

Complex Metaphor in the Novel of Cecelia Ahern “Thanks for the Memories”

Natalya Keklyak

Student of Applied Linguistics Department, Lviv Polytechnic
National University, UKRAINE, Lviv, S. Bandery street 12,
E-mail: natalya-keklyak@yandex.ru

Abstract – The paper aims at describing the unique techniques of secondary metaphorisation in Cecelia Ahern's writings. The examples of combination of primary metaphors to form complex ones are analyzed, which reveals the peculiarities of metaphor as a trope.

Key words – metaphor, primary metaphor, complex metaphor, direction of metaphorisation, target concept, trope.

I. Introduction

The paper is dedicated to studying the technique of complex metaphorisation in the novel of Cecelia Ahern “Thanks for the Memories”. The **topicality** of the study is brought about by the fact that metaphor is one of the linguistic phenomena, which still needs thorough research, since its classical determination as the transition by similarity has become far too narrow. Nowadays the new cognitive studies open up the broader outlook on metaphorisation. Furthermore, metaphor remains one of the most productive ways of creating language units.

The aim of the study is: to study the major directions of metaphorisation and target concepts; to analyse the examples of complex metaphors from the novel by Cecelia Ahern “Thanks for the Memories” and to classify them according to the way they are formed.

The object of the research is metaphor in the novel by Cecelia Ahern “Thanks for the Memories”. **The subject** of the research is to find the individual author's peculiarities of metaphorisation

II. Linguistic Metaphor

The number of sound combinations that human speech organs can produce is limited. Therefore at a certain stage of language development the production of new words by morphological means becomes limited, and polysemy becomes increasingly important in providing means for enriching the vocabulary. From this it should be clear that the process of enriching the vocabulary does not consist merely in adding new words to it but, also in the constant development of polysemy [5]. Especially it is important when we talk of fiction, where the beauty of the author's words lies in the ability to build them into a unique and sophisticated architecture, and metaphor is a valuable tool the writers use abundantly.

Linguistic metaphor is the type of meaning transference when a new meaning appears as a result of associating two objects (phenomena, qualities, etc) due to their outward similarity.

The example can be the noun drop, which in addition to its meaning “a small particle of water or liquid”, has the meanings: “ear-rings shaped as drops of water”(e.g.,

diamond drops) and “candy of the same shape” (e.g., *mint drops*). It is quite obvious that both these meanings are also based on resemblance. In the compound word snowdrop the meaning of the second constituent underwent the same change (also, in bluebell). In general, metaphorical change of meaning is often observed in idiomatic compounds [1].

In its broad meaning the word “metaphor” is applied to all types of using words in their indirect meaning [4].

In stylistic approach – metaphor is considered to be one of the tropes. Occasionally made-up metaphor has always been the creation of the author's individual reflection of the world, which is based on a peculiar experiment with the language. A lot of scientists state that the literary occasionalism is created as a result of conscious, stylistically motivated, deviation from general norms when a word is collocated in a non-standard way. In linguistics the problem of metaphor, as a process reproducing new meanings of the expressions by their reconsidering, and also as a ready metaphoric meaning, has been studied for a very long time, but more often as a stylistic or artistic method, more seldom as the means of nomination, and even less often as the means of creating the picture of the world with the means of language, which appears as a result of cognitive manipulations with the already existing in the language meanings to create new concepts, especially for spheres of reality that do not exist in the real life [6].

III. Complex Metaphor

Lakoff G. and Johnson M. have suggested that all conceptual metaphors must be grounded either in a co-occurrence of experience between the two domains of a mapping or through the unification of primary metaphors which are themselves experientially grounded [2].

A primary metaphor is a basic, intuitively understood metaphor (or figurative comparison) – such as *knowing is seeing* or *time is motion* – that may be combined with other primary metaphors to produce complex metaphors. The concept of the primary metaphor was introduced by Joseph Grady [3].

Cecelia Ahern's often uses such metaphors in her text, and we have classified her techniques of building complex metaphors into several types:

1. Adjunction.

Instead Justin finds himself continuing to walk with Sarah, his mind as active as Mount Saint Helens, his eyes jumping around like an addict needing a fix.

In this example the metaphors stand separately in one sentence. The first one is targeted at a natural object, namely a volcano, and the second one – at the human sphere, personifying the eyes of the hero. What is interesting in this example is the fact that the author used two completely different tangible concept spheres to describe one intangible emotional condition of a person. The researches have already pointed out that very often the human mind is capable of comparing the concepts, which have something in common but at first sight seem absolutely different, that is how the metaphor appears. So the metaphor expects some similarity and difference between the semantic referents, as it should be clear to

understand and at the same time create some new sense, new knowledge. Metaphorisation is the process that has three aspects: the aspect of language, connected with the changes in the language; semantic or deep, which explains the transactions in the categories of linguistic theory; and the cognitive aspect, which is responsible for gaining new knowledge, creation of new senses [6].

2. Insertion

Grafton Street is crowded at lunchtime, as though the gates to the Dublin Zoo have been opened and all the animals have flooded out, happy to escape confinement for an hour.

In the given example we can find combined two primary metaphors. The first one is targeted at the animal world comparing a busy street with the zoo full of animals. The second primary metaphor is embedded into the first one, thus comparing the movement of animals, which are the metaphor of people themselves, with the flow of water. This way a complex structure is built, which unfolds as a telescope directed into the world of nature.

3. Combination

Her fork playfully pokes at a piece of chicken; the chicken hangs on, falls off, grabs on again, and manages to hang on while she waves the fork around, using it as a sledgehammer to knock pieces of lettuce over to see what's beneath.

There are two objects that undergo metaphorisation in this sentence: a fork and chicken. Chicken is personified as being actually alive and not cooked by giving it the ability to move voluntarily, which is the first primary metaphor. The fork, however, undergoes metaphorisation twice in one sentence, being personified the first time and compared with a sledgehammer, i.e. not living object, the second time. This is a very interesting instance of showing how actually the same object and its operation may be metaphorised directed into absolutely opposite concept spheres.

Finally words start spilling out of his mouth, as though they'd been queuing up impatiently. Fired from his heart as usual, not from his head, and catapulted to his mouth, only to bounce against the walls of his closed lips. But now the gates open, and the words fly out in all directions like projectile vomit.

The abovegiven is a vivid example of combination, where words are both personified being given the ability to feel impatience and queue and compared to bullets and even *projectile vomit*.

Such sophisticated technique of metaphorisation sends the reader's mind rushing through different concept spheres in just milliseconds.

4. Infusion

Dad's rubber ears go back on his head, his bushy eyebrows lift upward, as we reach the airport.

In this example we have a metaphor comparing eyebrows with natural object, and a metaphor comparing ears with a rubber object, however, at the same time this object is personified and given the ability to voluntary move away from the head and back again. Unlike in the previous example with the fork, the two metaphors are not presented in different phrases, but are combined in a single one.

5. Accumulation

...old man, who is easily spotted on the pavement, swaying in horizontal motions like a drunken sailor amid

the crowd's vertical stream.... Like a salmon he swims upstream, pushing against the throngs of people going in the opposite direction... I smile now as I watch my great big salmon of knowledge moving upstream, weaving in and out of the pedestrians pounding the pavement toward him. ... look that has set his chin in that defiant stance, jutting outward like Cork and Kerry's rugged coastline from the rest of the land.

In the given above example the sentences containing primary metaphor occur in the text page after page as the story evolves. This way the metaphor accumulates as a snowball gaining weight and creates a character of the heroine's father first compared to a sailor and then to a salmon. This metaphor is mostly characteristic of fiction as a whole story or book may be one complex metaphor. It should be also mentioned that in order to build complex metaphors Cecelia Ahern uses both usual primary metaphors and occasional ones coined by herself.

Conclusion

In this paper the phenomenon of building a complex metaphor has been studied. Five main types of forming complex metaphors have been identified: adjunction, insertion, combination, infusion and accumulation. It has been revealed that a complex metaphor may include primary metaphors directed into various target spheres and include target concepts, which may seem to have little in common.

All of them help to make the word of fiction more eloquent, which proves the fact that metaphor is one of the most productive tropes. Some of the forms of complex metaphors can be actually met mostly in books.

The further research may include carrying out statistical analysis of the examples and creating a corpus of individual author's metaphors for the novel by Cecelia Ahern "Thanks for the Memories". The results of the work may help to understand deeper the mechanisms of metaphorisation process in the modern English language.

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