semantic, and these are what makes the substitution metaphor and the metonym possible. The contiguously related signifiers, in referring or apply-

ing to the latent signifier rather than to the manifest signifier that has taken its place, act to produce the metaphor. In, for example,

Weepe you no more, sad fountaines

the non-metaphoric elements (Max Black's "frame") apply to the latent "eyes" and not to the manifest "fountaines," while the metaphoric effect, what Lacan calls an "effet de signification," is produced by the quite special way in which latent and manifest terms are brought together - an effect that no explicit equation of eyes and fountains would accomplish. It has been suggested that metaphors, like this one, work because the manifest term (Black's "focus") and the latent term belong to a series of semantically similar terms that pick out a class of objects of which a certain predicate is true - in this case it would be the class of all things from which water issues.²² But this cannot be right since, as "L'amour est un caillou riant dans le soleil" shows, metaphors do not invariably pick out similarities between terms: some metaphors depend more on "collision" than on "collusion."

So what is the "effet de signification" exactly? It varies according to the type of metaphor in question. Take the extension metaphor, where the meaning of a term is extended or enlarged so that the term applies to objects to which it would not normally apply ("the mouth of the river"). This is often catachresis. The meaning effect of an extension metaphor is the creation of new meaning which will eventually make its way into dictionary entries. The meaning of words changes, and the extension metaphor is one typical way this happens. As Saussure remarked, the extension metaphor has little to do with the creative talents of the individual speaker, since it will be present potentially in the language before actually being employed and gaining currency

The fact that mouth may have a primary meaning (OED: "The external orifice in an animal body which serves for the ingestion of food . . .") and a secondary meaning (OED: 'Applied to things resembling a mouth') has lead some authors to assume that the word was at one time used only in its primary meaning and *then* extended to other objects. I do not want to deny that this extension of meaning ever takes place; no doubt it does, but the idea that this is how extended, secondary meaning actually comes about is almost certainly false.

Moreover, as Saussure pointed out, it is a fallacy to think one can explain a term's meaning, which is a synchronic property of language, by appeal to diachronic fact. So it seems that even if it were true in a particular case that a term was once used in its

primary meaning and then extended, this is no explanation of the difference between primary and secondary meaning.²³

But what about the appositive metaphor? Black treats "the poor are the negroes of Europe" which is an appositive metaphor as an extension metaphor, where "in the given context the focal word 'negroes' obtains a new meaning, which is not quite its meaning in literal uses, nor quite the meaning which any literal substitute would have."²⁴

Concerning the appositive metaphor, ask what "Love is war" or "You are my sunshine" means, and you will of course get any number of different answers. Donald Davidson is surely right in inveighing against "the idea that metaphor carries a message, that it has a content or meaning (except, of course, its literal meaning),"²⁵ if we take him to mean the appositive metaphor, then his suggestion that it does not say but intimates is well said. For in the appositive metaphor there is neither too much nor too little metaphoric meaning for us satisfactorily to paraphrase because there is no metaphoric meaning. We have in "Love is war" two themes that we can develop and elaborate indefinitely, without ever arriving at a completed paraphrase. The error is to confound this metaphor either with the extension metaphor, thereby suggesting that the meaning of "war" or "love" or both is extended beyond what it ordinarily means, or with the substitution metaphor.

The substitution metaphor ("this mortal frame" for example), on the other hand, is the closest to the traditional conception. Here there is substitution of one term for another term that remains retrievable. Here the poetic interaction of signifiers takes place according to the associative series of contrasts and likenesses, oppositions and concurrences between the manifest and latent signifiers; and this is the product, the "nouvelle espece dans la signification" as Lacan describes it, of the (substitution) metaphor.

Metonymy is structurally similar to the substitution metaphor, since both have a latent and a manifest term. The difference is that there is an established semantic link between latent and manifest terms in metonymy (cause and effect, container and contained, etc.). But this link mitigates against the meaning effect, which relies upon collision, not collusion. On the other hand, this link means that little support from the "frame," that is the manifest chain apart from the metaphoric term, is needed to maintain the latent term in place.

Metaphors do not just operate by means of a semantic relation between a manifest and a latent signifier, but make use of any means the language has at its disposal.²⁶ In

(2) The very dice obey him

the definite article makes the noun phrase a definite description which has, or purports to have, a precise reference. This metonymic contribution of the structure of the sentence is enough to ensure a metaphoric reading. A function similar to that of the definite article can be performed by a subordinate clause, as in

(3) That undiscovered country from whose bourne
No traveller returns. -,

where "undiscovered country" refers to death, but with the difference that the metonymic support given to the latent signifier is more complex, since the subordinate may bear upon either the latent signifier or signifiers, the manifest signifiers, or upon both manifest and latent structure at the same time. As Lacan demonstrates with "Sa gerbe n'était pas avare ni haineuse," the possessive adjective is also capable of binding latent signifiers to the manifest chain. The effect is the same when on the death of Antony, Cleopatra laments,

(4) It were for me
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stol'n our jewel,

where there would have been no metaphoric effect, "our jewel" for Antony, had Shakespeare employed an article. Finally, demonstrative adjectives may fulfill the same function, so that in

These quicksands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink

"these" refers the statement to the context of its utterance, and therefore to its role as metaphor, rather than as a literal statement.

In neither (2) nor (4) is there any semantic link between the latent signifiers and the metonymically related manifest terms. The only semantic link between manifest and latent terms in each case is that between the actual focal term and something unstated ("dice" and chance, "knot" and love), and this link suffices to bring about the metaphoric reading of the entire manifest chain.

(3) is different, though. It shares a common structure with the adjectival metaphor, a structure in which the manifest adjective, adjectival, or subordinate clause may apply to the manifest term, to the latent term ("the starry floor" for the night sky), or to both

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("The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome are all too dear for me").²⁷

Moreover, the existence of latent and manifest chains of signifiers allows the metaphor to be elaborated and developed:

(5) With as little a *web* as this will I *ensnare* as great a fly as Cassio.

A conceit, a parable, or an allegory has this same structure. Some oxymorons are also metaphors where a qualifying term, typically an adjective, applies to the latent term rather than to the manifest one; for example:

Now I feed myself with most delicious poison.

(5) is like other cases in which it is the qualifying terms adjectives or clauses - rather than the focal term, that establish the metaphor. The "deviance" in such cases consists only in the fact that the qualifying terms may not (but sometimes will) apply to in the sense that they are patently false of or in the context inappropriate to - the manifest signifiers.

It is an error to regard the semantic criterion upon which the substitution metaphor is based as a relation, dimly perceived, of "resemblance" or "analogy" between manifest and latent terms, rather than as the effect of the substitution of manifest for latent term. There is a difference of degree only between metaphoric and non-metaphoric, or literal and non-literal, expression, and it results from the nature of the semantic relation between the manifest signifiers. In all cases the metonymic relations may maintain the latent signifier "underneath" the manifest chain, but the metaphoric effect, Lacan's "nouvelle signification" or "nouvelle espece dans la signification," depends upon the (semantic) relation between the latent, "eclipsed" signifier and the manifest, metaphoric signifier. (Lacan calls the actual maintaining of the latent signifier "underneath" the manifest chain the "effet de sens.")

The metaphor is then not infra- or supra-linguistic but depends upon and is brought about by exactly the same linguistic structures as the most prosaic language is. It may be buttressed by all the grammatical means at a language's disposal, which are themselves capable of making a metaphor with no contribution from a resemblance relation.

As has been shown above, the substitution metaphor depends upon the metonymic support the latent term derives from the manifest terms. This is so because the semantic link, inadequately described as "resemblance," between latent term and the term that replaces it in the manifest chain is generally unable to effect the

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metaphor unaided. But in the dead or dormant metaphor ("the mouth of the river", for example) the metonymic support can be emptied of all semantic content to the point of lending a purely syntactic support.

The so-called "dead" metaphor ('the mouth of the river', 'sifting the evidence') is typically an extension metaphor, and need never have actually been a living one. As an extension metaphor, it tends to make its way into dictionary entries, too, where it will appear as extended meaning or secondary meaning.

Metonymy cannot be catachresis, since by definition a metonym demands two terms and catachresis one only. There are cases of "dead metonyms" ('the crown versus . . . ' in Britain and Australia), however, where a metonym is generally used in the place of what it stands for.

Finally, let us now turn to a sub-species of substitution metaphor, the more complicated "analogy" metaphor, such as Aristotle's "the evening of life" for old-age. Aristotle sees not two but four signifiers in the form of an abbreviated comparison or analogy: evening is to day as old age is to life, A is to B as C is to D, so that there are two latent signifiers, not one. This type of substitution metaphor, already mentioned, is very common: "the flower of the age", "the face of the water," "The riches of the ship is come ashore", "the Kingdom of God". Consider, then, Shakespeare's

The next Caesarion smite!
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
.....
Lie graveless . . .

with its metaphor "the memory of my womb" standing for Cleopatra's descendents. Here we find a lot of semantic support for the latent terms in the manifest chain. But the more important difference between this and the other metaphors considered so far is that here there is an effect of displacement. Though the focus is "memory", the metaphor has repercussions elsewhere, particularly upon "womb".

The true analogy metaphor is one of substitution, and Chaim Perelman,²⁸ in a work that Lacan refers to,²⁹ soon gets out of his depth when he takes the appositive example he finds in Berkeley,

(6) an ocean of false learning,

for a substitution metaphor and tries to analyze it as a "condensed analogy." I have no debate with his claim that (6) is a richer and more significant metaphor than is Aristotle's, but in my opinion the

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reason he gives for why this is so is wrong. Treating (6) as based on the analogy A is to B as C is to D, he claims that in saying A of C (and not, like Aristotle, C of B or A of D), it leaves the terms B and D to be evoked by the reader.

Aristotle produced the first matheme of metaphor. He based the metaphor "the evening of life" for old age on the analogy: evening is to day as old age is to life. By substituting letters for terms we get: A is to B as C is to D as the basis of the two metaphors: A of D for C ("the evening of life" for "old age") and: C of B for A ("the old age of the day" for "evening"). Or, schematically,

$$\frac{C}{A} \quad \text{of} \quad \frac{B}{(D)} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{A}{C} \quad \text{of} \quad \frac{D}{(B)}$$

The structure of (6), says Perelman, is neither of the Aristotelian ones (A of D for C or C of B for A), but simply A of C, and this leaves it up to the reader to supply the two missing terms, B and D. In "the evening of life" the four terms of the analogy are supplied, albeit two implicitly. In (6) however, the reader is required to furnish the terms B and D himself, so the metaphor will mean different things according to how the terms B and D are interpreted: as "a swimmer" and "a scientist," "a stream" and "the truth," or "terra firma" and "the truth." Or rather, he claims, the metaphor will mean all these things simultaneously; and this is the source of its greater semantic richness.

But Lacan is surely right in objecting that the fact both that Perelman has to appeal to these couples and that they can be multiplied indefinitely shows that nothing of all this is implied by the metaphor itself.³⁰ Insofar as there is a metaphoric meaning effect in this example, it is a case where in fact it does spring from between two manifest signifiers (the terms A and C). But if this is the case, then Lacan's attempt to construe (6) as structured like a substitution metaphor cannot be correct either - and his transcription of (6) onto the formula,

$$\frac{\text{an ocean}}{\text{learning}} \quad \text{of} \quad \frac{\text{false}}{x} \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{and ocean} \quad \frac{I}{?}$$

appears incorrect. The metaphor is appositive: the ocean *consists of* false learning; the false learning is an ocean, and it should therefore not be treated as a substitution metaphor.

Here, moreover, lies the difference between Lacan and Breton. Juxtaposition of two disparate images can never create a substitution metaphor unless metonymic relations maintain a latent signi-

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fier in position "underneath" the manifest chain. The substitution metaphor is not comparable to the comparison or simile, nor to the juxtaposition of images, but consists in using syntactic means to keep signifiers latently present in discourse.

Syntactically the metaphor is quite complex. I have shown that there are at least three types of metaphor: substitution, appositive, and extension metaphors. There has been a general tendency to ignore this syntactic complexity, resulting from the attempts to find one semantic characterization common to all varieties.

Syntactically there is only one type of metonymy. It involves a particular type of semantic relation, for which Jakobson's term "semantic contiguity" seems as appropriate as any. Though Lacan suggests that all metaphors are substitution metaphors, I have shown that some of the examples Lacan uses are best seen as appositive metaphors. The interactionist accounts of Richards and Black refer to the appositive metaphor, but they both to some extent confuse the appositive with the substitution metaphor. Their attributing metaphoric meaning to the appositive

metaphor results from this confusion. Davidson is essentially correct in saying that metaphors have no metaphorical meaning, provided we take this to apply to appositive metaphors only. Only in the case of substitution metaphor can we talk of metaphoric meaning.

Notes

1. R. Jakobson, "Deux aspects du langage et deux types d'aphasies", in *Essais de linguistique generale I* (Paris: Minuit, 1963), 61.
 2. See J.-E Lyotard, *Discours, figure* (Klincksieck 1978) 252, for a slightly different table to which he adds, following Jakobson, the "genres" of poetry and prose and, on the one hand, the "schools" of romanticism and symbolism and, on the other, realism.
 3. R. Jakobson, "Deux aspects du langage . . .", 61.
 4. *Ibid.*, 62.
 5. G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors we live by* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980).
 6. P. Fontanier, *Manuel classique pour l'etude des tropes* (1821), in *Les figures du discours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1968).
 7. Compare C. Day Lewis' prescriptive characterization of "poetic truth" as "the collision rather than the collusion of images." (C. Day Lewis, *The poetic image* (1947) [London: Jonathan Cape, 1969], 72.)
 8. P. Fontanier, *Manuel classique*. . . , 99. R. Whateley defines a metaphor as "a word substituted for another on account of the Resemblance or Analogy between their significations". Quoted by Max Black, "Metaphor"
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- (1954) in *Models and metaphors* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962) 31. (R. Whateley *Elements of rhetoric*, 7th edition [Ithaca: J.W Parker, 1846].)
 9. C. Brooke-Rose, *A grammar of metaphor* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1958).
 10. I.A. Richards, *The philosophy of rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936). M. Black, "Metaphor," *ibid.*
 11. *Ibid.*, 93. My emphasis.
 12. J.-E Lyotard, *Discours, figure*, 254-55.
 13. Compare J. Lacan, "Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalyse," in *Ecrits*, (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 268, and R. Jakobson, "Results of a joint conference of anthropologists and linguists" (1953), in *Selected writings*, vol. 2 (The Hague: Mouton and Company, 1971), 565.
 14. R. Jakobson, "Deux aspects du langage . . .", 66.
 15. J.-E Lyotard, *Discours, figure*, 253.
 16. J. Lacan, "L'instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud" (1957), in *Ecrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 506.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. *Ibid.*, 507.
 19. J. Lacan, "La metaphore du sujet," in *Ecrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 892.
 20. *Ibid.*, "L'instance de la lettre . . .", 507.
 21. A. Breton, "Manifeste du surrealisme" (1924), in *Manifestes du surrealisme*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), 52-53.
 22. This is the approach taken by, among others, J. Dubois *et al.*, *Rhetorique generale* (Larousse, 1970), and S. Levin, *The semantics of metaphor* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).
 23. In any case, I have never seen this thesis supported by any evidence. But any amateur can establish the following: the OED gives circa 897 for the first occurrence of the Old English "muo" in a literal context, and 1122 for the first occurrence of the term "muoe" for a river mouth. On the other hand, Gover, Mawer, and Stenton give the earliest occurrence of the English place-name 'Axmouth' ('Axanmuoan ') as purporting to be 880-5, though the actual copy of the document consulted dates from the year 1,000. (J. Gover, A. Mawer, and E Stenton, *The Place-names of Devon*, part 2 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932], 636.)
 24. M. Black, "Metaphor," 38-39.

This is not the same as Richards' position, although Black believes it is. For Richards, "in the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and *supported by a single word, or phrase*, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction" (p.93, my emphasis). Richards is suggesting that the metaphoric term, his "vehicle," expresses its literal meaning and another meaning which interact to express the metaphor, or the metaphoric meaning. This is confirmed by his remark that "the co-presence of the vehicle and tenor results in a meaning (to be clearly distinguished from the tenor) which is not attainable without their interaction" (p.100), since vehicle and tenor are

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thoughts, or meanings. So, Black gets it wrong in thinking "Richards says that our 'thoughts' about European poor and American negroes are 'active together' and 'interact' to produce a meaning that is a resultant of that interaction" (p.38). Further, the reason that Richards says that "talk about the identification or fusion that a metaphor effects is nearly always misleading and pernicious" (p.127) is not, as Black says, that "for the metaphor to work the reader must remain aware of the extension of meaning - must attend to both the old and the new meanings together" (p.39), but that the metaphor not only has us notice similarities between two thoughts brought into interaction, but also has us bear in mind the disparities and contrasts between them.

Black's failure correctly to read Richards' position leads him into the further error of claiming that Richards has lapsed "into the older and less sophisticated analyses he is trying to supersede" (p.39) in referring to the common characteristics between tenor and vehicle as the ground of the metaphor, "so that in its metaphorical use a word or expression must connote only a *selection* from the characteristics connoted in its literal uses" (p.39), while "usually Richards tries to show that similarity between the two terms is at best *part* of the basis for the interaction of meanings in a metaphor" (p.39, n.20). For does not Richards immediately comment on the passage Black refers to that "a metaphor may work admirably without our being able . . . to say . . . what is the ground of the shift" (p.117)?

Finally Black hints at the possible syntactic complexity of metaphor when in a suggestive passage that is unfortunately left undeveloped he concedes that his own strict definition of metaphor defines the term overnarrowly. A characterization more sensitive to common usage would probably lead to a classification of metaphors "as instances of substitution, comparison, or interaction" (p.45). I do not think Black is correct in saying that "only the last kind are of importance in philosophy" (p.45). But even if he were, I should still consider my general account relevant for showing how conflicting definitions of metaphor apply to different types of metaphor.

25. David Donaldson, "What Metaphors Mean" (p. 261), in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984, pages 245-264.

26. Christine Brooke-Rose, in an excellent work limited only rarely by an inadequate grasp of linguistic theory, deploys many of the syntactic means that make metaphor work. Though she defines "metaphor" to cover all the tropes of substitution (including metonymy), she, too, makes the mistake of taking appositive metaphors for substitution metaphors. A number of the examples that follow are discussed by her. (C. Brooke-Rose, *A Grammar of metaphor* [?: Secker and Warburg, 1958j.)

27. Davidson sees fit to remind us that metaphors are not puns, but here pun and metaphor meet. To quote Shakespeare - like Davidson - Cleopatra is both punning and speaking metaphorically when she says "The mer

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chandise . . . " : The pun (on "dear") is possible because the metaphor (on "merchandise", which here means news about Antony) establishes latent and manifest themes to both of which a punning reference may then apply (D. Davidson, "What metaphors mean".)

28. Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *TraW de l'argumentation*, vol. 2, (Paris: PUF, 1958), 497-534.

29. J. Lacan, "La metaphore du sujet," in *Ecrits*, 889-92.

30. Ibid., 891.

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