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# Diplomarbeit

Titel der Diplomarbeit

## Metaphors and linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics

Verfasserin

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2010

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt: A 343

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt: Diplomstudium Studienrichtung Anglistik und  
Amerikanistik

Betreuer: Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Ritt

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to express my thanks to Univ.-Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Ritt for his patient support even in difficult times of my studies and for his guidance.

Special thanks to my closest family who made my studies possible.

Further thanks to my friends for their support and encouragement.

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## 1. Introduction

For five decades, the Beatles have been the greatest phenomenon in pop-culture despite the fact that the band has not been together since 1970. As far as the Beatles are concerned, the year 2010 is special in many respects. Not only does it mark the band's Golden Jubilee since the band's inception fifty years ago but it has also been forty years since their disbanding and thirty years since the tragic death of John Lennon.

The four musicians from Liverpool changed the history of pop-culture. No band before or after them has had a similar influence on music and fashion. Since I have always been interested in the Beatles and their music, I decided to look at them from an academic point of view and use them as the topic of my thesis. The working title of my paper is "Metaphors and linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics". In 2008 Petrie, Pennebaker and Sivertsen already conducted a linguistic analysis of the Beatles with the purpose of investigating how the group changed as a unit over time and how the various members changed in their writing style. My paper, however, will offer a cognitive approach to metaphor analysis, identifying different aspects of metaphor along with other kinds of linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics. The corpus of my investigation consists of the songs that the Beatles released between 1963 and 1970 exempting the ones by other writers that the Beatles covered. The hypothesis that I want to explore is that the Beatles have become more metaphorical in the course of their career.

The first part of this paper lays out the theoretical dimensions of this research and looks at how metaphors are identified and categorised focusing on the conceptual metaphor and its different types and the poetic metaphor. In the second part, I will investigate the development of metaphors in Beatles' lyrics. For the purpose of this analysis, the Beatles' career is split into four sub-periods in which their thirteen albums published in the respective years are evaluated in terms of their metaphorical contents.

## 2. Introducing metaphor

### 2.1. Defining and understanding metaphor

Metaphor is described by Lakoff and Turner (1989: xi) as “a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it”. Their definition vividly illustrates that we use words in our everyday lives that may not even seem metaphorical at first glance. In fact, the word metaphor itself is metaphorical. Etymologically, the meaning of metaphor is *transfer* (the Greek prefix *metá-* often conveys an idea of change, and *-phor* is from a Greek verb *phérein* ‘to carry’, ‘to bear’) which corroborates the notion that metaphor is a kind of “substitution” or “transfer” (Knowles; Moon 2006: 66). A great interest in this subject goes hand in hand with an abundant amount of definitions and theories because of the complexity of the concept of metaphor. It is impossible to provide a clear-cut definition because, as Gibbs (1999: 36) states, “no single theory of metaphor [...] will [ever] account for all of the different kinds of metaphor [...]”. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of current English, for instance, defines metaphor as

a word or phrase used to describe somebody or something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful.

(O.A.D. 2005: 963)

According to Harries (1981: 82) “[m]etaphors speak of what remains absent” whereas Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) suggest that metaphor is

the use of language to refer to something other than what it was originally applied to, or that it ‘literally’ means, in order to suggest some resemblance or make a connection between the two things.

Obviously, there are plenty of definitions. The question is why people think metaphorically, and why metaphors are used so frequently. The fact is that metaphor does not simply function as a literary device but that it is part of

ordinary language. Many compound words enclose metaphors, for example *foothill* or *pigeonhole* (Knowles; Moon 2006: 4). Idioms and proverbs are often metaphorical in origin. In his unconventional way of describing things, Pinker (2007: 238) explains what he calls the “killjoy theory”:

[Metaphors] came to be used often enough, and in enough contexts, that speakers kicked the ladder away, and today people think not a white about the metaphorical referent. It persists as a semantic fossil, a curiosity to amuse etymologists and wordwatchers, but with no more resonance in our minds than any other string of vowels or consonants.

We do not pay much attention as to how and why we use metaphors, maybe because they are simply omnipresent. However, Pinker (2007: 238) believes that for the understanding of human thought it is essential to examine metaphors in detail.

Gibbs (1999: 46) argues for a link between metaphors in thought and language and bodily experience saying that “the embodied motivation for metaphor” makes people construct “asymmetrical metaphorical mappings” in order to increase their understanding of abstract concepts. The advantage of using metaphors is that much more can be conveyed compared to straightforward, literal language, either through implication or connotation. Metaphors can be used for remembering or they can simply serve as a means to express one’s creativity. Sometimes there is simply no other word to refer to a particular thing and that is why we use a metaphor. Black (1962: 33) defines this as “catachresis” which is the “use of a word in some new sense in order to remedy a gap in the vocabulary”. In other words, the metaphor fills the gaps in the literal vocabulary.<sup>1</sup> Keysar and Glucksberg (1992: 654) are convinced of the unique function of metaphor to convey information in a special way. Since information is expressed through categorisation, it can be suggested that there is a strong pattern of relations that permits metaphor to function as a descriptive tool that can capture the whole structure of a theme by means of a single phrase.

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<sup>1</sup> Catachresis does not apply if there is a readily available literal equivalent.

The process of understanding metaphor starts with the recognition that a particular word or expression is polysemous.<sup>2</sup> In other words, we must recognise that the word is being used with a secondary metaphorical meaning and not its literal meaning. It is important to note that in order to identify a metaphorical expression we must first agree on the literal meaning of a word. Afterwards concepts and meanings can be lexicalised through metaphor. For example, in *We used to thrash all the teams in the Keith Schoolboy League. We had a great squad and no-one could touch us* (Knowles; Moon 2006: 66) the metaphorical meaning of *thrash* serves as a substitute for a word that is more literal, for instance *defeat*. As a scheme, this process can be expressed as:

Word A	has a literal meaning A
Word B	has a literal meaning B1
	has a metaphorical meaning B2
Metaphor:	B2 is substituted for A

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 66)

It can thus be suggested that word B is polysemous, and that the metaphorical relationship gets established between B2 and A, because B2 is substituted for A whereas there is no connection between B1 and B2.

The second approach deals with metaphor as a comparison. In this case, a similarity is implied between the topic, i.e. the original subject in a metaphor, and the vehicle, i.e. the words and concepts that are invoked by the words, of the metaphor.<sup>3</sup> In other words, it is a way of saying that the vehicle is like the topic. In the above mentioned example the metaphor implies that winning a game easily is like striking one's opponents. Consequently, this implication challenges the hearer to understand the relation between winning a game and a physical assault. Schematically this is expressed as:

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<sup>2</sup> Polysemy is the technical term for words with two or more senses. Many polysemous words have a basic meaning or "core meaning" (Knowles; Moon 2006: 16) which refers to something concrete and physical from which further senses have developed which are often metaphorical, for example *cream* vs. *cream of pop*. Cf. Ravin; Leacock 2002: 17.

<sup>3</sup> Metaphorical referents can also be labelled as topic/vehicle or focus/frame. Cf. Mac Cormac 1985: 24.



Word A	has a literal meaning A
Word B	has a literal meaning B
Metaphor:	A is like B

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 67)

In general, it seems that the second view suggests a closer link between metaphor and simile because treating metaphors as comparisons means that closer attention must be paid to similes, which are also comparisons.

In light of the above, it is necessary to consider three components in order to analyse metaphors: the metaphor, its meaning and the similarity or connection between metaphor and meaning. These three elements have traditionally been referred to as vehicle, topic,<sup>4</sup> and grounds as exemplified in the following example using the word **mountain**:

Context:	Be prepared for a mountain of paperwork
Metaphor/vehicle:	mountain
Meaning/topic:	a large amount
Connection/grounds:	ideas of size, being immovable and difficult to deal with

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 9)

The effectiveness of the vehicle depends on the relationship between the literal and the metaphorical meaning. The latter also shows how meaning is being conveyed and which features of the literal meaning of the vehicle are being transferred to the topic. These features are referred to as “meaning components” (Knowles; Moon 2006: 21).

The purpose of this chapter was to give an account of how metaphor is defined and to explain the process of understanding metaphor. The most obvious finding to emerge was that there is no precise definition, due to the amount of different kinds of metaphors and their respective theories. In the following chapter, I will provide a brief overview of early works conducted on

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<sup>4</sup> The topic of metaphoric usage is also called tenor. Pinker (2007: 240) points out that the terms vehicle and tenor are used in literary theory, while in cognitive science they are called source and target.

metaphor before elaborating on the conceptual metaphor and its categorisation, which is the basis for the analysis of the Beatles' lyrics.

## **2.2. Early works on metaphor**

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on metaphor but this topic has not always attracted such a keen interest even though the tradition of studying figurative language goes back to Aristotle (Hawkes 1977: 6-11). At Aristotle's times metaphor was dealt with in a number of disciplines such as literary criticism and philosophy. However, as a scientific subject it was established only in the mid-nineteenth century (Allan 2008: 4-5). Before that time metaphor was mainly regarded as "a kind of decorative addition to ordinary plain language; a rhetorical device to be used at certain times to gain certain effects" (Saeed 1997: 303). The idea that metaphor is a potentially misleading and deceptive linguistic tool is reflected by a comment by Max Black who argues that

[a]ddiction to metaphor is held to be illicit, on the principle that whereof one can speak only metaphorically, thereof one ought not to speak at all.

(Black 1962: 25)

Black (1962: 47) even goes as far as to say that "metaphors are dangerous". The first detailed account of the working of figurative language seems to have appeared in the early twentieth century. Perhaps the most important contributor is I. A. Richards whose new perspective on metaphor paved the way for later scholars such as Lakoff and Johnson. Richards was one of the first to recognise that metaphor was by no means an unusual or extraordinary phenomenon. He described it as the "omnipresent principle of language", which "we cannot get through three sentences of ordinary fluid discourse without" (Richards 1936

[2001]: 61). He asserted that metaphor was more significant than a mere rhetorical decoration:

The traditional theory noticed only a few of the modes of metaphor; and limited its application of the term *metaphor* to a few of them only. And thereby it made metaphor seem to be a verbal matter, a shifting and displacement of words, whereas fundamentally it is a borrowing between and intercourse of *thoughts*, a transaction between contexts. *Thought* is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom. To improve the theory of metaphor we must remember this.

(Richards 1936 [2001]: 63)

The work of the philosopher Max Black in the 1960s has also been influential. Black was interested in the limitations of traditional theories in accounting for the way metaphor works, presenting a critique of the widely held “substitution view” and the closely related “comparison view” (Black 1962: 31-39). According to the substitution view, a metaphorical expression serves as a means to substitute an equivalent literal expression that the hearer/reader must decode. Black’s example is the use of *Richard is a lion* as a way of saying *Richard is brave* (Black 1962: 35). The comparison view, on the other hand, holds that a metaphorical expression is simply an abridged simile and can, therefore, be replaced by a literal comparison. In other words, *Richard is a lion* stands for *Richard is like a lion (in being brave)* (Black 1962: 35). However, Black is critical of both the substitution view and the comparison view. As far as the substitution view is concerned, he claims that metaphor is reduced either to a source of catachresis, which is a compensation for an inadequacy in the lexicon, or to a simple decoration of language (Black 1962: 34). With respect to the comparison view, he states that “it suffers from a vagueness that borders upon vacuity” (Black 1962: 37). In other words, there are no rules to guide a reader as to which characteristics are theoretically being compared, and often it is hard to find objectively recognisable, **literal** resemblances. Therefore, Black suggests that the alternative “interaction view” is a more realistic theory of the way metaphors function:

[W]hen 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.

(Black 1962: 38)

The reader must always be aware of the possible extension of meaning because a new context, i.e. the “frame”, “imposes extension of meaning upon the focal word” (Black 1962: 39).<sup>5</sup>

After Black and during the 1960s and 1970s, semantics gradually began to be accepted as a viable part of linguistics, and linguists finally began to turn their attention towards figurative language as a valid and justifiable topic for study. In the last twenty years, metaphor has been recognised as a central element of linguistics. Perhaps the most significant influence on the field has been that of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson who have contributed both individually and collaboratively to the study in linguistics. Their work *Metaphors we live by* has probably had the greatest impact. Lakoff and Johnson looked beyond the role of metaphor in language and focused instead on its relationship to thought. The result is a coherent and convincing account of the way that metaphor underlies the fundamental structuring of concepts.

The ideas presented in *Metaphors we live by* are not all new. Michael Reddy has produced the same type of data on the conduit metaphor (Reddy 1980: 164-201). As it has already been noted, the basic idea of metaphor in thought can be traced back as far as Richards. However, Lakoff and Johnson shifted the emphasis of metaphor study and opened up new areas of enquiry. These included a new interpretation of the terms **live** and **dead** when applied to metaphor. Traditionally, the dominant view was that when a metaphor has become so familiar that it is no longer striking to a hearer/reader it has **died** and passed into literal language (Searle 1980: 122 ). Mac Cormac is more specific in his argument that

when metaphors become so commonplace that one or more of the referents adds a lexical entry in a dictionary, then we can be sure

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<sup>5</sup> For more details on the interaction view of metaphor, see Black 1980: 19-43.

that the metaphor has completely died and is now literal rather than metaphorical.

(Mac Cormac 1985: 77)

Lakoff and Johnson claim that dead or conventionalised metaphors are actually the most important and interesting, since they can often provide linguistic evidence for the concepts that are used to structure speakers' views of the world and their understanding of situations and experiences (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 54-55). The relation between conceptual metaphors and human experiences is referred to as "experiential basis" for metaphors (Knowles; Moon 2006: 44). The idea that conventionalised metaphors can be examined from a cognitive perspective, as a source of insight into the way concepts are structured, is now widely accepted within cognitive linguistics, and it has been taken up by many other scholars to become the focus of much of the current metaphor research within the discipline (Allan 2008: 10).

While Lakoff and Johnson use the terms dead and conventionalised interchangeably there are authors who draw a fine distinction between the two terms.<sup>6</sup> However, since by definition a dead metaphor is "a lexical item with a conventional meaning different from its original meaning" (Pawelec 2006: 118) I will treat dead metaphors as conventional ones.

In this chapter, the aim was to provide a brief overview on selected early works on metaphor. In the following chapter, I will outline the conceptual metaphor theory, which is the basis for the categorisation of conceptual metaphor types that will be the topic of discussion later on.

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<sup>6</sup> For details on conventionalised and dead metaphors, see Deignan 2005: 40-47.

### 2.3. Conceptual metaphor theory

The conceptual metaphor theory<sup>7</sup> supports the notion that language is the product of general cognitive processes that enable the human mind to conceptualise experience. Cognitive linguists call these processes “embodied understanding” (Freeman 2000: 253). In other words, we conceptualise our ideas about the world and ourselves through our embodied experience of the world and self. *Love* and *life*, for instance, are abstract ideas that are understood through the conceptual projection of our physical experiences.<sup>8</sup> Linguistic phenomena such as metaphor are the result of so-called “analogical reasoning” meaning that elements of one cognitive domain are mapped onto another domain (Freeman: 2000: 253). Thus, according to the cognitive theory of language metaphor is a matter of thought, not a matter of words. One scholar particularly associated with the cognitive approach and with investigations of the psycholinguistic processing of non-literal language is Raymond Gibbs. He makes a crucial point about the ease with which we understand metaphor and other non-literal language, which he defines as tropes:

Speakers can't help but employ tropes in everyday conversation because they conceptualize much of their experience through the figurative schemes of metaphor, metonymy, irony, and so on. Listeners find tropes easy to understand precisely because much of their thinking is constrained by figurative processes.

(Gibbs 2002: 253)

It should be noted that the earlier prevailing view was that metaphor was mere language rather than something conceptual. As Crisp (2003: 99) explains the significance of a new metaphorical expression was that it could be expressed by a literal equivalent which would eventually become its literal meaning if the expression became conventionally established. The cognitive metaphor theory contradicts other theories of metaphor like that of Searle (1979: 76-116) who

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<sup>7</sup> Also known as “cognitive metaphor theory” which is the label given to the account of metaphor-as-thought (Deignan 2005: 4).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 61-68.

regards metaphorical expressions as special uses of language which have to be reduced to literal meaning through the application of pragmatic rules, and whose interpretation necessarily requires extra cognitive effort. Cognitive semantics, however, promotes the idea of a conceptual cross-domain mapping. In other words, one conceptual domain called the target is understood in terms of another, namely the source. In order to understand how source and target are associated it is important to know the literal meanings of the words in both domains (Goddard 2002: 146). If we look at the metaphorical concept ARGUMENT IS WAR,<sup>9</sup> the source domain, which is used for the concept area from which the metaphor is drawn, is WAR. The target domain, which is used for the concept area to which the metaphor is applied, is ARGUMENT. It is characteristic for conceptual metaphor, or “generative metaphor”<sup>10</sup> as it is also called, to project experientially basic categories onto more abstract ones (Pinker 2007: 240). Source and target are not linked in terms of similarity but there is a correlation in basic experience as exemplified in *He’s a hothead* or *She’s doing a slow burn* which represent the concepts POWER IS UP or ANGER IS HEAT (Crisp 2003: 100).

The view of Lakoff and Johnson that we use metaphors unconsciously and automatically is supported by Barcelona (2000: 5) who writes that metaphors are “automatic, unconscious mappings, pervasive in everyday language”. Despite the fact that metaphors happen automatically and unconsciously the cognitive approach to metaphor claims that there is a system behind the use of metaphors. This argument accords with Barcelona’s (2000: 6) observations that, for example, the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY is a specification of a more abstract metaphor namely LIFE IS A JOURNEY, which

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<sup>9</sup> Knowles and Moon (2006: 31) point out that a conceptual metaphor is conventionally written in capital letters with the metaphorical concept mentioned first. The way in which we conduct arguments is conditioned by the way in which we conduct wars. In other words, an argument structured as war consists of sequences of attacks and counter-attacks with winning as the goal.

<sup>10</sup> Pinker (2007: 240) uses the term “generative metaphor” because new tropes, which belong to one figure of speech, can be produced very easily, for example *He protected his theory in a hardened bunker* (ARGUMENT IS WAR), or *Marsha told John they should step on the breaks* (LOVE IS A JOURNEY).

in turn is a manifestation of a more abstract concept, the EVENT STRUCTURE metaphor.

Since metaphors are motivated by our personal experiences, it can be assumed that metaphors are largely culture-specific because not all cultures share the same domains of experience. However, the most abstract metaphors do have universal physical notions called “image schemas” that are acquired based on our earliest bodily experiences (Barcelona 2000: 6). Pinker (2007: 245) supports the idea that metaphors have a basis in physical experience saying that:

[c]onceptual metaphors are acquired by a kind of associative conditioning. We learn that CONTROL IS UP because we experience fights in which the victor ends up on top, that GOALS ARE DESTINATIONS because we talk toward something we want, and that TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT because things that approach us get closer and closer as time elapses.

According to the cognitive theory of metaphor, the mapping in metaphor is always “unidirectional” meaning that only the source is projected onto the target domain but the target is not mapped onto the source domain (Barcelona 2000: 6-7).<sup>11</sup> Barcelona (2000: 7) demonstrates this with the conventional metaphor PEOPLE AS ANIMALS. If we say *Don't snap at me*, or *Their love nest has been discovered*, we project an aspect, in this case aggressive behaviour and a living place respectively, of some animals such as dogs or birds on some aspects of people (anger, lovers' meeting point). But no aspect of people is mapped onto animals on the grounds of the existence of this particular metaphor. However, this does not mean that there cannot be a different metaphor, ANIMALS AS PEOPLE, which maps aspects of people onto aspects of animals, as in the sentence *Lions are courageous*, in which a human moral attribute is projected onto an animal instinct, but nothing is mapped from animals onto people. In each case what is mapped is different. Hence, they are not two variants of the same metaphor.

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<sup>11</sup> In this respect the cognitive theory of metaphor differs from other theories such as Black's interaction theory. Cf. Black 1962: 38.



In this chapter, I have explained the central importance of cognitive processes in the notion of language. The conceptual metaphor theory adds substantially to the understanding of our conceptualised ideas about the world by suggesting that in general abstract ideas are understood through the conceptual projection of our physical experiences. Before the discussion of the categorisation of conceptual metaphor types, one more term needs to be explained, and this is blending.

## **2.4. Blending**

Metaphorical blending, also known as “conceptual integration” or “mental binding” (Turner; Fauconnier 2000: 133), is part of metaphor research. It is an extension of the concept of cross-domain mapping meaning that in place of two domains multiple mental spaces exist of which at least two function as sources and target (Crisp 2003: 109-110). Crisp sums up the difference between blending theory and conceptual metaphor theory:

While a domain is a semi-permanent organisation of long-term semantic memory, a mental space is a temporary ‘online’ organisation of working memory. Blending theory is oriented to moment-by-moment discourse events, while conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) deals with enduring cognitive structures.

(Crisp 2003: 110)

Crisp (2003: 110) explains the blending theory by the example of a surgeon who is metaphorically a butcher. This kind of surgeon is regarded as lacking competence because the frame of BUTCHERS is mapped onto that of SURGEONS. To put it differently, the butcher corresponds to the surgeon because the cognitive structure is shifted from the source to the target. Since butchers usually are not incompetent, the notion of incompetence is not transferred. However, we can infer this notion by setting up a third space in which we imagine the surgeon as a butcher. This is the blended space, which merges the concepts of surgeon and butcher. Thus, if the surgeon cuts up his

patient like a carcass it makes him resemble a butcher and therefore an incompetent surgeon. The idea of incompetence appears in the blended space and is mapped onto the target space. This is the reason why we can infer that the surgeon is incompetent.

In chapter 2 the aim was to give an overall introduction to metaphor. The following chapter sets out to determine how conceptual metaphors are categorised, with the main differentiation being made between conventional and poetic metaphors.

### **3. Categorisation of conceptual metaphor types**

#### **3.1. Conventional metaphors**

In the previous chapters, I have provided a general introduction to the subject of metaphor. The focus has been on how metaphor is defined, an overview on selected works conducted on this topic in the past, and an outline of conceptual metaphor theory. This chapter deals with the categorisation of conceptual metaphor types. There are two main categories: the conventional metaphor and the poetic metaphor. In the following, I will consider the first category, namely such types of conventional metaphor as orientational metaphors, metaphors of communication and understanding, and metaphors and emotions. As will be seen, regardless of their different classifications, what all conventional metaphors have in common is that they are often not recognised as metaphorical in ordinary usage because they have become part of everyday language.

### 3.1.1. Orientational metaphors

According to the definition of Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 14), orientational metaphors “give a concept a spatial orientation” and “organize a whole system of concepts with respect to one another” which commonly involves an orientational or spatial concept of some kind such as:

Up-down  
In-out  
Front-back  
On-off  
Deep-shallow  
Central-peripheral  
Near-far

(Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 14)

Two typical examples for orientational metaphors are the metaphorical concepts HAPPY IS UP/SAD IS DOWN and MORE IS UP/LESS IS DOWN. What applies to both cases is that the target concepts appear in pairs just like the source concepts in that they are either antonyms or counterparts, as illustrated in the following examples:

1. a. The number of books printed each year keeps going up.  
b. My income *rose* last year.  
c. The number of errors he made is incredibly *low*.  
d. If you're too hot, turn the heat *down*.

(Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 14)

The typical UP/DOWN orientational metaphor shows a repetitive pattern that occurs in a rather large number of target domains, including for example:

CONSCIOUS IS UP  
HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP  
HAVING CONTROL OR FORCE IS UP  
HIGH STATUS IS UP  
GOOD IS UP

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 40)

The same applies to their opposites. A characteristic aspect of orientational metaphors featuring the UP/DOWN concept is that UP metaphors tend to be positive. The opposite DOWN concept, on the other hand, tends to be negative. For instance, UP metaphors are often associated with MORE / HAPPINESS / CONSCIOUSNESS / POWER IS UP whereas DOWN metaphors are typically used in connection with LESS / SADNESS / UNCONSCIOUSNESS / POWERLESSNESS IS DOWN (Knowles; Moon 2006: 43).

Oriental metaphors usually cannot be immediately identified as metaphors, because they are so naturally pervading our thoughts that they are largely taken as “self-evident, direct descriptions of mental phenomena” (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 27-28). It is, therefore, safe to assume that in one way or another our fundamental concepts are organised in terms of a spatial concept such as the ones mentioned before. The way orientational metaphors are organised suggests a systematicity to these kinds of metaphors including a so-called “external systematicity” (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 17-19), which means that there is also a coherence among the orientational metaphors themselves. Since orientational metaphors are based on physical and cultural experiences (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 14), they vary from culture to culture.

Not only the orientational metaphor is a typical example for a metaphor that is not instantly recognisable. The metaphors of communication and understanding, commonly known as conduit metaphors, are likewise far from striking. The conduit metaphor is the topic of the following chapter.

### **3.1.2. Metaphors of communication and understanding**

The present chapter provides a brief overview of metaphors of communication and understanding. They are also referred to as conduit metaphors. Michael Reddy contributed to the development of the conceptual metaphor by drawing

attention to the metaphorical way in which we talk about communication, and the effect that this has on our thinking.

[The] evidence suggests that English has a preferred framework for conceptualizing communication, and can bias thought process towards this framework, even though nothing more than common sense is necessary to devise a different, more accurate framework.

(Reddy 1980: 165)

Reddy refers to this framework as conduit metaphor, and analyses its major features as follows:

- (1) language functions like a conduit;
- (2) in writing and speaking, people insert their thoughts or feelings in the words;
- (3) words accomplish the transfer by containing the thoughts or feelings and conveying them to others; and
- (4) in listening or reading, people extract the thoughts and feelings once again from the words.

(Reddy 1980: 170)

In other words, we conceptualise communication as a transfer of thoughts, words, and ideas from one person to another just as if those thoughts, ideas, and words have physical substance – in the way that a substance might be transferred from one place to another along a conduit. All these thoughts, words, and ideas are the objects that are transferred through communication by means of containers, which are the linguistic expressions that we use (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 10). This is the simple structure of the conduit metaphor, which is a basic metaphor of communication. Examples such as **thoughts** *enter our heads* or *cross our minds* illustrate that our minds act as containers and have a spatial dimension (Knowles; Moon 2006: 37). The process of understanding is conceptualised in terms of sight or touch as if what we understand has some kind of physical reality. Therefore, the metaphors can be formulated as UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING or UNDERSTANDING IS HOLDING.<sup>12</sup> A typical example for a metaphor of communication and understanding is:

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<sup>12</sup> For a detailed list of examples refer to Reddy 1980: 191-201.

2. a. Try to *get* your *thoughts across* better  
b. You still haven't *given me* any *idea* of what you mean

(Reddy 1980: 166)

These sentences do not seem to contain any obvious metaphor, which is the main feature of the conventional metaphor. In a literal sense, we do not get thoughts across during conversation nor can we receive thoughts or ideas. However, it is language that makes the transfer of human thoughts and feelings possible (Reddy 1980: 167). Consequently, words become the containers, through which thoughts can be transferred from one person to another. Generally speaking, activities “are viewed metaphorically as SUBSTANCES and therefore as CONTAINERS” (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 31). This is likewise applicable to different kinds of states, for instance:

3. a. He's *in* love.  
b. We're *out of* trouble now.  
c. He's *coming out of* the coma.  
d. I'm *slowly getting into* shape.  
e. He *fell into* a depression.

(Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 32)

In addition to the orientational metaphor and the conduit metaphor, there is one more kind of metaphor, which is equally important in the discussion of conventional metaphor types, without which this discussion would not be complete. The following chapter is designed to describe the close connection between metaphors and emotions, and the way we use these metaphors in everyday language, often unaware of their omnipresence.

### **3.1.3. Metaphors and emotions**

Knowles and Moon (2006: 38) explain that we can not only think of thoughts, words, and ideas as if they have physical substance or presence but also of

emotions: we **have** feelings, or **are filled with** emotion, love, pride, rage, we react to things with astonishment, anger, enthusiasm, we fall **in** love. We all use these expressions probably without even being aware that they are metaphorical. When something affects us emotionally, we conceptualise it as if it has a physical impact on us: news **hits** us hard, we are **struck** or **touched** by events, actions, and people. Love and affection are conceptualised in terms of heat and fire, and relationships in general in terms of physical proximity and connections as the following examples show:

4. a warm welcome  
she was very cool/cold/frosty with us  
a red-hot lover  
be on heat  
inflame someone's passions  
smoulder with desire  
a close relationship  
inseparable friends  
a rift between them  
they broke up

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 38)

It can be seen from these examples that the target concepts are usually characterised by the source concept of fire. It can thus be suggested that there is a metaphorical concept INTENSITY IS HEAT which is a mapping in more complex metaphors such as ANGER IS FIRE, LOVE IS FIRE, CONFLICT IS FIRE or ARGUMENT IS FIRE (Kövecses 2000: 90). In other words, other mappings depend on the central mapping, which in this case is INTENSITY IS HEAT. Anger is conceptualised as HEAT, including notions of redness and of heated fluid or steam in a container. This metaphorical target domain has been investigated in detail in the cognitive linguistics literature. Kövecses (1998) proposes twelve metaphorical mappings for the concept ANGER:<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For more details on metaphorical patterns manifesting ANGER metaphors, see Stefanowitsch 2006: 74 and 76.

5. ANGER/BEING ANGRY IS
  - a. HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*She is boiling with anger*)
  - b. FIRE (*Oh boy, was I burned up!*)
  - c. INSANITY (*The man was insane with rage*)
  - d. AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE (*I was struggling with my anger*)
  - e. A CAPTIVE ANIMAL (*He unleashed his anger*)
  - f. A BURDEN (*He carries his anger around with him*)
  - g. AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL BEHAVIOR (*Don't snarl at me!*)
  - h. TRESPASSING (cause of anger) (*Here I draw the line*)
  - i. PHYSICAL ANNOYANCE (*He's a pain in the neck*)
  - j. A NATURAL FORCE (*It was a stormy meeting*)
  - k. BEING A FUNCTIONING MACHINE (*That really got him going*)
  - l. A SUPERIOR (*His actions were completely governed by anger*)

(Kövecses 1998: 128-129)

Regarding the concept FEAR, Kövecses (1998) identifies the following metaphorical mappings:<sup>14</sup>

6. FEAR/BEING AFRAID IS
  - a. FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*The sight filled her with fear*)
  - b. A VICIOUS ENEMY (*Fear slowly crept up on him*)
  - c. A TORMENTOR (*My mother was tormented by fear*)
  - d. A SUPERNATURAL BEING (*He was haunted by fear*)
  - e. ILLNESS (*Jill was sick with fright*)
  - f. INSANITY (*Jack was insane with fear*)
  - g. AN INCOMPLETE OBJECT (*I was beside myself*)
  - h. AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE (*Fear took hold of me*)
  - i. A BURDEN (*Fear weighed heavily on them*)
  - j. A NATURAL FORCE (*She was engulfed by panic*)
  - k. A SUPERIOR (*His actions were dictated by fear*)

(Kövecses 1998: 129)

One major criticism of Kövecses' classification is that the example *I was beside myself* is categorised as referring to fear. Stefanowitsch (2006: 78) challenges Kövecses' claim on the grounds that the mapping FEAR IS AN INCOMPLETE OBJECT for the example *I was beside myself* is a reference to an out-of-body situation rather than an incomplete object. Moreover, he argues that the expression can refer to any strong emotion and that there is no reason to

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<sup>14</sup> For more FEAR metaphors identified via metaphorical pattern analysis, refer to Stefanowitsch 2006: 79 and 81.



assume that it is particularly frequent with fear. One of the issues emerging from Stefanowitsch's finding is that these results must be read with caution because the examples used might sometimes not be the best.

Regarding the concept HAPPINESS, Kövecses (1998) lists the following metaphorical mappings:

7. HAPPINESS/BEING HAPPY IS
  - a. UP (*We had to cheer him up*)
  - b. BEING OFF THE GROUND (*I am six feet off the ground*)
  - c. BEING IN HEAVEN (*That was heaven on earth*)
  - d. LIGHT (*Lighten up*)
  - e. VITALITY (*He was alive with joy*)
  - f. WARM (*That warmed my spirits*)
  - g. HEALTH (*It made me feel great*)
  - h. AN ANIMAL THAT LIVES WELL (*He was happy as a pig in shit*)
  - i. A PLEASURABLE PHYSICAL SENSATION (*I was tickled pink*)
  - j. FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*He was overflowing with joy*)
  - k. CAPTIVE ANIMAL (*His feelings of happiness broke loose*)
  - l. OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE (*He was knocked out*)
  - m. A RAPTURE/HIGH (*I was drunk with joy*)
  - n. INSANITY (*They were crazy with happiness*)
  - o. A NATURAL FORCE (*He was swept off his feet*)

(Kövecses 1998: 129)

Kövecses' (1998) metaphorical mappings for the concept SADNESS include:

8. SADNESS/BEING SAD IS
  - a. DOWN (*He brought me down with his remarks*)
  - b. DARK (*He is in a dark mood*)
  - c. LACK OF HEAT (*His remarks threw cold water on the party*)
  - d. LACK OF VITALITY (*This was disheartening news*)
  - e. FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*I am filled with sorrow*)
  - f. VIOLENT PHYSICAL FORCE (*That was a terrible blow*)
  - g. VIOLENT NATURAL FORCE (*Waves of depression came over him*)
  - h. ILLNESS (*Time heals all sorrows*)
  - i. INSANITY (*He was insane with grief*)
  - j. BURDEN (*He staggered under the pain*)
  - k. LIVING ORGANISM (*He drowned his sorrow in drink*)
  - l. CAPTIVE ANIMAL (*His feelings of misery got out of hand*)
  - m. OPPONENT (*He was seized by a fit of depression*)

(Kövecses 1998: 130)

The above mentioned examples show that emotions correlate closely with the way we express ourselves. Therefore, it is not surprising that a rather large number of metaphorical expressions can be found when speaking of emotions. This is especially true in relation to the notion of heart. Niemeier (2000: 199) proposes four different categories:

1. Heart as a metonymy for the person
2. The heart as a LIVING ORGANISM
3. The heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE
4. The heart as a CONTAINER

According to Niemeier (2000: 199) the first category is the basis for the other categories. They differ from each other insofar as with each category the amount of metaphorical expressions increases whereas the connection between metaphor and metonymy<sup>15</sup> becomes less recognisable.

In the first category, the person is referred to metonymically as the heart. The emotion that is typically connected with the heart is love. Since a close connection exists between love and the heart, it can therefore be assumed that the heart is the centre of emotions. The following examples illustrate the many ways in which we use the concept of heart in everyday language.

9. a. set one's heart on somebody
- b. set all hearts on fire
- c. have a big heart; great heart

(Niemeier 2000: 200)

The first example presents the conceptualisation of heart as a MOVABLE OBJECT. In other words, the person, or when speaking in terms of metonymy the heart, is determined to achieve something and this strong desire leads this person to pursue his or her aim with strong persistence. Example 9.b. refers to conceptualisation of danger and love as heat. Heart and emotion are connected with each other metonymically meaning that not the heart as an organ is on fire but the emotion of love which is regarded as being inside the heart evokes these strong reactions. The fire in turn is a reference to the heat that a person

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<sup>15</sup> See chapter 4.

experiences when he or she is in love. The third example shows the concept of heart as CHANGEABLE IN SIZE. Positive emotions can be conceptualised by way of imagining an increase of the size of the heart. The larger the heart thus the higher the number of good feelings harboured inside it.

However, love is not the only feeling when talking about heart. There are other positive feelings and negative feelings respectively. Consider the concept HEART AS A SOLID and more specifically SOLIDS HAVE WEIGHT.

10. soft heart; tender heart; touch the heart  
heart of stone; heavy-hearted; harden one's heart

(Niemeier 2000: 201)

Through metaphor, materials such as stone in the example *heart of stone* are given qualities that they do not really possess but the qualities that they display are attributed to them. In this case, the hardness of the material is interpreted as a hard attitude and therefore metaphorically mapped onto the domain of the heart. The heart can also be conceptualised as being light in weight that one could fly away or as emitting warmth and sympathetic feelings as in the examples of *light-heartedness* and *warm-heartedness* (Niemeier 2000: 202). It is also possible that the WHOLE ENTITY OF THE HEART may be only half present or even absent altogether as in *have no heart (for)*; *heartlessness* (Niemeier 2000: 202).

The final example for heart as the metonymy for the person is the phrase *a lonely hearts club* (Niemeier 2000: 202) which is the clearest illustration of metonymy. People without partners meet in the lonely hearts club to look for a relationship. The heart is personified and the emotions are conceptualised as acting independently due to the fact that what people feel rationally might not match their emotional desires.

The second category presents heart as a LIVING ORGANISM for which there are plenty of examples:

11. a. heartthrob; all hearts throb for her  
b. Two hearts that beat as one  
c. heart-burning

- d. make one's heart bleed; something is heartrending; pierce the heart
- e. an aching heart; to be sick at heart; to be heart-sick
- f. cry one's heart out; to eat one's heart out

(Niemeier 2000: 203-204)

In example 11.a. the heart is described as an AUTONOMOUS ENTITY. In other words, the heart is independent showing that one of the psychological reactions experienced at the sight of or the thought of the object of one's desire metonymically stands for the person as such in a cause-effect relationship. The second expression is understood as a metonymy for the synchronisation and harmonisation of the behaviours of two people insofar as the two hearts stand for the two people as a whole. Example 11.c. illustrates how the heart is conceptualised as fire and it highlights the intense feeling involved. The emotion described can also be expressed in a more detailed way for example by saying that one's heart is set on fire because of strong feelings such as jealousy or regret. The fourth example addresses the notion of heart as a wound that can be inflicted by different kinds of weapons. Example 11.e. describes the conceptualisation of illness. However, the heart can not only be wounded or fall ill but it can be completely destroyed as in the last example. The logical consequence is that with the death of the heart the person's life or what has been worth living for disappears as well.

All these metaphors are based on a prior metonymic understanding.<sup>16</sup> The first and the second category are closely related to each other. The difference between the two is that in the second category the perspective is narrowed meaning that the heart is no longer considered as part of a person but as a living, independent entity in its own right. Consequently, the metonymies involved are less basic ones and often rely on double metonymisations or even

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<sup>16</sup> This argument is supported by Radden (2000) who claims that at least some metaphors are grounded in metonymy. He argues that the metonymic driving forces behind metaphors are first a common experiential basis of the two metaphorical domains, second the operation of implicature, third the category structure and fourth cultural models. For more details on these four categories, see Radden 2000: 94-105.

appear as metaphors. Nevertheless, the underlying metonymic basis is kept intact.

In the third category that deals with the concept of heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE the heart is depicted as a kind of treasure. Niemeier (2000: 204) draws our attention to the fact that single emotions or the connection between the heart and the person are not the main focus. In this case, the heart as an entity and an object of value is in the foreground. Examples include:

12. a. to win someone's heart; to conquer someone's heart; to offer one's heart
- b. to lose one's heart to somebody
- c. broken heart; heart-broken; broken-hearted
- d. to put heart into; to take heart of grace; new heart
- e. to lose heart; not have the heart to do something; his heart sank into his boots
- f. to be chicken-hearted
- g. to take it to heart
- h. to dishearten

(Niemeier 2000: 205-206)

In the first example the heart is described as a prize which conveys the meaning that a person's heart cannot be simply taken but that it needs to be conquered or won as in a contest or in a war. Example 12.b. shows that a heart can be lost or destroyed. The heart is a kind of booty, i.e. another person can take one's heart without permission. This expression implies that other people can take control over one's emotions. The third example depicts the heart as a MANIPULABLE OBJECT, a fragile object which must be handled carefully lest it be destroyed easily.

Examples 12.d. to 12.f. deal with types of behaviour associated with the heart involving feelings of courage, envy and anxiety. Niemeier (2000: 2006) argues that a special psychological feature of chickens, namely that their small hearts often stop beating when they are frightened or subject to stress, is used metonymically in order to refer to a certain behaviour pattern which is then metaphorically mapped onto human beings who display a similar behaviour to

that of chickens: they shy away even from the slightest danger and risk and prefer to remain passive and inert.

The sixth example shows how the feeling of envy can be conceptualised as being related to the heart. Example 12.g. relates to a person who causes somebody else to feel anger or discontent which causes the latter to become discouraged from doing something he or she intended to do. In the third category the metonymy is not as obvious as in the first two categories but it is still present in the general understanding of the expressions in this category.

The fourth and last category is about the concept HEART AS A CONTAINER. As already mentioned one of the first conceptual metaphors identified as underlying the lexical field of communication is the conduit metaphor, as discussed in Reddy (1980). The conduit metaphor focuses on the container conceptualisation where the message and the words in which it is packed are regarded as containers, which we unpack and out of which we take the contents, i.e. the meaning. The same applies to the human body and its major parts. Thus, the head, the heart, the chest, or the womb may all be seen as containers, for example:

13. a. to open one's heart; to close one's heart to something; to pour out one's heart to somebody
- b. a heart overflowing (with gratitude)
- c. this filled my heart (with joy)
- d. from (the bottom of) one's heart
- e. to know something/to believe something in one's heart
- f. I could not find it in my heart
- g. have a place in every heart

(Niemeier 2000: 207-208)

A container can be opened or it can be closed. If we regard the heart as a container, we can argue that when the heart is conceptualised as closed the speaker's emotional world is inaccessible. However, if too many feelings are involved the container might be too small to absorb them and the feelings might overflow like a liquid. Example 13.d. specifies the heart as a CONTAINER WITH GREAT DEPTH focusing on the type of container (Niemeier 2000: 207).

In other words, this container has a bottom that represents the location where one's feelings are stored. The heart can also be conceptualised as a COMPARTMENTALISED CONTAINER as in example 13.g. showing that it is possible to integrate different kinds of objects into different slots.

Niemeier (2000: 208) points out that the conceptualisation of the heart as a CONTAINER in fact comprises a series of sub-models. However, generally speaking, the container schema is a universal type of schema. In spite of the fact that the underlying metonymies are not as obvious as in the previous categories, the fourth category is dependent on the other categories that provide its metonymic basis (Niemeier 2000: 209).

The chapter on conventional metaphors has revealed that the types of metaphors, which belong to this category, have become so common in our everyday language that they are hardly recognised as being metaphorical. This applies to the orientational metaphor, the conduit metaphor, and metaphors dealing with emotions. However, there is a type of metaphor, which we do recognise as the thing that it is – a metaphor. To be more accurate: a poetic metaphor.

### **3.2. Poetic metaphor**

Poetic metaphors contrast with conventional metaphors in that the latter are “institutionalized” as part of the language and are therefore much of the time hardly noticed and we do not think of them as metaphorical when we use or encounter them (Knowles; Moon 2006: 6). However, there are times when even in ordinary usage we become aware that an expression is used metaphorically, for example when someone makes a pun or tells a joke which exploits the literal/metaphorical ambiguity, for instance:

14. Why is the aristocracy known as the cream of society?  
Because it's rich and thick and full of clots

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 24)

Conversely, we may realise that the word or phrase we are using will be interpreted metaphorically rather than literally and so the words literal/literally are sometimes used to indicate that we are not being metaphorical, for example:

15. In space, you can find methanol in **literally astronomical** quantities

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 24)

The term *literally* is more often used simply to add emphasis to an exaggerated or hyperbolic statement, while acknowledging its metaphoricity, for example:

16. Everywhere public space is disappearing.  
Everywhere the city streets are becoming meaner and the city just **literally bristles with malice**

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 24)

What all metaphors have in common is that they are non-literal, figurative uses of language. Knowles and Moon (2006: 6) define **literal** as a concrete identity with often physical existence in the world whereas a non-literal meaning refers to something abstract or abstract qualities, for example:

17. a. fox (animal – cunning person)  
b. jewel (ornamental precious stone – something valuable)  
c. mountain (a large piece of rock/ground – a large amount of something)

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 7)

In other words, the literal meaning is the most basic and physical meaning. Thus, as instances of non-literal language involving some kind of comparison, metaphors would not make any sense and they would be untrue if interpreted literally.

With the major tropes of metaphor we can also include personification which is defined as “the attribution of human properties to inanimate objects” (Knowles; Moon 2006: 125). For example, verbs such as scream, howl, whisper, shriek more literally describe human or animal noises but they are conventionally used



metaphorically to describe the sound made by wind, machines, or other inanimates. Mac Cormac (1985: 37) suggests that “[a]lthough not all metaphors are personifications, it certainly seems that all personifications are metaphors”. One prime feature of poetic metaphor is that its meaning involves imagery (Hester 1967: 23). Hester (1967: 70) argues that the normal, practical function of language is transformed into a presentational symbol meaning that discursive language or propositions are transformed into an appearance or image of life.

There is a range of common basic metaphors which are part of our cultural knowledge and that allows us to communicate with each other. Conceptual metaphors are part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualising their experience and poets use these basic conceptual metaphors in order to communicate with their audience (Lakoff; Turner 1989: 9).

As already mentioned, poets make use of the linguistic and conceptual resources at hand. Basic metaphors are part of those conceptual resources and part of the way members of our culture make sense of the world. Poets elaborate or express these basic metaphors in new ways. However, it is crucial that they use the conceptual resources available to everybody otherwise the audience would not understand them.

There are several metaphorical conceptions discussed by Lakoff and Turner (1989). They include:

18. a. PEOPLE AS PLANTS
- b. A LIFETIME IS A DAY
- c. A LIFETIME IS A YEAR; DEATH IS WINTER
- d. DEATH IS SLEEP
- e. LIFE IS A FLUID IN THE BODY; DEATH IS LOSS OF FLUID
- f. LIFE IS A PLAY
- g. LIFE IS BONDAGE; DEATH IS DELIVERANCE
- h. LIFE IS A BURDEN

(Lakoff; Turner 1989: 6-25)

In example 18.a. people are regarded as plants with respect to the circle of life. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 6) argue that just like parts of plants that blossom and fade away people die and it is death that arrives with the falling of the leaves.

The stages that the plant goes through within a year, equals the stages of a person's life. Thus, the expression *young sprout* refers to a person that is still in the early ages of his or her life. *Full bloom* corresponds to the maturity of a person. If someone *withers away* he is approaching death.

The second example corresponds to the conventional schema for the day. In other words, in this metaphor birth is dawn, maturity is noon, old age is twilight, the moment of death is sunset, and the state of death is night. Metaphorically speaking, since death is night the coldness of death is the coldness of night. It is important to note that the structures of the basic metaphors provide the roles which can serve as the sources of personifications meaning that no separate personification metaphor is needed to account for these cases, and it also explains why the personifications of death are all either minions to assist one to a final destination, or agents who cause death, or both (Lakoff; Turner 1989: 17).

Example 18.c. resembles the second example except that in this case in this conception of the life cycle springtime is youth, summer is maturity, autumn is old age and winter is death. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989: 18) it is an elaboration of the metaphor PEOPLE AS PLANTS because buds correspond to birth and youth and springtime is regarded as youth. Generally speaking, new life emerges in spring while winter is the season in which plants and animals usually hibernate in nature.

The fourth example is rather clear-cut. This metaphor illustrates a corpse that appears as a person sleeping.

Example 18.e. is a classical example of a container metaphor in which the body corresponds to a container. The intensity of life corresponds to the amount of fluid in the container. Thus, when the container breaks the fluids leak and diminish. In metaphorical terms life diminishes. As a consequence, death arrives with the total absence of fluid in the container.

As the concept LIFE IS A PLAY shows, this metaphorical concept relies on our metaphoric understanding of significant parts of life in terms of a play, for example:

19. It's curtains for him.  
She's my leading lady.  
She always wants to be in the spotlight.  
The kid stole the show.  
That's not in the script.  
What's your part in this?  
You missed your cue.  
He blew his lines.  
He saved the show.  
She brought the house down.

(Lakoff; Turner 1989: 20)

This basic metaphor for life is rather productive, perhaps because plays aim at portraying important events and parts of life, and the ways in which a play can correspond to life are extensively developed and conventionalised in our culture. Our schema for a play is also very rich. It commonly includes actors, casting, playwrights, applause, directors, bowing, parts, and so on. Many of the components of the schema for play have a function on the LIFE IS A PLAY metaphor, for instance:

20. He always plays the fool.  
That attitude is just a mask.  
He turned in a great performance.  
Take a bow!  
You deserve a standing ovation.  
He plays an important role in the process.  
I'm improvising.  
It's showtime.

(Lakoff; Turner 1989: 20-21).

In the LIFE AS A PLAY metaphor, the person leading a life corresponds to an actor, the people with whom he interacts are fellow actors, his behaviour is the way he is acting, and so on.

Lakoff and Turner (1989: 23) explain that the concept LIFE IS BONDAGE; DEATH IS DELIVERANCE means that life is conceived as a bodily bondage. In metaphorical terms the soul of a person is the prisoner that is

trapped inside the body. With death the soul is released from its imprisonment. In other words, the prisoner is released from prison.

The final example LIFE IS A BURDEN corresponds to LIFE AS A JOURNEY. Every person has to deal with difficulties in his or her life but they can be tolerated more easily with the support of family and friends. In the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor impediments along the way equal difficulties in life which may lead to the impression that the whole life is a burden because burdens hinder us to move forward with ease.

As far as the basic metaphorical conceptions of life and death are concerned their number is rather small. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989: 26) this is due to the way metaphorical mappings work. For example, it is possible to use the PEOPLE AS PLANTS metaphor as a basis for the personification of death in association with plants. However, not everything can be associated with plants. What is important is that this basic set of metaphors is used to create new metaphors through combination and elaboration.

Time is often conceptualised metaphorically as a physical commodity. In other words, time is something that we can possess, use, acquire, or lose. There are many conceptualisations of time. The most familiar metaphorical concept is perhaps TIME IS MONEY. The English expression to **pass** or **spend** time shows that time is conceptualised as if it has a physical dimension. *Passing time* demonstrates that the way in which we talk about time is similar to the way in which we talk about distance and position. In addition to traditional metaphorical expressions such as *Time is a great healer* or *It's a race against time* there are many prepositions and adverbs that have metaphorical meanings relating to time, for example:

- 21. in the weeks ahead;  
in April;  
at the weekend;  
on Sunday;  
*looking back* into the past;  
*looking forward* to the future

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 35)

Lakoff and Turner (1989: 34) argue that even our understanding of life and death is attached to our understanding of time. The reason is that death is inevitable and the passing of time can be viewed as the bringing about of events that are inevitable. Hence, in the case of inevitable events, time can be seen as playing a causal role. The saying *It's just a matter of time* in regards to a potential occurrence means that as the time is passing an inevitable event will occur. Time can be used differently in a large number of expressions. Depending on its usage, it can be:

- 22. a. TIME AS AN OBJECT (The time *passed* quickly. Where did all the time *go*? Do you *have* time to go over this paper for me?)
- b. TIME IS AN OBJECT TIME IS A LOCATION – CONTAINER metaphor (Did you arrive *in* time? *Where* did you pass the time?)
- c. TIME IS A HEALER (Time heals all wounds.)

(Freeman 2000: 266: 267)

To sum up, poetic thought uses the mechanisms of everyday thought, but it extends them, elaborates them, and combines them in ways that go beyond the ordinary. Thus, the key words as employed by Lakoff and Turner (1989: 67-70) are:

EXTENDING  
ELABORATING  
QUESTIONING  
COMPOSING

One major mode of poetic thought is to take a conventionalised metaphor and extend it, for example DEATH IS SLEEP. That conventional metaphor is partial meaning that it does not map everything in our general knowledge of sleep onto death but only certain aspects, for example inactivity, the inability to perceive, horizontal position, and the like. Another principal mode of poetic thought that goes beyond the ordinary is the nonconventional elaborating of schemas, by

filling in slots<sup>17</sup> in unusual ways rather than by extending the metaphor to map additional slots. (Lakoff; Turner 1989: 68): According to the conventional metaphor of DEATH AS DEPARTURE, we conceive of death as departure away from here, without possibility of return, on a journey, perhaps on a vehicle. The conventionalised metaphor is no more specific than that. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 67-68) provide an interesting example in order to show how a passage can be elaborated in more than just one way. They talk about Horace's reference to death as the "eternal exile of the raft" (Lakoff; Turner 1989: 68): Horace is using the conventional metaphor of death but fills in slots, i.e. he elaborates it and adds a new conceptual content to the metaphor of DEATH AS DEPARTURE. Exile does not simply mean being away from here but is it banishment and it assumes that the person living in exile would prefer to return. In other words, it is an unnatural state. In addition, a raft does not take us swiftly, directly, luxuriously, or securely to a given destination. It is something we are not in control of and we are exposed to the forces of nature. We can take Horace to mean by eternal exile that we are forever on the raft. In that case, the raft does not even have a destination. The elaboration of the DEATH AS DEPARTURE metaphor in such an unconventional way results in a change of our understanding concerning death and the way we perceive death.

In addition to elaborating conventional metaphor, poets go beyond the normal use of conventional metaphor to point out, and call into question the boundaries of our everyday metaphorical understandings of important concepts (Lakoff; Turner 1989: 69). Finally, the formation of composite metaphors is the most powerful way in which poetic thought goes beyond the ordinary way we use conventional metaphoric thought. For example, there may be more than one conventional metaphor for a given target: life may be viewed metaphorically both as a day and as a precious possession. One of the things that characterises poetic thought is the simultaneous use of two or more such metaphors in the same passage, or even in the same sentence (Lakoff; Turner

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<sup>17</sup> Lakoff and Turner (1989: 61) use the term slots for elements of a schema that are to be filled in. For example, a JOURNEY schema has a slot for TRAVELLER that can be filled by any particular person whom we understand to be on a journey.

1989: 70). The mode of metaphorical thought that poets use and invoke in their readers goes beyond ordinary metaphoric thought by including these elements:

- (1) The novel extension of the metaphor to include elements otherwise not mapped, such as extending DEATH IS SLEEP to dreaming.
- (2) The imaginative filling in of special cases, such as having the vehicle in DEATH IS DEPARTURE be a coach.
- (3) The formation of composite metaphors in which two or more conventional metaphors are joined together in ways that they ordinarily would not be. Its effect is to produce a richer and more complex set of metaphorical connections, which give inferences beyond those that follow from each of their metaphors alone.
- (4) Explicit commentary on the limitations of conceptual metaphors, and the offering of an alternative.

(Lakoff; Turner 1989: 71)

These extensions are a large part of what makes poetic metaphor more interesting than conventional metaphor. The power of poetic composition to create complex new ideas from simpler conventional ideas reveals itself in especially clear form in personification – metaphors through which we understand other things as people. As human beings, we can best understand other things in our own terms. As Lakoff and Turner (1989: 72) state:

Personification permits us to use our knowledge about ourselves to maximal effect, to use insights about ourselves to help us comprehend such things as forces of nature, common events, abstract concepts, and inanimate objects.

This chapter has given an account of and the reasons for the use of poetic metaphors in everyday language. One of the more significant findings to emerge from this chapter is that poetic metaphors are easily recognisable because of the use of imagery, which is the main feature of poetic metaphors.

The following chapter completes the theoretical part of this paper. I will look at how metaphor colludes with other figurative language. The prime focus will lie on metonymy, which is a figure of speech most closely connected with metaphor.

## 4. Metaphor and other figurative language

On the question of metaphor as an expression of language with a conceptual origin, there is a strong relationship between metaphor and other tropes among which metonymy is perhaps the figure of speech that is most closely connected with metaphor. The present chapter assesses the importance of metonymy and provides a brief account of other figurative language that conveys a metaphoric comprehension.

### 4.1. Metonymy

Since Lakoff and Johnson's study on metaphor, increasing attention has been paid to another figurative process which is also of fundamental importance to conceptualisation and human thought, and this is metonymy. As René Dirven (2002 :1) points out in a discussion of early work on metonymy, Jakobson discussed the importance of metonymy and the way in which it relates to metaphor in a paper published in 1956, but subsequent research which developed theories of metonymy in more detail were not undertaken until much later. For many years metonymy was considered to be far less interesting and important than metaphor.

Jakobson was the first to pay equal attention to both metonymy and metaphor. This balanced view was probably still impossible at the time of the metaphor revolution launched by Lakoff & Johnson's cannon shot known as *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). It took almost another twenty years to fully redress the balance between metaphor and metonymy.

(Dirven 2002: 1)

Defining metonymy is slightly difficult because a broadly accepted definition which distinguishes it distinctly from metaphor is lacking. To a large extent the



work in cognitive semantics focuses on the domain approach, where metaphor is regarded as a mapping between two domains. Metonymy, however, is an intra-domain mapping involving only one domain, or, following Croft (2002), a mapping between two domains within the same domain matrix.<sup>18</sup> A rather typical definition is given by Barcelona who takes account of Croft's approach:<sup>19</sup>

*Metaphor* is the cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain [...] is mapped onto a different experiential domain, the second domain being partially understood in terms of the first one. Both domains have to belong to different subordinate domains. *Metonymy* [...] is a cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain is partially understood in terms of another experiential domain included *in the same common experiential domain*.

(Barcelona 2002: 211-215)

The reason for this kind of definition can be found in the theory of conceptual domains according to which knowledge of and about the world is mentally stored in groups of related concepts, and each of these concepts can only be understood in the context of that group (Allan 2008: 11). In his discussion of domains, Langacker (1987 [1993]: 147-148) illustrates this by the example of the concept *knuckle*, which cannot be explained without the concept *finger*, which in turn depends on the concept *hand*. Generally speaking, a concept can therefore function as the domain for another concept while at the same time the concept itself belongs to a "superordinate domain" or "domain matrix" (Allan 2008: 11). In other words, the possibility of defining the boundaries between domains is the reason for the distinction made between metaphor and metonymy.

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<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed account of metonymy, see Hilpert (2006). He draws the distinction between two basic types of metonymy. The first type covers all contiguity relations between an *entity* and its *parts*. Contiguity relations of this kind are called *E-Metonymies*. The second type includes contiguity relations between categories and subcategories. Such contiguity relations are called *C-Metonymies*. (Hilpert 2006: 127). Cf. also Ruiz de Mendoza Ilbáñez (2000) who examines different aspects of metonymy in relation to metaphor and other polysemy phenomena.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Gibbs 1999: 36 who argues that if a non-literal comparison between two things is meaningful when seen in a X is like Y statement, it is a case of metaphor. If this criterion does not apply, it is metonymic.

Langacker (1987 [1993]: 385-386) refers to metonymy as a special case of “activation” due to the fact that metonymic mapping causes the mental activation of the target domain, for example:

- 23. a. *She’s just a pretty face.* (FACE FOR PERSON)
- b. *The ham sandwich is waiting for his check.* (CONSUMED GOODS FOR CUSTOMER)
- c. *There are a lot of good heads at the University.* (BODY PART FOR PERSON AND BODY PART FOR INTELLECTUAL ATTRIBUTES CONVENTIONALLY ASSOCIATED WITH IT)
- d. *I’ll have a Löwenbräu.* (PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT)

(Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 35-38)

In example 23.a. the domain of people includes the subdomain of face, which is mapped onto the whole matrix domain of people. This is an example of a “part-for-whole” metonymy in which the face is mapped onto the person (Barcelona 2000: 5). The word for a part of something is used in reference to the whole, or else the whole is referred to in terms of something associated with it. An example is *hand*, used to refer to a worker, especially a manual worker. In the other examples the mapping also occurs within one common subordinate domain. In example 23.b. it is the restaurant domain, which includes customer and food as parts. In example 23.c. it is the domain of the person which includes the head as a part; the head, in turn, includes the intellectual attributes connected with it. In example 23.d. the common domain is the production domain, which includes producer and product as parts. Market and Nissim (2006: 152) point out the fact that a lot of proper names are widely used metonymically. As demonstrated in example 23.d. organisation names can be used for products produced by the organisation or members of an organisation or events can be associated with the organisation. Other instances where metonymy is used include:

- 24. a. THE PART FOR THE WHOLE (use of *hands* in order to refer to workers)
- b. OBJECT USED FOR USER (The *buses* are on strike.)
- c. CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED (*Napoleon* lost at Waterloo.)

- d. INSTITUTION FOR PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE (I don't approve of the *government's* actions.)
- e. THE PLACE FOR THE INSTITUTION (*Wall Street* is in panic.)
- f. THE PLACE FOR THE EVENT (Let's not let Thailand become another *Vietnam*.)

(Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 38-39)

In spite of the fact that metonymy is rather closely connected with metaphor, the major difference between the two is that metonymy “allows us to focus more specifically on certain aspects of what is being referred to” (Lakoff; Johnson 1980: 37). Another difference is that metaphors are literally impossible or untrue, whereas metonyms are partially true because there is a connection between the metonym and its meaning. In other words, “contiguity” is an integral part of metonymy (Knowles; Moon 2006: 53) meaning that two elements in a metonym are part of a single thing and belong to the same domain. The metonym refers to one component or feature in order to name the whole. Or it refers to a part by picking up the whole. Metaphors, on the other hand, rely on comparisons, i.e. separate entities representing different kinds of things correspond through a similarity drawn between them. It is for this reason that many linguists make a distinction between metaphor and metonymy and regard them as complementary and yet separate entities.

Knowles and Moon (2006: 53) exemplify this by comparing the use of *head* in *sixty head of cattle* and *the head of the organization*. The first is a metonym because the whole cattle are referred to in terms of a body part and heads and cattle are part of the same entity. The second is a metaphor, relating to a metaphorical analogy, or a conceptual mapping, between an organisation and a body: organisation and body are separate kinds of entity, even though there are parallels between them which can be drawn consistently.

A more simple explanation of the difference between metaphor and metonymy is that if one thing can be said to **be like** another, it is an instance of metaphor. If the comparison does not make any sense, it is a metonym. Referring to the above mentioned example, it is possible to say that *the head of*

*an organisation **is like** the head of a body*, but it would be meaningless to say that *heads of cattle **are like** cattle*. In the latter case we would simply say that *heads of cattle **stand for** cattle*.

25. She fell head over heels in love with a man who has turned out to be a real **rat**. (metaphor)  
He is the **brains** behind the outfit. (metonymy)

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 53)

As already noted metaphorical processes can be systematised according to the conceptual mappings which underlie metaphorical relationships. The same applies to metonymic processes that are systematised with respect to the kind of relationship between the metonym and its meanings. Source domain and target domain are terms used with respect to metaphor whereas the terms vehicle entity and target entity are applied in the analysis of metonyms (Knowles; Moon 2006: 54). The vehicle entity is the word or phrase which is being used metonymically, while the target entity is the intended meaning or referent, for example:

26. a. hands – worker  
b. the Crown – the monarchy  
c. plastic – credit cards  
d. threads – clothes  
e. wheels – vehicle  
f. bricks and mortar – a house/building  
g. a roof over one's head – place to live

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 54)

An aspect that metaphor and metonymy have in common is their experiential basis. For example, the metaphorical concept “ANGER IS HEAT” derives from physiological sensations that are associated with feeling anger. Lakoff and Johnson regard metonyms as having an experiential basis as well. They comment that this basis is obvious

since it usually involves direct physical or causal associations. The PART FOR THE WHOLE metonymy, for example, emerges from our

experiences with the way in which parts in general are related to wholes [...] THE PLACE FOR EVENT is grounded in our experience with the physical location of events.

(Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 39-40)

Evidently, there is an interaction between metaphor and metonymy. Barcelona (2000: 10) identifies two general types of patterns of interaction which are:

- (1) Interaction at the purely conceptual level.
- (2) Purely textual co-instantiation of a metaphor and a metonymy in the same linguistic expression.

At the purely conceptual level Barcelona (2000: 10) distinguishes two main subtypes of metaphor-metonymy interaction:

- (a) The metonymic conceptual motivation of metaphor.
- (b) The metaphorical conceptual motivation of metonymy.

Without any doubt many metaphors are conceptually based on metonymy. This particularly applies to metaphors where emotions are involved,<sup>20</sup> as in the case of the ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID metaphor:

27. *I had reached boiling point.*  
*She got all steamed up.*  
*When I told him, he just exploded.*

(Barcelona 2000: 10)

In the example *She lent me her ear* (Barcelona 2000: 11) attention is perceived as an entity which has to be attracted and by way of metonymy this is represented by the ears. In other words, in the metonymy EAR FOR ATTENTION a body part which is used for hearing is featured as being performed in a highly specific manner. So the ear stands for a certain attribute, i.e. attention, of its typical function and this is made possible when attention is made the target domain in a metaphorical mapping and when within the target domain a metonymic mapping is carried out.

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. chapter "Metaphors and emotion" in this paper.

The second general type of interaction described by Barcelona (2000: 12) is the purely textual co-instantiation of a metaphor and a metonymy by the same linguistic expression. This happens when a metonymy co-occurs in the same linguistic expression with a certain metaphorical mapping, from which it is conceptually independent. Their co-occurrence is not owing to the fact that they conceptually motivate each other, but to the fact that they are compatible:

28. *The ham sandwich started snarling.*

(Barcelona 2000: 12)

The metaphor in this example is a special version of the PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS metaphor. The special version is ANGRY BEHAVIOUR IS AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR. In a restaurant situation this sentence would refer to the angry behaviour of the customer who bought the sandwich. The metonymy is CONSUMED GOODS FOR CUSTOMER. The metaphor and the metonymy are compatible with each other because both have people as target. However, they are conceptually independent from each other. As far as the metaphor is concerned, it is enough to replace the subject in the above example to realise that the metaphor does not depend conceptually on **this** metonymy:

29. *John started snarling.*

(Barcelona 2000: 12)

Despite the fact that metonymy may at times seem less rich and interesting than metaphor, the way in which metonyms are used and the reason why this form of figurative language is used are both significant. Knowles and Moon (2006: 58) point out the difference between saying, for example, that *Britain sent in troops*, rather than that *the British government* did. This is one of the reasons, why metonymy is important.

## 4.2. Synecdoche

Metonymy has been used as a general term to refer to the kind of figurative language where a part is substituted for the whole as in the example of twenty head for twenty cows. The difference between metonymy and synecdoche is that metonymy makes use of an attribute as an expression of the entity whereas synecdoche takes a part and lets it stand for the whole or takes the whole and lets it stand for a part (Mac Cormac 1985: 36). Basically, synecdoche comprises the cases where the whole entity is referred to by the name of one of its constituent parts, or where a constituent part is referred to by the name of the whole. Knowles and Moon (2006: 48) argue that where the term synecdoche is used, metonymy has a much narrower meaning, and refers just to the process of naming by association. Thus, using the term hands for workers is an example of synecdoche while using Crown for monarchy is an instance of metonymy. However, it is often difficult to distinguish between metonymy and synecdoche,<sup>21</sup> so usually synecdoche is not used as a category or term at all.

## 4.3. Simile

According to Punter's (2007: 147) definition, a simile is the simplest form of metaphor where two objects are compared by way of using link words such as like, as, compare or resemble. Similes explicitly compare similarities whereas more advanced forms of metaphor aim at surprising the hearer/reader by the omission of link words (Knowles; Moon 2006: 8). What metaphors and similes have in common is that both include "conceptual activity" (Mac Cormac 1985: 36). In other words, the creator of the metaphor or simile must imagine a combination of referents, and the hearer must look for the connections among the referents and take notice of their differences.

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<sup>21</sup> Consider the example of plastic for credit card. Credit cards are made from plastic, so it is a case of synecdoche. However, at the same time it is metonymic because plastic also refers to the whole system of paying by means of a prearranged credit facility.

For example, to say that someone is a fox is to use a metaphor but to say that they are **like** a fox is to use a simile. Even though it seems that there is little difference between the metaphor and the simile apart from a change of phraseology, there is an important distinction. As already noted, a metaphor is literally impossible or untrue: regardless of a person's behaviour, a person always remains a person and not a fox. Unlike metaphor, a simile is literally possible or true, however inappropriate the comparison may be. Ortony (1980: 189) argues that the process of making comparisons is of fundamental importance in the comprehension of similes. Comparisons are more or less successful or appropriate to the degree to which the things being compared are similar.

Finally, returning to the argument stated at the beginning of this paper that idioms and proverbs are often metaphorical in origin, I will close with a concise overview of idioms in relation to metaphor in the following chapter.

#### **4.4. Idioms**

Idioms are conventionalised phrases where the meaning of the whole phrase differs from the meaning which might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase, for example:

30. a. spill the beans
- b. cost an arm and a leg
- c. make a mountain out of a molehill
- d. out of the blue
- e. rain cats and dogs
- f. twist someone round your little finger

(Knowles; Moon 2006: 19)

The wording of idioms is often fixed meaning that the words cats and dogs in the idiom to rain cats and dogs cannot be replaced by any other animals. That is why Glucksberg (2001: 68) refers to idioms as a “subset of fixed expressions



in a language community". There are instances, however, where there is a lot of variation. In spite of the fact that the idiom wording is unstable, the metaphor itself remains unaltered. For example, it is possible to say that you *wash your dirty linen in public* or that you *air your dirty laundry* or that you *do your dirty washing in public* (Knowles; Moon 2006: 20).

Idioms and proverbs can not only be metaphorical but also metonymic. Many metonymic idioms and proverbs involve body parts as in the example a *roof over one's head* or to *hate someone's guts* or to *show one's face somewhere* (Knowles; Moon 2006: 51). Interestingly, items that mention a particular part of the body often share connotations or aspects of their meanings. For example, the word heart typically occurs in expressions dealing with emotions and feelings, as in *absence makes the heart grow fonder* or to *lose one's heart to someone* (Knowles; Moon 2006: 51).

Generally speaking, idioms, like metaphors, can refer to situations, actions, or events that epitomise a class of situations, actions, or events. The idiom *skating on thin ice* (Glucksberg 2001: 72) refers to a risky action. It is a phrase that can consequently be used to refer to any activity that is as risky as that activity.<sup>22</sup>

Rock lyrics make abundant use of the conceptual metaphors listed above. Knowles and Moon (2006: 162) point out that rock and pop song lyrics are a good source of data. Their metaphors may be one-off creative metaphors, or clichéd; they may exploit and develop conventional metaphors or idioms; or whole songs may represent a single, extended metaphor, or realise conceptual metaphors such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS HEAT, and so on. The following chapter explains the methodology employed for the examination of metaphors in Beatles' lyrics.

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<sup>22</sup> For more details on different idiom types, refer to Glucksberg 2001: 68-89.

## 5. Methodology

Firstly, it is important to note that this paper is by no means a definite study. I have conducted a pilot study with samples of Beatles' songs that served for the identification and categorisation of metaphors and linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics. The only criterion for a song to be selected was that it had to be an original Beatles' song and not a cover version by the Beatles. All samples are from *The Beatles complete* by Ray Connolly. In order to be able to assess the development of metaphorical lyrics chronologically, it was necessary to divide the career of the Beatles into different periods. By taking into account their personal development, their experiences and their increasing creativity that started in the mid-Sixties, I finally decided on four creative periods: 1962-1963, 1964-1965, 1966-1967 and 1968-1970. Which songs I picked for each period depended, on the one hand, on the linguistic relevance of the lyrics in terms of metaphors and, on the other hand, on the importance of the lyrics for the Beatles themselves.

The next step was to identify the metaphors and categorise them. Given the examples in the theoretical part of this paper, I was already aware of the characteristic features of conventional and poetic metaphors respectively. The most obvious indication for differentiating between conventional and poetic metaphors is that conventional metaphors are such an integral part of everyday language that they are not easily to detect, whereas poetic metaphors can be spotted without much difficulty. Once I identified and marked what I considered as a metaphor, I checked whether my intuition was correct by going back to the theory, in order to compare what features of conventional and poetic metaphors were applicable to my example. Then I categorised all examples accordingly.

Finally, it was not possible to analyse the metaphors in greater detail due to the limited time available. Despite the fact that I do analyse the lyrics occasionally, the reader should be aware that the focus lies on the identification and categorisation of metaphors and not on interpretation.

## 6. The Fab Four

### 6.1. Their songwriting

In retrospect, it is astonishing that at the early stage of their career, their skills as songwriters were completely ignored (Turner 1994: 10). There seemed to be a lack of interest in how they wrote their songs, where the ideas came from, and how much personal information they revealed in their lyrics, despite the fact that *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) was the first album that consisted solely of Lennon and McCartney songs. It was not until the release of more serious albums such as *Revolver* (1966) or *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) that the Beatles began to be taken seriously as artists capable of discussing the creative process of their work.

By the time the Beatles released their first single in 1962, there was already a considerable Lennon and McCartney catalogue because they had been writing together for five years. From early on, each song bore the distinctive signature of either John or Paul because although they were united in their love of primitive American rock 'n' roll, they were markedly different in their approaches to songwriting. Paul's songs were melodic and optimistic while not giving a lot away about his passions and anxieties. John's songs tended to be more rhythmic, his outlook was pessimistic and he was letting his feelings show (Turner 1994: 11).

The second stage of songwriting came in 1964 when Paul and John's horizons were broadened in other ways, by other influences (Turner 1994: 14). With songs like *I'm A Loser*, *You've Got To Hide Your Love Away* and *Help*, there came a new intensity and honesty which signalled that John had discovered that he could be as revealing in songs as he had been in his poems and jottings. The great burst of creativity in the mid- to late sixties came about because they accepted no limits (Turner 1994: 15).

The third stage of Beatles' songwriting was heavily influenced by drugs and eastern meditation (Turner 1994: 15). Songs such as *Tomorrow Never Knows*, *She Said She Said* and *Strawberry Fields Forever* would have never been written without marijuana and LSD. Equally, George Harrison's *Within You Without You* and *The Inner Light* would not have been possible without the experience of India. John's ability to write was first enhanced and then hammered by his experimentation with drugs. He later confessed that LSD had virtually destroyed his ego and that in turn cost him the unacknowledged leadership of the Beatles. In 1964 and 1965, most of the hit singles were songs with John as the major contributor. After *Sgt. Pepper*, the hits were almost all written by Paul, for example *Hello Goodbye*, *Magical Mystery Tour*, *Lady Madonna*, *Hey Jude*, *Get Back*, and *Let It Be*.

The fourth and final era of the Beatles' songwriting began in 1968 (Turner 1994: 15). Against all expectations, it marked a return to simplicity. Although most of the songs were still credited to them as a pair, it was clear that *The Beatles* (*The White Album* as it is popularly known) relied on solo contributions. In 1969, the Beatles decided they had done everything they could ever do together and parted company. As Turner (1994: 15-16) puts it:

In seven years they had gone from young Liverpudlians happy to sing about the delights of chatting up a girl in a ballroom to worldly-wise men waxing philosophical about the power of love and groaning under the weight of their business empire.

They seem to have documented the whole struggle of adolescence, from the desire to simply touch a loved one ('I Wanna Hold Your Hand'), through the feelings of loneliness ('Help!'), moving on to inquisitive experimentation with drugs and religion ('Within You Without You'), to facing up the burdens of earning a living ('Carry That Weight') and marriage ('The Ballad of John and Yoko').

The following chapter investigates the development of metaphors in Beatles' lyrics. For the purpose of this analysis, the Beatles' career is split into four sub-periods in which their thirteen albums published in the respective years are evaluated in terms of their metaphorical contents.

## 6.2. The development of metaphorical lyrics in different stages

### 6.2.1. The period from 1962 to 1963

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the earlier songs performed by the Beatles at the beginning were greatly influenced by the music of other artists such as Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Fats Domino or Ray Charles (Turner 1994: 17). That is why they were often cover versions. For this reason, only few songs of the Beatles' first album *Please Please Me* can be used as data for the analysis of metaphors. They are *I saw her standing there*, *Misery*, *Ask me why*, *Please, please me*, *P.S. I love you*, *Do you want to know a secret*, and *There's a place*. My argument will be that in this period the Beatles mainly use conventional metaphors in their songs.



Graphic 1  
*Please Please Me* (1963)

The song *I saw her standing there* presents a typical example for a metaphor of communication and understanding:

31. I could see that before too long I'd fall in love with her  
We danced through the night

(Connolly 1983: 59 / *I saw her standing there*  
– Paul McCartney)

Here, the phrase *I see* refers to the concept UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING, which is a very common way of expression. Hardly anyone would assume that this is an instance of metaphor because it appears so frequently in everyday language. To fall in love, on the other hand, shows the correlation between emotions and the container metaphor. The activity of falling in love is metaphorically regarded as a SUBSTANCE and therefore as a CONTAINER. The final sentence suggests that dancing is also an activity with the night being the container with a spatial dimension.

Let us consider another example:

32. The world is treating me bad, misery  
I've lost her now for sure  
Can she see she'll always be the only one  
Send her back to me 'cause ev'ry one can see  
Without her I will be in misery

(Connolly 1983: 71 / *Misery* – John Lennon)

In this song, the world is animated, which means that we regard something nonhuman as human. It is an example of personification with the metaphor THE WORLD IS AN ADVERSARY giving an account of why the person in this song is suffering. Lennon is complaining about a girl who has left him and made him lonely. Again, there is the typical concept UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING, which appears twice: *Can she see* and *'cause ev'ry one can see*. The last example *in misery* refers to the concept PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL STATES ARE ENTITIES WITHIN A PERSON. *Misery* indicates feelings of isolation and rejection, which would eventually become a major preoccupation in Lennon's songs.

As is the case in the next song *Ask me why*:

33. I should never, never, never be blue

My happiness still makes me cry  
And in time you'll understand the reason why  
But you're the only love that I've ever had

(Connolly 1983: 46-47 / *Ask me why* – John Lennon)

The first line is an instance of an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN. The characteristic feature is that the DOWN concept is negative. As in the previous song, there is an example of personification. Here it is happiness, which is given human characteristics. While the world was described as an adversary that hurts the person, happiness is depicted as making the person cry in a positive way. The next example in his song is time, which can be used in a large number of expressions. In this case, it is used as a container.

34. But you know there's always rain in my heart  
Why do you make me blue

(Connolly 1983: 36-37 / *Please please me* – John Lennon)

The song *Please please me* uses the concept HEART AS A CONTAINER. The heart mirrors the speaker's emotional state of mind. Rain in the speaker's heart suggests unhappiness and sadness, which is confirmed by the question *Why do you make me blue*. The latter refers to the fact that the speaker is unhappy, again an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN.

Let us consider one more example from the song *P.S. I love you*:

35. As I write this letter, send my love to you  
Remember that I'll always be in love with you  
Treasure these few words 'til we're together  
Keep all my love forever

(Connolly 1983: 40 / *P.S. I love you* – Paul McCartney)

The first line shows that human language works like a conduit. Love is sent from one individual to another. In this song, there are also other references to love. Here, again, we have the LOVE AS A CONTAINER metaphor. The other example refers to LOVE AS A PHYSICAL OBJECT. The girl addressed in this song is asked to keep the man's love. The LOVE AS A CONTAINER metaphor is repeated in the song *Do you want to know a secret*, where the state of being in love is conceptualised as a container.

36. I'm in love with you

(Connolly 1983: 44 / *Do you want to know a secret* – John Lennon)

Here, the state of being in love is conceptualised as a container.

Similarly to examples 32 and 33, we can observe orientational metaphors referring to the concept SAD IS DOWN in Lennon's song *There's a place*:

37. When I feel low  
When I feel blue  
And things you do go round my head  
In my mind there's no sorrow

(Connolly 1983: 104 / *There's a place* – John Lennon)

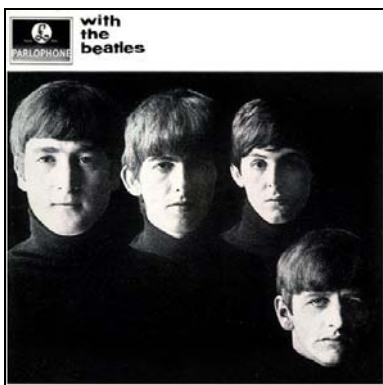
The first two metaphors that appear in this song reflect the negative emotional state of the singer. The third line focuses on the container conceptualisation. It sees the head as a container, where *things go round*. The same applies to the singer's mind.

Generally speaking, the Beatles' first album contains rather simple songs. This may allude to the fact that at that time the Beatles wrote songs in order to gain an immediate reaction from their audience (Davies 1994: 296). As far as metaphors are concerned, orientational metaphors and container



metaphors dominate. The lyrics predominantly deal with love and sorrow respectively.

As the Beatles began to travel, they were exposed to a greater variety of influences that proved beneficial for their songwriting (Turner 1994: 29). Compared to their first album, the second album *With the Beatles*, which was released in the same year, was a much more considered recording. The following examples are taken from this second album.



Graphic 2  
*With the Beatles* (1963)

38. I've got ev'rything that you want, like a heart that's oh so true  
I got arms that long to hold you and keep you by my side  
I got lips that long to kiss you and keep you satisfied

(Connolly 1983: 51 / *From me to you* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

As it can be observed, the first example in the song *From me to you* is a simile where the singer compares himself to a heart. It is an explicit comparison by way of using the link word like. The other two examples arms that long to hold you and lips that long to kiss you are instances of personification.

The following examples are from the song *Thank you girl*.

39. You made me glad when I was blue

And eternally I'll always be in love with you  
I could tell the world a thing or two about our love

(Connolly 1983: 68 / *Thank you girl* – John Lennon)

As can be seen, the first metaphor is an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN. Love, on the other hand, is referred to as a container.

Example 40 illustrates the metaphorical concept PAIN IS MADNESS:

40. She said you hurt her so, She almost lost her mind

(Connolly 1983: 66 / *She loves you* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

In example 41 love is referred to as a container:

41. Imagine I'm in love with you  
When I think about you I can say I'm never, never, never, never blue

(Connolly 1983: 54-55 / *I'll get you* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

The second metaphor here is an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN. Generally speaking, the lyrics are reflective rather than cheerful and seem to owe more to Lennon than McCartney, despite the fact that both songwriters have been given credit for this song. It is one of the earliest songs to formulate Lennon's belief in creative visualisation (Turner 1994: 33). In other words, by imaging changes we want to see, we can actually bring them about.

Let us consider the following:

42. I'll send all my loving to you

(Connolly 1983: 39 / *All my loving* – Paul McCartney)

This example shows the simple structure of the conduit metaphor where communication is conceptualised as a transfer of thoughts, words, and ideas from one person to another just as if those thoughts, words and ideas have physical substance. Like in the previous period, we find orientational metaphors (i.e. UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING) in this album as well. Consider the following:

43. You know you made me cry, I see no use in wond'ring why  
And now you've changed your mind, I see no reason to change mine  
Oh, you're giving me the same old line

(Connolly 1983: 64 / *Not a second time* – John Lennon)

The first two examples are orientational metaphors, i.e. UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING. The third example *you're giving me the same old line* shows an instance of conduit metaphor, which again enables the transfer of a specific repertoire member from one individual to another. In this case, the repertoire member is the same old line, which is given to the speaker by the other person, as claimed by the speaker.

As we can see, orientational and container metaphors still dominate in the second album. However, there are some examples of poetic metaphors. Let us take a look at one of them from *I want to hold your hand*:

44. It's such a feeling that my love I can't hide

(Connolly 1983: 52-53 / *I want to hold your hand* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

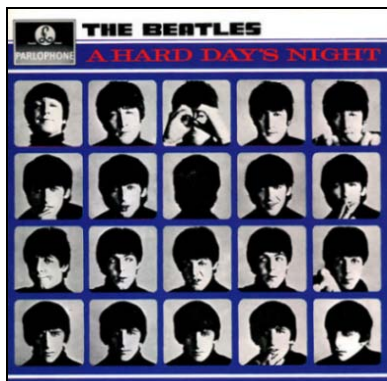
This is an instance of poetic metaphor. Love, which is a feeling, is personified otherwise it would not be possible to hide it like a physical object.

It is not surprising that the metaphors in the songs of the second album resemble to a large extent those of the first album. In other words, love still is a significant topic. The reason is that these songs were written for an audience,

mostly young women that wanted to hear this kind of songs. Consequently, the metaphors mostly contained references to love. The following chapter deals with the period from 1964 to 1965 in which the Beatles released four albums: *A Hard Day's Night*, *Beatles for Sale*, *Help!* and *Rubber Soul*.

### 6.2.2. The period from 1964 to 1965

The Beatles' increased creativity began in 1964, which lasted until drugs and lethargy set in during 1967 (Turner 1994: 44). John Lennon was the major contributor to the ten of the album's thirteen tracks. The Beatles were still writing pop songs but they were putting more of themselves into the lyrics (Turner 1994: 45). The first album that was released in 1964 was *A Hard Day's Night*.



Graphic 3  
*A Hard Day's Night* (1964)

45. It's been a hard day's night<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *A Hard Day's Night* was the last song written and it eventually became the title to both the album and the film. The phrase was attributed to Ringo Starr who said in 1964: "I came up with the phrase 'a hard day's night'. It just came out. We went to do a job and we worked all day and then we happened to work all night. I came out, still thinking it was day and said, 'It's been a hard day ... looked around, saw that it was dark and added ...'s night.'" If Ringo did invent the phrase he must have done so in 1963, and not on the set of the film as has been reported, because John included it in his book *In His Own Write* which was written that year (Turner 1994: 47).

And I've been working like a dog  
I should be sleeping like a log

(Connolly 1983: 83 / *A hard day's night* – John Lennon)

In example 45 I label the phrase *a hard day's night* as a poetic metaphor. *Working like a dog* and *sleeping like a log* is the typical example for a simile because the link word *like* is used.

Let us consider another example:

46. If this is love you've gotta give me more

(Connolly 1983: 86-87 / *I should have known better* – John Lennon)

Love is a commodity that can be increased, hence the demand to give more of what is regarded as love.

47. If I fell in love with you would you promise to be true  
'Cos I've been in love before  
If I give my heart to you

(Connolly 1983: 88-89 / *If I fell* – John Lennon)

In example 47 *fell in love* is an orientational metaphor. Again, the activity of falling in love is regarded metaphorically as a SUBSTANCE and therefore as a CONTAINER which is applicable to the many different kinds of states. The third line refers to the heart as an object of value and a kind of treasure respectively. Despite the fact that the connection between metaphor and metonymy is less recognisable, the metonymic aspect still is present.

In examples 48, 49 and 50 love is referred to as a commodity, a container metaphor and a poetic metaphor respectively:

48. I give her all my love  
The kiss my lover brings she brings to me  
A love like ours could never die  
I know this love of mine will never die

(Connolly 1983: 73 / *And I love her* – Paul McCartney)

Again, the first line refers to the concept of love as a commodity that can be given or taken away. This is also applicable to the second line where the lover brings kisses. In other words, the kiss is a movable commodity. The final lines are typical examples for the poetic metaphors, where anything is possible. Normally, love cannot die like a living being since it is something abstract. However, as a personified object, the death of love does make sense, while it would be untrue if interpreted literally.

49. I'm so in love with you

(Connolly 1983: 103 / *Tell me why* – John Lennon)

In this line, the state of being in love is again conceptualised as a container.

50. Can't buy me love  
For money can't buy me love

(Connolly 1983: 76-77 / *Can't buy me love* – Paul McCartney)

In both lines, love is referred to as a commodity. Despite the fact that according to Paul McCartney, all songs are open to interpretation, the assumption that this song is about prostitution is too far-fetched (Turner 1994: 53).

The following example illustrates the use of an idiomatic expression, i.e. *a shoulder to cry on* – a phrase which cannot be interpreted literally.

51. If you need a shoulder to cry on I hope it will be mine

(Connolly 1983: 72 / *Any time at all* – John Lennon)

The wording of this idiom is fixed which means that in this case *shoulder* cannot be replaced by any other part of the body.

Let us consider another example from the song *I'll cry instead*:

52. I'm gonna break their hearts all 'round the world  
Yes, I'm gonna break them in two

(Connolly 1983: 94-95 / *I'll cry instead* – John Lennon)

The first and the second line refer to the heart as a valuable object. The focus does not lie upon the connection between the heart and the person but the heart as an entity and a kind of treasure is in the foreground. The heart is a delicate and fragile object that can be destroyed easily if not handled with care.

From example 53 it can be concluded that *deep in love* is a variation of the container metaphor to be in love or to fall in love:

53. Someday when we're dreaming deep in love not a lot to say

(Connolly 1983: 107 / *Things we said today* – Paul McCartney)

The next example demonstrates another instance of an orientational metaphor and love as a commodity respectively:

54. I'm gonna let you down and leave you flat  
I'm the one who won your love

(Connolly 1983: 110 / *You can't do that* – John Lennon)

The examples *let you down* and *leave you flat* refer to the spatial concept DOWN. The example in the second line illustrates the use of love as a commodity.

The final example discussed from the album *A hard day's night* deals with heart as a valuable object:

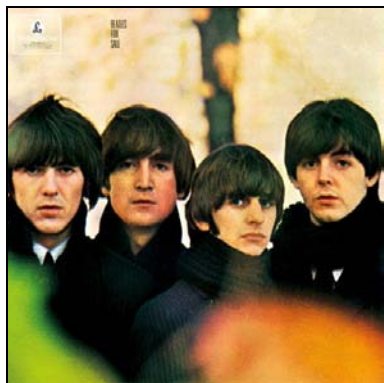
55. You know if you break my heart I'll go, [b]ut I'll be back again

(Connolly 1983: 91 / *I'll be back* – John Lennon)

This example depicts the heart as a manipulable object, a fragile object that must be handled carefully lest it be destroyed easily.

The lyrics of the songs of the third album do not show any significant change in the metaphors that are used. Container metaphors dealing with love and orientational metaphors prevail.

The fourth album, which was released in 1964, was named *Beatles for Sale*. At this point, the Beatles started to experience the downside of the so-called Beatlemania. They had to deal with exhaustion, dejection and the loneliness of life at the top. (Turner 1994: 68). The following lyrics show that the new situation may have already had an influence on their writing style.



Graphic 4  
*Beatles for Sale* (1964)

Example 56 is from the song *I feel fine*:

56. I'm in love with her and I feel fine  
She's so glad she's telling all the world



She's in love with me and I feel fine

(Connolly 1983: 169 / *I feel fine* – John Lennon)

The first line again refers to the conceptualisation of the state of being in love as a container as the many examples before. The second line is also to be understood in a metaphorical sense since it is absolutely impossible to let the whole world know that one is happy. The third line repeats the conceptualisation of the state of being in love as a container as in the first line.

Let us consider another example:

57. She don't give the boys the eye  
She will never make me jealous, gives me all her time as well as  
lovin[g]

(Connolly 1983: 102 / *She's a woman* – Paul McCartney)

To give somebody an eye is defined as looking at another person with romantic interest. This is a typical example for an idiom. The second line is an example for a poetic metaphor where time is conceptualised metaphorically as a physical commodity. In other words, time is something that we can possess, use, acquire, lose, or in this case give. Loving likewise has a physical dimension. Similar to love, it is used as a commodity that people can deal with as they please.

The following example is from the song called *No reply*, which is a typical Lennon song about betrayal and tells a complete story:

58. I nearly died, '[c]os you walked hand in hand with another man in my  
place

(Connolly 1983: 100 / *No reply* – John Lennon)

The singer does not really die but it is a metaphorical way of expressing the amount of pain felt because he saw his girlfriend walk hand in hand with another man.

Let us consider example 59:

59. Of all the love that I have won or have lost,  
Although I laugh and I act like a clown,  
Beneath this mask I am wearing a frown  
My tears are falling like rain from the sky

(Connolly 1983: 97 / *I'm a loser* – John Lennon)

The example *love that I have won or have lost* refers to love as a commodity. The examples *act like a clown* and *wearing a frown* respectively are instances of poetic metaphors. More specifically, it follows the concept LIFE IS A PLAY in which the person corresponds to an actor. The last example *falling like rain from the sky* is a simile.

The following example shows the typical metaphorical use of language where the singer uses the word *blue* in order to describe how he feels inside:

60. Baby's in black and I'm feeling blue

(Connolly 1983: 74 / *Baby's in black* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

Despite the fact that there is no connection between the physical meaning of the word and the meaning of the message, which the singer wants to convey, it is clear that the language is used to simply describe our inside in an imaginative way. *Feeling blue* is a classic example of the message of one's inner feelings communicated to the receiver.

Examples 61 and 62 are instances of poetic metaphors:

61. Eight days a week<sup>24</sup> is not enough to show I care

(Connolly 1983: 78 / *Eight days a week* – Paul McCartney)

62. I will love her forever, for I know love will never die

(Connolly 1983: 79 / *Every little thing* – Paul McCartney)

Especially the example *love will never die* is typical for a poetic metaphor. Normally, love cannot die like a living being since it is something abstract. However, as a personified object, the death of love does make sense, while it would be untrue if interpreted literally.

Comparing the following example 63 to example 60, we can conclude that this is another instance of an orientational metaphor referring to the concept SAD IS DOWN:

63. Look what you're doing, I'm feeling blue and lonely

(Connolly 1983: 105 / *What you're doing* – Paul McCartney)

In contrast to the previous albums, the metaphors in these lyrics already include poetic metaphors, which is a sign for the increasing creativity of the Beatles that started in the mid-Sixties. Container metaphors relating to love as well as orientational metaphors do not dominate anymore. This pattern continues with the fifth album *Help!* which was released in 1965.

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<sup>24</sup> This expression was coined by Ringo Starr when he was complaining about the group's workload that had increased considerably during 1964. McCartney heard it and decided to incorporate it into a song, just as Lennon had incorporated *A hard day's night* into a short story and then into a song (Turner 1994: 63).



Graphic 5  
*Help!* (1965)

64. For red is the colour that will make me blue

(Connolly 1983: 139 / *Yes it is* – John Lennon)

Once more, this line shows the typical metaphorical use of language where the singer uses a word in order to describe how he feels inside.

Let us consider examples 65 and 66:

65. I'm down (I'm really down)

(Connolly 1983: 120 / *I'm down* – Paul McCartney)

66. Help me if you can, I'm feeling down

(Connolly 1983: 114-115 / *Help* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

As can be seen both examples *I'm down* and *I'm feeling down* respectively are orientational metaphors featuring the characteristic UP/DOWN concept.

The next example is a container metaphor where the eyes are referred to as a container:

67. Love was in your eyes

(Connolly 1983: 127 / *The night before* – Paul McCartney)

The following song *You've got to hide your love away* contains examples for poetic metaphors:

68. If she's gone I can't go on feeling two foot small  
Hey, you've got to hide your love away  
How could she say to me love will find a way?

(Connolly 1983: 145 / *You've got to hide your love away* – John Lennon)

The first line is poetic. No human being can be two foot small. By way of exaggeration the singer expresses how he feels when he loses the girl he loves. At this stage, Lennon began to write songs that became more intense and reflected a more personal style of writing. This song in particular is about a relationship that has gone wrong and Lennon gives insight into how he feels about the girl he has lost (Turner 1994: 77). The second line describes love as an object. One could argue that love is being personified because it is said to find its way.

Let us consider another example:

69. Through thick and thin she will always be my friend

(Connolly 1983: 111 / *Another girl* – Paul McCartney)

*Through thick and thin* is an example for an idiomatic expression. The singer means to say that the girl will be his friend in good as well as bad times. As in example 51, the wording of this phrase is fixed, which is characteristic for such conventionalised phrases.

The next example features another orientational metaphor:

70. She said that living with me, is bringing her down

(Connolly 1983: 133 / *Ticket to ride* – John Lennon)

Example 71 is a song which is full of clichéd rhymes and images:<sup>25</sup>

71. I get high when I see you go by  
When you sigh, my, my inside just flies, butterflies,  
Just the sight of you makes night time bright

(Connolly 1983: 125 / *It's only love* – John Lennon)

Similar to example 70, the first line contains an example for an orientational metaphor. However, this song also shows examples for poetic metaphors: *my inside just flies* or *the sight of you makes night time bright*.

Let us consider an example that describes the heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE as in the song *Tell me what you see*:

72. If you let me take your heart I will prove to you,  
Big and black the clouds may be time will pass away,  
If you put your trust in me I'll make bright your day

(Connolly 1983: 131 / *Tell me what you see* – Paul McCartney)

Here, emotions or the connection between the heart and the person is not the focus but the heart as an entity is in the foreground. In the example in the second line, *time will pass*, time is conceptualised as if it had a physical dimension. Passing time demonstrates that the way in which we talk about time

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<sup>25</sup> In the lyric, Lennon describes how his girl lights up the night for him and yet he's suffering from butterflies in his stomach. The real problem is that he is in love. All the songs that Lennon regretted having written were condemned on the grounds of their lyrics rather than their melodies, because he felt that he had produced platitudes rather than expressed any real feeling (Turner 1994: 82).

is similar to the way in which we talk about distance and position. In the third line, the whole person is featured as a container.

Example 73 is ought to be understood in a poetic sense:

73. She's just the girl for me and I want all the world to see we've met

(Connolly 1983: 126 / *I've just seen a face* – Paul McCartney)

Nobody can spread news to the whole world. However, by way of exaggeration the singer shows the degree of happiness about the fact that he has just met a wonderful woman.

The final song discussed from the album *Help!* is *Yesterday*:

74. Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away,  
Now it looks as though they're here to stay  
There's a shadow hanging over me  
Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play

(Connolly 1983: 140 / *Yesterday* – Paul McCartney)

The strength of this song lies in its vagueness. All the listener needs to know is that it is about someone wanting to turn back the clock, to retreat to a time before a tragic event happens. This application is universal (Turner 1994: 84). Troubles are personified and attributed human properties. In other words, *They're here to stay* as if they were made of flesh. The third line is also a poetic way of expressing the anticipation of a tragic event. Love is described as a game. Despite the fact that it is an instance of LIFE IS A GAME metaphor, this metaphor speaks of life and has nothing to do with gambling situations.

Due to the nature of orientational metaphors, it is not surprising that a rather large number of orientational metaphors occur in the lyrics. Nevertheless, there is also a noticeable increase of poetic metaphors, in particular instances

of personification. With *Rubber Soul* came more lyrical subtlety, which is reflected in the metaphors as well.



Graphic 6  
*Rubber Soul* (1965)

75. She was a day tripper, one way ticket yeah

(Connolly 1983: 112-113 / *Day tripper* – John Lennon)

*Day tripper* is not necessarily poetic but rather a typical play on words.<sup>26</sup>

The following song *We can work it out* contains an example for a metaphor and emotion:

76. There's a chance we might fall apart before too long

(Connolly 1983: 134 / *We can work it out* – Paul McCartney)<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Lennon wanted to reflect the influence of the growing drug culture within a Beatles' song. It was his way of referring to those who couldn't, like him, afford the luxury of being almost permanently tripped out (Turner 1994: 86).

<sup>27</sup> Lennon said, You've got Paul writing 'we can work it out', real optimistic. And me (i.e. John), impatient (with) 'Life is very short, And there's no time, For fussing and fighting my friend' (Turner 1994: 87).



Let us consider another example:

77. Working for peanuts is all very fine  
Got no car and it's breaking my heart

(Connolly 1983: 116 / *Drive my car* – Paul McCartney)

The first line is a poetic metaphor while the second line again depicts the heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE.

The following song *Norwegian wood (this bird has flown)* contains a poetic metaphor:

78. And when I awoke I was alone, this bird has flown

(Connolly 1983: 128 / *Norwegian wood (this bird has flown)* – John Lennon)

Here, the girl is described as a bird that has flown away when the lover wakes up in the morning and finds himself all alone.

Example 79 resembles example 59 in that the first line represents the poetic metaphor LIFE AS A PLAY

79. I have had enough, so act your age  
We have lost the time that is so hard to find  
I can't get through my hands are tied  
Though the days are few they're filled with tears

(Connolly 1983: 143 / *You won't see me* – Paul McCartney)

The expression *act your age* relies on our metaphoric understanding of significant parts of life in terms of a play. In this case, the person concerned corresponds to an actor. Time, on the other hand, is described as a physical commodity. The third line *my hands are tied* is an idiom where the meaning of the whole phrase differs from the meaning that might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase. For example, the word *hand*

cannot be replaced by the term feet because it would not make any sense. The wording of this idiom has a fixed meaning which is that a person is unable to help or intervene, thus the expression that one's hands are tied. The final example in this song illustrates a container metaphor. The days represent a container that gets *filled with tears*. It is also poetic because literally this sentence would not make any sense.

Example 80 is the first Beatles' song which is not about love and it marked the beginning of Lennon's overtly philosophical musings (Turner 1994: 91):

80. He's a real nowhere man  
Sitting in his nowhere land  
Making all his nowhere plans for nobody  
He's as blind as he can be, just sees what he wants to see  
Leave it all till somebody else lends you a hand

(Connolly 1983: 129 / *Nowhere man* – John Lennon)

*Nowhere man* was always assumed to be either about a specific person or about an archetypal member of society whose life had no purpose (Turner 1994: 91). This song contains the first example for a metonymy. If we lend somebody a hand, this means that we offer our help. This phrase is not to be understood literally.

In the next example time is again conceptualised as if it had a physical dimension:

81. And you've got time to rectify all the things that you should

(Connolly 1983: 132 / *Think for yourself* – George Harrison)

To put it differently, time is an object that can be dealt with like any other commodity.

The following song marks the transition between the "boy-meets-girl love" of Beatlemania and the "peace-and-harmony love" of the hippy era (Turner

1994: 93). Understood at the time as just another Beatles' love song, it was actually sprinkled with clues pointing to a song of a different kind. The love that Lennon was now singing about offered freedom. It even offered 'the way'. He may have been thinking of "the word" in the evangelistic sense of "preaching the word" (Turner 1994: 93). LSD often produced experiences of a religious nature and could provide people with the idea that a universal or brotherly love is possible and constitutes man's best if not only hope. It was for this reason that "love" became such a "buzz word" within the drug culture of the mid- to late Sixties, Lennon being one of the first songwriters to catch the mood (Turner 1994: 93). He later recalled the song as one of the Beatles' first song with a message and the beginnings of the group's role as cultural leaders who were expected to provide answers to social and spiritual questions. Lennon said this song was about "getting smart", meaning the state of realisation which users of marijuana and LSD were claiming as theirs (Turner 1994: 93).

82. Give the word a chance to say that the word is just the way  
It's so fine, it's sunshine, it's the word love

(Connolly 1983: 135 / *The word* – John Lennon)

The term word is personified and is thus an example for a poetic metaphor. The last line is an instance of a simile, however, without any linking word.

Let us consider another example:

83. I need to make you see what you mean to me

(Connolly 1983: 136-137 / *Michelle* – Paul McCartney)

This example describes the metaphorical concept UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING.

The following example features heart and mind as containers:

84. What goes on in my heart, what goes on in my mind  
You are tearing me apart  
When I saw him with you I could feel my future fold  
I met you in the morning waiting for the tides of time  
But now the tide is turning, I can see that I was blind  
Did you mean to break my heart and watch me die

(Connolly 1983: 138 / *What goes on* – John Lennon)

Again, the last line is a depiction of the heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE. Example 85, on the other hand, offers another example for an orientational metaphor featuring the concept SAD IS DOWN:

85. She's the kind of girl who puts you down when friends are there

(Connolly 1983: 121 / *Girl* – John Lennon)

The following example shows another poetic metaphor:

86. Love has a nasty habit of disappearing overnight

(Connolly 1983: 122-123 / *I'm looking through you* – Paul McCartney)

As can be seen, this is a personification of love.

The following example can be compared to example 84 where in both cases the heart is depicted as an OBJECT OF VALUE.

87. But if your heart breaks, don't wait, turn me away  
And if your heart's strong, hold on, I won't delay

(Connolly 1983: 142 / *Wait* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

Let us consider another example:

88. If I had some time to spend then I guess I'd be with you my friend  
I'm too much in love

(Connolly 1983: 118-119 / *If I needed someone* – George Harrison)

The first line with the example *time to spend* describes time as a commodity having a physical dimension. The second line is a container metaphor because to be in love is an activity which is regarded in metaphorical terms as a substance and therefore as a container.

The final example *hide your head in the sand* is another idiomatic expression. In other words, it is a conventionalised phrase where the meaning of the whole phrase differs from the meaning which might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase:

89. Hide your head in the sand

(Connolly 1983: 130 / *Run for your life* – John Lennon)

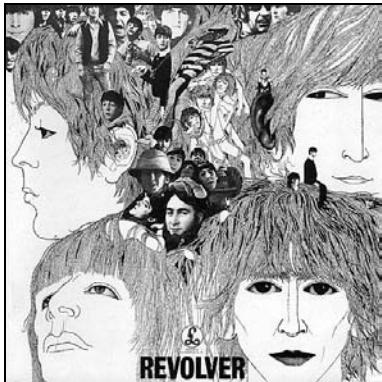
Although there had been hints of a new direction on the preceding albums, *Rubber Soul* marked a major period of transition. Lennon would later call it the beginning of the group's self-conscious period; the end of the Beatles' "tribal child-like" stage (Turner 1994: 86). Despite the cover, with its deliberately distorted photograph of the Beatles suggesting the perception shifts of LSD and marijuana, this was by no means a psychedelic album. Musically however, the Beatles explored new sounds and new subject matters and with that came a further shift to poetic metaphors. There was a playfulness to *Rubber Soul* that extended from wordplay of the title down to the "beep beeps" and "tit tits" of the backing vocals (Turner 1994: 86). McCartney was quoted at the time as saying that they were now into humorous songs and both *Drive My Car* with its role reversal, and *Norwegian Wood*, with its naïve seduction scene, fitted into this

category. For a group which has only ever sung about love, *Nowhere Man*, a song about lack of belief, was a breakthrough: other songs like *The Word* and *In My Life* were only tangentially about boy-girl relationships. The love songs of this period showed a new maturity. McCartney's *We Can Work It Out* was a long way from simplicities expressed in *She Loves You* or *I Want To Hold Your Hand*. Lennon's *The Word* pointed in the direction of the universal love that would later be the basis of songs like *Within You Without You* and *All You Need Is Love* (Turner 1994: 86).

The following period covers the third stage of the Beatle's songwriting, which was heavily influenced by drugs and Eastern meditation.

### **6.2.3. The period from 1966 to 1967**

*Revolver* not only marked a significant development in the Beatles' sound, but also the end of an era. After this album, all their music was given shape in the studio, with very little thought as to whether the songs could be reproduced in concert (Turner 1994: 99). Under the influence of the hippy movement in America and the avant-garde scene in Britain, they had also started to write for a different audience. Encounters with the underground scene, along with the effect of psychedelic drugs, were about to alter their perceptions of both themselves and their music (Turner 1994: 99). *Revolver* was an album bursting with new ideas. Not only did it introduce musical styles ranging from children's singalong to a psychedelic melange of backward tape loops, it also presented a strange mix of song topics – taxation, Tibetan Buddhism, law-breaking doctors, lonely spinsters, sleep, submarine and sunshine (Turner 1994: 99). The Beatles had entered a new phase of being recording artists rather than performers.



Graphic 7  
*Revolver* (1966)

The examples 90, 91, 92, 93 and 94 are all instances of poetic metaphor.

90. If you drive a car, I'll tax the street  
 If you try to sit, I'll tax your seat  
 If you get too cold, I'll tax the heat  
 If you take a walk, I'll tax your feet  
 Now my advice for those who die, declare the pennies on your eyes

(Connolly 1983: 162 / *Taxman* – George Harrison)

As can be seen in example 90, Harrison is playing with images. This is one of the characteristic features of a poetic metaphor and therefore examples such as *tax the street*, *tax your seat*, *tax your heat* and *tax your feet* can be labelled as poetic metaphors.

Let us consider another example:

91. [Eleanor Rigby] waits at the window, wearing a face that she keeps in a jar by the door  
 Eleanor Rigby died in the church and was buried along with her name

(Connolly 1983: 149 / *Eleanor Rigby* – Paul McCartney; with contributions from John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr)

As already mentioned, these examples are also poetic metaphors since none of these phrases makes any sense if interpreted literally.

The same explanation is applicable to example 92:

92. When I'm in the middle of a dream, stay in bed, float upstream  
Please don't spoil my day, I'm miles away, and after all, I'm only sleeping  
Keeping an eye on the world going by my window, taking my time

(Connolly 1983: 158 / *I'm only sleeping* – John Lennon)

As is shown in example 93, time is illustrated as having a physical dimension:

93. You don't get time to hang a sign on me  
A life-time is so short, a new one can't be bought

(Connolly 1983: 159 / *Love you to* – George Harrison)

Life, on the other hand, is described as a commodity that can or, as in this instance, cannot be bought.

From the next example we can infer that this is a poetic metaphor where love is personified:

94. But to love her is to meet her everywhere, knowing that love is to share  
Each one believing that love never dies

(Connolly 1983: 153 / *Here, there and everywhere* – Paul McCartney)

Let us consider another example:

95. I said who put all those things in your head

(Connolly 1983: 165 / *She said she said* – John Lennon)



Here, the head is depicted as a container and thus is a container metaphor. This is also the case in the following example:

96. I'm in love and it's a sunny day

(Connolly 1983: 150 / *Good day sunshine* – Paul McCartney)

*In love* describes the state of being in love which is regarded as a substance and hence a container.

The chain of poetic metaphors is interrupted by example 97 which shows an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN.

97. When your prized possessions start to weigh you down

(Connolly 1983: 148 / *And your bird can sing* – John Lennon)

However, the examples of poetic metaphors continue in the song *For no one*:

98. She takes her time and doesn't feel she has to hurry

When she says her love is dead

There will be times when all the things she said will fill your head

(Connolly 1983: 156 / *For no one* – Paul McCartney)

In the example *she takes her time*, time is referred to as a physical commodity. The second line *love is dead* illustrates the personification of love. In other words, love is like a person who passes away. The last example in this song is a container metaphor with the head as the container.

The following example shows another instance of an orientational metaphor. This time, however, there is not only an example for the concept SAD IS DOWN but also HAPPY IS UP.

99. If you are down he'll pick you up

You're feeling fine

(Connolly 1983: 146 / *Doctor Robert* – Paul McCartney)

Example 100 contains three different kinds of metaphors:

100. My head is filled with things to say  
The games begin to drag me down  
I feel hung up and I don't know why  
I've got time

(Connolly 1983: 154-155 / *I want to tell you* – George Harrison)

In the first example *my head is filled with things*, the head is referred to as a container. Thus, this is a container metaphor. The second example *drag me down* shows an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN. Finally, there is a poetic metaphor with time having a physical dimension.

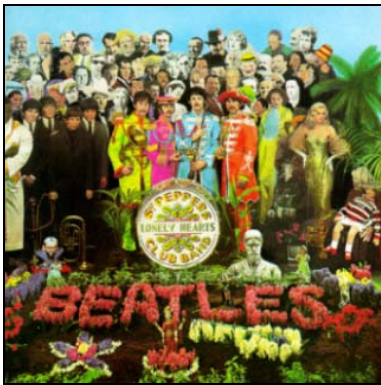
The following song *Tomorrow never knows* also contains examples for poetic metaphors:

101. Turn off your mind relax and float down-stream  
Lay down all thought surrender to the void  
That love is all and love is everyone  
That ignorance and haste may mourn the dead  
Listen to the colour of your dreams

(Connolly 1983: 163 / *Tomorrow never knows* – John Lennon)

The most striking result to emerge from this data is that the amount of poetic metaphors has significantly increased. The majority of the metaphors in these lyrics is poetic. In addition, there are, as expected, examples of orientational metaphors and container metaphors as well.

One of the problems of success was that people had begun to expect so much from the Beatles (Turner 1994: 121). In order to avert his pressure, McCartney came up with the idea of taking on the characters of Sgt. Pepper and his musicians. It was a new identity, which would give the band some much needed creative freedom. As The Beatles, they had become self-conscious while as the Lonely Hearts Club Band they did not have any expectations to live up to (Turner 1994: 121). The Beatles had intended to write old-fashioned lyrics expressed with a satirical psychedelic intensity and to use a title that appealed to the late “Sixties vogue” for long and surreal band names – such as Jefferson Airplane (Turner 1994: 121).



Graphic 8

*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967)

The following example illustrates a container metaphor:

102. Penny Lane is in my ears and in my eyes

(Connolly 1983: 184-185 / *Penny Lane* – Paul McCartney)

The person represents the container and Penny Lane, which is a street in Liverpool, is the subject that is put into the container.

Let us consider example 103:

103. We're Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

(Connolly 1983: 186-187 / *Sgt. Pepper's lonely hearts club band* – Paul McCartney)

The title of the album is already a clear illustration of metonymy. It describes the heart as the metonymy for the person. The heart is personified and the emotions are conceptualised as acting independently.

The song *With a little help from my friends* also contains a rather well-known example for metonymy:

104. Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song

(Connolly 1983: 196-197 / *With a little help from my friends* – John Lennon; Paul McCartney)

In the first line, attention is perceived as an entity, which has to be attracted. By means of metonymy this is represented by the ears. In other words, in the metonymy EAR FOR ATTENTION a body part, which is used for hearing, is featured as being performed in a highly specific manner. Thus, the ear stands for a certain attribute, i.e. attention, of its typical function and this is made possible when attention is made the target domain in a metaphorical mapping and when within the target domain a metonymic mapping is carried out.

Let us consider another example:

105. Picture yourself in a boat on a river with tangerine trees and  
marmalade skies  
A girl with kaleidoscope eyes  
Cellophane flower of yellow and green towering over your head  
Look for the girl with the sun in her eyes

Follow her down to a bridge by the fountain where rocking horse  
people eat marshmallow pies  
Newspaper taxis appear on the shore waiting to take you away  
Climb in your back with your head in the clouds and you're gone  
Picture yourself on a train in the station with plasticine porters with  
looking glass ties

(Connolly 1983: 193 / *Lucy in the sky with diamonds* – John Lennon)

The whole song is full of imagery making use of poetic metaphors. Lennon invents expressions by simply combining words. In respect to “newspaper taxi”, Lennon once said that he consciously wrote poetry at that time or rather self-conscious poetry, as he put it (Wenner 2002: 29).

Example 106 is similar to example 89:

106. Me hiding me [sic] head in the sand

(Connolly 1983: 175 / *Getting better* – Paul McCartney)

This is an idiomatic expression. In other words, it is a conventionalised phrase where the meaning of the whole phrase differs from the meaning which might be produced by interpreting the individual words in the phrase.

Let us consider two more examples for poetic metaphors:

107. And the people – who hide themselves behind a wall of illusion  
We were talking – about the love we all could share – when we  
find it  
And life flows on within you and without you  
We were talking – about the love that's gone so cold  
And the time will come when you see we're all one

(Connolly 1983: 198-199 / *Within you without you* – George Harrison)

108. I could be handy, mending a fuse when your lights have gone  
Yours sincerely wasting away

(Connolly 1983: 194-195 / *When I'm sixty four*  
– Paul McCartney)

Both examples deal with the circle of life. The death of a person is described in a metaphorical way.

The song *Lovely Rita* provides another example with the description of the heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE:

109. When it gets dark I tow your heart away

(Connolly 1983: 180-181 / *Lovely Rita* – Paul McCartney)

Finally, let us consider this example:

110. Going to work don't want to go feeling low down  
Everything is closed it's like a ruin  
After a while you start to smile now you feel cool  
Watching the skirts start to flirt now you're in gear

(Connolly 1983: 176 / *Good morning, good morning* – John Lennon)

The first line and the third line are examples for an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN and HAPPY IS UP respectively. The second line *like a ruin* is a simile. The last example describes a typical metonymy, i.e. the skirts represent the girls that flirt with the man.

As can be seen, the numbers of poetic metaphors rise steadily. The ninth album is the *Magical Mystery Tour*, which in fact was a pioneering 50-minute colour feature for television (Turner 1994: 135). Starting as McCartney's project, soon all the Beatles were heavily involved in every aspect of production. The

songs from this period are the wildest, most psychedelic collection the Beatles put together.



Graphic 9  
*Magical Mystery Tour* (1967)

The first example is from the song *All you need is love*:

111. Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time

(Connolly 1983: 166 / *All you need is love* –  
John Lennon)

Here, time is illustrated as having a physical dimension and must therefore be categorised as a poetic metaphor.

Let us consider example 112:

112. When I look into your eyes, your love is there for me  
And the more I go inside the more there is to see  
The love that's shining all around you  
Floating down the stream of time, of life to life with me  
All the world is birthday cake

(Connolly 1983: 234-235 / *It's all too much* –  
George Harrison)

The first line is an example for a container metaphor with eyes as a container. Moreover, love is personified which as a result causes love to have characteristics that only physical objects can have. Time is likewise described as having a physical dimension. The final example likens the world to a birthday cake, which is an instance of simile except that in this case the link word is missing.

The following songs *Magical mystery tour* and *The fool on the hill* both contain poetic metaphors:

113. The Magical Mystery Tour is waiting to take you away  
The Magical Mystery Tour is dying to take you away

(Connolly 1983: 182-183 / *Magical mystery tour* – Paul McCartney)

As can be seen *The Magical Mystery Tour* is personified and thus an example for a poetic metaphor. At the same time, it is an instance of metonymy because the *Magical Mystery Tour* stands for the people who are part of this tour and want to please the audience. Metonymy is also shown in example 114:

114. And the eyes in his head see the world spinning around  
Well on the away, head in a cloud, the man of a thousand voices  
talking perfectly loud

(Connolly 1983: 174 / *The fool on the hill* – Paul McCartney)

This is not simply a poetic metaphor but more specifically it is an instance of metonymy because the eyes stand for the whole person.

Let us consider another example:

115. Lift up your hearts and sing me a song that was a hit before your  
Mother was born



(Connolly 1983: 200-201 / *Your mother should know* – Paul McCartney)

Here, the heart is described as an object like any other physical object that can be touched.

The following song *I am the walrus* is full of similes that are characterised by the use of the link word *like*.

116. See how they run like pigs from a gun  
See how they fly  
Sitting on a cornflake – waiting for the van to come  
You let your face grow long  
See how they fly like Lucy in the sky see how they run  
See how they smile like pigs in a sty

(Connolly 1983: 178-179 / *I am the walrus* – John Lennon)

Overall, example 116 can be described as poetic.

The following song *Lady Madonna* in example 117 offers two types of metaphors:

117. Friday night arrives without a suitcase  
Sunday morning creeping like a nun  
Listen to the music playing in your head

(Connolly 1983: 236-237 / *Lady Madonna* – John Lennon)

The examples *Friday night arrives without a suitcase* and *Sunday morning creeping like a nun* respectively are without any doubt poetic. The weekdays *Friday* and *Sunday* are personified. In other words, they take the shape of human beings and can therefore act as human beings. *Creeping like a nun* contains an example for a simile. The third example is an instance of container metaphor with the head being the container.

Let us consider one more example before completing the third period:

118. Remember to let her into your heart  
The minute you let her under your skin  
Don't carry the world upon your shoulders  
Hey Jude, don't let me down

(Connolly 1983: 306-307 / *Hey Jude* – Paul McCartney)

*Let her into your heart* describes the heart as a container. The second and the third lines are poetic metaphors because they elaborate and extend in order to create a new imagery. The final example *don't let me down* is an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN.

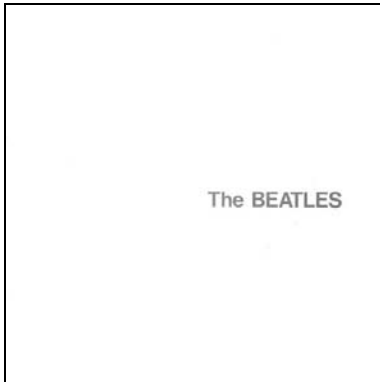
From all these examples, we can conclude that poetic metaphors and personification are predominant. One reason is certainly the nature of the album, which involves elements of carnival which itself is all about personifications. The *Magical Mystery Tour* completes the third period.

#### 6.2.4. The period from 1968 to 1970

The fourth and last period marks a return to simplicity. This, however, does not mean that the lyrics are as simple as the ones the Beatles wrote when they produced their first album. The simplicity is reflected by the album itself, which has a plain white cover with the simple title *The Beatles*.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Due to its white cover, this album is commonly known as *The White Album*.



Graphic 10

*The Beatles* commonly referred to as *The White Album* (1968)

As can be seen from example 119, this is an instance of a poetic metaphor:

119. Well the Ukraine girls really knock me out

(Connolly 1983: 210-211 / *Back in the U.S.S.R.* – Paul McCartney)

The term **literally** could be used in order to add emphasis to this exaggerated statement. In spite of the lack of this term, it is nevertheless obvious that this phrase must be interpreted metaphorically rather than literally.

The example of poetic metaphors continues with the song *Dear Prudence*:

120. The clouds will be a daisy chain

(Connolly 1983: 220-221 / *Dear Prudence* – John Lennon)

The clouds in example 120 are likened to a bunch of flowers which is a simile without the use of a link word.

Let us consider another example for poetic metaphors:

121. Looking through the bent backed tulips  
 Looking through a glass onion  
Fixing a hole in the ocean

Trying to make a dove-tail joint

(Connolly 1983: 223 / *Glass onion* – John Lennon)

The description of the tulips suggests the personification of a flower. One would normally associate *bent backed* with the posture of an elderly person. None of these examples makes sense if interpreted literally. Consequently, these metaphors are simply figurative uses of language or play of words.

So far, there have been very few examples for metonymy. The following song contains more examples for this type of metaphor:

122. Desmond says to Molly, “Girl, I like your face.”  
Desmond lets the children lend a hand

(Connolly 1983: 245 / *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da* – Paul McCartney)

The first example *I like your face* is a metonymy with the concept of FACE FOR PERSON. It is a typical example for a part-for-whole metonymy in which the face is mapped onto the person. The second example *lend a hand* is likewise a metonymy of the same category.

As is shown in example 123, both *love* and *guitar* are personified and are attributed human properties. Therefore, it is an example for a poetic metaphor.

123. I look at you all see the love there that's sleeping while my guitar  
gently weeps

(Connolly 1983: 254-255 / *While my guitar gently weeps* – George Harrison)

Let us consider another example:

124. She's well acquainted with the touch of the velvet hand like a  
lizard on a window pane

I need a fix 'cause I'm going down

(Connolly 1983: 224-225 / *Happiness is a warm gun* – John Lennon)

Here, the simile in the first line compares the woman to a lizard. The second example *going down* is an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN.

Examples 125 and 126 provide plenty of examples for poetic metaphors. What both songs have in common is that *blackbird* and *piggies* respectively are terms used in order to describe actual people.

125. Blackbird singing in the dead of night  
Take these broken wings and learn to fly  
Take these sunken eyes and learn to see

(Connolly 1983: 216 / *Blackbird* – Paul McCartney)

126. Have you seen the bigger piggies in their starched white shirts?  
You will find the bigger piggies stirring up the dirt, always have clean shirts to play around in  
In their styes with all their backing they don't care what goes on around  
Everywhere there's lots of piggies living piggy lives  
You can see them out for dinner with their piggy wives clutching forks and knives to eat their bacon

(Connolly 1983: 258-259 / *Piggies* – George Harrison)

Let us consider another example in the song *Rocky Racoon*:

127. He said, "Danny boy this is a showdown."

(Connolly 1983: 246-247 / *Rocky Racoon* – Paul McCartney)

The concept LIFE IS A BATTLE shows that this metaphorical concept relies on our metaphoric understanding of significant parts of life in terms of a battle. Here, the battle is specified as a showdown between two men.

Example 128 shows another instance of an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN:

128. Don't pass me by, don't make me cry, don't make me blue

(Connolly 1983: 202-203 / *Don't pass me by* – Ringo Starr)

Examples 129 and 130 are poetic metaphors: The phrases cannot be interpreted literally but they are examples of how words can be elaborated and sometimes exaggerated.

129. Julia, Julia, ocean child, calls me  
Julia, seashell eyes, windy smile, calls me  
Her hair of floating sky is shimmering  
Julia, Julia, morning moon, touch me  
When I cannot sing my heart I can only speak my mind  
Julia, sleeping sand, silent cloud, touch me

(Connolly 1983: 238-239 / *Julia* – John Lennon)

130. My mother was of the sky  
My father was of the earth  
But I am of the universe  
The eagle picks my eye, the worm he licks my bone  
I feel so suicidal just like Dylan's Mr. Jones

(Connolly 1983: 264-265 / *Yer Blues* – John Lennon)

The following example also vividly illustrates the use of poetic metaphor:

131. Swaying daisies sing a lazy song beneath the sun

(Connolly 1983: 244 / *Mother nature's son* – Paul McCartney)

The example *Swaying daisies sing a lazy song* shows that the flowers are personified. Thus, they can do what human beings are able to do, for example singing a song.

Since exaggeration is a characteristic feature of poetic metaphor, example 132 is undoubtedly poetic:

132. I'm coming down fast but I'm miles above you  
I'm coming down fast but don't let me break you

(Connolly 1983: 226-227 / *Helter skelter* – Paul McCartney)

Poetic metaphors continue with example 133:

133. So many tears I was searching  
So many tears I was wasting

(Connolly 1983: 262-263 / *Long long long* – George Harrison)

The phrase cannot be understood literally but must be interpreted metaphorically.

Let us consider another example:

134. If you want money for people with minds that hate

(Connolly 1983: 314-315 / *Revolution* – John Lennon)

*Minds that hate* stand for people that hate. Hence, this is an example for metonymy. In other words, the word for a part of something is used in reference to the whole.

The next example *in love* shows that this is an example for a container metaphor. The reason is that the state of being in love is regarded as a substance and thus as a container.

135. I'm in love but I'm lazy

(Connolly 1983: 230-231 / *Honey pie* – Paul McCartney)

Let us consider another example:

136. A ginger sling with a pineapple heart  
Coconut fudge really blows down those blues  
The sweat is gonna fill your head

(Connolly 1983: 256-257 / *Savoy Truffle* – George Harrison)

These lyrics likewise contain poetic metaphors. The final example is a container metaphor with the head as a container.

137. I'm in love for the first time  
It's a love that lasts forever  
It's a love that had no past

(Connolly 1983: 268-269 / *Don't let me down* – John Lennon)

This example is also a container metaphor. The examples dealing with love in lines two and three are poetic metaphors.

Despite the fact that the Beatles returned to simplicity, their songwriting was not affected by it. The amount of poetic metaphors is still overwhelming



compared to the lyrics the Beatles wrote in the early Sixties. The eleventh album *Yellow Submarine* only offers a very limited amount of data because the majority of the compositions was performed by orchestra, without the addition of any lyrics.



Graphic 11  
*Yellow Submarine* (1968)

138. And we lived beneath the waves in our yellow submarine  
(Connolly 1983: 164 / *Yellow Submarine*)

This example is a poetic metaphor. The people do not literally live beneath the waves. They simply travel in a yellow submarine.

Let us consider another example:

139. When I look into your eyes, your love is there for me  
And the more I go inside the more there is to see  
The love that's shining all around you  
Floating down the stream of time, of life to life with me  
All the world is birthday cake

(Connolly 1983: 234-235 / *It's all too much* – George Harrison)

Here, the eyes are depicted as a container while time is described in a poetic way. The last example *the world is birthday cake* is a simile except that in this case the link word is missing.

The final example is from the song *All you need is love*. As is shown in example 140, time is a location as indicated by *in*. Thus, this type of metaphor is a container metaphor.

140. Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time

(Connolly 1983: 166 / *All you need is love* – John Lennon)

Seven years on from their first recordings at the Abbey Road Studios, the Beatles returned for what proved to be their final sessions together. Back in June 1962, they were “wide-eyed provincial boys” keen to make their mark on the music business (Turner 1994: 187). By July 1969, they had become sophisticates bored with the world, their loves destroyed by power and money struggles.



Graphic 12  
*Abbey Road* (1969)

As is shown in example 141 the phrase *the words are leaving his lips* suggests that the lips are a container. Therefore, the example in this song is an instance of container metaphor.

141. But as the words are leaving his lips, a noise comes from behind

(Connolly 1983: 276 / *Maxwell's silver hammer*  
– Paul McCartney)

Let us consider the following example from the song *Oh! Darling*:

142. Well you know I nearly broke down and died  
I'll never let you down

(Connolly 1983: 281 / *Oh! Darling* – Paul  
McCartney)

*I nearly broke down and died* and *I'll never let you down* respectively demonstrate examples for orientational metaphors. The concept used is SAD IS DOWN.

The examples 143, 144, 145 and 146 are all poetic metaphors.

143. I'd like to be under the sea in an octopus's garden in the shade  
He'd let us in, knows where we've been, in his octopus's garden in  
the shade  
We would be warm below the storm in our little hide-away beneath  
the waves  
Resting our head on the sea-bed in an octopus's garden near a  
cave

(Connolly 1983: 284-285 / *Octopus's garden* –  
Ringo Starr)

144. Because the world is round it turns me on

(Connolly 1983: 253 / *Because* – John  
Lennon)

145. You never give me your money, you only give me your funny  
paper

(Connolly 1983: 290-291 / *You never give me  
your money* – Paul McCartney)

This song is in fact made up of three distinct fragments. The first, which develops the line in the title, is an allusion to the Beatles' financial problems saying that instead of money all they ever seemed to get was "funny paper" (Turner 1994: 194).

146. Sleeps in a hole in the road  
Keeps a ten bob note<sup>29</sup> up his nose

(Connolly 1983: 278 / *Mean Mr. Mustard* – John Lennon)

Let us consider another example:

147. Golden Slumbers fill your eyes  
Smiles awake you when you rise

(Connolly 1983: 272 / *Golden Slumbers* – Paul McCartney)

Here, the eyes are described as a container. Thus, the example in the first line is a container metaphor. *Smiles*, on the other hand, are personified. Due to this personification, the *smiles* can take over functions of a human being such as waking up another person.

Finally, the example in the song *The End* illustrates love as a physical commodity. In other words, love can be possessed and dealt with like any other object.

148. And in the end the love you take is equal to the love you make

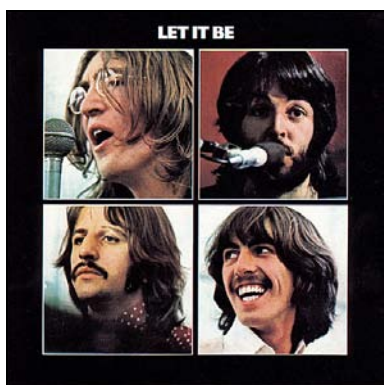
(Connolly 1983: 270 / *The End* – Paul McCartney)

*Let it Be* was the last album that was published before the Beatles separated for good. Instead of being a document of how the group created songs for an

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<sup>29</sup> A British ten shilling note. The second line is Lennon's own invention and has nothing to do with snorting cocaine (Turner 1994: 195).

album, *Let it be* became a record of how the group fell apart (Turner 1994: 174). By the time *Let it be* was released the Beatles had already ceased to exist. The following lyrics show that at the end of their career the Beatles had changed from provincial boys to serious artists.



Graphic 13  
*Let It Be* (1970)

As can be seen from the following examples 149 and 150, these are instances of poetic metaphors.

149. You and I have memories longer than the road that stretches out ahead  
 You and me chasing paper, getting nowhere on our way back home

(Connolly 1983: 288-289 / *Two of us* – Paul McCartney)

*Memories longer than the road* show the typical feature of a poetic metaphor, which is elaboration and exaggeration. The same applies to the example *chasing paper* which, if understood literally, does not make any sense.

Example 150, on the other hand, is one large metaphor, since it is a song about writing songs. It vividly describes how a song comes into existence. This creative process is depicted in terms of similes, for example *like endless rains*, *like a million eyes* or *like a million suns*.

150. Words are flowing out like endless rains into a paper cup  
 They slither wildly as they slip away across the universe

Pools of sorrow, waves of joy are drifting through my open mind  
 Possessing and caressing me  
 Images of broken light that dance before me like a million eyes  
 They call me on and on across the universe  
 Thoughts meander like a restless wind inside a letter box  
 They tumble blindly as they make their way across the universe  
 Sounds of laughter shades of life are ringing through my opened  
 ears inciting and inviting me  
 Limitless undying Love which shines around me like a million  
suns, and calls me on and on across the universe

(Connolly 1983: 206-207 / *Across the universe*  
 – John Lennon)

Let us consider another example:

151. Dig it, like a rolling stone,  
Like the FBI and the CIA,  
 And Doris Day,  
 Matt Busby

(Connolly 1983: 300-301 / *Dig it* – John  
 Lennon; Paul McCartney; George Harrison;  
 Ringo Starr)<sup>30</sup>

The link word *like* shows that this is an instance of a simile where something is compared by using link words.

As many examples before, the following example *broken hearted* illustrates the concept of heart as an OBJECT OF VALUE:

152. And when the broken hearted people living in the world agree

(Connolly 1983: 304-305 / *Let it be* – Paul  
 McCartney)

As can be seen in the following example, this is another instance of a simile:

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<sup>30</sup> The version released on *Let it be* was an excerpt from a much longer jam session in which all the Beatles made up lines on the spot, which explains the shared composed credit (Turner 1994: 178). There was a lot of time spent hanging around reading newspapers when they recorded which might account for the references to the FBI and CIA.

153. All that I was looking for was somebody who looked like you

(Connolly 1983: 310-311 / *I've got a feeling* – Paul McCartney)

The following song *The long and winding road* can be compared to Lennon's *Across the universe* in example 150 in that the whole song is metaphorical.

154. The long and winding road that leads to your door will never disappear  
The wild and windy night that the rain washed away has left a pool  
of tears crying for the day

(Connolly 1983: 295 / *The long and winding road* – Paul McCartney)

Let us consider another example:

155. Come on baby don't be cold as ice

(Connolly 1983: 302-303 / *One after 909* – John Lennon)

Here, *cold as ice* is an example of a simile. As can be seen, the link word *as* is used in order to compare two objects, i.e. a person and ice.

The next song *For you blue* provides another example for an orientational metaphor with the concept SAD IS DOWN:

156. I want you at the moment I feel blue

(Connolly 1983: 204-205 / *For you blue* – George Harrison)

Here, again *feeling blue* is a classic example of the message of one's inner feelings communicated to the receiver.

It can be seen from example 157 that the song *The ballad of John and Yoko* is a poetic way to describe the story of Lennon and Ono:

157. The way things are going they're gonna crucify me  
The newspaper said, "Say, what you doing in bed?"  
They look just like two gurus in drag

(Connolly 1983: 308-309 / *The ballad of John and Yoko* – John Lennon)

*Crucify me* can only be understood in a metaphorical sense. The example *the newspaper said* is an instance of metonymy. Here, the newspaper stands for the journalists conducting an interview with Lennon and Ono. Finally, *like two gurus in drag* demonstrates the use of a simile indicated through the link word *like*.

Let us consider the final example:

158. I'm in love with you  
Got me escaping from this zoo  
For your sweet top lip I'm in the queue

(Connolly 1983: 260-261 / *Old brown shoe* – George Harrison)

Here, *in love* indicates that this is an example for a container metaphor. This also applies to the example in the second line *escaping from this zoo*. The last example *sweet top lip* shows creativity by describing lips as sweet as if they were some sweet fruit.

In summary, it can be stated that these examples of songs, roughly in chronological order of their release, prove an obvious development from predominantly container to poetic metaphors.



## 7. Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to determine metaphors and other linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics. The hypothesis that I wanted to explore was that the Beatles had become more metaphorical in the course of their career. I decided that the best method to adopt for this investigation was to employ the conceptual metaphor theory based on Lakoff.

In respect of my thesis, two limitations need to be considered. The first one lies in the fact that I merely categorised the metaphors for which I defined two main categories: the conventional and the poetic metaphor respectively. Metaphors that were not clearly conventional, I labelled as poetic. The second limitation is that, in spite of the fact that I assigned each song to its songwriter, I did not evaluate the metaphors in terms of their authors.

Returning to the hypothesis posed at the beginning of this study it is now possible to state that indeed the Beatles had become more metaphorical. The Beatles offer a huge scale of songs ranging from simple love songs they wrote at the beginning of the career to lugubrious and more profound lyrics several years later. Therefore, the most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that in terms of metaphors there is a noticeable change from conventional metaphors, in particular metaphors and emotion, to an increase of poetic metaphors. In other words, the lyrics and with them the metaphors and the imageries used developed just as the Beatles developed as a group in the course of a decade. Another impression I got from my cursory sampling of songs is that, depending on the nature of the song, the same kinds of metaphors reappear frequently.

Unquestionably, this conclusion is only preliminary. It is clear that the mode of research employed within this project is by no means a sign for a full examination of any particular song. However, the selected samples enable us to reveal connections between the use of particular metaphors, whether conventional or poetic, and the environment and the circumstances in which the songs came into existence.

Given the limitations of this paper, further research regarding the role of metaphors in Beatles' lyrics might explore how these metaphors can be interpreted including the reasons why particular metaphors are used in the songs. The issue of the differences between the songwriters Lennon and McCartney is also intriguing and could be investigated in further research.

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## Suggestions for further reading

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## **Appendix**

### **Abstract English/German**

The purpose of this paper is to look at the Beatles from an academic point of view and aims at contributing to a large body of literature pertaining to the Beatles. It is a pilot study in which a selection of songs has been chosen in order to identify and categorise metaphors and linguistic imagery in Beatles' lyrics. The first part of this thesis lays out the theoretical dimensions explaining definitions and providing an overview of theoretical works on metaphors covering a time-span of almost 60 years. The main part of this paper is divided into four creative periods of the Beatles and deals with the categorisation of metaphors based on the cognitive approach by Lakoff.

The assessment of the songs that the Beatles released between 1963 and 1970, exempting cover versions by the Beatles, reveals that the number of poetic metaphors has increased in the course of their career. This has been induced by their personal development, their experiences and their increasing creativity that started in the mid-Sixties.

Further research regarding the role of metaphors in Beatles' lyrics might explore how these metaphors can be interpreted including the reasons why particular metaphors are used in the songs.

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Die vorliegende Arbeit behandelt die Beatles von einem akademischen Standpunkt aus und soll einen weiteren Beitrag zur bereits bestehenden Literatur über die Beatles leisten. Es handelt sich um eine Pilotstudie, bei der anhand einer Auswahl ihrer Lieder Metaphern und andere bildliche Darstellungen identifiziert und kategorisiert werden.

Der erste Teil der Arbeit bietet zunächst eine Definition der Begriffe und schließlich einen Überblick, bei dem ein Bogen über fast 60 Jahre theoretisches Arbeiten zu den verschiedenen Arten von Metaphern gespannt wird, während sich die Hauptarbeit, gegliedert in vier Schaffensperioden der Beatles, mit der Kategorisierung der Metaphern ihrer Lieder basierend auf der kognitiven Methodik Lakoffs beschäftigt.

Die Untersuchung der Lieder - ausgenommen sind die Coverversionen -, die die Beatles in den Jahren von 1963 bis 1970 veröffentlicht haben, hat die These bestätigt, dass die Anzahl der poetischen Metaphern im Laufe der Karriere der Beatles zugenommen hat, hervorgerufen durch ihre persönlichen Entwicklungen und Erlebnisse und zunehmende Kreativität ab Mitte der 60er Jahre.

Mögliche weitere Forschungsbereiche zur Rolle von Metaphern in den Liedern der Beatles könnten beispielsweise Interpretation oder auch die spezifische Verwendung von bestimmten Metaphern sein.

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