



Functions of Inanimate Metonymies in the Kenyan Dholuo Language

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Abstract

This paper examines Dholuo inanimate metonymies by establishing their functions based on the 'what' question, as the guiding principle. Kisumu South Nyanza dialect of Dholuo is used as the point of reference because it is considered a standard variety. The paper focuses on inanimate metonymies used for inanimate objects. It is anchored on the Causal Theory of Reference advanced by Kripke and the Refining Causal Theory of Reference for Natural Kind Terms advanced by Kitcher and Stanford. The study was conducted in Homa Bay, Kenya. It adopted a descriptive research design. The population constituted mourners in burial ceremonies, traders, sportsmen/women, musicians and travelers from which a sample of 25 respondents was selected purposively. Data was qualitative in nature and it comprised 15 actual metonymies. Data was analyzed using the discourse analytical approaches, where both linguistic and content elements were examined. Presentation of the findings was done using descriptions. The findings show that Dholuo metonymies are used for reference, humor, rhetorical and conventional functions. These findings will contribute to existing knowledge on functions of metonymy in natural languages and will be a source of reference to researchers in applied linguistics and general linguistics studies.

Keywords: Metonymy; constitution; function; dialect; dholuo.

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Introduction

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which one word is substituted for another on the basis of some material, causal or conceptual relations (Preminger & Brogan, 1993). Metonymic references involve the use of part/whole relation, adjacency relation, constitution relation and containment relation. This study attempted to establish functions of the metonymic use in the Dholuo language in Homa Bay County, where the Kisumu South Nyanza dialect of Dholuo is spoken. It is considered a standard variety among Boro-Ukwala dialect and Trans-Yala dialect. Analyzing the functions of the Dholuo inanimate

metonymies is important in academia because it is an addition to existing literature in the area of language in use. The study further puts Dholuo on the linguistic map as a natural language that makes use of figurative speech.

Preminger and Brogan (1993) defined metonymy as a figure of speech in which one word is substituted for another on the basis of some material, causal or conceptual relations. Papafragou (1996) had it that metonymy is a 'figure of speech,' a departure from linguistic that demands suitable training for its successful use and comprehension. Fauconnier (1985) viewed metonymy as a case of 'deferred

reference' in which a speaker uses a description of 'A' and succeeds in referring to 'B'. Thomasson (1994) claimed that metonymy involves 'naming by association', a metonymic process of linking two concepts or persons together in such a way as to tell us more about the latter by means of what we already know about the former. According to Mboya (2014), metonym is a figure of speech that is used as a linguistic strategy in communication, with several functions, which are the focus of this paper.

Dholuo language

Dholuo language is spoken by the Luo people who are generally referred to as Luos. In Kenya, Luos occupy the counties of Siaya, Kisumu, Migori and Homa Bay. Their neighbors include the Luhya to the north, the Kalenjin to the east and the Gusii, Kuria and Masai to the south-east and south. The Luos belong to the Nilotic group of languages (Ogutu, 1975). In Kenya, Dholuo is characterized by three main dialectal variations spoken in different regions. The first is the Kisumu South Nyanza dialect, spoken in Kisumu County, Homa Bay County and Migori County. This is considered a standard dialect because it is spoken in a wider geographical area (Atoh, 2001). It is the dialect examined in this study. Boro-Ukwala dialect is spoken in a smaller region that covers Ugunja, Ukwala and Alego Usonga. The region is considered less prestigious (Atoh, 2011; Stafford, 1969). The third is Trans-Yala dialect, spoken in Ugenya, Alego, imbo and parts of Gem. Although mutually intelligible, these dialects are varied enough to enable the identification of speakers with specific regions (Atoh, 2001).

Reasons for Studying Metonymies

Metonymic expressions are a common phenomenon in language use. Zheng (2014) reports that natural languages are naturally metonymic. On this basis, Dholuo language is naturally metonymic. Metonymy is frequently used in the Dholuo discourses as metonymic concepts are naturally grounded in the people's experience and language. Metonymic use enables Dholuo speakers to express their thoughts concisely and achieve certain functional effects of metonymy in communication. Firstly, metonymy as a figure of speech flowers language because, from stylistic and rhetorical stand point, it provides a rhetorical ornament that enhances both clarity and suggestiveness (Leech 1969). It is a condensed and an elegant way of expressing a proposition, which would otherwise have to be worded along the lines. Secondly, metonymy is largely considered functioning as

economical. That is, it proves to be the most efficient way of economizing processing effort in identifying the referent. The speaker decides on how to produce the economic expression so as to lead the hearer to the intended referent in the economic-efficient way. Thirdly, metonymy causes humor in language use. The speakers use metonymic expressions in such a way to express their attitude towards the referent (Barbara, 2015).

Related literature

Metonymy performs the functions of reference, providing understanding based on pragmatics. Zheng (2014) asserts that reference in pragmatics is an act in which a speaker uses linguistic forms to enable a listener to identify a referent. A successful reference occurs when the speaker makes a good choice of the referring expression and has a reasonable expectation of the hearer's ability to make the correct inference, and that certain referring expressions are used to designate certain entities. He further claims that metonymy is a mode of thinking pervasive not only in language use, but also in people's daily life; metonymic concepts structure not just our language but our thoughts, attitudes and actions. Metonymy helps people understand one thing by means of another. A speaker uses linguistic forms to enable a listener to identify something based on their relatedness. Metonymy makes people express their thoughts concisely and therefore, metonymic concepts are grounded in people's experience and language.

Pankhurst (1994) suggests that metonymy is primarily referential in character, relying on causality and contiguity as context-linking principles between the term and its referent, which is in the material world and is understood through inference. The author records that metonymy is not perceived as meaningful outside its specific context. Context is a 'system of beliefs' i.e. a more or less fixed set of assumptions shared by a subset or by the whole of community and held as (probably) true; this set can be brought to bear on the interpretation of an utterance and consequently a word use (Papafragou, 1996). Referential metonymy is a strategy interpreters make use of in order to make utterances best fit the situation in which they occur. The speaker manifests an independent intention to refer to a given object regardless of the particular interpretation of the expression she used 'as words.' The association between the referent and the reference is because of 'links' based on co-occurrence, physical contiguity (Papafragou, 1996).

In comprehending metonymy, Zheng (2014) argues that metonymy is a mode of thinking pervasive not only in language use but also in people's daily life; that metonymic concepts structure not just our language but our thoughts, attitudes and actions. Metonymy helps people understand one thing by means of another. A speaker uses linguistic forms to enable a listener to identify something based on their relatedness. Though metonymy shares this claim with metaphor, metonymy has a different working mechanism. Metaphor involves two domains and mapping occurs between the two domains due to the similarity between the two cognitive models. In metonymy, however, only one domain is involved and requires contiguity or association between the two entities in the same domain.

According to Zheng (2014), organization is thought of as a person, new people are just like new blood, making the organization stronger and more energetic. Zheng (2014) further claims that while doing things, people use their hands, which is considered salient part in the work. In Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM) of metonymy, the source entity, provides an easy mental access to the target entity; language is naturally metonymic. Metonymy makes people express their thoughts concisely. Therefore, metonymic concepts are grounded in people's experience and language because metonymy usually involves direct physical or causal associations (Zheng 2014). Metonymy is no more than a means of communicating the speaker's intention and is understood through inference. The knowledge of the immediate context of utterance is ideal for understanding the intended effect from a range of recoverable effects (Pankhurst, 1994). For example, 'that green anorak is coming' (Pankhurst, 1994). In this metonymy, feelings about the color, the garment and its wearer are a range of effects that are recoverable from the utterance.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This paper is anchored on the Causal Theory of Reference (CTR) advanced by Kripke (1980) and Refining Causal Theory of Reference for Natural Kind Terms (RCTRNKT), advanced by Kitcher and Stanford (2000).

Kripke authored the Causal Theory of Reference by virtue of causal-historical chain that originates in a naming event or "baptism." The initial event fixes the referent by associating a name with an object in a given social context. Once this referential link is established, it is transmitted along a communicative

chain, enabling subsequent users to refer to the same entity even without complete knowledge of its defining features. Kripke's theory extends beyond names to broad range of linguistic phenomena, including metonymy. The author's insight that names function through causal anchoring rather than semantic mediation provides a powerful explanatory model for metonymic tongues that become conventional though shared use rather than intrinsic descriptive precision.

Stanford and Kitcher (2000) proposed refined models- CTR 1 and CTR 2- that seek to integrate causal and descriptive elements in a more nuanced manner. These models recognize the need to accommodate perceptual and conceptual feature of referents while retaining the causal-historical continuity emphasized by Kripke (1980). CTR1 incorporates observable characteristics of the referent, linking the perceptual predicates with the causal-chain of reference. It mediates between perceptual experience and linguistic fixation. CTR2 introduces four parameters:

1. A set of representative samples of the kind (e.g. various types of cameras).
2. A set of foils – objects that are clearly not of that kind (e.g. binoculars, eye glasses).
3. A defining predicate $\phi[x]$ which captures the semantic profile of the referent (e.g. "an instrument used to record moving images").
4. A speech community capable of applying the predicate meaningfully.

Application to the Present Study

The theories apply to the present study because inanimate metonymy benefits from the integration of philosophical and cognitive reference theories. These expressions originate from embodied experience, metonymic projections or pragmatic necessity. They subsequently undergo a process of conventionalization. Overtime, what began as an intuitive entity becomes lexically entrenched with users employing the term without invoking its figurative background. This semantic abstraction is characteristic of conventional metonymy as supported by reference mechanism outlined by Kripke (1980). The philosophical foundation of naming reveals that there is an interplay between individual innovation and collective semantic gratification. That is, an individual's metonymic insight, grounded in perceptual analogy, is socially ratified and linguistically stabilized through the operation of reference mechanisms that combine causality, description and communal practice.

Methodology

The methodology for this paper was anchored on the qualitative approach to research. In qualitative studies, methods are more descriptive and narrative in nature. In this section, we provide the research design, data collection, analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

Area of Study

The study was carried out in Homabay County, selected because it is the home to the Kisumu South Nyanza dialect of Dholuo, which is considered a standard variety. The region is also rich in oral traditions and active participation in communal events, which enhance observing and recording in animate metonymic expressions.

Research Design

The study made use of the descriptive research design, suited for examining the who, when, what, where and how aspects of a research phenomenon. The design facilitated the understanding of the functions of linguistic forms in everyday communication among the Dholuo speakers.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study comprised adult native speakers aged 18 years and above. These were residents of Homabay County at the time of the study. Particularly, they were drawn from five Sub-Counties: Homabay, Rangwe, Ndhiwa, Rachuonyo North and Rachuonyo South. The adults were selected because of their conversance with cultural expressions and traditional moods of metonymic usage. From the population, five groups were identified: mourners, travelers, sportsmen/women, traders and musicians. Each identified group was represented by 5 purposively sampled respondents. Therefore, 25 native speakers of Dholuo constituted the sample.

Instrumentation

The study used qualitative data drawn from natural conversations and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to ensure in-depth and appropriate triangulation in the process of collecting inanimate metonymic expressions in Dholuo. Five FGDs were instituted; one in each of the 5 sub-counties of Homabay County, purposively sampled. Each FGD comprised 5 respondents selected through purposive sampling. This enriched the qualitative data through meaning-making and debate around shared metonymic expressions.

Data Analysis

Data was transcribed and translated from the language of study (Dholuo) into English. It was classified into various types (Part/ Whole, Whole/ Part, Instrument/ result and Container/ Content) for analysis. Data was analyzed through discourse analysis, as informed by Causal Theory of Reference by Kripke (1980) and Refining Causal Theory of Reference for Natural Kind Terms by Stanford and Kitcher (2000).

Ethical Considerations

The participants were encouraged to exercise their free will in deliberating on the topic of discussion. Further, they were informed that they were free to discontinue at any point. Participants' confidentiality was paramount. They were assured that the information they were to give was to be secured and used only for the purpose of the study. Where the information was to be shared in conferences or publication, the consent of the respondents was sought for. The researchers, therefore, ensured that any data given by the respondents was kept confidential.

Findings and Discussion

This study presents the following as functions of inanimate metonymy in Dholuo: metonymy as referential, metonymy as experiential, metonymy as a humorous, metonymy as rhetorical, Metonymy as conventional and metonymy as economical.

Referential Metonymy

Referential metonymy is a strategy Dholuo speakers make use of, in order to make utterances best fit the situation in which they occur. The speaker manifests an independent intention to refer to a given object regardless of the particular interpretation of the expressions she has used as words. This intention becomes dominant over the intention to use a word with the meaning given to it by the person from whom one learned it. The association between the referent and the referend is because of 'links' based on co-occurrence and physical contiguity (Papafragou, 1996). For example,

(1) Iwinjo othothoriyono? (Have you heard the one that makes shrill?)

Socio-cultural life of the Luo people is reflected on different games played by different age-groups. Othothoriyo 'the one that makes shrill' is one of such games played by young boys grazing cattle in the field.

Utterance (1) was made in the context of sports by a football fan going to cheer a favorite team. The shrill sound is produced when two hands are cupped leaving a gap between two fingers. Air is blown into the cupped hands through the gap left between the two fingers, resulting into a shrill sound. Othothoriyo is the metonymy. The speaker used it to refer to the whistle. Therefore, the speaker used it to imply an on-going game or a start of a game. Whistle is a device placed in the mouth in order to make a whistling sound when air is blown into it. Therefore, othothoriyo and whistle are both instruments for producing sound and are grouped under the sub-domain of instrument for result in the domain of the constitution.

The result (sound) relatedness makes the two entities be adjacent to each other. The adjacency relation is considered as a link between the two entities. Therefore, a special kind of causal relationship between them is developed. Either of them can be used to refer to the other. Warren (2006), in propositional metonymy, found that the 'whistle' as an instrument is used to refer to the sound (result) made by the whistle.

(2) Kalapapla emane okelo jatelo (The one that pops brought the VIP)

Kalapapla (the one that pops) in (2) is the metonymy a renowned air traveler (this was in Kabunde airstrip used by light aircrafts for landing and taking off) had used to refer to a helicopter. The speaker used it to imply high status and transportation. Helicopter is an aircraft that is borne along by one or more sets of long rotating blades, which allow it to hover and move in any direction. The long rotating blades produce quick successive 'pop' sounds when in flight or when it is just about to take off. The sound as a substance, constitutes the helicopter as an object and therefore the two entities are contiguous. The contiguity relation develops a special kind of causal relationship between the explicit and the implicit elements. The salient part - the sound is easily picked as the metonymic reference for helicopter.

(3) Tangacha dhi gowo e sori (That sail is going to anchor at the bay)

Fishing is a major socio-cultural activity among Dholuo speakers. Fishing is done in the lakes or rivers, using boats and fishing gears of different sizes. It is on this basis of socio-cultural activity that example (3), was uttered among the fish mongers at the landing beach. Tanga 'sail' is the metonymy. The

speaker used it to imply reference because *tanga* refers to boat. *Tanga* does not anchor, but that on which it is mounted does, which in this case is the boat. An intended target was the boat. Tanga 'sail' as the salient part of the boat was used as a metonymy to mean the boat. Tanga 'sail' is a product of cloth or polythene sheet. It is hoisted up the mast erected in the middle of the boat to collect the wind that makes the boat to move on the water surface. Tanga 'sail' and boat are contiguous, thus developing a contiguity relation between themselves. The contiguity relation develops a special kind of causal relationship between the sail and the boat. One salient entity in context, can be used metonymically to refer to the other entity.

Experiential

Metonymic concepts are used to reveal people's experience and language. This is because metonymy usually involves direct physical or causal associations. Therefore, metonymy, apart from its cognitive nature, is fundamental to people's thinking because it makes language expression concise and vivid.

(4) Puch dhi muoch gotieno (The swelling is going to blast tonight)

Dancing is a social aspect among the Luo community. Generally, there are different traditional dancing troupes; kondo dancers, orutu dancers, nyatiti dancers, owalo dancers and dudu dancers. The proposition in example (4) was made in the context of music by an enthusiastic music fan who confirmed the existence of a live music that was scheduled for the night. He used puch 'the swelling' as a metonymic reference for nyatiti 'an eight stringed music instrument.' Therefore, the speaker used the metonymy to imply entertainment (dancing). Puch 'the swelling' is a skin disease characterized by a semi-spherical swelling on the skin. Luos believe that it is treated by pinching it when a hyena is laughing. Nyatiti is a v-shaped musical instrument comprising two arms, eight nylon strings and a hemi-spherical resonator. Puch is also a hemi-spherical skin infection. The experience Dholuo speakers have is that the physical feature of puch is adjacent to the physical feature of the resonator which is part of nyatiti. The physical features analysis between puch and the resonator - the salient part of nyatiti in this context makes the two entities to be adjacent to each other. The adjacency relation can be considered as the causal relationship between the reference and the

referent. This finding indicated that Dholuo inanimate metonymies are experiential.

(5) *Buru nitie matin* (There is little ash)

In the social-cultural context of Dholuo speakers, there is a belief that during evening hours, some cooking materials are not mentioned by their names in the event of their shortages in the household and especially if they are to be asked from the neighborhood. These include salt and flour. In example (5), a member of a bereaved family used *buru* 'ash' as the metonymy in the kitchen context to refer to flour. The speaker used the metonymy to imply an ingredient of *ugali*. *Buru* has two meanings; dust and ash. In this context of utterance, it is 'ash' because ash is the solid remains of a fire in the hearth. The proposition was about a shortage of flour. In Dholuo experience, *buru* 'ash' and flour are both described as of 'fine particles' the kitchen being their common place. Therefore, they are adjacent to each other. This adjacency relation is considered as the causal relationship linking the two entities in the physical feature domain. Therefore, *buru* as the salient entity, can be used metonymically to refer to flour.

(6) *Wang' chieng' wacho ang'o?* (What does the eye of the sun say?)

Time of the day in Dholuo is divided into; *okinyi* (morning), *wang' onyango* (mid –morning), *odiochieng'* (afternoon) and *odhiambo* (evening), depending on the position of the sun in the sky. So, time is determined by the position of the sun. Proposition (6) was made by an aged football fan as he was pointing at a watch, a young person wore to mean time. The speaker enquired about time of the day by the watch by using *wang' chieng'* 'eye of the sun' as the metonymy to imply modernity. Watch is a portable or wearable time piece. In the Dholuo experience, the sun and the watch are adjacent entities that are used as time indicators of the day. The adjacency relation can be considered as the causal relationship between them. Therefore, *wang'chieng'* 'eye of the sun' can be used metonymically to refer to time by the watch.

Humorous

Metonymies can be used to give rise to some humorous effects, expressing the speaker's attitude towards the referent (Barbara 2015). For example,

(7) *Ne omwonyo kit ombo* (She swallowed a white stone)

Birth control, in the context of Luo culture, is attributed to a natural phenomenon. Culturally, a barren woman would be referred to as a *lwanda* (rock). That is, she is hard to be impregnated because her womb is considered hard as that of a rock. Using any other means to induce birth control is considered a behavioral misfit. An old lady, apparently waiting for a vehicle to travel made the utterance in example (7), after spotting a skinny lady passing by. Traditionally, Dholuo speakers hold the belief that being skinny, is an indication of inability to give birth. *Kit ombo* 'the white stone' is the metonymy used in reference to a contraceptive. Therefore, the speaker used it to ridicule. There are a number of contraceptives: oral contraceptive, injectable contraceptive and implantable contraceptive. The intended target in the context was the oral contraceptive. White stones are mostly round in shape and are found on the dry river bed. A stone is a hard object that is not easily penetrable. Contraceptive is a mechanism or means by which conception as a result of sexual intercourse can be prevented. The act of swallowing the white stone is a cultural manifest of a complete blockage of the womb. Similarly, the use of any form of contraceptive to control birth is not acceptable and faces all sorts of ridicule.

In (7), the speaker manifested her attitude by associating the contraceptive with the white stone; both of which are associated with blockade of the womb. Color of the stone and its believable impact and the color of the oral contraceptive and its health impact besides the attitude formation make the two entities to be adjacent to each other. The adjacency relation is considered a kind of causal relationship between them. The salient entity is used as metonymy for the other entity. The fact that it is impossible to swallow a stone in real life makes the statement humorous. Humor as a way of showing attitude, demonstrates the functions of Dholuo metonymies.

(8) *Othung'a gi nyiero biro tho* (The one that suppresses me with laughter will blow off)

Luo lifestyle is defined by, among other things, material objects e.g. open flames as the lighting system. In this cultural context, *othung'a gi nyiero* 'the one that suppresses me with laughter' in (8), is a metonymic proposition a grain seller operating a small-scale grain store in a village made as he protected the flame of a tin lamp with cupped hands from being blown off by wind. The metonymy

was an implication of low social status and regression. The proposition was in reference to a tin lamp. A tin lamp is a device containing oil burnt through an exposed wick for illumination. In experience of Dholuo speakers, exposed illuminating flame is vulnerable to wind. It extinguishes at a slight blow of wind. Therefore, it calls for a controlled laughter when sitting near the illuminating tin lamp, lest it blows off. The suppressed laughter, which is an abstract entity, has adjacency relation with the tin lamp. Adjacency relation, as a link between the two entities, develops a special kind of causal relationship between the two entities. For understanding in context, the salient entity – suppressed laughter, is used as the metonymy to refer to the tin lamp. Similarly, Barbara (2015) studied metonymy and found that metonymies can naturally be used creatively to give rise to humorous effect.

Ornamental

Ornamentation force of metonymies naturally depends on the nature of the explicit attribute of the instrument. When the chosen attribute has some figurative force, there is a double exposure effect which makes metonymic figurativeness similar to that of metaphor (Warren, 2006). Rhetorical metonymy captures a range of phenomena, which continues to be productive and widespread in a variety of languages and seem to be produced and understood naturally and spontaneously (Papafragou, 1996). For example,

(9) Dakuon ma ing'iyu okyieny (The cooking pot that is watched never boils)

Dholuo speaking community has ways of perfecting the behavior aspect of individual members to conform with the lifestyle of the society. One of the behavior aspect a society cherishes is patience. A speaker at a funeral gathering uttered the expression (9) while advising young people on the value of patience.

Dakuon (cooking pot) is the metonymy which the speaker used to imply patience in the context. The speaker used it in a socio-cultural context to refer to water. A pot is a container of water either for drinking or for cooking. The speaker in this context was specific on water for cooking because water is boiled in a cooking process. It is a tendency for cooks to keep watch on the cooking pot to check whether the water in it is boiling or not. The speaker warns that keeping on checking the water because of impatience creates the feeling that it takes much

longer time to boil. The pot and water are contiguous entities because one contains the other and therefore, are in the domain of containment. The contiguity relation is considered as a link between the two entities and develops a special kind of causal relationship between the container and the contained. The speaker focused on the cooking pot as the salient entity to metonymically refer to water.

The utterance in (10) constitutes a condensed and elegant way of expressing a proposition showing the ornamental functional of Dholuo metonymies.

(10) Kalam nigi teko moloyo ligangla; makeuru motegno ni ber ma kiny (The pen is mightier than sword; strictly stick to it for a better tomorrow)

Human community is moving away from the physical battle for purposes of interest to intellectual battles fought in formal learning institutions. It is in this context that example (10) was uttered by a church elder, advising the young generation to take up education as a formidable tool to fight ignorance and to establish an elite of society. Kalam (pen) is the metonymy whose implication is education. The speaker used kalam (pen) in the statement to refer to learning activities going on in formal education institutions. Formal education equips one with facts, skills and ideas that have been learned, placing one in a better position to fight ignorance. Pen is the tool that is used to write. In this case it is a tool used to fight ignorance. It is therefore the point of focus in this utterance. The pen and the facts, skills and ideas have an adjacency relation. The adjacency relation is considered a causal relationship between the pen and learning activities. Therefore, pen as a salient entity is used as a metonymic reference for education in an ornamental way.

Conventional

Conventionalism of metonymies is based on mutually manifest assumptions that are recurrently used for formation of ad hoc concepts. After being extensively used, a metonymic expression that has originated as a product of successful naming may begin to lose its former descriptive content and gradually accept the referential content it has when used (Papafragou, 1996). For example,

(11) Mano nyakalondo mar Ramogi (That is the talking guard of Ramogi)

In (11), nyakalondo (the talking guard) is a metonymic reference for a radio station. A traveler

in a public service vehicle, apparently thrilled by a soothing music played on the radio, made the statement in (11). Therefore, the metonymy implied excitement. Luo culture is grounded on the belief that the talking guards are reliable in collecting and giving correct information and remedies related to the presented problem. This cultural belief provides the context in which utterance (11) was made. Nyakalondo 'the talking guard' is associated with magicians. It is a guard from which an invisible speaker is heard. It gathers and gives information related to problems of the client. Radio stations transmit electronic sound signals, which are received on the radio receiver. Radio receiver is a box from which an invisible speaker is heard, giving collected relevant information. The two entities, that is the talking guard and Radio, are constituted by sound as a substance. The source of sound (the invisible speakers) constitutes the adjacency relation, which is the link between them and therefore, is considered as a causal relationship. One salient entity can be used as the metonymy to refer to the other entity. The metonymic expression, nyakalondo (the talking guard) has been extensively used by radio presenters and radio listeners to refer to radio stations and has accepted the conventional role assigned to it.

(12) Miya gorogorono (Give me that one of famine)

Example (12), was a proposition made in an open-air market among grain sellers. The metonymic expression gorogoro (famine) was used to identify a two-kilogram measuring tin used for measuring quantities of grains for sale. Therefore, the speaker implied a unit of measure. Every famine that strikes is given a name. Gorogoro was a famine that struck the Luo population in the mid-1970s. There was scarcity of grains. The measure that was used to measure the quantity of grains, then, was the two-kilogram tin. So, the two-kilogram tin is identified by its adjacency to the famine.

This adjacency relation is considered a causal relationship between the tin and famine. Therefore, gorogoro (famine) can be used as a metonymy to refer to the two-kilogram tin. Gorogoro is quite popular with Dholuo speakers. It has lost its former descriptive content and has accepted its conventional use

(13) Jomatatu ochako omedo nengo wuoth kendo (Matatu have increased the fare again)

A traveler at Homa Bay bus stage uttered the statement in (13), apparently expressing her worries about the ever-rising cost of transport. The metonymy in the utterance is *matatu*, implying a means of transport in the context. The speaker used the metonymy to refer to the public service vehicle. *Matatu* is a fourteen-seater vehicle used in the transport sector as a public service vehicle. It is a popular means of transport among travelers and transporters. The metonymic reference was grounded on the basis of the fare that was then three ten-cent coins, from the station of departure to the station of destination, which turned out to be a trend for the distance covered. A coin is a piece of currency, usually metallic and in the shape of a disc with a hole in the middle. *Matatu* is a Kiswahili word which has been adopted for use by Dholuo speakers and even by both print and electronic news reporters broadcasting in English. It is the plural form of 'tatu' in the g/ma class in Kiswahili whose English equivalence is 'three' in plural. Its use among the print and electronic news reporters translates into its being conventionalized. *Matatu* as an entity and the fourteen-seater vehicle as another entity albeit as unbounded entities, have adjacency relation between themselves because one entity is used to get the services of the other entity, service being transportation. The adjacency relation is regarded as the causal relationship between *matatu* and the fourteen-seater public vehicle. A salient entity is foregrounded (the three cents) for metonymic use to refer to the other backgrounded entity (the fourteen-seater vehicle) conventionally.

Therefore, the speaker in (13) used *matatu* as a metonymy to refer to the fourteen-seater public vehicle. The example shows that *matatu* has been accepted as part of Dholuo and is extensively used in the transport sector, such that it has lost its metonymic content and adopted conventional use.

(14) Wemulo plastigno gi chilo (Don't touch that plastic with dirt)

A speaker selling reusable plastic containers in an open-air market made the proposition in (14). The proposition was in reference to a white plastic bucket in the market context. Plastic is the metonymy which the speaker used to imply that it was easily soiled. It is a material used to make the bucket. The material and the object constituted by the material form a whole unit in the domain of constitution. The constitution relation is considered a kind of causal relationship between the material

and the object. Therefore, plastic, as the salient entity, was used metonymically to refer to the white plastic bucket in expression 14. The plastic as a material is extensively used by Dholuo speakers in reference to plastic objects that has lost its metonymic content and accepted its conventional use.

Economical

Metonymy proves to be the most efficient way to economize processing effort in identifying the referent when the literal description is longer. The speaker has to decide how to produce the metonymic expression to lead the hearer to the intended referent in the economic-efficient way (Barbara, 2015). 'If we call a potential scandal a 'water-gate' is to suggest volumes in a single word. Similarly, if we call an individual a 'Judas' rather than giving his/her proper name, we can in one word convey an immense amount of information about how we at least feel towards that person (Thomasson, 1994:10). For example,

(15) Debe e dwoko makare (Ballot box is the credible solution)

In a political contest, voting is the only way of determining the winner. Voting is a process that involves casting the votes, counting the votes, transmitting the results and announcing the outcome. A church goer made the utterance in example (15), relating it to the biblical concept where voting over Jesus' cloak was done to determine who would own it. He used debe (ballot box) as the metonymy to refer to the outcome of the voting process, a metonymy of a democratic election. All these are volumes of information about the speaker's feelings towards voting in a political context. So, the speaker opted to a more economic-efficient way of leading the hearer to the intended referent by uttering the metonymic expression debe. Debe 'ballot box' contains ballot papers. The container and the contained are in the domain of containment. The containment relation develops a causal relationship between the two entities within the same domain.

Therefore, one salient entity can be used as a metonymic reference for the other entity. In the context of the utterance, debe (ballot box) refers to votes. It saves the speaker much energy in saying the voting process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Metonymy is a conceptual and linguistic system that traverses beyond substitution. As referential, metonymy enhances access to concepts through association. As experiential, it reflects combined cognitive. As humorous, it provokes expectations and social meanings. As economical, it optimizes communication. As conventional, it institutionalizes shared conceptual patterns. Finally, as rhetorical, it plays the persuasive and stylistic ends. These interwoven functions explain metonymy's main role in the interplay between concept, culture and discourse.

Recommendations

This study recommends extended use of inanimate metonymy in Dholuo not only in informal contexts but formal ones, such as in radio and television broadcasting as well as indigenous language lessons, among others. This will enhance reservation of Dholuo metonymy, enrichment of Dholuo language and transfer to nonconventional usages.

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