A View of Novel Metaphor in the Light of Recanati's Proposals[*]

Esther Romero and Belén Soria

In his most recent work to our knowledge *Literal Meaning*, Francois Recanati wrote:

> I want to argue for contextualism. According to contextualism, the contrast between what the speaker means and what she literally says is illusory, and the notion of 'what a sentence says' incoherent. What is said (the truth-conditional content of the utterance) is nothing but an aspect of speaker's meaning. That is not to deny that there is a legitimate contrast to be drawn between what the speaker says and what he or she merely implies. Both, however, belong to the realm of 'speaker's meaning' and are pragmatic through and through. (2003: 7).

In the present paper, we show our agreement with Recanati's defence of contextualism, that is, with his defence of what is said as part of speaker's meaning, and we will make it clear that we find his work an important step forward in the discussion about what is said. Indeed, we find his description of the participation of primary pragmatic processes in what is said a great improvement. In particular, we agree with his defence of metaphor as involving a primary pragmatic process.

Recanati deals with metaphor only in a tangential way, he accounts for it just to include it in the description of what is said, but he does not develop a full description of the metaphoric phenomenon. Most of his writings lack any kind of engagement so as to state accurately the kind of phenomenon metaphor is. Furthermore, in the various occasions in which he speaks about metaphor he takes different positions which are not fully consistent with each other.

In Recanati's *Literal Meaning*, metaphor involves loosening,[1] and in Recanati's 1993 and 1995 metaphor is concerned with transfer. In this paper, we are going to side with Recanati's 1993 and 1995 to argue that novel metaphor is a case of transfer, although we are not going to belittle some correct intuitions included in the idea that metaphor involves loosening. But, as Recanati's works are not very explicit about how metaphor is identified and interpreted, we will detail the criteria for the identification and interpretation of metaphor. By doing this, we will argue that novel metaphor is a case of transfer of meaning that depends on a context-shift of the metaphoric utterance, prompted by the identification of a metaphoric use of language. This is defended by using an extended notion of context-shifting in order to include metaphor as one type of

context-shift, in particular, a type of language-shift required by the process of transfer involved in metaphor. But before explaining this, we will expound Recanati's proposals on metaphor and state our degree of agreement with them.

1. Recanati's proposals on metaphor

The notion of what is said constitutes the most important contribution of Recanati's proposal about meaning. What is said has to do with the truth conditions of an utterance, with its truth-conditional content. When the sentence-meaning included in the utterance cannot determine this content, we must introduce a number of pragmatic processes which play a role in the very constitution of what is said: the primary pragmatic processes (from now on *p-processes*). P-processes operate locally and, in this respect, they contrast with the secondary pragmatic processes, which presuppose that something has been said. Not only saturation (and sense selection) but also optional processes such as free enrichment, loosening and semantic transfer are p-processes recognized by Recanati in his latest work. Optional processes take us from the *literal meaning* of some constituent (the meaning that is linguistically encoded, or that which results from saturating the linguistically encoded meaning) to a *derived meaning* which may be richer, poorer, or involve some kind of transfer. For such processes to take place, we needn't antecedently compute what is said.

Loosening and transfer are the two p-processes that Recanati uses to explain how metaphor works. These two explanations share the refusal of the view of metaphor as implicature. When the speaker produces a metaphoric utterance he says something metaphorically. This is one of the reasons to consider, as Recanati does, that the difference between what the speaker means and what he literally says is illusory. Not always what is said must be said literally.

1.1 Metaphor is not a case of conversational implicature

As we have said, among the different positions on metaphor proposed by Recanati, there is one which is kept throughout, the claim that the proposition expressed by a metaphor is only achieved when some local p-process is involved. This proposal is in opposition to the view of metaphor as requiring any kind of secondary process for its interpretation, that is, the view of metaphor as implicature (Grice 1989). Resorting to

the gricean distinction between what the speaker literally *says* and what he *implicates*, it could be said that by uttering (1)

(1) The sky is crying

the speaker literally says that the sky is crying, something he believes to be false. Thus, the speaker is flouting the first maxim of quality of the cooperative principle, "do not say what you believe to be false", although what the speaker implicates with (1), that it is raining, reestablishes the situation and serves to show that his behaviour is cooperative. The speaker has just made as if to say that the sky is crying to convey the implicated meaning.

Recanati (1987) indicates two closely related problems to this explanation. The first is how it is possible to determine what the speaker implicates, how we can derive that it is raining from an utterance of (1). For Recanati (1987: 228), the implicature made by the speaker is that whose performance reconciles the utterance with the apparently flouted conversational maxim. The flouting of the first maxim of quality could be made apparent by determining the implicature so that the cooperative principle would be followed. If this is so, the second problem appears: there would be no way of calculating the implicature that it is raining, since there is no proposition that when added to what is said with (1), the false proposition that the sky is crying, makes the cooperative principle be followed. To conciliate the utterance with the maxim, it must be supposed that the implicature is not added to what is said. When a trope is involved, if the hearer wants to maintain the presumption that the speaker observes the conversational maxims, he must refrain from the presumption that he observes the principle of literalness, according to which what the speaker means is in agreement with the literal meaning of the sentence uttered. In this case, what literally said is only evoked, thus, the maxims are not really violated and, it is not necessary to suppose that the speaker has implicated anything in order to maintain the cooperative principle. Along these lines, Recanati considers metaphor as a use of language that affects what is said, although what is said does not follow the literalness principle.[2]

This criticism, however, is not conclusive. Indeed, if we bear the gricean notion of implicature in mind, we can say that in uttering a metaphor we make *as if to say p* in order to implicate *q*. In the figurative use of language what the speaker means is only what he implicates. And what the speaker means is characterized as an implicature

because when the speaker makes as if to say *p*, he says nothing and directly flouts the maxim of quantity, maxim that is repaired by the implicature.

We do not know if Recanati is aware of this possible rejoinder of the implicature theorist, what we do know is that in 1995 he attacks the theory of the non-literal as implicature again. Recanati (1995: 208) says that the view of metaphor as implicature is still accepted because its theorists have an apriori philosophical argument in favour of it. This sounds as follows: Given the asymmetric dependence of non-literal meaning on literal meaning, the meaning conveyed by an expression is "nonliteral" only if it is derived from some literal meaning which must be processed for the former to be accessed. Cases in which the alleged non-literal meaning can be accessed directly are cases where the non-literal meaning has become conventionalized.

But this argument is not conclusive for Recanati because the asymmetric dependence that non-literal meaning has on literal meaning not only can be explained resorting to the asymmetric dependence of an implicature with respect to what is literally said, the asymmetric dependence can also be explained at a subpropositional level. Indeed, Recanati argues that his subpropositional interpretation of asymmetric dependence is the right one because without it we cannot account for some types of examples, examples in which we must compute the non-literal interpretation in order to compute the proposition literally said. Let's consider (2)

(2)[A is at home. Her only daughter, who is a two-year-old girl, is playing with a woolen ball on the mat. B, a good friend of A, enters the room, asks A where her daughter is, and, A answers:] My cat is on the mat.

In (2), part of 'My cat' is used non-literally. If we understand that in this expression there is a relation between the cat and the speaker, we must determine what the relation is. But, to do this, first we have to determine the reference of these descriptions. To know what the cat refers to, we have to construct its non-literal meaning and then it is possible to saturate the relation between the metaphoric cat and the speaker. The optional process of metaphor is previous to the mandatory one of saturation.

This argument would not be conclusive for the implicature theorist because he could explain example (2) arguing that what the speaker makes as if to say is that the only cat of the speaker is on the only mat of his house, and he makes as if to say this because it is obvious by the context that he does not have any cat. What causes the

requirement of the non-literal interpretation to be previous to saturation is the referential use of the definite description included in (2), but this referential use must be understood as a case of implicature. Recanati's argument depends on the defence of the referential use of the definite description in what is said with which the theoreticians of metaphor as implicature do not have to commit themselves.

By contrast, in our opinion, the argument against the theory of metaphor as implicature becomes really conclusive when we point out that the speaker cannot make as if to say something literally in all non-literal utterances. Can we make as if to say something literally by uttering (1)? As far as the notion of trope as implicature is concerned, a speaker implicates q when he makes as if to say p. But we could argue that literally the speaker has not made as if to say any proposition at all with a normal (in the absence of special circumstances) utterance of (1) because the normal utterance of (1) cannot be interpreted literally, as far as our linguistic competence is concerned. It shows that "to cry" is the type of action that requires, for example, eyes, which the sky lacks. The normal utterance of (1) cannot fix literally expressed truth conditions. Since (1) cannot fix a literal content, it cannot be a literally false utterance. There is no situation literally represented by a metaphoric utterance of (1) and, if there is no situation literally represented, there is nothing that can be true and nothing that can be false. As there is no truth-conditional content literally expressed, nothing is said and, thus, it will be difficult for us to explain the asymmetric dependence of metaphoric meaning as an asymmetry between the implicature and what is literally said by a metaphor.

1.2 The primary pragmatic process involved in what is metaphorically said: loosening or transfer

Accepted that what is said by metaphoric utterances is metaphorically said and that a p-process is involved in metaphoric interpretation, we are going to consider Recanati's characterization of what type of p-process is involved in metaphoric interpretation. In this respect two p-processes are relevant: transfer and loosening. Although the former is previous, we will expound first his most recent position because we will partially depart from his view of metaphor as loosening and we will back the less recent one, that of metaphor as transfer.

In his *Literal Meaning*, we read

Through the interaction between the context-independent meanings of our words and the particulars of the situation talked about, contextualised, modulated senses emerge, appropriate to the situation at hand. The meaning of a word can thus be made contextually more specific, or it may, on the contrary, be loosened and suitably extended, as in metaphor. It may also undergo 'semantic transfer', etc. (Recanati 2003: 142)

Metaphoric interpretation is explained by means of one type of modulation, it requires the p-process of loosening.

Loosening is the converse of enrichment and there is loosening whenever a condition of application packed into the concept literally expressed by a predicate is contextually dropped so that the application of the predicate is widened. Thus, as far as Recanati (2003) is concerned, in (3)

(3) The ATM swallowed my credit card

we relax the conditions of application for 'swallow' and construct an ad hoc concept with wider application. In this way, not only living organisms but also ATMs can swallow. Knowing the linguistic meaning of 'swallow', and knowing what sometimes happens with ATMs, the hearer unreflectively constructs the sense in which the ATM can be said to 'swallow' the card by adjusting the meaning of the word to the situation talked about.

This way of explaining how a metaphor works is inappropriate for several reasons. The most important reason is that if (3) is a metaphor, it is a conventional metaphor, and if a conventional metaphor requires some p-process in order to be interpreted, the p-process involved is not loosening but just sense selection (Romero and Soria 1998). As far as we are concerned, 'swallow' is a polysemous word, there is an array of senses of the expression 'swallow' which "reflects conventionalised patterns of modulation" (Recanati 2003: 146) and one of them is selected for the occasion. It might have gone under a process of metaphoric modulation some time ago, but now we do not have to apply a process of loosening every time we have to interpret an utterance of (3), we will just have to select one of the normal modulated meanings stored (by previous experience and world knowledge) in our conceptual system, one of "the conventionalised patterns of modulation". But if now it is normal for ATMs to 'swallow', then when we interpret (3) we do not have to drop part of the meaning of this

word. Should some metaphor be interpreted resorting to loosening, conventional metaphor is not the sort of candidate requiring this interpretation process. The idea of loosening, if it is right, can only explain how the figurative meaning of 'swallow' that intervenes in (3) was originally modulated.

Not all the examples of metaphor are cases of the so-called "conventional metaphor". An example of genuine metaphor, of a special use of language which, as Recanati (2003: 88-89) would say, goes beyond the threshold and whose non-literal character cannot be ignored[3] is (4)

(4) [A and B are at the seaside talking about the wrong appearance of the sea as imperturbable and even if looked at from a distance, when in fact there are so many living creatures inside. A, who is reading *Hamlet*, says:] That apparently imperturbable sea is the English character and English literature is a flying fish.

We can say that (4) is a case of novel metaphor. In this example, we note that, as English literature is not the sort of thing that can be included in the semantic potential of 'flying fish', the overall interpretation of (4) is likely to involve some process of non-literal interpretation for 'flying fish' if 'English literature' literally applies to a type of literature (Recanati 1995, 2003: 47). A process of loosening, typical of metaphor, is involved in the interpretation of (4). From Recanati's line of reasoning, we learn that there is a criterion of identification of metaphor reflected in the claim that English literature is not the sort of thing that can be included in the semantic combinatorial potential of 'flying fish'; we detect an abnormality. The problem with this criterion is that we detect that 'the ham sandwich' is not the sort of thing that can leave without paying in 'The ham sandwich left without paying' and a normal utterance of this sentence is not identified as a metaphor but as a metonymy.[4]

But let us continue with (4) which is identified as a metaphor and is an example very different from (3), (4) does not seem to be a case of conventional metaphor. But, how do we interpret (4)? As a metaphor, the p-process needed is loosening, Recanati would say. So, we merely have to drop the conditions of application packed into the concept literally expressed by 'flying fish' so that this application should be widened. We construct an ad hoc concept with wider application, and less information. But, if loosening produces the ad hoc concept, up to what point do we have to stop loosening? We can say that by this task one selects only the properties that are literally applied to

the target, to the English literature. 'Flying fish' can be interpreted metaphorically in the sense of 'something that rises over something else'. But, can we understand this property literally in order to say something about English literature? It is likely that the task of reducing the concept to properties that are applied literally to the target leads us to a loss of the whole concept.

We think that when we interpret a metaphor we construct, at least, an ad hoc concept for the metaphoric vehicle, for the terms metaphorically attributed to what we are talking about. It is true that we select some properties of the normal concept and forget others and, in this sense, we can admit loosening. But this process of loosening cannot be done selecting the properties of the concept related to the metaphoric vehicle that can be attributed literally to the target because there are no such literal properties which can be applied to the target. We decide what part of the concept can be attributed to the target of the utterance, because this part will be able to change its meaning and be applied to the target. Metaphor does not only reduce the information of the concept represented by the metaphoric vehicle, but also changes the information associated with the remaining part so that it will fit with the target. Thus, we construct an ad hoc concept with a different application and not with a wider application.

When we use metaphorically 'flying fish' in (4) we are not interested in applying this predicate to the normal thing that it is usually applied to. In its metaphoric sense, this predicate is not applied to animate beings that live in water. The normal meaning of 'flying fish' is substituted by another meaning which involves not only the loss of part of the meaning of the expression 'flying fish' but also the change of the remaining meaning of this expression, this change is produced as a result of the reconceptualization of the concept we are talking about, English character.[5]

There are some weaknesses in Recanati's proposal of metaphor as loosening. Among them, we can note the following: (i) how do we know that the metaphoric ad hoc concept is constructed metaphorically and not metonymically if, in Recanati's writings, these mechanisms are applied to utterances that are identified in the same way? and (ii) if we construct an ad hoc concept for the term used metaphorically in a metaphoric utterance reducing its conditions of applicability, how do we know what conditions may be lost if the remaining conditions cannot be literally applied to the target concept anyway? English literature cannot literally rise over something. The solution of the last problem entails, as we indicated at the beginning, the understanding of metaphor as a case of transfer.

In Recanati (1993: 263), metaphor is considered, like metonymy, as a case of transfer. This proposal seems to be kept in 1995, though not explicitly stated in any of the two cases. In 1995, Recanati refers to metaphoric and metonymic interpretations as cases of contextual non-literal processes[6]. The contextual non-literal interpretation refers to the process whereby a semantic value distinct from the literal one is contextually assigned to an expression or a constituent of the uttered sentence, that is, refers to transfer. Transfer in 1993 is characterized as an interpretation process by which we can map an already available constituent into another one which replaces it (Recanati 1993: 263).

What triggers the local process of metaphoric transfer, as far as this author is concerned, is a change of accessibility produced by the interpretation of the constituents that are around the transferred term. Thus, in (5),

(5) The city is asleep

the activation of the literal interpretation of the noun phrase 'the city' triggers the local process of the metaphoric transfer of 'is asleep'. The literal interpretation of 'is asleep' was more accessible than that of its metaphoric interpretation, ('quiet and showing little activity'); but the metaphoric interpretation becomes more accessible as a result of interpreting the noun phrase literally. Yet, how do we know that 'quiet and showing little activity' is the transferred meaning of 'is asleep'? How do we determine its correct interpretation, the transferred meaning to which we magically have access? The description of metaphoric interpretation should include the specification of how a metaphoric transferred meaning is produced, and his approach also lacks such an explanation.

2. Context-shifting and what is said in metaphoric utterances

The solution to one of the problems of the proposal of metaphor as loosening, as we indicated at the beginning, entails the understanding of metaphor as a case of transfer. Nevertheless, Recanati's proposal on transfer is not totally articulated. We would need a criterion that permits us to distinguish metaphor from other uses of language in which a contextual abnormality is involved, and afterwards we would also need to specify how the metaphoric transfer is produced. In this respect, we will defend

that the key to metaphoric interpretation can be explained resorting to another proposal by Recanati, to wit, that of context-shifting.

2.1 A brief account on Context-shifting

We normally interpret utterances with respect to the context, *k,* in which they take place. But not always it is appropriate for us to interpret them with respect to that context, on certain occasions we have to interpret them with respect to a context *k'* distinct from the context in which it is actually uttered. Context-shifting, from *k* to *k',* is a p-process and can be produced in several different ways, according to what aspect of context is shifted (Recanati 2001). If we represent a context, following Lewis (1980), as consisting of three parameters, a language, a situation, and a circumstance of evaluation, a context can be shifted by modifying one of these parameters. A context *k* is therefore analysed as a triple *<L, s, c>* where *L* is a language, *s* is a situation of utterance comprising a number of parameters corresponding to the situation of utterance (speaker, hearer, time, place, etc.), and *c* a circumstance of evaluation or a possible world.

There are examples of context-shifting which involve a situation-shift, a world-shift, or a language-shift, but we are going to concentrate only on a case of language-shift such as (6)

(6) [It is mutually known to the speaker and his addressee that Paul is wrong about the use of 'paper session' that he understands with the meaning of 'poster session'. The speaker says:] Paul says he's due to present his work in the 'paper session'.

In (6), the context-shift can be described by a language-shift because the speaker of (6) does not use the expression 'paper session' in its normal sense but in the sense that expression has in Paul's idiolect, where it means the same as 'poster session' in its normal sense. Paul makes a deviant use of the phrase 'paper session'. The expression within the quotation marks, in this example, is not used with its standard meaning and so (6) has truth-conditions that differ completely from the truth-conditions of the utterance of the sentence when it does not include a quoted expression. In this sense, (6) is a non-cumulative case of literal meaning.

2.2. Metaphoric interpretation and language-shifting

A type of transfer of meaning that depends on a context shift is induced by the metaphor itself. To accomplish the defense of this position, we will resort to some of our previous proposals, to wit, those in which we defend that a metaphor is identified when the speaker perceives a contextual abnormality and a conceptual contrast, and that, once the utterance is identified as metaphorical, the speaker applies, among other things, the metaphoric mechanism for its interpretation.[7]

This mechanism involves a special type of human ability which is not found in other processes, that is, it involves the analogical ability by which the interlocutors make a coherent partial mapping of a set of features from source domain to target domain to obtain a metaphorically restructured target domain. This mechanism affects the context from which we must interpret the utterance; in particular, it generates a new context of interpretation. This new context can be seen as a result of changing the parameter of language included in the actual context of utterance. When we identify a metaphoric use of language[8], we are prompted to change the meaning of some constituents of the sentence metaphorically used. But this is possible only if we also change the target concept from which we interpret the constituents of the sentence used.

Let us consider again the sentence included in the utterance (4), but now in the linguistic context where it is used by Foster. We reproduce it in (7).

(7)   We know what the sea looks like from a distance: it is of one color, and level, and obviously cannot contain such creatures as fish. But if we look into the sea over the edge of a boat, we see a dozen colors, and depth below depth, and fish swimming in them. That sea is the English character - apparently imperturbable and even. The depths and the colors are the English romanticism and the English sensitiveness - we do not expect to find such things, but they exist. And - to continue my metaphor - the fish are the English emotions, which are always trying to get to the surface, but don't quite know how. For the most part we see them moving far below, distorted and obscure. Now and then they succeed and we exclaim, 'Why, the Englishman has emotions! He actually can feel!' And occasionally we see that beautiful creature the flying fish, which rises out of the water altogether into the air and the sunlight. English literature is a flying fish. It is a sample of the life that goes on day after day beneath the surface; it is a proof that beauty and emotion exist in

the salt, inhospitable sea. (Example taken from Foster's *Abinger Harvest* and quoted in Helen Monfries, 1970: 1)

In this example we detect a metaphoric use of language. We identify (7) as metaphorical because it is abnormal to talk about the English character as the sort of thing that can be considered as the sea (in the normal sense of the term 'sea') and because there is a conceptual contrast between the concept ENGLISH CHARACTER, the target concept of this utterance, and the concept SEA, the source concept. The conceptual contrast permits us to distinguish metaphor from other uses of language such as metonymy.

Once the speaker has recognized that (7), in its actual extralinguistic and linguistic context, is a case of metaphor, he interprets it and, doing so is but applying the mechanism that characterizes this phenomenon, mechanism that entails the production of a new meaning at least for its metaphoric vehicles, if we want to represent some propositional content. In (7), the vehicles are the terms that are involved in the description of SEA, the meaning of 'sea' or of 'flying fish' must be modified in order to fit the topics English character and English literature respectively. We are not talking about a sea or about a fish in any of the normal senses of these terms.

The application of the metaphoric mechanism results in the elaboration of these new senses. The metaphoric mechanism consists in linking two separate cognitive domains, the source and the target domains, by using the language appropriate to the first as a lens through which to observe the second (Black 1954, Indurkhya 1992). When a metaphoric use of language is identified, we must establish the metaphoric restructuring or recategorization that is made by a partial mapping from source domain to target domain.

If we want to interpret (7), we have to restructure the concept ENGLISH CHARACTER through the concept SEA. The result of the metaphoric restructuring, the restructured target domain, provides us with a context of interpretation of the metaphoric utterance provisionally restructured for that occasion. The context of interpretation of (7), the metaphoric context, shows our conception of the English character provisionally modified by those aspects of the concept SEA that intervene in its restructuring. The English character has the features of an apparently imperturbable and even sea which are analogically transferable to the English character. As the context of interpretation from which the terms that are involved in a metaphoric utterance changes, the meanings associated with these terms change too. Some terms acquire a metaphoric provisional

meaning. The relation between the terms and the originated metaphoric meanings is not established or conventionalized.

The English character seen provisionally from the sea-life world provides a context of interpretation for a selected part of (7), (7a)

(7a) English literature is a flying fish

from which the term 'flying fish' changes its meaning and gets a provisional one that depends on the new relations that it establishes with other terms in the characterization of English literature as a feature of the English character. The concept ENGLISH LITERATURE is partially shaped by the concept FLYING FISH. The metaphoric utterance of (7a) is dependent on the wider conceptual metaphor THE ENGLISH CHARACTER IS THE SEA.

(7) is interpreted as a result of a context shift by which the expression 'sea' is not used in its normal sense; it is used abnormally to describe the metaphoric sea-like English character. The language-shift allows us to interpret the terms belonging to the source domain SEA as referring to concepts of the target domain. For example, when it is said that 'beauty and emotion exist in the salt, inhospitable sea' the expression 'sea' must be interpreted from the shifted context not as a mass of salt water but as the metaphoric English character.

Similarly, the speaker of (7a) does not use the word 'flying fish' in its normal sense because he is not speaking about a fish that has enlarged pectoral fins used for gliding above the surface of the salt water. He is talking about English literature and so in (7a) 'flying fish' stands for a metaphoric flying fish-like literature. We might think that this is a case of loosening because 'flying fish' has now relaxed its conditions of application and has lost part of its meaning to arrive at the following abridged literal semantic value: "something that rises over something else". But we find this rather objectionable because 'rise over' means something very different when it is attributed to a sea-life creature and when it is attributed to a manifestation of the English character. In addition, the expression 'English literature' changes its meaning too.

By the metaphoric interpretation, we achieve a propositional content which is yielded by subpropositional metaphoric provisional meanings not available in the linguistic competence of a linguistic community (understanding by linguistic competence the kind of implicit knowledge that a normal speaker of that language has about the normal semantic potential of linguistic expressions when uttered).

In the interpretation of (7a), we go from the primary semantic value of 'flying fish' to a transferred value interpreted from the shifted metaphoric context and which, for explanatory reasons, we can verbalize as: "the only aspect of the apparently imperturbable English character that rises over the rest and glides showing a beauty and dynamism incomparable to any other", and it is only the latter which forms a part of the global interpretation of the utterance. Indeed, what is said in an utterance of (7b)

(7b) English literature is something which rises over something else

if taken out of its metaphoric context, would not coincide with what is said in (7a).

(7a) would not be relevant if we had to apply a process to loose meaning and obtain (7b). By contrast, it is quite revealing and economic to use (7a) to convey the metaphoric value. The semantic value achieved in metaphoric interpretation is by no means a case of loosening. The application of the p-process involved in metaphoric interpretation does not consist in using just the core meaning of the expression 'flying fish' that can be literally applied to both English literature and flying fish. What this process achieves is an analogical transfer of meaning since the output is "a different concept all together, bearing a systematic relation to it" (Recanati 2003: 40).

Going back to our consideration of Recanati's example of context-shifting, example (6), we are now ready to indicate the parallelism and also the difference between cases such as (6) and cases of novel metaphor such as (7a). In our opinion, (6) and (7a) can both be explained as cases whose correct interpretation requires a p-process of context shift. Nevertheless, there is an important difference between them with respect to their truth conditions. The sentence uttered in (6), if taken out of the quotation, has truth conditions (although different from the truth conditions of this sentence when quoted). By contrast, in metaphor, if the sentence is uttered out of the metaphoric context, it might not have truth conditions at all as it is the case in (7a). The context-shift involved in metaphor shows that all metaphoric utterances are cases of non-cumulative uses of the literal meaning of constituents. Indeed, with respect to the metaphoric context, (7a) expresses the proposition that English literature is a flying fish. If the context-shift is not produced, (7a) expresses no proposition at all.

Here arises a new difference with respect to Recanati's view. If we understand that a p-process is mandatory when it is necessary for a propositional content to be present in the interpretation of an utterance (2003: 76), then the metaphoric transfer

achieved by a language-shift is not an optional p-process, it is but a mandatory one.[9] But this consequence, surely, is worse for the minimalist. If metaphoric transfer is a mandatory p-process, the minimal proposition expressed by a metaphoric utterance must be non-literal. Thus, we have to dismiss the notion of what is literally said as the point of departure of what is implicated in every utterance.

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Notes:

[1] Recanati follows relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986).

[2] The literalness principle is not mentioned in his subsequent works, but it is implicitly included in the acceptance of p-processes such as transfer, processes that do not allow what is said to be exactly what the sentence conventionally means.

[3] "One of the paradigm cases of nonliteral meaning is metaphor. Now metaphor, in its most central variety, counts as p-literal" (Recanati 2003: 88). This we find quite an astonishing remark: some metaphors have a nonliteral character but are interpreted p-literally. The nonliteral character of metaphor depends on the perception of the speaker but this does not have any consequence at the interpretative level.

[4] The abnormality as a criterion of identification can be applied both to metaphor and to metonymy (Romero and Soria 2002).

[5] As loosening is not the p-process that can explain how we interpret metaphor, it cannot explain the metaphoric origin of the figurative meaning of 'swallow' in (2). The conventional figurative meaning of 'swallow' in (2) is not merely a loss of meaning with respect to the original meaning of this term. This can be seen in (2) because, on the one hand, the meaning of 'swallow' is not only reduced, the change also affects the quality of the part of the meaning of this term that can be attributed to ATMs, and, on the other, this change also involves a change in the semantic potential of ATMs, the concept of ATM has changed as well since they can now swallow. In the metaphoric interpretation process we change the target schema, and so we do not construct an ad hoc concept with wider application, and less information, but we construct ad hoc concepts with different applications that replace the already available semantic values of the constituents of the metaphoric utterance.

[6] The linguistic resource used by Recanati to exemplify the contextual process of transfer is metonymy. This does not mean that we consider both metaphor and metonymy as phenomena whose interpretation requires a process of transfer. Metonymy or 'metonymical transfer', as we have argued (Romero and Soria, 2002), is not really a case of transfer; metonymy does not exploit a transferred meaning. Metonymy is a non-textual use of language in which there is at least one unarticulated sub-phrasal constituent. We would only consider metonymy as a case of transfer if we took the term 'transfer' in a different sense from its normal one to mean apparent transfer of syntactic function. We cannot see in what sense 'ham sandwich' in 'The ham sandwich left without paying' denotes, through transfer, the derived property 'hand sandwich orderer' instead of its linguistically encoded property. The expression 'the ham sandwich' keeps its ordinary meaning and refers to a sandwich. The metonymic use makes the hearer recover some non-explicit but required subpropositional and sub-phrasal element in order to have an accessible proposition, but once we recover what is unarticulated ('orderer') both terms ('orderer' and 'ham sandwich') refer to their respective normal meanings. We agree with the most recent Recanati when he considers that both metaphor and metonymy are different phenomena whose interpretations depend on different processes, although we do not agree with him in what type of processes are involved in each case.

[7] The metaphoric identification does not have to be conscious and neither does metaphoric interpretation. For a detailed argument on this see Romero and Soria (1997-98).

[8] If metaphor is a case of context-shift, it is not normally controlled by any representational operator, even though it coincides with the language-shift effected through the expression 'metaphorically'. The context-shift produced by the metaphoric interpretation is activated by the metaphoric identification: from the appreciation of an abnormality and a conceptual contrast one may conclude that the context from which we determine what is said is different from the normal one. The context-shift at issue is of the *free* variety because it is not controlled by any linguistic operator but by the conditions of metaphoric identification of that specific use of language.

[9] Recanati not always understands by 'mandatory' what is indicated in the text. In fact, in 2003 (p. 109) he also points out that a process is mandatory when it is required in virtue of a linguistic convention governing the use of a particular construction (or class of constructions). Obviously, following this definition, metaphoric transfer would not be mandatory since there is no need to consider lexical items as requiring a transferred meaning. This makes it manifest that Recanati has several criteria for 'mandatory' and that if some of his proposals change, his criteria would lead us to say that a pragmatic process is at the same time mandatory and not mandatory.