

Surfing the frame net

Metonymy and similar phenomena as evidence for Barsalou's frame approach to concepts

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In Düsseldorf frame theory it is assumed that lexical meanings and interpretations in context of linguistic expressions have frame structure. Applying this assumption to the ubiquitous conceptual phenomenon of metonymy provides a basis for understanding and modelling metonymy in a more precise way than in traditional approaches. I will propose to analyse metonymy as a conceptual operation that shifts the reference of a frame to a different node within it, where this operation is constrained by well-formedness conditions on frame structure. In a frame approach to concepts, this kind of shift is a natural basic operation. Also the structural constraints on frames explain restrictions on metonymy. I will argue that the naturalness, in this sense, of metonymy and the structural constraints on metonymy provide evidence for Barsalou's assumption that concepts in human cognition have frame structure.

A previous version of the talk was presented at the 2014 Conference on *Concept Types and Frames*.