

CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETATION SCHEMES

A cognitive linguistic analysis of heart idioms would definitely involve metaphor and metonymy. Hence, it is mandatory to have in hand a set of theories concerning metaphor and metonymy in advance of the cognitive linguistic analysis of heart idioms. Lakoff (1993) details the contemporary theory of metaphor, including the nature, structure, and types of metaphor, which will be summarized in section 3.1. On the other hand, Kövecses & Radden (1998) present an elaborate account of metonymy from a cognitive viewpoint, which will be specified in section 3.2. The studies from Lakoff (1993) and Kövecses & Radden (1998) provide a useful tool for the explicit interpretation of the cognitive-semantic mechanisms behind heart idioms. In addition, Ruiz de Mendoza (2003) demonstrates three models of how metaphor can interact with metonymy, which will be adopted in this study to reveal the interactions of cognitive-semantic mechanisms behind heart idioms. The three models will be shown in section 3.3.

3.1 Contemporary Theory of Metaphor

Lakoff (1993) explicates the nature and structure of metaphor in the contemporary theory. In addition, he introduces the Invariance Principle, which is conformed to by the two major types of metaphors he proposes—conventional metaphors and novel metaphors. Section 3.1.1 will summarize the nature and structure of metaphor; section 3.1.2 will introduce the Invariance Principle, and section 3.1.3 the conventional metaphors and novel metaphors.

3.1.1 The Nature and Structure of Metaphor

Metaphor is traditionally viewed as a matter of language and defined as a novel or poetic linguistic expression (i.e. figurative language in the traditional sense). Scholars in the past have believed that the majority of everyday language does not involve metaphor, and thus everyday language is literal (i.e. everyday language is literal in the traditional sense). More and more recent studies, however, suggest that metaphor in nature is not in language, but in thought. According to Lakoff (1993), metaphor is the main mechanism that we employ to comprehend abstract concepts and to perform abstract reasoning, and it allows us to understand an abstract or unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete or structured subject matter. As a result, it applies not only to novel or poetic language but also to much of our

everyday language. Therefore, Lakoff (1993) holds the view that the traditional distinction between literal and figurative languages has to be modified with much of everyday language being figurative and little being literal.

Lakoff (1993: 203) defines metaphor as “a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system.” To be more specific, each mapping is a fixed set of ontological correspondences between entities in a source domain and entities in a target domain. He believes that this cross-domain mapping is by no means arbitrary, but grounded in the body and everyday experience. Thus, some mappings tend to be universal, though there are still some mappings that are culture specific. In the next section, the Invariance Principle, which is conformed to by both the conventional metaphors and novel metaphors, will be introduced.

3.1.2 Invariance Principle

The Invariance Principle comes from an observation of many cross-domain mappings. Take categories as an example. Categories (the target domain) are often understood metaphorically in terms of containers (the source domain). Thus, just like something can be in or out of a container, something can also be in or out of a category (e.g., *blue is in the category of colors*). Especially, it is found that categories will always map to containers, and members of a category to the content of a

container. It is never the case that any member of a category maps to the container or something outside the container. It is this kind of observation that leads to the hypothesis of the Invariance Principle.

Lakoff (1993: 215) describes the Invariance Principle as “metaphorical mappings [which] preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain.” What needs to be understood is that metaphorical mappings are not some kind of algorithmic processes that start with source domain structure and then copy this structure to target domain structure. Instead, the Invariance Principle should be realized as constraints on correspondences between source domain and target domain. That is, for example, source domain interiors should correspond to target domain interiors, and source domain exteriors to target domain exteriors. This Invariance Principle is conformed to by the two major types of metaphor proposed by Lakoff (1993): conventional metaphors and novel metaphors.

3.1.3 Types of Metaphor

Conventional metaphors and novel metaphors are the two major types of metaphor presented in Lakoff (1993). Conventional metaphors include conceptual metaphors and event structure metaphors; novel metaphors include image metaphors,

generic-level metaphors, and great chain metaphors. The concept of each metaphor is introduced with examples in this section.

Conceptual metaphors can be easily understood through the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY. This metaphor subsumes a set of ontological correspondences that characterize a mapping between a source domain (i.e. journeys) and a target domain (i.e. love). This mapping can be presented as follows:

THE LOVE-AS-JOURNEY MAPPING

The lovers correspond to travelers.

The love relationship corresponds to the vehicle.

The lovers' common goals correspond to their common destinations on the journey.

Difficulties in the relationship correspond to impediments to travel.

Owing to the above mapping, expressions about love like *how far we've come, we're at a crossroads, we have to go our separate ways, the relationship isn't going anywhere*, are so common and natural in everyday expressions. What's more, this metaphor also maps our knowledge about journeys onto our knowledge of love. This is why we can comprehend novel metaphorical expressions about love without any difficulty.

Lakoff (1993) mentions that metaphorical mappings are sometimes organized in hierarchical structures. For instance, the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor is a set of lower mappings in the hierarchy which would inherit the structures of the higher

mappings. The mappings that are higher than THE LOVE-AS-JOURNEY mappings are A-PURPOSEFUL-LIFE-AS-JOURNEY mappings and the mappings of event structure metaphors. This hierarchy can be represented as follows:

Level 1: The event structure metaphor

Level 2: A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY

Level 3: LOVE IS A JOURNEY

Event structure metaphors map various aspects of event structure, including states, changes, processes, actions, causes, purposes, and means, to space, motion, and force. The following are the mappings of event structure metaphors given in Lakoff (1993: 220).

THE EVENT STRUCTURE METAPHOR

States are locations (bounded regions in space).

Changes are movements (into or out of bounded regions)

Causes are forces.

Actions are self-propelled movements.

Purposes are destinations.

Means are paths (to destinations).

Difficulties are impediments to motion.

Expected progress is a travel schedule; a schedule is a virtual traveler, who reaches prearranged destinations at prearranged times.

External events are large, moving objects.

Long term, purposeful activities are journeys.

Take examples of mapping states to locations and changes to movements. We have expressions like *in or out of a state*, *going into or out of a state*, etc. Moreover, the

mappings between various aspects of event structure and space, motion, and force

entail the following mappings:

Manner of action is manner of motion. (e.g., *We are running right along.*)

A different means for achieving a purpose is a different path. (e.g., *Do it this way.*)

Forces affecting action are forces affecting motion. (e.g., *We're stuck.*)

Progress made is distance traveled or distance from goal. (e.g., *We've come a long way.*)

Image metaphors, which are also called one-shot metaphors, differ from conventional metaphors in that they do not map one conceptual domain onto another, but one image onto another image. Metaphorical image mappings work much the same as other metaphorical mappings, except that the domains mapped are in fact conventional mental images. Lakoff (1993: 229) gives an example of such metaphorical image mappings by adopting a line from André Breton: *My wife ... whose waist is an hourglass*. From this line we form a mental image of an hourglass and that of a woman, and we map the middle of the hourglass onto the waist of the woman by virtue of their common shape. What's interesting is that we normally do not map the waist of a woman onto other parts of an hourglass, owing to our conventional knowledge of the shapes of an hourglass and of a woman.

Generic-level metaphors are proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989) in order to deal with personification and proverbs. They find that an overwhelming number of

personifications have a certain pattern. For instance, events are understood as actions by some agent, which originates from a more general metaphor, EVENTS ARE ACTIONS. Take death as an example. The reason why it is often personified as drivers can be accounted for by looking at the DEATH IS DEPARTURE metaphor. If we can view departure as an action caused by some agent (e.g., *drivers*), it is thus obvious why we often personify death as drivers.

Great chain metaphors are widespread metaphors, often found in expressions of analogy. For instance, *John is a wolf* and *Harry is a pig*. It has to be noted that conventional metaphors also take a part in these examples by mapping our knowledge about the animals to the persons.

So far, Lakoff's contemporary theory of metaphor, including the nature, structure, and types of metaphor, has been summarized. The next section will introduce the cognitive linguistic view of metonymy by Kövecses & Radden (1998).

3.2 Cognitive Linguistic View of Metonymy

Kövecses & Radden (1998) give a very detailed and excellent study on metonymy from a cognitive linguistic view. In their study, four issues are covered: (1) Where does metonymy occur? (2) What are the types of metonymy-producing relationships? (3) What are the principles governing the selection of the preferred

vehicle? (4) What are the factors that result in the selection of non-default routes? The latter three issues will be explored in the following sections. Before that, a brief introduction to the traditional view and the cognitive view of metonymy are given in advance.

Metonymy was traditionally defined as “a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is used in place of that of another associated with or suggested by it.”

(Webster’s New World Dictionary Third College Edition, S.V. “metonymy”)

According to Kövecses & Radden (1998), this definition has the following assumptions: (1) Metonymy is a matter of words, (2) the metonymic process involves a transfer of the meaning of words which have reference, (3) metonymy is a stand-for relationship between names, (4) metonymy is a relationship between two entities, where the nature of the relationship is generally assumed to be one of contiguity or proximity, and (5) metonymy is parasitic on literal language. However, with so many heart idioms referring to human emotions, metonymy behind heart idioms must be conceptual instead of just a matter of words. Otherwise, it would be hard to explain why so many heart idioms describe human emotions. Recent studies of metonymy in cognitive linguistics have also developed a different view toward metonymy.

First, metonymy, like metaphor, is conceptual in nature. Second, metonymy involves not only the referential use of language but also the use of predications and

speech acts. Third, metonymy is a cognitive process through which we gain access to a mental entity via another mental entity. Fourth, the sense of contiguity or proximity can be accounted for by knowledge structures defined by domains or idealized cognitive models (ICMs). Fifth, some psychological experiments have evidenced that the figurative meaning of an expression can be processed without resorting to the literal meaning of that expression. Therefore, metonymy is not parasitic on literal language. Based on the above findings, a concise definition of metonymy in a cognitive view is given by Kövecses & Radden (1998: 39): “Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same domain, or ICM.”

The discussion above provides the current study with a clear concept of what metonymy is. In what follows, the types of metonymy-producing relationships proposed by Kövecses & Radden (1998), which cover the possible metonymies of heart idioms, will be detailed.

3.2.1 Types of Metonymy-Producing Relationships

Kövecses & Radden (1998) suggest that the types of metonymy-producing relationships may have two general conceptual configurations: whole ICM and its parts, and parts of an ICM. They discover 15 types of metonymy-producing

relationships. ICMs within the whole-and-part configuration are listed below from (1) to (6); ICMs within the part-and-part configuration are listed from (7) to (15).

A. whole-and-part configuration

- (1) Thing-and-part ICM
- (2) Scale ICM
- (3) Constitution ICM
- (4) Complex event ICM
- (5) Category-and-member ICM
- (6) Category-and-property ICM.

B. part-and-part configuration

- (7) Action ICM
- (8) Perception ICM
- (9) Causation ICM
- (10) Production ICM
- (11) Control ICM
- (12) Possession ICM
- (13) Containment ICM
- (14) Assorted ICMs involving indeterminate relationships
- (15) Sign and reference ICMs

Some of the 15 types above that are relevant to the analysis of heart idioms are specified below.

Thing-and-part ICM has two common metonymic variants: **WHOLE THING FOR A PART OF THE THING** (e.g., *America* for ‘United States’) and **PART OF A THING FOR THE WHOLE THING** (e.g., *England* for ‘Great Britain’). Constitution ICM leads to two reversible metonymies: **OBJECT FOR MATERIAL**

CONSTITUTING THAT OBJECT (e.g., *There was cat all over the road* for ‘There were parts of a cat body all over the road’) and THE MATERIAL CONSTITUTING AN OBJECT FOR OBJECT (e.g., *wood* for ‘the forest’). Category-and-property ICM also leads to two metonymic variants: CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY (e.g., *jerk* for ‘stupidity’) and DEFINING PROPERTY FOR CATEGORY (e.g., *blacks* for ‘black people’).

Action ICM has many metonymies. Four of them are introduced: OBJECT INVOLVED IN AN ACTION FOR THE ACTION (*blanket* for ‘to blanket the bed’), ACTION FOR OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION (*bite* for ‘a bite’), RESULT FOR ACTION (*screw-up* for ‘to blunder’), and ACTION FOR RESULT (*to cut* for ‘a cut’). Causation ICM also has many metonymies. One of them is introduced: PHYSIOLOGICAL/BEHAVIORAL EFFECT FOR EMOTION (e.g., *She was upset* for ‘something made her upset’). This metonymy is subsumed under the general EFFECT FOR CAUSE metonymy. Possession ICM produces a productive metonymy and its reverse variant: POSSESSOR FOR POSSESSED (e.g., *This is Harry* for ‘Harry’s drink’) and POSSESSED FOR POSSESSOR (e.g., *He married money* for ‘He married someone with money’). Containment ICM also has two metonymic variants: CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED (e.g., *glass* for ‘wine’) and CONTAINED FOR CONTAINER (e.g., *The milk tipped over* for ‘The milk bottle

tipped over’). The CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy is more widespread than the reverse variant, owing to the fact that we are often more interested in the content of a container.

Among the 15 types of metonymy-producing relationships, it is observed that some relationships are reversible (e.g., WHOLE THING FOR PART OF THE THING and PART OF A THING FOR THE WHOLE THING). However, these relationships seem to have a preferred directionality even though they are bidirectional. The following section will explore the principles that govern the directionality of metonymy-producing relationships.

3.2.2 Principles Determining the Preferred Vehicle

Kövecses & Radden (1998) suggest that cognitive principles and communicative principles can account for the selection of preferred vehicles. Cognitive principles mainly concern human experience, perceptual selectivity, and cultural preference. Human experiences and perceptions influence much of human conceptualizations. Therefore, things that we can easily perceive and interact with are more important to us than the rest. Cultural preferences also determine our selection of certain vehicles. Often the stereotypical, ideal, or typical members of a category would be chosen to stand for that category. Kövecses & Radden (1998) suggest that

there are many principles based on these three dimensions. Some of them are listed as follows:

- Human over nonhuman: This results in the preference of POSSESSOR FOR POSSESSED, CONTROLLER FOR CONTROLLED, and PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT.
- Concrete over abstract: This principle subsumes a set of subcases. For instance, bodily over emotional (e.g., *heart* for ‘kindness’) and bodily over mental (e.g., *brain* for ‘intellect’). This principle also entails a subprinciple visible over invisible. This subprinciple explains the preference of CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED and FORM FOR CONCEPT.
- Functional over nonfunctional: For instance, *They wheeled up to the airport* stands for ‘They drove to the airport’, since wheels are functional in driving.
- Immediate over non-immediate: This principle accounts for the preference of EFFECT FOR CAUSE, because effects often affect us more immediately than causes.
- Good gestalt over poor gestalt: This accounts for the preference of WHOLE THING FOR PART OF THE THING.
- Bounded over unbounded: This accounts for the preference of OBJECT FOR MATERIAL CONSTITUTING THAT OBJECT.
- Stereotypical over nonstereotypical: This explains why we understand mothers as housewives.
- Important over less important

Kövecses & Radden (1998) mention two communicative principles as well: the principle of clarity and the principle of relevance. These two principles can be understood as clear over less clear and relevant over irrelevant.

Although the cognitive and communicative principles stated above explain why certain vehicle-to-target routes are preferred over others, they are unable to account for the selection of non-default routes. Kövecses & Radden propose that social

considerations may account for the non-default selection. The use of euphemism is a typical example. Something less clear often stands for something clear. This obviously violates the clear over less clear principle. For instance, the use of *They did it* for 'They had sex'. Kövecses & Radden also propose that rhetorical effects may be another reason for choosing a non-default route. For example, metonymies in *The pen is mightier than the sword* violates the human over non-human principle.

In this section, based on Kövecses & Radden (1998), types of metonymy, principles of default routes, and factors for non-default routes are summarized. The next section will deal with the interactions between metaphor and metonymy.

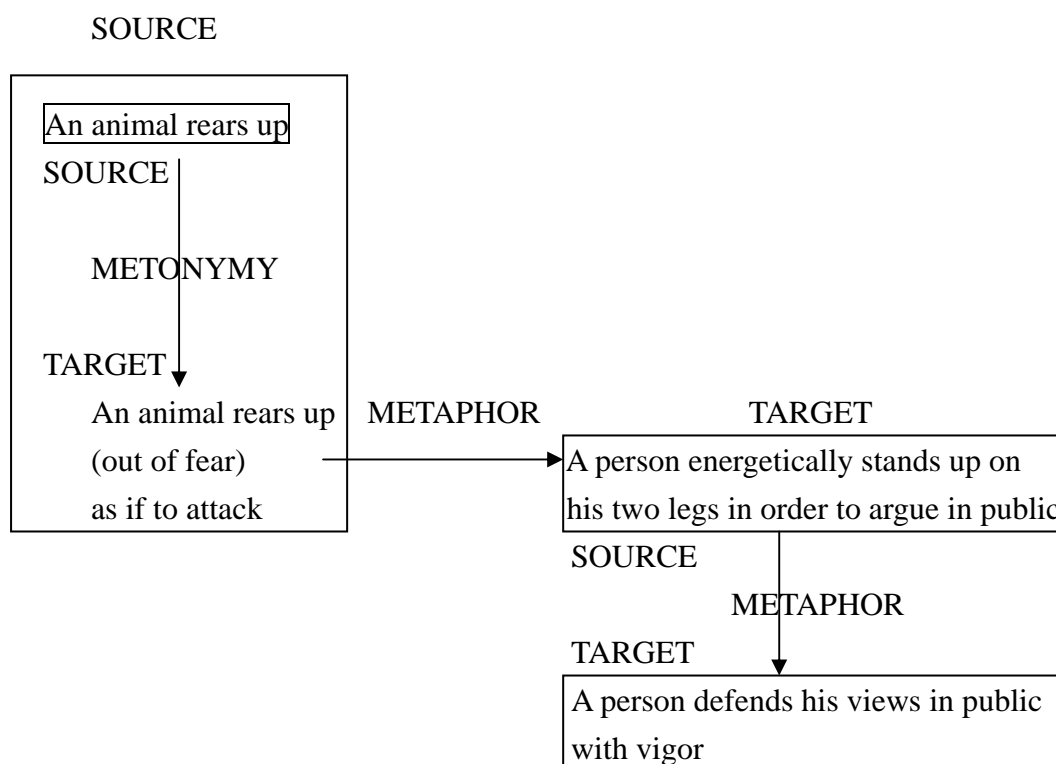
3.3 Interactions Between Metaphor and Metonymy

Ruiz de Mendoza (2003) observes three models of conceptual interaction between metaphor and metonymy: (1) A metonymic mapping provides the source for a metaphor, (2) a metaphoric mapping provides the source for a metonymy, and (3) a metonymy determines the interpretation of a specific correspondence within a metaphoric mapping. She provides each model with an example and a figure to demonstrate how the various conceptual interactions work. An example of the first model is given in Figure 3.1. It is shown in Figure 3.1 that the whole scene of an animal moving the front part of its body upwards to adopt an attacking position can be

accessed through the metonymic source: An animal rears up. Owing to the fact that the metonymic source is part of the whole scene, the metonymic target, a source-in-target metonymy is obtained. Then, the whole scene serves as a metaphoric source and maps onto the metaphoric target: A person energetically stands up on his two legs in order to argue in public. This scene in turn becomes the source of another metaphoric mapping whose target is a person who defends his views in public without actually standing up.

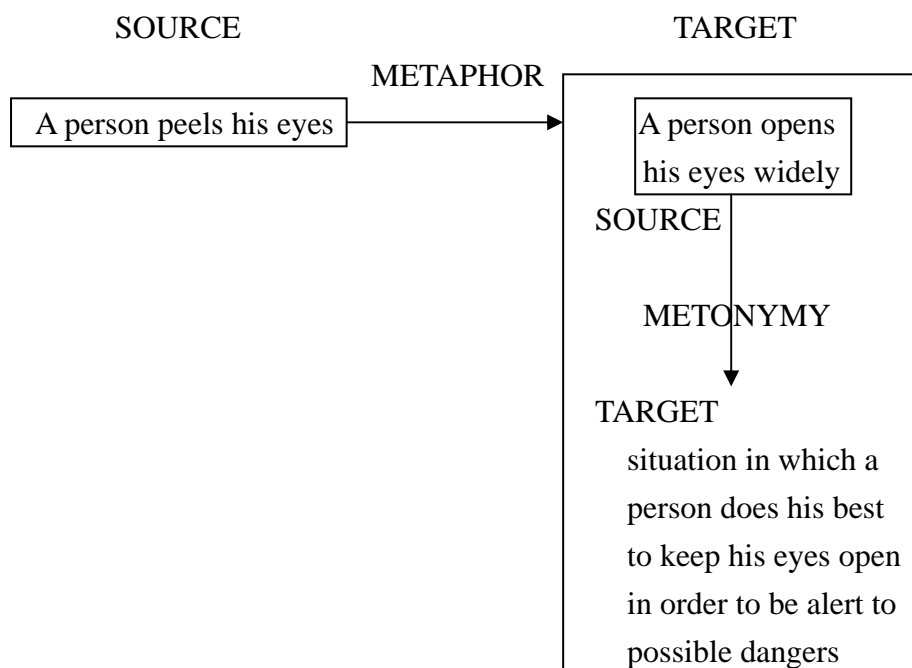
Figure 3.1. Source-in-target metonymy within the metaphoric source (Ruiz de Mendoza 2003: 122)

He got up on his hind legs to defend his views.



Let us now turn to an example of the second model with Figure 3.2. In Figure 3.2, a person peeling his eyes is metaphorically used to describe a person opening his eyes widely. This metaphoric target then maps through metonymy onto a more general situation in which a person keeps his eyes open in order to be alert to possible dangers. Again, this is a source-in-target metonymy; however, this time, it is a metonymy within the metaphoric target.

Figure 3.2. Source-in target metonymy within the metaphoric target (Ruiz de Mendoza 2003: 123)
He kept his eyes peeled for pickpockets.

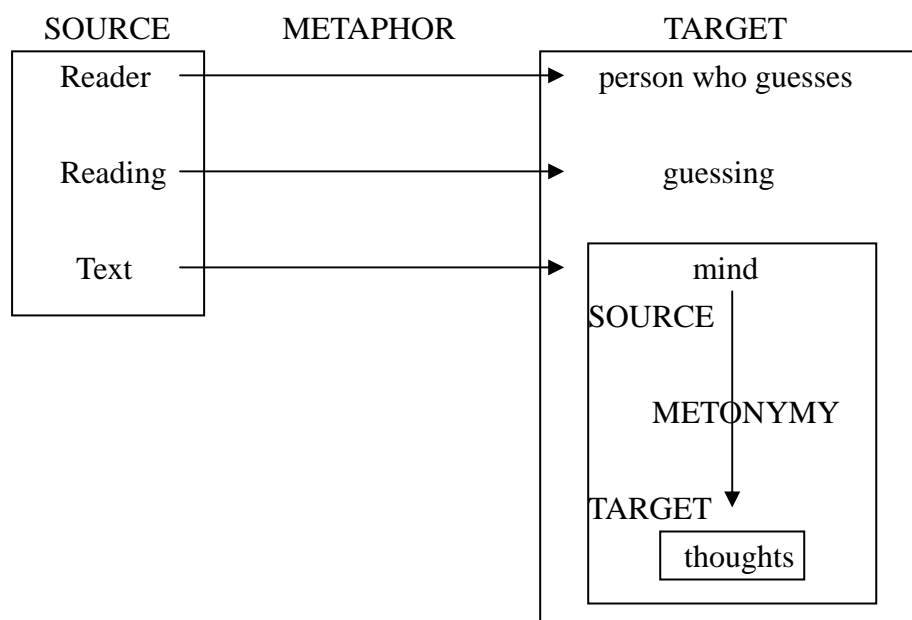


Although metonymies in the above two examples take place within different domains of metaphor, they serve the same function of developing a conceptual domain in order for the metaphorical mapping to be feasible. The Figure 3.3 below

demonstrates the third model of conceptual interaction between metaphor and metonymy. In Figure 3.3, through metaphor, the mind is regarded as a text which can be read, and therefore the person's thoughts, part of the mind, become readable as well through metonymy. Note that the metonymy in Figure 3.3 differs from those in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 in that it is a target-in-source metonymy rather than a source-in-target metonymy, and it serves the function of highlighting certain aspect of a conceptual domain.

Figure 3.3. Target-in-source metonymy within the metaphoric target (Ruiz de Mendoza 2003: 123)

She could read my mind.



Three models of interaction between metaphor and metonymy have been introduced in this section. In the following chapter, a thorough analysis of heart

idioms will be performed based on the contemporary theory of metaphor (Lakoff 1993), a cognitive view of metonymy (Kövecses & Radden 1998), and three models of conceptual interaction between metaphor and metonymy (Ruiz de Mendoza 2003).