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BIDIRECTIONALITY OF METONYMIZATION OF ENGLISH 'CLOTHES' VOCABULARY: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE ON SEMANTIC DIACHRONY

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Abstract: The article surveys the bidirectionality of metonymization within English 'clothes' terms. A metonymic shift can be observed from the domain CLOTHES to HUMAN BEING, as well as from HUMAN BEING to CLOTHES. We claim that a historical dictionary-based approach may be lacking in insight into how humans conceptualize the world and that such an approach needs to be complemented with a sociolinguistic perspective on semantic diachrony.

Keywords: semantic change, metonymy, bidirectionality, sociolinguistics, CLOTHES domain, HUMAN BEING domain.

1. Introduction

The use of metonyms denoting 'a human being' is observed in many languages and has been the subject of scrupulous academic interest. While Andersen (2006), Bybee (2015), Haspelmath (2004), Łozowski (2018; 2020) as well as Traugott and Dasher (2002) deal with the general take on the role of metonymy in semantic change, a more

specific perspective is taken by Gonzálves-García (2020) dealing with metonymy in Spanish nouns, Kiełtyka (2020) studying metonymy behind common place-names, Kopecka (2008a; 2008b) focusing on historical developments of women-related terms, Golubkova and Zakharova (2016) surveying metonymically motivated precedent names, Maćkiewicz (2020) scrutinizing metonymy as a persuasive tool applied in the media, Konieczna (2020) analyzing blends based on metonymic conceptualizations, Szpyra-Kozłowska (2021) working on metonymy in the area of Polish gender terms, Zhang (2016) investigating cross-linguistic, historical, and dialectal perspectives on metonymy, or Żyśko and Żyśko (2015) and Żyśko (2016) studying metonimization in historical developments of English 'joy' vocabulary.

Metonymy is as an integral part of our everyday way of thinking (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 37), grounded in our experience, "subject to general and systematic principles, structuring our thoughts and actions" (Radden & Kövesces 2007: 1). It encompasses relations existing between two entities where one stands for the other, driven by the principle of contiguity, e.g., PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT, PLACE FOR EVENT, PART FOR WHOLE, WHOLE FOR PART, OBJECT USED FOR USER, INSTITUTION FOR PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE. In other words, metonymy is a cognitive process whereby one conceptual entity, *the vehicle*, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, *the target*, within the same cognitive model. Analogically, in the CLOTHES FOR WEARER or WEARER FOR CLOTHES metonymy, which is the primary focus of this article, we can deduce that the same principle applies. The main objective of this paper is to explicate possible motivations for the bidirectionality of metonymization behind the English lexical items belonging to the conceptual domain CLOTHES and HUMAN BEING, i.e., those denoting 'an article of clothing' which underwent the process of semantic change to 'a human being', and, by analogy, those words with the meaning 'a human being' changed into 'an article of clothing'. We claim that a historical dictionary-based methodology may be lacking insight into particular motivations for the semantic changes under discussion, and that such an approach needs to be complemented with a sociolinguistic perspective on semantic diachrony. Therefore, we champion a need to take

extralinguistic factors into consideration, e.g., socio-cultural transformations, changes in lifestyle or in people's outlook on the pre-defined social roles characteristic of a given era.

2. (Bi)Directionality of language change

There have been different perspectives on the typologies of semantic change, most of them being discussed by Harris (2014), referring to Stern's (1931) classification into: substitution, analogy, shortening, nomination, (regular) transfer, permutation, adequation; Bloomfield's (1933) division into: narrowing, widening, hyperbole, litotes, degeneration, elevation, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche; or Traugott and Dasher's (2002: 27) typology into metaphorization and metonymization. However, for the purpose of this study, let us adopt the typology of semantic change directionality as discussed by Haspelmath (2004: 19). Here two major directions of language change are distinguished: unidirectionality, where A can change into B, but B cannot change into A, and bidirectionality, where A can change into B, and B can change into A, which functions at the level of semantic change patterns within one and the same language.

When it comes to the semantic change of English lexical items denoting clothes, it is of bidirectional character, motivated by metonymical extensions. The historical development of lexical items such as, among others, *basque*, *capuchin*, *cardinal*, *middy*, *reefer*, *sweater*, *toreador*, *wellingtons*, *Zouave* (Kleparski & Rusinek 2008; Rusinek 2009), proves that their original meanings were entrenched in the domain HUMAN BEING, and only secondarily, due to metonymization, they became associated with the domain CLOTHES. In general, the patterns of semantic change could be described as follows: *basque* from 'a native of Biscay' to 'a lady's bodice, slightly below the waist, forming a kind of short skirt', probably based on associations of this type of clothing with the clothing worn by Basque women; *capuchin* from 'a friar of the order of Saint Francis' to 'a female garment, consisting of a cloak and hood, made in imitation of the dress of capuchin friars', the motivation of which is the association of monks

with the kind of garment they were wearing, and then an attempt to imitate this garment in secular life; *cardinal* from 'an eminent ecclesiastic' to 'a woman's cloak, originally of scarlet cloth with a hood'; *middy* from 'a midshipman' to 'a woman's or child's loose blouse, often extending below the waistline, with a collar that is cut deep and square at the back and tapering to the front, similar to that worn by sailors'; *reefer* from 'a person who reefs, sails' to 'a reefer jacket or coat, also more generally: a thick overcoat', *sweater* from 'one who sweats or perspires' to 'a jumper or pullover'; *toreador* from 'a Spanish bullfighter' to 'women's tight-fitting trousers, tapering to mid-calf'; *wellington* from 'Arthur Wellesley, first duke of Wellington' to 'a waterproof boot'; *Zouave* from 'one of a body of light infantry in the French army, originally recruited from the Algerian Kabyle tribe of Zouaoua' to 'a woman's short embroidered jacket or bodice, with or without sleeves, resembling the jacket of the Zouave uniform' (Oxford English dictionary, *s.a.*).

The opposite direction of semantic changes, i.e., from CLOTHES to HUMAN BEING can be observed in the historical development of such lexical items as, inter alia, *blue*, *domino*, *pinafore*, *shawl*, *skirt* (Kleparski & Rusinek 2008; Rusinek 2009). The historical metonymization is visible in the following changes: *blue* from 'blue clothing or dress, especially of blue uniform, for instance of police officers, soldiers, etc.' to 'a police officer, sailor, American Federal troops'; *domino* from 'a kind of loose cloak, apparently of Venetian origin, chiefly worn at masquerades, with a small mask covering the upper part of the face' to 'a person wearing a domino'; *pinafore* from 'an apron, especially one with a bib, originally pinned to the front of a dress' to 'the wearer of a pinafore, especially a child'; *shawl* from 'an article of dress worn by Asian people (commonly as a scarf, turban, or girdle), consisting of an oblong piece of a material manufactured in Kashmir from the hair of the Tibetan "shawl-goat" ' to 'a prostitute'; *skirt* from 'the lower part of a woman's dress or gown, covering the person from the waist downwards' to 'a woman, especially an attractive one'.

As can be observed from a historical perspective, there is ample evidence attesting to the bidirectionality of metonymization in English holding between the conceptual domains of CLOTHES and HUMAN BEING. However, apart from "finding out the essence of a word with a relation to other words" and "finding out associations connected with the given word at the moment of nomination"¹ (Jakubowicz 2015: 11-12), what needs to be expounded is the socio-cultural motivation behind the evident semantic changes, i.e., along the lines of 'male garment' into 'female garment', potentially deducible through sociolinguistic analysis.

3. Materials and methods

In order to collect a sample of metonymies suitable for our study, we have consulted *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)*, the primary source of systemic historical information for English, and Glazier's (1996) *Random word house menu*, which have served as a source of our corpus. We rely on the intentional sampling method, i.e., we manually searched the two aforementioned bases and collected a sample of 20 lexemes pertaining to the domain CLOTHES, which we classified as metonyms. Since 14 lexemes such as *basque, capuchin, cardinal, middy, reefer, sweater, toreador, wellingtons, Zouave, blue, domino, pinafore, shawl, skirt* have been already discussed in depth by Kleparski and Rusinek (2008), and Rusinek² (2009) from a diachronic semantic perspective, we have narrowed our research material to 6 instances (*knickerbockers, pantaloons, bloomers, suit, cowl, apron*) that have not been so far discussed in detail in the scholarly literature. In particular, we survey the historical senses of the selected lexical items (discussed in detail via case studies) as evidenced by literary quotations collected from *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)*. In a step-by-step fashion, we provide attestations of their semantic changes, pinpointing the specific dates of their first recordings. However, we claim that such an approach is insufficient for elucidating the specific motivations for the semantic change observed along the lines of a specifically male to female garment. Consequently, we claim it is sociolinguistic factors, i.e., the social context in which the language varieties under investigation were used, that need to be taken into consideration to account for why new meanings are ascribed to these words

(Kövesces 2010; Paradis 2011; Zhang 2016). Therefore, relying on a qualitative approach, we conduct a diachronic analysis combining sociolinguistic data derived from monographs, encyclopedias, and compendia devoted to fashion (Fisher 2001; LaBat 2010; Schreier 1989, or the online edition of *Te Ara: The encyclopedia of New Zealand*). This is in line with Rutten et al.'s approach (2014), who claim that providing the sociolinguistic panorama behind a semantic change is often of a philological nature and involves reading non-dictionary texts to reach contexts crucial for the understanding of the semantic change observed at a particular point in time. In the case of *suit*, *cowl*, *apron*, in order to delve into their HUMAN BEING senses, we consulted dictionaries of slang (*Urban dictionary of slang*, *Green's dictionary of slang*).

4. Diachrony and sociolinguistic factors

A diachronic perspective, referring to the study of how a language evolves over a period of time, focuses on its changes over the course of history. After Lyons (1977), it assumes that words are arbitrarily related in semantic fields, potentially to be studied through a description of the historical development of their meanings. Quoting Murphy (2003: 95-96), "while [it] proved its worth as a general guide for research in descriptive semantics," its value is precisely in describing and not in explaining. In line with the abovementioned argumentation, we claim that lexical definitions must relate to "comprehensive, highly informative cultural note" (Włodarczyk-Stachurska 2011: 59) in order to provide the whole spectrum of a given word's meanings, to unfold its semantic evolution and offer an insight into the speakers' conceptual motivations for using it. Therefore, the aim of such a historical sociolinguistic³ perspective is to pay "increased attention to extralinguistic factors in the explanation of language variation and change" (Auer et al. 2015: 1), with a view to accounting for "how and when changes are transmitted from one speaker to another, how new forms become established in speech communities, across age groups, professions or social strata, and how prestige, [...] may affect changes" (Auer et al. 2015: 4). We assume then that the task of historical sociolinguists is to reconstruct a broad social picture in which the lexemes under discussion are embedded.

4.1 TOTO PRO PARS metonymization

Now, in the light of these claims, let us discuss the metonymization process going from the domain of HUMAN BEING to CLOTHES, studying the diachronic yet sociolinguistically entrenched aspects of the semantic evolution of three lexical items: *knickerbocker*, *pantaloon*, *bloomers*.

According to the available etymological sources, the Modern English *knickerbockers* is to be regarded as a plural form of *Knickerbocker*, a word recorded at the very beginning of the 19th century (Oxford English dictionary, *s.a.*). As *Webster's third new international dictionary of the English language* (1993) indicates, the term refers to the name under which Washington Irving published his popular "History of New York"⁴.

The original sense of *knickerbocker*, i.e., 'a descendant of the Dutch settlers of the Netherlands in America wearing knee-breeches; a New Yorker', has been attested since 1809, as visible in the following *Oxford English dictionary* quotations⁵:

(1809). Irving, W. "History of New York... By Diedrich **Knickerbocker**".

(1848). Irving, W. "History of New York". Revised edition, p. xiv: "When I find New-Yorkers of Dutch descent priding themselves upon being 'genuine **Knickerbockers**'".

(1876). Osgood, S. In: Hill, D.J. "Bryant": "We can all join, ... whether native or foreign-born, **Knickerbockers**, or New-Englanders".

It should be stated at this point that because of the connotations of the first Dutch settlers in America with the characteristic trousers they were wearing, the word transferred its sense and form accordingly. Thus, *knickerbockers*, now in plural and with a lower-case initial, acquired the sense of 'loose-fitting breeches, gathered in at the knee, and worn by boys, sportsmen and others who require a freer use of their limbs' (from 1859 onwards):

(1859). Elcho, L. In: "Times", 23 May 12/3: "The suggestion... is that volunteers should not wear trowsers [trousers], but I would recommend as a substitute what are commonly known as **knickerbockers**, i.e. long loose breeches generally worn without braces, and buckled or buttoned round the waist and knee".

(1969). Laver, J. "Concise History Costume", ix. p. 251: "The new baggy **knickerbockers** were known as "plus-fours" ".

It can be claimed that the reason for the metonymization in question might lie in a sheer association of the lexeme *Knickerbocker* with a particular sort of trousers rather than with their potential wearers. Since the society of the 19th century did not allow women to put on clothes typically associated with men, it is legitimate to state that this sense of *knickerbockers* denoted only a male-specific garment⁶. However, it is interesting to note that this sense of *knickerbockers* changed in the 19th century into 'a short-legged, loose-fitting pair of pants worn by women as an undergarment' (sense observed from 1872 onwards), granting the lexeme a female-specific category⁷. The following literary quotations from *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)* seem to illustrate this sense:

(1872). *Young Englishwoman*. Oct. 554/2: "Lady's long cloth **knickerbockers**. These drawers fasten behind".

(1969). Wilcox, R.T. "Dict. Costume". p. 234: "Muslin **knickerbockers** – girl's 6 to 8-buttoned at sides – pleated cambric frill".

However, what a diachronic perspective lacks is an insight into the motivation behind such a semantic pivot (i.e., from male-specific to female-specific garment). In order to explicate this motivation, we have to relate the detected semantic changes in *knickerbocker* to "the corresponding and underlying changes in the English mentality, transformations in the English society, events in the English history, landmarks in the English culture, etc." (Łozowski & Włodarczyk-Stachurska 2015: 93). It appears that the female-oriented sense of *knickerbockers* is strictly related to the activity of cycling, as knickerbockers were the garment usually worn as sportswear by female cyclists.

"Mid-Victorian society was not particularly fond of women riding bicycles, but the activity became more accepted after 1881 when Queen Victoria ordered tricycles for her daughters. Besides the immodesty and physicality of women straddling a bicycle, the independence granted to individual women was unprecedented. By the late 1800s, women were becoming enthusiastic bicyclists. Soon many adventurous women started wearing shorter skirts to avoid catching them in the pedals" (LaBat 2010: 76).

As Schreier (1989: 112) remarked, "bicycling helped to smooth the way for future clothing changes and dramatically advanced the position of women in sports". While knickerbockers made bicycle riding more comfortable for women, the style was ridiculed as being unfeminine and unattractive (Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion, 2005). *Te Ara: The encyclopedia of New Zealand (s.a.)* comments on a 19th-century photograph of a female cyclist in knickerbockers: "[...] this attire sometimes attracted abuse from onlookers, as members of the city's Atalanta Cycle Club found. They decided to revert to skirts in 1893, but later relaxed the rule as people got more accustomed to seeing women in trousers on bikes".

As exemplified by a critical assessment of the abovementioned definitions of *knickerbockers*, examined in chronological order and viewed in their historical contexts, the real motivation for the semantic change from 'male garment' into 'female garment' would be elusive without a recursion to extralinguistic factors, e.g., socio-cultural transformations, changes in lifestyle or people's outlook on pre-defined social roles, characteristic of a given era. In other words, such a change is generated by language-external aspects of socio-cultural reality, grounded in the human experience of the world. Similar observations can be made in the case of another lexical item denoting clothes that we subject to a diachronic semantic analysis, i.e., *pantaloons*.

The lexeme *pantaloone* is of the Romance etymology and is derived from Middle French *pantalon* from Old Italian *pantalone*, *pantaleone* (The Merriam-Webster new book ..., 1991). Evidence indicates that the Modern English *pantaloons* was often shortened to *pants*, owing its name to Saint Pantaleone, the patron Saint of Venice. As *American heritage dictionary of the English language* (1992) mentions, "he [the patron] became so closely associated with the inhabitants of that city that the Venetians

became popularly known as 'Pantalon' ". Funk (1950) observes, among the *comedia dell' arte* stock characters, that a Venetian was given the name of Pantalone since they "always wore a particular type of trousers. This style changed now and then, but one of the earliest varieties had long, tight legs and a sort of bloused effect around the hips. So, the comic character Pantalone gave us the word 'pantaloon' ".

The primary meaning of the lexeme concerned, as recorded by *Oxford English dictionary* (s.a.), is 'the Venetian character in Italian comedy, represented as a lean and foolish old man, wearing spectacles, pantaloons and slippers'. To be specific, it is the Roman martyr's name that became nominated to signify 'a comedy character', and, consequently, became immortalized. Moreover, owing to the fact that the 16th century theatre customs allowed only men to act on stage, one can suspect that the primary meaning of the conceptual category *Pantaloon* is a gender-specific term. However, its origins documented in the late 16th century in *Oxford English dictionary* (s.a.) cannot provide us with such information:

(1592). Nashe, T. "Pierce Penilesse": "Our representations... not consisting like theirs of a **Pantaloun**, a Whore, and a Zanie, but of Emperours, Kings and Princes".

(1739). Baker, H. & Miller, J. "Squire Lubberly" in "Works of Moliere". iii. 355: "A Singer habited like a **Pantaloon**".

(1983). *Oxford Companion Theatre*. Edition 4. 624/2: "James Barnes, one of the earliest and most famous **Pantaloons** of the early 19th century, played the part in short striped knee-breeches, a matching jacket with a short cape, and a fringe of beard".

During the same period of time, the semantics of *Pantaloon* started to lose their connotations with the Venetian character, being referred to as 'a dotard; an old fool'⁸. What's more, it should be mentioned that the sense of *pantaloon* did not acquire a positive connotation, as it was rather associated with 'an old person, somewhat foolish in a comic way', as documented in the following *Oxford English dictionary* material:

(1952). Granville, W. "A Dictionary of Theatrical Terms". p. 131: "**Pantaloone**...is a rather pathetic old man who is the butt of the clown's sallies, and generally provides the broad element in the pantomimic frolic".

(1983). "Oxford Companion Theatre". Edition 4. 624/2: "James Barnes, one of the earliest and most famous **Pantaloons** of the early 19th century, played the part in short striped knee-breeches, a matching jacket with a short cape, and a fringe of beard".

It was not until the 17th century that the word underwent the process of metonymization towards the domain of CLOTHES. More specifically, its plural form *pantaloons* was first recorded in 1661, for, as Funk (1950) reports, "at first the word 'pantaloone' was the name for a clown, then, in the plural form, the name for his trousers. The term 'pantaloons' came into English in the late 1600's". Thus, the word *pantaloone*, having changed its meaning from the domain of HUMAN BEING to the domain of CLOTHES, also altered its form from the singular to the plural and, consequently, transferred its sense into 'a kind of tight-fitting breeches or trousers in fashion for some time after the Restoration' (from 1661 onwards), as evidenced below:

(1661). Evelyn, J. "Tyrannus" 25: "I would choose ... some fashion not so pinching as to need a Shooing-horn with the Dons, nor so exorbitant as the **Pantaloons**, which are a kind of Hermaphrodite and of neither Sex".

(1987). Hall, R. "Kisses of Enemy". iv. cx. 599: "She stared agape with outrage at a fancydress party: men in periwigs and **pantaloons**, women of all descriptions from fat whores to glacial Edinburgh ladies cavorted in an unseemly manner".

Considering the possible conditions underlying such a change, one may claim that 17th century society, having mentally associated the sense of *pantaloone*, i.e., 'the Venetian comedy character' with a kind of eye-catching trousers he was wearing, subconsciously started to give his name to his attire. This might explain how *Pantaloone* became *pantaloons*⁹. The meaning of *pantaloons* soon widened, especially in American English, being referred to 'trousers in general' (from 1798 onwards).

On the other hand, it should be noted that apart from an extension of its meaning, *pantaloons* acquired negatively loaded connotations. This is evidenced by *American heritage dictionary of the English language* (1992), according to which the term *pants*, the abbreviation of *pantaloons*, met with great resistance. The name "was considered vulgar and, as Oliver Wendell Holmes put it, a word not made for gentlemen but 'gents' "¹⁰. As a result, the word *pants*, first found in the writings of Edgar Allan Poe in 1840, "has replaced the 'gentleman's word' in English and has lost all evident connections to Saint Pantaleon". *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)* goes even further classifying the short form *pants* as 'a vulgar abbreviation – chiefly U.S'. The *Oxford dictionary of word histories* (2002) attests that "it became a slang expression for 'rubbish, no good' in the 1990s". Therefore, it is legitimate to point out that *pants*¹¹, the abbreviation of *pantaloons*, has undergone a process called semantic pejoration¹². The existence of the category *pantaloon* in the sense of 'trousers' can be seen in the following etymological material:

(1834). Pike, A. *"Prose Sketches & Poems"*. p. 138: *"The men with their **pantalones** of cloth, ...the botas of striped and embroidered leather"*.

(1934). Mencken, H.L. *"Diary"*. 12 June: *"He caused a town sensation by arising at the dinner table and taking down his **pantaloons**"*.

Last but not least, the 19th century witnessed the narrowing of meaning of the category: the diminutive formation of *pantaloon*, i.e., *pantalettes*, 'loose drawers or trousers with a frill at the bottom of each leg worn by young girls'¹³ becomes the category's specialized sense, documented below:

(1814). Byron, G. *"Byron's letters and journals"*. Letter 2. July. IV. 136: *"Not all I could say could prevent her from displaying her green **pantaloons** every now & then"*.

(1992). *"Times"* 6 May. 11/2: *"During the past two days guilty young men have been handing in bags containing such items as the **pantaloons** of the actress Ava Gardner"*.

The lexeme thus became a female-specific term¹⁴. In search of the reason for the narrowing of its meaning one should examine certain aspects of life in the 18th and 19th centuries. Even though *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion* (2005) acknowledges a style change occurring at that time, it does not address the underlying reasons for such a change:

"[...] modern fashion trends toward complex clothing styles and rapid style changes, which were set in motion during the Renaissance, did not affect outerwear to any extent until much later. The most significant changes for outerwear took place during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with sleeved coats and jackets slowly superseding capes as the primary outerwear garments for both men and women".

According to Fischer (2001), the author of "Pantaloons and power: A nineteenth-century dress reform in the United States", it should be stated that up till the 19th century, the authorities frequently pointed to the values dictated by the Bible as their justification for reinforcing skirt-wearing. It was at that time that women's clothing started to become lighter and thinner, with very delicate fabrics being used. Modesty and reasons of warmth dictated that another garment be worn under the light gowns of skirts, and it was only a practical solution to adopt a warm undergarment (pantaloons), which had already been worn by men. At that time, the pantaloons were made of a light material that was flesh-toned, they extended from the waist to the ankle, and gave the appearance of having nothing on under the dress.

Later on, women used to put on garments from men's wardrobes as a kind of manifesto of their emancipation.

*"In polite society, though, the fight to make it permissible for women in the US and Europe to wear pants began in earnest in the 1850s, with the women's rights movement. Feminists were seeking liberation, not just from patriarchal oppression, but from the restrictions of corsets. Though Edwardian and Victorian women had adopted them voluntarily, the undergarments literally made it difficult to move, sometimes even to breathe. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton saw dress reform as part of their battle for rights, and some adopted an alternative outfit in the form of baggy 'Turkish' pantaloons worn with a knee-length skirt. In April 1851, Amelia Bloomer, the editor of the first women's newspaper, *The Lily*, told her readers about it, and thereafter the pants picked up the nickname bloomers" (Bain 2019).*

Amelia Bloomer, in *The Lily*, the first newspaper dedicated to women, advocated a change in women's clothing, insisting that a woman's costume should be suited to her wants and necessities. The semantic development of *bloomers* seems to point to a well-pronounced metonymic link HUMAN BEING-CLOTHES, as exemplified by the following *Oxford English dictionary* (s.a.) entry:

(1851). "Boston Transcript". 27 May 2/3: "*The Bee says the daughter of Dr. Hanson, of this city, appeared in the **Bloomer** suit ... last week*".

(1855). "Kansas Tribune": "*Perhaps Lawrence [Kansas] is the only city in America where the majority of the ladies wear **Bloomers***".

However, bloomers did not manage to successfully furnish a much-desired demand for a specifically female garment, being popular only for a few years, partly because women were shamed and ridiculed for wearing them, and partly because they did not find bloomers particularly attractive. Activist Susan B. Anthony complained in a letter that when she went on stage to speak wearing them, "people only paid attention to her clothes and did not hear what she had to say" (Bain 2019), thus testifying to female wearers of bloomers being regarded as a curiosity. In fact, Ms. Bloomer dropped the fashion herself in 1859.

As can be observed on the basis of the diachronic case studies behind *knickerbockers*, *pantaloons* and *bloomers*, any analyses hinged purely on systemic/dictionary data, although attesting to the first recorded uses of particular lexical items, may end up in a blind alley when it comes to the motivation behind their semantic evolution. We postulate then that sociolinguistic factors cannot be overlooked when it comes to shaping the meaning of linguistic expressions, offering a fuller insight into the motivation of metonymically-driven semantic change.

4.2 PARS PRO TOTO metonymization

Apart from emphasizing the role of socio-cultural parameters in shaping linguistic expressions, we also champion the necessity of including slang data in reconstructing a full picture of directionality behind metonymization, especially following the conceptual domains from CLOTHES to HUMAN BEING, as evidenced in the semantic evolution of *suit*, *apron*, and *cowl*. It must be stated that our collection of slang terms is by no means exhaustive. There are still lexical items within the domain of CLOTHES that could be further analyzed in a slang-based research, e.g., *skirt*, *brat*, *scrubs*, *smock*, attesting to their shift from the domain of CLOTHES into HUMAN BEING. These, however, owing to a need for a balanced exposition of the research material, could be subject to an analysis in a prospective study.

Among many attested meanings of *suit* (e.g., 'pursuit, prosecution, and related senses', 'the scent or (perhaps) the quarry', 'the action of suing in a court of law; legal prosecution', 'the action of entreating or petitioning a person to do something; petitioning, supplication', 'the pursuit of an object or quest; the action of following a particular person or cause', 'behaviour by a man intended to persuade a woman to marry him; the action of seeking a woman's hand in marriage; courtship', 'the obligation of attending a superior's court'), *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)* lists the one of 'a uniform or livery; (also, more generally) an outfit'. This is evidenced by a selection of contexts:

(c1325). *"The Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester"*: "A þousend kniztes... Of noble men ycloped in ermine echon Of o **sywte**". (Translation into Modern English by the Authors: "A thousand knights... of noble men all dressed in ermine **suits**".)

(1389). Smith, J.T. & Smith, L.T. *"English Gilds"*: "Þe brethren and sustren...shul be cloped in **suýt**". (Translation into Modern English by the Authors: "The brothers and sisters should be dressed in **suits**".)

A metonymical extension from the domain of CLOTHES into HUMAN BEING could be noted in the case of a slang meaning of *suit*, i.e., 'a person who wears a business suit at work; a business executive'.

(1977). *"The Syracuse Herald Journal"*. 12 June. 41 m/2: "He [sc. Robert Blake]... tells [Dan] Rather that if the network '**suits**' (i.e. executives) don't like the way he's doing the show, they can 'take me off the air' "

(1979). Sullivan, T. *"Glitter Street"*. vi. 32: "McBride was an exception to the usual '**suits**' at the Bureau".

(1987). *TV Week (Melbourne)*. 23 May 4/1: "A kid...eager to propel himself out of the mail-room, where he has a menial job, into the executive ranks of those who are called '**suits**' "

(2014). McCulloch, T. *"Stillman"*. 11: "The **suits** went into full-spectrum denial and spooked the union into balloting for a one-day stoppage to get them round the table".

A more extensive definition is offered by *Green's dictionary of slang*, which views a suit as 'a member of management, a businessman, anyone who has to wear a suit for their daily work, as opposed to more casually dressed creative or freelance workers, or those in jobs that in any case have no need for suits'.

(1954). *"Hot Rod Lexicon"*. In *Hepster's Dictionary*. 25: " The gray **suit** look like he had a lot of money". (American English usage)

(1967). Murray, W. *"Sweet Ride"*. 152: "One of the rumpled **suits** began to cry". (American English usage)

(1975). Carr, J. *"Bad"*. 66: "When some gray-**suit** asked me which trade, I replied 'butchery' ". (British English usage)

While any historical dictionary can offer a plethora of attestations for the standard metonymical meaning of *suit*, it comes short of accounting for the motivation behind such a pejorative evaluation. According to *The New Hacker's dictionary* (1996), it

denotes 'a person who habitually wears suits, as distinct from a techie or hacker', the latter belonging to the crew of engineers. The negative meaning most probably arose due to negative conceptualizations attributed to suit-wearing management, made on the part of engineers since conflicts between the two groups are a significant element of that culture. By extension, such a characteristic may be quite relevant for the whole corporate culture as it implies that one's attire is their only or most salient virtue (confront 'the engineer', 'the IT guy', 'the designer', versus 'the suit'¹⁵). Hence, it is through slang attestations that the domain HUMAN BEING is activated in the case of *suit*, however, it requires some background knowledge to fully comprehend the negative connotations that it triggers.

Let us now consider the lexeme *cowl*, which is an adaptation of the Latin *cuculla*, by *cuzele*, *cuzle*, *cuhle* and *cule*, then in the 12th and 13th centuries evolving into *cūle* and *cowle*. What seems essential in this connection is the fact that the Latin *cuculla* 'monk's cowl' comes from the Latin *cucullus* 'hood of a cloak'. The category *cowl*, as noted by Rusinek (2012: 252), appears first in the history of English as early as the 10th century in the sense 'a garment with a hood, worn by monks, having the permanent characteristics of covering the head and shoulders, and being without sleeves':

(c961). *Æpelwold "Rule of Saint Benedict"*. Schröer 91. lv: "*Ðæt he hæbbe twa **cugelán***" [*W. culan, T. Gl. cuflan, L. duas cucullas*]. (Translation into Modern English by the Authors: "*That he has two **cowls***".)

(a1677). *Barrow, I. "The works of the learned Isaac Barrow"*. II. 14: "*It is not the badges of our Religion that make a Christian; no more than a **Cowle** doth make a Monk, or the Beard a Philosopher*."

(1867). *Walker, C. "The Ritual Reason Why"*. p. 201: "*The **cowl** is a loose vestment worn over the frock in the winter season and during the night office*".

That the category *cowl* is of a religious character is seen in Glazier (1996) and *Webster's third new international dictionary of the English language* (1993). While the

former defines the category as monks' 'hooded cloak', the latter understands it as 'a usually sleeveless garment composed of a hood attached to a gown or robe and worn as the typical garb of a monk'. *Webster's encyclopedic unabridged dictionary of the English language* (1996) also defines *cowl* as 'a hooded garment worn by monks'. Evans (1896) writes that in the 13th and 14th centuries monasteries and churches were provided with secular architects' help in church decorations. The effect of such cooperation was paintings with 'apes in choristers' robes, swine in monks' hoods, asses in cowls chanting and playing the organ, sirens in the costume of nuns' and other pseudo-sanctity works of art¹⁶.

The end of the 16th century witnessed a meaning alteration of the word *cowl* to denote 'a hood of a monk' (from 1580 onwards)¹⁷. It seems that all the elements semantically related to the hood¹⁸ itself were more strongly associated with the category *cowl* than the cloak itself, which, consequently, narrowed the meaning of the category in question, as seen below:

(1580). Hollyband, C. *"The tresurie of the French Tong"*: "Capuchon, a **coule** or hood".

(1858). Oliphant, M. *"The laird of Norlaw"*. II. 6: "[He] took off his **cowl** in token of respect".

Any historical dictionary-based analysis is set to come to a halt since it cannot attest to other senses of *cowl* within the domain of HUMAN BEING. Yet, a consultation with *Urban dictionary of slang (s.a.)* evidences a novel use of the word, i.e., "an insulting term for a large framed woman" (by Harry Flashman May 26, 2006), stemming from the observable considerable size of the original attire¹⁹.

Similarly, an *Oxford English dictionary*-based study of the primary senses of *apron* specifies it as 'an article of dress originally of linen, but now also of stuff, leather, or

other material, worn in front of the body to protect the clothes from dirt or injury, or simply as a covering²⁰:

(1461–83). *"A collection of ordinances and regulations for the government of the royal household"*. p.36: *"Lynnen clothe for **apron**".* (Translation by the Authors: *"Linen cloth for **aprons**".*)

(1750). Walpole, H. *"Correspondence"*. 221 II. 370: *"He would not be waited on by drawers in brown frocks and blue **aprons**".*

At the end of the 17th century (from 1654 onwards) this meaning was narrowed down to form a synonym of today's *cassock*, defined as 'a similar garment worn as part of a distinctive official dress, as by bishops, deans, etc.':

(1654). Warren, T. *"Unbelievers no subjects of iustification, nor of mystical vnion to Christ"*. p. 145: *"It more befits a Green-**apron**-Preacher, than such a Gamaliel"*.

(1859). Helps, A. *"Friends in Council"*. 2nd sermon. I. i. 50: *"Never be a bishop, nor even wear the lesser **apron** of a dean"*.

However, such a semantic shift could not account for the word's informal sense: 'a woman; a wife; a bartender', as exemplified by *Urban dictionary of slang (s.a.)* (by William Warney, December 13, 2010): "Hey apron! Bring me a shot of scotch and a cold beer chaser. I had a hard day at work today!!!". This association of *apron* yet testifies to another metonymization observed from the domain CLOTHES to the domain HUMAN BEING.

The early traces of metonymization behind 'apron' could be traced back to 'white apron', recognized as a prostitute's 'uniform'. Note D'Urfey, *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719): "And first for those ladies that walk in the Night, / Their Aprons and handkerchiefs they should be White". According to *The Vulgar Tongue Green's History of Slang* by

Jonathan Green (2015), the major function of the white garment was for the women "better to be seen".

5. Conclusions

The present study shows that metonymical relations are very common during the semantic evolution of lexical items belonging to the domain of CLOTHES, and proves that their semantic change is of bidirectional character in English, observed along the lines of PART FOR WHOLE or WHOLE FOR PART conceptualizations. However, we claim that a diachronic method of research fails to appreciate the contribution of sociolinguistic factors, i.e., commonly held beliefs at a given point in time, as the source of motivation for the discussed semantic change. On the basis of a diachronic semantic analysis entrenched in socio-cultural data, we attempted to demonstrate that the motivation for the narrowing of selected senses (from male clothing to female clothing), e.g., as evidenced in *knickerbockers*, *pantaloons*, *bloomers*, can be explained by means of the characteristics of a given era, i.e., social transformations (women's emancipation), sweeping changes in lifestyle (women taking up cycling as a pastime, which required special garments) rather than pure relations between systemic elements (definitions and their attestations provided by historical dictionaries) or cursory references to whimsical fads of fashion.

Furthermore, in order to attain a full-scale picture of the bidirectionality of metonymic changes behind the lexical items in the domain of CLOTHES and HUMAN BEING in English, we champion the necessity to take slang meanings into account, revealing new areas of the metonymization involving the domain under study (as exemplified by *suit*, *apron*, *cowl*, designating 'a man, especially a manager, who works in an office and who has to wear a suit when he is at work', 'a woman; a wife; a bartender', 'an insulting term for a large framed woman', respectively). It is only through slang-based investigations that the conceptual domain of HUMAN BEING can be ascertained in relation to these clothes terms.

It must be stated that this text should be treated as a part of a large-scale study and therefore cannot be regarded as exhaustive. There are still English lexical items within the domain of CLOTHES that could be further analyzed, e.g., *skirt*, *chaperon*, *brat*, *collar*, *scrubs*, *smock*, etc. Due to space limitations and the need of well-balanced construction of this text, we resolved to limit the scope of the study to 6 items, equally representing each mode of the bidirectionality of metonymization.

Last but not least, one needs to emphasize that not every sense of development within the CLOTHES domain has been motivated by conceptual metonymy. It is interesting to note metaphorical extensions are also to be acknowledged. Therefore, the abovementioned points could and should map out directions for further studies, including contrastive ones.

Notes

1. The original text: "odkrywanie istoty wyrazu w sensie jego związku z innymi pojęciami, odkrywanie skojarzeń związanych z danym wyrazem w chwili nominacji".

Translated by the authors.

2. It is worth pointing out that these studies were conducted by the co-author of this text as Rusinek is her maiden name.

3. The term *sociohistorical* was used first in the title of Romaine's (1982) book on relative clauses in Middle Scots: *Socio-historical linguistics: Its status and methodology*. However, it was Milroy (1992) who used the alternative term *historical sociolinguistics*, which has become the most common term internationally, and which will therefore be used in this article. For more details on the development of the field, cf. *The handbook of historical sociolinguistics* (2012) edited by Hernández-Campoy & Camilo Conde-Silvestre, Auer et al. (2015), and Nevalainen (2015).

4. Quoting *Fashion, costume and culture: Clothing, headwear, body decorations and footwear through the ages* (2004), "[...] one group of men who wore this style of trousers was the Dutch immigrants who settled in the state of New York during the 1600s. These New York Dutch were given the name 'Knickerbockers', which was a

variation of the name of a prominent Dutch family. Soon their distinctive knee pants were called *knickerbockers* as well, and the name was commonly shortened to *knickers*".

5. All the literature quotations were gathered by and presented in *Oxford English dictionary (s.a.)*.

6. According to *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion (2005)*, "boys were breeched into popular knickers outfits at younger and younger ages. The knickers worn by the youngest boys from three to six were paired with short jackets over lace-collared blouses, belted tunics, or sailor tops. These outfits contrasted sharply to the versions worn by their older brothers, whose knickers suits had tailored wool jackets, stiff-collared shirts, and four-in-hand ties".

7. Note that owing to the information given by *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion (2005)* one might speculate that, indeed, *knickerbockers* denoted not only women's lingerie, but also a sort of trousers in which ladies could go out: "by the late 1800s, women were becoming enthusiastic bicyclists". Schreier (1989) declared that "bicycling helped to smooth the way for future clothing changes [...]. Knickerbockers made bicycle riding even easier for women, but the style was ridiculed as being unfeminine and unattractive. More shocking was the association of bifurcated garments and immorality".

8. *Webster's encyclopedic unabridged dictionary of the English language (1996)* states that such a sense of *pantaloons* is also commonly used in the modern pantomime. It defines the category as 'a foolish, vicious old man, the butt and accomplice of the clown'.

9. Note that according to Bierce (1911), pantaloons are "supposed to have been invented by a humorist. Called 'trousers' by the enlightened and 'pants' by the unworthy".

10. Interestingly, linguistic purism, initiated by the French Academy, also dysphemized the French words for "trousers" and "broom", which were considered vulgar.

11. According to *A dictionary of contemporary American usage* (1957), the term *pants* is the colloquial name for 'drawers' ("what Americans would call 'underpants' "), garments for the lower part of the body and legs, to be worn next to the skin.

12. We use the term 'pejoration' as a category of semantic change rather than a category of linguistic style. *Longman lexicon of contemporary English* (1981) does not define the term with negative connotations. According to the source, both in American and British English the category is used to denote 'trousers'. On the other hand, he points out that in British English the term signifies 'trousers as worn by women'.

13. Cf. Ayto (2005) for the evolution of the category *pants*.

14. Today the term *pants*, as a female-specific category, seems to be echoed in the diminutive form *panties*, which, according to *A dictionary of contemporary American usage* (1957), is "applied only to women's lower undergarment". As noted by *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion* (2005), "[...] by the 1990s the meaning of panties had completely changed. Previously they had to be hidden at all costs but in this decade, it became fashionable to wear big waist high pants under the transparent outerwear designs by Gianni Versace or Dolce & Gabbana. The deliberately non-sexual look of the pants diffused the potential vulgarity of the clothes above".

15. Interestingly, in the TV show "White Collar," the quirky character Mozzie (played by Willie Garson) refers to the FBI agent Peter Burke (Tim DeKay) as "The Suit" and his co-workers by variations of the phrase: Agent Jones is addressed as "The Junior Suit", Agent Diana Berrigan is called "The Lady Suit", Agent Kimberly Rice, who is known for her aggressive tendencies, is called "The Pants-Suit", a superior officer is "The Super Suit", and finally Agent Burke's wife Elizabeth is called "Mrs. Suit".

16. To look for more such church-oriented contexts of the category *cowl* one can refer to *Women and gender in Medieval Europe: An encyclopedia* (2006). *Women and gender in Medieval Europe: An encyclopedia* provides the reader with Elisabeth of Schönau's biography, according to which the Benedictine nun's life was intensified when "the devil tormented her in the chapel as a tiny apparition wearing a monk's cowl". Thus, it comes as no surprise that the category *cowl* has also contributed to the symbol of death. *The Wordsworth dictionary of symbolism* (1989) notes that "in the

TAROT deck the XIII card of the Major Arcana shows death as a skeleton with a scythe or a bow and arrow, often in a monk's cowl or as a horseman of the Apocalypse". The card is taken as a portent of "death, loss, change, the old giving way to the new".

17. Note that hoods crossed the walls of monasteries and in some regions were applied by women. As *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion* mentions, "Toraja women wore dark colored cowl-like hoods to signify widowhood" (2005).

18. The category *cowl* 'hood' forms an adjective *cowled*, which as *American heritage dictionary of the English language* (1992) states, means 'wearing or supplied with a cowl; hood'.

19. On a similar note, Golubkova and Zakharova (2016) discuss the meaning-making processes of derivatives from preceding names (DPN) in terms of metonymy. Thus, 'Robin Hooder' denotes Thai season workers who regularly migrate to earn money outside their native country and send the earned money home. Gradually, this DPN extended its meaning and started to euphemistically define any 'Gastarbeiter' who works abroad trying to provide for their family: "Agent is enhanced by the suffix -er which due to its agentive character contributes to the conceptualization of the derivative as someone who adopted the typical characteristics of the famous epic precedent hero. Besides, the hooder element might metonymically reflect a frequent outfit of the season workers, contributing to the so-called conceptual convergence when the meaning of the novel designation gets enhanced motivation" (Golubkova & Zakharova 2016: 50).

20. It is interesting to note that, as *Encyclopedia of clothing and fashion* (2005) reports, aprons have been worn worldwide for centuries as protective garments, ceremonial indicators of marital and parental status, rank and group affiliation and decorations as well. For instance, pharaohs used to show their status by wearing jewel-encrusted aprons. What is more, in the Middle Ages "tradesmen and artisans in general were called 'apron men', as aprons were so common that several trades boasted distinguishing styles. Gardeners, spinners, weavers and garbage men wore blue aprons; butlers wore green; butchers wore blue stripes; cobblers wore 'black flag' aprons for protection from the black wax they used; and English barbers were known as

'checkered apron men'. Stonemasons wore white aprons as protection against the dust of their trade, and even in the twenty-first century, aprons survive as part of Masonic ceremonial attire" (ibid.).

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Résumé

The present study shows that metonymical relations are very common during the semantic evolution of lexical items belonging to the domain of CLOTHES and proves that their semantic change in English is of bidirectional character, observed along the lines of PART FOR WHOLE or WHOLE FOR PART mental associations. It is only to be expected that a wealth of explications will be offered by reliable etymological dictionaries. However, a dictionary-based method of research fails to appreciate the contribution of sociolinguistic factors in the extension of semantic meaning. Therefore, we postulate that the extra-linguistic context is needed to demonstrate the weight of a sociolinguistic perspective. On the basis of a diachronic semantic analysis entrenched in socio-cultural data, we have demonstrated that the motivation for the specific

semantic changes behind the selected items can be explained by means of socio-cultural transformations (women's emancipation), changes in lifestyle (women taking up cycling as a pastime, which required special garments) rather than pure relations between systemic elements (definitions and their attestations provided by historical dictionaries). Furthermore, in order to attain a full-scale picture of the bidirectionality of metonymic changes of lexical items in the domain of CLOTHES and HUMAN BEING in English, we champion the necessity to take slang meanings into account, revealing new areas of the metonymization involving the domain under study (as exemplified by *suit*, *apron*, *cowl*, meaning 'a man, especially a manager, who works in an office and who has to wear a suit when he is at work', 'a woman; a wife; a bartender', 'an insulting term for a large framed woman', respectively). It is only through slang-based investigations that the conceptual domain of HUMAN BEINGS can be ascertained in relation to these clothes terms.

Keywords: semantic change, metonymy, bidirectionality, sociolinguistics, CLOTHES domain, HUMAN BEING domain.