

# STYLISTIC SEMASIOLOGY

LEXICAL EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC  
DEVICES

# PLAN

- 1. Stylistic devices (SDs) based on interrelation between primary and derivative meanings: **metaphor** (allegory, personification), **metonymy** (synecdoche) and **irony**
- 1.1 **metaphor vs simile**
- 2. SDs based on interrelation between denotational and emotive meanings: **oxymoron** , **epithet**
- 3. SDs based on interrelation between nominal and contextual meanings: **antonomasia**

# Literature

- Galperin – pp.136-190
- Kukharenko – pp.23-27
- Arnold – pp.82-102
- Pelevina – pp.58-76

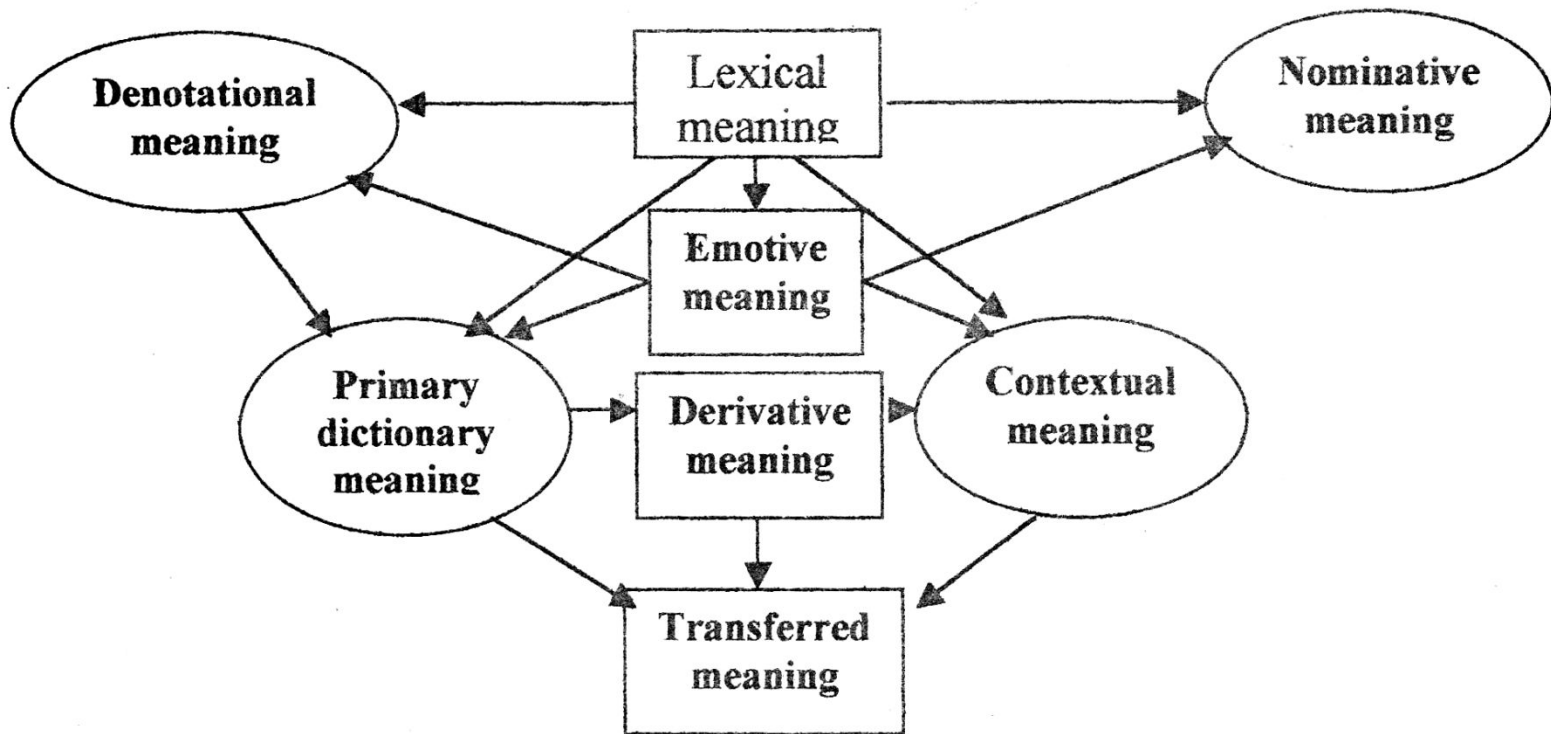
# Meaning as the basis of semasiological stylistic devices

- Meaning (L. Vygotsky) - the unity of generalization, communication and thinking. An entity of extreme complexity, the meaning of a word is liable to **historical** changes
- Various types of lexical meanings, the major one being *denotational*, which informs of the *subject* of communication; and also including *connotational*, which informs about *the participants* and *conditions* of communication.

# Types of Meaning

- *pragmatic* (directed at the desirable effect of the utterance),
- *associative* (connected, through individual psychological or linguistic associations, with related and nonrelated notions),
- *ideological, or conceptual* (revealing political, social, ideological preferences of the user),
- *evaluative* (stating the value of the indicated notion),
- *emotive* (revealing the emotional layer of cognition and perception),
- *expressive* (aiming at creating the image of the object in question),
- *stylistic* (indicating "the register", or the situation of the communication).

# Interactions of meaning



# Stan Barstow's novel "Ask Me

## Tomorrow" (meaning of "pop")

- 1. His face is red at first and then it goes white and his eyes stare as *if they'll pop* out of his head.
- 2. "Just *pop* into the scullery and get me something to stand this on."
- 3. "There is a fish and chip shop up on the main road. I thought you might show your gratitude *by popping* up for some."
- 4. "I've no need to change or anything then." "No, just *pop* your coat on and you're fine."
- 5. "Actually Mrs. Swallow is out. But she won't be long. She's *popped* up the road to the shops."
- 6. "Would you like me to *pop* downstairs and make you a cup of cocoa?"

# Interaction of Different Types of Lexical Meaning

- What is known in linguistics as *transferred* meaning is the interrelation between two types of lexical meaning: **dictionary and contextual**
- The transferred meaning of a word may be fixed in dictionaries as a result of long and frequent use of the word other than in its primary meaning. In this case we register a ***derivative*** meaning of the word.
- When, we perceive two meanings of the word **simultaneously**, we are confronted with a ***stylistic device*** in which the two meanings interact.



# Interaction of Dictionary and Contextual Logical Meanings

- The relationship between dictionary and contextual logical meanings can be based on the principles of **identification**, affinity or proximity (i.e. **metaphor**),
- on the principle of *symbol* – referent relation, or **substitution** (i.e. **metonymy**)
- on the principle of *opposition* (i.e. **irony**).

# METAPHOR - identification

- *metaphor* - transference of names based on the associated likeness between two objects, as in the "pancake", or "ball", or "volcano" for the "sun"; "silver dust" for "stars"; "vault", "blanket", "veil" for the "sky".
- The term metaphor meant in Greek "carry something across" or "transfer"

a comparison between two things, based on resemblance or similarity, without using "like" or "as"	most dictionaries and textbooks
the act of giving a thing a name that belongs to something else	Aristotle
the transferring of things and words from their proper signification to an improper similitude for the sake of beauty, necessity, polish, or emphasis	Diomedes
a device for seeing something in terms of something else	Kenneth Burke
understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another	John Searle

- A **metaphor** is a very common figure or trope which has been studied since Aristotle's Poetics.
- A **metaphor** states that something is equivalent to another thing which is not usually associated with it.
- **Metaphors** are not only found in literary works, but are actually quite common in language in general. However, many metaphors in everyday use are described as **dead metaphors**, as they have been used so frequently that their metaphorical character has become less apparent. When one describes one's **feelings as 'up' or 'down'** or when one describes oneself as **'fuming mad'** or as **'bubbling with enthusiasm'**, one is using dead metaphors.



# UT clip “metaphors and similes”



# SIMILE

- Similes compare two things using the words **like** or **as**, **seems**, **as if**, **such as**
- Hackneyed similes: The morning dew was **as bright as diamond**

As busy as a

As cold as a

As pale as a

As blind as a

As strong as a

As dead as a

As deaf as a

As clear as a

As dumb as an

bee, bat, post, crystal, herring,

oyster, mule, beetle, paper

horse, cucumber, doornail,

# Similes vs logical comparison

- Similes realize intensification of some one feature of the concept . Simile compares 2 objects of different classes, entirely different except for one feature in common: e.g. **Girls, like moths, are caught by glare**
- Ordinary (logical) comparison weighs 2 objects belonging to the same class with the aim of establishing the degree of their sameness or difference
- E.g. **Like father, like son**
- Extended simile: **Thoughts jerked through his brain like the misfirings of a defective carburetor.**
- **It was that moment of the year when the countryside seems to faint from its own loveliness**

# Kinds of metaphors

Metaphors can be classified according to their degree of originality or unexpectedness. Metaphors that are absolutely unexpected and unpredictable are called *genuine* metaphors.

Those, which are commonly used in speech and therefore are sometimes even fixed in dictionaries, are *trite or dead* metaphors. They are highly predictable and their (metaphorical) motivation is apparent, for example

*head of department, body of information, bottom of a road/ garden/ street, mouth of a river* and many others. I. R.

Galperin lists time-worn or trite metaphors, for example a *ray of hope, floods of tears, a flight of fancy, a gleam of mirth, a shadow of a smile*, etc.

- The expressiveness of the metaphor is promoted by the implicit **simultaneous presence of images of both objects** - the one which is actually named and the one which supplies its own "legal" name. So that formally we deal with the name transference based on the similarity of one feature common to two different entities. The wider is the gap between the associated objects the more striking and unexpected - the more expressive - is the metaphor.



# RELATED TERMS

**extended or telescoping metaphor:** A sustained metaphor.

The teacher descended upon the exams, sank his talons into their pages, ripped the answers to shreds, and then, perching in his chair, began to digest.

**implied metaphor:** A less direct metaphor.

John swelled and ruffled his plumage (versus John was a peacock)

**mixed metaphor:** The awkward, often silly use of more than one metaphor at a time. To be avoided!

The movie struck a spark that massaged the audience's conscience.

**dead metaphor:** A commonly used metaphor that has become over time part of ordinary language.

tying up loose ends, a submarine sandwich, a branch of government, and most clichés

# Why use metaphors?

- They enliven ordinary language.
- They are generous to readers and listeners; they encourage interpretation.
- They are more efficient and economical than ordinary language; they give maximum meaning with a minimum of words.
- They create new meanings; they allow you to write about feelings, thoughts, things, experiences, etc. for which there are no easy words; they are necessary.
- They are a sign of genius.

# Creative ways to use metaphors

as verbs

The news that ignited his face  
snuffed out her smile.

as adjectives and adverbs

Her carnivorous pencil carved up  
Susan's devotion.

as prepositional phrases

The doctor inspected the rash with a  
vulture's eye.

as appositives or modifiers

On the sidewalk was yesterday's paper,  
an ink-stained sponge

Scratching at the window with claws of pine, the  
wind wants in.

**Imogene Bolls, "Coyote Wind"**

What a thrill--my thumb instead of an onion.  
The top quite gone except for a sort of hinge of  
skin...A celebration this is. Out of a gap a million  
soldiers run, redcoats every one.

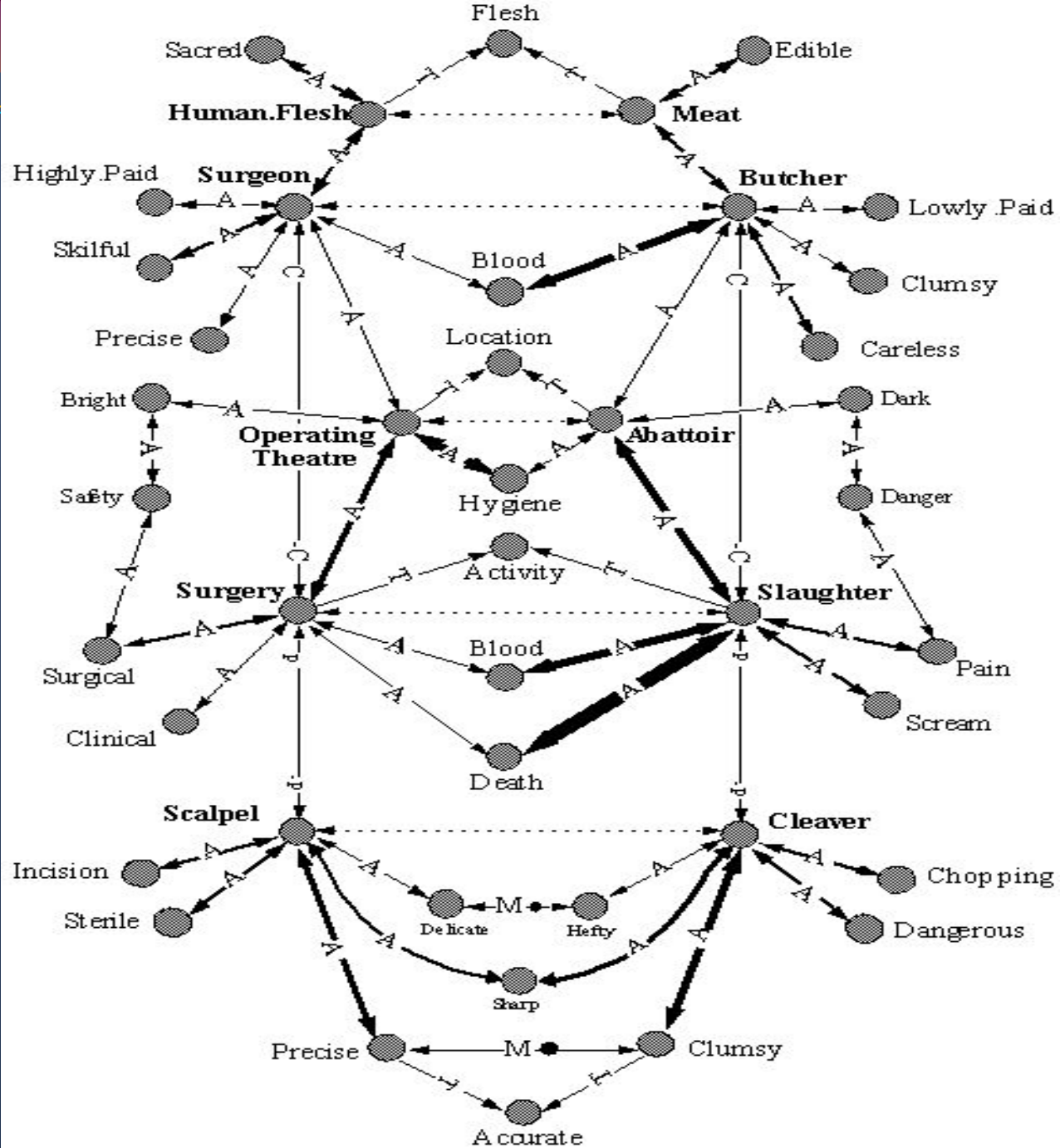
**Sylvia Plath, "Cut"**

The clouds were low and hairy in the skies, like  
locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes.

**Robert Frost, "Once by the Pacific"**

Little boys lie still, awake wondering, wondering  
delicate little boxes of dust.

**James Wright, "The Undermining of  
the Defense Economy"**



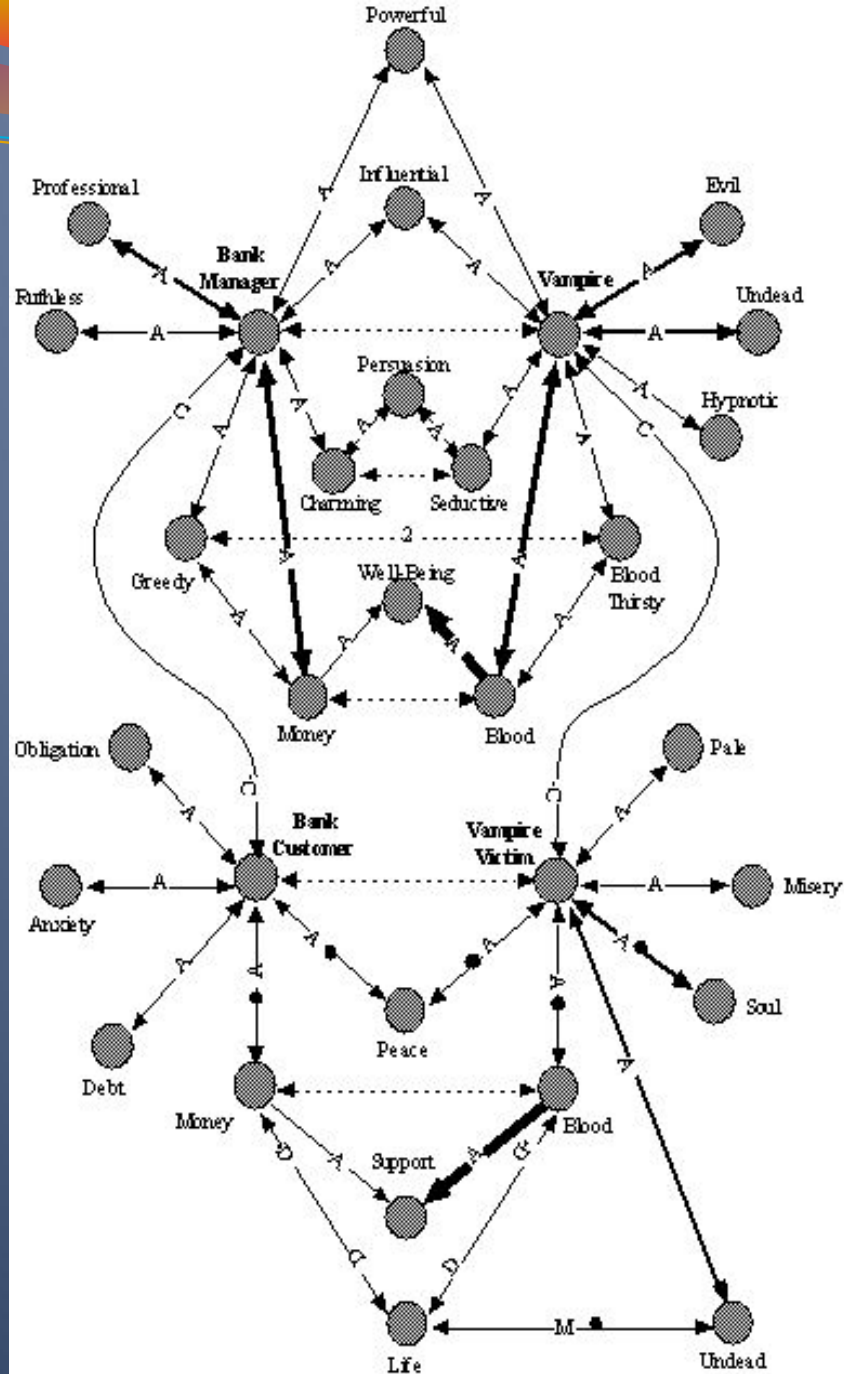
**Surgeons are Butchers**

**Speaker Ground** (unhappy with his bank manager): Bankers are powerful, influential and blood-thirsty people, which act in an evil, cruel fashion, seducing customers with loans and then sucking the life (blood) from them. Bankers, like vampires, often bring misery and death (financial) to their customers.

**Listener Ground** (reasonably happy with his bank manager): Bankers, like vampires, are powerful, influential and charming people, which often grant loans but expect more money in return. This expectation is often considered greedy and ruthless.

**Conversational Ground:** Bankers, like vampires, are powerful and influential. They are blood-thirsty inasmuch as they can be greedy, suck blood inasmuch as they take money (i.e., financial life-blood), seductive inasmuch as they can be charming, and cruel inasmuch as they can be ruthless.

**Imparted Ground:** Bankers are cruel, evil, seductive blood-suckers and bringers of misery and ruin.



**Bank Managers are Vampires**

# KINDS OF METAPHOR

- If a metaphor involves likeness between inanimate and animate objects, we deal with *personification*, as in "the face of London", or "the pain of the ocean".
- Metaphor, as all other SDs, is *fresh, original, genuine*, when first used, and *trite, hackneyed, stale* when often repeated. In the latter case it gradually loses its expressiveness becoming just another entry in the dictionary, as in the "*leg of a table*" or the "*sunrise*", thus serving a very important source of enriching the vocabulary of the language.
- Metaphor can be expressed by **all** notional parts of speech, and functions in the sentence as any of its members.
- When the speaker (writer) in his desire to present an elaborated image does not limit its creation to a single metaphor but offers a group of them, each supplying another feature of the described phenomenon, this cluster creates a *sustained (prolonged) metaphor*.

# Personification and allegory

Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human

**Objects:** The lights blinked in the distance

The moon is a harsh mistress

Your computer hates me

**Concepts:** Time marches on

It is not nice to fool Mother Nature

**Animals:** The birds expressed their joy

The groundhog hovered indecisively

# Allegory

- Allegory – a story which represents an idea or belief, is a form of extended metaphor, in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative, are equated with the meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. The underlying meaning has moral, social, religious, or political significance, and characters are often personifications of abstract ideas as charity, greed, or envy. Thus an allegory is a story with two meanings, a literal meaning and a symbolic meaning (Aesop Fables)



# Everyday metaphors

Everyday speech also provides many examples of metaphoric expressions.

*Barbie doll* (a US slang for an empty-headed but sexually attractive young woman),

*basket case* (a nervous wreck or someone who is mentally incapacitated; patients in mental hospitals are often taught basket-weaving skills),

*culture vulture* (a person who is excessively and indiscriminately interested in the arts),

*Egghead* (an intellectual),

*a good egg or a bad egg* (a nice person or a dubious character),

*Faceless man* (a person who is not known to the public, but who uses power behind the scenes),

*headshrink or headshrinker* (humorous and informal expression for a psychoanalyst or a psychiatrist, now shortened to shrink),

*shrinking violet* (humorous and informal word for a person who lacks self-confidence, a shy person),

*Muckrakers* (the name given to US investigative journalists and writers using excessive sensationalism at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century),

*yellow journalism* (the methods of the muckracking press), etc.

*She's got her claws into him, ...he messed up with a bad egg, ...their relationship bit the dust, ...she pulled wool around his eyes.*

Specific **functions** are achieved by metaphors used in newspapers. The following metaphoric expressions were abstracted from political commentaries:

...political parties have **learnt their lesson**..., ... the government decided **behind the closed door**...,

...Europeans looking forward to their new money..., ...there were few members of Congress without **skeleton in their closets**...,

... young generation heading for **the promised land**..., ...their recent campaign has come to nothing...,

...local directors **keeping them in dark**...,

...Clinton doesn't seem to notice he is **playing with fire** here.

# Examples for analysis

- Dear Nature is our kindest Mother (Byron) – **attributive** m.
- In the slanting beams that streamed through the open window the dust danced and was golden (O.Wilde) – **verbal** m.
- The leaves fell sorrowfully – **adverbial** m.
- Ray of hope, a storm of indignation, a flight of fancy, flood of tears, shadow of a smile – **hackneyed, trite** metaphor
- Mr. Pickwick bottled up his vengeance and corked it down..Mr Dombey's cup of satisfaction was so full at this moment, however, that he felt he could afford a drop or two of its contents even to sprinkle on the dust in the by=path of his little daughter (Dickens). – **sustained** m.

# Metonymy- substitution

- A metonymy involves **substitution** of one by another or the **association** of one thing with another which often occurs with or near it.
- Metonymy is based on a different type of relationship between the dictionary and contextual logical meanings, a relationship based on some kind of association connecting the two concepts which the meanings present
- For example, the word *crow*n can stand for a king or queen, *cup or glass* for the drink it contains, *woolsack* for the Chancellor of the Exchequer who sits on it, or the position and dignity of the Lord Chancellor

# Lexical metonymy

- Mauser
- Maxim
- Levy's
- Mackintosh,
- hooligan,
- ohm,
- ampere,
- watt,
- volt

# Relationships metonymy is based on

1. *A concrete thing is used instead of an abstract notion.*

- ‘The camp, the pulpit and the law For rich men’s sons and free.’ (P. B. Shelley)

2. *The container instead of the thing contained:*

- ‘The hall applauded.’ ‘He drank two glasses and left.’ ‘I managed just a cup.’

3. *The relation of proximity:*

- ‘The ballroom was glittering and happy.’ ‘The city was horrified and scared to death!’

4. *The material instead of the thing made :*

- ‘The gold was stolen.’ ‘The iron is hot.’ ‘He was taken away in irons.’

5. *The instrument which the doer uses in performing the action instead of the action or the doer himself:*

- ‘Well, Mr. Weller, says the gentleman, you’re a very good whip and can do what you like with your horses, we know.’ (Dickens)

# Synecdochy (Greek “take up with something else”) as a special case of metonymy

- Five main types of synecdochy
- 1. pars pro toto: **Ukraine** mourns dead from *Lviv air show. Tell us what happened. We're all **ears**!* Could you give me **a hand** with this heavy table?
- 2. totum pro parte
- 3. species pro genere
- 4. genus pro specie
- 5. singularis pro plurari

# Synecdoche

It involves the substitution of a **part for the whole, or the whole for a part.**

- *Washington and London (= USA and UK) agree on most issues; He was followed into the room by a pair of heavy boots (= by a man in heavy boots); cf. the Russian: "Да, да", ответили рыжие панталоны (Чехов). In a similar way, the word crown (to fight for the crown) may denote "the royal power/the king"; the word colours in the phrase to defend the colours of a school denotes the organization itself.*

**'John had gone into the room and drank the only bottle of Coke that I had'**



# Sentences for analysis

- She was too fond of a bottle. The press, the bench, from the cradle to the grave.
- They came in. Two of them, a man with long fair moustache and a silent dark man. Definitely the moustache and I had nothing in common.
- And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places.
- Bell, book and candle shall not drive me back.
- The pen is mightier than the sword.
- As the sword is the worst argument that can be used, so should it be the last.
- There was something very agreeable in being so intimate with such a waistcoat, in being on such off-hand terms with such a pair of whiskers...
- The camp, the pulpit and the law for rich men's sons are free
- The hall applauded. The round game table was happy. The marble spoke...

# Irony - opposition

- The essence of irony consists in the foregrounding not of the logical but of the evaluative meaning. The context is arranged so that the qualifying word in irony reverses the direction of the evaluation, and the word positively charged is understood as a negative qualification and vice versa.
- Irony thus is a stylistic device in which the contextual evaluative meaning of a word is directly opposite to its dictionary meaning, an indirect naming of a phenomenon
- in which the meaning is shifted towards the opposite pole
- J. Steinbeck's "She turned with the sweet smile of an alligator,"

# UT clip about irony



- Irony is a stylistic device also based on the simultaneous realization of two logical meanings, dictionary and contextual, but the two meanings stand in opposition to each other, for example:
- “It must be delightful to find oneself in a foreign country without a penny in one’s pocket.”
- Irony can be considered as an extreme case of a metaphor, however, metaphor is based on the relation of homonymy while irony is based on antonymy - *verbal irony*
- *Sustained* type of irony is formed by the contradiction of the speaker's (writer's) considerations and the generally accepted moral and ethical codes

# Examples of irony

- I like the parliamentary debate
- Particularly when it is not too late
- I like a beefsteak, as well as any;
- Have no objections to a pot of beer.
- I like the weather when it is not too rainy –
- that is I like two months of every year
- (Byron)

**Irony:** expression of something which is contrary to the intended meaning; the words say one thing but mean another.

\*Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honourable man. Shakespeare, Julius Caesar

**Metaphor:** implied comparison achieved through a figurative use of words; the word is used not in its literal sense, but in one analogous to it.

\*Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage. Shakespeare, Macbeth

\*From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent. W. Churchill

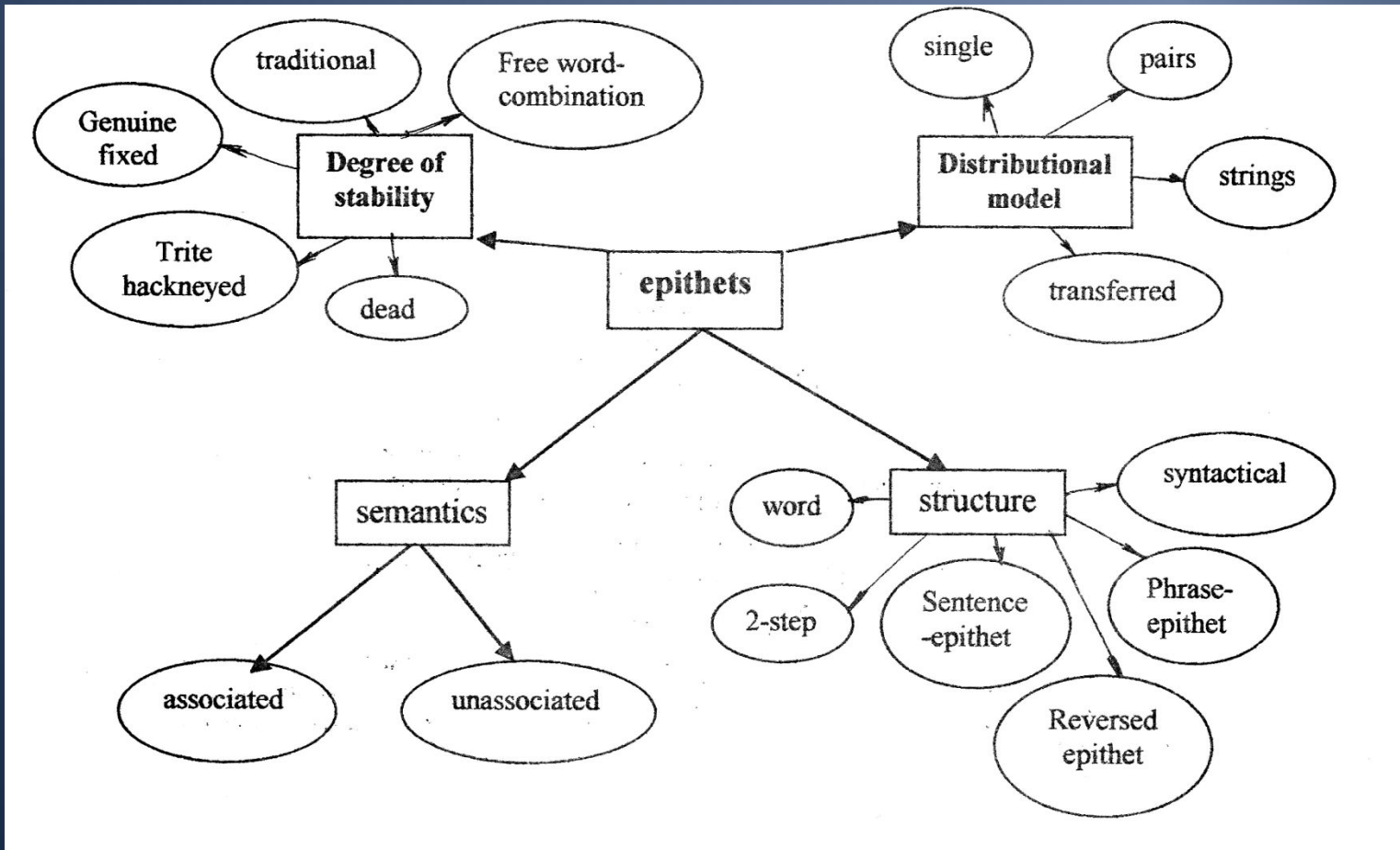
**Metonymy:** substitution of one word for another which it suggests.

\*He is a man of the cloth

\*The pen is mightier than the sword.

\*By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread

# SDs based on interrelation between denotational and emotional meanings: epithet, oxymoron



# Definition

- The epithet is a stylistic device based on the interplay of emotive and logical meaning in an attributive word, phrase and even sentence, used to characterise an object and pointing out to the reader some of the properties or features of the object
- Epithet expresses characteristics of an object, both existing and imaginary. Its basic feature is its emotiveness and subjectivity: the characteristic attached to the object to qualify it is always chosen by the speaker himself.
- Through long and repeated use epithets become *fixed* (*dead, traditional, trite, hackneyed*). Many fixed epithets are closely connected with folklore and can be traced back to folk ballads (e.g. "true love", "merry Christmas", etc.)



# Semantic groups

- *affective* (or *emotive proper*) *epithets*. These epithets serve to convey the emotional evaluation of the object by the speaker. Most of the qualifying words found in the dictionary can be and are used as affective epithets (e.g. "gorgeous", "nasty", "magnificent", "atrocious", etc.).
- *figurative*, or *transferred*, *epithets* - is formed of metaphors, metonymies and similes expressed by adjectives. E.g. "the smiling sun", "the frowning cloud", "the sleepless pillow", "the tobacco-stained smile", "a ghost-like face", "a dream-like experience".
- Associated: fantastic terrors, careful attention
- Unassociated: bootless cries sullen earth, voiceless sands

# Structural (distributional) types

- Epithets are used singly, in pairs, in chains, in two-step structures, and in inverted constructions, also as phrase-attributes. All previously given examples demonstrated **single epithets**. **Pairs** are represented by two epithets joined by a conjunction or asyndetically as in "wonderful and incomparable beauty" or "a tired old town". **Chains** (also called **strings**) of epithets present a group of homogeneous attributes varying in number from three up to sometimes twenty and even more. E.g. "You're a scolding, unjust, abusive, aggravating, bad old creature."
- **Two-step epithets** - the process of qualifying passes two stages: the qualification of the object and the qualification of the qualification itself, as in "an unnaturally mild day", or "a pompously majestic female".

# More structural types

- *Phrase-epithets* always produce an original impression :  
"the sunshine-in-the-breakfast-room smell", or "a  
move-if-you-dare expression", *a little man with a  
Say-nothing-to-me, or — I'll- contradict- you  
expression on his face*
- *inverted (syntactical, reversed) epithets* - based on the  
contradiction between the logical and the syntactical:  
logically defining becomes syntactically defined and vice  
versa. E.g. instead of "this devilish woman", W. Thackeray  
says "*this devil of a woman*", "*the giant of a man*" (a  
gigantic man), "*the toy of a girl*" (a small, toylike girl), "*the  
kitten of a woman*" (a kittenlike woman), *Just a ghost of a  
smile appeared on his face; she is a doll of a baby.*

# What kind of epithet?

- *O dreamy, gloomy, friendly trees! Rich, full, high alcohol wines*
- *my true love; a sweet heart; the green wood; a dark forest; brave cavaliers; merry old England*
- *The brute of a boy, the shadow of a smile, the devil of a job, the pig of a boy*
- *Do-it-yourself attitude; mystery-making, come-hither-but go-away-again-because-butter-wouldn't-melt-in-my-mouth expression of Gioconda*
- *Desperate core of rattling hearts, pioneering appropriation of masculine tailoring*

# Oxymoron

- *Oxymoron* is a stylistic device the syntactic and semantic structures of which come to clashes. It combines, in one phrase, two words (usually: noun + adjective) whose meanings are opposite and incompatible:
- *a living corpse; sweet sorrow; a nice rascal; awfully (terribly) nice; a deafening silence; a low skyscraper.*
- little big man, the poorest millionaire, sweet sorrow, nice rascal, pleasantly ugly face, horribly beautiful, deafening silence, poor little rich girl, unpleasant pleasure, adult children, blind eye, buried alive, agree to disagree, a little pregnant



# Interjections and exclamations

- Interjections – words we use when we express our feelings strongly. They exist in the language as conventional symbols of human emotions.
- **Wow! Oops! Auch! Aha! Yummy! Ugh! Yucky! Tut,tut!**
- Byron “Don Juan”:  
All present life is but an interjection  
An “oh” or “ah” of joy or misery  
Or a “ha, ha” or “bah’ – a yawn of “pooh”  
Of which perhaps the latter is most true
- Exclamations – are the words that may retain some logical meaning, though suppressed by emotive one.  
**Heavens! God! Good gracious! Look out! Bless me! Come on! Dear! Fine! Boy! Terrible! Man! Splendid!**

# SD based on interrelation between nominative and logical meanings: **antonomasia**

- **Antonomasia** is a lexical SD in which a proper name is used instead of a common noun or vice versa
- 1 type: Th. Dreiser : "**He took little satisfaction in telling each Mary something....**" *He is the Napoleon of crime* (= a genius in crime as great as Napoleon was in wars); *You are a real Cicero*
- 2 type: when a common noun serves as an individualizing name: "**There are three doctors in an illness like yours. Dr. Rest, Dr. Diet and Dr. Fresh Air.**" *Mister Know-all; Miss Toady, Miss Sharp* (W.Thackeray); *Mr. Murdstone* (Ch.Dickens)
- **Society is now one polished horde, formed of two mighty tribes, the Bores and the Bored.**" (G. G. Byron)



# 3 groups of semasiological SDs

- 1. The interaction of different types of lexical meaning.
  - a) dictionary and contextual (metaphor, metonymy, irony);
  - b) primary and derivative (zeugma and pun);
  - c) logical and emotive (epithet, oxymoron);
  - d) logical and nominative (autonomasia);
- 2. Intensification of a feature (simile, hyperbole, periphrasis).
- Peculiar use of set expressions (cliches, proverbs, epigram, quotations).

## SDs based on interaction of primary and derivative meanings (zeugma and pun)

- **Zeugma** is the use of a word in the same grammatical but different semantic relations to two adjacent words in the context, the semantic relations being on the one hand literal, and on the other, transferred.
- e. g. *Dora, plunged at once into privileged intimacy and into the middle of the room.*
- *Moira in the bar was dispensing champagne and bright laughs in copious quantities,...*
- *“Mr. Well’s hair, manner, and eyes were all out of control,...”*
- *Let’s have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives’ heels. (Shakespeare)*

# PUN

- The **pun** is a S.D. based on the interaction of two well known meanings of a word or a phrase. The pun is often used in advertising slogans, headlines, catch-phrases, jokes

e.g.- Did you miss my lecture ?

□ Not at all.

Seven days without water make one weak.

“Bow to the board,” said Bumble. Oliver brushed away two or three tears that were lingering in his eyes; and seeing no board but the table, fortunately bowed to that. (Ch. Dickens)

“New cheese for the cheeseboard.” (A slogan advertising new cheese for the *cheese bored*.)

“My dog is a champion boxer.” (A saying based on homophony of the word *boxer*: a breed or a fighter.)

“Prince of Wails.” (The title of an article about Prince of Wales.)

“Bald ambitions.” (The title of an article about *bold* ambitions of a *bald* musician.)

“The Hole Truth.” (The title of an article about the pop group The Hole. The meaning of the word *whole* should be inferred.)

“Why is six afraid of seven? Because seven ate nine.”  
(A joke based on homophony: eight/ate.)

● Play on words may be based upon **polysemy and homonymy**:

● a) *Visitor, to a little boy:*

● *Is your mother engaged?*

● *Engaged ? She is already married;*

● b) *A young lady, weeping softly into her mother's lap:*

● *My husband just can't bear children!*

● *He needn't bear children, my dear. You shouldn't expect too much of your husband.*

● Play on words may be based upon **similarity of pronunciation**:

● *John said to Pete at dinner: "Carry on". But Pete never ate carrion.*

# SDs based on Intensification of a Feature

- **Periphrasis** is a round-about way of speaking used to name some object or phenomenon. Longer-phrase is used instead of a shorter one
- e. g. *The fair sex. My better half.*

Periphrases are divided into:

1. Logical - based on inherent properties of a thing.  
e. g. *Instrument of destruction (weapon), the subject of administration (President, king, prime minister).*
2. Figurative - based on imagery: metaphor, metonymy  
e. g. *To tie a knot - to get married; in disgrace of fortune - bad luck. Love = the most pardonable of human weaknesses. Money = root of all evil*

# SDs based on Intensification of a Feature

- **Euphemism** is a periphrasis used to avoid some unpleasant things, or taboo things.
- e. g. *To pass away - to die. To answer the call of nature*
- **Religious euphemisms:** *devil = the dickens, the deuce, old Nick; God = Lord, Almighty, Heaven, goodness.*
- **Moral euphemisms:** *to die = to be gone, to expire, to be no more, to depart, to decease, to go west, to join the majority, dead = departed, late; a whore = a woman of a certain type*
- **Medical euphemisms:** *lunatic asylum = mental hospital, idiots = mentally challenged, insane = person of unsound mind.*
- **Political euphemisms:** *starvation - undernourishment; revolution – unrest, poor people = less fortunate elements; absence of wages and salaries = delay in payment*

# Hyperbole

- **Hyperbole** is deliberate overstatement or exaggeration, the aim of which is to intensify one of the features of the object in question to such a degree as to show its utter absurdity
- e. g. *A thousand pardons, scared to death, immensely obliged. Mary was scared to death. Pete knows everybody in the town. Every single rascal tries to cheat the public here.*
- Hyperbole can be expressed by all notional parts of speech. The most typical cases of expression are: by pronouns (*all, every, everybody, everything*); by numerical nouns (*a million, a thousand*); by adverbs of time (*ever, never*).



# SDs based on Intensification of a Feature

*Meiosis* is a deliberate diminution of a certain quality of an object or phenomenon. This figure of quantity is opposite in meaning to hyperbole. Meiosis underlines insignificance of such qualities of objects and phenomena as their size, volume, distance, time, shape, etc. The domain of meiosis is colloquial speech.

*There was not a drop of water left in the bucket. It was a cat-size pony. August can do the job in a second. Their house is one minute from here. The guy is so disgusting! He is a real microbe. She was a pocket-size woman*

*Litotes* is a specific variant of meiosis. It is a combination of the negative particle "not" and a word with negative meaning or a negative prefix. *He is not without sense of humour. The mission was not impossible*

- 1. Christina's love is hungry: it swallows every penny Bert offers. 2. The empty shell of the Embassy frightened Philip. 3. Mary was a large dark moth, her wings lifted, ready to fly. 4. One more truck had passed by, full of moustaches and beards. 5. Rambos are necessary in Victoria's business. 6. Dance music was bellowing from the open door. 7. Dismal and rainy day emerged from the womb of the night. 8. Some remarkable pictures in the gallery: a Petrov-Vodkin, two Van Dycks and an Aivazovsky. 9. Edward's family is a couple of aunts a thousand years old. 10. It was not unwise to behave like that. 11. Jenny is the size of a peanut. 12. A spasm of high-voltage nervousness ran through Diana. 13. Don't move the tiniest part of an inch! 14. Every Caesar has his Brutus.