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Change of Meaning Behind *Meat*-Specific Words in the History of English

Abstract

The aim set to this paper is to discuss English food metaphors named and defined in Kleparski (2008) as cases of foodsemy. Here, we shall be dealing with meaning shifts of meat-related vocabulary items, in which the source domain derives from the riches of the conceptual macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS**, the target domain being the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**. To this end, we shall concentrate on a dozen of figurative extensions of the original senses of lexical items related to the category **MEAT PRODUCTS** and many other foodsemic shifts in this area will be employed as backup material or only mentioned in passing in relevant cases. As to the research material, we shall rely on the data derived from various dictionaries, including *The Oxford English Dictionary*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang Online*, *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, *The Diner's Dictionary* and other lexicographic sources. The model of analysis employed in this paper is that of Kleparski (1996, 1997) and further developed in later publications of the author. All in all, the enquiry attempted here is predominantly historical and the method is one of the versions of cognitive linguistics analysis, but there are also elements of sociolinguistics and cultural linguistics.

Keywords: metaphor, metonymy, foodsemic developments, **MEAT PRODUCTS** category, the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**

Introduction

The target of this paper is to analyse selected metaphorical and metonymic transfers of lexical items linked 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**¹ (*beef, burger, ham, meat, mutton, laced mutton, pork, pork chop, veal*), **FEMALE PRIVY PARTS** ((*vertical*) *bacon sandwich, beef, beef curtains, fur burger, meat, a bit of meat, mutton, pork, veal* and *badly wrapped kebab*), **MALE PRIVY PARTS** (*bacon, bacon bazooka, beef, beef bayonet, beef bugle, beef injection, beef steak, beef torpedo, beef tube, hot dog, meat, meat axe, meat horn, meat puppet, meat skewer, meat tool, meat whistle, meatballs, mutton, mutton bayonet, mutton dagger, mutton gun, mutton tail, pork, pork grinder, pork leg, pork roll, pork sword, salami, sausage, (love) steak* and *wenie/weeny/weiner/wiener/wienie/winni*) and, finally the category of **SEXUALITY** (*beef, meat* and *pork*). In the tradition of metaphorical studies a variety of authors penetrated other sectors of metaphorization processes, such as for example, Górecka-Smolińska and Kleparski (2019), who studied plantosemy, and Osuchowska and Kleparski (2012) who dealt extensively with the phenomenon of gustasemy.²

It goes without saying that food is of major importance for every living creature, not only vital for maintaining our earthly existence, being the fuel for continuation of life, but also food plays a crucial role when viewed from historical, cultural and social perspective. As a significant component of our daily existence, it has also enormous influence on the shape of language. Recent analysis, carried out by, among others, Kleparski (2008, 2012), López-Rodriguez (2014) and Kowalczyk (2017, 2019) provides ample evidence the 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 process is as old as English itself. Already at the oldest stages of the development of English the type of change discussed here was for all of us to see. Such lexical items as *beef, mutton, pork* and *veal* were introduced by the French-speaking Normans in order to deliver an alternative to the animal names used in reference to edible meat of domesticated animals. From this time on, these words began their semantic journey in English, which included the rise of multiple figurative extensions.

Foodsemy

The term *foodsemy* was introduced first by Kleparski (2008), and it is now used in literature on the subject to name those semantic alterations, both metaphor and metonymy, in which a lexical item linked originally to the macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS** comes to be employed in reference to objects signified by lexical items that are related to the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**, especially several of its subcategories, such as **FEMALE/MALE HUMAN BEING**, **FEMALE/MALE PRIVY PARTS** and **SEXUALITY**. In the proposed model of semantic analysis, Kleparski (1997) implements the basic metaphorical/metonymic paths based on general schemata of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but also the author elaborates on smaller

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- 1 Interestingly enough, the conceptual category **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** is far richer than the category **MALE HUMAN BEING** and one finds it difficult to trace cases of male-specific foodsemy transfers, except for the lexical items *beef* and *beefcake*. The nouns are used in reference to attractive and muscular man. *Beefcake* is thought to be based on the model similar to a female specific *cheesecake* “attractive female human being”.
 - 2 Let us stress that these are merely limitations of space that do not allow us to extend here our inquiry into other fields of foodsemy metaphorization processes which, panchronically speaking, is present in practically all natural languages of the world in various forms and manifestations.

units – attributive features forming various paths which enable the analyst to delve into the nature of figurative shifts based on metaphor and metonymy.

Obviously, in the case of foodsemic transfers certain resemblance paths or, as termed by (Sornig 1981) conceptual bridges, seem to trigger and to channel metaphorical shifts in which food items, with their various qualities, such as taste (SWEETNESS) and visual characteristics, such as (SIZE) come to stand for attributes of human beings. One may claim, to use cognitive terminology, that the process of transfer involves the projection of attributive features and values associated with members of the macrocategory **FOODSTUFFS** onto the macrocategory **HUMAN BEING**.

For instance, the value (SWEET) is perceived as positive in the rise of metaphorical transfers of such lexical items as *honey*, meaning not only “the sweet sticky substance produced by bees and used for food”, but also its metaphorical sense “a beloved person”. Similarly, the same attributive element may be said to be responsible for the emergence of figurative extensions of several lexical items, such as *cheesecake* which acquired the secondary sense “an attractive female”, and *cookie* which is used in reference to a woman, a girl, esp. an attractive and seductive one. However, the presence of the value (SWEET) does not automatically result in the rise of positively-loaded senses. Let us take the cases of *tart* and *tartlet* in which one may speak of pejorative shift as the two lexical items developed the senses “a female of immoral character” and “a young woman of immoral character”, respectively.

In general, foodsemic metaphors are frequently nothing else but euphemistic tools employed to avoid certain taboo terms connected with moral issues and sexuality, and, as such, they serve as substitutes that are more acceptable on various grounds, e.g. *biscuit*, *chicken* and *peach* convey the senses “an immoral woman” and “a prostitute”. Additionally, *bun*, *bread* and *pie* are used in reference to female privy parts, whereas *banana*, *carrot* and *cucumber* are employed to stand for male privy parts. In turn, lexical items, such as *cauliflower*, *jam*, *jelly roll* acquired, at one point of time, an extended sense ‘sexual intercourse’. The very same could be said about dysphemising potential of foodsemic transfers and the study carried out by, for example, Keith and Burridge (1991, 2006) and Duda (2014).

The Microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS**

The lexical items linked to the conceptual microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** have been frequently affected by figurative extensions of various nature, and hence constitute varied multilingual 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)>.

In selecting the data material for the analysis attempted here, we have been guided by the principles that are easy to define. First of all, the list of vocabulary items which are primarily semantically related to the microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** has been compiled on the basis of *Random House Word Menu* and *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*. Secondly, the decision on the question of edibility of a given food item, as relatable to various extralinguistic cultural factors, has been based on the list of food items given in the *Random House Word Menu*. All in all, the two subcategories **MEAT AND CUTS OF MEAT** and

SAUSAGE AND PÂTE are linked to more than one hundred words used in reference to various meat types and meat products. Further, the lexical material has been confronted with various dictionaries, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang Online*, *Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, *Urban Dictionary* and *Dictionary of Word Origins*, among others. Let us stress that due to obvious space limitations, we have restricted our attention to the transfer of words covering general meat types, such as *beef*, *mutton*, *pork*, *veal*, and a few meat products including *bacon*, *chop* and *hamburger*. Finally, the conclusion as to the main paths of semantic development of meat-related vocabulary are attempted.

To start with, let us focus on the very word *meat*³, the central meaning of which, according to *The Diner's Dictionary* is 'the flesh of animals used as food', developed in the 14th century. Interestingly, the Anglo-Saxon noun *mete* used to refer to food in general, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) enumerates two related 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 ze nawiht zimstones leggen Swinen to mete* > c1450 *Ți mete schal be mylk, hony, & wyn* 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*.

Judging on the basis of available lexicographic material, one may say that from the beginning of the 14th 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 quotation dating back to the first half of the 14th century: *Ilc man..Heued and fet and in rew mete Lesen fro de bones, and eten*. However, the original meaning of *meat* by no means disappeared completely from the lexico-semantic system of English, and its traces are visible in various quotations from the 16th and the 17th century: 1578 *These kindes of lillies are neither used in meate nor medicine* > 1623 *Meate of the Gods, Ambrosia, Manna*. In Modern English, the original sense is still traceable in such compounds as *bakemeat* used in the sense "pie", *milkmeat* "cheese and other dairy products", *mincemeat*⁴ standing for dried fruit mixed with species, suet, and often some sort of alcohol and *sweetmeat* "a sweet or other preserved or candied fruits, sugared nuts, etc.", as well as fixed expressions, such as *meat and drink* and *what's one man's meat is another man's poison*.

As far as the effects of metaphorical extension of *meat* are concerned, they made their first appearance during the course of the 16th century, and *Green's Dictionary of Slang* enumerates two main sense-threads. Chronologically, these are "woman's body as an object of sexual pleasure" and "the penis". Somewhat later, at the beginning of the 17th century, the sense "the vagina" appeared followed by the rise of the meaning "prey, a potential victim". Finally, the 19th century, was the time of the emergence of

3 Interestingly, Ayto (1990) draws up a fascinating history of the lexical item *meat*. The author states that, etymologically, its source may be traceable in Indo-European *mat/met* 'portion of food measured out' which, in turn, may be also said to lie at the basis of English *measure* as Old English *mete* broadened its meaning and evolved from "portion of food" to, generally speaking, "food".

4 What is more, one may speak of two separate threads of sense development here; the former linguistic (based on the semantic development of the *meat* itself) and the latter cultural one. Here, let me highlight the influence of an extralinguistic factor in the rise of the modern sense of *mincemeat*. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, people used to conserve and spice up meat with various dried fruit, salt and other species. As Ayto (1993) suggests, there could be a gradual reduction of meat component in mincemeat.

yet one more female-related sense, that is “a prostitute”, whereas the sense “a corpse, a wounded person” developed during the course of the 20th century.

Kleparski (2012) signals the presence of several modern senses of *meat*, such as “a sexual partner”, the sense that gave rise to many other formations, such as the ones 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, such as *fresh meat*, *hot meat* and *raw meat* have acquired the sense “a prostitute” and “the vagina”. Kleparski (2012), points out 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>.

Human-Oriented Extensions Related to the MEAT PRODUCTS Category

Other historically oldest cases of foodsemic transfers in the history of English involve the implementation of meat terms used metaphorically to refer to humans and the various qualities of their body and mind. For example, the lexical item *bacon* started to be used, in the 14th century English, with reference to human being and human flesh, in most general terms. As we have seen, at the beginning of the 16th century, *meat* started to be used in reference to a woman and her body viewed as the 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 “the vagina”.

Similarly, other somewhat loosely meat-related words referring to fish and bird flesh proved to be at the peak of their semantic productivity in the 15th–17th centuries. For instance, the lexical item *cod* developed a metaphorical sense “penis” in the course of the 16th century, and *fish* started to be used in reference to vagina, and later also as a general term for the woman, whereas *herring* acquired a secondary meaning “a foolish person”. Interestingly enough, lexical items linked to the category **POULTRY AND GAME** are even more productive and, follow a similar line of semantic evolution. Likewise, *pheasant*, *partridge*, *quail*, *pullet*, *poultry*, *duck*, *chicken*, *deer* and *hare* were all used in a sense “a woman” and/or “a prostitute” with minor differences in meaning. Intriguingly, *poultry* stood for women in general, in case of *chicken* and *pullet*, the element (YOUNG) seems to be clearly at work and may be said to have been responsible for the emergence of a novel sense “a young woman” and, at a later stage, “a young prostitute”. One could state that the mechanism that operated in the rise of those meaning shifts was very much of similar nature, but – at the same time – the results of metaphorical shifts disappeared more or less at the same period of time during the course of the history of English. In other words, it is possible to say that female-specific metaphorical senses that developed with the lexical items related to the category **POULTRY AND GAME** are a linguistic flash in the pan as the majority of metaphorical senses are obsolete now. It remains for future research to see whether the nature of this wave-like disappearance is purely accidental or whether it may be justified on some linguistic and/or extralinguistic grounds.

On the basis of the linguistic material discussed above, it may be claimed that the conceptualization of meat is in various intricate ways strictly connected with human body and corporality, and – especially – cognitive centrality of human sexuality, and all that what goes with it. In what follows, I shall try to encircle and divide the gathered data, the scope of foodsemic extensions affecting the names of meat

kinds and products, into four main categories. I shall begin with the body of 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, rather than consume food themselves, because they are perceived as mere products that are at the disposal of men, to be consumed, enjoyed or ignored and/ or totally discarded.

The general macrocategory **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** may be further subdivided into other various 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 fall within the latter conceptual category that is *beef*, *meat*, *mutton* and *laced mutton* acquired the secondary sense “a prostitute”. The noun *pork* may be proved to be employed in reference to a woman, viewed as a sexual object. The component (YOUNG) seems to have provided the conceptual bridge, and the necessary spark for the rise of the novel metaphorical sense of *veal* that may be used in reference to young female, referring to a girl younger than the interested male.⁵

Conceptually, as women tend to be perceived through the prism of their bodies, many lexical items related to the subcategory **FEMALE PRIVY PARTS**, such as (*vertical*) *bacon sandwich*, *beef*, *beef curtains*, *fur burger*, *meat*, *a bit of meat*, *mutton*, *pork* and *badly wrapped kebab* developed another female-specific sense “female privy parts, the vagina”.

The conceptual image of a woman mirrored in the body of existing metaphors/metonymies is in no way homogenous. Yet, one observes that the amount of figurative changes within the first of the categories is relatively low, as the most productive and general path of development operative here is <SWEETNESS IS PERCEIVED AS POSITIVE>. Consequently, attractive female human being is more often referred to by means of sweet foodstuff names that semantically share the well-pronounced conceptual feature (SWEETNESS). Finally, meat-oriented foodsemic extensions are oftentimes linked to sexuality, and therefore the two conceptual subcategories, that is **IMMORAL FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and **FEMALE PRIVY 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 PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS MEAT/A KIND OF MEAT>. Although, one may get the impression that it is the woman and her body which is frequently pictured as a food to be “consumed”, however the same holds true for the microcategory **MALE PRIVY PARTS** that is linked to a great number of lexical items, and – what is more – the set of metaphors found here definitely outnumbers the body of female-specific extensions. However, female-related semantic alterations may be said to be more varied and conceptually diversified and they frequently develop links to a large number of conceptual categories.

Interestingly enough, the body of transfers linked to the microcategory **MALE PRIVY PARTS** is quantitatively attention-appelling because as many as 30 lexical items have developed secondary senses, and this number includes a certain group of compounds. These are such lexical items as *bacon*, *bacon bazooka*, *beef*, *beef bayonet*, *beef bugle*, *beef injection*, *beef steak*, *beef torpedo*, *beef tube*, *hot dog*, *meat*, *meat axe*, *meat horn*, *meat puppet*, *meat skewer*, *meat tool*, *meat whistle*, *meatballs*, *mutton*, *mutton bayonet*, *mutton*

5 In Polish, some meat-related lexical items, such as *cielęcinka* and *wolowinka* which are diminutives of *cielęcina* “veal”, and *wolowina* “beef” may be used in reference to young inexperienced females.

dagger, mutton gun, mutton tail, pork, pork grinder, pork leg, pork roll, pork sword, salami, sausage, (love) steak and wienie/weeny/weiner/wiener/wienie/winni. All the lexical items listed above developed historically secondary metaphorical sense “the penis” at the certain stage of their semantic evolution. Additionally, the list given here may be supplemented with the example of mixed-bag type transfers, that is *meat and two veg(etables)* (meat + vegetable) that conveys the sense “the penis and testicles” and the compound *meatballs* (meat + round inanimate object) used in reference to testicles.

As shown above, the conceptual category **MALE PRIVY PARTS** is particularly rich in foodsemic metaphorical shifts. One could say that the abundance of meat products has conditioned the metaphorization and metonymization processes linked to human associations of meat and meat products with physical strength, vitality, vigour, and general fitness. Consequently, there is a set of cases of complex nouns semantically characterized by 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 here <MALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A KIND OF WEAPON> is followed. What is more, note that the majority of weapons listed here are tubular-shaped and hard as being made of steel and their deployment involves some form of thrusting movement. All these features form a bridge for the associations with the penis and penetration.

Meat-Specific Cases of Metaphonymy

While studying the historical material collected for our analysis we have found evidence that justifies the proposal made by Goosens (1990) who introduced the notion metaphonymy that may be defined as the process in which metaphor and metonymy interact in some way. One gets the impression, that it is not the matter of the differences of perception between the two sexes, but rather one should point to a more universal association of meat products and sexuality regardless of sex distinction. There are other lexical items that acquired more than one figurative sense, in the rise of which one has grounds to speak of the working of metaphonymy. For instance, at some point of their semantic evolution, lexical items *meat, mutton, pork, beef* and *bacon* developed more than one secondary sense, the former of which is of metaphorical nature, and the latter ones are conditioned by the operation of metonymy. In these cases we are justified to propose 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 start to be related to the microcategory **FEMALE PRIVY PARTS** (here, the metonymy <FEMALE BODY PART FOR PERSON> is at work). The same joint process may be testified for the evolution of the lexical item *meat*.

Yet another pattern clearly emerging from the history of the lexical item *beef* the historical prior sense of which was “the vagina”, resulted from the operation of metaphor <FEMALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A FOOD ITEM>. Within the course of the sense evolution discussed here, it is possible to

distinguish one more figurative and female-specific sense arising through the operation of metonymy patterned as <FEMALE BODY PART FOR PERSON>.

Finally, this deeply rooted and embedded physicality of food metaphors and food metonymies may be exemplified by the existence of yet another path of development of secondary senses of meat-related words, such lexical items 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 a sexual intercourse”.

All in all, the analysed data allows us to formulate the following paths of metaphorical and metonymic extensions:

SCHEME 1:

metaphorical pattern <FEMALE HUMAN BEING IS PERCEIVED AS A FOODSTUFF> or <FEMALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS FOODSTUFF> or <MALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A FOODSTUFF>

FOODSTUFFS > FEMALE HUMAN BEING (e.g. *burger*, *ham*, *pork*, *beef*, *meat*, *mutton*, *veal*)

FOODSTUFFS > FEMALE PRIVY PARTS (e.g. *beef*, *meat*, *mutton*, *pork*)

FOODSTUFFS > MALE HUMAN BEING (e.g. *beef*, *beefcake*)

FOODSTUFFS > MALE PRIVY PARTS (e.g. *bacon*, *beef*, *hot dog*, *meat*, *mutton*, *pork*, *salami*, *sausage*)

SCHEME 2:

metonymic pattern based on the relation <BODY PART FOR A PERSON>, HERE <FEMALE PRIVY PARTS FOR FEMALE HUMAN BEING>

FEMALE HUMAN BEING > FEMALE PRIVY PARTS (e.g. *meat*, *mutton*)

FEMALE PRIVY PARTS > FEMALE HUMAN BEING (e.g. *beef*)

SCHEME 3:

metonymic pattern based on the relationship <BODY ORGANS FOR ACTION EFFECTED WITH IT>

FEMALE/MALE BODY PARTS > SEXUAL INTERCOURSE (e.g. *beef*, *meat*, *pork*)

SCHEME 4:

metonymic pattern based on the relationship <OBJECT FOR ACTION>.

SEXUAL INTERCOURSE > HAVING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE (e.g. *pork*)

The evolution paths phrased schematically above represent a clearly simplified picture of foodsemic developments that have taken place in English, and affected a number of lexical items related to the conceptual category **MEAT PRODUCTS**. Yet to be verified, the schemas formulated here should be confronted with larger material and more extensive diachronic analysis.

Concluding Remarks

Every lexico-semantic system is in the state of constant flux and here we have attempted to throw some light on the mechanism of metaphorical and metonymic extensions of those lexical items that are related to the category **MEAT PRODUCTS**. Although one may hardly speak of any hard-and-fast rules that may be formulated for any lexico-semantic system of language, the mechanisms that we may have found operative here are far from being entirely random. Earlier, certain paths and tendencies in the semantic evolution of lexical items were formulated by, among others, Schreuder (1929), Stern (1931), Ullmann (1957) and, in Polish tradition, Kleparski (1990). In the foregoing, an attempt has been made to show that figurative extensions, affecting words related to meat types and meat products, frequently are linked to such conceptual target categories as **FEMALE HUMAN BEING** and **MALE/FEMALE PRIVY PARTS**.

Evidently, the discussed material throws some light on the nature of euphemistic tools used to refer to female and male privy parts, or more generally, human sexuality, and also the conditions that lie behind the rise of pejoratively loaded senses that serve to encode negative moral features, such as immorality and behavioural looseness. Obviously, one has grounds to claim that numerous metaphorical shifts discussed here and elsewhere are tightly connected with culture and extralinguistic norms and conditions.

Most conceptual metaphors are part of the cognitive unconscious effort, and the results of this effort are frequently transferred to other operations on further semantically-related lexical items. Hence, novel metaphorical language makes use of the existing patterns, and may be said to be a type of reduplication and reapplication of certain definite earlier patterns. In most general terms, the foodsemic transfers may be proved to follow a number of easily definable paths of evolution that may be schematized in the following manner, although future research may prompt the formulation of other patterns, too:

1. <(ATTRACTIVE/IMMORAL) FEMALE HUMAN BEING IS PERCEIVED AS A MEAT KIND/MEAT PRODUCT>,
2. <FEMALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A MEAT KIND/MEAT PRODUCT>,
3. <MALE PRIVY PARTS ARE PERCEIVED AS A MEAT KIND/MEAT PRODUCT>.

At this point however, the data that has been analysed justifies the claim that the majority of lexical items related to the microcategory **MEAT PRODUCTS** have developed a number of historically secondary figurative senses through the process of metaphor, metonymy and metaphonymy. It is the task of the future research to bring to life, show and account for other characteristics of thus understood foodsemic transfers.

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