

Metaphor and What is Said: A Defense of a Direct Expression View of Metaphor

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1. Introduction

According to one widely held view of metaphor, metaphors are cases in which the speaker (literally) says one thing but means something else instead. I wish to challenge this idea. I will argue that when one utters a sentence in some context intending it to be understood metaphorically, one directly expresses a proposition, which can potentially be evaluated as either true or false. This proposition is what is said by the utterance of the sentence in that context. We don't convey metaphorical meanings indirectly by directly saying something else. One consequence is that, contrary to what Searle (1993: 110) suggests, we do not arrive at the metaphorical meaning that the speaker intended via a literal interpretation of the sentence the speaker utters. The defense of this view depends on articulating a conception of what is said that is more generous than that allowed for by Searle (1993) and others such as Bach (2001). I hope to motivate this broadened conception of what is said (what I call a *contextualist* conception of what is said), and to show some of the benefits of adopting a direct expression view of metaphor.

Despite the fact that philosophers such as Searle have defended the view that metaphorical interpretations are indirectly conveyed via the expression of another proposition, the direct expression view has a lot of initial intuitive appeal. Consider the following example, inspired by one used by Carston (1997: 113). Suppose that a group of people is trying to decide whom to vote for as the next chair of their department:

A: How about Bill?

B: Bill's a bulldozer.

A: That's true. But isn't that a good thing in this case? We want someone who'll stand up to the administration and get things for our department.

C: I disagree that he's a bulldozer; that exterior hides someone who's basically insecure. But, either way, Bill wouldn't make a good chair.

In this dialogue A and C are agreeing and disagreeing respectively with the metaphorical content of B's utterance. The most natural construal to put on such a dialogue is that B says something, that B says it with assertoric force, and that A and C are either agreeing or disagreeing with what B says. Stern (2000: 24) writes: "the ordinary appearance is that utterances of sentences that contain metaphors are truth-valued, express propositions, and can be used to make assertions (or other speech acts that presuppose assertion). The burden of the argument, therefore, falls on those who deny that this appearance is reality." I am partially in agreement with Stern. I

do not agree that utterances of sentences containing metaphors are always truth-valued, since such sentences can just as readily be used to ask questions and make requests. E.g., ‘Will the bulldozer make a good chair?’ or ‘Don’t mention the bulldozer again!’ However, I do agree that all metaphorically used sentences directly express propositions. Assertions, questions and requests containing metaphors all express propositions, although only in the case of assertions is a claim made that it is appropriate to evaluate as either true or false.

Even though I sympathize with Stern’s point of view, I believe the direct expression view needs defense, because the view that metaphorical contents can only be indirectly communicated is so well entrenched (especially amongst philosophers of language). I will try to provide such a defense. In sections 2 and 3 I set the stage for my account, which is laid out in section 4. In section 5 I compare my view with Stern’s view of metaphors as demonstratives, and give some reasons for preferring my account. In section 6 I anticipate a couple of objections that might be raised against my direct expression view of metaphor.

Before turning to the task of this paper, I want to say that I agree with White (1996) that philosophical discussions of metaphor tend to suffer from an impoverished diet of examples. How often does one see examples such as ‘Sally is a block of ice’, ‘He is a gorilla’, ‘Man is a wolf’, ‘Juliet is the sun’? White thinks that such simple predicative metaphors are rare in actual use, especially in literary use. In his own book he tries to avoid such trite examples and focuses instead on highly poetic metaphors. I disagree however that only poetic metaphors should be used in constructing a view about the nature of metaphor. I agree with Stern (2000) that it is equally legitimate to focus on examples from ordinary discourse, and that highly poetic metaphors of the sort discussed by literary theorists may not make the best starting point for theorizing about metaphors. I certainly have no pretensions to be able to take on literary theorists on their own turf, so unlike White (1996) I will not in general illustrate my points with literary metaphors. However, I will try to stay away from the stock examples, and to use examples other than simple predicative ones.

My own view is that the problem with a lot of philosophical discussions of metaphor is not that they use hackneyed examples, but that they use examples out of context. So long as we supply enough of a context to make our examples seem somewhat naturalistic, the use of non-literary metaphors does no harm. I think that the reason people use hackneyed examples is because it means they don’t have to spend too much time developing a plausible context. They hope to rely on the fact that their readers have seen these examples discussed so often before that a ready-made context comes along with the example, obviating the need to waste space on

supplying such a context. This is what I believe is the mistake. Context is all-important, and shouldn't be neglected, even though it is tempting to do that. What one wants to avoid are "dead" metaphors; ones that have become lexicalized. But even dead and dying metaphors can have new life breathed into them by imaging a novel context.

2. What is said versus what is meant

Grice (1989: 88) held that a speaker has said that *p* just in case she intends to communicate that *p* and the sentence that she utters in an attempt to communicate this means that *p*. In other words, to say something requires that the speaker's intended meaning coincides with the conventional meaning of the sentence she utters. When this correspondence fails, as Grice thought it must in the case of the metaphorical use of language, then nothing is said. At best in such cases we "make as if" to say something. Many have found this consequence of Grice's account of saying unsatisfactory and have argued that we need to divorce what is said from speaker meaning. For instance, Bach (2001) defends a syntactically constrained notion of what is said. According to Bach, what is said is a projection of the syntax of the sentence as used in a given context, in the sense that the constituents of what is said correspond to elements of the sentence. Others, such as Searle (1993), operate with a similarly constrained notion of what is said, tying what is said closely to sentence meaning and distinguishing it from speaker meaning (or what Searle calls utterance meaning).

Once one separates what a speaker says from what the speaker means in this way, this opens up at least the following four possibilities:

- (1) One can say one thing and mean something else in addition. This according to Searle (1993) is what happens in cases of indirect speech acts. E.g., I utter the sentence 'It is cold in this room' in an appropriate context. What I have said is that it is cold in the demonstrated room, but indirectly I may also be requesting that my hearer close the window in that room. Something similar can be claimed about standard cases of Gricean conversational implicature. E.g., my husband asks me whether I'd like to go to the movies tonight and I reply by uttering 'I've got a headache'. I've said one thing (and meant it) but, given certain mutually manifest background assumptions shared by my husband and me, I have in addition conversationally implied that I do not want to go to the movies tonight.
- (2) One can say one thing and mean something else instead. This according to Searle (1993) is what happens in figurative uses of language, such as metaphorical and

ironical uses of language. E.g., I utter the sentence ‘The Israeli-Palestinian peace process has been mortally wounded’ and I say something false (since the I-P peace process cannot literally be wounded, given that it is not a living creature). This false claim is not what I mean to convey. Rather, I intend to convey something that may well be true, namely that the I-P peace process is unlikely to continue much longer. In this second category one would also have to include cases of slips of tongue and other such speech errors. In such cases one intends to say one thing but uses an expression that (conventionally) means something different from what one intended, so that what is said and what is meant come apart.

- (3) One can say something and mean exactly that. This according to the Bach/Searle view is what happens when we speak literally. How often this happens and in what sorts of cases will depend very much on how one defines what is said. For instance, on Bach’s very restrictive syntactic projection view of what is said there are many fairly ordinary cases, which some might think involve the literal use of language, that he would classify as cases of *sentence nonliterality*. E.g., ‘I am finished’ is semantically underdetermined, according to Bach. What it is that I have finished must be recovered from the context. However, there is no syntactic slot in the sentence ‘I am finished’ that signals the need for this contextual element (unlike the indexical ‘I’, which does signal the need to search the context for its semantic value). What is said by means of such a semantically underdetermined sentence cannot be propositional. Since what is meant is always something propositional, what is said and what is meant can never coincide in such cases of semantic underdetermination. Thus they will always involve an element of nonliterality.
- (4) One can say something and mean nothing at all. This according to Bach (2001) is what happens when someone recites lines in a play, or in other cases of pretend communication. There are also cases in which someone utters words without comprehension (e.g., when in a trance). Arguably something is said in such a situation, although nothing is meant. (One might reasonably deny that in such cases anything is said, for by parity of reasoning one would also have to claim that parrots and other non-human mimics are saying things, which doesn’t seem plausible). Perhaps here we also need to recognize the opposite possibility, namely cases in which the speaker means something but says nothing at all. This might be the case

with someone heavily drugged. He tries to say something but what comes out is something garbled and unintelligible.

Each of these claims about the relation of what is said to what is meant can be fruitfully explored. For instance, there are many ways in which to question Searle's views about indirect speech acts. Bertolet (1994) challenges the very idea of an indirect *speech* act. Holdcroft (1994) challenges the idea that a directive interpretation of a sentence such as 'You will be there' is any less direct than an assertive interpretation. Bach (1995) introduces a notion of *standardization*, which may go some way towards explaining Holdcroft's observations. Bach argues that what is (literally) said in cases that Searle treats as instances of indirection may be bypassed due to familiarity with a certain sort of use. This sort of streamlining in processing means that the so-called indirect meaning can be directly communicated. Bach in effect proposes a three-fold distinction between what is said, what is directly communicated and what is indirectly communicated.

However, in this paper I will focus exclusively on claim (2), and even more particularly on the claim that in *metaphorical* uses of language what is said and what is meant come apart. I will *not* be offering an account of ironical and other figurative uses of language. What I want to try to make a case for is the view that **in metaphorical uses of language the metaphorical interpretation is directly expressed. We don't convey metaphorical meanings indirectly by directly saying something else.**

3. Some Disclaimers

I should make it clear at the outset that I agree with Davidson (1978) that expressions used metaphorically generally do not have metaphorical meanings that are lexicalized alongside their literal meanings (although there may be some so-called "frozen" metaphors that have become lexicalized). So I am *not* advocating a semantic ambiguity thesis with regard to sentences that are used metaphorically. For instance, I do not believe that a sentence such as 'He is a butcher' – sorry, this is a trite example – is semantically ambiguous between a literal and a metaphorical meaning. I can use this sentence literally, to express the claim that a certain contextually indicated male is a member of the profession that prepares cuts of meat to be sold at market. I can also use it metaphorically to express the claim that a certain contextually indicated male, who is known by my hearer and me to be a surgeon, performs his surgery in a manner that seems brutal and

unfeeling. He treats his patients' bodies as though they were animal carcasses, without the dignity that should be accorded to a fellow human being.¹

The metaphorical interpretation that I have imagined involves pragmatically determined aspects of content, and the hearer cannot retrieve it simply by a process of sense selection. Some sort of sense creation must be involved. (Gerrig (1989) uses the terms 'sense selection' and 'sense creation' to describe the difference between cases in which context is used to select between two or more lexicalized meanings of an expression and cases in which context must be used to arrive at a novel – a “nonce” or one-off – interpretation of a phrase.) This process of sense creation is basically a pragmatic one, even though, as we will see, it is semantically constrained. But although the intended metaphorical interpretation of 'He is a butcher' is pragmatic in nature, it is not accessed by first considering and rejecting the literal interpretation of that sentence, in the way suggested by Searle (1993: 110) or Grice (1989: 34). My alternative pragmatic account will be described in section 4 below.

Given that I accept that metaphorical interpretations are pragmatic in nature, I reject attempts to argue that metaphor is a semantic, not a pragmatic phenomenon. For instance, Tsohatzidis (1994) reasons that if metaphorical meanings are pragmatic, they ought to be distinguishable from other sorts of pragmatic meanings, such as cases of irony and indirection. But, he argues, Searle's way of distinguishing these types of speaker meaning fails. According to Searle what differentiates metaphor from irony is that in the case of irony the opposite of what is said is what is meant, whereas in the case of metaphor something other than what is said is meant, though it isn't simply the opposite of what is said. On the other hand, both irony and metaphor differ from cases of indirection, since in the case of indirection the speaker means what she says but means something else in addition, whereas in the case of figurative uses of language the speaker means something other than what she says.

Tsohatzidis argues against Searle's way of differentiating metaphor from irony and both of these in turn from indirection. He believes that there are examples of these phenomena that would violate Searle's classification scheme. For instance, consider examples of the following sorts (I

¹ In my dictionary 'butcher' n. is listed as having as one of its meanings 'a person guilty of brutal murder' and 'butcher' v. has as one of its meanings 'to botch or bungle something' – as in 'She really butchered that job'. Thus one might want to argue that what I am calling the metaphorical meaning *is* lexicalized. However, I would claim that the metaphorical interpretation I have imagined doesn't quite correspond to the 'brutal killer' meaning of 'butcher', and the intended metaphorical claim is not simply that the surgeon botches or bungles his surgery. In fact, one can imagine that this particular surgeon happens to be quite effective at his job. More important are the inferences the hearer is intended to draw about the kind of attitude the surgeon has towards his patients and so on.

have slightly altered Tsohatzidis' examples, but the points they are meant to illustrate are the same):

(5) Our piglet is getting dirty.

(6) She's the Taj Mahal.

Imagine that (5) is uttered by a husband to his wife in reference to their toddler who has wandered off and is splashing around in a puddle of mud. (5) is being used metaphorically, but it could also be intended as an indirect request by the husband to the wife to do something to stop the toddler from getting any dirtier. In the case of (6), imagine that two men are talking about a woman and a question arises as to whether one of the men finds the woman attractive. He utters (6), which is clearly being used metaphorically, but he also intends it ironically (or sarcastically) to mean that he finds the woman unattractive.

Tsohatzidis thinks that examples such as (5) and (6) present a problem for Searle. For instance, in the case of (5), which is a case of indirection, Searle has to say that something is said and meant, and that something else is meant in addition. But there doesn't seem to be any candidate for what is said (in Searle's sense) which is also something that is meant. The husband does not mean to be referring to a real piglet. In the case of (6), which is a case of irony, Searle has to say that the ironical meaning is the opposite of what is said (in Searle's sense – henceforth what-is-said_s). But this would seem to give the wrong result, as the ironical meaning is not that the woman in question is not the Taj Mahal.

Examples (5) and (6) do show that Searle's simple scheme for differentiating between metaphor, irony and indirection will not work. But perhaps a more complex scheme would work. Searle has to grant that indirection and irony can be at one remove from that allowed for by his scheme. There are cases where the hearer must first detect the speaker's metaphorical meaning and then only the irony or the indirection. Cases of once-removed indirection look more like what Searle classifies as cases of metaphor, since no aspect of what is meant corresponds to what-is-said_s. Something similar holds for cases of once-removed irony. They too look more like what Searle classifies as cases of metaphor, since the speaker's intended meaning doesn't correspond to what-is-said_s, but nor does it correspond to the opposite of what-is-said_s. So in non-removed cases Searle can retain his simple scheme, but cases of once-removed indirection and irony would have to be lumped together with cases of metaphor. We could then distinguish within this class between straightforward metaphors, metaphorical-irony and metaphorical-indirection. These labels signal the fact that cases of the latter two sorts arise out of a prior metaphorical

interpretation. In these cases the hearer is invited to elaborate on the prior metaphorical interpretation to discover additional (in the case of metaphorical-indirection) or different (in the case of metaphorical-irony) meanings.

Even if one doesn't think the more complicated scheme suggested in the previous paragraph saves Searle, one should not grant Tsohatzidis' further conclusion. Tsohatzidis claims that the failure of Searle's classification scheme means we must give up the idea that metaphor is a pragmatic phenomenon and embrace the view that it is a semantic phenomenon. But this follows only if Searle's pragmatic account of metaphor is the only pragmatic account that is available. But it isn't. There are other ways of treating metaphor as a pragmatic phenomenon, including the direct expression view that I defend in the following section.

Tsohatzidis has another objection to pragmatic accounts that is more worrying. He argues that if metaphorical interpretations are pragmatic, they ought to pass Grice's cancellability test. That is, one ought to be able without anomaly to utter a sentence that could be metaphorically interpreted, yet follow it up with a disclaimer that cancels the potential metaphorical meaning. But this doesn't seem to be possible with cases of metaphor where what-is-said_s involves a category mistake, such as (6) above. A woman cannot literally have the property of being a building, so one couldn't without anomaly mean what-is-said_s by (6).

Metaphorical interpretations do appear to be cancelable in cases where no category mistake prevents the sentence uttered from being interpreted literally. For example, in my surgeon/butcher case I could without anomaly utter 'He is a butcher, and I don't mean with respect to the way he behaves in the operating room. He moonlights down at the abattoir.' But consider an utterance such as 'She is the Taj Mahal, and I don't mean to comment on her remarkable beauty. She ...'. There doesn't seem to be any content that could be inserted in the ellipsis that would make it plausible to construe my remark 'She is the Taj Mahal' literally (assuming that 'she' refers to a human female and 'the Taj Mahal' denotes a building in India). I will come back to this objection in section 6, as it is a potential problem for my account too, given that I, like Searle, treat metaphor as a pragmatic phenomenon.

Tsohatzidis discusses cases like (5) and (6), which are cases of once-removed indirection and irony. It is interesting to ask whether there could be cases of once-removed metaphor. In other words, we've seen that metaphors can be vehicles for irony or indirection. Could irony or indirection be vehicles for metaphors? That is, could one utter something intending it to be taken literally, but also intending one's hearer to indirectly retrieve a further meaning, which in turn one intended one's hearer to interpret metaphorically? E.g., can I utter something like 'It's cold in

here' intending it literally, but also intending my hearer to indirectly retrieve the idea that I want my hearer to close the window, which in turn I intend my hearer to interpret metaphorically? And are there cases in which one utters something that has a literal interpretation, but where one intends one's hearer to retrieve a meaning opposite to this literal meaning, which in turn one intends one's hearer to interpret metaphorically? E.g., can I utter 'It's cold in here' intending my hearer to retrieve the idea that it is hot in our immediate vicinity, which in turn I expect my hearer to interpret metaphorically? Neither of these appears to be possible.

One can of course utter 'It's cold in here' intending it literally and also simultaneously intending one's hearer to understand that one thinks the "emotional climate" between the two of you is chilly. But this is something like a case of double entendre. 'It's cold in here' is intended to be simultaneously literally and metaphorically interpreted. It is not a case of a metaphor at one remove.

Also, one can utter 'It's cold in here' and intend one's hearer to interpret this metaphorically to mean that emotional relations between the two of you are strained. One might then, at a stretch, expect one's hearer to get the idea that one is indirectly implying that there is some "emotional window" that is causing the strained relations and that one desires the hearer to close this "window". But if this is possible it is because the hearer has already interpreted one's utterance 'It's cold in here' metaphorically, and is able to play along with the idea of a "chilly emotional climate". Just as having an open window can cause chilliness in the physical environment, so can some "rupture" in one's relations cause chilliness in the emotional environment. And just as closing the window can end the physical chilliness, so too can closing the emotional rupture end the emotional chilliness. In other words, this would *not* be a case of metaphor at one remove. In fact, this case is analogous to (5) above, where a metaphor is used to communicate a further meaning or meanings. It would be a case of *indirectness* at one remove.

Similar sorts of considerations count against the idea that irony can be used as a springboard for cases of once-removed metaphor. Thus we can say that metaphors (though not what might be called metaphorical extensions or elaborations) must be launched from an utterance, and cannot be launched from an interpretation that is itself reached only via the pragmatic interpretation of a speaker's utterance.

Stern (2000: 235-237) discusses a case that is a potential counterexample to my claim that irony cannot be used as a springboard for cases of once-removed metaphor. Consider:

(7) He is a towering figure.

It seems possible that a speaker could use (7) intending his hearer to understand it ironically. Stern assumes that the ironical interpretation of (7) is simply the contrary of (7), namely:

(8) He is a minute figure.

The speaker might intend this in turn to be metaphorically interpreted to mean that the man in question is of no consequence, or that he is not taken seriously or respected by his peers, or whatever. As Stern himself points out, this only seems possible because (7) is a “frozen” metaphor. “Person of great importance” is arguably one of the lexicalized meanings of “towering figure”. Stern’s final conclusion is in line with my claim that metaphors must be launched from utterances. He says that metaphorical interpretations are operations on sentences, whereas ironical interpretations are operations on propositional contents. (2000: 237).

One might dispute the claim that (7) is a “frozen” metaphor and argue instead that (7) and (8) are possible linguistic manifestations of an underlying conceptual metaphor of the sort posited by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). The conceptual metaphor would be something like SOCIAL STATUS IS PHYSICAL SIZE. Amongst other possible linguistic manifestations of this conceptual metaphor are:

(9) He is a giant in the recording industry.

(10) She is a person of great stature.

(11) He’s no more than a blip on her radar screen.

But even if one took this line, it would not lend support to the idea that there are once-removed cases of metaphor. One may be able to understand (7) ironically as (8). But this is because one is already in a metaphorical space where SOCIAL STATUS IS PHYSICAL SIZE. So this would not be a case in which one understands the irony prior to understanding the metaphor.

I take the fact that there are no cases of once-removed metaphor (i.e., no cases of metaphors launched from ironically or indirectly intended propositions) as support for the view that metaphorical interpretations are different from other sorts of pragmatic interpretations. We are thus able to satisfy Tsohatzidis’ demand that we specify the ways in which metaphors differ from other pragmatic phenomena. Metaphorical interpretations have a kind of directness that isn’t shared by other pragmatically derived interpretations, such as cases of irony and indirect speech acts. Metaphors must be (initially) launched from utterances, although of course once one is launched into metaphorical space, one can extend or elaborate on the metaphor – consider for example the case of the “chilly emotional environment” discussed above. This does not yet

establish that metaphors directly express propositions. Something more needs to be said to establish this stronger claim.

4. Metaphor and Directness

My direct expression view of metaphor depends on defending a notion of what is said that is not as constrained as the syntactic projection view defended by Bach (2000) nor as constrained as Searle's view that ties what is said to literal sentence meaning. I call my conception of what is said a *contextualist* conception, because it allows that some aspects of what is said may be entirely pragmatically determined. That is, there may be no syntactic or semantic rule that generates these aspects of what is said. Instead, the speaker intends the hearer to use the syntactic and semantic clues provided, along with non-linguistic information available in their mutual cognitive environment in order to recover what is said. The syntactic and semantic clues by themselves will underdetermine what is said. Henceforth I will call this contextualist conception what-is-said_C.

It will be useful to illustrate the contrast between what-is-said_C and Bach's notion of what is said – what-is-said_B – with an example. What-is-said_B allows for elements of content that must be contextually determined, because it includes elements of content that correspond to indexicals and to ambiguous expressions. But it excludes from what is said any content that does not correspond to some syntactic slot in the sentence uttered. E.g., when I utter the sentence 'I've been to the bank' in a suitable context, what-is-said_B is that Anne has been to the monetary depository (i.e., the indexical has been assigned a referent, and the word 'bank' has been disambiguated). Any suggestion as to when specifically this event occurred that you the hearer might have been able to gather from the context will be excluded from what-is-said_B. This additional aspect of content (assuming that I intended my hearers to access it) can at best be implicit in what-is-said_B. Bach calls this pragmatically determined aspect of content an *implicature* to make it clear that it is not a part of what-is-said_B.

What-is-said_C on the other hand includes this purely pragmatically determined aspect of content. To make this plausible one needs to consider the utterance in context rather than in isolation. Suppose for instance that I work in a store and it is my job to take the cash and checks from the previous day's sales to the bank (i.e., monetary depository) every morning at around 9:00am. The manager comes in late one morning and wants to know what tasks have been done so far that morning. I utter the sentence:

(12) I've been to the bank.

What-is-said_C by uttering (12) in this context is:

(13) Anne has been to the monetary depository *on the morning of utterance*.

On the other hand, suppose that I regularly help out an old lady who lives in a retirement home by doing various errands for her. Every Friday afternoon I go to the bank (i.e., monetary depository) for her and withdraw \$50.00 from her account. Then when I visit her on Sundays I hand over the money. One Sunday I come for my usual visit and, as I hand over her \$50.00, I utter (12). What-is-said_C in this context is:

(14) Anne has been to the monetary depository *on the Friday prior to the time of utterance*.

In both the cases illustrated in the previous paragraph the sentence is pragmatically enriched to restrict the event described to some particular period of time in the past. Of course, it is also possible for a speaker to utter (12) intending simply to express the proposition that the speaker has been to the monetary depository at some time before the time of her utterance. For instance, suppose a group of villagers is discussing the amenities available in the next town. There is a bank and a credit union in the town and for some reason a question arises as to whether anyone has any knowledge of either of these institutions. Someone utters (12). What the speaker says is that she has been to the bank sometime before the time of her utterance, but she doesn't intend to single out any particular time in the past as the time at which her visit occurred.² In this situation, the speaker expresses a complete proposition. It is an existential proposition that quantifies over times, and it could be represented in first-order predicate logic as follows:

(15) $(\exists t)$ (t is a period of time earlier than τ and α visits β at t)

where ' τ ' is the time of context of utterance, ' α ' is the speaker in the context and ' β ' is the monetary depository denoted by the description 'the bank' in the context.

Note that the proposition represented by (15) is not what the *sentence* (12) expresses, not even given an assignment of references to the indexical and the definite description in (12). It is what-is-said_C by (12) in the particular context of utterance we have imagined. The past tense construction of the verb in (12) simply points to the fact that the time of the event described in the sentence is past, but it does not (either implicitly or explicitly) quantify over past moments of time. In other words, what is semantically and syntactically encoded in (12) underdetermines the propositions it can be used to express in particular contexts. It can be used to express (13), (14), (15), and indefinitely many other propositions.

² In this context she may also conversationally imply that she has not been to the credit union.

Some people may be tempted to say that (15) deserves to be singled out as a literal interpretation of (12), whereas (13) and (14) are non-literal interpretations that contain conceptual material extracted from background assumptions available in the context of utterance. Hence only (15) has a legitimate claim to be identified with what is said by an utterance of (12). However, each of these propositions is reached via a process of pragmatic enrichment, although one might say that the pragmatic enrichment in the case of (15) is the minimal needed to express a complete proposition. I prefer to say that all the interpretations (including the minimal one) are candidates for what-is-said_C.³

If one singles out (15) as the only legitimate contender to the title of what is said, then one will have to say that in the other situations that I imagined there must have been some minimal existential proposition that was really what was said. On this view (13) and (14) are at best implicit in what was said. This is in fact the position adopted by Bach (1994, 1999). However, the idea that interpretations such as (13) and (14) are indirectly conveyed via the direct expression of the minimal interpretation (15) lacks psychological plausibility. Even if (15) deserves to be called a literal interpretation, there is a great deal of psychological evidence that literal interpretations are not privileged from the processing point of view. Many reading time experiments have found that nonliteral interpretations are accessed as quickly as literal ones, casting doubt on the view that pragmatically enriched interpretations are indirectly conveyed. Gibbs (1994) summarizes much of this psychological work, especially as it applies to the processing of metaphors, ironical utterances, indirect speech acts, idioms and other figurative uses of language, such as cases of metonymy, hyperbole, litotes, oxymoron and so on. Bezuidenhout & Cutting (2001) discuss the problem as it applies particularly to cases such (15) compared with (13) and (14).

Bach (2001) invokes his notion of standardization to account for such psychological findings. It may well be that minimal propositions are bypassed in processing because enriched uses such as (13) and (14) are so familiar. Familiarity with certain sorts of uses can set up a default interpretative pathway that obviates the need to first consider the minimal interpretation and only then move to an enriched interpretation such as (13) or (14). Nevertheless it may still be that the minimal interpretation is dispositionally available to the processing system. Besides, Bach complains, the psychological evidence about how *hearers* process utterances is irrelevant to the issue as to what the *speaker* has said. Thus an appeal to psychological findings should not be allowed to influence our philosophical account of the notion of what is said.

³ Notice that in those cases in which (12) is interpreted as a quantificational claim, what sort of quantifier is expressed can vary depending on the context. What-is-said_C could be that the speaker has

Bezuidenhout (2001) addresses both these claims. Regarding the latter point, I argue that Bach's identification of what is said with a minimal proposition is psychologically implausible *both* from the point of view of language *production* (the speaker's point of view) and from the point of view of language *comprehension* (the hearer's point of view). If this is so, it is not as easy to dismiss psychological evidence as irrelevant to philosophical concerns. Regarding the former point, merely to claim that minimal propositions are dispositionally available to the processing system doesn't set Bach's view apart from the contextualist view. Contextualists can accept the claim that minimal propositions are dispositionally available. There clearly are contexts in which the minimal proposition is what-is-said_C, and in those contexts the hearer ought to be able to access that interpretation. Thus unless Bach can make some empirical predictions about the psychological role of minimal propositions that differ from the predictions made by contextualists, Bach's notion of what-is-said_B will be empirically empty. It is unsatisfactory to retreat to the claim that what-is-said_B is relevant to a philosophical account of semantic and pragmatic phenomena even if it has no psychological validity. Our account of natural language semantics and pragmatics ought to be constrained by what it is psychologically plausible to attribute to speakers and hearers of natural language.

This debate between contextualists and their critics cannot be settled here. I hope to have at least made it clear what the contextualist view is. So far I've discussed cases in which what is semantically encoded in the sentence uttered underdetermines what is said and in which a pragmatic process of enrichment adds elements of content to the encoded content. But there is also a pragmatic process of the opposite sort that eliminates elements of content. This is a process of loosening in which elements of content that are semantically encoded in the sentence uttered are discarded with the result that what is expressed is a proposition that is broader than what is encoded. For example, consider:

(16) It is silent here.

(17) This meat they've served me is raw.

I will discuss only example (16). I leave it to the reader to construct a comparable story about example (17). The word 'silent', as applied to a state or condition of the world as opposed to a person, encodes the idea of a state in which nothing is audible, a state in which all sound or noise is absent. But one does not always use the word so strictly. Thus suppose my companion and I enter a house and stand in the hallway. There appear to be no people around making the usual sorts of domestic noises that people make. But if I really strain my ears I can catch the sound of

visited the bank many (a few, a couple, several, a dozen, etc.) times.

the refrigerator humming. I can hear a faint scratching that I think might be a squirrel or a mouse up in the eaves of the house. Every now and then there seems to be a plopping sound that could be water dripping from a tap somewhere in the house. I turn to my companion and utter (16). I intend my hearer to understand that my use of ‘silent’ is a loose use, which excludes only sounds that are clearly audible, but doesn’t exclude sounds that are barely audible, or only just above the threshold of audibility, such as a dripping tap or humming refrigerator.

What-is-said_C by my utterance in such a context can be represented as:

(18) It is silent* in the house.

*Silent** is what Carston (199?) calls an *ad hoc* concept. This *ad hoc* concept is a constituent of the proposition I express by my utterance of (16). It is the concept I intend my hearer to recover by a pragmatic process of loosening. The hearer must use the semantically encoded content of the word ‘silent’ as one clue, along with other assumptions that are mutually manifest to speaker and hearer in the context, in order to understand what-is-said_C. The concept *silent** is not one of the lexicalized meanings of the English word ‘silent’ and there is no other word in English whose lexical meaning corresponds to this concept. We could decide to introduce a new term into our language whose meaning corresponded to this concept. But there isn’t much point to doing this, as it is easy enough to express the *ad hoc* concept simply by using the lexicalized concept as a springboard and relying on context to fine tune one’s meaning. Moreover, if we introduce a term for *silent**, then why not for all the other possible *ad hoc* concepts that can be conveyed by (16) by suitably altering the context? Since there are indefinitely many such concepts, this would be an exercise in futility.

It is worth making a few remarks here that will have a bearing when we come to discuss metaphorical uses of expressions. Firstly, the expressibility of such *ad hoc* concepts does not depend on the possibility of putting such concepts into words, even in principle. An *ad hoc* concept is expressible even in situations in which there is no way in principle of fully linguistically characterizing the concept, so long as it is possible to convey part of the content by extra-linguistic means. It may be that part of the individuation conditions of the concept I wish to express is some feature in my perceptual environment that can only be demonstratively picked out. In other words, my concept may be a *de re* one. Such a concept can never be fully linguistically characterized, in the way that a purely descriptive concept can be, at least in principle. Nevertheless I can express this *de re* concept and my hearer can understand me to have

expressed this concept so long as the perceptual feature is part of my hearer's and my mutual cognitive environment.⁴

Secondly, as already mentioned, there are many possible *ad hoc* concepts corresponding to 'silent' that can be expressed by uttering (16) in some appropriate context. For instance, different contexts may set different audibility thresholds, and to each such threshold would correspond a different *ad hoc* concept. But it needn't be only audibility thresholds that vary from context to context. Another feature that might vary from context to context is what sorts of sounds are relevant. For instance, imagine there has just been a heated battle in our city. There have been the sounds of shells and mortars exploding, bursts of gunfire and so on. We emerge from our underground shelter and listen. No more battle sounds can be heard, although there is an audible sound of flowing water, the result of a ruptured water main. In such a situation I might utter (16). I intend my hearer to understand that my use of 'silent' is a loose use, which excludes only clearly audible battle sounds, but doesn't exclude other sorts of audible sounds, such as the sound of a gushing water main. (Compare: 'All's quiet on the Western Front').

Thirdly, the talk of *ad hoc* concepts is just as applicable to cases in which what-is-said_C is arrived at by a process of enrichment. When I utter (12) and thereby express (13) one could say that I've expressed the *ad hoc* concept of *having been to the bank**, which is the concept of having been to the monetary depository on a particular Monday morning at a particular time. And here too there are indefinitely many such *ad hoc* concepts expressible by the utterance of (12) in a suitable context, and some of these concepts may be in principle inexpressible in words.

Fourthly, even though I have spoken of the processes of enrichment and loosening as though they operate separately, it may be that in many situations they operate together. In other words, to understand the *ad hoc* concept I intend to express, it may be necessary to both loosen along some dimensions and enrich along others. Carston (1997: 113-116) gives several examples to illustrate this possibility. In future, when I talk of loose use I mean to include cases in which loosening and enrichment operate together.

Fifthly, besides the pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening, contextualists have discussed various other sorts of pragmatic processes that might play a role in generating aspects of what-is-said_C. For instance, Recanati (1993) describes a process that he calls transfer. More

⁴ When I talk of a person's cognitive environment I mean any information of which that person can become aware, even if generally such information is not attended to. Perceptual states encode information of which we can become aware, so that the contents of such states belong to our cognitive

will be said about this in the next section in which I consider the ways in which my direct expression view of metaphor differs from Stern's (2000) view of metaphors as demonstratives.

Before moving on to explain how this discussion of pragmatic enrichment and loosening bears on the case of metaphors, it is worth dispensing with one possible objection to the contextualist conception of saying I've been trying to characterize. This is an objection that has been pressed by Bach against those, such as Carston (1991), Recanati (1991, 1993) and Travis (1985), who defend contextualist conceptions of saying. According to Bach (1999) these people have confused saying, which is a locutionary act, with stating, which is an illocutionary act. However, I am happy to agree that saying is to be identified with a locutionary act. Where I differ from Bach is on how to define a locutionary act.

Bach accepts Austin's (1975) definition of a locutionary act. According to Austin (1975: 94), when a speaker utters a sentence in a certain context, this counts as a locutionary act only if these words are used *with a certain sense and reference*. It is plausible to think that Austin was operating with the still widely shared assumption that once we've used the context to determine sense (by disambiguation) and reference (by reference assignment) we have determined the proposition that is expressed by the speaker's utterance of the sentence in that context. In other words, Austin thinks that locutionary acts are individuated by their propositional contents, which in turn he thinks are fixed simply by disambiguation and reference assignment.

However, this latter assumption fails to accommodate cases in which the syntactic and semantic information encoded in a sentence underdetermines the proposition expressed by the utterance of that sentence in some context. In such cases, a process of pragmatic enrichment is called for in addition to disambiguation and reference assignment. There are also cases in which what is semantically encoded is too narrow or too broad, in which case loosening or enrichment (which is a type of narrowing) are called for respectively. We need to amend Austin's definition of a locutionary act as follows: A locutionary act is the uttering of certain words with a certain sense and reference *and pragmatically enriched/loosened in a certain way*. Once we have done this it is a simple matter to agree that to say something is to engage in a locutionary act.

How do the notions of what-is-said_C and of pragmatic enrichment and loosening apply to cases of metaphor? Sperber & Wilson (1986) suggest that loose use and metaphor are phenomena of essentially the same sort. Mundane cases of loose use such as (16) and (17) are at one end of a continuum with highly poetic metaphors at the other end. When Sperber & Wilson first proposed

environments just as much as the contents of our beliefs and other propositional attitudes. 'Cognitive' is not being used synonymously with 'conceptual'.

the idea that the metaphorical use of a sentence can be profitably thought of as a certain sort of loose use of that sentence, their conception of loose use was more in line with neo-Gricean views about the nature of metaphor. Sperber & Wilson (1986) held that in cases of loose use there is a proposition expressed by the sentence the speaker uses (what neo-Griceans would say is literally expressed by that sentence) but that this expressed proposition is not identical to the loose proposition that the speaker intends to communicate. The loose interpretation is not directly expressed but is merely a Gricean conversational implicature.

Carston (1997) points out that this means treating the pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening in asymmetrical ways. She argues that it is more in line with Sperber & Wilson's theory of relevance to regard **enrichment and loosening as symmetrical processes**. One should think of them as processes that move in opposite directions away from what is semantically encoded in the sentence uttered. **Enrichment narrows the encoded content, loosening broadens the encoded content**, but both processes should be thought of as resulting in a pragmatically derived proposition which is directly expressed by the sentence as uttered in some context. There is no need to invoke Gricean conversational implicatures. In my discussion of loosening, I have been following Carston's (1997) conception of the process, and hence in thinking about metaphor as loose use I will follow Carston (1997) too.

In what sense can metaphor be thought of as loose use? Consider the following passage, which describes the emotions Duncan Cambus experiences after learning that his wife Jean is leaving him for the second time to return to her lover David Crimond:

(19)He [Duncan] groaned, feeling, smelling, as it came bubbling to the surface, all that old murderous jealousy and hate which had been packed away, a dangerous atomic capsule, submerged for so long in the darkest sea caverns of his mind. (Iris Murdoch, *The Book and the Brotherhood*. Penguin Books, London, 1988, pg. 76-77).

Duncan's emotions of hate and jealousy are here compared to dangerous atomic weapons. Atomic weapons can lay waste to whole cities (as they did in Hiroshima and Nagasaki), and the damage they do is indiscriminate. Innocent civilians and their homes and businesses are destroyed along with military targets and enemy soldiers. We therefore form an *ad hoc* concept of things that are hugely destructive and that are not discriminating about what they damage. It is this *ad hoc* concept that is applied to the emotions of jealousy and hate. Note that the emotions here are being used metonymically to stand for the person who has those emotions. Presumably it is people who do damage because they are jealous, rather than the mental states of jealousy themselves that do the damage.

There is the further image of jealousy and hate being packed away deep in Duncan's unconscious, in the way that atomic weapons may be stored far beneath the Earth's surface (in caverns under the sea). Now this hate and jealousy is rising to consciousness like an atomic capsule "bubbling to the surface" of the sea beneath which it was buried. Two further *ad hoc* concepts must be constructed here. Atomic weapons are kept in secure places where they are not easily accessible, to guard against their being accidentally triggered, because they are so dangerous and destructive. Thus we form the *ad hoc* concept of keeping things so inaccessible that it is no easy matter to retrieve them. Duncan's feelings of jealousy and hatred for Crimond have been repressed, and are inaccessible in this way.⁵ The image of an atomic capsule "bubbling to the surface" suggests that the capsule is not being raised to the surface in some controlled and deliberate way, and it is not being shot out of the water, say at the head of a guided missile. Thus we form an *ad hoc* concept of something ominous, stealthy, out of control which is applied to Duncan's emotions. All these *ad hoc* concepts are constituents of the proposition that is directly expressed by (19).

Consider another example, from Shakespeare's *Othello*:

(20) Iago: And his [Othello's] unbookish jealousy must construe / Poor Cassio's smiles,
gestures and light behaviors / Quite in the wrong. (*Othello*, IV, i, 9-11)

As in the passage from Murdoch, jealousy is being used metonymically to stand for the person who has the emotion, in this case Othello. It is Othello who will misconstrue Cassio's behavior, not the mental state of jealousy itself. An unbookish person is one who is not devoted to books or study and who is not familiar with the academic way of life. An unbookish person is likely to have difficulty with reading and understanding what he reads. Shakespeare frequently refers to people's faces and actions metaphorically as texts that must be read and interpreted. Here too Cassio's behavior is being treated metaphorically as a text that must be read. From the context we also know that Othello is a military man, unfamiliar with the mannerisms of the Venetian court. Thus we form the *ad hoc* concept of someone who is not good at understanding a certain sort of courtly behavior. Presumably, being in the grip of the emotion of jealousy, Othello's interpretive

⁵ Of course, talk of repressed emotions and of storing things in one's unconscious is itself a metaphorical way of talking of emotions. But this sort of Freudian conception of the mental is so much part of our everyday talk of the mind that it is hardly recognized as metaphorical. It is also possible to see all these metaphors, including Murdoch's more colorful ones, as linguistic expressions of a couple of underlying conceptual metaphors in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) sense, namely MENTAL STATES ARE OBJECTS and THE MIND IS A CONTAINER.

task is made even more difficult, as he is unlikely to stop to consider whether his judgments about Cassio are warranted.

Both (19) and (20) seem to pattern with the example of loose use discussed above. Thus we have good reason to think of metaphors as directly expressing certain propositions, just as sentences used loosely directly express propositions. Of course, the more poetic the metaphor, the more difficult it is to be sure we have correctly represented the content. Metaphors also have an open-ended quality to them. If a metaphor is a good one, then the more one thinks about it, the more one seems to discover in it, so that one can never be sure that one has exhausted its content. This is true, but this observation doesn't count against the direct expression view of metaphor that I am attempting to defend.

Firstly, it doesn't help to retreat to an indirect communication view of metaphor. Those who defend the view that metaphorical interpretations are indirectly conveyed via literally saying something else nevertheless want to hold that some proposition is indirectly communicated. Thus they too must face the problem that it is sometimes hard to say what this proposition is, due to the open-ended nature of metaphorical interpretation.

But secondly, the open-ended nature of metaphorical interpretation isn't an embarrassment. Literal interpretation is just as open-ended. Any difficult claim that requires the mastery of a lot of background information for its interpretation is likely to have an open-ended quality. The more time one can spend thinking about the claim and the more background one can bring to bear on it, the greater one's understanding is likely to be. As one processes at a deeper level one is likely to read more into the claim and hence to revise one's initial interpretation(s).

When discussing the loose use of (16), I remarked that there are indefinitely many propositions that can be expressed by (16), depending on the context in which it is uttered. Similar remarks can be made about metaphors. For instance, Shakespeare was fond of metaphorically comparing his characters to the Sun. But by situating this metaphor in different contexts, what is expressed is never the same. Consider for example the following:

(21) Romeo: But soft, what light through yonder window breaks? / It is the East, and Juliet is the sun. / Arise fair sun and kill the envious moon, / Who is already sick and pale with grief, / That thou her maid art more fair than she. (*Romeo and Juliet* II, ii, 2-6)

(22) Salisbury: Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind / I see thy glory like a shooting star / Fall to the base earth from the firmament. / Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west, /

Witness storms to come, woe and unrest; / Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes, /
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes. (*Richard II*, II, iv, 18-24)

(23) Cleopatra: The crown o' th' earth doth melt. (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, xv, 73)

I will not discuss these examples in detail, but just briefly remark on some of their features. The comparisons in (21) and (22) of Juliet and Richard II to the Sun are very different. Juliet is compared to the rising sun, whereas Richard is compared to the setting sun. Juliet is a “fair sun” whereas Richard is a “weeping sun”. The surrounding contexts are very different. Juliet is being praised by a besotted Romeo who is trying to woo her. Salisbury has been told that Richard is dead and is lamenting all the evil consequences of this event. These different background assumptions will give rise to very different *ad hoc* concepts to be applied to Juliet and Richard respectively.

White (1996: 176) very beautifully describes example (23). Cleopatra utters (23) just at the moment Antony dies. White argues that this is a double metaphor. The Sun is compared to a golden crown and Antony is compared to the sun. As the sun sets its light is diffracted and spreads out along the horizon like molten gold. Antony's death is then compared to such a setting sun and hence to a melting crown. The set of assumptions here is very different again from either (21) or (22). Both Richard and Antony are compared to setting suns, but the background assumptions give rise to different *ad hoc* concepts. Antony's political greatness is emphasized, his “preciousness” and there are none of the evil portents (shooting stars falling to Earth) as in the case of Richard. (I am talking just about the immediate context for (23). In other places in the play Antony's death is compared to the falling of a star that halts time. *A&C*, IV, xiv, 129f).

I want to end this section by discussing a distinction Stern (2000: 27-28) draws between what he calls extension and transfer. Cases of extension are metaphorical interpretations “that *extend* the (literal) meaning of an expression, say, by dropping at least one condition in the (literal) meaning” (2000: 27. Stern's emphasis). Cases of transfer on the other hand are metaphorical interpretations that involve a change of extension; “the resulting interpretation is applicable to a domain disjoint from its original [literal] one (or sufficiently disjoint for the change to count as one of transfer).” (2000: 27). Stern gives (24) as an example of extension, and (25) as a case of transfer:

(24) Quine demolished Carnap's argument.

(25) Juliet is the sun.

Stern grants that both sorts of uses are metaphorical uses. However, he claims that his account of metaphor is focused on cases of transfer, implying that these are the more interesting cases, and that an account of metaphor based just on cases of extension would be somehow impoverished. Since his definition of extension may seem to suggest what I've been calling loose use, and since my direct expression view of metaphor has made the notion of loose use central, we need to ask whether there is an important distinction here that my account is missing.

Stern says that in cases of extension one or another of the conditions of application of the extended term is dropped, but that the metaphorical interpretation "properly contains" the original (literal) one. He says that what condition is to be dropped will vary from context to context, and so metaphorical extensions are in some sense context-dependent. But he also thinks they are "context-independent insofar as they do not draw upon extra-linguistic presuppositions for the content of the metaphorical interpretation." (2000: 27. His emphasis). How might this work in the case of (24)? Well, to demolish is to destroy or tear down a physical structure, such as a building or a bridge or a dam wall. If we drop the condition that the structure torn down be a physical structure, then the term will be applicable to any kind of structure, including such abstract structures as arguments or proofs or ideologies. It looks as though we've simply broadened the extension of the predicate, and that all we needed to do was access the lexical entry for the verb 'to destroy' and eliminate one of the semantic features associated with the term, viz. [+thing destroyed is physical].

However, I do not agree that this is how we interpret (24). Of course, Stern provides us with absolutely no context for the utterance of this sentence, which is one of the things I have already complained is often missing in philosophical discussions of metaphor. Even without too much in the way of background I would argue that many extra-linguistic presuppositions enter into the interpretation of (24). For example, although the verb 'to destroy' is not subcategorized for an obligatory following prepositional phrase, talk of demolishing things will bring to mind various sorts of instruments and implements used in demolition jobs. We may think of wrecking balls and dynamite and huge earth moving equipment. What specifically we think of will depend on the size of the thing to be torn down. A dam wall or a huge building will probably call for large amounts of dynamite, but if it is simply a rickety old wooden outhouse that needs to be torn down, then probably a single person wielding an axe can accomplish the task. In the case of (24) we know that Carnap was a good philosopher whose arguments were generally well constructed.⁶

⁶ Note that here again we could invoke an underlying conceptual metaphor of the Lakoff & Johnson sort. In this case the metaphor would be ARGUMENTS ARE BUILDINGS.

So refuting his arguments would be no easy matter. Presumably Quine was up to the task, being himself no slouch. But Quine and Carnap were also pretty well matched in intellect. For Quine to demolish Anne's arguments would be an easy matter, requiring no heavy-duty logical apparatus. In the case of Carnap, Quine might have to muster argumentative techniques of a more sophisticated sort.

I would argue that by relying on such non-linguistic background assumptions we arrive at an *ad hoc* concept *demolish** and it is this concept that is applied to Quine's arguments against Carnap. This concept is no mere extension in Stern's sense of the meaning of 'demolish', and it certainly does not "properly contain" the literal interpretation of the term. This *ad hoc* concept would not be applicable to the act of tearing down a building. Thus I dispute Stern's claim that cases like (24) are any different from cases like (25), that he calls cases of transfer. In the case of (25), as I have already indicated in my discussion of Shakespeare's sun metaphors, we construct an *ad hoc* concept *sun** that is applicable to Juliet and would not be applicable to the Sun. But once again, this doesn't distinguish (24) from (25). Thus I conclude that by appealing to the notion of loose use I have not restricted myself to the discussion of an uninteresting sub-class of metaphorical interpretations and precluded myself from the discussion of the truly interesting cases.⁷

5. Metaphors as demonstratives

In this section I want to discuss in some detail the account of metaphor offered by Stern (2000), and to compare it to my own direct expression view. Stern too can be thought of as offering a direct expression view of metaphor, but whereas I have argued for this conclusion by assimilating metaphors to cases of loose use, he argues for this conclusion by assimilating metaphors to demonstratives. Although there are aspects of Stern's view that I am sympathetic to, I think it is wrong to think of metaphors as demonstratives. I will briefly characterize Stern's view, and then say why I think it is preferable to think of metaphors as cases of loose use.

Stern and I are in agreement that expressions used metaphorically (whether these be words, phrases or whole sentences) are context-dependent expressions.⁸ Thus we wish to think of

⁷ The view that metaphors involve *ad hoc* concepts is similar to the view of metaphor defended in Glucksberg & Keysar (1993). They argue that simple predicative metaphors like 'My job is a jail' or 'Cigarettes are time bombs' are class inclusion statements. A class inclusion statement is one in which an object is included in a category or a category is included within a superordinate category. They argue that when novel metaphors are used new categories are created.

⁸ Stern (2000) focuses on what he calls predicative metaphors (such as 'Juliet is the sun') and briefly discusses what he calls nominative metaphors (such as 'The sun is furious'). He thinks the latter can be

metaphors on the model of other context-dependent expressions. Stern appears to think that we have only two choices. Metaphors are either like ambiguous expressions or like demonstrative and indexical expressions. Ambiguous expressions are context-dependent, in the sense that context is needed to select the speaker's intended meaning. Stern and I agree that semantic ambiguity is not a good model for metaphor. As I noted at the beginning of section 3, constructing a metaphorical interpretation is not a case of sense selection but of sense creation. So Stern is left with indexicals and demonstratives as the only model for metaphors.

On the other hand, I have tried to argue that disambiguation and reference assignment are in many cases not sufficient to determine what is said. We must grant that pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening are (at least sometimes) needed to determine propositional constituents. Thus it is open to me to think of metaphors as context-dependent expressions that directly express propositions, but that are nevertheless not indexical or demonstrative expressions.⁹ The context dependence may be due to the fact that some propositional constituents are fixed via the pragmatic processes of enrichment and/or loosening. These aspects of content go beyond anything that is syntactically or semantically encoded. This is the sense in which metaphor is a pragmatic phenomenon. So, contrary to Stern's claim, metaphor is not something to be handled within indexical semantics.

Stern's account of metaphor is modeled on Kaplan's (1989a) discussion of indexicals and demonstratives. In particular, it makes use of Kaplan's distinction between character and content, of Kaplan's notion of a 'Dthat' operator, and of Kaplan's idea that pure indexicals are parametric expressions whose values are fixed relative to a context via a semantic rule. Stern argues that there is a general operator 'Mthat' which when applied to a predicate expression 'Φ' forms a metaphorical expression 'Mthat[Φ]'. This is a context-dependent expression that has a certain metaphorical character '{Mthat[Φ]}'. This character is a function from context to content.

reduced to special cases of the former. But he has to grant that expressions of all types, including noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, adjectives and adverbs, can be used metaphorically. Also, whole sentences may be used metaphorically (e.g., 'The crown o' th' earth doth melt.').

⁹ Note that the issue here is what the best model for metaphor is. In denying that the best model is an indexical model I am *not* denying that indexicals and demonstratives can sometimes be used metaphorically. I think that all kinds of expressions can be used metaphorically, including demonstratives. For example, I can utter 'That old gin-soaked rag needs to be wrung out', intending to use the demonstrative expression 'that old gin-soaked rag' metaphorically to refer to one of my colleagues. I would say that the use of the expression 'gin-soaked rag' is a loose one, and in context you will retrieve an *ad hoc* concept *gin-soaked rag** that will help you to determine my reference. Another way of characterizing the difference between Stern's view and mine is to note that for him even a non-indexical expression 'Φ' is turned into an indexical one by the application of his 'Mthat' operator.

Relative to some context of interpretation, this function determines a set of properties P, which is the interpretation or content of the metaphorical expression in that context. The set $P = \{M_{\Phi}(c)\}$, that is the value in context c of the metaphorical character that is associated with the metaphorical expression 'M Φ '. These properties are constituents of the proposition that is expressed by the sentence containing that metaphorical expression. This proposition can in turn be evaluated as either true or false. (As previously noted, Stern's account is in the first instance an account of predicative metaphors. He later tries to extend the account to nominative metaphors, by reducing these to a special case of predicative metaphors).

The set of properties assigned by the metaphorical character of an expression 'M Φ ' as the value of that expression in a context c is the set of properties presupposed to be m-associated with 'Φ' in c. Which properties are m-associated with 'Φ' in c is not something that is determined by the semantics of the language. It is an entirely pragmatic affair, and Stern is willing to grant that in different kinds of cases there may be different sorts of pragmatic mechanisms at work. He mentions three such possible pragmatic mechanisms, one involving what he calls exemplification schemas, one based on thematic frameworks, and one based on the idea of inductive/associative networks. He devotes the most space to explaining the mechanism of exemplification, which he claims is involved in simple predicative metaphors of the 'Juliet is the sun' sort.

I cannot go into any detail here, but in rough outline the idea of exemplification is that in using an expression 'Φ' metaphorically the speaker is trying to focus the hearer's attention on a set of properties. She does this by getting the hearer to recognize (by relying on certain shared presuppositions) that the object picked out by the literal vehicle 'Φ' exemplifies that set of properties. The exemplified properties will be the properties m-associated with 'Φ' in the relevant context.

A non-linguistic case of exemplification is when one presents someone with a sample (say a swatch of material in a tailor's booklet). In presenting the sample one exemplifies (makes salient) a set of properties. Each swatch works as a sample not in isolation but as part of a whole schema. So what properties of the swatch will be salient will depend on the other members of the schema. For instance, whether it is the color or the texture of the sample that one is to focus on will depend on what other samples belong to the exemplification schema.

Something analogous is supposed to be true in the case of the metaphorical use of an expression. Thus consider again:

(25) Juliet is the sun.

The speaker is trying to make salient a set of properties that is exemplified (relative to the presupposed context) by the object that belongs to the extension of the literal vehicle 'is the sun', viz. the properties exemplified in the relevant context by the Sun. What properties these are will depend on the exemplification schema to which the Sun belongs. To determine this we need to look at the literary context of (25). Some of the context in which the metaphor is presented is given above in (21), where Juliet and Rosaline are compared respectively to the Sun and the Moon. Several lines later Romeo says:

(26) Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven, / Having some business, do entreat her
[Juliet's] eyes / To twinkle in their spheres till they return. / What if her eyes were there,
they in her head? / The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars, / As daylight
doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven / Would through the airy region stream so bright, / That
birds would sing, and think it were not night. (*Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 15-22)

Stern therefore suggests that the exemplification scheme in this case is composed of the sun, the moon, the two stars, daylight, the lamp. The multiple contrasts between these objects will determine what it is that the Sun exemplifies. He also suggests that there is a second stage of the interpretation process in which certain filter-presuppositions will be invoked to select and extract relevant features from the ones generated by the sets of contrasts between the members of the exemplification scheme. These selected features will be features appropriate to humans, and in particular appropriate to Juliet. Here we will rely on what we know from the rest of the play about Juliet's personality (or more accurately, on what we know the story says that Romeo knows or believes about Juliet's personality).

One other aspect of Stern's account that I'll briefly mention is his claim that metaphorical characters share some of their features with those of pure indexicals ('I', 'here', 'now' etc.) and some of their features with the characters of Dthat-descriptions. Metaphorical characters are like those of pure indexicals in that they determine their semantic values parametrically. That is, their semantic values are determined in context by a semantic rule, and not denotationally, as Stern assumes is the case with Dthat-descriptions.¹⁰ For instance, the rule in the case of the indexical 'I' is to assign as its value in a context *c* the agent of *c*. The rule in the case of a metaphorical

¹⁰ Kaplan's original view was that the reference of a Dthat-description is fixed in context as what is denoted by the description in that context. However, he later argued that the reference of Dthat-descriptions is determined by the speaker's intentions, and that the description was a mere externalization of the intention, functioning as an aid to communication, like speaking more slowly or loudly, but having no semantic significance (1989b: 582). The idea that there are pure indexicals whose reference is determined parametrically by a semantic rule, and without reference to a speaker's intentions, has been challenged by Smith (1989) and Nunberg (1993).

expression ‘Mthat[Φ]’ is to assign as its value in a context *c* the set of properties *m*-associated with ‘Φ’ in *c*. On the other hand “what the speaker knows when she knows how to interpret a metaphor Φ is not simply something about the single expression Φ. Her knowledge of metaphor is closer to knowledge of an operator, of an interpretive operation she can perform on any (literally interpreted) expression. And in this respect the character of a metaphor is more like that of the demonstrative interpretation operator ‘Dthat’ than of that of any individual indexical (type) such as ‘I’ or ‘here’.” (Stern 2000: 198-199). In other words, with indexicals one has to learn a separate rule for each expression type, whereas with metaphors we simply learn a single general operation ‘Mthat’ that we can apply to any expression that can be used metaphorically.

One problematic consequence of Stern’s view is that he has to deny that one and the same expression type can be both literally and metaphorically interpreted. Consider again an example that was used in one of the footnotes:

(27) That old gin-soaked rag needs to be wrung out.

On the face of it there looks to be one sentence type that can, depending on context, be used either literally (say to refer to a cloth that I’ve used to mop up a spill) or metaphorically (say to refer to an alcoholic who is in need of detoxification). But Stern thinks that the metaphorical interpretation of an expression ‘Φ’ requires the application of a metaphorical character in context. This metaphorical character is not the same as the literal character of ‘Φ’. But if we say that the sentence-type (27) has both a literal and a metaphorical character, then we are committed to its being ambiguous, and Stern does not want to explain metaphor by appeal to the notion of semantic ambiguity. So instead he denies that there is a single expression type that has both a literal and a metaphorical character. What has the metaphorical character is the metaphorical expression-type:

(28) Mthat[‘that old gin-soaked rag’] needs to be Mthat[‘wring out’].

When trying to decide how to interpret a particular *token* expression whose surface realization is That old gin-soaked rag needs to be wrung out, we have to decide what type it belongs to. We have to assign it either to type (27) or type (28). Once we’ve decided this, different semantic procedures will apply. Interpretation will proceed by applying either a literal character or a metaphorical character to the context to yield its content.¹¹

¹¹ Stern (2000: 133) writes as though the literal character of an expression ‘Φ’ is always what Kaplan (1989a: 506) called a fixed character, namely one that determines the same content in every context, whereas the metaphorical character ‘{Mthat[Φ]}’ is what Kaplan calls a context-sensitive character,

This is to make an invidious distinction between literal and metaphorical interpretation that doesn't seem to exist. I agree with Rumelhart (1993: 76) that any account rich enough to give an account of literal interpretation is already rich enough to give an account of metaphorical interpretations. I take it to be a virtue of my account that metaphorical uses of language do not require interpretative mechanisms any different from those used in the interpretation of mundane loose uses.

Stern (2000: 317) argues that literal interpretation is relatively independent of context, whereas metaphorical interpretation is context-dependent. He wants to reject a continuum between the literal and the metaphorical. However, it seems that here Stern fails to take seriously enough his own earlier claim that we must distinguish between literal word (and sentence) meaning and the literal interpretation or understanding of a word or sentence. (2000: 64) Literal meaning is what is semantically encoded in an expression, but interpretation is sensitive not only to linguistically encoded information but also to information available in the context of utterance, including non-linguistic background information. All interpretation is context dependent, and all interpretation is constrained by literal word meaning. There is simply a difference in degree to which interpretations depart from what is semantically encoded in the sentence uttered. Where the departure is minimal the interpretation will seem more literal than in cases where the departure is substantial. Thus cases of the sort Stern (2000: 27) calls transfer will seem more metaphorical than cases of the sort he calls extension.

It also seems wrong to say that generally speaking sentences encode (either explicitly or implicitly) whether they are to be interpreted literally or metaphorically. In the case of a sentence that could be interpreted either way (i.e. one where no category mistake arises from interpreting it strictly and literally) the sentence does *not* encode how it is to be interpreted. Instead, the speaker's intentions play a crucial role here, and provided the hearer focuses on the relevant background assumptions, ordinary interpretive processes, including enrichment and loosening, will enable the hearer to figure out the proposition expressed by the speaker's utterance in that particular context. Stern on the other hand, is committed to the idea that even if on the surface sentences do not encode how they are to be interpreted, at deep structure sentences *do* encode this, because at deep structure we have two different sentence types, literal and metaphorical.

However, Stern doesn't give convincing arguments to support his claim that when sentences are interpreted metaphorically there is an underlying deep structure different from literal deep

namely one that determines different contents in different contexts. However, the literal character of the demonstrative expression 'that old gin-soaked rag' is not a fixed character.

structure, and that this deep structure is associated with a metaphorical character different from literal character. The phenomena he points to in support of his claims are more parsimoniously explained simply by distinguishing literal meaning from literal interpretation in the way indicated in the previous two paragraphs. I will briefly examine two of the arguments Stern (2000: 69-71, 215-217) offers in support of his demonstrative model of metaphor. These arguments are meant to establish that we need to posit metaphorical characters in addition to literal characters.

One argument depends on cases of verb phrase anaphora in which certain “crossed” interpretations are ruled out. Consider the following;

(29) The largest blob of gases in the solar system is the sun.

(30) Juliet is the sun.

(31) Antony is the sun.

*(32) The largest blob of gases in the solar system is the sun and Juliet is too.

?(33) Juliet is the sun and Antony is too.

(29) is to be understood literally, and (30) and (31) are to be understood metaphorically, but let us assume that their metaphorical contents differ in the ways already indicated when these examples were discussed in section 4. Given these interpretations, the cases of verb phrase anaphora in (32) and (33) are unacceptable, and (32) seems more so than (33). Stern (2000: 216) claims that the best explanation of these interpretive constraints is that ‘is the sun’ in (29) has a literal character different from the metaphorical character that ‘is the sun’ – or more strictly that ‘Mthat[‘is the sun’]’ – has in (30) and (31). So the predicate expressions in (29) and (30) have both different characters and different contents. On the other hand, the predicate expressions in (30) and (31) have the same character and differ only in content. This explains the fact that (33) is not quite as unacceptable as (32).

However, it is by no means clear that the unacceptability of such crossed interpretations is to be explained in this way. Firstly, it is by no means clear that ‘is’ is being used univocally in (29) – (31). In (29) we appear to have the ‘is’ of identity, as is clear from the fact that we can reverse the order of the terms on either side of ‘is’. (29) says the same thing as is said by ‘The sun is the largest blob of gases in the solar system’. However, the ‘is’ in (30) and (31) is the ‘is’ of predication, because these do not say the same things as ‘The sun is Juliet’ and ‘The sun is Antony’ respectively. This equivocation would be enough to explain why (32) is more unacceptable than (33).

Secondly, even if we grant for the sake of argument that no equivocation is going on, a similar pattern of results about the unacceptability of crossed interpretations holds in cases of loose use. Consider the following:

(34) It is silent in this specially constructed experimental chamber.

(35) It is silent in this house.

(36) It is silent on this street.

*(37) It is silent in this specially constructed experimental chamber and in this house too.

?(38) It is silent in this house and on this street too.

Suppose that ‘silent’ in (34) is interpreted strictly to mean the absence of all sounds, whereas in (35) and (36) it is interpreted loosely, although in the different ways that I imagined when discussing example (16) in section 4. (35) is to be interpreted in a way that allows there to be barely audible sounds such as humming refrigerators and dripping taps but not to include louder sounds of any sort. (36) on the other hand is to be interpreted in a way that allows audible sounds of water gushing from a water main and disallows only loud battle sounds, such as machine gun fire, exploding mortars and so on. Given these interpretations, (37) and (38) are unacceptable, although arguably (37) is more unacceptable. This cannot be explained by saying that the expression ‘is silent’ has a different character in (34) from the one it has in (35) and (36). In all three sentences the phrase has the same literal meaning. What differs is whether an *ad hoc* concept is intended and if so which one it is. Thus the explanation must be that mixing strict and loose uses is more unacceptable than mixing loose uses.

This suggests that a similar explanation will be forthcoming in the metaphorical case, given that metaphor and loose use are closely related phenomena. We do not need to invoke the notion of a metaphorical character to explain why certain crossed interpretations are ruled out and why some seem worse than others.

A second argument that Stern gives in favor of his demonstrative account of metaphor is to argue that metaphors behave like demonstratives in modal contexts. The truth-conditional content of a demonstrative or indexical is always determined relative to its context of utterance, never relative to the counterfactual or alternative possible circumstances in which we evaluate its truth. According to Stern (2000: 71) the same thing is true of metaphors. Suppose Paris disagrees with Romeo’s utterance of ‘Juliet is the sun’, but he is willing to concede the following:

(39) Juliet might have been the sun.

Stern claims that this requires that ‘is the sun’ be interpreted metaphorically in the same way in Romeo’s and Paris’ utterances. This in turn means that the predicate expression in (39) must be assigned the set of properties that are m-associated with ‘is the sun’ in the context of utterance. It cannot be that (39) is true in virtue of the fact that Juliet has the set of properties that ‘is the sun’ would be assigned if it were interpreted metaphorically in some other possible circumstance. Stern claims that only if we posit metaphorical characters that behave like the characters of demonstratives and indexicals can we explain this constraint on acceptable interpretations of (39).

Once again, this does not seem to be true. The most obvious explanation for the constraint on the interpretation of (39) is that Romeo and Paris, if they are to be genuinely disagreeing, must be disagreeing about the same proposition. Thus we cannot interpret ‘is the sun’ in (39) in a different way (i.e., interpret it as involving a different *ad hoc* concept), because then Romeo and Paris would be talking at cross-purposes.

But secondly, it simply seems false that metaphors are always to be interpreted relative to their actual context of utterance and not at the counterfactual circumstances at which they are being evaluated. Consider:

(40) The shrinking violet might have been more gregarious.

Suppose the definite description is being used metaphorically to denote a person, not a plant. There seem to be two possible interpretations here, depending on whether the definite description or the modal operator takes wide scope. On one possible reading the description takes wide scope, and then its interpretation is the one it has in the actual context. Suppose it denotes Susie. Then (40) is true in some possible circumstance of evaluation just in case Susie is gregarious in that circumstance. On the other hand, if the modal operator takes wide scope, then the description ‘the shrinking violet’ will be interpreted relative to the circumstance of evaluation, and (40) will be true just in case whoever is picked out in that circumstance is gregarious in that circumstance.

I conclude that Stern’s reasons for assimilating metaphors to demonstratives are by no means compelling. The sorts of constraints on interpretation that he argues push us towards the demonstrative model of metaphor can be accounted for without invoking metaphorical characters in addition to literal characters. All we need is a distinction between literal sentence meaning (what is semantically encoded) and (literal or metaphorical) interpretation, as well as the interpretive mechanisms of pragmatic enrichment and loosening.

6. Some Objections Considered

In this final section I consider a couple of objections that might be raised against my direct expression view. The first is Tsohatzidis' (1994) objection that metaphorical interpretations are not always cancellable. He takes this to count against pragmatic accounts of metaphor. Since my direct expression view treats metaphor as a pragmatic phenomenon of the same kind as the phenomenon of loose use, Tsohatzidis' objection is a potential problem for my account.

I begin with three observations. Firstly, cancellability was a test that Grice (1989: 44) devised to determine whether some content p is semantically encoded in a sentence or merely conversationally implied by the utterance of that sentence in some context. However, the test can be applied more generally to any content that is pragmatically determined and that goes beyond what is syntactically and semantically encoded. Thus it should apply to content determined via pragmatic enrichment and loosening. Secondly, as I noted in section 3, metaphorical interpretations *are* cancellable in favor of a literal interpretation in cases in which the sentence uttered is capable of a literal interpretation (E.g., 'He is a butcher, and I don't mean because of the way he carries out his surgery. He moonlights down at the abattoir'). Thirdly, the sorts of cases in which the metaphorical interpretation is not cancelable in favor of a literal interpretation are cases in which a literal interpretation of the sentence uttered would involve some sort of category mistake. And here we need to distinguish two sub-cases. Sometimes the literal interpretation is ruled out even at the level of sentence meaning, because the encoded meaning is semantically anomalous. But sometimes literal sentence meaning can be non-anomalous, yet given certain interpretive decisions with respect to some of the component expressions, a literal interpretation of the whole sentence is ruled out.

Thus it does not seem possible, keeping the references of 'she' and 'the Taj Mahal' fixed, to cancel the metaphorical interpretation of the following in favor of a literal interpretation:

(41) She is the Taj Mahal.

The literal meaning of (41) by itself does not rule out a literal interpretation. After all, we sometimes use 'she' to refer to inanimate things such as ships, and it could be that (41) is to be interpreted as being about a ship named 'the Taj Mahal'. However, given that 'she' refers to a woman and 'the Taj Mahal' refers to a certain building in India, we are constrained to find a metaphorical interpretation of (41). This metaphorical interpretation cannot be cancelled in favor of a literal one, given these interpretive constraints. This does not mean that it cannot be cancelled at all. It can be cancelled *in favor of another metaphorical interpretation*:

(42) She is the Taj Mahal, and I don't mean that she is beautiful. Rather, she is someone her countrymen are proud of.

(41) does not lend support to the claim that the sentence a speaker utters semantically encodes its metaphorical interpretation, nor to the claim that metaphor is a semantic rather than pragmatic phenomenon.

It might be thought that examples of the following sort are more problematic for anyone who wants to maintain that metaphor is a pragmatic phenomenon:

(43) Humans are spiders.¹²

The literal meaning of the sentence is semantically anomalous, on the assumption that the lexical entries for 'human' and 'spider' contain semantic features that are incompatible with one another (e.g., [+belongs to phylum *Chordata*] versus [+belongs to phylum *Arthropoda*] respectively). One might say that the information semantically encoded in the sentence gives a strong clue that the sentence is to be interpreted metaphorically (if one assumes that the speaker is semantically competent and isn't simply misusing words). Does this mean that we have to give up the idea that metaphorical interpretation is a pragmatic affair and grant instead that it is purely semantic? No, all it means is that what sort of interpretation is required is sometimes over-determined. Sometimes semantically encoded information by itself is neutral as to whether the sentence uttered is to be interpreted literally or metaphorically, and then information about the speaker's intentions will be decisive. But sometimes semantically encoded information can point strongly in the direction of a metaphorical interpretation. This does nothing to support the claim that any specific metaphorical interpretation is semantically encoded. Moreover, even though a specific metaphorical interpretation is not cancellable in favor of a literal interpretation, it will be cancellable *in favor of another metaphorical interpretation*:

(44) Humans are spiders, and not because they are disposed to spin "webs of deceit", but because they are capable of trapping and killing things larger than they are.

The final objection that I will consider is that my direct expression view, by denying that there are metaphorical characters in addition to metaphorical contents, must deny that there are aspects of metaphorical meaning that are not part of the proposition expressed. Yet it seems as though there *are* aspects of metaphorical meaning that go beyond metaphorical content. Consider the following example, based on one used by Stern (2000: 259). A young woman Marie, who is

¹² I was going to use 'Humans are insects', but my dictionary lists 'contemptible person' as one of the meanings of 'insect'.

in psychotherapy because she is suffering from *anorexia nervosa*, tells her therapist that her mother has forbidden her to see her boyfriend. Referring to her mother's injunction, Marie utters:

(45) I won't swallow that.

Here 'swallow' is being used metaphorically, and Stern suggests that the content of Marie's utterance (the proposition she has expressed) can be paraphrased as:

(45) Marie won't accept her mother's injunction.

Given her eating disorder, it seems significant that Marie chose to frame her comment about her mother's injunction by using the word 'swallow'. But once we've accessed the metaphorical interpretation it seems that we've lost these echoes of meaning that might connect what she is saying to her eating disorder and hence to any problems that she might be having with her mother connected to this disorder. Stern claims that only if we admit that there is a metaphorical character – a metaphorical “mode of presentation” of the proposition (45) – can we capture these dimensions of meaning which are not parts of the proposition expressed.

However, that these echoes of meaning are lost from the proposition expressed is due to the way Stern proposes to represent the proposition expressed by Marie's utterance of (45). If instead one represents it as containing an *ad hoc* concept *swallow** that is arrived at via a pragmatic process of loosening (and possibly also enrichment) from the lexical concept *swallow*, then one can see that the proposition expressed is not somehow impoverished:

(46) Marie won't *swallow** her mother's injunction.

Thus a character/content distinction is not needed to account for the ways in which what Marie has said by her utterance of (45) is connected to her eating disorder. My direct expression view of metaphor does not have to ignore relevant dimensions of metaphorical meaning.

Much more would have to be said to provide a full-fledged defense of the view according to which metaphors directly express propositions with constituents that are pragmatically determined by loosening (or loosening and enrichment). I hope at least to have motivated the view, and to have shown how it falls out naturally from a certain contextualist conception of saying. I also hope to have shown that if one wishes to assimilate metaphor to context-dependent expressions, an account that identifies metaphors with the phenomenon of loose use is more parsimonious than one that assimilates metaphors to demonstratives.

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