

## Event metonymies

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Studies of metonymy have mainly been concerned with referential metonymies, as in *the White House* for 'the President'. The conceptual link between source and target and the referential target are normally easily inferable, which may explain the traditional preoccupation with referential metonymies. The situation is far more complex with predicational and event metonymies.

Events are by their very nature multifaceted. They have a complex internal structure, involve "surrounding" elements such as aspect, time, modality, grounding and setting, and relate externally to other events. This paper focuses on an event's internal structure, specifically its composition of subevents. Typically, subevents are profiled but an overall event is metonymically targeted.

Probably most events can be expressed metonymically by way of subevents, and for many subevents no term denoting the target event as a whole is available. For example, the referee's booking of a player by cautioning him (yellow card) or sending him off (red card) is expressed by a host of expressions highlighting one of the various subevents that metonymically stand for the particular booking event. We may draw attention to the visual representation of the booking event (*show the yellow card*) or metaphorically code its impact on a player (*give the yellow card*), we may describe the event's initial phase (*brandish the yellow card*), its central phase (*issue the yellow card*) or its final phase (*be booked*), we may portray the event from the agent's, i.e. the referee's, perspective (*show the card*) or from the patient's, i.e. the player's, perspective (*be shown the yellow card*), and we may see the cautioned player as a recipient (*receive a yellow card*) or as an agent (*pick up the yellow card*). These metonymic construals are largely interchangeable but invite aspects of meaning that derive from their specific metonymic source.

The paper provides examples illustrating the prevalence of the SUBEVENT FOR EVENT metonymy in conceiving and expressing events. The ubiquity of this metonymy may be due to various factors that distinguish events as relational units from things, including the indeterminacy of relational concepts, the wide range of interrelations with other concepts, the frequent unavailability of overall event terms and, at the same time, the availability of terms for subevents, and the attraction of exploiting the pool of alternatives for communicative purposes. In view of their characteristics it is not surprising that event metonymies, unlike referential metonymies, tend to go unnoticed to the language user.

**Key words:** event metonymy, metonymic construal, referential metonymy, subevent, SUBEVENT FOR EVENT

## References

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