

# Hidden Meanings behind *Meat-specific Vocabulary* in the History of English



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## Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to illustrate and discuss selected changes of meaning of meat-related vocabulary items brought about by the mechanism known as foodsemy, in which the source domain derives from the riches of the conceptual macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS** (e.g. *pork, peach, bread*), and the target is the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**. The closeness and familiarity of food in our lives has given rise to various historical foodsemic metaphors during the evolution of English, most frequently in the colloquial register of the language, while the phenomenon may easily be observed in other natural languages. To this end, we intend to delve into figurative extensions of the original senses of words related to the category **FOODSTUFFS**. More specifically, we shall be dealing with a body of meat-related vocabulary, and the secondary senses they developed at certain points in the history of English.

## Key words

*foodstuffs, metaphor and metonymy, microcategory MEAT PRODUCTS, and macrocategory HUMAN BEING*

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## 1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, food is of major importance for every living creature, not only vital for their existence, but also food plays a crucial role when viewed from historical, cultural and social perspectives. As a significant component of our daily existence, it also has enormous influence on the shape of language. Recent analyses provide evidence that food-related vocabulary serves as the basis for numerous metaphorical/metonymic transfers, and the process in question is, in no way, restricted to the current use of English, but rather it characterises various stages of the development of its vocabulary stock.

The last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and – in particular – the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been marked by a particular rise in interest in the study of metaphor, which has become one of the main targets in linguistic research. In Polish tradition, this is particularly true of a group of Resovian academics, such as Kleparski (2002, 2008, 2012), Górecka-Smolińska (2009, 2015), Kiełtyka (2008, 2009, 2016), Cymbalista (2009) and Kudła (2009, 2016), who have developed a number of specific categories of meaning shift, such as zoosemy, plantosemy and foodsemy. The last category mentioned here has been investigated extensively by, among others, Kleparski (2002, 2008, 2012). Also Kudła (2009, 2016) has brought to the fore the research on ethnonymic metonymies and Cutierrez-Rivas (2011) has dealt with the notion of gender realised in food metaphor.

The goal set to this paper is to discuss several metaphorical/metonymic transfers of lexical items related primarily to the microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** that may be said to represent cases of historical shift to such human-related conceptual categories, as **FEMALE HUMAN BEING**, (e.g. *beef, burger*) **FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS** (e.g. *sandwich, beef*) **MALE PRIVATE PARTS** (e.g. *bacon, bacon bazooka*) and, finally the category of **SEXUALITY** (e.g. *beef, meat*). The English lexico-semantic inventory of meat-related metaphorization processes is difficult to determine with absolute precision, but all in all, one can speak of at least 35 documented cases of foodsemy that have shown up in the period from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which merely mirrors the material registered and evidenced in a variety of lexicographic works, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang*, *Green's Online Dictionary of Slang*, *Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, *Dictionary of Word Origin*, *The Diner's Dictionary*, *Word Origins*, *The Secret Histories of English Words from A to Z*, *Partridge's Dictionary of Slang* and *The Probert Encyclopaedia of Slang*.

## 2. Foodsemy and the macrocategory HUMAN BEING

The very term *foodsemy* was coined and introduced to metaphorical research by Kleparski (2008); however, the first analysis of the issue ventured by the author goes back to 1980s when various food-related transfers were discussed without being explicitly named. The nature of the mechanism is defined by Cymbalista and Kleparski (2013: 145) as figurative extension of food-related words onto various conceptual categories, most frequently **HUMAN BEING**, and the various subcategories that may be discerned within its scope, such as **FEMALE HUMAN BEING**, **FEMALE/MALE PRIVATE PARTS** and **SEXUALITY**. For the multitude of cases that have been subject to linguistic investigation in order to account for metaphorical extensions affecting the conceptual macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS**, the model of analysis proposed by Kleparski (1997, 2008) will be implemented. In short, it is based on general tenets of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in that it employs the general concept of mappings occurring between the source and target domains, together with the formulation and phrasing of possible paths/schemes of development, but, what is crucial for the analysis, it makes use of other elements, such as **CONCEPTUAL DOMAINS** (CD) and attributes that stand for experiential elements. In the implemented convention, capital letters are employed to signal names of conceptual attributes (e.g. **YOUNG**), bold capitals indicate names of conceptual domains (e.g. the **DOMAIN OF AGE** [...]) and conceptual categories (e.g. **FOODSTUFFS**).

One may say that such conceptual dimensions as, among others, **TASTE**, **SMELL**, **SHAPE** or **SIZE** are involved in the possible paths of semantic change from the **DOMAIN OF TASTE** [...], **DOMAIN OF SMELL** [...], **DOMAIN OF SHAPE** [...] and the **DOMAIN OF SIZE** [...] from the macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS** to the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**. At the same time, one observes that in the case of foodsemic transfers certain resemblance paths or, as termed by Sornig (1981), conceptual bridges, seem to trigger metaphorical shifts in which food items, with their various qualities and characteristics, related to taste, shape, size and/or colour are translated metaphorically onto diverse qualities of human beings. For instance, the parameters based on the **DOMAIN OF SHAPE** [...] and the **DOMAIN OF**

**SIZE** [...] with such attributive values as [ROUND] and [BIG] may be said to be responsible for the sense transfer of lexical items *grapefruits, melons, pumpkins* and *watermelon* that can stand for large female breasts. Additionally, the attributive value [SWEET] is perceived as positive in the rise of metaphorical shifts of such lexical items as *honey* which acquired the metaphorical sense ‘a beloved person’. Similarly, further instances of panchronically viewed transfers related to the sphere of the target macrocategory **ATTRACTIVE FEMALE HUMAN BEING** include the set of sweet food item names, such as *biscuit, bun, cake, cherry pie, cookie, cupcake, sweet meat, cream puff, cheesecake, cupcake, hot gingerbread, sugar-pie* and *jam*. All of them, at one point of the history of English started to be used for an attractive female human being, and they are all linked to the **DOMAIN OF TASTE** [...] and, in particular measure, the value [SWEET]. One may generalize and say that numerous foodsemic developments related to the conceptual category **ATTRACTIVE FEMALE HUMAN BEING** are based on the possible metaphorical schema phrased here as <SWEETNESS IS PERCEIVED AS POSITIVE>. Yet, here the **DOMAIN OF TASTE** [...] and the **DOMAIN OF PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS/APPEARANCE** [...] seem to form the most relevant bridge between the original and metaphorical senses. Additionally, there are also cases, including *bun, cherry pie, cookie, cupcake* and *sweet-meat*, which are linked to the attributive value [YOUNG] of the **DOMAIN OF AGE** [...] as the last five vocabulary items acquired the secondary sense ‘attractive young female/girl’.

### 2.1. The microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** in focus

The lexical items linked to the conceptual category **MEAT PRODUCTS** have been frequently affected by figurative extensions of various nature, and hence constitute challenging material for linguistic analysis. According to Kiełtyka (2016, 200), “one of the most intriguing aspects of foodsemy [...] is the prominence of meat products in the rise of metaphorical senses”. From the extralinguistic point of view let us stress that – since meat is obtained from animal flesh – whenever one employs meat terminology to refer to people, one makes use of the general conceptual metaphor <HUMAN BEING (OF A KIND) IS ANIMAL (FLESH)>. It has been shown by, among others, Kleparski (2012) that the list of vocabulary items primarily semantically related to the microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** is quantitatively significant (see, for example, *Random House Word Menu* and *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*). All in all, the two subcategories, namely **MEAT AND CUTS OF MEAT** and **SAUSAGE AND PÂTE** as stated in Glazier’s (1997) *Random House Word Menu* are linked to more than one hundred words used in reference to various meat types and meat products. Interestingly enough, 51% of elements listed in the former category developed a secondary sense/senses, while as far as the latter one is concerned 36% of the given vocabulary items acquired metaphorical/metonymic extensions. Consequently, **MEAT AND CUTS OF MEAT** is one of the categories that are the richest in variously conditioned figurative transfers. Out of 63 vocabulary items related to some kind of meat listed by Glazier (1997), words such as *meat, bacon, beef, brisket, burger, butt, chitterlings, chop, cold cut, corned beef, cutlet, goat, ham, hamburger, hock, jerky, joint, kid, kidney, lamb, liver, marrow, mutton, pork, ribs, roast, steak, tripe* and *veal* have been prone and subject to foodsemic developments. Here, we shall highlight a number of representative transfers of lexical items related to general meat types, such as *beef, mutton, pork, veal* and a few meat products including *bacon, chop* and *hamburger*.

To start at the top, let us focus on the very word *meat*, the meaning of which, according to *The Diner's Dictionary* is 'the flesh of animals used as food', developed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Interestingly, Anglo-Saxon *mete* used to refer to food in general, and the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* enumerates two related historical senses, that is 'food, as nourishment for people and fodder for animals', and the other one being 'a kind of food; an article of food, a dish, a drink'. The source provides the following Middle English illustrative material for the former sense 1222 *Ne sculen 3e nawiht zimstones leggen Swinen to mete*, > c1450 *Pi mete schal be mylk, hony, & wiyne* and for the latter 1340 *A god huet we hedde guod wyn yesteneuen and guode metes* > c1520 *Of all metis in the worlde that be By this lyght I loue best drynke*.

Diachronic lexicographic data shows that from the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century a novel meaning, that is 'the flesh of animals used as food, esp. excluding fish and sometimes poultry, and usually in contrast to the bones and other inedible parts' started to establish itself in English. The OED provides the earliest possible quotation dating back to the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century *Ilc man... Heued and fet and in rew mete Lesen fro ðe bones*, and eten. However, the original sense of meat by no means disappeared completely from the system of English vocabulary and its traces are visible in various quotations from the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century: 1578 *These kindes of lillies are neither used in meate nor medicine* > 1623 *Meate of the Gods, Ambrosia, Manna*.

As far as metaphorical extensions of the lexical item *meat* are concerned, they made their first appearance during the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and *Green's Dictionary of Slang* enumerates two sense-threads of the noun. Chronologically, these are a 'woman's body as an object of sexual pleasure' illustrated in the following quotation: 1515 *And from thens to the halfe strete, To get us there some freshe mete. Why, is there any store of rawe motton? Ye, in Faythe*, 1590 *Why how now Scull quoth hee? will no worse meat go downe with you then my wife?* > 2013 *Drag the meat back to your magazine's snazzy tent, club it into submission with pumping house music and have your way*, and 'the penis' as in: 1564 *The baker he did cram the cockes / with bread well baked for y' nonce / and she her mealy mouth well stoppes / w'h pleasinge meate quite free from bones* > 2017 *We caught you staring at our meat while we took a piss*. Somewhat later, at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the sense 'vagina' appeared, which may be testified by a number of historical quotations, such as 1654 *The Streams of Concupiscence so in her floate, / That many a Water-man rows in her Meate* > 1998 *Meat shots', 'Hamburger shots' in the jargon of the world of home-made pornography and contact magazines*.

The given, so to speak, corporally-oriented extensions were followed by the rise of the negatively loaded sense 'prey, a potential victim' and, especially in American English, 'a corpse, a wounded person' as testified in the following lexicographic material: 1845 *I knoed he were my meat without an accident* > 2012 *Then Bill got his eyes on me. He rolled them once or twice [...] New meat, Fred? Who's the new meat?* Finally, the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was also the time of the rise of yet one more female-related sense, that is 'a prostitute' as in 1844 *Almost every house in the street is a bawdyken, and a decent bit of prize meat may be got at, at a reasonable price*.

Kleparski (2012) distinguishes several modern senses of *meat*, such as 'a sexual partner', the sense that gave rise to further sense-threads, such as the senses encoded by the compounds

*meat market* and *meat rack* used in reference to bars for singles, where one can find someone for sexual ‘consumption’. Additionally, other secondary compounded formations as *fresh meat*, *hot meat* and *raw meat* have acquired the sense ‘a prostitute’ and ‘the vagina’. Kleparski (2012), points to the fact that meat-related words follow the path of semantic evolution that may be patterned as <SEXUAL USE OF A PERSON IS CONSUMPTION OF MEAT>.

## 2.2. HUMAN BEING on the hit-list of meat products

Historically speaking, the oldest cases of foodsemic transfers in English, apart from *meat*, are *bacon*, *mutton* and *beef*. Thus, the lexical item *bacon* started to be used in 14<sup>th</sup> century English with reference to a human being and human flesh, in most general terms. As we have seen, at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, *meat* started to be used in reference to a woman and her body viewed as sources of sexual pleasure. During the course of the same century, *mutton* and *beef* developed similar metaphorical senses. Specifically, the former acquired the sense ‘a promiscuous woman’, and the latter started to be used in the sense ‘vagina’.

It is fairly obvious that foodsemic metaphors provide euphemistic tools that help one avoid taboo terms connected with moral issues and sexuality, and, as such, they serve as replacement means that serve as more acceptable means of conveying the sense intended, e.g. *biscuit*, *chicken* and *peach* convey the negatively loaded senses ‘immoral woman’ and ‘a prostitute’. Likewise, *bun*, *bread* and *pie* may be euphemistically employed in reference to female private parts.

One is justified in claiming that the conceptualization of meat is in various intricate ways strictly connected with the body, corporality, sexuality and all that may go with it. In what follows, we shall define and divide the scope of the data, and the type of foodsemic extensions affecting the names of kinds of meat and products, which fall into four main categories, namely **ATTRACTIVE FEMALE HUMAN BEING**, **IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING**, **FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS** and **MALE PRIVATE PARTS**. We shall begin with the lexical items that witnessed female-specific shifts, as both women and their bodies are most frequently viewed from a metaphorical perspective as food ready for consumption (by men). In this context, let us point to Cutierrez-Rivas (2011) who claims that in the metaphors of consumption women are usually eaten, if not devoured, rather than consume food themselves, because they are perceived as mere products that are there at the disposal of men, to be consumed, enjoyed or ignored and discarded.

Ideally, an analysis of foodsemic developments related to the macrocategory **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** would involve dividing the macrocategory into several conceptual subcategories including, among others, **ATTRACTIVE FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and **IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING**. Lexical items, such as *burger*, *ham* and *pork chop*, that are related through metaphorical links to the former subcategory, developed the historically attested sense ‘a very attractive young woman’ at some point of their semantic evolution in English. Also, the words that are related to the latter conceptual category, that is *beef*, *meat*, *mutton* and *laced mutton*, developed the secondary sense ‘a prostitute’. The noun *pork* may be proved to be employed in reference to a woman, viewed as a sexual object. Conceptually, as women tend to be perceived through the prism of their bodies, many lexical items related to the subcategory **FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS**, such as (*vertical*) *bacon sandwich*, *beef*, *beef curtains*, *fur burger*, *meat*, *a bit of meat*, *mutton*, *pork*



and *badly wrapped kebab* developed via some kind of metonymy another female-specific sense 'female private parts, the vagina'.

The conceptual image of a woman mirrored in the existing metaphors is in no way homogenous. Yet, one observes that the number of figurative changes that result in the rise of metaphorical sense echoing the feature of ATTRACTIVENESS is relatively low, and the most productive and general path of development operative here is <SWEETNESS IS PERCEIVED AS POSITIVE>. Finally, meat-based foodsemic extensions are oftentimes linked to sexuality, and therefore the two conceptual subcategories, that is **IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and **FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS**, are rich as far as foodsemic transfers are concerned. One may speak here of two major paths of development, namely, <IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING IS PERCEIVED AS MEAT/A KIND OF MEAT> and <FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS MEAT/A KIND OF MEAT>.

Although, one gets the impression that it is the woman and her body that are frequently pictured as a food to be 'consumed', the same holds true for the microcategory **MALE PRIVATE PARTS**, that is linked to a great number of lexical items, and what is more the number of metaphorical and metonymic transfers found here definitely outnumbers the body of female-specific extensions. However, female-related semantic alterations may be said to be more varied and have developed links to a large number of conceptual categories. Interestingly, the body of transfers linked to the microcategory **MALE PRIVATE PARTS** is quantitatively most interesting because as many as 30 lexical items have developed secondary senses, and this number includes a certain number of compounds (see, for example *bacon*, *bacon bazooka*, *beef*, *beef bayonet*, *beef torpedo*, *meat*, *meat axe*, *mutton*, *mutton bayonet*, *mutton gun*, *mutton tail*, *pork*, *pork grinder*, *meatballs*). All the lexical items listed above developed the secondary metaphorical sense 'penis' at a certain stage of their semantic evolution in English. Additionally, the list given here may be supplemented with the example of mixed-bag type transfers that is *meat and two veg(etable)* (meat + vegetable) that conveys the sense 'penis and testicles' and the compound *meatballs* (meat + round inanimate object) used in reference to testicles. Here, one may postulate the existence of the pattern that may be phrased as <MALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A MEAT KIND/MEAT PRODUCT>.

One could venture the claim that the abundance of meat-based transfers has been conditioned by various human associations of meat and meat products with physical strength, vitality, vigour and general fitness. Especially, we observe that there are a number of cases of complex nouns semantically characterized by the presence of those elements that are directly associated with physical power, violence and warfare, such as *bazooka* (in *bacon bazooka*), *bayonet* (in *beef bayonet*, *mutton bayonet*), *axe* (*meat axe*), *dagger* (*mutton dagger*), *grinder* (*pork grinder*), *gun* (*mutton gun*), *knife* (*butter knife*), *musket* (*mutton musket*), *torpedo* (*beef torpedo*), *skewer* (*meat skewer*) and *sword* (*pork sword*). In the above cases, different kinds of weapons are clearly associated with masculinity and dominance and, therefore, the metaphorical/metonymic path followed here is <MALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A KIND OF WEAPON>. What is more, the weapons listed here are rod-shaped and, so to speak, are on the hard side, being made of steel and similar materials, and their deployment involves a thrusting movement, which certainly mirrors certain male sexual associations. All these elements form a kind of bridge for the associations with the penis and penetration.

Male and female private parts are conceptually phrased, quite often, as meat and meat products. Consequently, there is a link between the conceptual domains **FOODSTUFFS** and **SEXUALITY**, between eating and sexuality as, generally speaking, sexuality and sexual desire is often understood as appetite or hunger. Certain food items bear strong associations with sexuality, not only those which are treated as aphrodisiacs. Here, one may propose the most general patterns of development <THE OBJECT OF SEXUAL DESIRE IS PERCEIVED AS A FOODSTUFF> and <HAVING SEX IS EATING>. Since meat and meat products are associated with the body, flesh, physical strength and vigour, they are 'a natural' tool for language users to articulate certain notions connected with the most basic elements of human life, including procreation. Consequently, meat-related vocabulary items *beef*, *beef injection*, *meat injection* and *pork* developed the sense 'sexual intercourse/the act of penetration by the penis' as presented in the following current English illustrative material: *Maybe her old man ain't givin' her enough beef at night; Queen – A female of fluid moral habits who takes [...] beef injections; Their defining pro-pleasure dissertation is '(I Wanna) Meat Injection,' on which they avow that they'd swap Rudolph Valentino and Tom Cruise for a 'meat injection' from 'someone sweet, who can keep an erection'; There was much more to getting yourself than being an honest Joe. That crap rarely counted for anything when it came to pork time.* Additionally, except for the variety of nominal developments, one may enumerate verbs and verbal expressions that are used in the sense 'to have sexual intercourse', including *to make bacon*, *to pork*, *to hawk one's mutton* and *to hide salami*. One is tempted to generalize and say that the meat-related secondary extensions, both metaphors and metonymies, occupy a special position in the conceptualization of sexual organs and sexual activities and are strong images connected with generally understood sexuality.

However, apart from the picturesque images of meat and physicality, there are several metaphorical extensions of meat-related vocabulary items traceable within the subcategories APPEARANCE, NATIONALITY and MENTAL CAPACITIES. In the cases of *meatball* and *hamburger* one may speak of pejorative developments encoding features that characterise human beings. As far as *meatball* in American English is concerned, it may stand for a short and fat person, either a woman or a man. Similarly, and much along similar conceptual lines and patterns, Spanish *albondiga* 'meatball' and Polish *pulpet* 'a kind of meatball' may be used in the sense 'fat, obese person'. In all these cases, the main trigger in the path of evaluative development and the concept of obesity is realized by the presence and activation of attributive features/elements, such as SHAPE: [ROUND] and SIZE: [LARGE] operative within the **DOMAIN OF SHAPE** [...] and the **DOMAIN OF SIZE** [...]. However, the vocabulary item in question, may also be used in reference to a person of Italian origin. Stereotypically, Italians are viewed from the perspective of their popular dishes. In this case, one can formulate the metonymic path <FOODSTUFF FOR NATION>, namely <MEATBALLS FOR ITALIANS>. *GODS* provides the following illustrative material: 1968 *Didn't I tell you to stay with that meatball and get him to work?* > 2011 *I don't like Mr Cardone [...] Treats me like a child, that meatball.*

Quite frequently, the changes discussed here are – at the same time, and yet on different levels – cases of pejorative foodsemic transfers that involve and encode negative evaluative features that on various down-to-earth occasions characterize human beings,

their appearance, but also mental capacities, as in the case of *meatball* and *hamburger*. The former may be used to stand for a person who is far from wise and lacks what is known as common sense, as documented in the illustrative quotations from *Green's Online Dictionary of Slang* 1922 *Meatball: Dumb but happy*; 1947 *He wasn't such a meatball that he couldn't find a way to get around Vince's reluctance to declare a dividend* > 2024 *You stop with that kid stuff or I'm going to start calling you Meatball*.

Similarly, Am.E. *hamburger* (also *hamburgerhead*) can be used in reference to an individual treated as stupid and worthless, as visible in the following quotations: 1955 *He had been pulling all this stuff for years and getting away with it, which just shows what a grand and glorious country of opportunity for hamburgerheads we got* > 1993 *Why don't you hamburgers try and set some sort of record for your class*. In order to encode the trigger behind the evaluative developments of *meatball* and *hamburger* one may make use of the presence of negative elements within the **DOMAIN OF MENTAL CAPACITIES** [...], such as [LACK OF COMMON SENSE], [LACK OF WISDOM] and [STUPIDITY]. Interestingly enough, the two cases of foodsemic extensions may be treated as instances of the *linguistic wammel syndrome*. Kleparski (2012) provides this label for those foodsemic transfers of food-related vocabulary items that serve as names for those foodstuffs the content of which is either difficult or impossible to determine. The author claims that human mentality tends to work in such a way that treats everything that is new, unknown and undetermined as alien and negative. Quite frequently, we “tend to fork and poke suspiciously any dish the internal composition of which is hard to determine by the system of human senses” (Kleparski 2012, 44-45).

Hence, such attributive elements as [UNKNOWN] and [UNDETERMINABLE] may justifiably be linked to such negatively charged qualities as [UNACCEPTABLE] or [DISAGREEABLE] and, consequently, it is possible to formulate the schema <UNKNOWN/UNDETERMINABLE IS PERCEIVED AS NEGATIVE> responsible for the indicated transfers.

### 2.3. Meat-specific transfers as a case of metaphonymy

We have also found evidence, albeit partial and in need of further research, that justifies the proposal made by Goosens (1990), who introduced the notion *metapho-nymy*, which may be defined as the process in which metaphor and metonymy interact in some intricate way. One gets the impression that it is not a matter of differences of perception between the two sexes, but rather one should speak of a more universal association of meat products and sexuality regardless of the sex distinction. There are other lexical items that acquired more than one figurative sense, in the rise of which one is justified to speak of the working of the process termed here as metaphonymy. For instance, at some point of their semantic evolution, the lexical items *meat*, *mutton*, *pork*, *beef* and *bacon* developed more than one secondary sense thread, the former of which is of metaphorical nature, and the rise of the latter was conditioned by the operation of metonymy. In these cases one is justified to speak of metonymy within metaphor. In other words, lexical items that at some point of their history are linked to the macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS**, develop, via metaphor, a sense related directly to the macrocategory **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and, simultaneously, or at some later stage, via the process of metonymy they become historically linked to the microcategory **FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS**, and here, the metonymic pattern <FEMALE BODY PART FOR PERSON> is clearly at work.



Yet another pattern that emerges from the history of the lexical item *beef* is that the historically earlier sense ‘the vagina’, resulted from the operation of the metaphor <FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A FOOD ITEM>. Within the course of sense evolution discussed here, one may also speak of the rise of another figurative female-specific sense conditioned by the operation of metonymy that may be patterned as <FEMALE BODY PART FOR PERSON>. Note that this deeply rooted physicality of food metaphors and food metonymies may be further exemplified by the path of development of other *meat*-related words, such as *beef*, *beef injection*, *meat injection*, *pork* that acquired the sense ‘sexual intercourse’, and *to make bacon*, *to pork* and *to hide salami* that came to be used in the sense ‘to have sexual intercourse’.

Judging from the entirety of factual material discussed and signalled here, one may speak of some sort of task-directed metonymic chains, such as first of all, <FEMALE BODY PART FOR A PERSON>, here most often narrowed to its subcategory <FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS FOR FEMALE HUMAN BEING>, that may, in turn have led to new transfers within the microcategory <SEXUAL INTERCOURSE>, on the basis of the pattern <BODY ORGANS FOR ACTION EFFECTED WITH IT>. Let us merely add that in the case of verbal representations, one may speak of a pattern of metonymic development <OBJECT FOR ACTION>.

### 3. Conclusion

In spite of over two decades that have elapsed since the start of the *Rzeszów School of Diachronic Semantics* the problems of such metaphoric transfers as zoosemy, foodsemy and the broadly understood evaluative transfers still occupy the minds of several members of this much specialized academic circle. Here, we have attempted to throw some light on the mechanism of selected metaphorical and metonymic extensions of the lexical items that are conceptually primarily related to the category **MEAT PRODUCTS**. Although one may hardly speak of any hard-and-fast rules for any lexico-semantic system that have been formulated, or may be in the future, the mechanisms that we may have thrown some light upon are not thought to be entirely random. Earlier, certain paths and tendencies in the semantic evolution of lexical items were formulated by, among others, Schreuder (1929), Stern (1931) and Kleparski (1990). Here, an attempt has been made to provide yet another piece of evidence that figurative extensions affecting words related to meat types and meat products frequently relate both historically and synchronically (hence panchronically) to such conceptual target categories as **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and **MALE/FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS**.

We hope to have thrown some light on the nature of the rise of euphemistic tools used to refer to female and male private parts, or more generally, human sexuality, but also the extralinguistic conditions that lie behind the rise of pejoratively loaded senses that encode negative evaluative attributes, such as immorality and behavioural looseness. More generally, most conceptual metaphors are part of an unconscious cognitive effort, and the results of this effort are frequently transferred to other related operations on other semantically-related lexical items. Hence, novel metaphorical language makes use of the existing patterns, and may be said to be a type of reapplication of certain definite patterns existing in purely extralinguistic reality. In most general terms, the foodsemic transfers

discussed here may be justifiably viewed as ones that follow a number of easily definable paths/patterns of semantic evolution, such as for example: <IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING IS PERCEIVED AS A KIND OF MEAT/ MEAT PRODUCT>, <FEMALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A KIND OF MEAT/ MEAT PRODUCT>, <MALE PRIVATE PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A KIND OF MEAT/ MEAT PRODUCT> and <SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IS PERCEIVED AS CONSUMPTION OF MEAT/MEAT PRODUCT>.

The data analysed in this work justifies the claim that the majority of lexical items related to the microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** have developed a number of secondary figurative senses through the process of metaphor, metonymy and metaphonymy. It is the task of future research to bring to light other characteristic particulars of foodsemic transfers that are certainly there for us to discover.

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