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Defining Metaphor

On Two Early Accounts on Metaphor by Aristotle and Hermogenes of Tarsus and Their Reception by Modern Interactionists

Abstract

The article discusses linguistic and epistemological presuppositions of the thesis, raised by the Irish classicist W. B. Stanford (1936), that the rhetorician Hermogenes of Tarsus, in his definition of metaphor, provided – in contrast to Aristotle’s “mere linguistic” description – a radically new, dynamic and reference-based conception of metaphoric speech, which he called tropé. For Stanford, it was a historical pre-figuration of his own “stereoscopic” account of metaphor, which later on, with Max Black and Paul Ricœur, inspired the so-called interactionist view of metaphor in various areas of philosophy of language and science, and in linguistics. In the article, Hermogenes’ idea of metaphor as a “common” name for different things has been related throughout the text to a three-level (linguistic, logical and epistemological) analysis of the theory of transference in Aristotle. The paper points, through brief references or more extended comments, to systematic relations between the two ancient theories and some contemporary, interactionist and cognitivist, contributions on metaphor theory (Ricœur, Lakoff and Johnson, Kittay). As a result, the supposed interactionist explanation of metaphor in Hermogenes turns out to be rather continuous than hostile with respect to Aristotle’s analysis, which appears no less conceptual than linguistic. Moreover, both accounts clearly call for further analysis on more complex systematic levels, which modern writers on metaphor scarcely acknowledged neither in Hermogenes nor in Aristotle.

Key words

Aristotle’s and Hermogenes of Tarsus’ definition of metaphor, interaction vs substitution, linguistic vs conceptual analysis, double reference, naming vs transference of names, assertive logos, referring and speech act

1.

Modern philosophical accounts on metaphoric language typically do not contain strict and elaborated, if any, *definitions* of metaphors. The classical definition of metaphor by Aristotle in his *Poetics* is widely being considered as reduced to transference of *lexical items* and thus misleading with respect to the deeper, conceptual aspect of metaphor. Since Nietzsche, if not earlier, metaphors have been understood as a general character both of language and of

thought, and not only as a linguistic phenomenon *within* language.¹ Later on, in a curious continuity with this Nietzschean line in hermeneutics, which was inherited from the romanticist view on sign-character of thoughts, in cognitive linguistics and, partly, in the analytic philosophy of language, metaphors have been generally understood as the very structure of how we conceptualize the world, i.e. as *conceptual* phenomenon underpinning the language itself. As a result, what readers of modern philosophical literature on metaphors in recent decades find, instead of definitions, are theoretically various approaches to the issue of metaphor in a wide range of views about metaphoric character of language and thought, about knowledge and truth, and more specific explanations of “how metaphors work”. This clear and programmatic change of theoretical perspective from so-called “mere linguistic” analysis of metaphors towards metaphors as “conceptual structures” we owe to the classic contemporary work on metaphors by cognitive linguists.² Nevertheless, despite universalizing, or even totalizing, metaphors to an every-day phenomenon the early contributions to conceptual analysis of metaphor, such as Lakoff and Johnson’s, seem to contain some dramatization about the difference between linguistic and conceptual analysis. For it has not remained undisputed even among “friends of metaphors” for a tacit reduction of metaphors in general, including those with high poetic quality, to the *katachretic* type.³ More recent works are concerned not only with theories about the nature and the limits of literal language and the depths of non-literal language, but also entered new domains of research as they were developing with cognitive and computational linguistics or with epistemology of science.⁴

One of few theoreticians among modern authors on metaphor who has given us a definition of metaphor in the proper sense is the famous classicist William Bedell Stanford.⁵ He was the first among historians of literature to programmatically overcome the traditional, lexicographer method of dealing with the metaphor issue towards a more conceptually oriented explanation based on a semantic approach to poetical discourse and literary theory. On that ground, he met other modern accounts on style such as Coleridge’s as well as the linguistic account by Gustaf Stern (1932), and, as even a more important point of reference, the rhetoric-based literary criticism by Ivor Richards (1936).⁶

Stanford can be qualified thereby as one of the pioneers – if not the most important one – of the so-called *interaction* theory of metaphor, as opposed to the *substitution* theory that was traditionally (and wrongly!) ascribed to Aristotle. The new interaction theory became famous later in the 20th century with Max Black’s early essay on metaphor and even more with the appraisal of Stanford by Paul Ricœur.⁷ What we generally encounter in later authors on metaphor, referring to Stanford’s contribution (including authors like Black and Ricœur but also their more recent followers), is not as much Stanford’s proper theory or definition of metaphor as mere citations of a *figurative explanation* by Stanford of how metaphors work. It is his famous and much cited *stereoscope* metaphor about metaphor⁸ that Stanford calls a “metaphorical definition” being quite aware that this way of putting the difficult issue of metaphor is the most delicate and inconclusive method.

For Stanford’s self-understanding as a metaphor theoretician it is fundamentally important that he made, as he clearly puts it, a *historical* discovery in the field of literary theories. While acknowledging the importance of Aristotle’s account of ‘style’ in *Poetics* (Ch. 21) and *Rhetoric* (III, 1–11), Stanford suggests that the belief in the literal use of language as the fundamental one had been criticized and overcome by the ancient rhetorician Hermogenes of Tar-

sus, but only for a short period of time.⁹ It was this most influential writer on types of style who, in Stanford's opinion, gave us a quite *modern* account of metaphor that differs from the Aristotelian definition, prevailing before and after the time of Hermogenes, in two principal features. First, instead of emphasizing metaphor as a matter of 'diction' (*léxis*), Hermogenes would have defined metaphor as a matter of meaning (*diánoia*); second, with Hermogenes, metaphor was no more conceived of as mere transference of names (or substitution of proper names for foreign names) but rather as a *dynamic* word-unity referring *at once* to *both* related things. In short, Hermogenes seems to have delivered, according to Stanford, a *wholly new* approach to the theory about metaphors (*tropé*) which Stanford himself takes as the starting point for his own view.

Notwithstanding Stanford's fate of being himself the unacknowledged true patriarch of the modern, widespread and pre-dominant interaction theory of metaphor (thus repeating Hermogenes' fate of not being recognized in ancient times), it seems worth to re-examine his appreciation of Hermogenes' metaphor account not merely for historical reasons. As contrasted explicitly with the Aristotelian conception of metaphor, the account by Hermogenes could be of some systematic interest if we re-consider how two presumed different positions – the modern interaction-based and the traditional, or reductive one – relate to each other within ancient metaphor theories, with respect to their essential linguistic and epistemological features. In other words, re-examining the two ancient definitions of metaphor is, for at least one part of the job, a discussion on the modern struggle between interactionists and substitutionalists in metaphor theories and its role in theoretical discourse.¹⁰

1

In his "Le retrait de la métaphore" Jacques Derrida (1987) thought of metaphors, in a clear Nietzschean gesture, as being nothing but 'philosophemes', i.e. the very means of thinking, not apt of being theoretical *objects*.

2

See Lakoff and Johnson (1981). For a later application of their conceptual metaphor theory on central notions of Western metaphysics, including Aristotle's theory of literal meaning and metaphoric uses of language see Lakoff and Johnson (1999). For epistemological contributions to conceptual and cognitive analysis of metaphor see MacCormac (1990); Indurkha (1994); more elaborated in Indurkha (1992). For a more linguistic elaboration of the every-day aspect of metaphor within cognitive linguistics, see Baldauf (1997).

3

See, for instance Kittay (1987). For an early and very illuminating linguistic work on metaphors see the small but for many writers on metaphor inspiring book *A Grammar of Metaphor* by Christine Brooke-Rose (1958).

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It must be then more than surprising that, contrary to Derrida's verdict, in the period from 1970s to 1990s metaphors became one of the most discussed issues worldwide in linguistic philosophy, analytic and hermeneutical, as

well as in the epistemology of science. For a wide range of discussions in the 1990s see Mikulić (1999), pp. 128–137.

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Stanford (1972), p. 101

6

Richards (1936), especially important to Stanford and later interactionists because of his connection of metaphor with the sentence level.

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Black (1962); Ricœur (1976).

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"Only one metaphor of mine will I venture to repeat: metaphor is the stereoscope of ideas", Stanford (1972), p. 105. On the problem of "venturing" metaphoric definition in a theoretical discourse with respect to Aristotle's prohibition of metaphor use in the veridical discourse of philosophy and science, see my concluding observations in this article.

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On Hermogenes of Tarsus (160–225) see also Kennedy (2003): pp. xii, 73, and Kennedy (1994).

10

Though Paul Ricœur, in his influential book on "living metaphor" was the first to defend



In order to do so, I will confront Hermogenes' definition of metaphor, as interpreted by Stanford, with the text of Aristotle's definition from Ch. 21 of *Poetics*, and examine the results within a broader epistemological frame.

2.

At the very introduction of Aristotle's definition Stanford declares himself "disappointed" with Aristotle's preceding description of concrete metaphors as well as with the abstract character of his word definition in *Poetics* whereas, for him, as a contrast, Hermogenes appears as one who "rebels against the barren formulas of the orthodoxy". The two ancient definitions of metaphor read (in English translations) as following:

Aristotle: "Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy".¹¹

Hermogenes of Tarsus writes:¹² "It is Oblique Language when a term not relevant to the subject matter but signifying some extraneous object of reference is introduced into a sentence so as to unite in its significance both the subject at issue and the extraneous object of reference in a composite concept; this is also called Metaphor by the grammarians, but it should not be considered, as they aver, as a transference from lifeless to alive etc., for rhetoric entirely avoids busying itself with such details."

Hermogenes' definition of 'oblique language' (*tropé*) appears, at least at the first sight and in spite of Stanford's rather paraphrasing than accurately translating the stylish Greek text, more complex in form and content, it is synthetic and more literary-like sounding than the dry-styled Aristotelian definition.¹³ It really seems, in its very wording, to reveal something of the very "secret" beyond that what "grammarians" called 'metaphor' but analysed in a wholly wrong direction, and what modern theoretician like Stanford seem to have been searching since forever.¹⁴ Although Stanford's extensive account on Hermogenes' definition of metaphor¹⁵ appears illuminating for the historical discovery of a genuine rhetoric "rebel against grammatical orthodoxy", his interpretation of Hermogenes' is, in its explanative and evaluative aspects, not only inspired by but dependent on Coleridge's romanticist enthusiasm about "words as living things" and "not just shadows of things".¹⁶ This seems to explain why Stanford remains unaware, as I assume, of a deeper *logical* relation between Aristotle and Hermogenes' accounts. It persists despite Hermogenes' explicit criticism towards post-Aristotelian "grammarians".¹⁷ This criticism, as I would like to show, did not have a deep impact on Aristotle's metaphor theory but seems to blind Stanford, as a modern interactionist, for the Aristotelian basis of Hermogenes' account.

Hermogenes' definition, though giving no doubt a new and appealing idea of *common* name, i.e. for a simultaneous *double* reference of *one* name for *two things* which in themselves are clearly differentiated both from logical and topic point of view (*allótrion, éxothern*), appears nevertheless as a more familiar theoretical frame than Stanford would have wanted. As the very first common feature, Hermogenes approach focuses at the very beginning of the definition on *ónoma sémantikón*, just like Aristotle. But Stanford describes Hermogenes' new achievement merely in terms of reference and omits mentioning the really new element in Hermogenes' definition: it is his display of *tropé* as *linguistic action* (or more precisely, as a *turn* or *twist*) in the language by which the presumed double reference of the name comes about in the first place. More precisely, this linguistic action is *setting* name (*ónoma theînai*),

which implies, first, that it borrows the ‘common name’ (*ónoma koinón*) from *another* thing (*toû allotriou prágmatos*) and, second, that *only through this action* the name becomes capable of being (*dynámenon eínai*) one-and-common name for both things.

In the linguistic perspective of reference, one cannot but see, first, that this description of *tropé* presents metaphor not only as oblique language in general but also as *occurrence* or *event* in language. Second, its very wording represents an exact re-formulation – though a wholly new in approach – of the Aristotelian idea of transference of name *from* one outer object *to* the subject at issue (*epiphorá toû onómatos allotriou apò ... epì...*). Both theoreticians of metaphor – Aristotle not less than Hermogenes – clearly privilege the “subject at issue” as the standpoint of their definition-oriented discourse on metaphors, and both clearly emphasize the “foreignness” of the transferred name. But significantly enough, Aristotle’s *epiphorá* as *genus proximum* is in Hermogenes *substituted* by the expression ‘*ónoma theinai*’; it designates in a more clear way the linguistic action of *naming* than does Aristotle with his uncovering of concept levels and logical procedures which underpin the name transference. In re-formulating *transference* of names to *setting* of names (new ones, borrowed from *other* things) Hermogenes provides strategically, both linguistically and conceptually, a different – generic and not logically descriptive – *stance* towards the theoretical issue of metaphoric speech. He does not define metaphor, as does Aristotle, as an explicit formula of *transference* process of *thought* through *words*, which is visible through the very structure of Aristotle’s definition. Instead, Hermogenes takes metaphor from a different

Aristotle against the so-called substitution theory of metaphor, based on *comparison* of pre-existing similarities, which in fact stems from Quintilian (Ricoeur 1976: 35), he too assumes that Aristotle considers metaphors as one-word-units. Umberto Eco was, to my knowledge, the first to treat Aristotle’s linguistic account on metaphor in a non-reductive way (Eco 1990, esp. chapters 2.1 and 3.3.). For a sentence-oriented view on Aristotle’s semantics and linguistics in general see Di Cesare (1981). An integrative approach to Aristotle’s metaphor account offers Lacks (1994). (For a more detailed discussion on Ricoeur’s and Lakoff and Johnson’s (1999) conventional views on Aristotle’s metaphor theory see parts 3 and 4 of this paper.)

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Stanford (1972), p. 10 (§ 4). The translation is from Aristotle’s *Poetics* by Ingram Bywater, in: *The Works of Aristotle*, transl. into English under the editorship of W. D. Ross, vol. XI, Oxford 1946. Greek text (p. 10, n.1) corresponds to *De arte poetica liber*, rec. R. Kassel, Oxford UP, 1965, ch. 21, 1457b7–9: “Metaphorà dè estin onómatos allotriou epiphorà ê apò toû génon epì eídos, ê apò toû eídous epì tò génon ê katà tò análogon”.

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The translation is by Stanford himself, *ibid.*, § 5, p. 14. The first translation of the whole treatise by Hermogenes’ into modern languages is the English translation by Wooten (1987).

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Greek text in Stanford, *ibid.*, p. 14, n. 3 is from L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*, Vol. II, 254, Leipzig: Teubner, 1854: “Tropé ésti tò mê éx hypokeiménou prágmatos allotriou dè sémantikòn ónoma theínai, koinòn eínai dynámenon kai toû hypokeiménou kai toû éxóthen emphainouménou, hò kaleítai kai metaphorà parà tois grammatikois, ouch hós ekeinoi légousi tò apò tón apsychón epì tà émpsycha, kai tò anápalin, kathólou gár he rhetoriké polympragmonóusa mēden toioutón”.

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Stanford provides a review of theoretical and interpretive work on literary use of metaphor by ancient authors and of modern views on language not only by Collieridge and by linguists and philosophers, such as G. Stern and R. Ogden and I. Richards (cf. the whole ch. V, especially §§ 3–6).

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Stanford (1972), pp. 14–19 (§ 5).

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See Stanford (1972), p. 17 (the same § 5).

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Stanford (1972), at the end of § 4. For a more recent discussion on Hermogenes’ role in rhetoric see the translation and commentary of Hermogenes’ work by Heath (1995).

point of view which, in a clear polemic gesture, neglects details about logical areas or ways through which names come, and focuses only on the very act (or, rather, fact) of naming. But since, for Hermogenes, it is naming of a subject with a *foreign* word *from without* the subject, this means nothing more or less than that Hermogenes' definition of metaphor *implies* the linguistic and logical analysis by Aristotle while denying it, in the very wording of the definition, any relevance for rhetorical purposes.¹⁸

It is true, as Stanford says, that Hermogenes meant of the common name as a dynamic unit. Nevertheless, he describes it as 'common' in a more common sense – and less dramatically – as *potentially* a common name for two things (*koinòn eínai dynámenon*). But the very assumption by Stanford of a common name with a double reference raises, nevertheless, new theoretical problems which Stanford clearly tends to mystify by pleading for a "vividness" of words apart of their being "mere signs" for things. He ignores, first, that such a dynamic (potential) word-unit, does not signify two different things but – being previously a signifying name of another thing from without – is set to be the name for the subject at issue. The assumption of a double reference of a term "so as to unite in its significance" two different things is not by itself distinctive enough to distinguish metaphors from other types of bipolar reference (as homonyms which are not metaphorical). As a consequence, Stanford fails to interpret what, in Hermogenes' account, it means for a word to have meaning (to be *ónoma sémantikón*) – except, first, to signify some object, and, second, to signify two objects at once. Instead of providing a deeper analysis of the reference issue Stanford pleads for a Coleridgean "living" word-thing, independent of world-things and, thus, independent of the sign-function for other things. Nevertheless, this refined romantic account of what words "really" are raises questions which, in the meantime, have led among the interaction theoreticians to ontological and semantic controversies as to what might be the linguistic, logical and ontological status of the "new", the "synthetic" and the "dynamic" *meaning* of the metaphoric expression. For if taken in the sense of an "average" semantic content of two "metaphorically crossed" items and not "merely" in the sense of a *common name* for these two different things, the assumption of a new, independent metaphorical meaning seems to lead necessarily to the assumption of independent linguistic entities, like *katachrêseis*, and ontological entities like *werewolves*.¹⁹

Thus Stanford's conclusion in favour of Hermogenes' definition of metaphor, and against Aristotle's account, seems not only enthusiastic about a wholly new perspective but theoretically questionable. In spite of the differences between the two definitions of metaphor both accounts, the referential one by Hermogenes and the analytical one by Aristotle, relate closely on another level, which Stanford does not examine. This is provided by the fact that the Aristotelian account of metaphor, displaying the metaphor as a process of transference on two different levels, the linguistic-lexical one and logical-conceptual one²⁰, is grounded upon the *explicit assumption* that metaphors are "meaningful names" (*ónoma sémantikón*), just as Hermogenes calls them. The names themselves, as parts of language, are defined both in *Poetics* (Ch. 20) and in *Peri hermeneias* (Ch. 2–4) as "compound, meaningful articulation by voice" (*phônê sémantikê synthetê*). Hence, to say, as Hermogenes does, that *tropé* is a 'meaningful name' is, from Aristotle's point of view a non-informative statement. It is non-pleonastic only in that part of the definition in which Hermogenes insists on metaphor's nature of being a linguistic action of setting one name for two different items. One cannot address this aspect only through the bipolar structure of reference. Otherwise metaphors would

remain mere homonyms and a part of *léxis*. Since the rhetorician Hermogenes too takes the linguistic level of *names* as the starting point for his account of metaphor, just as Aristotle does, and the only clear difference seems to make Hermogenes' insistence on the name as *common*, a more differentiated view of the relation between the two definitions seem to be needed. I tend to consider the approach to metaphor by Hermogenes as one that, through the idea of a *double* reference, opens up other perspectives on metaphors reaching beyond the struggle between linguistic and conceptual understanding. It raises a series of typical questions about metaphors of which not all I can address here.²¹

No doubt, there is in Hermogenes' idea of metaphor a new element with respect to Aristotle's basic linguistic account of metaphors and a generic explanation of how metaphoric expressions come about. In this point Hermogenes goes clearly beyond the level of post-Aristotelian metaphor accounts – starting with Theophrastus, through Demetrius of Phaleron till Cicero and Quintilian²² – which maintained all restrictive viewpoints in Aristotle's theory and, thus, more conservative than Aristotle himself.²³ Nevertheless, Hermogenes' approach is semantic and *relying* on Aristotle's linguistics, which means, it grounds on the two parts of Aristotle's analytical account. The linguistic one, in Ch. 20 of *Poetics*, contains definitions of words as elements of language, culminating in an explanation of sentence. The tropologic one, in Ch. 21, starts with a semantic theory of compound words in general (*ónoma* in the general sense of word or expression). Precisely this part of Aristotle's account makes up an important link between the conception of sentence (*lógos*) and a semantic theory of compound names with an “autonomous” (non-literal) meaning with respect to the (literal) meaning of their components. Though hardly recognized by modern authors, this passage is central to Aristotle's theory of metaphor.

Aristotle's account of metaphor is embedded in an explanation of word meaning, which is conceived of as complex and autonomous with respect to the meaning of its morphological constituents like in the proper name ‘Theodor’. The meaning of such words is for Aristotle not constituted or defined by the

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As the citation above shows, Hermogenes refers himself critically not to logical areas of transference but to “alive and lifeless, and vice-versa” which is a further elaboration of Aristotle's account by the “grammarians” (Theophrastus, Demetrius, Quintilian). For more detailed differences, see the philological and historical works by Kennedy (1991, 1994, 2003), Heath (1995), and Wooten (1987).

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It was Black (1962) to first introduce the idea of a *new* meaning in metaphoric expressions (more elaborated in Black (1979, repr. 1986). See the contentions by Davidson (1984) and arguments against Davidson in Kittay (1987) and Steinhardt / Kittay (1994).

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It is precisely that what Hermogenes rejects with the “grammarians”: four types of “metaphor” or transference of names between *eidós* and *eidós*, *eidós* and *genus*, *genus* and *eidós*, and “according to analogy”.

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One of interesting special questions would address the meaning of the very term ‘common’ and its implications for the problem of “metaphoric symmetry”. However, because Hermogenes defines metaphor as a linguistic action of “setting” a significant name that is “able of being common to two different things” his conception clearly pleads for far more than a double-sided reference analysis. It seems susceptible also of a speech act account of metaphor, as given by Searle (1979).

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See the historical works of Kennedy (esp. Kennedy 1994).

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As for comparative reductionism in simile and metaphor theories, see Tirrell (1991), and an extended discussion on the comparison-marker ‘like’ in Mikulić (1996); see also Fogelin (1994).

meaning of its elements, but only by its linguistic *function* to be the proper name or to designate one object). Thus metaphor, though being classified under “names”, is not to be taken for a single or isolated word like other instances of names, but rather as a complex expression with components which, if taken apart, still have a meaning but a different one from the metaphoric meaning. In this respect, metaphor is to be understood primarily as a *sentence-like* structure with predicative character. This is a double-sided syntactic basis of a semantic complexity that differs in status from the meaning of word elements, which constitute it. One can analyse metaphoric expressions more properly as sentence-like structured units of speech, because, as Aristotle says himself,²⁴ the “oneness” (semantic and discursive unity) of an expression is not dependent on the pre-defined (or, rather, pre-interpreted) meaning of its syntactic elements, but on other functions of *lógos* as assertive form of speech and of language in general.

3.

On this background, a relevant, though not necessarily radical, difference between the Hermogenes’ and Aristotle’s perspectives on metaphor must have a different basis than it has been supposed by proponents of interaction theory. This difference concerns the very theoretical kernel of how both Aristotle and Hermogenes consider the *status* of metaphors *within* language. Though Hermogenes’ definition is formulated in an essentialist way, just like Aristotle’s (“metaphor is...”),²⁵ his identification of metaphor with *naming* as a linguistic *action* seems to establish metaphors more radically as a part of *actual* language: it is a double referring in the very *act* of naming and not a pre-established bipolar reference of a word. Nevertheless, Aristotle’s account in chapters 20–21 of *Poetics* informs us that – although he classifies metaphors as “words” among other types of words in the range from usual expressions (*kyrion ónoma*) and foreign words (*glóttai*) to neologisms, poetic and onomatopetic words (*pepoiéména*) – there are *no genuine* metaphors *within* language as established lexical corpus. Instead, for Aristotle, metaphors are words only by virtue of a word-transference which occurs in an *action with* standard expressions and, at once, in a move of thought between different logical levels (as *species* and *genus*) or areas (as in analogy between *genus* and *genus*). Thus, again, metaphors are – or exist only insofar as they are – nothing but a *common* word (*kyrion*) which, first, have undergone transference in the sense of a re-direction of reference, and, second, have become common – now with Hermogenes’ term (*koinón*) – of two *formerly* (i.e. outside the language act) unrelated things by the common sense, which uses standard word interpretations. In this respect Aristotle’s understanding of metaphor is not only not radically different in linguistic conception from the Hermogenes’ one but, despite the difference in rhetoric approach – rather con-current in the double sense of the word (similar in linguistic presuppositions and substitutive in its aim). Even more, Hermogenes’ generic definition of metaphor as an *act* of renaming and as a *new event* within speech seems to be rather a better formulation of what really constitutes a metaphor from a rhetorical point of view than classifications of regions of transference by grammarians, which he rejects as irrelevant (thus deserving apparently his surname “purifier”).

However, Hermogenes’ account sheds light also on another, unexpected theoretical “twist” in Aristotle’s definition. Just because metaphors are linguistically nothing else than (common) words in a foreign area, one must consider them as a matter of meaning-production and not just of exchange of “mere

names”. For *transference* itself occurs, in Aristotle’s account, as a process between *names* (*onómata*) and not just verbal expressions (*léxeis*). Which means, as transference of *notions* or, more precisely, as *thought content* exchange *within* and *beyond* the confines of the framework of species and genus. Thus, differently from Hermogenes’ delightful but theoretically not unproblematic formulation that metaphors are cases of double reference, because they must additionally be differentiated from other cases of bipolar reference, Aristotle’s account gives us not a less sophisticated – though perhaps less rhetorically appealing – linguistic, logical and also epistemological hint of “how metaphors work”. He provides us with the hardly dispensable information, mentioned above, that metaphors are in themselves meaningful *onómata* produced by language use out of ordinary words (*kyria*), and that, paradoxically, just because metaphors not merely *are* but *occur* in the language, they must be a matter of language *competences* such as capacity for re-constitution of word *forms* and word *meanings*. The so-called “mere diction” (*léxis*) is not only style, but designates also the lexical part of language as a system; it is an indispensable and necessary (though not sufficient) precondition for metaphors. They *stem* from *léxeis*, designating a corpus of standard words, and they *occur* as *léxis*, designating diction or style. Therefore, *léxis* – being itself a case of double-referring term – is a higher language process, namely meaning-*production* using the semiotic material, which is characteristic of language (expressions or *léxeis*). For Aristotle, it is the most basic language process that he calls *hêrmeneía*, which is one of the most general – defining and not defined – terms in Aristotle’s work.²⁶

The fact that Aristotle did not display his account of metaphor as definition of a word-unit, and not even defined metaphor as name-giving, but rather as a *thought process* which, occurring through words, is also a linguistic process,

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Poetics 20, 1457a28–30: *heîs de esti lógos di-hôs, ê gar ho hên semainon ê ho ek pleiônôn syndesmôî.*

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In this respect Stanford’s generic translation “Oblique Language is when a name is introduced into sentence...” is not only extended into a paraphrase (using more terms, like ‘sentence’ or ‘unite in its significance’, which do not occur) but also totally misleading. For Hermogenes uses, just like Aristotle, only the copula ‘*esti*’ and a term for *genus proximum*: in Aristotle, it is ‘*epiphorâ onómatos*’ whereas in Hermogenes it is ‘*onoma theînai*’.

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Cf. *Poetics*, Ch. 6, 1450b13 sq.: *lêgô de lêxin (eînai) tên diâ tês onomasias hêrmeneian*. Contrary to these evidences of *synthesis* and *production* aspects in Aristotle’s understanding of language and thought Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 382–386) characterize Aristotle’s conception of linguistic representation as just another *instance* of the *correspondence* relation between cognition and a mind-independent world of things; as such, it is the very base of his literalist meaning (and metaphor) theory as well as of the scientific thinking in general: “Terms used in their proper literal

senses are necessary for demonstrative reasoning via syllogisms and thus are necessary for communicating scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge, in Aristotle’s view, cannot be communicated if terms are not used in their proper literal senses”. The authors seem, however, to ignore that Aristotle’s “prohibition” of metaphors in *An. Po.* (97b37) is clearly related to definitions and demonstrative procedures whereas metaphors are – for and in Aristotle – present not only in the explanatory discourse of the science but also – just like for Lakoff and Johnson – in the very grounds of knowledge, namely in the building process of *archai* via *epagôgê*. As a natural cognitive process, *epagôgê* is for Aristotle different from and prior to demonstration and “reliable enough” (*An. Po.* 90b14). Likewise, Lakoff and Johnson seem to ignore that if they themselves analyse the metaphoric structure of our world *concepts* as an object of theory, it does not imply that their own scientific method itself is metaphoric despite their conceptual totalisation of metaphor. To declare all concepts to be metaphorical is not to make a whole theory metaphorical but, quite contrary, to make metaphors unmetaphorical. Or, as they themselves put it, to make metaphors “proper literal senses”.

may be taken as an implicit claim that such a kind of “words” exist only in the language as *process*. Explicitly, for Aristotle, the only kind of words *within* language which are capable of meaning *two things at once*, are *amphibola* (such as *homónyma*), and they are just standard words (*kyria*). What Hermogenes arrives at with his definition of metaphor, based on double-referring names, must be therefore a hardly explicable oxymoron if taken strictly in terms of linguistic meaning, and not in terms of language use and meaning-production. If taken in the way Stanford takes it, namely as a ‘stereoscope’, it appears to be a strange kind of a synonymic homonym, one name standing for two or even more different elements in different reality domains. But nevertheless we should not overview that, in Hermogenes’ formulation, the double reference, brings about a new meaning – as is supposed by the interaction theoreticians of metaphor – only by virtue of the linguistic capacity of words for double or multiple reference (cf. ‘*dynamenon einai koinón*’) to different things in the world, be it alive, lifeless or abstract. Hence, it seems sufficiently that, both in Hermogenes and in Aristotle, the supposed new meaning is contextual and pragmatic in nature though neither Hermogenes nor Aristotle theorize on issues like language speaker.

Thus, in spite of being, at least at its surface, clearly a more pragmatic than a theoretical definition of metaphor, Hermogenes’ account has been widely appreciated as a more advanced theoretical achievement on the ground that for him a metaphor designates a *dynamic semantic* entity in which two *different* things of the world find themselves “unified”. Nevertheless, *tropé* or metaphor is in Hermogenes’ account still focused on single *name*, i.e. on a *linguistic* unit with designative and referring function, just as the tradition ascribed it to Aristotle. But just as Hermogenes’ account is bound to an action within *actual* language, i.e. speech, his idea of metaphor as *setting a foreign name for a subject* seems to call for a higher level of linguistic analysis than that of single words with double reference. Although Stanford in his translation of Hermogenes’ definition uses the term ‘sentence’, which does not occur in Hermogenes’ expression, the only information about which higher linguistic level we deal with is given by Aristotle’s analytic – and for Stanford disappointing – account of metaphor. Because Aristotle conceived of metaphors both as a *thought* process across different logical levels and procedures (moving between *eidos* and *génos* and according to analogy) and as a *language* process of transferring names, metaphor is for him an *assertive procedure*. Namely, as Aristotle puts it with more emphasis in his *Rhetoric* than in *Poetics*, metaphor is for him always founded on a *tacit predication* telling us “that something is something” or “that something is *like* something”.²⁷ Therefore, for Aristotle, metaphor belongs to the general structure of assertive language, which he explains with the formula *tì katà tinós*. It is, by consequence, capable of truth-value.

Against this background, Stanford’s objection (Stanford 1972: p. 18) that with Hermogenes, unlike Aristotle, there is “no suggestion of adding ‘to xenon’ [strangeness] to the meaning (*diánoia*) as well as to the diction (*léxis*) of its context”, turns out to be fully mistaken. It might have become clear so far that for Hermogenes – and even more so for Aristotle – metaphor is a matter of re-making things meaningful with astonishing, unusual linguistic operations such as transferring, setting and borrowing “other”, foreign, strange names for things “from without”, from other things. Therefore, metaphor is essentially a *thought* process just the same as it is a linguistic one. How could it otherwise provide cognition of *tò homoíon*, which is the kernel of both the empirical and the theoretical knowledge, as Aristotle proclaims in *Poetics*

(Ch. 22) and in *Rhetoric* (iii, 10). One must, however, bear in mind that he in *Posterior Analytics* (Ch. 3. 1–3) explicitly forbids the use of metaphors in definitions, for they are general in character and demanding clarity of direct and not evasive speech.²⁸

If we look more closely, the drama about this issue consists in the fact that, according to Aristotle, we grasp the “whole thing” by *observing the simile* between things (*theôreîn tò hómoion*) and not by knowing all existing instances. This appears to be a necessary reason for Aristotle to discriminate sufficiently metaphoric language from definitions. However, on the other side, we know that he discusses and evaluates metaphors in most delicate theoretical contexts as underlying most basic procedures of grasping, naming and explaining things. Even more, his use of metaphor in scientific theorizing on different things on different levels is pretty excessive. One among many topics is the famous explanation of how perception produces *tò koinón* (the common notion, be it species or gender) by re-organizing particular percepts through induction (*epagôgê*). In going further from the level of mere perception through *empeiria* to notions of species, and then to the level of more abstract notions of genders, he does not increase at once the abstract character of explanation itself but introduces, instead, the metaphor of *máchê*.²⁹

Therefore, though contemporary interactionists have often suspected Aristotle’s notion of *hómoion* of being a “metaphysical” notion of similarity, which cannot provide “any new and fresh insights” beyond the narrow framework of logically related realms, this does not appear to be the case just as the assumption of a one-word-primacy in Aristotle’s account of metaphor appears

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Cf. *Rhetoric* iii, 10, 1411b17 sq., esp. b19. As to my knowledge, the only author to recognize the propositional character of Aristotle’s account on metaphor is George A. Kennedy: “Aristotle, unlike later classical rhetoricians, thus implies that metaphor is a form of predication, a major contention of Paul Ricœur in *The Rule of Metaphor*”, Kennedy (1991), p. 245, note 114. However, the above quotation from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* by Kennedy shows clearly that Aristotle does not just “imply” a form of predication but rather fully and explicitly asserts it. Moreover, as I have already shown, it is prepared in Aristotle’s “more abstract” linguistic account in *Poetics*, Chs. 20–21. (As for Ricœur’s contention, see my further comment in the note 30 below.)

28

See the whole passage in *An. Po.* 97b25–37. Though Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 383–386) also acknowledge that for Aristotle “the ability to find real similarities was necessary for being a good scientist” they completely ignore that the act of *noetic grasping the similarity* (which they take for an “intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars”) cannot in Aristotle be correctly accounted for on the assumption of a direct correspondence relation between things, ideas, and expressions. *Noûs* is an inherent agent within the natural cognition process called *epagôgê*, which in Aristotle is explicitly responsible for the cog-

nitive and, by this, conceptual-linguistic *production* (*empoiía*) of *commons* and *universals* (*tò koinón* and *tò kathólou*), which means: *making principles* (*An. Po.* B, 19, 100b4; cf. *EN* vi.3, 1139b28). Furthermore, the authors seem to be blind to their own interpretation, when they say: “Aristotle chose similarity as the most general consistent basis for a metaphorical use of language. For him, the most general reason for using the name of one kind of thing to designate another kind of thing is to point out some similarity between the kinds of things.” It is not clear how it should be possible for Aristotle, or anyone, to point out similarity *between* things if not through transferring structures *from* one conceptual domain *to* another (gender-species, gender-gender), which is, more exactly, a reference by Aristotle to *analogy* as a framework for metaphor explanation and not, as Lakoff and Johnson’s tacitly assume, to similarity of mere things.

29

Just as the strategic *arché* comes about in a battle out of disorder when one stands firmly, and then others stand to him one by one (*henòs stántos, hétéros éstê, eith’ hétéros*) just this is the way how perception through memory and *empeiria* produce first principles with means of *epagôgê*: “ék pantós êremêsantos toû kathólou”.

questionable.³⁰ If we do not recognize such dynamic conceptual aspects in Aristotle's account on metaphor, then too the 'koinón' in Hermogenes' definition begs the same questions. As a 'common name', it is, first, still a name – and just a name. Moreover, it belongs originally to *one* of two things, namely to the "subject without". Second, it is a common name for a thing in common only because both related things have 'always' been sharing it in some way. We saw that Hermogenes did not discuss any other ways of sharing but the one by means of linguistic action of "setting one name for two different things". Hence, if Hermogenes neglects explicitly the logical or a background knowledge based analysis of metaphors, one can consider it only implicitly as an original creation by the speaker. There is, however, no such pragmatic and speaker-oriented theorization of the metaphoric phenomenon neither in Hermogenes nor in Aristotle despite their interest for rhetoric. Therefore, a common or double-referring name does not by itself necessarily bring about a *new* meaning in common which would not have existed before the metaphoric action itself. In order to approach such a possibility, one must rethink the very notion of a double reference from the context of linguistic action, which includes not only the object of reference (or two of them) but a linguistic agent too. Both theoreticians seem, while speaking of objects, to circle around the agent's place as tacit subject of the enunciation.

There are, as I might have shown sufficiently, enough reasons to assume that both Aristotle's *homoíon* (similar) and Hermogenes' *koinón* (common) are clearly conceived of as dynamic elements, be it as effects of a transference process of concepts to things or of a dynamic tension in the name itself due to its double reference. This is confirmed by the usage of the term 'epiphorá' in Aristotle's definition of metaphor as the defining notion indicating – just as in Hermogenes – that the real point of view in his account is the *linguistic action* (by the speaker), a movement through thought, language and the world from an object without to the very subject of speech.³¹ The thing towards which the movements goes, the *epì*, or "subject at issue", the *hypokeímenon*, is the very stance of the discourse where the so-called subject at issue, in the sense of object, turns out to be the speaker "at issue". As we can see, such a subject reveals himself only through the linguistic action of "metaphorising", through introducing "strangeness" into the established linguistic order. One could say – against and in favour of Stanford – just like Hermogenes, the rebel and "purifier" of the grammarians' orthodoxy. Strangeness is necessary for metaphor, but it depends on how far the "subject" goes without the subject.

To conclude this aspect of the "issue", it seems quite correct to consider Hermogenes' definition of metaphor as a new view in the history of discussion on metaphor in which an interactionist taste for the dynamic aspects of metaphor seems fully satisfied. However, it does not appear true to assume that Hermogenes gives metaphoric words a semantic independency. Even less true is that metaphors were to Aristotle "mere shadows of things". Since, for Aristotle too, words are primarily a meaningful sounding (*phônè sémantiké*), it makes no sense to assume that transference is about "mere names", because a so-called mere name is always-already a name-concept (*ónoma* as different from *phônè* and also from *léxis*); it is the unity of signifying words, *ónomata*, where Aristotle (and Plato too) distinguished two levels (*léxis-diánoia*). Moreover, in a closer analysis, Hermogenes' focusing on metaphor as meaningful *word* through a double reference turns out to be rendered *possible* only through Aristotle's account on transference of concept-names, yet with the difference that to Aristotle metaphors are not linguistically *independent* words at all. (Nor are they independent for Hermogenes; they are for him, just as for Ari-

stotle, just “common” to two things that are previously understood as different.) As I already emphasized, in chapters 20–21 of Aristotle’s *Poetics* on *léxis*, which deal with literary style, metaphors are described on two levels, as a phenomenon within *léxis*, in the broader sense of the language style, and, at once, as a transference of name-concept within *diánoia* by means of *léxis*, in the narrower, material sense of expression-part of words. Therefore, they are only conceivable as effects or virtual linguistic units, stemming from thought-building procedures within and by virtue of language performing capacity to do things with language. In order to appreciate Aristotle’s contribution in a more appropriate way, it is not necessary to suppose that metaphors build up meanings as *independent* semantic word-things (among other world-things). For Aristotle too, no less than for Hermogenes, metaphors can be seen as events, for they *occur* within language by being exhibited through *actions* with words and thought processes.

4.

Despite the apparent close relation and continuity between Aristotle’s and Hermogenes’ conception of metaphors, a clear advantage of Hermogenes’ account of metaphor is that he, unlike Aristotle, explicitly rejects any analysis of species to gender transference, or vice-versa, and of analogy relation for metaphoric items. Instead, his definition asserts clearly that *tropé* grounds simply – and necessarily – on the reference of a name which *becomes* common by being set (*theînai*) from without to re-designate the subject of which one speaks. By this it is clearly implied that a *tropé* is rendered meaningful not just through a double reference, as Stanford insists, but through a *mode* of reference which must be, by its very occurrence, already *understood* as conveying at once, with the foreign name, a set of properties from the foreign thing in order to say something about something. This means not only that Hermogenes’ definition of metaphor implies, just as Aristotle’s, a proposition-oriented understanding of metaphoric language which is to be found more direct in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* than in his word-based analysis in *Poetics*. It means rather – and that seems to be a truly contribution of Hermogenes – that the so-called double reference of a borrowed name must, as a matter of fact, be understood as an *act of reference* which *produces* a name as *common*. The “foreign” reference is produced and not given.

30

At this point it seems clear enough that for Aristotle ‘*theôreîn tò hómōin*’ contains conceptually much more than Ricœur appreciates in Aristotle excepting him from later comparatists in metaphor theory like Quintilian. But Ricœur does not seem to recognize that the issue of similarity in Aristotle’s account of metaphor is closely related to his *ti katà tinós*-analysis of speech, which is conceptual and propositional and not sentence-based, and this seems to be the reason why he believes that the lack of a *sentence analysis* in Aristotle’s metaphor theory makes Aristotle not only not apt for a translation into Max Black’s interactionist theory but also not useful for modern investigations on metaphors’ constitutive role in scientific discourse. For a broader historical context of metaphor both in ancient and

in modern *philosophies of science* see Lloyd (1987); for recent developments in the philosophy of science towards a universalization of metaphor and a re-evaluation of induction in modern discussion on science, see the influential (but not undisputed) work by Mary Hesse (1963, 1974, 1988) which is strongly referred to by Black; for a further discussion on theoretical consequences of this development for scientific and literary discourses see Hirsch 1985; more recently Rentetzi 2005.

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Cf. also the very formulation *apó-epí* in the second part of Aristotle’s definition as well as by the expression ‘*tò éxothern emphainómēnon*’ (“the phenomenon from without”) in Hermogenes’ definition.

Thus besides the supposed dynamic (twofold, stereoscopic) character of metaphor in Hermogenes the consequence of his account is that the entire set of issues related to understanding, producing, accepting and evaluating metaphoric expressions must be analysed not by reference itself but by the *capacity* of refer. This means, in other words, that one must take a metaphoric expression for a natural thought process within language and not for an exclusive, sophisticated logical construction of analogical relations between the subject topic and the predicate modifier of the expression. In other words, Hermogenes' definition calls rather for producing metaphors directly than for understanding them via analogies.

This is easily to understand by the very fact that Hermogenes, as a rhetorician, was rather interested in explaining the simple pattern of production and the impact of metaphors on listeners than in systematic descriptions of metaphors. Aristotle, though too interested in rhetoric, was obviously more interested in issues of understanding via *logical explanation* and linguistic systematization of metaphors but also of their good quality ('*eú metaphérein*') within particular discursive contexts (poetical, rhetorical, or even proto-philosophical).³² This seems to explain his search for deeper thought patterns of metaphoric expressions. But it is by no means a random quality of Aristotle's metaphor account that it leads so far as to explicitly – but quite without drama – affirm that metaphoric expressions are essentially forms of a different linguistic thought-processing. They are peculiar cases of predication, of saying that something *is* something, but also of comparing and naming things, and of ordering actions etc. Hence, the linguistic and logical analysis in Ch. 21 of *Poetics* represents in fact only a display of the logical frame of proportion as well as the intellectual background of common beliefs and common knowledge which, in Aristotle's opinion, is responsible of the possibility that speakers of a language make and understand metaphors. Thus, beyond the acknowledgement that Aristotle's account provides us with a display of metaphor as a complex pattern of thought-processing through language rather than of constitution of a single language unit, it has to be remembered that his pattern of analysis is primarily related to the intellectual *background* against which metaphors might be understood than to its linguistic (expressive) means.

In this sense, Aristotle's account, defining metaphors as a thought-process through language, and not as single word transference, seems theoretically broader than the one provided by Hermogenes', though Hermogenes' idea of *trópé* as *producing* a common name out of a single one opens up new and unparalleled levels of linguistic metaphor analysis. Nevertheless, as I suggested above, both accounts are continuous with each other because Hermogenes, focusing on metaphoric expression as double-sided reference, emphasizes just that aspect of the metaphor theory which in Aristotle's approach remained implicit and, in consequence, less explanative with respect to other revolutionary insights by Aristotle into metaphor's capacity of "bringing about the truth" (*Rhetoric* iii, 11, 1412a20). The capacity of a metaphoric expression to bring about the truth is only due to the peculiar linguistic function of saying something about something. Therefore, the function of Aristotle's grammatical and logical analysis of metaphors in Ch. 21 of *Poetics* is, and can only be, to provide general categories (species, genus) and thought patterns (analogies) for analytic purposes of *understanding* particular metaphoric expressions, be they one-word-based or sentence-based.

By this, however, it is not asserted that to provide background conditions for understanding metaphors is to define at once, on one side, their poetic

value or, on the other side, to find out the truth conditions of their (presumed) proposition, and to determine their truth value (see Davidson, 1984). Understanding metaphors by transference between genus and species or by analogy is not already accepting them under veridical or aesthetic aspects. Only few metaphors aim *explicitly* at a truth-value and they have the form of logos or sentence, whereas much more of them have another surface structure (be it verbal, attributive, nominal, or elliptic expression) conveying *prima facie* an aesthetic and emotional claim rather than a cognitive or veridical one.

Hence, understanding metaphors remains a general precondition for accepting (or not accepting) them – be it as true, illuminating, convincing, adequate or “merely” inspiring or emotionally and aesthetically taking etc. Moreover, it is this twofold aspect of metaphors, which at once explains the so-called prescriptive character of Aristotle’s metaphor theory. Namely, the analogical analysis proceeds as defining conditions of understandability and provides thereby the indispensable pre-condition for any further procedure of determining its acceptability, be it either the truth value of a metaphorical proposition (if any is given), or aptness for a pragmatic speech act or just for an aesthetic pleasure. It is also this twofold aspect of metaphor that explains also a philologically relevant fact, namely that Aristotle, while displaying in Ch. 21 of *Poetics* the logical frame of understanding metaphors points at issues like truth value and other types of discourse efficiency of metaphors only when dealing with the issue of a good realization (*areté*) of the *léxis*. For Aristotle, this virtue belongs not only to the beauty of poetry but is also a sign of the genius in philosophical thinking and in our cognitive capacity in general.

Despite their appreciation of these lines in Aristotle, Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 376, 382sq.) declare their deepest disappointment (another one in the line Stanford–Ricoeur–Black) with Aristotle’s account of metaphor in following words:

“Aristotle’s theory of metaphor could not allow him to see his own conceptual metaphors. His theory could not allow him to look into his own cognitive unconscious and see that he was using conceptual metaphors, that is, mappings across conceptual domains. Blind to his own metaphors, he was forced by his own consistent application of his metaphors to a theory of metaphor that was inadequate to describe either his own metaphors or anyone else’s.”

But, as I tried to show, the difference between alleged “cognitive unconscious” of Aristotle’s and Lakoff and Johnson’s own “cognitive conscious” – with which they aim to save philosophy’s capacity to understand “its own nature and its own rational structure” – consists precisely in conscious and explicit aspects of Aristotle’s account on “good metaphorising”: transference of names, which is conceived of as a synthetic *conceptualizing* out of cognitive and linguistic material and not just as a transference of ready-made structures, schemes or “maps” across domains. If one takes these dynamic aspects of Aristotle’s theory into account, there is no room for wondering why Lakoff and Johnson’s disappointment with Aristotle appears itself disappointing in the final triviality:

“(…) given his central metaphors and the overall conceptual structure of his philosophy, he could not have come up with anything like the contemporary theory of conceptual metaphor that we have been using.”

At this point of the analysis of Aristotle's and Hermogenes' definitions of metaphoric language, new tasks may arise. One task could – and perhaps should – be a closer, more positive and more synthetic, i.e. less negative and differential analysis, like the one presented here, of possible relations between Aristotle's insights into the structure of metaphoric language and its function in poetical, rhetorical and scientific discourse and modern writers on philosophy and science theory like Ricœur, Black, Hesse and others. Another line of a more special investigation would certainly include more detailed analyses of relations between Aristotle's rhetoric and the interactionist theories of rhetoric and literary discourse in the line from Hermogenes through Stanford and Richards to more recent positions. But this task would heavily exceed the scope of this paper aiming at a contrastive analysis of two ancient conceptions of metaphor as they have been formulated in respective definitions.

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Borislav Mikulić

Definiranje metafore

O dva rana objašnjenja metafore kod Aristotela i Hermogena iz Tarsa i njihovoj recepciji kod suvremenih interakcionista

Sažetak

Članak istražuje jezične i epistemološke pretpostavke teze irskog klasičnog filologa W. B. Stanforda (1936.) da je retoričar Hermogen iz Tarsa u svojoj definiciji metafore – za razliku od Aristotelovog »puko jezičnog« opisa – dao radikalno novu, dinamičnu koncepciju metaforičkog govora, zasnovanu na referenciji, koju je nazvao tropé. Za Stanforda je to bila povijesna prefiguracija njegovog vlastitog »stereoskopskog« shvaćanja metafore koje je kasnije, s Maxom Blackom i Paulom Ricæurom u 60-im i 70-im godinama 20. st. inspirirala tzv. interakcionistički pogled na metaforu u raznim područjima filozofije jezika i znanosti te lingvistike. U članku se Hermogenova ideja metafore kao »zajedničkog« imena za različite stvari stavlja u odnos s trostrukom (lingvističkom, logičkom i epistemološkom) analizom teorije prijenosa kod Aristotela; kroz kraće rubne primjedbe ili opsežnije komentare članak ukazuje na sistematske veze između dviju antičkih teorija i suvremenih rasprava o metafori. U konačnici ispostavlja se da je navodno interakcionističko objašnjenje metafore kod Hermogena prije u kontinuitetu nego u sukobu s Aristotelovom analizom, koja sama nije manje konceptualna nego što je jezična. Usto, oba razumijevanja metafore pozivaju jasno na daljnje analize na složenijoj sistematičkoj razini, koju suvretni teoretičari jedva da priznaju i kod Hermogena i kod Aristotela.

Ključne riječi

Aristotelova definicija metafore, definicija metafore Hermogena iz Tarsa, interakcija vs. supstitucija, jezična vs. konceptualna analiza, dvostruka referencija, imenovanje vs. prenošenje imena, asertivni logos, referencija i govorni čin

Borislav Mikulić

Metapher Definieren

Über zwei antike Metapherklärungen bei Aristoteles und Hermogenes von Tarsus und deren Rezeption durch gegenwärtige Interaktionisten

Zusammenfassung

Der Aufsatz erörtert linguistische und epistemologische Voraussetzungen der vom irischen Philologen W. B. Stanford (1936) aufgestellten These, dass der Rhetoriker Hermogenes von Tarsus in seiner Definition der Metapher – im Unterschied zu Aristoteles' „bloß linguistischer“ Definition – eine radikal neue, dynamische und auf Referenz basierende Konzeption der metaphorischen Rede, die er tropé nannte, entworfen habe. Für Stanford bedeutete dies eine historische Vorwegnahme seiner eigenen „stereoskopischen“ Auffassung der Metapher, die ihrerseits später, durch Max Black und Paul Ricœur, die sogenannte interaktionistische Konzeption der Metapher in verschiedenen Gebieten der Sprach- und Wissenschaftsphilosophie sowie der Linguistik motiviert hat. Über den ganzen Aufsatz hinweg wird Hermogenes' Idee der Metapher als „gemeinsamer Name“ für unterschiedliche Dinge in eine dreistufige (linguistische, logische und epistemologische) Analyse der Übertragungstheorie bei Aristoteles einbezogen; durch kürzere Randbemerkungen oder umfangreichere Kommentare verweist die Arbeit auf einige systematische Zusammenhänge zwischen den beiden antiken Theorien und zeitgenössischen Metapherdebatten. Im Endergebnis zeigt sich die bei Hermogenes vermutete interaktionistische Erklärung der Metapher eher als Fortführung denn als Gegensatz gegenüber der Aristotelischen Analyse, die ihrerseits nicht minder konzeptuell als linguistisch ausfällt. Darüber hinaus rufen beide antiken Erklärungen der Metapher zu weiteren Erörterungen auf komplexeren systematischen Ebenen auf, die die modernen Metapherforscher ebensowenig Hermogenes wie Aristoteles zuerkannt haben.

Schlüsselwörter

Aristoteles' und Hermogenes von Tarsus' Metapherdefinition, Interaktion vs. Substitution, linguistische vs. konzeptuelle Analyse, Doppelreferenz, Benennung vs. Namensübertragung, assertorischer Logos, Referieren und Sprechakt

Borislav Mikulić

Définir la métaphore

A propos de deux concepts anciens de métaphore, ceux d'Aristote et d'Hermogène de Tarse, et de leur réception parmi les interactionnistes contemporains

Résumé

L'article examine les présuppositions linguistiques et épistémologiques de la thèse dressée par le classiciste irlandais W. B. Stanford (1936), selon laquelle le rhétoricien Hermogène de Tarse avait proposé dans sa définition de la métaphore – par opposition à la description « purement linguistique » faite par Aristote – une conception du discours métaphorique radicalement nouvelle, dynamique et fondée sur la référence, qu'il avait appelée tropè. Pour Stanford, ceci préfigurait historiquement sa propre conception « stéréoscopique » de la métaphore qui, plus tard, avec Max Black et Paul Ricœur dans les années 1960 et 1970, a inspiré le regard dit interactionniste, porté sur la métaphore dans différents domaines de la philosophie du langage et de la science tout comme de la linguistique. L'article analyse l'idée de métaphore selon Hermogène en tant que nom « commun » des choses différentes et la met en rapport avec une analyse à trois niveaux – linguistique, logique et épistémologique – de la théorie du transfert chez Aristote ; l'article souligne les relations systématiques entre ces deux théories anciennes et les discussions contemporaines sur la métaphore. Résultat, l'explication de la métaphore chez Hermogène, supposée être interactionniste, s'avère être davantage dans la continuité que dans le conflit par rapport à l'analyse d'Aristote, qui n'est pas moins conceptuelle que linguistique. En outre, les deux définitions requièrent clairement une analyse approfondie, à un niveau systématique plus complexe, que les auteurs contemporains qui traitent de la métaphore reconnaissent à peine chez Hermogène comme chez Aristote.

Mots-clés

définition d'Aristote et de Hermogène de Tarse de la métaphore, interaction vs substitution, analyse linguistique vs analyse conceptuelle, référence double, dénomination vs transfert du nom, logos assertif, acte de référence et de parole