

Issues in Metonymy

Section 1

Problems in the characterization of metonymies and in the creation of a detailed typology of metonymy

Introduction

**Antonio Barcelona
(University of Córdoba)**

A. Description of section

- Three 20 minute presentations (Antonio Barcelona, Olga Blanco and Isabel Hernández) on various topics in our **metonymy database entry model**

B. *Aim* of this section

- To report on **an aspect** of our ongoing work to develop the database: **the establishment of a set of criteria to characterize each metonymy**
- **Criteria:** registered in our database entry model
- **We have already developed a rich set of criteria** (Blanco, Barcelona and Hernández, in press) and
- **Applied it to 200 metonymies registered in the specialized literature.**

C. Brief description of research project partially reported on in the session

PROJECT FFI2012-36523

(continues earlier project FFI-2008-04585 from 2013):

An empirical investigation into the role of conceptual metonymy in grammar, discourse and sign language. Compilation of a metonymy database.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

ANTONIO BARCELONA SÁNCHEZ (UCO)

MEMBERS:

PILAR GUERRERO MEDINA (UCO)

CARMEN PORTERO MUÑOZ (UCO)

OLGA BLANCO CARRIÓN (UCO)

ISABEL HERNÁNDEZ GOMARIZ (UCO)

EVA LUCÍA JIMÉNEZ NAVARRO (UCO)*

ANA LAURA RODRÍGUEZ REDONDO (UCM)

M^a DEL CARMEN GUARDDON ANELO (UNED)

ALMUDENA SOTO NIETO*

MARIA SOLEDAD CRUZ MARTÍNEZ*

CARLOS HERNÁNDEZ SIMÓN*

ANDREA MARIELA MARTÍNEZ FIGUEROA*

***From 2013**

Aims of this publicly funded research project

MAIN AIM:

To investigate systematically:

- the functioning of conceptual metonymy across a variety of authentic discourse samples
 - in two oral languages (English and Spanish)
 - and in two sign languages (American Sign Language and Spanish Sign Language).

Main aim broken down into a series of
SECONDARY AIMS:

- *One of them*: Compilation of a **detailed annotated database of mainly basic and higher-level conceptual metonymies** on the basis of:
 - metonymies registered in specialized literature on metonymy and
 - our own corpus-based research on authentic discourse.
- This database may be the **basis for the development of a detailed typology of metonymy** beyond a mere list of metonymies roughly grouped into types.
- **It may constitute a useful reference tool for the academic community**

D- Present stage in the development of this annotated database

- **After an “internal training” period, used to acquire practice and refine the criteria,**
- **an initial annotated database**
- **now we are completing the full database**
- **We have just begun to develop a digital, web-based version of the database entry model (still under construction)**

UCO Cognitive and functional linguistics research group

Home

Ejemplo de una ficha de análisis de metonimia

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Category label	Hierarchical level	Prototypicality and conventionality	Examples	Language
Linguistic Domains	Metonymy triggers	Metonymic chaining	Other hierarchical level	
Patterns of interaction with metaphor and with other metonymies				

Category label:

Component parts of a whole for the action that produces the whole

Additional remarks:

Queda pendiente implementar el tipo de dato ejemplo de metonimia. En cuanto se haga el funcionamiento es similar a la versión 6 de Drupal

E- The entry model and a simple example of its application to the analysis of one metonymy

- This entry model has gone through successive minor revisions.

- **Entry model:**

8-1-10 version entry model (revision june 2013)

(also as **handout**) (recent changes to be applied in new entries are in red)

- **An example of a completed entry:** As much.
The model will still suffer some minor changes, due to further refinements and to its digital implementation, which will affect especially the form of fields 9 (chaining) and 11(interaction).

An important point: A **single entry** is assigned to **only one conceptual metonymy each time:**

- Example: noun *crude* meaning “crude oil”. Author (Radden, 2005): this expression is based on two conceptual metonymies.

- One of them (PART OF A FORM FOR THE FULL FORM) has been analyzed in one entry.

- The other metonymy (PROPERTY OF AN ENTITY FOR THE ENTITY), claimed by Radden to motivate the “crude oil” meaning of this expression, has been analyzed in a different entry.

- **What to do when the same conceptual metonymy is invoked by several different papers in the literature and illustrated by means of different examples?– One different entry then**

***Crude* when used to refer / denote “crude oil”**



1. Category label (to be reproduced exactly from the source book/article at the lowest level mentioned by the author, if more than one are mentioned by her/him, such as EFFECT FOR CAUSE, etc.):

PART OF A FORM FOR THE FULL FORM

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

2. Hierarchical level (Generic/ high / basic / low level, with various possible degrees of specificity):

Generic: PART FOR WHOLE



High: PART OF A FORM FOR THE FULL FORM



Basic: PART OF A NOUN PHRASE FOR THE WHOLE NOUN PHRASE



Low:

High-low: MODIFIER FOR MODIFIER PLUS HEAD

ADDITIONAL REMARKS: The adjective *crude* has

Pantalla completa ▼
Cerrar pantalla completa

Problems in the characterization of metonymies and in the
creation of a detailed typology of metonymy

Illustration / Discussion of fields 1, 2-10, 3,
and 4.

Antonio Barcelona
University of Córdoba

Field 1

1. Category label (to be reproduced exactly from the source book/article at the lowest level mentioned by the author, if more than one are mentioned by her/him): EFFECT FOR CAUSE, etc.
 - Normally not problematic.
 - A potentially frequent problem: two different papers use different labels for the same conceptual metonymy (this affects especially fields 1, 2 and 10). Solution: comparison and unification (but recording original label in “Addit. Remarks, Field 1).

- Another problem: Sometimes no actual label is used by the author. Then we have to assign one.

Example in Panther & Thornburg's (2007) description of *Buckingham Palace* as metonymic when referring to the Queen or her staff.

We described it (in field 2, at the high level in the hierarchy) as LOCATION FOR LOCATED, so this is the label used in Field 2 (it will eventually be entered in field 2, after “unification”):

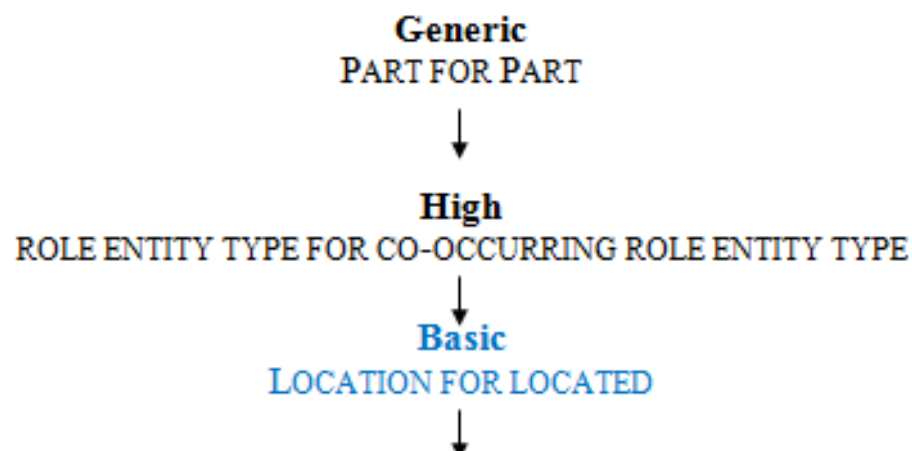
Buckingham Palace issued a statement this morning



1. Category label (to be reproduced exactly from the source book/article at the lowest level mentioned by the author, if more than one are mentioned by her/him, such as EFFECT FOR CAUSE, etc.): **None mentioned**

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

2. Hierarchical level (Generic/ high / basic / low level, with various possible degrees of specificity):



Top Low: AN OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE PEOPLE / THE INSTITUTION LOCATED IN IT

Lower: A MONARCH'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE MONARCH / THE WHOLE ROYAL FAMILY / THE ROYAL OFFICE AND STAFF

Lowest: THE BRITISH QUEEN'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE (BUCKINGHAM PALACE) FOR THE BRITISH MONARCH HERSELF / THE WHOLE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY / THE ROYAL OFFICE AND STAFF OF THE BRITISH MONARCH

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

Field 2

2. Hierarchical level: Generic/ high / basic / low level, with various possible degrees of specificity
- Normally this field is quite problematic
 - The decisions made so far about it in many entries will be revised because our analytical criteria have now become more sophisticated.

- The number of sub-levels is still not clear, although so far we have not found it necessary to go beyond three sub-levels for the “High”, “Basic” and “Low” levels (see Entry Model, handout).
- An unproblematic example again is Buckingham Palace: [Buckingham Palace.doc](#)
- A problematic example: **Morpheme –ful** (as in ***“You are a fine armful now, Mary, with those twenty pounds you’ve gained”***).

Initial version of field 2 for the relevant metonymy:

Hierarchical level: Initial version of Field 2 for DEGREE TO WHICH A CONTAINER IS FILLED FOR QUANTITY OF CONTAINER'S CONTENT, as illustrated by *armful* in *You are a fine armful now, Mary, with those twenty pounds you've gained*

Generic

PART FOR PART



Top High

EVENT FOR CO-OCCURRING EVENT



High

FILLING A CONTAINER FOR INCREASE IN CONTENT'S QUANTITY



Basic

DEGREE TO WHICH A CONTAINER IS FILLED FOR QUANTITY OF CONTAINER'S CONTENT



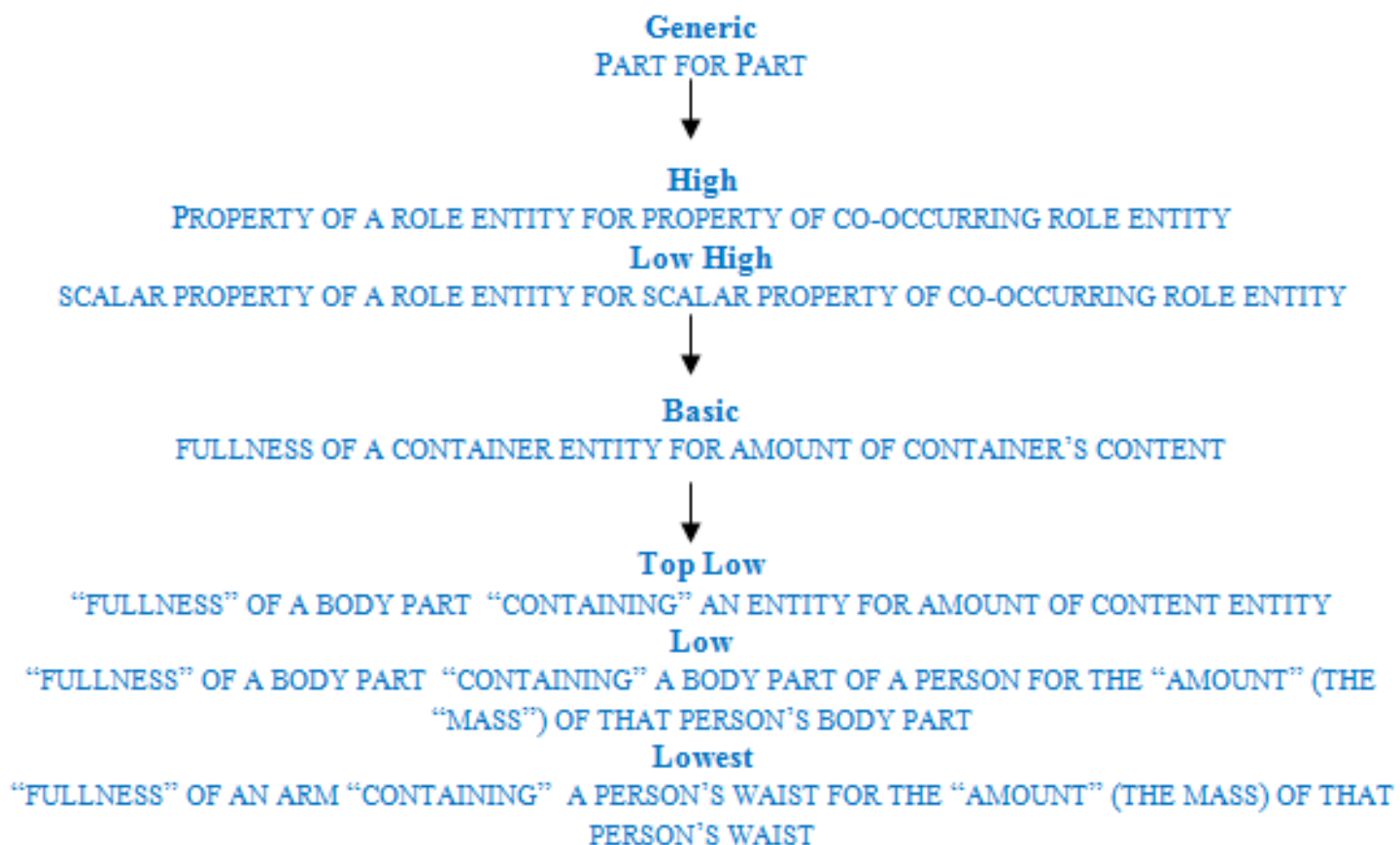
Low

DEGREE TO WHICH AN ARM IS FILLED WITH SOMEBODY'S WAIST FOR THE MASS (A MEASURE, A QUANTITY) OF THAT PERSON'S WAIST

- Problems (typical problems in this field):
 - Mixing of a taxonomic hierarchy (“kind of”) with a meronymic hierarchy (“part of”): lower levels should be either in a kind-of or a part-of relation with higher levels.
 - In principle: use only “kind-of” hierarchies.
 - A “kind of” hierarchy including the metonymy under analysis:

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

2. Hierarchical level:



ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

-On High and Low High: The properties acting as source and target are properties other than the role of the co-occurring entities.

-On Top Low: Note the existence of such derived nouns as *a headful* ("a relatively great amount of knowledge"), *a breastful*, *a mouthful* or *an eye-ful*.

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona, in press):

Typical

- “fullness”: a SCALAR property of an entity (arm) with a role (container) (implies *degree*)

- “amount”: also a SCALAR property of an entity (a person’s body region) with a role (content).

- Is the metonymy FULLNESS OF A CONTAINER ENTITY FOR QUANTITY OF CONTAINER’S CONTENT (i.e. DEGREE OF FILLING...) identical to, or just connected to, but different from, other metonymic hierarchies involving verticality and / or containers?

- Examples:

- HEIGHT (on a vertical scale) FOR QUANTITY:

My pile of books reached the ceiling (fullness implies more than height):

- verticality is highlighted in events of “piling”, less so in those of filling.

- CONTAINER FOR CONTENT:

I drank a cup of coffee (a certain type of container is a metonymic source for a degree of quantity)

vs. I drank the whole cupful (a degree of fullness – the maximum degree- is a metonymic source for a degree of quantity; only the *level of fullness* of the container seems to be profiled, the container remaining in the background – in the *base*).

Full file for this entry: [Morpheme {ful}.doc](#)

Further problem (among others):

Basic criterion to assign a metonymy to a major level or to a sublevel: in general, we are supposed to recognize a major level when a metonymy seems to initiate a new subordinate hierarchy: PROPERTY (and subtypes)>>> FULLNESS (and subtypes).

All of these and other problems are very frequently encountered when completing this field (see Blanco et al).

A further example (with hierarchy revised: oral communication is an activity, a type of event): **By word of mouth** (done by Almudena Soto; revised A. Barcelona).

2. Hierarchical level (Generic/ high / basic / low level, with various possible degrees of specificity):



ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

- On Generic: The mouth is the most salient participant (perceptual salience) of the communication process and it activates another part, signal transmission, which is considered a subevent in the general structure.
- On Top low and Lowest: The authors have mixed two different levels in their choice of label for their metonymy: lowest for the source (mouth) and low basic for the target (signal transmission) because this mixture befits their blending approach. However, in the hierarchy, MOUTH can only activate SPEECH ACTIVITY. Incidentally, the fact that the mouse and the mouth are instruments in signal transmission should have been represented in the generic space of the blending schema, not in the input spaces.

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona, "Reviewing the properties..." [in press]):

Antonio Barcelo..., 20/6/13 21:44

Comentario [1]: This is nice, as it makes clear that there *might* be other metonymies whose sources would be other speech organs / body parts involved ... in speech production (the throat (*deep throat*), the lungs?, the tongue, the lips...

Field 10

10. Conceptual connections to other metonymic hierarchies. Can the metonymy be included in other hierarchies apart from those in field 2?
- This field has also often proved problematic.
 - The problems are similar to those affecting field 2 (thus no need to discuss).
 - An unproblematic example is again
 - Field 2: Basic level: LOCATION FOR LOCATED
 - Field 10: Basic level: CONTAINER FOR CONTENT

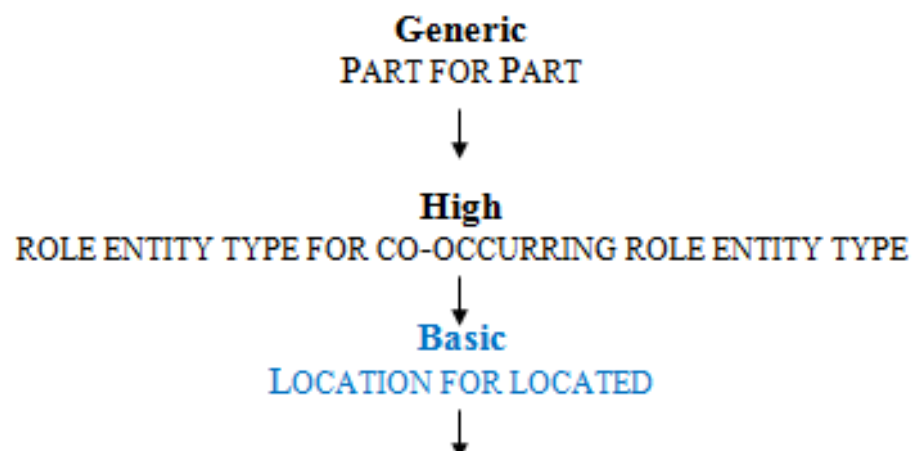
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1. Category label (to be reproduced exactly from the source book/article at the lowest level mentioned by the author, if more than one are mentioned by her/him, such as EFFECT FOR CAUSE, etc.): **None mentioned**

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

2. Hierarchical level (Generic/ high / basic / low level, with various possible degrees of specificity):



Top Low: AN OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE PEOPLE / THE INSTITUTION LOCATED IN IT

Lower: A MONARCH'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE MONARCH / THE WHOLE ROYAL FAMILY / THE ROYAL OFFICE AND STAFF

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ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

10. Conceptual connections to other metonymic hierarchies. Can the metonymy be included in other hierarchies apart from those in field 2?.

Generic

PART FOR PART



High

ROLE ENTITY TYPE FOR CO-OCCURRING ROLE ENTITY TYPE



Basic

CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED



Top Low : AN OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE PEOPLE CONTAINED IN IT

Lower: A MONARCH'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE MONARCH / THE WHOLE ROYAL FAMILY / THE ROYAL OFFICE AND STAFF

Lowest: THE BRITISH QUEEN'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE (BUCKINGHAM PALACE) FOR THE BRITISH MONARCH HERSELF / THE WHOLE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY / THE ROYAL OFFICE OF AND STAFF OF THE BRITISH MONARCH

ADDITIONAL REMARKS: At the "Low" level this hierarchy is conflated with the one having LOCATION FOR LOCATED at the Basic level. Both hierarchies could be completely conflated if CONTAINERS and CONTENT are regarded as, respectively, types of LOCATION and LOCATED.

An interesting case:

- Those *active zone* metonymies whose target is a “relationship” (Langacker) or “proposition” involving the source:
 - *started the book* in “*East of Eden* was originally titled *The Salinas Valley* because Steinbeck started the book as a history of his family”. (“started writing the book”)
 - *liked the dictionary* in “I liked the dictionary as I could find most of the terms I looked for”. (“liked checking words up in it”).

(Entry done by Carmen Portero; revised by A. Barcelona)

- They can be regarded as being in a PART FOR WHOLE or a WHOLE FOR PART hierarchy:
 - PART FOR WHOLE: source entity is seen as a part of the relationship involving it.
 - WHOLE FOR PART: the source entity is a WHOLE activating its contextually relevant “part”, its *active zone*: the relationship involving it.

Fields 2 and 10 of entry:

1. **Conventional Category label.**

SALIENT PARTICIPANT FOR THE WHOLE EVENT

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

2. **Hierarchical level:**

Generic

PART FOR WHOLE

High

SALIENT PARTICIPANT FOR THE WHOLE EVENT

Basic

CONCRETE OBJECT FOR EVENT ASSOCIATED WITH IT

Low

|THE BOOK FOR WRITING THE BOOK

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

Contextual dependence: some utterances with poor context, or without any context, must be seen as

ambiguous: e.g. George *finished the book* (= “reading the book, writing the book, typing the book, editing the book?”), vs The **student** *finished the book* (= “reading it”)

In addition to aspectual verbs, this metonymy is also found with emotive verbs of liking and disliking. This is a case of profile (the book) -active zone (reading, writing, etc) discrepancy (Langacker 1999: 100). The book is the entity profiled by the object and serving as the focal participant to stand for its action.

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona, “Reviewing the properties...” [ICLC10])

10. Conceptual connections to other metonymic hierarchies: YES.

Generic
WHOLE FOR PART

High
ENTITY FOR ACTIVE ZONE (CONTEXTUALLY RELEVANT PART)

Basic
PHYSICAL ENTITY FOR RELATIONSHIP INVOLVING IT

Low
THE BOOK FOR WRITING THE BOOK

ADDITIONAL REMARKS: Active zone metonymies can also be regarded as WHOLE FOR PART metonymies, if the domain matrix presupposed by the source is viewed as the “whole”.

11. Patterns of interaction with metaphor and with other metonymies

11.1. Conceptual plane. (1) A metonymy motivates a metaphor (register only if the author mentions this point). NO

Field 3

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona 2011]).
- Though potentially problematic, this field has turned out to be easy to apply so far, as most of the metonymies analyzed are, in terms of Barcelona (2003, 2011), either “typical” or “prototypical”.
 - Technical notions. Only an informal description here.

- **“Purely schematic”**: Target is a relatively **“primary” subdomain of source** in **WHOLE FOR PART** metonymies, as in *This book is highly instructive*
 - These metonymies are controversial, as they are close to literal use. (Barcelona 2011)
- **“Typical”**:
- **A metonymy whose target is clearly distinct from the source**, either because it is a relatively secondary subdomain of the source, as in certain **WHOLE FOR PART** metonymies such as (1),

(1) *The pill has reduced the birth rate in many countries.* (PILL [CATEGORY] FOR BIRTH CONTROL PILL [MEMBER])

- or because it is not included in it, as in **PART FOR WHOLE** metonymies like (2),

(2) *She's just a pretty face.* (SALIENT BODY PART FOR PERSON; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 37)

or as in **PART FOR PART** metonymies like (3):

(3) *The coke felt as stimulating a drink as a cup of tea.* (PART [CONTAINER] FOR PART [CONTENT]; Kövecses and Radden (1998: 57: container and content are two parts of the “Containment” ICM)

“Prototypical”: A **referential typical metonymy**, whose target and referent is an individual entity, or a collection of individual entities:

(4) We have seen *a couple of new faces* around lately. (PART [SALIENT BODY PART] FOR WHOLE [PERSON])

- A complementary prototype account of metonymy: Peirsman and Geeraerts (2006).
- Example of the application of field 3: Entry for *interstate* (interstate highway”), as in “If you have ever driven west on Interstate 70 from Denver to the Continental Divide, you have seen Mount Bethel.”

- - Metonymy (Barcelona 2005, 2009);
DISTINCTIVE POLITICAL-GEOGRAPHICAL
PROPERTY (LINKING TWO STATES) OF A
HIGHWAY FOR THE HIGHWAY.

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona, "Reviewing the properties..." [in press])

Prototypical (It occurs as head of the referential NP "Interstate 70", which furthermore designates an individual "thing").

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

4. Examples offered by the author + Label in each example to indicate the taxonomic domain (feelings, objects, geographical entities, actions, etc.) activated in the target.

1. In "text C", as cited by the author: "If you have ever driven west on Interstate 70 from Denver to the Continental Divide, you have seen Mount Bethel."

Label: Geographical entities: Paths and roads: Highways

2. "All interstates are necessary"

Label: Geographical entities: Paths and roads: Highways

Pantalla completa ▼

Cerrar pantalla completa

3. "The new interstates increased the mobility of the American people"

Label: Geographical entities: Paths and roads: Highways.

4. "The interstate's length is 2000 miles"

Label: Geographical entities: Paths and roads: Highways]

Field 4

- Examples of the metonymy offered by the author at any of the hierarchical levels discussed by her/him.
- Label each example to indicate the taxonomic domain (feelings, objects, geographical entities, actions, etc.) activated by the target.

Examples:

- *The buses* (“the bus drivers”), as in *The buses are on strike*, instantiating OBJECT USED FOR USER (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Entry done by Isabel Hernández; revised A
Barcelona

- *Skirt* for “woman”, as in *He is a skirt chaser*, instantiating CLOTHES FOR PEOPLE (a submetonymy of OBJECT USED FOR USER, where the object used is a piece of clothing).

The author only provides de-contextualized examples (a frequent situation in the literature).

(Entry done by Almudena Soto; revised by A Barcelona)

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

3. Purely-schematic, typical, prototypical (Barcelona, “Reviewing the properties...” [ICLC10]). **Prototypical**

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

4. Examples of the metonymy offered by the author at any of the hierarchical levels discussed by her/him + Label each example to indicate the taxonomic domain (feelings, objects, geographical entities, actions, etc.) activated by the target.

ANSWER:

The authors present several examples of the same metonymy:

1. “The buses are on strike” (Taxonomic domain: PEOPLE: vehicle drivers: bus drivers)
2. “The *sax* has the flux today” (Taxonomic domain: PEOPLE: musicians: sax players)
3. “The *BLT* is a lousy tipper” (Taxonomic domain: PEOPLE: restaurant customers: restaurant customers consuming BLT sandwiches)
4. “The *gun* he hired wanted fifty grand” (Taxonomic domain: PEOPLE: professional firearm users: gunmen (killers))
5. “We need a better *glove* at third base” (Taxonomic domain: PEOPLE: glove user: baseball players who wear baseball gloves)

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

5. Conventionality:

(i) Conceptual conventionality only (guiding reasoning, purely

ADDITIONAL REMARKS: This depends on the predicational or generic referential use (typical) or individuative referential use of the NP where the metonymic noun occurs as head.

4. Examples offered by the author + Label in each example to indicate the taxonomic domain (feelings, objects, geographical entities, actions, etc.) activated in the target.

Petticoat

Smock

Placket

Skirt

Bikini

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

5 Conventuality:

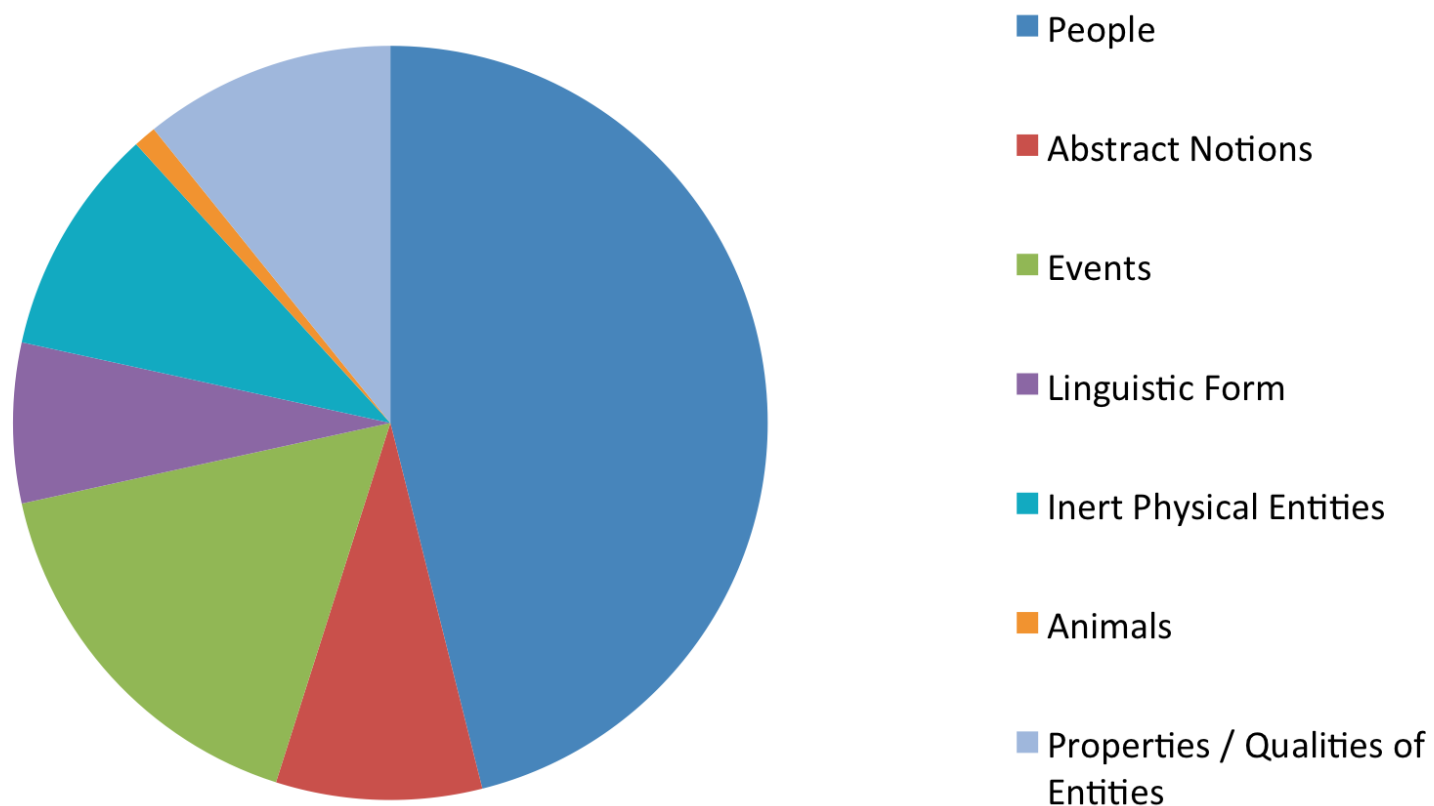
Example of a manual search

- Digital database under construction.
- Example of type of searches that will be done digitally:

Field 4: Taxonomic domains activated by means of the target expressions in a sample of entries (30 entries)

- Metonymies in the sample.
- Table 1: Metonymies, examples and domains.
- Search results.
 - SUMMED UP IN THIS GRAPH:

DISTRIBUTION OF TAXONOMIC DOMAINS AND SUBDOMAINS ACTIVATED BY METONYMIC TARGET



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THANK YOU!