

Title: Metonymy of Aspect/Aspects of Metonymy

Author: Tore Nessel, University of Tromsø

Ever since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) published *Metaphors We Live By*, metaphor has played a major role in cognitive linguistics, while metonymy has received less attention. However, a vivid debate in 2006 (Peirsman and Geeraerts 2006, Croft 2006) testifies to a renewed interest in metonymy, thus raising the question as to how metaphor and metonymy interact in grammatical systems. The goal of this paper is to shed light on this question on the basis of an analysis of prototypical and non-prototypical meanings of the imperfective and perfective aspects in Russian. It is argued that metaphor and metonymy are both pervasive in the category of aspect, and that metaphor motivates the basic meanings of the aspects, while metonymy provides conceptual links between various subcategories.

Janda (2004, 2007) has shown that two metaphors are fundamental in the Russian aspect system, analyzing imperfective verbs as metaphorical substances and perfective verbs as solid objects. However, metaphor cannot explain the relationships between the various meanings of an aspect. This is the job of metonymy. In the prototypical case, the perfective aspect is used about singular complete events, but in examples like *on rešit ljubuju problemu* a general state of affairs is referred to. We are dealing with a metonymical relationship, insofar as a single salient example (a part) is used to represent a general state of affairs (a whole). The *nagljadno-primernoje značenie* involves metonymy in a similar way; in *inogda vesnoj byvaet tak: naletit burja, poguljaet dva-tri časa i neožidanno zatixnet, kak načalos'* a general state of affairs is described by means of a single example. In the *summarnoe značenie* (e.g. *on tri raza postučal v dver'*) there is also a part-whole relationship, but here the perfective aspect summarizes the parts into a whole. In the same way as part-whole relations connect the meanings of the perfective aspect, it will be argued that metonymy structures the various uses of imperfective verbs (including habitual and general-factitive meanings). The analysis suggests that metaphor and metonymy complement each other in the Russian aspectual system. While metaphor relates events to matter (substances and objects), metonymy relates various types of events. Although metaphor and metonymy do not enable us to predict the correct aspectual forms in a given sentence, they capture the cognitive mechanisms that motivate the system, and thus facilitate a unified analysis of a set of seemingly disparate phenomena.

Janda, L.A. (2004): A metaphor in search of a source domain. *Cognitive Linguistics* 15.

Janda, L.A. (2007): Aspectual clusters of Russian verbs, *Studies in Language* 31.

Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson (1980): *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago.

Peirsman, Y. and D. Geeraerts (2006): Metonymy as a Prototypical Category, *Cognitive Linguistics* 17.

Croft, W. (2006): On Explaining Metonymy. *Cognitive Linguistics* 17.