

The Pragmatic Function of Metonymic Expressions in the Novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban"

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Abstract. The article studies the pragmatic function of metonymic phrases in the novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban". The issue of studying metonymy in literature, especially in the fantasy genre, is key for readers in terms of perceiving the world and language of a literary work, and metonymy is also considered an excellent device of thinking in everyday life. First, this article explores the cognitive essence of metonymy in terms of Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban". Based on this work, the cognitive meaning and lexical and stylistic potential of metonymy are studied. Thus, the cognitive nature of metonymy in J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" work can deeply contribute to the reader's understanding of the magical world of the work.

Keywords: metonymy; cognitive function; Harry Potter; fantasy.

INTRODUCTION

With its unique ability to build worlds and endow them with unusual laws, magic, mythological creatures and vivid symbols, the fantasy genre is a real laboratory for studying various linguistic and cognitive processes. One of these processes is cognitive (conceptual) metonymy, a linguistic phenomenon actively used by fantasy authors to create depth in the plot and symbolic structure of the world. While metaphors in fantasy express analogies and perceptions, metonymy functions on the principle of "adjacency" and "connection", creating denser and more multi-layered relationships between different fantasy world elements. Conceptual metonymy, unlike metaphor, is based on the principle of adjacency, not analogy. Unlike metaphor, where elements of context are transformed and become part of another image, metonymy works on the principle of "a part for a whole" or "a whole for a part", reflecting real or abstract connections between objects and phenomena. Within the fantasy genre, conceptual metonymy plays an important role in shaping works' symbolic and philosophical aspects and constructing unique worlds. J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series is certainly one of the most influential works of fantasy, and in it, the rich world of magic

and wizardry interacts with real-life social and moral themes. One of the clearest examples of cognitive metonymy used in this work is the concept of "Hogwarts", the magical school where the main characters study. In this context, Hogwarts serves not only as a physical space but also as a metonymy through which deeper concepts are conveyed, such as education, growing up, the struggle between good and evil, and the social and moral structure of the magical world. Thus, J. Rowling's novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" is a thrilling adventure and a rich field for exploring the various linguistic and cognitive mechanisms that form the basis of the text. Such mechanisms include metonymy, i.e. a figure of speech in which one word or expression replaces another but is related to it in the context. In "The Prisoner of Azkaban", metonymy is an important stylistic device in building the world and featuring the characters. Due to the metonymy, a multi-layered structure is created, where symbols and images acquire additional meanings.

METHODS

J. Rowling's novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" is the third part of the famous series

about the young wizard Harry Potter, and it presents important elements of both the plot and the development of the characters. The study of this work was conducted using various methods of analysis. In the research, we have considered the possible research methods used to analyse the novel and the materials that formed the basis for such a study.

To begin with, linguostylistic analysis (philological approach) has been used. It is accepted that this method includes a detailed study of the text structure, language, style, symbolism and images used by an author. Within the framework of this method, we studied how J.K. Rowling used her language to create unique magical elements and characters, as well as what literary devices she used to form the narrative. Consequently, having used this method, we analysed how the writer created the image of Azkaban using metonymy or how she described the development of characters through dialogues and actions.

Cognitive-linguistic analysis was also used. This method allows us to study how the text reflects cognitive processes, the characters' perception of the world, and the character's interaction with the surrounding reality. In particular, we have studied how the author used metonymies and other cognitive structures to explain magical phenomena or concepts. For example, the metonymy "Azkaban" symbolises isolation and punishment and is a metaphor for the characters' psychological struggle and internal transformation.

The novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" was used as an empirical material for the analysis. The novel's text served as the study's main material. Key episodes and dialogues revealed the characters' personalities, their interaction with the outside world, and the methods of constructing the plot and structure of the world.

The research methods applied to the novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" allowed us to understand better its literary structure, symbolism, and the main philosophical and moral ideas. It is important to note the variety of approaches used to study such key aspects as character development, the theme of punishment, internal struggle and liberation, and the symbolism of the magical world. The research materials, including the book's text, helped reveal the deep layers and themes that J. Rowling laid out in her work.

The theoretical literature review

The study of metonymy in linguistics spans a two-hundred-year period, and this issue has developed from traditional rhetoric to modern cognitive linguistics. According to modern rhetoricians and linguists, metonymy is more than a figure of the language. Metonymy is considered to function on behalf of other things (concepts); this device involves substituting the name of one thing for another, and these two things (concepts) are somehow interconnected.

Metonymy is the transfer of a name from one object to another based on similarity. In cognitive linguistics (Lakoff, Johnson), metonymy is considered one of the main mechanisms for conceptualising the world [1]. It reflects mental associations and promotes linguistic inference, facilitating information processing.

As a branch of linguistics, pragmatics studies the use of language in specific communicative situations. In this context, metonymy is analysed not only as a linguistic trope but also as a means of performing certain communicative tasks:

- Discourse economy: metonymy allows you to convey more information with less effort;
- Implication: metonymy often implies a common background of knowledge between the participants in communication;
- Manipulation of perception: a metonymic expression can emphasise or change the focus of perception (for example, "The White House said ..." – shifting attention from specific individuals to the institution of power).

Metonymy can perform various functions depending on the pragmatic context:

- Identification function – the designation of an object through its part or attribute: "The shirt fits";
- Euphemistic function – softening the effect: "passed away" instead of "die";
- Evaluative function – implicit evaluation with the help of a metonymic expression: "skin and bones" to express thinness (excessive thinness).

In traditional rhetoric, metonymy was perceived as a means of speech based on association, unlike metaphor based on similarity. However, in modern linguistics, especially within the cognitive and pragmatic paradigms framework, metonymy is perceived as a cognitive and communicative mechanism that actively participates in classifying and conceptualising the meaning in the world.

Thus, our goal is to consider the theoretical foundations of the pragmatic function of metonymy and describe its cognitive nature and communicative strategies.

In the framework of classical rhetoric (Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian), metonymy is defined as a trope based on the substitution of one word for another based on a logical or associative connection: a part (*pars pro toto*) for the whole, a work for the author, etc. (Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*, Book VIII).

This interpretation is inherited from the structuralist tradition. For example, R. Jakobson contrasts metonymy and metaphor as two poles of linguistic organisation – the axes of the syntagma and the paradigm, respectively: "The development of the discourse can occur along with two different semantic lines: one topic can lead to another either by similarity or by proximity" [2, p. 99].

With the transition to cognitive linguistics in the 1980s-1990s, particularly in the works of C. Lakoff and M. Johnson, metonymy became considered a stylistic device and a conceptual mechanism. In their work "Metaphors We Live By", they emphasised that metonymy is not just a rhetorical figure but reflects a cognitive operation to isolate and represent fragments of experience: "Metonymic concepts are not just linguistic expressions. They are a part of our conceptual system and a structure of our understanding of the world" [5, p. 36]

Cognitive scientists such as A. Barcelona have proposed a classification of metonymy based on schemas: a creator instead of a product (e.g., "I read Jack London"), a location instead of an enterprise (e.g., "The White House announced..."), a part instead of a whole, etc. [1, p. 196].

From a pragmatic point of view, metonymy plays the role of linguistic economy, replacing longer or more complex expressions with shorter ones while preserving their meaning. In addition, it is often used to create hidden meanings based on a common knowledge base between communicators.

According to the theory of associations by D. Sperber and D. Wilson, metonymy is a bridging interpretation strategy. It allows the addressee to restore the full meaning by the context: "Metonymy is not just a replacement of terms, but a process of inference based on association, guided by the contextual assumptions" [6, p. 203].

Metonymy is also actively used in manipulative discourses, such as political, media discourse or advertising. This allows for changing the focus and blurring or strengthening responsibility. Examples: "The White House declared ..." (instead of specific individuals) – institutionalisation and depersonalisation of the subject; "SOCAR decided ..." – the industry is replaced by a toponym, creating a strong unitary effect. Research in this area was conducted by Ruth Wodak [7] in critical discourse analysis.

A. Barcelona [1] and others have developed a systematic typology of metonymy, distinguishing between predicative and propositional metonymy:

- Referential: "Paris never sleeps" (city = inhabitants);
- Predicative: "You can't eat this restaurant" (quality of the establishment);
- Propositional: replacing one judgment with another logically related.

Thus, according to Z. Koeveches and R. Guten, "metonymy, unlike metaphor, is always described in conceptual terms, not purely linguistic. When analysing metonymic relations, even traditional rhetoric works with conceptual concepts, for example, cause and effect, a part instead of a whole, etc." [4, p. 335].

"Metonymy is a culturally conditioned phenomenon: the success of the interpretation depends on the belonging of the communicants to a common cultural and linguistic system. This makes it an important unit of cross-cultural pragmatics" [3]. The context determines the relevant interpretation: "He drank two bottles" can express the intention to get drunk or even social behaviour – depending on the conversation.

Modern theories of metonymy in linguistics demonstrate a shift from a purely stylistic understanding to a comprehensive cognitive-pragmatic approach. Metonymy is a universal tool for conceptualisation, information compression, and pragmatic strategy in communication. Its analysis requires consideration of cognitive schemas, context, and communicative goals.

In general, despite the different points of view they adopt, most cognitive linguists agree that the metonymic process consists of mental access to one conceptual entity through another entity; metonymy is not just a figure of speech but a part of people's everyday way of thinking; and the function of metonymy is not only to achieve some

artistic or aesthetic goal but also to understand concepts better. It is an effective cognitive tool for conceptualising the world.

In brief, metonymy, as a cognitive process, is the use of one object or phenomenon to refer to another related to it through real or conceptual proximity. According to the theory of cognitive linguistics, metonymy is not just a figure of speech but also a way human perception interacts with the world and structures it. It is a cognitive process based on the principles of contiguity, causality or belonging, which allows for creating connections between parts of a whole. Metonymy is not limited to linguistic expression alone but is part of a deeper structure that shapes our understanding of reality and its aspects. In fantasy, metonymy acts as a means through which the reader can perceive magical systems, character interactions, and even the laws of the fictional world.

Despite its fantastic nature, fantasy uses metonymy to build cognitive models that make the world more understandable and real to the reader. It is important to note that metonymy in fantasy does not simply serve to create images but also reflects how readers perceive and make sense of this world. Cognitive metonymic schemas in fantasy include several main types:

One of the most common types of metonymies in fantasy is using a part to denote a whole and vice versa. In fantasy, this can manifest in the connection between parts of the world and its overall picture. For example, in Harry Potter, the Philosopher's Stone is a metonym for immortality and the philosophical aspect of life and death. It is not just a magical object but also a symbol that a person can strive for power and immortality while losing their humanity and moral compass. The stone becomes a link that connects the heroes with large moral issues such as mortality, evil, and sacrifice.

In fantasy, the "whole for the part" is common when the name of a country or world denotes its inhabitants or character. For example, in the novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban", "Hogwarts" (the school) functions as a metonym for the entire magical world that Rowling builds in her books. It is not just a school but a place that connects all the key elements of the magical world – from magical creatures to the social and political structures of magical society. Hogwarts is like the centre of the magical universe, where all the most important aspects of magical society intersect: magic, traditions, laws, power, social classes and moral conflicts.

Every event at Hogwarts is somehow connected to the outside wizarding world, and vice versa; events that take place outside the school (such as the fight against Voldemort) are reflected within the walls of Hogwarts. Thus, the school becomes a metonym for the magical reality in which large and important events occur. This is important from the point of view of cognitive linguistics since Hogwarts helps the reader to structure and perceive complex abstract elements of the magical world as a holistic system. In fantasy, space and time often become metonyms for more abstract concepts. Spatial metaphors such as "crossing worlds" or "travelling through time" are literal movements and metonyms for transformations, changes in the characters' lives, and their inner growth. Thus, in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter, magical objects such as the invisibility cloak or the wand create a magical context and metonymically point to hidden powers, the heroes' internal struggles, and the ability to change their fate. Spatial elements of the fantasy world become metonyms for the personal and philosophical changes that occur in the heroes. For example, Hogwarts in the Harry Potter series is a metonym for the educational and upbringing system in which the heroes begin their journey of growing up. This school is not just a place where magic is taught but also a space where the characters' worldviews, moral guidelines, and skills for interacting with the outside world are formed. Through the school, Rowling demonstrates the process of upbringing, the importance of learning and personal growth, and the transformation of the heroes.

The building and boundaries of Hogwarts in this context symbolise the framework within which students are educated and the limitations they overcome on their way to adulthood. For example, for Harry Potter, the school becomes a metonym for his development, his first steps in understanding good and evil, and his acquisition of inner strength and wisdom. Harry's interactions with Hogwarts (and teachers such as Albus Dumbledore) allow the reader to see the importance of education in forming an individual. Characters in fantasy are often metonyms for broader concepts or moral notions. For example, in Harry Potter, characters often act as metonyms for certain moral stances. Voldemort, for example, metonymically symbolises not only the antagonist himself but also the idea of absolute evil, the desire for power and dominance. At the same time, Harry Potter is a metonym for sacrifice, courage, and the fight for justice.

Let's consider another example from Harry Potter. Hogwarts is a metonym for the magical world Rowling builds in her books. It is not just a school but a place that connects all the key elements of the magical world – from magical creatures to the social and political structures of magical society. Hogwarts is like the centre of the magical universe, where all the most important aspects of magical society intersect: magic, traditions, laws, power, social classes and moral conflicts. Every event at Hogwarts is somehow connected to the outside world of wizards. Conversely, events outside the school (for example, the fight against Voldemort) are reflected within the walls of Hogwarts. Thus, the school becomes a metonym for the magical reality in which big and important events occur. This is important from a cognitive linguistics perspective because Hogwarts helps the reader to structure and perceive the complex abstract elements of the wizarding world as a coherent system.

Metonymy in fantasy plays an important role in the perception of the fictional world and the reader's interaction with it. It helps the reader build cognitive schemas that allow him to perceive fantasy objects, events, and characters as part of a holistic picture. Cognitive models of metonymy make the world more tangible and structured by linking abstract concepts with concrete images and actions.

For many characters in Harry Potter, Hogwarts represents a school and a home. This metonymy, especially evident in the case of Harry Potter, symbolises a place of belonging and protection. After Harry loses his parents, Hogwarts becomes a symbol of family and support for him, as well as a new "home" where he finds friends, teachers, and a place where he is accepted and loved. For Harry and other characters such as Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, Hogwarts becomes a metonym for belonging to a group or a team and developing themselves. These characters and their relationships with each other reflect how the school shapes their lives, and this element of metonymy highlights the importance of social connections in the process of growing up.

In particular, metonymy helps to:

1. Simplify complex concepts: Fantasy often features philosophical ideas and abstract concepts (e.g. evil, good, magic) that become more understandable through metonymic connections. For example, in Harry Potter, it is not just Voldemort himself who becomes evil. His symbolic attributes

– the Death Eaters and the Dark Marks — allow abstract evil to be visually displayed in concrete forms.

2. Deepen character development and motivations: Fantasy characters often become metonyms for more global concepts, such as fate, personal growth, or the struggle between good and evil. This allows the reader to perceive not only the individual actions of the characters but also broader philosophical themes.

3. Make the world more realistic and connected: Metonymy creates a sense of unity and interconnectedness among the elements of a fantasy world, making it not just a set of individual parts but a whole organism, where each action and object has its place and meaning. Thus, conceptual metonymy is an important cognitive tool in the fantasy genre, which helps build a fictional world and deepen the reader's perception. Fantasy authors create cognitive schemes through metonymic connections that allow abstract ideas to be perceived through specific images and objects. The cognitive nature of metonymy makes the fantasy world more holistic, multi-layered and accessible for understanding, which contributes to the depth and emotional richness of the genre.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In [8], metonymy is important in building the world and characterising the characters, creating a multi-layered structure in which symbols and images acquire additional meanings. The pragmatic function of metonymic phrases in the novel lies in their ability to influence the reader's perception of the text, creating a certain context and emotional background. In the novel, metonymy performs several key functions:

Azkaban and its prison. One of the most striking metonymies is the prison of Azkaban itself. Azkaban is not just a place of imprisonment but also a symbol of the inner state of the prisoners, expressing the idea of isolation and mental pain. The ominous metonymy "Azkaban" acts as a mental construct associated with the torture and fears that the prisoners experience. The prison itself is perceived as an extension of their fear, helplessness and suffering, which increases the drama of the events. For example: "*Was inflating Aunt Marge bad enough to land him in Azkaban?*" [8].

Creating the Atmosphere and World of Wizardry: Metonymic expressions help convey the

uniqueness and mythic nature of the world around us — Hogwarts as a metonym for safety and home. Hogwarts, in turn, acts as a metonym for safety and stability. For Harry, who feels lost and alone at the beginning of the novel, Hogwarts becomes not only a school but also a symbol of home, acceptance, and love. It is a place where he can find a sense of belonging, and through it, Rowling conveys the idea of the importance of social and emotional connection in every person's life. Although "Hogwarts" is a school, it is often extended to the wizarding community's entire culture, traditions, and values, acting as a metonym for the wider community. For example, mentioning "Hogwarts" can mean the school of wizardry and everything associated with it – its traditions, history, and atmosphere. Let's look at several metonymic phrases with the word "Hogwarts". For example: *"When they reached the portrait hole, they found Sir Cadogan enjoying a Christmas party with a couple of monks, several previous headmasters of Hogwarts, and his fat pony"* [8].

Featuring the characters: The author reveals the characteristics of characters through metonymy. For example, "Harry's Wand" emphasises his individuality and connection to the magical world. For example: *"At Dudley's fifth birthday party, Aunt Marge had whacked Harry around the shins with her walking stick to stop him from beating Dudley at musical statues"* [8].

Deepening the Plot: Metonymic phrases are often used to hint at events or objects that play a key role in the development of the plot. For example, mentioning "Potters" can evoke associations with Harry's past and the mysteries surrounding his family. For example: *"Not many people are aware that the Potters knew You-Know-Who was after them"* [8].

Creating an emotional response: Metonymy evokes certain emotions and associations in the reader. For example, the phrase "dark forest" evokes a sense of anxiety and danger, emphasising an atmosphere of the unknown and threat. For example: *"You know what Harry and Ron are like wandering off by themselves — they've even ended up in the Forbidden Forest!"* [8].

Now let's consider specific examples of metonymy from the novel:

"Hogwarts" refers to the school, its inhabitants, events, and culture. For example: *"Ron Weasley, who was one of Harry's best friends at Hogwarts, came from a whole family of wizards"* [8].

"Bearskin" is mentioned as a metonym for werewolf, emphasising his connection to the animal kingdom. "Stick" refers to the character's wand, reflecting his personality and abilities. For example: *"At Dudley's fifth birthday party, Aunt Marge had whacked Harry around the shins with her walking stick to stop him from beating Dudley at musical statues"* [8].

"Dementors": Although Dementors are specific creatures, their name often reflects the pervasive sense of despair and hopelessness they bring, symbolising depression and fear. Dementors are a metonym for fear and depression. Dementors, terrifying creatures that feed on happiness, can be seen as a metonym for the fear and depression that characterise the novel's characters. These creatures cause their victims to experience bouts of anxiety and hopelessness, symbolising the darkest aspects of the human psyche. For Harry Potter, Dementors become a metonym for his past, filled with pain and loss, as they make him remember the death of his parents and emotional trauma. For example: *"Dementors are supposed to drain a wizard of his powers if he is left with them too long..."* [8].

The Marauder's Map: This enchanted map not only shows the layout of Hogwarts but also embodies the mischievous legacy of its creators—James Potter, Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, and Peter Pettigrew – serving as a metonym for their youthful adventures and camaraderie. For example: *"There was a knock on the door. Harry hastily stuffed the Marauder's Map and the Invisibility Cloak into his pocket"* [8].

"The Shrieking Shack": Although it is a building, it is inextricably linked to the hidden history of Remus Lupin's lycanthropy. Its name and the events surrounding it metonymically represent themes of secrecy, stigma, and the struggle with the dark nature of man. For example: *"All right, the sweetshop's rather good, and Zonko's Joke Shop's frankly dangerous, and yes, the Shrieking Shack's always worth a visit, but, Harry, apart from that, you're not missing anything"* [8].

"The Patronus Charm": Besides being a spell, the Patronus Charm represents hope, protection, and the positive aspects of human nature. It is a metonym for the characters' resilience and ability to summon light in the darkest times – the Patronus is a Metonym for Willpower. The Patronus, a magical creature that protects the wizard from Dementors, can be interpreted as a metonym for the character's willpower, psychic energy, and moral

state. In the Harry Potter story, the Patronus symbolises hope and personal strength, as only strong feelings of love and goodness can create it. When Harry learns to cast the Patronus, he literally and figuratively masters his willpower, demonstrating that the metonymic connection between will and the Patronus can be direct and powerful. For example: "*The spell I am going to try and teach you is highly advanced magic, Harry — well beyond Ordinary Wizarding Level. It is called the Patronus Charm*" [8].

CONCLUSIONS

Cognitive metonymy in fantasy is an important tool that helps create rich and multi-layered

worlds and deepens the meaning of works, giving each object, character and action symbolic and philosophical value. Fantasy authors can convey abstract and complex ideas through metonymy, making them more accessible and tangible for readers. This makes fantasy an entertainment genre and a deep philosophical tradition in which conceptual metonymy plays a key role. Thus, metonymic phrases in "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" played an important role in forming a rich and multi-layered world in which each word carries additional meaning and context. The pragmatic function of these expressions is their ability to enhance the emotional perception of the text, deepen the understanding of characters and events, and create a unique atmosphere of magic and adventure.

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