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“Our language is very literal”: Figurative expression in Dene Sų́líné [Athapaskan]

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Abstract

For reasons perhaps more sociolinguistic than linguistic, Athapaskan languages rarely borrow in order to expand the lexicon. Instead, they opt for the recycling of a very small set of core stems through recombination or simple reinterpretation (involving metaphor and metonymy). The resulting lexical inventory is striking to cognitive linguists because of the way experiential reality and typologically common construal patterns are routinely exploited for lexical expansion. This paper presents figurative lexicalization strategies in Dene Sų́líné and argues that they are similar to patterns adopted by genetically unrelated languages. Importantly, a deeper understanding of the processes involved in Athapaskan lexicalization may help speakers continue to lexicalize new concepts in indigenous ways, thus helping sustain the health and viability of their languages.

Running Head: Figurative expression in Dene Sų́líné [Athapaskan]

1. Introduction

Like most Athapaskan or Dene languages, Dene Sų́líné resists borrowing as a way of extending the lexicon.¹ A long-discredited hypothesis first advanced by Sapir (1921: 196) holds that elaborate derivational and inflectional processes within the verbal complex conspire to keep foreign loan words to a minimum (cf. K. Rice 1989, 2000; Hargus 2007), for descriptions of some of these processes). However, this morphological resistance may instead be due to socio-cultural factors rather than linguistic, a hypothesis advanced at the end of this paper. In any event, language-internal word-formation mechanisms which I will subsume under the rubric *periphrasis* (such as relativization, apposition, incorporation, and compounding) as well as *conversion* (which can involve special morphology in the way that the plural of computer *mouse* in English is often *mouses*, not *mice*) seem to be the most productive means of achieving lexical extension in Dene Sų́líné and its Athapaskan sisters both historically—for indigenous terms—and synchronically—for terms of acculturation. Illustrative examples of some of these periphrastic or morphosyntactic pathways of lexicalization are presented in (1):²

¹ Literally, ‘the true people’, Dene Sų́líné is the preferred ethnonym for this northern Athapaskan language loosely associated with the Mackenzie Basin, generally replacing the Cree-based *Chipewyan*, except in its ISO 639-3 code: *chp*. In this paper, I employ the practical orthography used at Cold Lake, Alberta. That system conflates /e/, /ɛ/, and /ə/ and writes them all as *e*. High tone and nasalization (represented with a Polish hook) on vowels are phonemic, as are ejectives versus “plain” stops and affricates (represented with an apostrophe). Other possibly unfamiliar bigraphs with their IPA values are as follows: *th* = /θ/, *dh* = /ð/, *gh* = /ɣ/, *sh* = /ʃ/, *zh* = /ʒ/, *dz* = /dʒ/, *tl* = /tʎ/.

² I use lexicalization in the sense discussed in Pawley 1985, viz. in a manner that includes both multimorphemic items such as compounds (i.e., *laptop* or *overindulge*) as well as periphrastic items such as idioms (i.e., *nickel and dime to death*) which have lexical status.

(1) a.	<i>nadudh-i</i>	‘the one that slithers along’	‘snake’	RELATIVIZATION
b.	<i>nilts’i slini</i>	‘wind it is evil’	‘tornado’	APPOSITION
c.	<i>sets’é-yalti</i>	‘towards me-3SG talks’	‘s/he’s scolding me	INCORPORATION
d.	<i>tthe-sheth</i>	‘stone-hill’	‘mountain’	COMPOUNDING
e.	<i>-la</i>	‘hand’	‘job’	CONVERSION

There is some evidence that loan translation has also been deployed to achieve lexical extension especially for many terms of acculturation brought during the first wave of European colonization, since many languages of native North America use similar imagery and a similar lexico-semantic “recipe” for the same salient referent (cf. Brown 1999), as shown in (2):

SOME PROBABLE CALQUES

(2) a.	<i>kóntué</i>	‘fire water’	‘alcohol, whiskey’
b.	<i>bescho nené</i>	‘big knife country’	‘America’
c.	<i>ghinaze</i>	‘little worm (pupa, maggot)’	‘rice’

Nevertheless, there are few true borrowings beyond proper (Christian) names, most of which derive from French and have been altered to conform to Dene phonotactics. I have encountered only a few dozen conventionalized loans in over 18 years of interactions with speakers.)

BORROWINGS

(3) a.	<i>libada</i>	< French <i>le patate</i>	‘potato’
b.	<i>masi</i>	< French <i>merci</i>	‘thank you’
c.	<i>lidi</i>	< French <i>le thé</i>	‘tea’
d.	<i>Lizqber</i>	< French <i>/elizabét/</i>	‘Elizabeth’
e.	<i>susíkiyâs</i>	< Cree <i>osikiyâs</i>	‘lizard’

While interesting in their own right, the morphological *mechanisms* driving lexicalization are secondary to my purpose here. In this study, I report on lexical extensions and apparent innovations in Dene Słiné that have come about morphologically or periphrastically through the application of some typologically common metaphors and metonymies. Some preliminary examples, presented in (4) and (5), are hardly unusual to readers familiar with Lakoff and Johnson (1980); Panther and Radden (1999); and Panther, Thornburg, and Barcelona (2009). The actual trope types are expounded on in Sections 2 and 3.

TWO METAPHORS

(4) a.	<i>sets’eni</i>	‘the towards me one’	‘my friend’	IN IS GOOD
b.	<i>ets’eze gaiaze</i>	‘little white kidney’	‘chickadee’	FORM SIMILARITY

TWO METONYMIES

(5) a.	<i>balai</i>	‘that which is round (‘button’)	‘the French’	PART FOR WHOLE
b.	<i>nát’adhi</i>	‘that which is cut twice’	‘square’	PROCESS FOR PRODUCT

A case study such as this is intended to demonstrate the ubiquity of figurative processes in everyday language use while advancing the premise that such processes can be relatively constrained and systematic in language(s).

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In §2, I briefly describe some typologically common metaphors and metonymies that are highly prevalent in Dene languages. I then summarize some of the typological literature on figurative lexicalization pertinent to the later discussion on Athapaskan. In §3, I present examples from the Cold Lake variety of Dene Sųłiné, a fairly conservative but sadly moribund dialect spoken in east central Alberta, Canada. Some general tendencies are discussed in §4 and compared with examples from other Athapaskan languages. Finally, §5 addresses issues pertaining to the function and analysis of metaphor and metonymy in a language's lexicon and grammar and why it is neither paradoxical nor oxymoronic for speakers to insist that their very figurative languages are, in fact, very literal.

2. Conceptual and typological patterns of lexicalization

Much early research in cognitive linguistics (henceforth CL) revolves around the study of grammaticalization and lexicalization patterns cross-linguistically (cf. Talmy 1985, Traugott & Heine 1991, Heine et al. 1991, Bybee et al. 1994, Svorou 1994). One product of this research has been to demonstrate how conceptualization and human experience mediate linguistic patterning (this is the central message in Langacker 1987/1991a, 1991b; Lakoff 1987, Johnson 1987, and Taylor 1989). Of special interest is exploring how semantic and functional extensions arise for a given lexical item or construction. Metaphor and metonymy have both been implicated in such extension processes in language, although they are by no means the only mechanisms of semantic change. While there are major differences between these processes, they each entail shifts of reference within or between what philosophers and cognitive scientists call **mental models** or what cognitive linguists call **background** or **cognitive domains**. That is, the semantic use or interpretation of metaphors and metonymies involve a projection of language commonly expressing (usually) more concrete or real-world relations or situations to (often, but not necessarily) more abstract or idealized cases in which the domain of reference might be ideation, causation, or textual expression itself. However, metaphors and metonymies are not just used to describe the abstract or otherwise inexpressible. They can be recruited for purposes beyond the utilitarian as well; for example, for cultural or metalinguistic reasons, a topic I return to in §5. It should be pointed out first, though, that inter- and intra-domain projections as implicated in metaphors and metonymies are responsible for the widespread ambiguity and polysemy found in language and are a major force in driving semantic change and grammaticalization (cf. notably

Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Sweetser 1990, Heine & Kuteva 2002). Many words have multiple meanings and grammatical functions, although individual meanings are usually specific to a particular background domain. Critically, the domain of application bears on the intended or correctly inferable semantic meaning of a term (cf. Croft 1993). This is especially the case with metaphor and metonymy.

2.1 *Metaphor*

Literary scholars and cognitive linguists both characterize metaphor more or less the same way: as an inter-domain mapping function. An expression that has a literal interpretation in one domain of application takes on a figurative meaning in a second domain. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) inspired most of the contemporary CL work on metaphor and metonymy (cf. Dirven 1985, Claudi & Heine 1986, Goossens 1990, Langacker 1991b, Radden & Kövecses 1999, Panther & Radden 1999, Gibbs 2008, and Panther et al. 2009). Collectively, this research not only has catalogued many conventional metaphors and metonymies across languages, but it has analyzed them systematically. Lakoff and Johnson placed the study of these figurative tropes squarely in the realm of linguistic analysis of everyday (rather than specialized or literary) language. The examples throughout this paper are necessarily of the former type since Dene Sųłiné has but the shallowest of written traditions and most remaining speakers cannot read or write using either a practical roman orthography or the Cree-based syllabary familiar to them from the rather antiquated Roman Catholic (Oblate) hymnals and prayerbooks passed down from their forebears. Moreover, metaphor and metonymy are ubiquitous in colloquial language and do not just pertain to a highly composed genre or register. Most examples of everyday metaphors rarely strike the average speaker as conspicuously figurative or unusual. Indeed, many times the metaphor has to be stated explicitly before it is recognized as such, a point I return to in §5.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identified three highly prevalent classes of conventionalized metaphors based on correlations we perceive in our experience: *orientational*, *ontological*, and *structural* (similarity) metaphors. Orientational metaphors obtain when expressions associated with location or movement along a vertical or horizontal axis signal non-spatial and especially qualitative relations. Specifically, verbs, adpositions, and adverbials associated semantically with location or movement upwards or inwards (towards the speaker) in space or along a scale (always spatially construed) are more positively esteemed than are those associated with location or movement downwards or outwards (away from the speaker). Ontological metaphors are those whereby intangible, ephemeral phenomena (like TIME, IDEAS, or EMOTIONS) which frequently lack direct means of expression in a language, can be talked about and even conceptualized as if they were substantive, directly perceivable, and imbued with value or other physical qualities

like a real concrete object. Structural metaphors fall out under what Lakoff (1987) calls “great chain of being” metaphors. Associated behaviors or attributes of entities up and down the epistemological animacy scale can be mapped onto entities in other (both higher and lower) categories: PEOPLE ↔ ANIMALS ↔ PLANTS ↔ INANIMATE OBJECTS, etc.

2.2 Metonymy

Metonyms are perhaps more ubiquitous in language than are metaphors and individual metonymies more widespread across languages (cf. Radden & Kövecses 1999, Panther & Radden (1999), and Panther, Thornburg, & Barcelona (2009)). Metonymy is characterized in CL as an *intra*-domain mapping function. Some subpart of a thing or aspect of a relation comes to stand for the whole in a typical metonymy or, conversely, the whole can stand for a part. Of special relevance to the Dene Sų́líné examples detailed in §3 are, of course, both PART FOR WHOLE and WHOLE FOR PART metonymies (of which CONTAINER FOR CONTENTS metonymies are a special and frequent case), but also GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC and SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymies, which Sullivan & Sweetser (2010) contend are, in fact, metaphors—a position that I do not happen to endorse. Perhaps most widespread in the Athapaskan languages are those metonymies which are verb based, operating on *relational predications* in one of two ways. In the most obvious case (since most nouns in the language are deverbal, arrived at morphologically through the addition of a relativizing or nominalizing particle in a ‘the-one-that-VERBS’ or ‘the-one-that-is-VERBED’ type of schema), the entire process stands for a salient event participant bearing an AGENT, EXPERIENCER, INSTRUMENT, PATIENT, LOCATION, or MANNER role, a sub-part of that process. My corpus is full of such ATTRIBUTE/BEHAVIOR FOR ENTITY metonymies. Equally robust are PART FOR WHOLE metonymies in which a sub-part of a state or relation or a sub-phase of some process (such as the initial cause or end result) can come to stand for the state, relation, or process itself. In most cases, it is an initial phase that stands for the whole. These metonymies may be less obvious, but they are highly prevalent in Athapaskan languages due to the ready conversion of noun stems into verb stems and the ubiquity of deverbal nominalizations.

Most of the lexicalizations examined in §3 involve the following patterns of metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor features prominently in cases of conversion and compounding, in which some term for a concrete substance may be applied in a more abstract or at least non-literal domain. Since, as mentioned previously, many nominals in Dene Sų́líné are derived from verbal sources, PROCESS FOR {RESULT, EFFECT, PRODUCT, AGENT, EXPERIENCER} verb-based metonymies are extremely numerous. Indeed, verb-based signification (through relativization) seems much more prevalent than does noun-based (through exogenous compounding or incorporation) in the language. Some of the diverse lexical domains bearing witness to these

figurative lexicalization processes include the very familiar practice of PERSON, GROUP, ANIMAL, and PLACE NAMING, as well as TOOL or CULTURAL ARTIFACT NAMING. Less commonly considered cases involve PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES, DISEASES, and various PROCESS predications. I will exemplify and discuss each of these in turn in §3. First, I present two proposals about lexicalization patterns cross-linguistically that have tried to account for naming tendencies in particular.

2.3 *Some proposals about lexicalization tendencies*

The study of metaphorically and metonymically inspired semantic extension has a huge literature, not just in the CL world, but in typological and historical linguistics as well. I single out two sets of investigations in particular because they (a) treat metaphor and metonymy on par and (b) they are intensely cross-linguistic. Cecil Brown's (1999) massive study of 77 terms of acculturation across nearly 200 New World languages dissects naming tendencies by region, genetic stock, dominant European colonizer, degree of bilingualism, as well as semantic domain of the artifact. At a coarse-grained level, he divides his concepts into *natural kinds*, encompassing introduced fruits ('watermelon'), vegetables ('peas'), grains ('rice'), livestock ('pig') and domestic animals ('chicken'), and *artifacts*, such as prepared foods ('butter'), tools ('fork'), storage items ('bottle'), clothing ('button'), domestic items ('candle', 'window'), measurements ('mile'), and a host of other concrete and abstract concepts (e.g., 'key', 'soldier', 'school', 'Wednesday'). He reports on percentages of loans, calques, loan blends, or indigenous lexicalizations inspired by metaphor and metonymy for his many factors and his many items. Brown subsumes most of his indigenous lexicalization strategies under one of two general types: *referential extension/marking reversal* (some type of form-similarity metaphor whereby a native term is extended, often upon modification, to name the introduced concept as in 'sun' for 'clock' or 'big-dog' for 'horse'), or *descriptive focus/utilitarian naming* based on a salient feature of the item (a kind of PART FOR WHOLE metonymy as in 'the rounded one' for 'button') or on how humans use the item (also a kind of metonymy, usually based on a PROCESS FOR PARTICIPANT metonymy as in 'that which you write it down with' for 'paper'). He concludes there is a robust correlation between the nature of the introduced items (living thing or artifact) and the nature of the naming pattern (referential extension/metaphor vs. utilitarian function/metonymy), finding that only 10% of the items in his corpus that referred to introduced living things were given a utilitarian name as opposed to 63% of imported artifacts (Brown 1999: 41).

As a simple illustration of the Brown findings, consider the items in Figure 1 which shows images for two items of acculturation (depending on the culture), one indigenous to native peoples of North America, although not exclusively so, and the other a modern variant of an

artifact first introduced by European colonists. In English, the top item has been lexicalized through a compound, as shown on the right. Thus, it is multi-morphemic, analyzable, and figurative by virtue of a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy or some other kind of utilitarian description (‘outer shoe for use with other shoes in deep snow made of bent birch wood and sinew’), unlike a similar—but borrowed and therefore unanalyzable—monomorphemic English word, *ski*. The Dene Sų́líné equivalent, *?aih*, is monomorphemic, unanalyzable and therefore non-figurative, as befits an indigenous concept to people who traditionally lived in the seasonally snowy boreal forests of the subarctic. By contrast, either of the English terms for the firearm, *gun* or *rifle*, are arguably unanalyzable and monomorphemic to modern speakers. However, the Dene Sų́líné equivalent, *helk’édhi* (< *he-l-k’édh-i*) ‘that which shoots’, is multi-morphemic and structured around a PROCESS FOR INSTRUMENT metonymy. In Brown’s (1999) terms, both *snowshoe* and *helk’édhi* would be classified as lexicalizations framed around functional utility, typical for manufactured cultural objects, as opposed to his “natural kinds.” These contrasting examples illustrate one purported cross-linguistic lexicalization tendency: that terms for items of acculturation tend to be borrowed or figurative. In each case, the native object is lexicalized simply and literally, while the encountered object is lexicalized complexly and figuratively. As we will see in §3, terms of acculturation are indeed overwhelmingly figurative in Dene Sų́líné, but strikingly, so are most indigenous concepts as well.


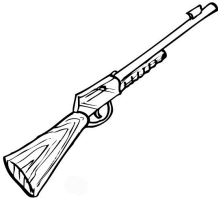
	non-figurative lexicalization	figurative lexicalization
	<i>?aih</i> [Dene Sų́líné]	<i>snowshoe</i> lit. ‘shoe for snow’ [English]
	<i>gun, rifle</i> [English]	<i>helk’édhi (t’elk’idhi)</i> lit. ‘the thing that shoots’ [Dene Sų́líné]

Figure 1. Figurativity in English and Dene Sų́líné lexicalization for two terms of acculturation.

In a similar vein and inspired by some of Brown’s earlier work with his colleague, Stan Witkowski (Witkowski & Brown 1978), David Wilkins (1996) searches for cross-linguistic tendencies of semantic change (what we could also call semantic extension leading to polysemy) in the admittedly circumscribed but completely universal and therefore always indigenous domain of “parts of a person”. Tracking 75 concepts across a large number of languages of

central and western Australia, he concludes that metaphor and metonymy are differentially responsible for the most commonly attested semantic extensions or *chains* (e.g. ‘egg’ → ‘testicle’ vs. ‘skin’ → ‘body’ → ‘person’) affecting body part naming. Although his larger aim is to better understand semantic shift in order to expand the list of possible cognates for purposes of proto-reconstruction across a language family, he does propose an implicational hierarchy within the semantic field of “parts of a person” which could be tested both cross-linguistically and across other semantic domains. This hierarchy, presented in Figure 2, is especially relevant in the context of the present volume since it puts metonymy alongside metaphor as a patterned and cognitively motivated mechanism of semantic change in language after language.

intrafield metonymic changes ‘skin’ → ‘body’	→	interfield metonymic changes ‘smell’ → ‘nose’	→	interfield metaphoric changes ‘spear’ → ‘penis’	→	intrafield metaphoric changes ‘anus’ → ‘mouth’
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

Figure 2. Wilkins’ (1996: 274) four classes of semantic change, ranked hierarchically, within the semantic field “parts of a person.”

The present study of figurative lexicalizations in Dene Sųliné ranges beyond the typical referential denotata of the Brown and Wilkins investigations. Although I do include terms of acculturation and body parts, I also investigate figurativity in indigenous concepts as well as in a host of relational predications (states and processes) in the language.

3. A Semi-Structured Inventory of Metaphors and Metonymies in Dene Sųliné

In this extended section, I survey certain semantic domains in Dene Sųliné that are replete with lexicalizations based on metaphor, metonymy, or a combination thereof. This is by no means an exhaustive inventory—one feels as if the surface has barely been scratched—but I believe it to be representative. Moreover, I make no claims about the figurative uniqueness or universality of these expressions. That is, the lexical formatives and/or conceptual imagery contained in the following expressions may or may not be particular to this dialect or this language. The resulting lexicalization may involve nothing more than a wholesale calque or loan translation from other languages. Nevertheless, an ingenious combination of indigenous lexical items driven by metaphor and/or metonymy has produced an impressive set of innovative and often idiomatic expressions. Taken together, they contribute to a line of argumentation in CL that seeks to demonstrate the central role that meaning plays in lexical and grammatical structure in language. They also bring us closer to understanding the cognitive means by which human beings, no matter the culture, come to linguistic terms with the world around them and within them.

In the case of Dene languages, the stem inventory is staggeringly small. Estimates range from 1300-2000 semantically discernible (though often very vague), relatively cognate, phonologically coherent, and generally monosyllabic lexical stems (Victor Golla and Jim Kari, p.c.). Semantic extension (leading at times to cross-categorical conversion with attendant morphological adjustments) appears to be fairly robust, but it remains a poorly studied part of the Athapaskan lexicon. It is especially the case that verb stems, often highly suppletive, will “cross-lexicalize”.³ There may be arguments for treating these stems as highly polysemous or at least as engendering chained associations via metaphor and metonymy. I tackle Athapaskan verb stem polysemy at length in Rice (forthcoming). Nevertheless, Dene verb stems—and not just the well-known classificatory verb stem system—are notoriously vague and generic, and only gain their specificity through a variety of prefixes or context of use.⁴

Because of the small inventory, stems are routinely called upon semantically to do double and triple duty, if not more, through conversion, compounding, juxtaposition, and inflection. The small inventory extends as well to a small set of items that would traditionally be considered derivational material, encompassing things like augmentatives, diminutives, defunctives, gender markers, intensifiers, negativizers, nominalizers, qualifiers, and the like. These items, all suffixes, are still highly productive, but they have allowed for, either singly or in combination, the creation of many entrenched and conventionalized lexical items, which in turn can be examined for their degree of figurativity since many exhibit striking metaphors and metonymies. It is the inventory and analysis of this relatively small set of items that we delve into here.

A word first about format. In individual examples, a metaphor will be identified using an [X IS Y] comment, while a metonymy will be specified by the rubric [X FOR Y]. If the English (free) translation is itself figurative, double asterisks (**) will follow the gloss. To save space, I present data in columnar format, with the Dene example listed first, the literal gloss in the middle column, and the figurative or free gloss at the right. I primarily present examples of Dene Sųlíné figurative lexicalizations by semantic domain, regardless of whether they involve pure metaphors or metonymies. In §4, however, I summarize with comments about the most systematic metaphors and metonymies observed in the data.

³ For example, the stem *-da* shows up as the singular imperfective form for ‘sit’, ‘go’, and ‘rock (back and forth)’. Likewise, the stem *-ʔi* is associated with paradigms for ‘see’, ‘look around/for’, ‘notice’, ‘wait for’, ‘steal’, and ‘hide’ (cf. Li 1933).

⁴ The classificatory verb system conflates position, dislocation, and controlled handling of objects which are variously construed as stick-like, flat and flexible, solid and round, granular, animate, contained in an open container, contained in a closed container, and so on. The different Dene languages feature different inventories of classified objects. The Athapaskan literature features many studies, although Rice (forthcoming) argues against its exclusivity. I contend that the majority of verbs are classificatory in that they conflate information about a salient event theme and the event or relation itself.

3.1 Naming others and describing the human condition

A lexical domain especially rich in metaphors and metonymies involves (proper) naming. This is a good category with which to begin because names are both highly conventionalized and highly charged in terms of cultural identity. Having an epithetic quality as they do, ethnonyms especially can serve to identify both the referent and the labeler as members of a specific group. The practice of giving descriptive (that is, figurative) sobriquets or nicknames is typical of Athapaskan, not to mention Amerindian languages generally (cf., notably, Sapir 1923, 1924; Young and Morgan 1987: 811-812b; Basso 1990). I will concentrate here on ethnic and group naming. Proper names, peoples (tribes/nationalities/ethnic groups), and place names are rarely monolexical. Generally, the resulting composite lexicalization describes something about the people themselves, a geographical feature of where they come from, or activities or artifacts native to the region. Most of the ethnonyms in my Dene Sų́líné corpus involve metonymies, typically either a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC or a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy.

3.1.1 Ethnonyms

Across the larger Dene world (at the time of European contact, it stretched from Alaska to Mexico in latitude and from the Pacific Ocean to the Hudson Bay in longitude), the word for person or people is highly cognate: *diné* (Navajo), *-t'ina* (Tsuut'ina), *denae* (Ahtna). According to Victor Golla (p.c.), the etymology of the probable proto-form strongly suggests a derivation based on a stative predication—an ideophone, really—of the form ‘sounds like X’:

- (6) *dene* (<*de-na*)
 lit. ‘the one who sounds human’
 fig. ‘Dene person (the one that speaks like a human being)’

This etymological hypothesis is intriguing as it both makes morphological sense and conforms to what I have found to be a quite common set of metonymies across the many Dene languages that I have examined: SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC or GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymies. These tropes are especially common in ethnonymic naming. In the examples below, I gloss the Dene Sų́líné exponents *dene* and *-t'iné* as ‘person’ or just list the group modifier. As singular and plural are not specially marked in Dene Sų́líné, these terms also refer to the entire ‘people’ so designated.

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

- | | | | |
|--------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| (7) a. | <i>dene sų́líné</i> | ‘genuine/true person’ | ‘Dene Sų́líné’ |
| b. | <i>’ena</i> | ‘enemy’ | ‘Cree’; ‘non-Dene native’ |
| c. | <i>hotél’na</i> [< <i>hotéli ’ena</i>] | ‘barrens (AREAL cover) enemy’ | ‘Inuit’ |
| d. | <i>des nát’iné</i> | ‘river-across-people’ | ‘Slavey’ |
| e. | <i>’asi dene</i> | ‘some person’ | ‘non-native person’ |

With the first (fur traders) and second (homesteaders) waves of colonization, came ethnonyms based on some salient feature of the interlopers. Usually these features pertained to dress or lifestyle, hence, they are metonymic. I make no claims about the semantic uniqueness of these lexicalizations. It is highly likely that most of the examples in (8)-(9) are calques.

ASSOCIATED ARTIFACT (PART) FOR OWNER/WEARER (WHOLE) FOR SPECIFIC

- | | | | |
|--------|---|----------------------|------------|
| (8) a. | <i>tthot'iné</i> [<i>< tthé-yoh t'iné</i>] | 'stone-house person' | 'English' |
| b. | <i>bescho dene/t'iné</i> | 'big knife person' | 'American' |

ATTRIBUTE FOR WHOLE

- | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| (9) a. | <i>betthighe t'ule nenedhi</i> | 'those whose tied hair is long' | 'Chinese' |
| b. | <i>?ilt'eri nade</i> | 'the ones who are naked' | 'Ukrainians' |

3.1.2 *Kith and kindred*

Dene people were traditionally hunter-gatherers who migrated seasonally in small multi-family bands. Kin systems were somewhat fluid (Ives 1990) and the nomenclature system is complex, although not particularly figurative. Contemporary Dene Sųłiné speakers refer to their family and fellow band members in similar ways, no doubt since both groups were traditionally their relatives. Both terms are metaphoric and suggest unity. As shown in (10), one invokes a body part metaphor whereby the family is construed like a hand (an intriguing source image schema since its individual parts are as salient as the whole); the other stresses the oneness of the group in a kind of DIVERSITY IS UNITY image.

- | | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| (10) a. | <i>selot'iné</i> [<i>< sela-hot'iné</i>] | 'my hand/partner-people' | 'my relatives' |
| b. | <i>ilá dene</i> | 'one people' | 'family' |

Other significant relationships that are lexicalized figuratively in Dene Sųłiné involve forebearers and descendents, which likewise can be metaphorically (and spatially) construed in English. In Dene Sųłiné, both orientation and botanical metaphors are at play:

TIME IS SPACE (PAST IS AHEAD or PAST IS BEHIND)

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (11) a. | <i>tthéridene</i> | 'first people' | 'ancestors/forebearers' |
| b. | <i>yanísot'ine</i> | 'the past/long ago people' | 'ancestors' |
| c. | <i>?qłnetthi</i> | 'the one who went the length' | 'elder' |

PEOPLE ARE PLANTS

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| (12) a. | <i>betthúe</i> | '3SG-branch' | 'his/her grandchildren' |
| b. | <i>bechighaé</i> | '3SG-wood-root' | 'his/her descendants' |

With respect to significant relationships of the same generation, a few are lexicalized figuratively, notably, the concepts of 'partner' and 'friend'. These lexicalizations are based on

two metaphors seen previously: a body part metaphor (USEFUL PERSON IS USEFUL BODY PART) and a spatial metaphor (IN IS GOOD), as shown in (13) and (14), respectively:

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------|----------------------|--|
| (13) | <i>sela</i> | ‘my-hand’ | ‘my same-sex cousin, helper/partner’ (♂ speaker) |
| (14) | <i>sets’éni</i> | ‘the-towards-me-one’ | ‘my friend’ |

Although there is no gender differentiation in the personal and possessive pronoun system for third person singular in any Athapaskan language, there is ample differentiation when referring to males and females. The generic ‘human/person/people’ term, *dene*, does not extend exclusively to males. Although the etymology of the suffix in the male human term, *deneyu*, is opaque, it might be related to *sí-yeze*, ‘my son’ (lit. ‘my little man’?) and *-yane*, the all-purpose male suffix used for animals. By contrast, the female term, shown in (15), is strongly metonymic, based on a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy. The *-kwi* suffix is an obscure pluralizing morpheme which applies to human collectives (like the English *-folk*), although it and its cognates in other Dene languages are no longer very productive.

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| (15) | <i>ts’ékwi</i> (< <i>ts’ér-kwi</i>) | ‘womb-ones’ | ‘woman, women’ |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|

Athapaskan kin systems are fairly complex, with differences in cross-ness and parallel-ness (sic) extending across three generations, as well as differentiation in older and younger siblings. Thus, while there are many distinct terms, there is also some morphological recycling, as the examples in (16) show. These could probably be considered examples of what Brown (1999) calls a *marking reversal* or what Wilkins (1996) calls an *intra-domain metaphor*. Within the content domain of kinship, the diminutive singles out individuals who are of different generations than those referred to by the non-derived stems, but not necessarily descending generations. Nevertheless, the derived forms do suggest an especially close relationship to ego, as is often the case when a diminutive is used. This lexical extension via the diminutive gives rise to what I will call a SMALL IS FAMILIAR metaphor in the context of kin terms.

SMALL IS FAMILIAR

- | | | | |
|---------|--|--|---|
| (16) a. | <i>sunaghaze</i> [< <i>sunaghe-aze</i>] | ‘my little older brother’ | ‘my grandson’ |
| b. | <i>setáze</i> [< <i>setá-aze</i>] | ‘my little father’ | ‘my uncle (father’s brother)’ |
| c. | <i>sárazze</i> [< <i>sáre-aze</i>] | ‘my little older sister’ | ‘my granddaughter’; also ‘my daughter-in-law’ (♀ speaker) |
| d. | <i>setsqaze</i> [< <i>setsu-aze</i>] | ‘my little aunt (dad’s sister)’,
‘my little mother/sister-in-law’,
‘my cross-sex cousin’ (♂ speaker) | ‘my sweetheart’ (♂ speaker) |

3.1.3 Cultural roles

Pre-contact Dene society was largely egalitarian, with any differentiation reserved for chiefs and shamans (Abel 2005). Both of these traditional societal roles are lexicalized via a relativization ('the one who Vs'); thus, they are based on a deverbalized process and are therefore metonymic. Just as a host of non-traditional concrete objects that were introduced into Dene culture required lexicalization, so too did non-traditional social roles, job titles, or professions. Many of these are based on the 'chief' formative derived from an all-purpose verb of being/doing/acting upon (which we will revisit later), *-dher/-dhi*: *k'ódheri* [*< k'á/k'é hólderī*], lit. 'the one who acts for/on (unspecified)', fig. 'chief, boss, ruler, Lord', as shown in (17). Others involve compounds with *dene* 'person' or other types of relativizations based on processes (being at, knowing, speaking, teaching, making, etc.).

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC or SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| (17) a. | <i>k'ódheri</i> | 'chief' | 'factor (head of fort or trading post)' |
| b. | <i>tsqba k'ódheri</i> | 'money chief' | 'Indian agent (dispenses treaty money)' |
| c. | <i>deni k'ódheri</i> | 'moose chief' | 'forest ranger/game warden' |
| d. | <i>k'ódheri nethé</i> | 'chief important' | 'king/prime minister' |
| e. | <i>k'ódheri nethé ts'ékwi</i> | 'chief important woman' | 'queen' |

PROCESS FOR AGENT and GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| (18) a. | <i>yalti</i> | 'the one who speaks' | 'priest' |
| b. | <i>tthethiyi</i> | 'the one who stands (at the) head' | 'leader' |
| c. | <i>tsqtsáné k'olyqi</i> | 'the one who knows about metal' | 'mechanic' |
| d. | <i>niholtsini</i> | 'the one who made earth' | 'the Creator' |

DOING IS BEING AT and BEING AT IS BEING

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------------|---|
| (19) a. | <i>*nádher</i> | '3SG stays/lives customarily' [infelicitous without a complement] |
| b. | <i>hueghqnádheri dene</i> | 'the person who's about fishing' 'fisherman' |
| c. | <i>ilts'uzi gáh nádher</i> | '3SG lives about the trap' 'trapper' |
| d. | <i>se?á nádheri</i> | 'the one who stays by me' 'my neighbor' |
| e. | <i>ik'qzī nádheri</i> | 'the one who stays (about) spirit' 'medicine man/shaman' |

3.2 Body parts, functions, and dysfunctions

Owing perhaps to the chronically small stem inventory, there is a general lack of differentiation between humans and animals in Dene Sųliné when it comes to partonymic naming of the body, to the point that it is difficult to state whether the terms are simply very vague or, if not, whether the semantic extension maps from humans to animals or vice versa. While animal and human body part terms are largely shared, there is substantial differentiation in the verbal lexicon when it comes to the "selectional restrictions" holding between verbs of position, motion, and even

consumption and the location of their subjects on an animacy hierarchy.⁵ As a case in point, consider the examples in (20), each of which subsumes a part (or effluvium) that could belong to a variety of fauna, from insects, fish, and reptiles to birds, animals, and humans (as enumerated in parentheses).⁶ The possessive prefix *e-* in all the examples in (20) is non-specific and generally used for non-human possessors. The series *se-/sɨ-*, *ne/nɨ-*, and *be-/bɨ-* constitute the personal possessive prefixes for 1SG, 2SG, and 3SG, respectively.

SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC

(20) a.	<i>edheth</i>	‘its-skin/hide/pelt’	(animal, human)
b.	<i>edé</i>	‘its-horn/antlers/feelers/antenna’	(animal, insect)
c.	<i>eché</i>	‘its-tail’	(animal, bird, fish ⁷)
d.	<i>egha</i>	‘its-fur/hair’	(animal, human)
e.	<i>ekegané</i>	‘its-claw/hoof/talon/toenail’	(animal, bird, human)’
f.	<i>etsáné</i>	‘its-excrement’	(animal, bird, insect, human)

3.2.1 Body part naming

Despite the vagueness alluded to above resulting from overlap between humans and non-humans in body part naming, there is a lot of figurativity in Dene Sų́líné body part terminology (examined here) as well as certain bodily secretions and wastes (described in §3.2.2). At play, largely, is form similarity—with plants (21), animals (22), and other body parts (23).

⁵ For example, *heya* ‘3SG goes/sets out’ could be used to describe the motion over land of either a single human or a single moose (hence two-legged and four-legged motion are conflated here), but a horse or a caribou or buffalo would require different motion verb stems. As per fn. 4, most position and dislocation (motion) verbs are classificatory and they reference diverse shape, constituency, and animacy distinctions in the stems themselves. It should thus not be terribly surprising that there is more specificity in the Dene verb stem than in the noun stem, as evident in these generic body part terms. See also fn. 15.

⁶ In perhaps the most striking case I have encountered of semantic chaining or lexical extension across body parts of different species of different phyla of the animal kingdom, the same body part term, *s-tlólé* or *s-thure*, which I will gloss loosely as ‘lobe’, shows up in the Dene Sų́líné expressions for ‘(human) ear lobe’, ‘chicken crop/croup/craw’, ‘turkey’, and ‘(seal) flipper’: as in *dene dzastlólé* ‘human ear-lobe’, *k’ásba dastlólé* ‘chicken chin-lobe’, *dastlúré* ‘chin-lobe’ (in a complete PART-FOR-WHOLE metonymy whereby the most salient part of the bird stands for the bird itself), and *lastlúré* ‘hand-lobe’, as in a seal’s flipper. Despite minor phonological variations in the shape of this stem morpheme, each instance features an *-s-* pre-stem interfix, whose presence between the possessor body part (*dza-*, *da-*, and *la-*) and the profiled subpart (*-tlólé* or *-thure*) is morphologically licit, but highly marked semantically. I have rare examples in my field notes of *sɨtsi* instead of the expected *sɨtsi* ‘my nose’ or *besdlok* instead of the expected *bedlok* ‘his/her laugh’ accompanied by comments from consultants saying that the *s*-marked body part was ‘cute’, ‘deformed’, or ‘distinctive’ in some way. The late Bob Young (p.c.) called it the “spurious *s*”, as he had encountered it in Navajo, as well, where it had much the same function.

⁷ Northern Dene people are riverine people and fish is a dietary staple. It is not surprising, then, that many fish part terms are monomorphemic and/or specific to fish: *hue gaye* ‘fish fin’, *hue k’ésé* ‘fish gill’, *hue gúthé* ‘fish scale’, and *hue k’oné* ‘fish eggs’ (although the latter might derive from a form-based metaphor and literally mean ‘fish fire’, since roe are generally red).

PEOPLE ARE PLANTS

- | | | | |
|---------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| (21) a. | <i>sichéné</i> | ‘my-wood/stick/branch’ | ‘my arm’ |
| b. | <i>sekechéne</i> | ‘my-foot-wood’ | ‘my ankle’ |
| c. | <i>betthú</i> | ‘3SG-(wood) knot’ | ‘his/her/its tongue’ |
| d. | <i>benajulé</i> [also: <i>dene jul</i>] | ‘3SG-pinecone’ | ‘his penis’ |
| e. | <i>bedaghezt’ok</i> | ‘3SG-mouth-around-grass’ | ‘his beard/moustache’ |

PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| (22) a. | <i>setthíghá</i> | ‘my-head-fur’ | ‘my hair’ |
| b. | <i>begheze</i> | ‘3SG-egg(s)’ | ‘his testicle(s)’ |

PARTS ARE OTHER PARTS (intra-domain metaphorical mapping based on form similarity)

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| (23) a. | <i>setth’utthila</i> | ‘my-breast-head-hand(extremity)’ | ‘my nipple’ |
| b. | <i>betth’ene</i> | ‘3SG-bone/skeleton’ | ‘his/her leg’ |
| c. | <i>setth’itth’ene</i> | ‘my-head-bone’ | ‘my skull’ |
| d. | <i>sets’atth’éné</i> | ‘my-hat-bone’ | ‘my forehead’ |

The examples in (24) and (25)-(26) below are all cases of intra-domain mappings described at length in Wilkins (1996). Although he posits an implicational hierarchy indicating a universal directionality for certain part-to-part mappings (upper body to lower body, as in WRIST → ANKLE or FINGER → TOE, or visible to invisible, as in PALM → SOLE), we can not really establish with any certainty the directionality of a few body part extensions in Dene Sų́líné. For example, *-t’á*, is a morpheme that figures in lexicalizations for ‘buttocks’, ‘cheek’, ‘palm’, and ‘sole’. These items are commonly construed and lexicalized similarly cross-linguistically because their relative flatness and fleshiness. Dene Sų́líné is no exception. However, it is difficult to determine whether the morpheme, *-t’á*, has a single basic meaning from which the others have extended, especially since *dene t’átt’hén*, lit. ‘person’s *t’á*-flesh’, can mean either ‘cheek’ or ‘buttocks’. I would submit that there are more simple compounds with *-t’á* that suggest it is the latter (which goes against Wilkins’ upper-to-lower hypothesis), as shown in (24e-h). Nevertheless, the morpheme also refers to ‘palm’ and ‘sole’ in the proper contexts.

FORM SIMILARITY

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (24) a. | <i>-t’á</i> | ‘butt/cheek’ | |
| b. | <i>dene t’átt’hén</i> | ‘person’s butt/cheek-flesh’ | ‘buttocks’, ‘cheek’ |
| c. | <i>deni t’ághé</i> | ‘(in) person’s (hand) butt/cheek’ | ‘palm’ |
| d. | <i>dene ket’á</i> | ‘person’s foot butt/cheek’ | ‘sole’ |
| e. | <i>ts’i t’ághe</i> | ‘boat’s butt’ | ‘keel’ |
| f. | <i>t’á?ih</i> | ‘butt-garment’ | ‘pants, trousers’ |
| g. | <i>sekwi t’ádhéth</i> | ‘child’s butt-cover’ | ‘diaper’ |
| h. | <i>t’áreghesdá</i> | ‘butt-I sat’ | ‘I rested’ |
| i. | <i>bet’á yeghikq</i> | ‘I put it in 3SG hands’ | ‘I handed it to him/her’ |

We've seen from the example in (24b) above that *-tthén* means 'flesh' generally. When modified by another body part, it can specify particular fleshy regions of the body, as in (25):

- (25) *dene ghú tthén* 'person's tooth flesh' 'gum (of mouth)'

I would also consider the semantic extension in (26a) as a case of intra-domain metonymic mapping, although the extension in (26b) does involve a shift from the purely physical to the more abstract inter-personal or social sphere and, thus, suggests a metaphorical extension from body to self as well. We frequently tap or place our hand on our chest when introduced to strangers as we speak our name. In Dene Sųliné, this semantic shift and relexicalization is reinforced by the use of the (less-frequent) nasal allomorph of the possessive prefix.⁸

PART FOR PHYSICAL WHOLE (26a) → PHYSICAL WHOLE FOR ABSTRACT WHOLE (SELF IS BODY) (26b)

- (26) a. *sezi* 'my-chest' 'my body (living)'
 b. *sizi* alternate possessed form of 'my-chest/body' 'my name'

Other body part terms involve a combination of metaphors and metonymies or, at the least, a combination of metonymies. In (27), we find a PROCESS FOR PRODUCT metonymy designating the nail as the dried part of a digit; however, no digit is explicitly mentioned. Instead, the WHOLE (hand/foot) stands for the PART (finger/toe) and a GENERIC expression, *-gané* 'dried', that's also used for dried fish, meat, berries, or even paint, designates the nail—something SPECIFIC. Not surprisingly, as indicated in (20) above, many body parts extend to both humans and other living creatures. Toenails are no exception and they also designate claws, hooves, and talons, especially when used with the non-specific 3SG possessive pronoun *e-*.

PROCESS FOR PRODUCT, WHOLE FOR PART, and GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

- (27) a. *belagané* '3SG-hand-dried' 'his/her fingernail'
 b. *bekegané* '3SG-foot-dried' 'his/her toenail'
 c. *ekegané* 'its-foot-dried' 'its claw, hoof, talon'

In (28), I list some other figurative body part terms next to a brief descriptive label indicating the metaphor or metonymy involved.

- (28) a. *benalchethé* '3SG's sack' 'his genitals' FORM SIMILARITY
 b. *setthighá* 'about my head' 'my brain' CONTAINER FOR CONTENTS
 c. *sedzagór* 'my lower leg-spear' 'my knee' ARTIFACTUAL FOR NATURAL
 d. *seberts'ene* 'that which is round' 'my navel' PROCESS FOR THEME
 [*<seber ts'i ?ane*] from my belly'

⁸ Note the two allomorphs for the possessive prefix for 1SG—a nasal version, *sĭ-*, in (26b) and (29d), and an oral version, *se-*, in (26a) and (29e). Dene languages often exploit allomorphy such as this for (re)lexicalization purposes.

Certain body part terms (e.g. ‘hand’, ‘foot’, ‘skin’, ‘guts’, and the previously discussed ‘buttocks’) enter into a number of expressions that either make reference via form similarity to a non-body part (something concrete as in an associated artifact or something a bit more abstract as in a remnant such as a print or track) or they enter into predications for processes in which the body part is somehow salient (e.g., expressions of position, transfer, ideation, emotion). Most of these are metaphorical as well as metonymic. Because they are so numerous and diverse, I offer no further analysis beyond their strategic listing and glossing.

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (29) a. | <i>-la</i> | ‘hand’ | ‘work’, ‘end/extremity’ |
| b. | <i>denelachédh</i> | ‘person’s hand-duck’ | ‘thumb’ |
| c. | <i>denelatthalé</i> | ‘person’s hand-awl’ | ‘finger’ |
| d. | <i>sila</i> | ‘my hand’ | |
| e. | <i>sela</i> | | ‘my job/work/partner’ |
| f. | <i>tlolá</i> | ‘grass-end’ | ‘grain, wheat’ |
| g. | <i>yohthtilá</i> | ‘house-head-end’ | ‘roof (peaked)’ |
| (30) a. | <i>-ké</i> | ‘foot’, ‘paw’ | ‘shoe’, ‘track’ |
| b. | <i>dene kéłts’élé</i> | ‘person’s foot-DIM’ | ‘person’s toe’ |
| c. | <i>dene ké</i> | ‘person’s foot’ | ‘person’s shoe’ |
| d. | <i>ké sūliné</i> | ‘genuine/real shoe’ | ‘moccasin’ |
| e. | <i>kéchogh</i> | ‘shoe-AUG’ | ‘boot’ |
| f. | <i>dene láké</i> | ‘human hand-foot’ | ‘finger print’ |
| g. | <i>łiké</i> | ‘dog paw’ | ‘dog tracks’ |
| h. | <i>náské ha</i> | ‘I set out footing (it)’ | ‘I will track (him/her/it)’ |
| (31) a. | <i>-chane</i> | ‘guts, intestines’ | |
| b. | <i>echq̄th’éné</i> | ‘its-gut-bone’ | ‘ribs’ |
| c. | <i>echátheda</i> | ‘3SG (baby) is gut-sitting’ | ‘she is pregnant’ |
| d. | <i>echánestı̄</i> | ‘I’m gut-lying’ | ‘I’m lying on my stomach’ |
| (32) a. | <i>-dhéth</i> | ‘skin, hide, pelt’ | ‘cover/sheath’ |
| b. | <i>tsádhéth</i> | ‘beaver pelt’ | ‘fur’ (generic commodity) |
| c. | <i>nadhéth</i> | ‘eye cover’ | ‘eyelid’ |
| d. | <i>dene dadhéth</i> | ‘person’s mouth cover’ | ‘lip’ |
| e. | <i>dene tthí dhéth</i> | ‘person’s head cover’ | ‘scalp’ |
| f. | <i>lezhéth</i> | ‘urine cover’ | ‘bladder’ |
| g. | <i>jiegaié dhéth</i> | ‘bean/pea cover’ | ‘pod’ |
| h. | <i>k’aigúé dhéth</i> | ‘caterpillar cover’ | ‘cocoon’ |
| i. | <i>t’elk’ithi dhéth</i> | ‘gun cover’ | ‘holster’ |
| j. | <i>tsqba dhéth</i> | ‘money cover’ | ‘wallet’ |

Finally, in (33), I list some assorted examples of material objects, either man-made or found in nature, like those in (32), which are constructed from a body part term which serves as a metaphorical source for some artifact part.

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| (33) a. | <i>yodq̄báli</i> | ‘house-mouth-canvas’ | ‘door’ |
| b. | <i>tthídá</i> | ‘headway-mouth’ | ‘doorway’ |
| c. | <i>idziaze</i> | ‘its little heart’ | ‘strawberry’ |
| d. | <i>ebq̄dzaghéjeré</i> | ‘its rotten rounded ear’ | ‘mushroom’ |
| e. | <i>ts’aq’áni k’oth</i> | ‘metal-burning (stove) neck’ | ‘chimney, stovepipe’ |

3.2.2 Effluvia

Most effluvium terms in Dene Sųliné are monomorphemic and, thus, unanalyzable. While both *lez* ‘urine’ and *del* ‘blood’, each a quintessential effluvium, are nouns cognate with verb stems, neither can be possessed as nouns (the same goes for *kut* ‘vomit’), although both stems do enter into figurative compounds, as in *lezdhéth* (lit. ‘urine-skin/sheath’, fig. ‘bladder’), or process metonymies, as in *del nılth’éli* (lit. ‘blood that has flowed together’, fig. ‘blood clot’). In any case, with verbal *-lez*, as in (34), we have an interesting chicken-and-egg conundrum: Is the proper basic gloss ‘drip’ or ‘urinate’? If the former, then the expressions in (34b-c) seem very literal (‘rain drips’, ‘blood drips’), while (34d) is merely vague in a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymic way (‘s/he’s dripping’). On the other hand, if the prototypical gloss of *-lez* has to do with ‘urinate’, then (34b-c) are quaintly metaphoric in a GREAT-CHAIN-OF-BEING sort of way (the environment is animate) or in an intra-domain (BLOOD IS URINE) and inter-domain (RAIN IS URINE) metaphoric way. The expressions in (34a) and (d) do contrast morphologically (and hence, semantically) on the basis of the pre-stem syllable; *de-* suggests an impersonal and intransitive process, while *he-* suggests a human actor and an imperfective process which might be transitive or intransitive. This contrast should reinforce a message to both linguists and learners that most lexical items in the language are *constructions* and therefore need to be analyzed holistically and in context, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the morphological overlap of certain stems.

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| (34) a. | <i>delez</i> | ‘it is dripping’ | |
| b. | <i>chq̄ delez</i> | ‘it’s dripping rain’ | ‘it’s raining hard’ |
| c. | <i>del delez</i> | ‘blood is dripping’ | ‘s/he’s bleeding’ |
| d. | <i>helez</i> | ‘3SG is urinating’ | |

A variety of other effluvium terms either have a figurative origin or they give rise to other figurative expressions. The term for ‘breast milk’, shown in (35), is simply the independent form of ‘breast’ (for inalienably possessed items like body parts, the independent form features no *-é* suffix). The examples in (36) and (37) present some other body-based effluvium extensions.

CONTAINER FOR CONTENTS

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|------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| (35) | <i>tth’u</i> | ‘unbound form of <i>breast</i> ’ | ‘breast milk’ |
|------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------|

EFFLUVIA ARE OTHER EFFLUVIA (intra-domain metaphorical mapping based on form similarity)

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| (36) a. | <i>edzaghé tsané</i> | ‘ear excrement’ | ‘earwax’** |
| b. | <i>sedayíhé</i> | ‘my mouth-breath’ | ‘my voice’ |

EFFLUVIA ARE WATER (inter-domain metaphorical mapping based on form similarity)

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| (37) a. | <i>senatúé</i> | ‘my eye-water’ | ‘my tears’ |
| b. | <i>hetsqnetué</i> | ‘defecation water’ | ‘diarrhea’ |

On analogy with (37a), I present (38a) along with a host of other expressions in (38b-m) built on the stem *-jer*, which enjoys a considerable vagueness or ambiguity among speakers, no doubt on account of the presence of this very salient and morphologically stable syllable in a wide range of expressions. Nevertheless, they all seem to share a certain semantic essence of being rotten or repulsive as well as being feared. I would argue here that, whatever the core meaning might indeed be, one sense is clearly ‘fart’, arguably a type of effluvium. I suggest that the expressions in (38) are probably related through a variety of metaphors and/or metonymies, although I have no basis for positing any directionality.⁹

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (38) a. | <i>najér</i> | ‘eye-fart/crud’ | ‘sleep/sand’** |
| b. | <i>hesjer</i> | ‘I farted’ | |
| c. | <i>nesjer</i> | ‘I’m starting to fart’ | ‘I’m afraid’ |
| d. | <i>bech’á nesjer</i> | ‘I’m afraid against him/her’ | ‘I’m afraid of him/her’ |
| e. | <i>hojere</i> | | ‘it’s dirty, messy, rotten’ |
| f. | <i>hónejere</i> | | ‘it’s dangerous’ |
| g. | <i>deljere</i> | | ‘it smells rotten’ |
| h. | <i>ejere</i> | ‘that which farts/is rotten, stinky’ | ‘cow’ |
| i. | <i>bek’eghiłjer</i> | ‘it’s rotting on 3SG’ | ‘his/her flesh is rotting/scabby’ |
| j. | <i>dene bek’eghiłjeri</i> | ‘the person who it’s rotting on’ | ‘leper’ |
| k. | <i>k’eljeri</i> | ‘that which is rotting on (s.o.)’ | ‘leprosy’ |

Finally, the term for ‘excrement’ *tsá* (or *-tsáné* in its combined form) gives rise to at least two non-body-based extensions for food terms, presumably based on a form similarity metaphor. I hesitate to include the generic word for ‘metal’ here, *tsqtsáné*, although it conforms to the same pattern as the pair in (39a-b).¹⁰ The remaining examples in (39c-f) also involve effluvia-based metaphors for introduced foodstuffs, based on blood, milk, and rendered fat (grease).

⁹ A ‘rotten’/‘be afraid of’ polysemy holds in a host of Athapaskan languages. For example, of the 15 languages Hoiyer 1956 examined for degree of cognation across a 100-item Swadesh-esque list, 12 featured the same stem for both, data were missing for the ‘rotten’ term in 2 of the languages, while only 1 had a different stem for the ‘rotten’ and ‘be afraid of’ terms. In all 15 languages, however, the ‘be afraid of’ stem was cognate with Dene Sųliné *-jer*.

¹⁰ The modifying morpheme *tsq* (no high tone) is not interpretable as a noun, although low-tone *-tsq* is the verb stem for ‘defecate’. Whatever it means, it also shows up in the word for ‘money’ *tsqba*, which seems to have the shape ‘X-for’. Could the word for metal, *tsqtsáné*, be reduplicative, as in ‘shit shit’?

FORM SIMILARITY (FOOD IS EFFLUVIA)

(39) a.	<i>t'izitthoétsané</i>	‘bee-excrement’	‘honey’
b.	<i>k'asbatsané</i>	‘chicken-excrement’	‘mustard’
c.	<i>ejeredelé</i>	‘cow-blood’	‘chocolate’
d.	<i>ejeretth'úaze</i>	‘little-cow-milk’	‘canned milk’
e.	<i>ejeretth'úétlesé</i>	‘cow-milk-grease’	‘butter’
f.	<i>ejeretth'úé niltth'éli</i>	‘cow-milk that flows together’	‘(cheese) curds’ [cf. (44f)]

3.2.3 Ailments and diseases

Generally, Dene Sųliné does not deploy a POSSESSION metaphor the way English does for expressing illness or some physiological condition. In English, one generically *has* measles, cancer, a stroke, a heart attack, an infection, an operation, a skin rash, an incurable disease, a cold, a headache, etc. Except for a single example in my corpus (in 40b), possession does not enter into the naming or predication of disease. Moreover, possession in most Dene languages is handled via a spatial metaphor, specifically a ‘from’ or ablative image schema (cf. Rice 2004), as shown in (40). The disease expression in (40b) is also based on a CAUSE FOR EFFECT (or at least a PART FOR WHOLE) metonymy, with *suga* ‘sugar’ standing for the disease, presumably because of the well-known role that diet and blood chemistry play in the disease.

HAVING IS BEING FROM (ablative-based possession)

(40) a.	<i>bets'í</i>	‘from 3SG’	‘it’s his/hers, s/he has it’
b.	<i>suga bets'í</i>	‘3SG has sugar’	‘s/he has diabetes’

The disease metaphor in more general use in Dene Sųliné is an anthropomorphic one. This metaphor, illustrated in (41), revolves around A CONDITION/DISEASE IS A WILD ANIMAL metaphor. We know this image of a wild animal is invoked on account of the fact that the verb stem *-dak* ‘eat’ is only used with non-domesticated animals.¹¹

DISEASE IS A DEVOURING ANIMAL

(41) a.	<i>gu sedak</i>	‘worms are eating me’	‘I have cancer’** ¹²
b.	<i>dekoth sedak</i>	‘phlegm is eating me’	‘I have a cold’
c.	<i>shiratt'én sedak</i>	‘heartburn is eating me’	‘I have heartburn**’
d.	<i>ya sedak</i>	‘lice are eating me’	‘I have/am infested with lice’

¹¹ For example, *-dak* is not used with dogs (the same verb stem associated with human eating is used instead) and it can be used figuratively with humans.

i.	<i>nunie deni hedak</i>	‘the wolf is mouthing a moose’	‘the wolf is eating a moose’
ii.	<i>łi { *hedak / sheti }</i>	‘the dog is *mouthing/eating its food’	‘the dog is eating’
iii.	<i>betsakwié hedak</i>	‘he’s mouthing his wife’	‘he’s beating his wife’

¹² Hotze Rullmann (personal communication) reminded me that in English, the disease, cancer, is named for a crab that pinches and bites—an underlying image similar to the Dene Sųliné case.

Not surprisingly, many other disease and physiological state expressions are built around body part terms. The body part, as the actual or supposed locus of the physiological response or condition, figures prominently in the following expressions, many of which are metaphorical and metonymic simultaneously. They tend to feature both a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy and a SYMPTOM IS DISEASE/CONDITION metaphor, as shown in (42). The ailments, expressed via verbs of hurting, being swollen, or stopping, can be temporary or chronic.

PART FOR WHOLE and SYMPTOM FOR DISEASE/CONDITION

(42) a.	<i>sedzidithé hílgház</i>	‘my lungs, they’re swollen’	‘I have pneumonia’
b.	<i>sedzidithé eyá</i>	‘my lungs hurt’	‘I have tuberculosis’
c.	<i>sedzaghe eyá</i>	‘my chest hurts’	‘I have bronchitis’
d.	<i>sebie eyá</i>	‘my stomach insides hurt’	‘I’ve got diarrhea’
e.	<i>setthi eyá</i>	‘my head hurts’	‘I’ve got a headache’
f.	<i>sedheri eyá</i>	‘my liver hurts’	‘I have cirrhosis’
g.	<i>bedzie hî?q</i>	‘3SG heart stopped’	‘s/he had a heart attack’**

I list a few miscellaneous expressions in (43) which defy neat classification, although they are clearly figurative. Whereas *eyá* ‘it hurts’ is a common expression covering a variety of ailments (and even psychological states; cf. (50g)), *da* ‘disease’ has also given rise to a number of GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymies:

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

(43) a.	<i>dadhi</i>	‘disease moves/happens’	‘suffering’
b.	<i>dene dadhihi</i>	‘person who suffers’	‘invalid’
c.	<i>î dâdaé</i>	‘dog mouth-disease’	‘rabies’

Beyond disease proper, a number of less severe ailments—skin conditions, in particular—are expressed via a figurative lexicalization, as shown in (44). In the examples in (44c-f), *tth’i* is another form for ‘body’, unrelated to *-tthén* encountered in (25).

SYMPTOM IS DISEASE or CAUSE FOR EFFECT and WHOLE FOR PART

(44) a.	<i>bek’erek’os</i>	‘it’s red on 3SG	‘s/he’s got measles’
b.	<i>dene tthí nédheli</i>	‘person’s head, that which is hot’	‘fever’ [cf. (74b)]
c.	<i>dene tth’i slini</i>	‘(on) person’s body it is evil’	‘hives’
d.	<i>dene tth’i háretl’ézi</i>	‘(on) person’s body that which is blue’	‘bruise’
e.	<i>dene tth’i dik’ósi</i>	‘(on) person’s body that which is red’	‘rash’
f.	<i>del niltth’éli</i>	‘blood that flows together’	‘blood clot’ [cf. (39f)]

3.2.4 Physiological states and conditions, both permanent and ephemeral

Many physiological conditions have lexicalized from more literal expressions, some of which describe the underlying cause of the condition, particular symptoms, or the result of the

condition. Some of these are built metonymically around a body part term. Others translate a specific behavior into a general condition. In (45) are expressions for being able to see or not (i.e. being blind) and for being able to hear or not (i.e. being deaf). Notably, the same verb stem, *-t'ĩ*, is used for ‘seeing’ and ‘hearing’. This stem is usually glossed as intransitive ‘see’, but perhaps it would be better to gloss it more generally as ‘perceive’. The predications for seeing and not seeing in (45a-b) and (46a) as well as the counterpart predications for hearing and not hearing in (45c-d) and (46b) all contain morphemes that appear to be incorporated body parts—*na(ghe)*- ‘eye’ and *dzi(ye)*- ‘ear’—not an uncommon verb formation strategy in Athapaskan (cf. S. Rice 2009: 124-126 and *passim* for discussion about Dene eating expressions incorporating ‘mouth’ terms). Indeed, the examples in (46c-d), including those in (47), also feature a body part as a salient participant, if not the logical subject.

PART FOR WHOLE and (DYS)FUNCTION FOR CONDITION

(45) a.	<i>nast'ĩ</i>	‘I eye-see’	‘I see well’
b.	<i>nast'ĩle</i>	‘I eye-see-not’	‘I can’t see/I’m blind’
c.	<i>dzióst'ĩ</i> (< <i>dziyé-hó-st'ĩ</i>)	‘I see in my ear’	‘I can hear’
d.	<i>dziyóst'ĩle</i> (< <i>dziyéhóst'ĩ</i>)	‘I see in my ear-not’	‘I can’t hear/I’m deaf’

PART FOR WHOLE and ABSENCE IS DYSFUNCTION

(46) a.	<i>naghedĩ</i>	‘eyes-without’	‘blindness’
b.	<i>dziedĩ</i> [< <i>dziye-dĩ</i>]	‘ears-without’	‘deafness’
c.	<i>dziyéđihi</i>	‘ears-without-NMLZ’	‘deaf person’
d.	<i>dzádĩ</i>	‘legs-without’	‘crippled/paralysis’
e.	<i>beyatié húle dene</i>	‘3SG talk is gone person’	‘deaf-mute’

PART FOR WHOLE and RESULT FOR CAUSE

(47) a.	<i>sedzie hĩdhu</i>	‘my heart is numb’	‘I’m hungry’
b.	<i>sedeyaghe hega</i>	‘in my throat, it is dry’	‘I’m thirsty’
c.	<i>bedhenĩt'ĩ</i>	‘3SG’S throat it is tight’	‘s/he’s a glutton’
d.	<i>seyidani?a</i>	‘my breath is blocked’	‘I have a lump in my throat’**

Dene Sųliné features a few other physiological state predications that are constructed on the basis of a general SYMPTOM FOR CONDITION or RESULT FOR CAUSE metonymy, shown in (48). The examples in (48b-c) also feature an orientation metaphor where OUT/AWAY IS NEGATIVE.

SYMPTOM FOR CONDITION (48a) and RESULT FOR CAUSE (48b-c)

(48) a.	<i>heldok</i>	‘3SG is cramping/convulsing’	‘s/he’s an epileptic’
b.	<i>ch’a ahostĩ</i>	‘my appearance is away/off-putting’	‘I’m ugly’
c.	<i>dene ch’arĩldhen</i>	‘person thinks/moves away’	‘s/he’s deformed’

In addition, there are physiological and emotional state predications in that are constructed on the basis of a particular metaphor within a general CAUSE FOR RESULT metonymy. Specifically, the

targeted state is conceptualized as an entity by means of an ONTOLOGICAL metaphor. Moreover, the now reified condition is both the subject of the expression and metaphorically construed as being physically located on or overcoming the experiencer, who by virtue of an OBJECT FOR EXPERIENCER metonymy is coded as the location. The examples given in (49) are highly conventionalized. In fact, (49a) with an unspecified subject, generally means ‘to be drunk.’

BEING ON IS HAVING EFFECT ON and UNDERGOING/SUFFERING IS BEING

- | | | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| (49) | a. | <i>sek'idher</i> | ‘UNSPEC is happening on me’ | ‘I’m drunk’ |
| | b. | <i>dáda sek'idher</i> | ‘illness is happening on me’ | ‘I’m sick’ |
| | c. | <i>bel sek'idher</i> | ‘sleep is happening on me’ | ‘I’m sleepy’ |
| | d. | <i>dekoth sek'idher</i> | ‘phlegm is happening on me’ | ‘I’m getting a cold’ |
| | e. | <i>ts'udi sek'enádher</i> | ‘laziness is on top on me’ | ‘I’m feeling lazy’ |
| | f. | <i>sek'enádher</i> | ‘UNSPEC is on me’ | ‘it’s bothering me’ |

3.2.5 Psychological State Predications

As was the case with many disease and physiological state expressions in which some body part stood as the actual or supposed locus of the physiological cause or symptom, so too are many attitudinal or psychological state predications based on a BODY PART FOR WHOLE PERSON metonymy whereby the predicated (literal) condition of the body part suggests a figurative condition of the whole person. As in many languages, the heart is construed as the locus of emotion in Dene Sų́liné. However, the figurative interpretation of specific attributes of hearts is somewhat different between it and English. The examples in (50) illustrate how an attribute of a part (heart) stands for the attitude of the whole (person), while those in (51) show how the behavior of the heart stands for some emotional reaction by the person.

ATTRIBUTE OF PART (heart) FOR ATTITUDE OF WHOLE (person)

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (50) | <i>bedzie...</i> | ‘her/his heart...’ | ‘s/he’s...’ |
| a. | <i>...netl'edh</i> | ‘...is mighty/powerful’ | ‘...hopeful, determined’ |
| b. | <i>...nátser</i> | ‘...is strong’ | ‘...courageous’ |
| c. | <i>...denur</i> | ‘...is soft’ | ‘...kind/humble’ |
| d. | <i>...nezq</i> | ‘...is good’ | ‘...good’ |
| e. | <i>...necho</i> | ‘...is big’ | ‘...big-hearted’** |
| f. | <i>...hule</i> | ‘...is absent’ | ‘...heartless’** |
| g. | <i>...eya</i> | ‘...hurts’ | ‘...heart-broken’** [cf. (42g)] |

BEHAVIOR OF PART (heart) FOR EMOTIONAL REACTION OF WHOLE (person)

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (51) | a. | <i>bedzie nalther</i> | ‘3SG’s heart shivered/shook’ | ‘s/he was startled’ |
| | b. | <i>bedzereltth'er</i> | ‘3SG’s heart took off’ | ‘s/he got scared’ |
| | | | | ‘her/his heart was racing’** |
| | c. | <i>yets'én bedzie nághidá</i> | ‘3SG’s heart moves towards 4SG’ | ‘s/he’s furious at him/her’ |
| | d. | <i>sedzie t'a heneslî</i> | ‘I’m happy because of my heart’ | ‘I’m elated’ (very positive) |

Most of the remaining figurative expressions in my corpus pertaining to emotions, attitudes, or behaviors involve metaphors within metonymies. Generally, they are of two types. In (52), I give examples of chained metonymies whereby a CONTAINER (*-ni-* ‘mind’) STANDS FOR ITS CONTENTS (thoughts) and the CONTENTS STAND FOR THE EFFECT THEY PRODUCE. In addition, in (52) and (53a-c), orientation metaphors are invoked, whereby IN IS POSITIVE emotionally, while OUT/AWAY/ABSENT IS NEGATIVE. The examples in (53) and (54) all involve the same generic verb stem of ideation {-*dhen/-then*}. Through juxtaposition or incorporation of a PP or NP complement, specific types of mental activities or states can be predicated. In (53d-e) and (54), the specific target of ideation—the PP or NP complement—stands for a general attitude or habitual behavior in a SPECIFIC IS GENERIC metonymy, at the same time that the target of ideation becomes the target of emotion in a THOUGHTS ARE EMOTIONS metaphor.

(52) a.	<i>sinié</i> (< <i>sini yé</i>)	‘(it’s) in my mind’	‘I’m happy/glad/pleased’
b.	<i>sɪnik’éch’a</i>	‘(it’s) away from my mind’	‘I’m disappointed’
c.	<i>ánihi?á</i>	‘my mind is in the wild’	‘I’m lonesome’ ¹³
d.	<i>?enilé</i> (< <i>?eni ?ilé</i>)	‘3SG is not minded’	‘s/he’s naughty/silly’
(53) a.	<i>ch’a nɪdhen</i>	‘3SG thinks away’	‘s/he’s stubborn’
b.	<i>bech’a nesthen</i>	‘I think away from 3SG’	‘I disagree with him/her’
c.	<i>behél nesthen</i>	‘I think with 3SG’	‘I agree with him/her’
d.	<i>beka nesthen</i>	‘I think for 3SG’	‘I want him/her/it’
e.	<i>tsqba ghq nɪdhen</i>	‘3SG thinks about money’	‘s/he is miserly’
(54) a.	<i>sqnesthen</i>	‘I play-think’	‘I’m good with children’
b.	<i>dlonesthen</i>	‘I laughter-think’	‘I have a good sense of humor’
c.	<i>estenesthen</i>	‘I grief-think’	‘I’m feeling sorry for myself’

Other generic verbs of cognition work similarly in Dene Sḡliné. By means of an incorporated postpositional or nominal complement, a specific mental state, attitude, or emotional reaction has clearly become lexicalized. Many of these formatives are no longer productive.¹⁴ Examples of GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC craving and thinking are given in (55)-(56):

(55) a.	<i>bérbaidher</i>	‘for meat I suffer/crave’	‘I’m hungry’
b.	<i>túbaidher</i>	‘for water I suffer/crave’	‘I’m thirsty’
c.	<i>?ebaidher</i>	‘for unspecified I suffer/crave’	‘I’m horny’
d.	<i>*tsqbabaidher</i>	‘for money I suffer/crave’	*‘I’m greedy’

¹³ Compare (52c) with the incorporated *-ni-* ‘mind’ as the logical subject, with the less paronymic *áhiya*, lit. ‘I went into the wilderness’, fig. ‘I’m lost’ (literally or figuratively). The same orientation metaphor obtains, since being ‘out there’ is equally construed in a negative way.

¹⁴ Their productivity is a topic addressed in Rice (1997).

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (56) a. | <i>bet'a néthi?a</i> | 'I cognize with 3SG' | 'I'm {devoted to, trust} him/her' |
| b. | <i>bena néthi?a</i> | 'I cognize against 3SG' | 'I'm vengeful against him/her' |

Finally, there are a handful of expressions in my corpus that describe an attribute or attitude in terms of a particular activity. Specifically, they build on the idea that doing something well or not well implies a general attitude or attribute surrounding the process. These are therefore PART FOR WHOLE metonymies in the sense that something done well (or not) is something done habitually. Moreover, (57c-d) also involve a PERCEPTION IS COGNITION metaphor.

- | | | | |
|---------|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| (57) a. | <i>dene hotie ghəna</i> | '3SG is living well' | 's/he's healthy' |
| b. | <i>dene hqzq yalti</i> | '3SG prays good' | 's/he's religious' |
| c. | <i>suwarelti</i> [<i><sugha ghereltthi</i>] | '3SG hears well' | 's/he understands' |
| d. | <i>sugha ghereltthịle</i> | '3SG didn't hear well' | 's/he misunderstood' |
-
- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| (58) a. | <i>axe e'erit'i</i> | 'the one who seems proud' | 'snob' |
| b. | <i>axe ghehkádh</i> | '3SG is trotting proud/pretty' | 's/he's well off' |

3.3 *Fauna and their feathers, fur, fins, and feelers*

An extremely robust lexical field for metonymies involves animal naming. Folk etymologies abound for explanations behind some of the lexicalizations presented here. We need not be particularly interested in the details here, except to say that some aspect, attribute, physical property, behavior, salient association, or the like has been codified for referential purposes. Consequently, metonymy seems to be the dominant semantic trope, relativization the usual morphological mechanism, and mythical beliefs, as much as physical attributes, habitual behaviors, or location associations, the source of the particular metonymy.

3.3.1 *Naming mammals*

As I stated earlier, figurativity in Athapaskan nomenclature is not limited to terms of acculturation. Nowhere is this observation more readily apparent than in terms for animals in Dene Słiné. Both indigenous and introduced fauna are named via metonymies and metaphors, as only a dozen or so native fauna are named with monosyllabic stems.¹⁵ Superordinate terms are

¹⁵ Here is a nearly exhaustive list of monolexical animal terms: *chedh* 'duck', *dq* 'mole', *del* 'crane', *dih* 'grouse', *dza* 'dove', *dzen* 'muskrat', *gah* 'rabbit', *hah* 'goose', *li* 'dog', *lué* 'fish', *sas* 'bear', *tha* 'marten', *tsá* 'beaver', and *ts'i* 'porcupine'. It fails to include the three animals of most critical food value to northern Dene peoples, the caribou, the moose, and the bison (buffalo). I address the 'bison' term in the text. The word for caribou, *etthén*, is not mono-lexical. It could derive from *e-tthén* (lit. 'its living flesh'). Some bands of Dene Słiné were in fact referred to as 'caribou eaters' and it would not be surprising if either the flesh word came to be associated specifically with caribou (like O.E *dēor* 'ruminant animal' → 'deer') or the caribou term, as the most common food source, generalized to include all edible flesh sources. As for the 'moose' term, *deni* (or *denie*) it seems constructed out of a common thematic prefix

rare in Athapaskan languages, but a few exist, although they are metonymic, based on either a salient PART or a salient BEHAVIOR standing FOR THE WHOLE, as shown in (59):

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| (59) a. | <i>ech'erisline</i> | 'the evil-tendoned one' | 'wild animal' |
| b. | <i>tich'anadie</i> | 'the one that wanders outside' | 'wild animal' |

One could argue that the examples in (59) also feature a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy since all animals have tails and all animals wander. This trope is more obvious in the next set featuring more specific indigenous animals in the Dene world:

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC & ATTRIBUTE FOR ENTITY

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (60) a. | <i>nagidhi</i> | 'the one who twists' | 'fox' |
| b. | <i>námbe</i> | 'the one who swims across' | 'otter' |
| c. | <i>nadudhi</i> | 'the one who slithers' | 'snake' |
| d. | <i>nághai</i> | 'the one who takes down' | 'wolverine' |
| e. | <i>nunie</i> | 'nostril to the ground' | 'wolf' |
| f. | <i>núniets'elas</i> | 'little wolf (nostril-to-the-ground)' | 'coyote' |
| g. | <i>nultsihi</i> | 'the one who sniffs the ground' | 'skunk' |
| h. | <i>telk'ali</i> | 'clean sock one' | 'weasel' |
| i. | <i>ejere</i> | 'the stinky/rotten one' | 'bovine' (bison, cow) |

A small set of indigenous animals is lexicalized using some sort of marking reversal or metaphorical extension of a native animal term. Although (60i) originally meant 'bison', it has now come to refer only to domesticated cattle. Bison are now referred to as *tloghijere* 'grass-cow'. Similarly, in some Dene languages, the widely cognate term for 'dog', {*tli*, *li*, *tle*}, is now used exclusively for 'horse' rather than the common label—something like *licho* 'dog-big'. This has required a different lexicalization strategy for the old native concept, 'dog', which inevitably comes about through a behavioral attribute metonymy like those in (60). The only indigenous animal term I know of that is clearly metaphoric in Dene Słliné is the word for 'bat'. It involves the modification of a native animal term, *tsá* 'beaver', resulting in an intra-domain metaphor. In addition, as is common with many introduced (via colonization) or encountered (via migration) animal terms, it is lexicalized like the others in (61), through the addition of a quantity- (size) or quality- (valuation) based suffix, or both. I list a host of similar examples from multiple semantic fields in Tables 1-3 in §3.5.3.

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| (61) a. | <i>tsáret'anaze</i> | 'little flying beaver' | 'bat' |
| b. | <i>licho</i> | 'big dog' | 'horse' |
| c. | <i>etthénslinaze</i> | 'little evil caribou' | 'sheep, lamb, goat' |

de- found with stative verbs, as discussed in (6), and the generic stem for 'food' *ni*. So *dení*, might literally be glossed as 'that which is food.' Moose are treated linguistically like human beings, unlike other animals, as they both eat and walk with the same verb stems used for human action. See fn. 5.

Generally, all introduced or encountered fauna have fanciful (i.e. metaphorical) names, as predicted by Brown (1999). The expressions in (62) exemplify typical lexicalization strategies deployed, one involving a GENERIC ATTRIBUTE FOR SPECIFIC ENTITY metonymy and the other an intra-domain, BIOTYPE-FOR-OTHER-BIOTYPE metaphor in an attribute-based metonymy.

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| (62) a. | <i>dene hedareli</i> | ‘the one who imitates a man’ | ‘monkey’ |
| b. | <i>gu detth’eni</i> | ‘the worm/bug that’s boned’ | ‘turtle’ [cf. (63d)] |

Because terms for most introduced animal concepts for non-indigenous animals like ‘elephant’, ‘giraffe’, refer to the obviously salient body part (i.e. trunk or neck) and are both rarely used and have not conventionalized across speakers or communities, I refrain from including them here.

3.3.2 Naming non-mammals

Due to the paucity of figurative examples, I lump metaphoric and metonymic terms for insects (63), birds (64), and fish (65) together in this section. Most of these examples are metonymic, involving the expression of some attribute or behavior which modifies some generic insect term like *gu* ‘worm/bug’, *yá* ‘flea/louse’, or *tł’izi* ‘horsefly’, as shown in (63a-g). Most of these are compounds, which generally involve some sort of metaphorical marking reversal or other semantic extension. The remaining examples in (63h-k) are deverbal and therefore metonymic.

INSECT TERMS

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| (63) a. | <i>k’áigúé</i> | ‘willow worm’ | ‘caterpillar’ |
| b. | <i>gukale</i> | ‘flat worm; worm that is flat’ | ‘bedbug’** |
| c. | <i>guslinaze</i> | ‘little evil worm’ | ‘grub’ |
| d. | <i>gu detth’enaze</i> | ‘the little boned bug’ | ‘beetle’ [cf. (62b)] |
| e. | <i>yagolas</i> | ‘little sky worm’ | ‘butterfly’** |
| f. | <i>tthot’iné yá</i> | ‘Englishman’s louse’ | ‘flea’ |
| g. | <i>tł’izi tthoghe</i> | ‘yellow horsefly’ | ‘bee’ |
| h. | <i>dejoli</i> | ‘the one that’s pointed’ | ‘mosquito’ |
| i. | <i>horádzi</i> | ‘the one who winds around’ | ‘spider’ |
| j. | <i>honeltónas</i> | ‘little holdable thing’ | ‘no-see-ums’** |
| k. | <i>chqdii</i> | ‘the ones that travel’ | ‘ants’ |

Dene Sųliné has two generic ‘bird’ terms, one for raptors, *det’ani*, and the other for smaller (usually) songbirds, *iyese*, which is unanalyzable to my speakers, though clearly composed. Both terms are metonymic and enter into complex expressions for naming specific types of birds.

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| (64) a. | <i>det’ani</i> | ‘the winged/feathered one’ | ‘bird (especially a raptor)’ |
| b. | <i>dádzeni</i> | ‘the black-beaked one’ | ‘loon’ |
| c. | <i>tł’oghetsané</i> | ‘grass-jay’ | ‘blackbird’ |

d.	<i>iyese</i>	(unanalyzable)	‘(song) bird’
e.	<i>dení iyeseze</i>	‘little moose bird’	‘hummingbird’
f.	<i>iyese yaltihi</i>	‘the bird that talks’	‘parrot’

Lué is the generic Dene Sų́liné word for ‘fish’, although it is probably derived from the most prototypical northern fish, *lú* ‘whitefish’. In (65), we see some simple examples based on the stem *lué* ‘fish’. I survey some specific examples of what are in fact metonymies based on qualitative properties of entities.

(65) a.	<i>lú</i>	‘whitefish’	
b.	<i>lué</i>	‘of/like whitefish’	‘fish’
c.	<i>huezáné</i>	‘fish-black’	‘trout’
d.	<i>huezáné lą́t’i</i>	‘it’s like trout’	‘salmon’
e.	<i>są́t’ie</i> (< <i>zan/zen-t’i</i>)	‘black-it.is/appears’	‘grayling (fish)’
f.	<i>egóthécháe</i> (> <i>gócháe</i>)	‘its neck is big’	‘sucker (fish)’
g.	<i>déldeli</i>	‘the red-colored one’	‘red sucker’
h.	<i>echui</i>	‘the spiny one’	‘pickerel’

3.4 Places and spaces

Topographic and geographic terms are relatively under-represented in my corpus. Place names, on the other hand, are nearly always metonymic, with an important event or geological feature entering into the name. I do not have space to list any here, most of which only name small hamlets, rivers, and lakes particular to the Dene Sų́liné world. Rather, I list figurative expressions that describe natural phenomena (§3.4.1) and cultivated places (§3.4.2).

3.4.1 The natural world

Of the classic four basic elements, ‘earth’ (*nih*), ‘sky’ (*ya*), ‘fire’ (*kón*), and ‘water’ (*tu*), all are monomorphemic and unanalyzable. However, all four—along with monosyllabic terms for other natural entities such as ‘sun’ (*sa*), ‘star’ (*tthén*), ‘rock’ (*tthe*), ‘sand’ (*tthai*), ‘rain’ (*chq*), ‘falling snow’ (*tsıl*), ‘snow on the ground’ (*yath*), ‘ice’ (*ten*), ‘river’ (*des*), ‘hill’ (*sheth*), ‘cover’ (*tél*) and ‘island’ (*nu*)—enter into composite expressions which are figurative in some way.

METAPHORICAL COMPOUNDS

(66) a.	<i>shéth-chogh</i>	‘hill-AUG’	‘mountain’
b.	<i>nın-teli</i>	‘earth-cover’	‘muskeg’
c.	<i>tł’o-teli</i>	‘grass-cover’	‘prairie’
d.	<i>sa t’ulé</i>	‘sun rope’	‘sunbeam/moonbeam’
e.	<i>tetl’e-zaé</i>	‘night-sun’	‘moon’
f.	<i>tsıl-lu</i>	‘frozen falling snow’	‘hail’

METONYMIC DEVERBAL EXPRESSIONS

(67) a.	<i>yélkq</i> (< <i>ya hélkq</i>)	‘sky-it lights up’	‘it’s dawn’
b.	<i>hoye</i>	‘inside AREAL (a place)’	‘hole’
c.	<i>xátaili</i>	‘water which is flowing out’	‘spring’
d.	<i>niłts’i</i>	‘that which blows’	‘wind’
e.	<i>horádzi yélu</i>	‘the spider weaved it’	‘rainbow’**
f.	<i>náhagez</i>	‘PL things move randomly/stir’	‘fog’
g.	<i>nayelka nághegez</i>	‘it lights it up, it stirs’	‘northern lights’

3.4.2 The human world

As prototypical hunter-gatherers, Dene peoples were traditionally mobile, engaging in seasonal migrations as a band as well as more solitary living out in the bush along a trap line. Most encampments were temporary and permanent settlements only came about with the signing of treaties with the British Crown in the late 19th century. The notion of a human place centers around the concept ‘fire’, *kón*. The ‘place of the fire’ (lit. ‘on the fire’) is *kónk’é*. Being ‘around/at/beside the fire’ is *kóni/kóné*. I believe that there is good evidence for proposing that, over time, this PP reduced phonetically as it became more abstract semantically. The term *kóq̣* (many alternate spellings exist, including *kóq̣*, *kóq̣é*, and even *kóq̣̣*) has taken on a variety of contemporary meanings from ‘campsite’, ‘house’, or ‘building’ all the way to ‘village’ or ‘town’. Thus, ‘(the place) beside the fire’ extended to mean ‘(the place) where people are’ in what is perhaps a WHOLE FOR PART metonymy. This highly productive term has compounded morphologically with a large number of lexical items to produce many of the specialized buildings (or rooms) that one finds in a township. Semantically, these composite terms involve a CONTENTS FOR CONTAINER metonymy, as happens when a space turns into a place.

CONTENTS FOR CONTAINER

(68) a.	<i>yatikóq̣</i>	‘talk/prayer-house’	‘church’
b.	<i>tsq̣bakóq̣</i>	‘money-house’	‘bank’
c.	<i>tsq̣kóq̣</i>	‘shit-house’	‘toilet, outhouse’
d.	<i>eyakóq̣</i>	‘hurt-house’	‘hospital’
e.	<i>ejerekóq̣</i>	‘cow-house’	‘barn’
f.	<i>dzólkq̣</i>	‘ball-house’	‘pool hall’
g.	<i>sekwi hóneltenikóq̣</i>	‘children they.are.taught-house’	‘school’

Traditional dwellings of Northern Dene peoples were tipis—*niábali* (literally, ‘that which hangs/flaps/drapes’), erected using multiple animal hides sewn together and wrapped around a dozen or so long wooden poles arranged in a conical shape. The term has come to mean any canvas tent, a (weak) metaphorical extension of this original metonymy. The same term can mean ‘sails’ as well, as in *ts’i-niábali ts’i* ‘sailboat’ (lit. ‘boat-canvas boat’).

Two very productive place-building morphemes which are suspiciously cognate (and for which a plausible shared etymology could be projected), which overlap semantically, and for which any tone differences are usually neutralized, are *-k'e* 'on/place' and *-k'é* 'on surface of/hole'. Despite inconsistencies in how speaker-consultants pronounce these morphemes (which I have tried to transcribe and represent orthographically as uttered), speakers are fairly adamant about glossing one as a 'place' and the other as a kind of 'hole'. Significantly, there is a nice minimal pair between (69b) and (70b) which confirms the meaning contrast. In any case, the semantic extension from an adpositional relation to an abstract location is well attested cross-linguistically. The Dene Sų́líné postposition, *-k'e*, implies contact between some unspecified figure and a surface-like ground location. A metonymic shift to the actual place that the contact surface occupies does not require much cognitive imagination, nor does a further extension from contact with two-dimensional surface to penetration through it in order to access a three-dimensional container or hole below or behind it.

(69) a.	<i>k'e</i>	'on'	'place'
b.	<i>yak'e</i>	'sky-place'	'heaven'
c.	<i>kónk'é</i>	'fire-place'	'campsite'
d.	<i>nihók'é</i>	'land-place'	'farm, field'
e.	<i>náinik'é</i>	'back-and-forth place'	'store'
f.	<i>tth'áik'é</i>	'dish-place'	'cupboard'
(70) a.	<i>k'é</i>	'on'	'hole, opening'
b.	<i>yak'é</i>	'sky-hole'	'window'
c.	<i>tuk'é</i>	'water-hole'	'well'
d.	<i>yoréldedhék'é</i>	'key-hole'	'lock'
e.	<i>bqlaghek'é</i>	'button-hole'	'buttonhole'

3.5 *Terms of acculturation*

Culture drives lexicalization whenever there is a need for increased referential diversity as happens through experiential circumstance or cross-cultural contact. Lexical innovations brought about by the latter are the most striking because there is generally a high expectation that foreign concepts will be lexicalized in a creative and figurative way. While there are several dozen borrowed terms (from French, chiefly) for physical artifacts, domesticated animals, church-related concepts, and the like introduced into Dene culture by Europeans, most terms of acculturation have been constructed using morphological material and lexicalization patterns already present in the language and highly pervasive in Athapaskan languages generally. With the exception of some wholesale conversions already discussed (e.g., *-la*, 'hand' and *-ke* 'foot'),

there are few straightforward extensions that do not involve additional modification through compounding or relativization. Some notable examples are given in (71):

NATURAL IS ARTIFACTUAL (71a-b) and FORM/FUNCTIONAL SIMILARITY (71a-c)

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| (71) a. | <i>sa</i> | ‘sun’ | ‘clock’ |
| b. | <i>tthe</i> | ‘stone’ | ‘pipe, cast’ |
| c. | <i>itsólé</i> | ‘rosehip’ | ‘tomato’ |

Each of the examples in (71) is based on a metaphor. Although I have not performed a quantificational analysis like Brown (1999) did for his 77 terms of acculturation in Dene Słliné to see whether, in fact, natural kinds tend to be lexicalized metaphorically while artifacts tend to be metonymic, this is the impression I have from my study of the language. Most of the terms described and illustrated in this section involve artifacts and concepts that would have been commonly found in Dene homes and communities through the 1940s-1950s, the last time a majority of the community still spoke Dene Słliné as a first language. The ravages of the residential school system and land loss to the government, military, oil and gas industry, and non-native farmers really took their toll on family structure and traditional livelihoods after World War II. Therefore, most terms of acculturation listed here have a 19th century to mid-20th century feel to them.

Many of the natural and acculturated artifact examples in (72)-(95) involve metaphors (based on physical and/or functional similarities) and metonymies simultaneously. I have loosely grouped the examples by lexical field or morphological stem, depending on where the highest-level generalization can be made. For the most part, the examples in this extended section involve the lexicalization of nominal entities. These may come about through compounding, deverbalization, or suffixation. The end result is a new set of nouns (and a few stative relations) from an old set of diverse lexical material.

3.5.1 *Recycling the old for the new*

Compounds with *-tu* ‘water’ are especially numerous, still productive, and a good place to start in describing Dene Słliné terms of acculturation. The contribution of *-tué* as the head element in the compounds in (72) is likely to contribute the notion of ‘liquid’, in a SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC initial metonymy. The modifying element suggests the source domain to which the thing named by the overall compound belongs (perhaps with the exception of *kóntué* ‘alcohol’ (lit. ‘fire-water’) and *k’estué* ‘watermelon’ (lit. ‘aspen-water’ → ‘sap’). Although these two exceptions are strikingly metaphorical, the remaining examples in (72) could safely be described as metonymic in, ironically, a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC way.

(72) a.	<i>tué</i>	‘(of) water’	‘liquid’
b.	<i>jiétué</i>	‘berry-water’	‘wine, juice’
c.	<i>t’olátué</i>	‘grain-water’	‘beer’
d.	<i>senaghetué</i>	‘my eye-water’	‘my tears’
e.	<i>dechentué</i>	‘tree-water’	‘sap’
f.	<i>k’estué</i>	‘aspen-water’	‘watermelon’
g.	<i>eghézétué</i>	‘egg-water’	‘egg white’
h.	<i>erihlt’istué</i>	‘writing-water’	‘ink’

The contribution of *tu-* ‘water’ as the modifying element in the compounds in (73) contributes, respectively and metonymically, the notion of ‘constituency’ in (a), ‘typical contents’ in (b), and ‘location’ in (c)—all subparts or associated features of water, rather than the whole substance.

(73) a.	<i>tutlesé</i>	‘water-grease’	‘kerosene’
b.	<i>tuteli</i>	‘water-container’	‘bottle, pail’
c.	<i>tuhé</i>	‘water-fish’	‘salmon’

In (74), the contribution of *tu-* as an incorporated verb complement or object of an incorporated postposition only invokes literal water (arguably) in (74c-e). As all the examples involve processes standing either for entities (74a-b) or other processes (74c-e), they are all metonymic. All five examples suggest the initial phase of the process that brings about the lexicalized result.

(74) a.	<i>tunilkedh</i>	‘water comes together’	‘blister’
b.	<i>tu nédheli</i>	‘water which is hot/heated’	‘soup’ [cf. (44b)]
c.	<i>túbaidher</i>	‘for water I crave’	‘I’m thirsty’
d.	<i>túyenasther</i>	‘I’m in water’	‘I’m swimming’
e.	<i>tú nádq̃n</i>	‘3SG drank water’	‘s/he drowned’

As in pre-colonial times, wood (*dechen*), stone (*tthe*), and rawhide (*-dhehth*) were the most common source materials used by Indigenous peoples in the subarctic to construct cultural artifacts for a post-colonial life-style. The following domestic objects could be considered double metonymies. They are compounds, of a sort, with the stem (left-most element) describing the source material, *wood*, or the shape of the new artifact, *stick*. In (75a-d), the modifying element describes the process that the artifact is associated with (sleeping, sitting, writing), while in (75e-g), it describes a salient entity associated with some process. Moreover, in these last four examples it is shape (stick-like) rather than internal constituency that is most likely to be the profiled contribution of the stem *-chené*. Nevertheless, I have glossed all uses as ‘wood’.

(75) a.	<i>etéchené</i>	‘one person lies-wood’	‘bed’
b.	<i>edáchené</i>	‘one person sits-wood’	‘chair’
c.	<i>l̥ichogh k’e dáhchené</i>	‘one person sits on horse-wood’	‘saddle’

d.	<i>erihł'ischené</i>	'one marks it-wood'	'pencil, pen'
e.	<i>edhéthchené</i>	'hide-wood'	'stretcher (frame for hide)'
f.	<i>hodethchené</i>	'screw-wood'	'screw-driver'
g.	<i>jéthchené</i>	'fishhook-wood'	'fishing pole'

The examples in (76)-(77) involve figurative extensions around the morpheme *yú* 'clothing, clothes'. In (76), we find metonymic compounds built on the same essential and general metaphor whereby the most personal of personal effects—clothing—generalizes to mean 'stuff, belongings' so it can then particularize through a metonymy to mean different kinds of personal effects. In (77), we find other household items that pertain to storing or cleaning clothes. Some of these are what Brown (1999) would call descriptive comments about functional utility.

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

(76) a.	<i>yúé</i>	'of clothing, clothes'	'belongings, gear'
b.	<i>layúé</i>	'hand-gear'	'tool, equipment'
c.	<i>jéth layúé</i>	'fishhook-gear'	'fishing tackle'
d.	<i>sqyúé</i>	'fun-gear'	'toy'
e.	<i>yísi hoyúé</i>	'inside it place-gear'	'furniture'
f.	<i>sqyúé</i>	'good-gear'	'jewelry'
(77) a.	<i>yúтели</i>	'clothes-container'	'wash tub'
b.	<i>yú dechen teli</i>	'clothes-wooden-container'	'trunk'
c.	<i>yúch'elaze</i>	'little torn cloth/clothes'	'rag'
d.	<i>bet'á yú delk'ali</i>	'with it, that which makes clothes white'	'bleach'
e.	<i>bet'á yú k'enátsili</i>	'with it, that which makes clothes clean'	'washing machine'
f.	<i>beyé yú thelai</i>	'in it, one puts clothes'	'dresser, suitcase'

In (77e) above, we see that the expression for 'washing machine' *be-t'á yú k'e-nát-tsil-i* (lit. 'with-it clothes on-it.makes-clean-the one' or 'that which makes clothes clean'), features the verb stem *-tsil*. This morpheme is cognate with the noun for 'falling snow', first seen in (66f) as well as in the term for 'snowflake' *tsilkaré* (lit. 'falling.snow-flat'). No doubt through a form-based (and perhaps even color-based) metaphor, the morpheme for snow came to mean 'soap' (or more accurately, 'soapflakes') and, through an INSTRUMENT FOR PROCESS metonymy, the verb stem for 'clean'. We find this 'snow' → 'soap' → 'clean' morpheme *tsil* in a number of expressions, which, considered individually, might otherwise not seem very figurative:

(78) a.	<i>datsil</i>	'soap'	
b.	<i>selák'e nátsil</i>	'I am washing (on) my hands'	
c.	<i>bet'a eghú k'enátsili</i>	'with it, the thing that teeth are cleaned'	'toothpaste'
d.	<i>beyé k'enáts'eltsili</i>	'in it, the thing that people are cleaned'	'bathtub'

Another metaphorically driven polysemy chain arguably holds between the words for ‘sock/stocking’ (the traditional rawhide legging which covered the foot and leg), *tel*, and the all-purpose ‘container’ word, *тели*. Although the latter is considered monomorphemic by speakers, it has the form of a derived word like *tel-li* ‘sock-like’ or *tel-e* ‘of a sock’. Bi-syllabic stems are exceedingly rare in Dene Sų́líné. In any case, *тели*, is a very productive stem and enters into lexicalizations for all manner of closed or semi-closed containers. The examples in (79a-f) involve a CONSTITUENT-BASED metonymy; the material substance describes the thing it makes. The examples in (79g-h) involve a CONTENTS FOR CONTAINER metonymy. All the examples in (79) are, therefore, PART FOR WHOLE metonymies of one sort or another.

(79) a.	<i>тели</i>	‘container’	‘pail, pan, pot, motor’
b.	<i>xq̃iteli</i>	‘root-container’	‘(spruce root) basket’
c.	<i>k’áiteli</i>	‘willow-container’	‘(willow) basket’
d.	<i>tsq̃tsánételi</i>	‘metal-container’	‘tin can’
e.	<i>ttheteli</i>	‘stone-container’	‘jug’
f.	<i>dechenteli</i>	‘wooden-container’	‘wooden box’
g.	<i>tuteli</i>	‘water-container’	‘bottle’
h.	<i>tsq̃bateli</i>	‘money-container’	‘cash register, safe’

Like ‘soap’ and ‘container’ examined above, other household items, especially foodstuffs, have a metaphorical origin in Dene Sų́líné. I list some below in groups with their literal stem(s).

FORM SIMILARITY

(80) a.	<i>t’o(gh)</i>	‘grass’	
b.	<i>t’o-lá</i>	‘grass-hand/end’	‘grain’
c.	<i>t’olá-tué</i>	‘grain-water’	‘beer’
d.	<i>t’ochenas</i>	‘wooden grass-DIM’	‘carrot’
(81) a.	<i>thai</i>	‘sand’	
b.	<i>dedhai</i>	‘that which is sandy’	‘salt’
c.	<i>dedhaidzeni</i>	‘salt that is black’	‘pepper’

FORM SIMILARITY (103a-b) and PROCESS FOR RESULT (103c)

(82) a.	<i>lés, leze</i>	‘powder/dust’	‘flour’
b.	<i>konleze</i>	‘fire-powder/dust’	‘ashes’
b.	<i>lést’éth</i>	‘flour-baked’	‘bread, bannock’

GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

(83) a.	<i>dene ni</i>	‘human food’	‘food’
b.	<i>dlie ni</i>	‘squirrel food’	‘nuts, peanut butter’
c.	<i>l̥icho ni</i>	‘horse (big-dog) food’	‘oats’

NATURAL FOR ARTIFACTUAL & CONTENTS FOR CONTAINER

(84) a.	<i>bekóné</i>	‘its fire’	‘electricity’
b.	<i>betili kóné</i>	‘its container (motor) of fire’	‘battery’

The *travois* was the traditional device used by pre-contact indigenous peoples of North America to drag loads of food, clothing, or other belongings over land. It consisted of a few long wooden poles joined by pieces of sinew that held a pack to be pulled by a human or dog team. The Dene used this method of transporting goods well into historic times and the *travois* or *béthchené* (lit. ‘pack/load-wood/sticks’) has extended semantically to mean ‘sled, wagon’ and, with modification, many other vehicles as well. The land-based vehicle terms of acculturation in (85) are based on the traditional *travois* term, so in all cases, we have a kind of intra-domain metaphor at play in addition to the usual GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymies.

(85) a.	<i>béthchené</i>	‘pack/load-wooden’	‘sled, wagon’
b.	<i>kón béhchené</i>	‘fire sled’	‘train’
c.	<i>tlesbéchenéchogh</i>	‘gas-sled-AUG’	‘truck’

Before contact, Dene peoples had a limited set of material resources (rock, wood, birchbark, grass, hide, sinew, bone) as well as human body parts (foot, thumb) for constructing and measuring their world. Since number is not marked on nouns in most Dene languages, the presence of the numerical quantifier reinforces the domain change from the sphere of qualifying types of objects to the sphere of quantifying sizes of objects or how much they can contain.

(86) a.	<i>ilághe béthchené</i>	‘one sled’	‘one hundred’
b.	<i>ilághe dechene</i>	‘one wood/stick’	‘one yard/one mile’
c.	<i>ilághe dechenchogh</i>	‘one big wood/stick’	‘one thousand’
d.	<i>ilághe ttheteli</i>	‘one stone-container’	‘one gallon’
e.	<i>ilághe denechédh</i>	‘one human-thumb’	‘one inch’
f.	<i>ilághe deneké</i>	‘one human-foot’	‘one foot’**

3.5.2 *Modifying the old for the new: Neologisms through qualitative suffixation*

A very common lexicalization strategy is to augment a stem (either a bare root or some product of prior derivation) through a set of “qualitative” suffixes. As mentioned in the introduction to §3, these encompass a small set of qualifiers, which can either modify their stem or completely relexify it. Here, we are interested in the latter case. Although the full set includes an augmentative, several diminutives, a defunctive, gender markers, some shape and color terms, a marker of high import/valued entity, a marker of low import/rejected entity, and a negativizer, I will only exemplify a few of these types. I consider them as potentially figurative since they invoke “scalar” metonymies: the suffix has the effect of partitioning off only one pole of a dichotomous opposition or only part of a continuous scale (of color, for example) in a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy. Moreover, in the cases we are interested in, the modified stem refers to a

completely different entity (sometimes a different species entirely), suggesting that metaphor is also responsible for some of the semantic extension. Many of the examples in Table 1 illustrate a

Table 1. Neologisms based on augmentatives or diminutives, or both.

stem	+ AUG: <i>-cho(gh)</i> , <i>-chok</i>	+ DIM: <i>-aze</i>	+ DIM: <i>-tsele</i>
<i>lî</i> ‘dog’	<i>lîcho</i> ‘horse’	<i>lîaze</i> ‘puppy’	<i>lîtsele</i> ‘small dog’
<i>dene</i> ‘person, human’	<i>denechogh</i> ‘giant’	<i>dene tselaze</i> ‘dwarf’	<i>dene tselaze</i> ‘dwarf’
<i>chize</i> ‘lynx’	<i>chizechogh</i> ‘bobcat’, ‘lion’	<i>chizaze</i> ‘cat’	
<i>hue</i> ‘fish’	<i>huechogh</i> ‘whale’	<i>huaze</i> ‘minnow/smelts’	
<i>jie</i> ‘berry’	<i>jiechogh</i> ‘apple, orange’	<i>jîaze</i> ‘raisin’	
<i>háyorîla</i> ‘town’	<i>háyorîlaicho</i> ‘city’	<i>háyorîlaze</i> ‘village’	
<i>des</i> ‘river’		<i>desaze</i> ‘creek’	<i>des tsele</i> ‘creek’
<i>datsá</i> ‘raven’		<i>datsáze</i> ‘magpie’	<i>datsáqtsele</i> ‘crow’
<i>nunie</i> ‘wolf’			<i>nunietsele</i> ‘coyote’
<i>yáhtóę</i> ‘deer’			<i>yáhtóę tsele</i> ‘antelope’
<i>lîcho</i> ‘horse’			<i>lîcho tsele</i> ‘pony’
<i>yath-tu</i> ‘fallen.snow-water’			<i>yath-tu-tsele</i> ‘sleet’
<i>yath-lu</i> ‘fallen.snow-frozen’		<i>yath-lu-aze</i> ‘hail’	
<i>deneyu</i> ‘man’		<i>deneyuaze</i> ‘boy’	
<i>ts’ékwi</i> ‘woman’		<i>ts’ékwaze</i> ‘girl’	
<i>sekwi</i> ‘child’		<i>sekwiaze</i> ‘baby’	
<i>sekwiaze</i> ‘baby’		<i>sekwazazé</i> ‘doll’	
<i>denetthî</i> ‘human head’		<i>denetthîaze</i> ‘postage stamp’	
<i>dlîe</i> ‘squirrel’		<i>dliechoaze</i> ‘gopher’	
<i>taretîé</i> ‘rough water’		<i>taretîaze</i> ‘ripple’	
<i>kón</i> ‘fire’		<i>kónaze</i> ‘battery’	
<i>dzól</i> ‘ball’		<i>dzólaze</i> ‘marble’	
<i>nóneshe</i> ‘plant(s)’		<i>nóneshaze</i> ‘vegetables’	
<i>t’oghetsáné</i> lit. ‘grass-jay; fig. ‘blackbird’		<i>t’oghtsánaze</i> ‘swallow’	
<i>béthchené</i> ‘sled/wagon’		<i>béthchenaze</i> ‘bicycle’	
<i>tûlu</i> ‘road’		<i>tûluaze</i> ‘path’	
<i>jîze</i> ‘jay’ (Western)	<i>jizechogh</i> ‘hawk’		
<i>dlúne</i> ‘mouse’	<i>dlúnechogh</i> ‘rat’		
<i>det’ani</i> ‘bird’ (raptor)	<i>det’anichogh</i> ‘eagle’		
<i>t’îzi tthoghe</i> ‘bee’	<i>t’îzi tthoghéchogh</i> ‘hornet’		
<i>erihlt’is</i> ‘paper, book’	<i>erihlt’ischogh</i> ‘Bible’		
<i>teîi</i> ‘container’	<i>telichogh</i> ‘barrel’		
<i>t’uk’etî</i> ‘violin’	<i>t’uk’etîchogh</i> ‘guitar’		
<i>tu</i> ‘water’	<i>tuchogh</i> ‘ocean’		
<i>?ih</i> ‘garment’	<i>?ihchogh</i> ‘parka’, ‘coat’		
<i>ke</i> ‘shoe(s)’	<i>kechogh</i> ‘boot(s)’		

specific type of qualitative metonymy whereby parts of a size scale come to stand for a new (and different) whole. Lexicalization proceeds via an augmentative suffix or one of two diminutive suffices or sometimes via a combination of these. Note, too, that the examples in Table 1 run that gamut from living thing to geographic place to artifact.

Two other less common, but still productive sets of “qualifying” suffixes that have been used in Dene Sųłiné to build the lexicon are shown in Tables 2 and 3. In the former case, an intensifier-like suffix, *-néthé*, with a meaning like ‘big, important’, imparts a high value on the entity named by the stem, turning it into a different type of entity entirely. In the latter case, the suffix, *-slini/-sline*, which is usually glossed as ‘evil’, imparts a low value on the stem concept: the (new) entity is something to be rejected or feared. The two stems are not really antonyms, but they occupy positive or negative regions of whatever valuation scale is invoked by the content domain of the stem. In both cases, significantly, they create new lexical items.

Table 2. Neologisms based on the suffix, *-néthé* ‘important’.

bare stem	with intensifier <i>-néthé</i> ‘important’
<i>tulu</i> ‘road’	<i>tulu néthé</i> ‘highway’
<i>kqe</i> ‘building, town’	<i>kqenethé</i> ‘city’
<i>k’ódheri</i> ‘boss, chief’	<i>k’ódheri néthé</i> ‘king, prime minister’
<i>yaltii</i> ‘priest’	<i>yaltii néthé</i> ‘bishop’
<i>náyaltihi</i> ‘lawyer’	<i>náyaltiinéthé</i> ‘judge’
<i>chq</i> ‘rain’	<i>chq néthé</i> ‘torrent’
<i>des</i> ‘river’	<i>desnethé</i> ‘MacKenzie River’

Table 3. Neologisms based on the suffix, *-slini* ‘evil’.

bare stem	with dysphemistic <i>-slini/e</i> ‘evil’
<i>tl’o</i> ‘grass’	<i>tl’oslini</i> ‘thistle, weed’
<i>’ena</i> ‘enemy’ > ‘Cree’	<i>’ena slini</i> ‘Ojibwe’
<i>ebáqzaghéjere</i> ‘mushroom’	<i>ebáqzaghé slini</i> ‘toadstool’
<i>náidii</i> ‘medicine’	<i>náidislini</i> ‘poison’
<i>kón</i> ‘fire’	<i>kónsline</i> ‘(Christian) hell’

Other morphological material, from the domains of shape, color, and space, also appear with nouns as nominal suffixes (87)-(88), post-nominal deverbal modifiers (89), or as postpositional heads (90), and can lead to lexical innovation. The shape terms, two of which are shown in (87) and (88), are the simplest and look like the augmentative *-chogh* and diminutive *-aze* suffixes listed in Table 1.

(87) a.	<i>dekál</i>	‘it’s flat’	
b.	<i>t’a kálé</i>	‘the flat one’	‘pocket’
c.	<i>tth’áikálé</i>	‘dish-flat’	‘plate’
d.	<i>t’ulekálé</i>	‘rope-flat’	‘strap’
e.	<i>dechenkálé</i>	‘wood-flat’	‘board, lumber’
f.	<i>ts’ikáléchogh</i>	‘boat-flat-AUG’	‘barge’
g.	<i>ts’ilkáré</i>	‘falling.snow-flat’	‘snowflake’
(88) a.	<i>delu</i>	‘it’s cylindrical/sticklike’	
b.	<i>tenlu</i>	‘ice-cylinder’	‘icicle’
c.	<i>denelu</i>	‘human-cylinder’	‘corpse’
d.	<i>denelué</i>	‘human’s cylinder’	‘calf of leg’

Color terms¹⁶ may be fully deverbal (89a-f) or suffix-like (89g-i) in Dene Sų́liné, probably depending on the degree of entrenchment or analyzability of the resulting expression. When modifying a noun, they often create a new lexical item in an ATTRIBUTE FOR ENTITY metonymy.

(89) a.	<i>tsatsáné deltthoghi</i>	‘metal that is yellow’	‘copper’
b.	<i>tsqba deltthoghi</i>	‘money that is yellow’	‘gold’
c.	<i>tsqba delgai</i>	‘money that is white’	‘silver’
d.	<i>sas delgai</i>	‘bear that is white’	‘polar bear’
e.	<i>taretı delgai</i>	‘choppy water that is white’	‘white caps’
f.	<i>jíéchogh delzeni</i>	‘big berry that is black’	‘prune’
g.	<i>jietth’oghé</i>	‘berry-yellow/orange’	‘orange, corn’
h.	<i>jiegaié</i>	‘berry-white’	‘beans’
i.	<i>jiegaié t’ézé</i>	‘white berry-blue/green’	‘peas’

Finally, postpositions can effectively re-lexicalize their nominal complements. We saw many examples in (69)-(70) with *-k’e* ‘on’. In (90), I list some additional, yet less robust, examples with other postpositions or locatives.

(90) a.	<i>xáit’ázı̃ <xáye-t’ázı̃)</i>	‘winter-behind/against’	‘autumn’
b.	<i>luk’e</i>	‘fish-on/place/time’	‘spring’
c.	<i>shéth-geze</i>	‘hill-between’	‘canyon’

¹⁶ There are seven basic color terms in Dene Sų́liné. They feature the stative prefix *del-*, which is strongly associated with sound and color predications, and an (unanalyzable) stem: *delk’os* ‘(it’s) red (-colored)’, *delzen* ‘(it’s) black’, *delgai* ‘(it’s) white’, *deltse* ‘(it’s) brown/faded’, *delba* ‘(it’s) grey’, and *deltthogh* ‘(it’s) yellow/orange’. The stems (the last syllable) might be cognate with more interpretable or transparent stems in other Athapaskan languages, but they remain opaque to modern speakers. An exception is the term for ‘blue’, which is transparently figurative for most speakers: *detlés* (lit. ‘(it’s) grease/lard-colored’). This term can also mean ‘green’. On the other hand, ‘green’ has two periphrastic exponents, depending on whether it describes—elliptically and metonymically—that which looks like (the color of) a spruce tree or a leaf. Neither conforms to the usual pattern of color naming; that is, they lack the prefix *del-*. On the other hand, they are overt similes (the most rudimentary type of metaphor): *el lát’e* (lit. ‘it looks like a spruce tree’) or *t’áchái lát’e* (lit. ‘it looks like a leaf’).

d.	<i>lá-ʔáné</i>	‘hand-circles around’	‘ring finger’
e.	<i>lés k’e ʔáné</i>	‘on bread-circles around’	‘bread crust’
f.	<i>yeʔáné</i>	‘it-circles around’	‘wilderness’
g.	<i>dene ts’i ʔáné</i>	‘from person-circles around’	‘offspring’

3.5.3 Seeing the old as the new: Similes

As we gradually move away from compounds and appositive constructions towards more full-blown periphrastic lexicalizations, we should consider the most literal or explicit of all figurative tropes—the simile. There are a few conventionalized ones in the language, involving both intra-domain and inter-domain metaphors.

SIMILES

(91) a.	<i>etteláze lát’i</i>	‘it looks like a little colon’	‘sausage’
b.	<i>tuezáné lát’i</i>	‘it looks like trout’	‘salmon’
c.	<i>shìth lát’i</i>	‘it looks like wart’	‘corn (on feet)’
d.	<i>sónibán yué lát’i</i>	‘it looks like silk cloth’	‘nylon’

3.5.4 Deconstructing processes

In Athapaskan languages, the verb is fully propositional. It generally inflects for subject and object, valency, tense/aspect/mood, and a variety of thematic and adverbial prefixes. The details of verbal inflection are complicated and need not concern us here. Pertinent is the fact that verbs regularly nominalize and relativize (the same process is involved in both cases: suffixation with the morpheme *-(h)i*, although it is sometimes incorporated into the stem or is simply absent). Nevertheless, the result is a fertile source of neologisms that will either be deverbal words that can enter into further suffixation or compounding or phrasal expressions (in the presence of a head noun or postpositional phrase). Some of the resulting expressions for artifacts or other terms of acculturation are syntactically and semantically complex, although they provide fairly descriptive “functional” labels and thus could be analyzed as process-based metonymies. The process stands for a participant or location of that process.

PROCESS FOR LOCATION/INSTRUMENT/PATIENT

(92) a.	<i>bek’eshíts’elyi</i>	‘on it people eat food’	‘table’
b.	<i>beyághe horétth’qí</i>	‘that which one hears through it’	‘radio’
c.	<i>benuzeʔi (<benuzi edezelʔi)</i>	‘one looks at oneself through it’	‘mirror’
d.	<i>nak’e ts’elyai</i>	‘that which lays on the eyes’	‘glasses’
e.	<i>ts’élt’úi</i>	‘smoke/fog which is sucked’	‘tobacco, cigarette’
(93) a.	<i>thenakothi [< theni nakóthi]</i>	‘that which turns alone’	‘car’, ‘automobile’**
b.	<i>ts’ichogh nqkóthi</i>	‘big boat which turns back & forth’	‘ferry’
c.	<i>ts’ichoretai</i>	‘big boat which flies’	‘airplane’

- (94) a. *tł'uk'et'ĩ* 'on string, sticklike object is pulled' 'violin'
 b. *tł'uk'et'ĩchogh* 'big violin' 'guitar'
 c. *tł'is'éjeni* (<*tł'is héjeni*) 'paper that sings' 'accordion'
 d. *dechentilihéjeni* 'wooden-container that sings' 'piano/organ'
- (95) a. *erihł'is* 'it is marked/written' 'paper, book, writing'
 b. *erihł'is chené* 'marking stick' 'pencil, pen'
 c. *erihł'is net'ĩ* 'marking that's looked at' 'movie, TV'
 d. *náke saritł'ésé* 'two sun-marking' 'it's two o'clock'

3.5.5 Processual antonymy through negation

In §3.5.2, we considered the effects of suffixation on nominal stems to create new lexical items. Here, I present some stative and process verbs with and without the all-purpose negativizing suffix, *-(h)íle*. The examples in Table 4 are fully conventionalized in the language and do not have the feel of a derivation, as I try to indicate with the English glosses.

Table 4. Neologisms based on the negativizing suffix, *-(h)íle*.

bare stem		with negativizer: <i>-íle</i> 'not'	
<i>dánechá</i>	'they're big'	<i>dánechíle</i>	'they're small'
<i>?eltth'i</i>	'it's right'	<i>?eltth'íle</i>	'it's wrong'
<i>nedáth</i>	'it's heavy'	<i>nedádth'íle</i>	'it's light'
<i>benasní</i>	'I remember 3SG'	<i>henasníle</i>	'I forget/I don't remember'
<i>bek'éghesní</i>	'I kept/took care of 3SG'	<i>bedóghesníle</i>	'I ignored 3SG'
<i>bóreni</i>	'it is easy'	<i>bóreníle</i>	'it is difficult'
<i>dáhoní</i>	'they know it (the place)'	<i>dáhoní hile</i>	'they're absent-minded'

3.6 The temporal landscape and time expressions

It should come as no surprise that many temporal expressions in Dene Sų́liné are figurative since the lexicalization of concepts in the time domain is one that is particularly susceptible to metaphoric treatment. A small set of temporal expressions—mostly full propositions—involve a variety of ontological TIME IS A SUBSTANCE/LOCATION metaphors and PROCESS FOR AGENT/OBJECT/LOCATION metonymies. The first example below, in (96a), is a variant of the stereotypical expression attributed to all indigenous North Americans for 'several months ago': *many moons ago*. In the Dene Sų́liné example, the earth, rather than the moon, stands for a year, rather than a month. The remaining expressions use spatial language to locate a place in time.

TIME IS SPACE

- (96) a. *ĩla néné* 'one earth' 'one year'
 b. *yanathé horeltth'eli* 'that which will happen next' 'the future'

c.	<i>yánáth xáye, yánáth néné</i>	‘next winter’, ‘next earth’	‘next year’
d.	<i>dzinék’e</i>	‘on the day’	‘today’
e.	<i>tthi dzinék’e</i>	‘ahead of/before today’	‘yesterday’

3.6.1 *The passing of time*

Most expressions in Dene Sų́líné involving the passage of time (or the aging process in living creatures) are based on a complex of verb stems, {-*thi*, -*dhi*, -*ther*, -*dher*}, associated very generally with *undergoing* (in the absence of the pre-stem transitive or causative valency marker -*l*-) and *doing* (in its presence). Perhaps we could say that, at a very abstract level, these associated stems predicate something about change of state, which can come about either through motion (intransitive) or activity (usually transitive).¹⁷ All of the examples in (97) feature some inflected form of this ‘undergo/do’ stem complex, while the specific lexical differences are due to the individual prefixes or other incorporated material. Most important, for present purposes, is that these expressions have to do with the passage of time. Again, in Dene Sų́líné as in so many other languages, time is predicated against a spatial landscape: a human/celestial/temporal subject moves and time passes. Rather than ‘undergo’ or ‘do’, I will use the verb ‘move’ in all the literal glosses.

PASSAGE OF TIME IS DISLOCATION IN SPACE

- (97) a. *núnesthi* (<*nihónesthi*) ‘ground-I start to move there’ ‘I’m aging’
b. *nónildher* ‘ground-we (DL) moved there/fell down’ ‘we are old’
c. *dzine hoghı́dher* ‘day-it has moved there’ ‘the day is over’
d. *nahódher* ‘AREAL had moved there’ ‘it (time) happened’

3.6.2 *Times of the day*

All of the following predications (all are full propositions) in (98) again share the same verb stem, in this case either the imperfective -*?a* or its progressive counterpart -*?ał*. This stem is a common classificatory verb stem that signals that some entity construed as a solid round object (SRO) moves or is moving. In all but one of these expressions, the sun—the presumed referent for this classificatory verb stem—is not stated overtly. However, the motion of the sun in the sky during the course of a day stands metonymically and metaphorically for the passage of time.

¹⁷ In his catalogue of Dene Sų́líné stems, Li (1933:139) wrote, “[t]his stem (sic) refers probably to some general idea of activity, its meaning depends more upon its prefixes; thus, it may mean ‘to wake up’ (ø-intr; *l*-tr); ‘to die’ (ø), ‘to kill’ (*l*); ‘to desire’, ‘a snow-storm comes’, ‘to snow’, ‘sickness comes’, ‘to be sick’, ‘to suffer’, ‘to echo’, (ø); ‘to move, travel’, ‘to become old’, ‘to notify, to pass the news’, ‘to render service’, ‘to struggle’ (*l*).” To add a further level of complication, the stem forms for SG/DU subjects are different from those for PL subjects. Such person- and number-based stem suppletion is quite common in Athapaskan languages for certain verbs.

TIME PASSING IS THE MOVEMENT OF THE SUN (OR ITS METAPHORICAL EXTENSION, CLOCK)

- | | | | |
|---------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| (98) a. | <i>xa?a</i> | ‘it (SRO) comes out’ | ‘it’s dawn’ |
| b. | <i>nidha?ał</i> | ‘it (SRO) is far away’ | ‘it’s noon’ |
| c. | <i>ts’e?ał</i> | ‘it (SRO) is bright/clear’ | ‘the sun is shining’ |
| c. | <i>nuye?q</i> | ‘it (SRO) moves into the earth’ | ‘it’s dusk’ |
| d. | <i>nághĩ?q</i> | ‘it (SRO) goes down’ | ‘it’s evening’ |
| e. | <i>sa ghe?ał</i> | ‘the sun, it (SRO) is moving’ | ‘the clock is ticking’ |

3.7 *Miscellaneous states and processes*

I conclude this lengthy section with a number of diverse expressions that involve the attribution of some common processes—the expression of which is largely metaphoric.

3.7.1 *The life cycle: Love and death, etc.*

There are a number of figurative expressions pertaining to stages and milestones in a person’s life, including the beginning and the very end, both of which transitions are conceived of as movement to a place, as shown in (99) and (100):

CHANGE OF STATE IS CHANGE OF LOCATION

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| (99) a. | <i>xáilge</i> | ‘I crawled out’ | ‘I was born’ |
| b. | <i>nók’e níniya</i> | ‘I arrived on earth’ | ‘I was born’ |
| (100) a. | <i>leghánĩdher</i> | ‘3SG moved to the end’ | ‘s/he died’ |
| b. | <i>leghánĩlther</i> | ‘I moved 3SG to the end’ | ‘I killed him/her’ |
| c. | <i>denedhié</i> | ‘person’s movement/suffering?’ | ‘death’ |

Next, we consider a variety of interpersonal situations: the loss of virginity (for males, at least!) in (101a); the tricking or cheating of another person, as in (101b); or the uniting of two people as husband and wife, as in (101c-d).

ONTOLOGICAL METAPHORS

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (101) a. | <i>ts’a aze áyehésyél</i> | ‘he lost his little hat’ | ‘he lost his virginity’** |
| b. | <i>hoya ghiltĩ</i> | ‘I handled.ANIMATE into a hole’ | ‘I tricked/deceived him/her’ |
| c. | <i>elghanihĩt’as</i> | ‘they (DU) sat together’ | ‘they got married’ |
| d. | <i>beghá nesdá ha</i> | ‘next to 3SG, I sit down FUT’ | ‘I will marry him/her’ |

All of these processes are lexicalized via ontological metaphors. In the first case in (101a), the loss of something intangible is being made tangible. In the second case in (101b), manipulating someone through deceit means having power over the person in an one-upmanship sort of way, much as if the person were placed in a hole, a “one-down” position, to be sure. In the third case, in (101c-d), sitting with or sitting next to someone (a physical act) stands for getting married (an abstract interaction). Perhaps this case might be better described as an elaborate phase metonymy

on par with the English expression, *walking down the aisle*, which merely describes an initial episode to the whole event of getting married (and getting married, specifically, in a church).

3.7.2 *A day in the life*

Many everyday activities also have a figurative cast to them. I would argue that metonymy is the dominant semantic mechanism at play in these expressions, although some have a slight metaphorical feel to them (e.g., ‘moving into the clear’ for ‘waking up’). For the most part, these actions are metonymic because the verb (and in some cases, the subject) actually lexicalized is only indirectly associated with the conventionalized meaning. More than GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC or SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymies, the examples below tend to lexicalize an initial or intermediate phase of the process, leaving the resulting state to be inferred.

WHOLE FOR PART (CONSCIOUSNESS) and PART (HEAD) FOR WHOLE

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (102) a. | <i>ts'ehedhi</i> | ‘(in) clear-3SG moves’ | ‘s/he is waking up’ |
| b. | <i>ni-tthí-rést'a</i> | ‘up-head-I.moved.SRO’ | ‘I got up (from sleeping)’ |
| c. | <i>daghéghes?á</i> | ‘I positioned.SRO (head) upward’ | ‘I laid on my back’ |

ASSOCIATED PROCESS FOR PROCESS (LYING DOWN IS SLEEPING; SLEEPING IS DREAMING)

- | | | | |
|----------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| (103) a. | <i>thetì</i> | ‘3SG is lying (down)’ | ‘s/he is sleeping’ |
| b. | <i>náthetì</i> | ‘3SG slept twice’ | ‘s/he dreamed’ |

ASSOCIATED PROCESS FOR PROCESS (DRINKING IS DRINKING TO EXCESS; DRINKING IS DROWNING)

- | | | | |
|----------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| (104) a. | <i>yenéhdq</i> | ‘3SG drank of it’ | ‘s/he is drunk’ |
| b. | <i>tuhedq</i> | ‘3SG drank water’ | ‘s/he drowned’ |

INITIAL PHASE FOR ENTIRE PROCESS (GETTING DRESSED)

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (105) a. | <i>nástl'u</i> | ‘I’m tying up’ | ‘I’m getting dressed’ |
| b. | <i>yu yessa</i> | ‘clothes, I’m going into’ | ‘I’m getting dressed up’ |
| c. | <i>?ih náréghesyá</i> | ‘coat, I went up/handled into it’ | ‘I wore a coat’ |
| d. | <i>t'así náréghes?á</i> | ‘UNSPEC I handled.SRO up (on head)’ | ‘I wore s.th. on my head’ |
| e. | <i>ke yéghes?édh</i> | ‘shoes, I kicked into (them)’ | ‘I wore shoes’ |
| f. | <i>thedh hetheréltl'q</i> | ‘belt, 3SG tied it on’ | ‘s/he wore a belt’ |
| g. | <i>beyédesnígh</i> | ‘I manipulated into it’ | ‘I wore it (gloves/mitts)’ |

3.7.3 *Action and interaction*

Expressions about what people do and how they interact with each other are often formulated using figurative language. Related to the psychological state predications explored in previous subsections are a host of expressions relating to physical processes or states. Some of these allow one physical process to stand for another, more abstract or habitual one, as in the case of a qualitative assessment, for example. Others involve attitudes or more mental events. They all are expressly figurative by virtue of the many metaphors and/or metonymies that underlie them.

Lexicalized expressions with the complex verb stem *yati* ‘talk’ are especially numerous, as shown in (106). All of these expressions are built on a set of basic metonymies by which the speech process stands for the patient (106a), the agent (106b), or the manner (106c) of speaking (based on the content of the talk). The example in (107) is a nice instance of an ontological metaphor whereby language is construed as a physical object. This is a common metaphor across the different Athapaskan languages—conceiving of language as something tangible which can be passed from person to person. We know this is the case since the verb stem used with *-tiye*, the bound and nominal form of ‘language’ or ‘word’, is a handling verb. Individual Dene languages differ in terms of which handling verb is called upon: one for handling solid, round objects; one for sticklike objects; or one for an object of unspecified shape, as in (107).

PROCESS FOR SALIENT PARTICIPANT (PATIENT, AGENT) or MANNER, and GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC

- | | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (106) a. | <i>yati</i> (< <i>yatii</i>) | ‘that which is spoken’ | ‘language, word, prayer, mass’ |
| b. | <i>yalti</i> | ‘the one who speaks’ | ‘priest’ |
| c. | <i>axe yalti</i> | ‘3SG speaks pride’ | ‘s/he’s boasting’ |

ONTOLOGICAL METAPHOR (LANGUAGE IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT)

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| (107) | <i>betiye hılchu</i> | ‘3SG’s word, I took it (UNSPEC)’ | ‘I took his/her word/advice’,
‘I believed him/her’ |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|

Finally, a very dramatic case of semantic extension (involving either ambiguity or polysemy, depending on one’s point of view) brought about by the application of conventionalized metaphors and metonymies involves a simple locative expression loosely of the form ‘to be located on’. ‘To be on/at something’ in many languages implies activity rather than pure location. In English, expressions such as *I’m on it* can suggest pure physical location as in *I’m on the podium* or, more metaphorically, action as in *I’m on the assignment/job*, etc. Likewise, *to be at something* can be used in reference to a location (*I’m at the store right now*) or in reference to a process (*I’m at prayer/dinner*). Moreover, *to be at someone* in English generally implies being in the midst of antagonistic or sexual behavior with that person, as in *She was constantly at him about his tattoo* or *He was at her day and night right after they got married*. The same range of figurative interpretations are also invoked in Dene Sı́líné by virtue of a LOCATION IS ACTION metaphor and a GENERIC ACTION FOR SPECIFIC ACTION metonymy, as shown in (108):

- | | | |
|-------|--|--|
| (108) | <i>bek’enasther</i> | |
| | lit. ‘I stay/am located on 3SG’ | |
| | fig. ‘I’m doing it’; ‘I’m bothering/fighting him/her’; ‘I’m sexually engaged with him/her’ | |

I close with a few more specific examples of this LOCATION IS ACTION metaphor and a GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy, as given in (109).

- | | | | |
|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| (109) a. | <i>tı́ye nasther</i> | ‘I stay/am located in water’ | ‘I am swimming’ |
|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--|------------------------|
| b. | <i>edhéth ghq nasther</i> | ‘I stay/am located about (the) hide’ | ‘I’m tanning the hide’ |
| c. | <i>sq ghq nasther</i> | ‘I stay/am located about fun/pleasure’ | ‘I’m playing’ |
| d. | <i>húé ghq nasther</i> | ‘I’m stay/am located about fish’ | ‘I’m fishing’ |

These constructions literally express being (statively) at a location or near an object. In all cases, however, they convey something about performing an activity, thus BEING AT IS DOING.

4. Some general observations about Athapaskan metaphor and metonymy

This extended tour of figurative lexicalization in Dene Sų́liné has aimed to show that, under the constraint of an almost hermetically sealed and positively tiny set of lexical building blocks (stems) and a handful of derivational processes, the language—through metaphorical and metonymic re-conceptualization—allows for a wide range of expressive power. The reshuffling and recycling of morphemes is not confined to the more novel parts of the lexicon; that is, the coding of non-indigenous entities and concepts. Both native and acculturated notions receive figurative treatment. Likewise, new nouns and new verbs both result from these morphological reinterpretations, recombinations, and semantic extensions.

4.1 Patterns in the Dene Sų́liné data

Not to belabor one of my central points, but the fact is that Athapaskan languages have very small stem inventories; moreover, they are relatively fluid when it comes to parts of speech. Noun stems often turn into verbs and vice versa, priming us to be on the lookout for metonymies. The Dene Sų́liné examples below are representative of nouns taking on verbal morphology, as in (110), or verbs adding a nominalizing/relativizing suffix, *-(h)i*, as in (111).

- | | | | | |
|---------|------------------|--------------|--|---------------------|
| (110)a. | <i>húé gúthé</i> | ‘fish scale’ | <i>hesgúth</i> | ‘I’m scaling (it)’ |
| b. | <i>shen</i> | ‘song’ | <i>hesjen</i> (< <i>hes-d-shen</i>) | ‘I’m singing’ |
| c. | <i>tsq</i> | ‘excrement’ | <i>hestsq</i> | ‘I’m defecating’ |
| d. | <i>tthél</i> | ‘axe’ | <i>erestthél</i> | ‘I’m chopping it’ |
| e. | <i>ts’i</i> | ‘comb’ | <i>hests’i</i> | ‘I’m combing (it)’ |
| f. | <i>-yíhé</i> | ‘-breath’ | <i>hesjí</i> (< <i>hes-d-yí</i>) | ‘I’m breathing’ |
| g. | <i>tł’ú</i> | ‘rope’ | <i>hestł’úl</i> (< <i>hes-tł’ú-l</i>) | ‘I’m braiding (it)’ |
-
- | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| (111)a. | <i>delkoth</i> | ‘3SG is coughing’ | <i>dekothi</i> | ‘cough’ < ‘that which is coughed’ |
| b. | <i>behixel</i> | ‘I’m beating 3SG’ | <i>hélgheli</i> | ‘drum’ < ‘that which is beaten’ |
| c. | <i>hébíl</i> | ‘3SG is swinging’ | <i>húbili</i> | ‘swing’ < ‘that which is swung’ |
| d. | <i>edelyel</i> | ‘it is thundering’ | <i>edelyeli</i> | ‘thunder’ < ‘that which thunders’ |

As well, most of the “verb” stems in (111) have monosyllabic and cognate nominal counterparts:

- (112) a. *-k'odh* 'neck'
 b. *xáł* 'club'
 c. *b'íl* 'snare, net'

Thus, even through some morpho-phonological changes and some weak semantic shifting, we can appreciate how resourceful Dene Sų́líné is in its redeployment of precious lexical material. Perhaps we can also gain some insight into how difficult it is to separate conceptually the participants from the events. In discourse, separate nominals are few and quickly disappear into the agreement marking on the verb once introduced and established. Speakers are used to relying on inference and extensive conflation patterns within the verb word to interpret the nature of the event from the lexicalized participants and the participants from the lexicalized event.

Another facet of Dene lexical resourcefulness is evident when we take stock of the relatively small inventory of metaphors and metonymies that emerged in this survey. The orientation (IN IS GOOD/OUT IS BAD), ontological (PEOPLE ARE PLANTS/PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS/IDEAS ARE ENTITIES/BEING AT IS DOING), and structural metaphors (FORM SIMILARITY, PARTS ARE OTHER PARTS) that kept recurring were pretty stock-in-trade. As well, the set of metonymies was not so unusual: there were many instances of PROCESS FOR {RESULT, EFFECT, PRODUCT, AGENT, EXPERIENCER} metonymies, in addition to CONTAINER FOR CONTENTS, GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC, SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC, ATTRIBUTE/BEHAVIOR FOR WHOLE ENTITY. Perhaps the most unusual metonymy noted in the data is an INITIAL PHASE FOR WHOLE PROCESS metonymy. It does seem like there is an “inchoative” bias in Dene Sų́líné event encodings. One doesn’t “sleep”, one “lies down”, for example. One doesn’t “put on shoes”, one “kicks into shoes.” All in all, this smallish inventory of figurative devices just underscores the high degree of systematicity in the lexicon. That said, a high degree of systematicity does not necessarily correlate with a high degree of transparency. Most of the lexicalizations explored here are highly idiomatic and opaque, and really only interpretable to an outsider when going “backwards”, so to speak, from figurative to literal gloss. Nor does a relatively small and highly cognate stem inventory (between sister languages) correlate with ease of analysis when studying lexicalization patterns in other Athapaskan languages. As Victor Golla (p.c.) has stated, Athapaskan “is a common language used by each tribe in a different way.” I would expand on this thought and add that in lexicalizing, the different Athapaskan languages either use the same ingredients in different recipes or different ingredients in the same recipes, with the added effect that no two are alike despite a shallow time depth of separation and a fair degree of mutual intelligibility. The partial substitutions and partial overlaps of form and combinatorial pattern are sometimes maddening, but always fascinating. These are languages whose ethos is definitely *creativity under constraint*.

4.2 Related tendencies across the Dene world

A cursory examination of Athapaskan materials as diverse as Young & Morgan (1987), Kari (1990), Golla (1996), K. Rice (1989), Jetté & Jones (2000), and Norwegian & Howard (2004), leads me to the very preliminary conclusion that metaphor and metonymy, as lexicalization mechanisms, are extremely robust across the family. However, the particular route in multi-morphemic lexicalizations is rarely the same. I offer two sets of comparative examples in (113)-(114), for ‘whiskers’ and ‘tears’, respectively, each of which is a mix of same and different morphology.

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (113) a. | -daghe-tl’ok | ‘-around. mouth -grass’ | Dene Sųliné |
| b. | -dayaane’ | ‘- chin -growth’ | Ahtna (Kari 1990: 136) |
| c. | -da:-wa’ | ‘- mouth -fur’ | Hupa (Golla 1996: 106) |
| d. | -dúghaa’ | ‘- lip -wool’ | Navajo (Young & Morgan 1987: 8) |
| (114) a. | -na-tué | ‘(one’s) eye- water ’ | Dene Sųliné |
| b. | <i>tsagh tuu</i> | ‘crying water ’ | Ahtna (Kari 1990: 374) |
| c. | -na:q’it-to’ | ‘(one’s) eyes-on- water ’ | Hupa (Golla 1996: 95) |
| d. | <i>nák’eesh-to’</i> | ‘eye.place- water ’ | Navajo (Young & Morgan 1987: 544) |

By studying one language’s lexicalization strategies in depth, one can make better sense of what appear to be disparate and random lexicalizations in a related language. Consider the Hupa fauna names in (115) (Golla (ed.), 1996). Not one features a stem in common with its Dene Sųliné counterpart, presented in §3.3. Yet, each lexical item is oddly familiar, as most are built on a BEHAVIORAL ATTRIBUTE FOR ENTITY metonymy or intra-domain metaphor.

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| (115) a. | <i>michwa:n'-tul-ta:n</i> | ‘its excrement-is very soft’ | ‘fox’ |
| b. | <i>lo:q'-yiditile</i> | ‘fish-it relishes’ | ‘otter’ |
| c. | <i>k’it-na:dil</i> | ‘with something-they go around’ | ‘wolf’ |
| d. | <i>tl’iwh-mixung’</i> | ‘rattlesnake-its husband’ | ‘weasel’ |
| e. | <i>tintah-xixe:x</i> | ‘in the woods-kids’ | ‘chickadee’ |
| f. | <i>xulto’n</i> | ‘it jumps up out of the ground’ | ‘flea’ |
| g. | <i>mun'-ts’isge</i> | ‘fly-downy, feathery’ | ‘mosquito’ |
| h. | <i>minim'-mil-le:diliw</i> | ‘its face-with it-it slays’ | ‘mountain lion’ |
| i. | <i>xonsil-chwiw</i> | ‘(in) summer-it cries’ | ‘dove’ |
| j. | <i>miq’it-dahch’idiltse</i> | ‘on top of it-they sit’ | ‘horse’ |
| k. | <i>nulmowh</i> | ‘it swings around’ | ‘monkey’ |

Likewise, the well-known Western Apache vehicle part naming examples in (116) feature an extensively exploited great-chain-of-being metaphor whereby MOTOR VEHICLES ARE ANIMALS/HUMANS (Basso 1967: 472; 1990: 20-21). Again, the systematicity of the metaphorical mapping is striking. However, with the exception of the interpretation of a couple of items, few non-

speakers could probably guess precisely the individual inter-domain correspondences between mammalian body part and car/truck part, despite the inspired motivation for the overall mapping.

(116)a.	<i>bi'ik'ah</i>	'its fat	'grease'
b.	<i>biyedaa'</i>	'its chin/jaw'	'front bumper'
c.	<i>bigan</i>	'its hand/arm'	'front wheel/tire'
d.	<i>bike'</i>	'its foot'	'back wheel/tire'
e.	<i>bizé</i>	'its mouth'	'gas pipe'
f.	<i>bighán</i>	'its back'	'bed of truck'
g.	<i>bidáá'</i>	'its eye'	'headlight'
h.	<i>bichîh</i>	'its nose'	'hood'
i.	<i>bita'</i>	'its forehead'	'windshield'
j.	<i>bits'qqs</i>	'its veins'	'wiring'
k.	<i>bizig</i>	'its liver'	'battery'
l.	<i>bibid</i>	'its stomach'	'gas tank'
m.	<i>bijîi</i>	'its heart'	'distributor'
n.	<i>bijîi'izólé</i>	'its lung'	'radiator'
o.	<i>bich'i'</i>	'its intestine'	'radiator hose'

Metaphor and metonymy, no matter how systematic or structured around typologically common patterns and a tight lexical base, can clearly give rise to highly varied and idiomatic expressions. In a language family in which metaphor and metonymy are so extensive by virtue of (a) a reluctance to borrow, (b) the need to expand expressive power, but (c) an exaggerated reliance on the endolexicon, the fact that many of these resulting lexicalizations are so opaque leads one to query the nature of the system in the first place, as well as to ask what role lexico-semantic deconstruction, guided by insights from metaphor and metonymy studies, plays in traditional morpho-syntactic analysis, language learning, and language revitalization.

5. Discussion

The breadth of the Dene Sų́liné inventory of figurative expressions just examined is tempered by the fact that the stems and lexicalization patterns keep repeating themselves and, with appropriate variations, in its sister languages as well. Some readers may be struck by the general analyzability of the literal-to-figurative lexicalizations presented in this paper. Seeing the figurative gloss side-by-side the literal makes the logic of the association fairly obvious. Nevertheless, post-hoc analyzability by the linguist does not always spell automatic conceptual recognition on the part of native speakers or analyzability by strangers to the speech community. The literal glosses in most cases are not sufficient for determining the actual denotata they

signify or the figurative interpretation they conventionally receive. All in all, this result should seem a bit paradoxical: a small stem inventory, a handful of combinatorial patterns, but still a robust opacity in the meaning of the resulting construction—*pace* what speakers say about their language being very literal. Why does and should such opacity prevail?

5.1 *Exoterogeny and esoterogeny*

Thurston (1988) and Grace (1997) suggest that speech communities might engage in transparent or opaque lexicalization for cultural reasons rather than purely linguistic ones.¹⁸ If the cultural situation is such that the language is regarded as a *lingua franca*, then borrowing tends to be more prevalent and transparent (i.e., non-metaphorical) compounding of basic vocabulary is usually the means of achieving lexical speciation. Thurston calls these languages *exoteric*. However, if no such social demands are put on the language or its speakers, then more *esoteric* means can be deployed for lexicalization purposes, possibly out of the sheer joy of linguistic invention unconstrained by practical concerns such as intelligibility to strangers. Exoteric languages tend to be regular, isomorphic in their form-meaning mappings, relatively analytical and thus transparent to outsiders, and perfect for “compositional” descriptive and pedagogical tools such as dictionaries and grammars. On the other hand, esoteric languages tend to feature a high degree of idiomatcity, owing to a low degree of borrowing and, thus, a high degree of recycling, which in turn leads to much polysemy, allomorphy, suppletion, and low tolerance for paraphrase. For the purposes of description and language teaching, esoteric languages may be more suited to phrasebook models, since nearly every expression, from word to proposition is a construction, with a specific and contextually dependent meaning. Such insider-oriented languages often end up being more synthetic to boot than the more analytical languages of “Standard Average European.” But does esoterogeny have to correlate with opacity?¹⁹ There are reasons to think that it does, at least in the case of Athapaskan.

Athapaskan languages were, until colonial times and even well into the 20th century in the far north, spoken largely by peoples who maintained hunter-gatherer lifestyles.²⁰ Speakers tended to interact mainly with members of their own, small, family-defined bands (30-40 people)

¹⁸ Thanks to John Newman for drawing my attention to these sources.

¹⁹ I have not talked at all about the role of literacy in fostering morphological transparency or, by analogy, the role of orality in fostering morphological opacity. Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this paper, but while literacy does not preclude figurativity (indeed, literature has been the genre most closely associated with metaphor and metonymy studies), figurativity may be more robust in oral languages. Such a correlation remains an open empirical question for semantic typologists.

²⁰ The Navajo are an exception. Its speakers have been profoundly influenced culturally by over 500 years of contact with more sedentary and socially stratified Puebloan peoples. Still, there has not been much external borrowing in Navajo until recent times.

or semi-annually in gatherings with members of related bands (several hundred people at most). While most aspects of culture were freely borrowed (Athapaskans are the great cultural chameleons of North America), there has surprisingly been little outside influence on their languages. An insider-oriented posture would indeed seem to correlate with a low degree of bilingualism. Among the Dene Sų́liné, what bilingualism there was historically tended to be unidirectional with non-Athapaskans. Neighboring Cree, French, and English speakers still lament the difficulty in learning the language, even after decades of working with or being married to a speaker! With little bilateral bilingualism, it is easy to see how there might be minimal borrowing except perhaps in certain domains such as the church or trade economy. Minimal borrowing would lead to an over-reliance on the indigenous lexicon. However, when that endolexicon is as small as it is in the typical Dene language, there could be no recourse except to re-deploy and over-extend the basic vocabulary, either through conversion or through new composite constructions. In either case, metaphor and metonymy would play a role in inspiring and licensing the new lexicalizations. Being figurative, however, any new lexicalization would tend to be idiomatic and with idiomaticity would come a high degree of opacity that would keep any new generation of outsiders from cracking the code. The esoteric nature of the language would thus persist, if not strengthen over the generations. All in all, a “closed” system seems to be the perfect breeding ground for an explosion of figurativity in a language, as we have seen firsthand in this study of Dene Sų́liné. And a closed system might mean that insiders fail to see any figurativity in the first place since they have never had to encounter the “logic” of their lexicalization strategies head-on as few outsiders would have ever queried the system.

5.2 *Idiomaticity and analyzability*

In tackling the opacity question now from a linguistic rather than sociolinguistic point of view, let me step back and question a study such as this that catalogues so many metaphors and metonymies in a single language. The present inventory as well as the other chapters in this volume have two major purposes: the obvious one is to argue that metaphoric and metonymic *systematicity* exists within a language and possibly across a number of unrelated languages, suggesting that form-meaning mappings are not arbitrary and that conceptualization plays a big role in lexicon and grammar. The less obvious purpose is to demonstrate that figurativity and idiomaticity in lexicalization does not necessarily mean unanalyzability. The fact that metaphor and metonymy apparently comprise a major avenue of lexicalization in Dene Sų́liné (and no doubt most Athapaskan languages) makes this a fruitful area of research for both Athapaskanists and cognitive linguists alike.

Sadly, though, in many lexical studies of Athapaskan languages, one frequently encounters a cluster of expressions sharing the same stem(s), but treated as if they have little to do with each other semantically because the analyst has only catalogued items on the basis of the free gloss. Consequently, some stem forms are treated as hopelessly homophonous. By failing to take into account that the languages in the family tend to encode the same kinds of entities and relations using similar types of figurative formations, if not the very same stems, one fails to capture certain semantic generalizations by noting the very extended polysemy chains that certain stems and a small vocabulary engender (cf. Rice, forthcoming). By starting from the basic assumptions shared by most cognitive linguists—that form-meaning mappings in language are non-isomorphic at best, that language is organized around prototypical instances which can give rise to both extended cases and schematizing generalizations, that there is a continuum between lexicon and grammar, that lexical and constructional polysemy is therefore the norm, and that frequency and use drive lexicalization and grammaticalization—one can be a little less timid when delving into the semantic workings of another language for which there is little extensive documentation, no written tradition, a very shallow historical record, and one with a speaker population that insists that the language is very literal. A more open-minded posture that looks for the literal *and* the figurative allows for a broader search for cognates and derivationally related items across parts of the lexicon that may seem quite unconnected (e.g., between terms for ‘blood clot’ and ‘cheese curds’; ‘snow’ and ‘toothpaste’; or between ‘waking up’, ‘aging’, and ‘dying’—all three being sets of items that share stems or constructions in Dene Sųliné). Without an understanding of the nature and extensiveness of the semantic shifts in the language, especially because of the small stem inventory, one is forced either to use a very vague gloss that tries to subsume most of the extensions of a stem or to use very specific and disjoint glosses with individual derived forms which are, in fact, probably related. All in all, a descriptive disservice is done to the language and an opportunity to provide semantic insight into the language for speakers or learners is missed.

5.3 *Lexicalization and revitalization*

For reasons outlined above, metaphors and metonymies such as those inventoried here are of great theoretical interest to cognitive linguists and perhaps can be of increasing descriptive interest to typologists and Athapaskanists especially. Importantly, the cataloguing and analysis of metaphors and metonymies with speakers of indigenous languages is a sure-fire way of engaging them linguistically with phenomena having deep cultural, cognitive, and language revitalization import. A narrow focus on form and structure, especially on the stem and prefix combinations in the usually templatically construed Athapaskan verb word and other overly theoretical studies of

voice and obviation, has failed to convince several generations of speakers that linguistic analysis has anything to contribute to the documentation and preservation of their threatened languages. But learning about the extensive role that figurativity plays in linguistic expression in their languages opens up interest in morphological analysis both inside and beyond the verb word, in cross-language comparison, and even in semantic shift and sound change diachronically. It also builds confidence in semi-fluent speakers, allowing them to tackle the coining of new terms in ways consistent with indigenous patterns in their own language so as to expand vocabulary for 21st century needs.

A lexico-semantic analysis, as attempted here, that puts words and full propositions on par as it catalogues the conceptual strategies that previous generations of speakers used to lexicalize their ever-changing world, could not be more relevant to this generation of speakers, semi-speakers, and non-speakers of their heritage language, just as it captivates cognitive linguists looking for connections between conceptualization and language structure. Every language in the Athapaskan family, including Navajo, is endangered. A deeper understanding of the processes involved in Athapaskan lexicalization may help speakers continue to lexicalize new concepts in indigenous ways and keep English loans and code-switching to a minimum. I say this not in the interest of linguistic purity, but because once incursions from English reach a tipping point, language attrition in native communities in northern Canada has no hope of being stopped. More importantly, a good understanding of historical lexicalization patterns may help native non-speakers peer into the complex morphology and seemingly endless lexical recycling of their languages, take them apart semantically and morphologically, and even put them back together, while coining new expressions. They soon see relationships among words in their language or even among cognate forms in related languages, both of which can have an empowering effect linguistically. By contrasting the literal and figurative meanings in an expression, the learner and linguist alike can be impressed by the infinite resourcefulness of previous generations of speakers who were able to use a small set of “ingredients” and a small set of combinatorial patterns (inter- and intra-domain metaphorical and metonymic mappings) for wide-ranging expressive effect. The conceptual *and* pedagogical benefit to scientific and speech communities from systematic semantic analysis such as this is thus quite promising.

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