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E. Annamalai, University of Chicago

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தொல்காப்பியம் பொருளதிகாரம் உவமையியல்:
இளம்பூரணர் உரை, பேராசிரியர் உரை

Theory of உவமை in Tolkappiyam-1

Function of உவமை

Comparison of similarity

உவமை (upama in Sanskrit, simile in English) is a literary concept and technique found in literary theories found in every language that has literate poetry. The concept is based on the notion of similarity (ஒப்பு, ஒப்புமை) between two things. The verb from which these nouns are derived (ஒப்பிடு) means 'compare'. Similarity between things is never total; it is always partial (ஒருபுடை ஒப்புமை). பேராசிரியர் (S 1) explains this with the example tiger-like warrior, which excludes from similarity having a tail, four legs etc. Similar features for comparison are selected not just by natural similarity; the cultural convention about the significance of a feature or some features of things plays a crucial role as well. Comparison of the beauty of a woman with the beauty of the bird parrot is specific to Tamil (may be, Indian) culture, but is unacceptable in European culture. So, acceptable and unacceptable உவமை is culture specific and consequently, language specific. This, however, does not rule out உவமைs that are universally acceptable.

It may be noted that all comparisons by some similarity are not உவமை. புலி போல் பாயும் பூனை 'the cat that leaps like a tiger and 'the cat leaps like a tiger' is a comparison between two animals, but is not a உவமை. தொல்காப்பியம் (S 11) uses the உவமச்சொல் அன்ன as in அன்னவை பிறவும் 'and others like them' to refer to the உவமச்சொல் not in the list. This is about similarity and this is not உவமை.

Tolkappiyar's description of உவமை is Tamil specific. But his theorization of it could be universal and this is an empirical question. Similarly, the question if Tolkappiyar's theory of உவமை is applicable (or extendable) to all of the literature in Tamil is empirical.

Conveying meaning and beauty

The function of உவமை is two-fold: conveying knowledge and conveying a sense of beauty. In இளம்பூரணர்'s words, புலனல்லாதன புலனாதலும் அலங்காரமாகிக் கேட்டார்க்கு இன்பம் பயத்தலும் 'what is not cognizable is made cognizable and creates pleasure for the listeners by being decorative'. Both functions are considered equal in தொல்காப்பியம், unlike in later

அணியியல் theories, which give primacy to ornamentation and enjoyment. பேராசிரியர் (S 1) foregrounds the former function, which is 'meaning creation' with this statement: உவமத்தானும் பொருள் புலப்பாடே கூறுகின்றான் 'he talks about explication of meaning through உவமம் also'. He claims (S 1) that உவமவியல் is semantic analysis (பொருளாராய்ச்சி), justifies placing it in பொருளதிகாரம் 'the part (of the book) on meaning'. Conveying meaning is the function of மெய்ப்பாடு also (பொருள் புலப்பாடு கூறிய மெய்ப்பாடு 'மெய்ப்பாடு that describes the emergence of meaning' (S 1). This commonness is the reason for placing the chapter on உவமை after the chapter on மெய்ப்பாடு, according to பேராசிரியர்.

Ordinary language and poetic language

Use of உவமை is common to the ordinary language (வழக்கு) and to the poetic language (செய்யுள்), as the commentators point out. The common thing for both is the way of getting knowledge (புலனெறி வழக்கு) through semantic interpretation (S 1). In the ordinary language, using metaphors is a common strategy to convey meaning (as linguists like George Lakoff have demonstrated, cf. his book *Metaphors we live by*). It is also used as a rhetoric device of persuasion. In the words of பேராசிரியர் (S 1), ஏனை உவமம்... யாப்புடைமை நோக்கி உலக வழக்கினும் செய்யுள் வழக்கினும் வரும் 'the open simile is found in the language of poetry and of the world, having the same structure'. It is for this reason, according to commentators, the description of உவமை is not given in the chapter on செய்யுள் (S 1). This chapter (செய்யுளியல்) gives a list of thirty four components of poetry, but உவமை is not one of them. That உவமை is not specific to poetry could be a reason for this. As mentioned above, meaning creation is an important function of உவமை, which function is not limited to poetry.

The meaning (பொருள்) from உவமை is expansive to include both அகப்பொருள் and புறப்பொருள்; in other words, every meaning in the world. உவமை is of two kinds: ஏனை or வெளிப்படை உவமம் and உள்ளுறை உவமம் (as introduced in அகத்திணையியல்). The criterion for this division is the difference in the creation of meaning. In உள்ளுறை உவமம், the meaning creation is only of அகப்பொருள், in the poetry of which கருப்பொருள் is the உவமை. The meaning in this is implicit and it is created by poetic conventions from the vocabulary of கருப்பொருள். This உவமை is impossible in the ordinary language (nor in the poetry of புறப்பொருள். It is true only of the language of one genre the poetry.

The grammar of உவமை

The linking word

There are two units in a உவமை construction, which are பொருள் (உபமேய in Sanskrit, tenor in English (I.A. Richards) and உவமை (உபமான in Sanskrit, vehicle in English). The linking element between them is a non-referential form that compares, and this form is designated as சொல் (in the traditional grammar's word class, this will be இடைச்சொல்). It is உவமச் சொல் for which the later grammarians use also the term உவம உருபு. Tolkappiyam (S 11) calls this form to be meaning sensitive (பல் குறிப்பின) unlike a உருபு. They fall into classes of multiple senses of உவமை that are implicit; the multiple senses are actually four meanings that define உவமை (உவமப் பொருள் in S 1). பேராசிரியர் points to inference to get these meanings, which are the intention of the poet (முன்னம் (S 3) from the root முன்னு 'think, have in mind'). உவமச் சொல் is an element in உவமை construction (உவமத் தொடர்) to base this inference on. Commentators point to the empirical facts that make this method problematic. One is the actual use in poetry of a உவமச் சொல் to suggest a உவமப் பொருள் different from the specified one in the sutra (பேராசிரியர் on S 12 and others). The other is the fact that some of உவமச் சொல் are இடைச்சொல், which by definition does not have a referential meaning.

List of linking words

Sutra 11 lists thirty six of உவமச் சொல் and keeps the list open for others to be added and they are grouped into six with each group having six உவமச் சொல். The criterion of this classification is not clear. The semantic correlation with உவமப் பொருள் by four groups of eight each (S 12-17, leaving out four உவமச் சொல் out of correlation). Commentators (S 11) explain that six உவமச் சொல் (ஒன்ற, என்ற, மாற்ற, பொற்ப, நாட, நடுங்க) of the list of 36 are not in the correlational list. This shortens the absolute list to 32, which are semantically specified. The reason for the exclusion is not mentioned, but it may be speculated that they do not specify any particular உவமப் பொருள். To this shortened list are added two உவமச் சொல் (நேர, நோக்க), which are included in the correlational list by using the open provision அன்னவை பிறவும் 'such others (i.e. உவமச் சொல்) also' (S 11). Commentators add to the list உவமச் சொல் that are attested in actual use as well as those (for example, நளிய, நந்த, given by பேராசிரியர் S 16) that have dropped from use. This brings back the absolute list to thirty six. பேராசிரியர் (S 11) makes it clear that the list is not finite but is not open ended either (வரம்பிறந்தனவாகா).

உவமச் சொல் are limited to certain grammatical forms; other grammatical forms do not qualify to be உவமச் சொல். New உவமச் சொல் that are acceptable are variations of the specified grammatical forms (S 11, for example, gives போல but போல், போன்று, போன்ற, போலும்

could be added). Other acceptable உவமச் சொல் are other verbs with some meaning of ‘compare’, which contemporary poets have used and future poets will use (whether they are etymologically related (அனை, அனைய, அற்று while S 11 gives only அன்ன) or are of new etymology (நோக்க, நேர, ஏந்து, செத்து, கெழு etc.)).

The commentators add இன் to the list of உவமச் சொல், which is a case suffix (வேற்றுமை உருபு of ஐந்தாம் வேற்றுமை, the ablative case), which is not derived from a verb. It is also semantically different from the rest in the list in that it is not for the comparison of similar things but between higher or lower things. The fundamental question is if this comparative construction is உவமம் at all and its meaning is உவமப் பொருள். It may be noted, however, that there is ambiguity with the use of இன். காக்கையிற் கரிது களம் பழம் both meanings: ‘kaḷam fruit is darker than / as dark as a crow’. The second meaning is probably a secondary meaning that developed later, when உவமச் சொல் came to be grammaticalized as உவம உருபு.

Form of linking words

The grammatical form of உவமச் சொல் is mostly from a verb, which may (தெரிநிலை) or not take tense (குறிப்பு). It is from different verbs or different grammatical forms of one verb (போல், போலும், போல, போன்ற, போன்று (the past two are later forms). The commentators read குறிப்பு (S 11) as குறி ‘sign’ (cf. வினையெஞ்சு கிளவி பல்குறிய (தொல். சொல். எச்சவியல் S 1)) and பல் குறிப்பின as ‘of many grammatical forms’. இளம்பூரணர் takes these forms to be a relative participle (பெயரெச்சம்: போன்ற), verbal participle (வினையெச்சம்: போன்று, போல), finite verb (வினைமுற்று: போலும்) and non-referential form (இடைச்சொல்: அன்ன). By the word ‘others’ in the sutra, commentators add more உவமச் சொல், one of which is இன், as mentioned above.

Commentators call the structures with these forms உவம வாய்பாடு ‘formula of simile or figure’. It could be argued that all உவமச் சொல் belong to one grammatical function, viz., noun modification. The noun modifier is a verbal root (as in வினைத்தொகை: போல், உறும் etc.) or a relative participle (போன்ற, போலும் etc. (as of the pattern செய்யும்)). The relative participle may not be marked for tense (குறிப்புப் பெயரெச்சம்: அன்ன, என்ன). The infinitive form (நிகர்ப்ப, ஏய்ப்ப, போல, புரைய, மருள் etc.) is not syntactically linked to a noun. It links one clause to another; as such, a உவமச் சொல் in the infinitive plus a noun does not make one syntactic constituent. It will be a case where பொருள் and உவமை belong to two clauses. So is the

problem with the verbal participle of செய்து pattern (e.g. போன்று, செத்து). The உவம வாய்பாடு of these two constructions with வினையெச்சம் are syntactically very different from others that are noun modifiers. ஆங்கு and இன் belong to a different kind of exception; they are not derived from a verb. Some of the உவமச் சொல் are probably frozen grammatically creating a new grammatical category உவம உருபு under இடைச்சொல்.

The verb base of the உவமச் சொல் could function as the predicate of a sentence. மதி போலும் இவள் முகம் parallels இவள் முகம் மதி போலும்; so are மதி அனைய இவள் முகம் and இவள் முகம் மதி அனைத்து. பேராசிரியர் (S 11) gives for the predicate use the example மதியொத்தது மாசற்ற திருமுகம் 'the spotless rich face resembles the moon'. Such propositions with a comparative verb are paraphrases of உவமத் தொடர். The verb of comparison (ஒ-) takes the second (accusative) case (தொல். சொல். வேற்றுமையியல் S 11): இவள் முகம் மதியை ஒக்கும். உவமை is the Object of the verb; this suggests a relationship of transitivity between பொருள் and உவமம். உவமம் comes into existence by the function of the verb as in குயவன் பானை செய்தான். This property of the transitive verb may be extended to உவமச் சொல் to say that உவமை has Object relationship to பொருள் and that it makes the உவமை to have an existential relationship with it.

This sutra (S 11) may not be talking about the grammatical status of உவமச்சொல், if one understands the word குறிப்பு in the sutra as referring to 'intended meaning' (உவமப் பொருள்). Then the word 'many' in the sutra will be understood as 'four', as the following sutras spell out.

Syntax of உவமை construction

உவமை is used in தொல்காப்பியம் sutras in three senses. One is the structure itself of பொருள் and உவமை (உவமத் தொடர் 'figurative phrase'); the second is only what something is compared with (உவமம் 'source of the figure, vehicle'); the third sense is the meaning obtained from the comparison (உவமப் பொருள் 'figurative meaning'; this divides into generic as per S 1 and specific meanings of particular instances). In the first sense, the common structure of உவமை is N_2 - link- N_1 : புலியன்ன மறவன் 'the warrior like a tiger'. The 'link' is உவமச் சொல். The other structure is N_2 -link- V: புலி போல் பாய்ந்தான் 'charged like a tiger. The third structure is N_2 - N_1 without a link: புலி மறவன் 'tiger warrior', புலிப்பாய்ச்சல் 'tiger leap'. This last one is a compound made with a simile (உவமத் தொகை (தொல். சொல். எச்சவியல் S 18). உவமை also has a fourth sense, in addition to the three above, as in ஆறாறு உவமையும் (S 11), where the meaning is உவமச் சொல் 'the word establishing the figure'.

The Semantics of உவமை

Four sites for meaning

In the organization of the theory of உவமை, Tolkappiyam starts with the aspects of its meaning. The first sutra (S 1) of the chapter, உவமையியல் or உவமவியல், which is placed between the chapter on 'sensual effect (of poetry or performance, மெய்ப்பாட்டியல்) and the chapter on metrical structure (of poems, செய்யுளியல்), gives the four sites of meaning to identify and define the foundational meanings of உவமை called உவமப் பொருள். They are வினை 'action', பயன் 'result of action (i.e. what one gets from an action)', மெய் 'form' and உரு 'color'. They relate to பொருள் 'tenor', which the உவமை explicates. The four relations may be though the performed action of பொருள், effect of the action of பொருள் and two qualities of பொருள். The two qualities could be subsumed under the genetic term quality (பண்பு). The reason for specifying only two of the many possible qualities is not clear. (தண்டியலங்காரம் gives three site, which are பண்பு 'quality' followed by தொழில் (= வினை) and பயன். பேராசிரியர் justifies the twin specification of quality in this way. For உவமை to be appropriate in அகம் poetry in the description of the meeting of தலைவன் and தலைவி at night, the shape of the object (பொருள்) that is described by உவமை would be appropriate as it can be cognized by touch whereas the color of the object would be invisible in darkness. Therefore, the bifurcation of the generic quality (பண்பு) is necessary to prevent any inappropriate use of உவமை in love poetry. This explanation does not justify the exclusion of other qualities such as taste, anger, kindness, grief etc., which play a role in generating the meaning of உவமை. பேராசிரியர் probably would have பண்பு as a meaning site for உவமை and thinks that Tolkappiyam gives the parts to represent the whole and the choice of two specific parts out of many is dictated by their relevance for appropriateness in a poetic context. The usual way of Tolkappiyam doing this, however, is to have a separate sutra of special use (எய்தியது விலக்கல்) or exception (புறனடை).

இளம்பூரணர் gives some manifestations of each of these two sites of meaning of quality. They are circle, square, triangle etc., for form and white, yellow etc., for color. He illustrates the other two sites of meaning also: lengthening, shortening, spreading, piling up etc., for action, and good thing, bad thing etc., for result. These are logical manifestations, not specific to poetry the poets commonly choose to use in. One could, in principle, break each of the four sites of meaning to infinity. Hence, any short list is arbitrary. It could at best be taken to be illustrative.

இளம்பூரணர், while expanding the semantic site of quality, brings in the sensory organs that enjoy specific qualities of the thing (பொருள்). They are the sound enjoyed by ears, taste by tongue, smell by nose, temperature by body and feeling (இன்பம், துன்பம்) by mind. He visualizes these qualities not just for the purpose of comparison but for the sensory experience a reader gets from உவமை. He

has in mind the parallel in performance, which expresses these qualities by signs. This parallel is the justification for placing the chapter on மெய்ப்பாடு and on உவமை close to each other, as mentioned above. He thus expands the function of உவமை from creating meaning to creating sensory experience.

Meaning creation

Meaning creation, however, is paramount in உவமை for Tamil grammarians. பேராசிரியர் emphatically states that this is the reason for உவமை to be treated in the third Book: treatment of உவமை is a matter of semantic analysis (பொருளாராய்ச்சி). The word often used in the sutras to get the meaning of உவமை (S 7, ... உவமம் .. பொருள் எதிர் புணர்த்து ...) and in the commentaries (S 7, இளம்பூரணர்: உவமம் பொருட்குப் புணராக்கண்ணும்; the formal means of coupling is by உவமச்சொல், whose semantics is specified S 12-16) is புணர்த்தல் ‘coupling’. Coupling the பொருள் and உவமை is to make meaning (S 7, ... புணர்த்தன கொளலே). புணர்த்தன is the result of this coupling, which is one of the four sites (S 1) that are the sites of the coupling. Note the analogy in phonology (எழுத்துப் புணர்ச்சி) in grammar, which describes the three results (மிகுதல், குறைதல், திரிதல்) of the coupling (புணர்ச்சி) of two sounds / letters. உவமை is பொருட் புணர்ச்சி. It may be noted that இளம்பூரணர் uses the term வருமொழி (S 8) from the grammar to refer to பொருள் to point to the syntagmatic relation between பொருள் and உவமை. வரு in this term refers to the right orientation of the placement of பொருள் syntactically. (By extension, உவமை would be நிலைமொழி, though this term is not used). By knowing the sandhi rule, one would know which one of the three results obtains in a particular instance; similarly, by knowing the உவமை (S 1), one would know which of the four semantic classes obtains in a particular instance. உவமை is a formula in this sense even when உவமச் சொல் is absent (S 7, சுட்டிக் கூறா உவமம்).

பேராசிரியர் brings in the notion of knowing the முன்னம் ‘intension’ of the poet to get the meaning of உவமை (S 3, முன்னத்தின் கிளவியான் உவமம் கோடல் ‘getting the meaning of உவமம் from the clues of intension’; clues include who said what, where and when, as இளம்பூரணர் explains (S 23) முன்னம் citing தொல். பொருள். செய்யுளியல் S 199). The meaning falls within the four sites or parameters mentioned above. உவமச் சொல் that correlates to one of these four elements is an aid to get the intension and thus the meaning. But getting the meaning is not straight forward. One problem is the presence of non-referential இடைச்சொல் among the உவமச்சொல் (S 18), as mentioned above. Another problem is that some of the உவமச்சொல் across the four sites of meaning are homonymous with same or nearly same meanings (S 18; this is a secondary point and is attributed as இதுவும் ஒரு கருத்து ‘this is also a thought’). Yet another

problem is the empirical fact that one உவமச் சொல் relates to all four sites of meaning. பேராசிரியர் (S 11) demonstrates this with the உவமச் சொல் ஒன்று: வேலொன்று கண் ‘eyes like the spear’ (வினை), மழையொன்று வண் தடக்கை ‘the broad benevolent hand like the rain (பயன்), வேயொன்று தோள் ‘her shoulder like the bamboo stem’ (மெய்), குன்றியும் கோபமும் ஒன்றிய உடுக்கை ‘the drum like see of crab’s eye with a black round spot on a red body’ (உரு).

Problems of getting meaning

A serious problem is the absence of உவமச் சொல் in a உவமத் தொடர். பேராசிரியர் (S 18) calls it உவமத் தொகை ‘உவமம் with elided உவமச்சொல்’ in contrast with உவம விரி ‘உவமம் with explicit உவமச்சொல்’. The particular உவமச்சொல் that is absent cannot be retrieved non-arbitrarily; this is referred to as உவமக் குறைபாடு (S 3).

புலி மறவன் ‘the tiger of a warrior’ may expand with different உவமச்சொல்s for three உவமப் பொருள்s: புலியென்ன மறவன் ‘the warrior who charges like a tiger’ (வினை S 12), புலிபுரையும் மறவன் ‘the warrior strong like a tiger’ (மெய் S 15), புலியொக்கும் மறவன் ‘the warrior ferocious like a tiger’ (உரு S 16). புலியென்ன மறவன் (S 13) ‘the warrior like a tiger’ can have all three உவமப் பொருள். It is an open question if the claimed distinctive semantic uses of உவமச் சொல் are empirically validated.

பவளம்போல் செந்துவர் வாய் (S 7, பேராசிரியர்) explicitly states that the color between lips and the coral is compared. The meaning (உவமப் பொருள்) of this உவமம் is undisputed. பவளம்போல் வாய் does not mention the word for color that is compared, but, by theory, போல் is the உவமச்சொல் for color (S 16). Hence the meaning could be obtained. பவள வாய் has neither the word for color nor the உவமச்சொல். Hence the meaning has to be inferred. The way is to follow through convention (மரபு). The comparison of lips with coral is not for its texture, which is hard and so an untrue comparison (S 7, பேராசிரியர்); the choice falls on color; this choice is fortified by convention. இளம்பூரணர்’s examples for getting the meaning by the presence of a word for quality, without its presence but the presence of உவமச்சொல், and the presence of neither (S 11), are: தேன்போல இனிய மொழி ‘words sweet like honey’, தேன்போலும் மொழி ‘words like honey’, தேமொழி ‘words of honey’.

Non-canonical உவமை structure

A more serious problem is the meaning of உவமை that does not adhere to the formula (உவம வாய்பாடு) for உவமை does not allow a உவமச் சொல் even optionally. பேராசிரியர் (S 30) gives two such non-formulaic illustrations. He calls such structures உவம வகை 'kind of உவமை'. 'One is a doubt about reality whether an object is real or looks deceptively like another one. The doubt makes two things similar, one of which is commonly the உவமை for the other. ஆய்மயில் கொல் மாதர்கொல் 'is it a loveable woman or a beautiful peahen?' In this example, the conventional comparison is the gait common to them. உவமப் பொருள் therefore is action (வினை). There is no structure of உவமை phrase in the example and so there is no formal coupling link between பொருள் and உவமை. Hence the உவமப் பொருள் is to be inferred based on convention: it is the gait, not the beauty.

Another type of உவமை that does not follow the formula is the one that negates the similarity (ஒப்புமை) through which the excellence (சிறப்பு) of பொருள் is suggested. கலித்தொகை poem 55 (cited by பேராசிரியர் under S 3) lists many physical and functional features of தலைவி and negates the உவமை in verbally as not matching by a difference in their features. For example கலித்தொகை 55 describes the excellence of the body parts of the heroine by negating that they are not like the preferred உவமை of them. Here getting the meaning (உவமப் பொருள்), even without a உவமச்சொல், is not hard because the negated feature mentioned will give way the semantic (S 1) that is compared. ஐ in the example suggests that what is compared is shape (ஐ தேய்ந்தன்று பிறையுமன்று 'the beauty doesn't fade and so it (forehead) is not the crescent...)

பேராசிரியர் (S 1) points out that a word indicating one of the four semantic sites may be attached by the reader to உவமை, which is not in the language of the poem but could be intuited. He gives an example only for வினை. புலி போலப் பாய்ந்தான் 'he charged like a tiger' would be understood as the expanded sentence புலிபாய்வதைப் போலப் பாய்ந்தான் 'he charged like a tiger charges / does' from which it is deduced. This circumvents the problem that போல is the உவமச் சொல் for the meaning of color (S 16). Here the grammar comes to help get the meaning. This is different from the poetic mention of உவமச் சொல் (as in பவளம்போல் செந்துவர் வாய் mentioned above), where there is no need to involve the grammar. Another grammatically constructed example would be மதியன்ன வட்ட முகம் 'round face like the moon', மதி வடிவன்ன முகம் 'the face in the shape of the moon'. Here the உவமச் சொல் அன்ன is specified for the meaning of வினை (S 12).

Commentators (S 12) cite the உவமை which is the வினை itself. This kind follows the formula in having உவமச் சொல் (though restricted to a very few such as அன்ன, ஆங்கு), but does not follow the formula of உவமை being a noun. The verbal form here is the வினையெச்சம் of

செய்து type: கொன்றன்ன இன்னா செயினும்.. (திருக்குறள் 109) ‘even if one does harm like killing (you)’. This structure could be paraphrased using an action noun (verbal noun) in உவமை as கொன்றதன்ன, which is structurally similar to the English gloss above. Use of the verb itself as the உவமை preempts any other meaning (உவமப் பொருள்) but வினை. The point is that irrespective of the form of expressing உவமை, the meaning must be one of the four elements (S 1) and the grammar may be called up to decide the right one.

Mismatch of meaning and form in உவமை

பொருள் may compare with உவமை in more than one meaning (S 2). That is, there may be more than one உவமைப் பொருள் in a உவமை construction. In இலங்கு பிறையன்ன விலங்கு வால் வை எயிற்று (அகநானூறு: கடவுள் வாழ்த்து) ‘of sharp white shining teeth like the shining crescent moon’, the similarity is of color and shape and so there are two உவமப் பொருள், viz., உரு and மெய். Though அன்ன is specific to வினை (S 12), it alternates with other உவமச் சொல் and is appropriate for other உவமப் பொருள் also (S 13). There is the empirical problem of mismatch between the theoretical sanction and poetic use. இளம்பூரணர் (S 17) gives a sample of use of உவமச் சொல் in a உவமப் பொருள் that is not specified for it. He claims that, in such cases, the non-canonical use is sanctioned by this sutra (17), which says that உவமப் பொருள் appear according to each one’s conventional use (தத்தம் மரபில் தோன்றும்மன் பொருளே). He interprets தத்தம் மரபில் as ‘in their independent ways’ (மரபென்றது பயிற்சியை ‘convention is the practice’ is the gloss of இளம்பூரணர்). This sutra is naturally amenable to the interpretation: ‘in their established ways’. The established ways of using உவமச்சொல் were true at the time Tolkappiyam was written, as given in sutras 12-16. (நூல் செய்கின்ற காலத்து வினை முதலாகிய பெயர்கள் ஓதிய வாய்பாட்டால் வருவது பெருவழக்கிற்று ‘it was the common practice at the time of the grammar for the meanings of வினை and others to follow the specified framework’). This is how இளம்பூரணர் rationalizes the deviance between theoretical sanction and empirical practice.

பேராசிரியர் does not recognize this empirical deviation and makes an argument that deviation is not possible because of the etymological meanings of உவமச் சொல், which anchor the உவமப்பொருள். இடைச் சொல் among them do not have a verb base and they are appropriate for all four meanings. One example of etymological interpretation of உவமச் சொல் is this. The உவமச் சொல் எள்ள comes from the verb எள் ‘put to shame’; it is specified for the உவமப் பொருள் பயன் ‘result (from action)’. The உவமை, மழை எள்ளும் கொடை ‘giving that puts the rain to shame’ is acceptable because it does not diminish the excellence of giving’. If this உவமச் சொல் is used in வினைப் பொருள், as in புலி எள்ளும் பாய்த்து ‘his charge

that puts to shame the charge of a tiger' makes the tiger weak and this goes against keeping the உவமை superior. The argument that எள்ளும் does not reduce the superiority of the rain likewise is then an arbitrary attribution. It should be noted that பேராசிரியர் himself (S 17) is unconvinced by his own argument when he gives an alternative explanation, like இளம்பூரணர்'s, to the empirical problem that the variations are conventional use. He says that the semantic specifications given by Tolkappiyam to உவமச்சொல்s are according to the conventions of use by the poets of the starting period of Tamil literature (which பேராசிரியர் identifies as the First Sangam, from which time the use of உவமச் சொல் has changed during Third Sangam!).

Besides specifying the meaning appropriate for உவமைs, there are combinatory restrictions between உவமச் சொல் and உவமம். பேராசிரியர் (S 17) draws attention to the fact that அன்ன, ஆங்கு, which are இடைச்சொல் without any semantic content, can have a உவமம் of action, but not of color: புலி பாய்ந்தாங்கு is acceptable, but *தளிராங்கு சிவந்த மேனி is not. They link to உவமை in verbal form.

The multiple layers of meaning of உவமை would necessarily suggest a category overlap between உவமச் சொல். This overlap is indicated by the verb விரவு (S 2). One may compare this word with the grammatical term விரவுப் பெயர், which refers to a noun that belongs to both human and non-human gender categories as indicated by the different agreement markers with the predicate. On par with this, one could call the overlap of உவமப் பொருள் as விரவுப் பொருள். Like the overlap in உவமப் பொருள், there is overlap in உவமச் சொல் also. அன்ன is specified for வினை, but is also acceptable for others (S 13). By extension, உவமச் சொல் specified to a particular meaning in sutras (S 12-16) may also be acceptable for other meanings. This should be true of some உவமச் சொல், if not all. This would make problematic the method of knowing the intended meaning of உவமை from the உவமச் சொல் used. This problem could be handled if there is a rank order of semantic choices for a உவமச் சொல்; the first choice goes to the specified meaning of the உவமச் சொல் used and if it is not appropriate to the intended உவமைப் பொருள், then the other meaning of the உவமச் சொல்.

Commonly உவமை has one to one comparison with பொருள். But there are complex உவமைs, which have two பொருள்s and two உவமைs. Each pair may have a different meaning.

இளம்பூரணர் finds an example in கலித்தொகை 84. The lines say: *the scion is sitting under the parasol in its shade (protection) like a lotus bud with beautiful petals is under the leaves the lotus plant.* The only உவமச் சொல் used is போல to compare the scion with the bud and the parasol with the lotus leaf. The former is a comparison of மெய், the young one, and the latter is a comparison of வினை, protection.

இளம்பூரணர், using his extension of meaning of உவமை to sensory experience (see above), extends the overlap also to மெய்ப்பாடு. தேன் மொழி ‘speech of honey’ combines the sensory experiences of tongue and ears. Tamil grammarians treat metaphor (உருவகம்) as a kind of simile (உவமை). This would be called a mixed metaphor and it is prevalent in Tamil. Subramaniya Bharati is an example from the modern period: இன்பத் தேன் வந்து பாயுது காதினிலே ‘(when you hear the word the land of Tamil) sweet honey pours in the ears’. உவமப் பொருள் in these cases compounds the meaning of a உவமச் சொல்.

Multiple simultaneous meanings

Even when restricted to the simple cases of உவமை of one to one comparison, having a composite meaning of more than one of the four elements (S 1) is an accepted practice (மரபு, S 2).

பேராசிரியர் goes a step further to say, extending one of the senses of வழக்கு ‘practice’ of the word மரபு to பெருவழக்கு ‘common practice’, that is, for உவமை to have a composite meaning is a common practice. For the four meanings to have opaque boundaries between them is not the practice at all (S 2, வேறு வேறு வருதலே மரபெனப்படாது). He gives an example (அகநானூறு 108) of the composite meaning of three elements in one உவமை: *the bees hopping from one காந்தள் flower to another is like the dice rolling in a hand*. This flower has petals that look like fingers; the dices were probably nuts dark in color. This comparison conveys the composite meaning of action, shape and color. The choice of this citation also indicates, though பேராசிரியர் does not explicitly state it, that ஏனை உவமம் overlaps with உள்ளுறை உவமம்; i.e. the former is embedded in the latter (அகத்திணையியல் S 47 நச்சினார்க்கினியர் commentary). This poem is the expression of fear of தலைவி, who compares காந்தள் with the hood of a cobra, emanating from the behavior of தலைவன், who is unpredictable like gambling and is unstable like the bee moving from one காந்தள் to another. உள்ளுறை உவமம் has ஏனை உவமம் inside it.

Elaboration of four meanings

Unlike the variations in the number and meanings of உவமச் சொல், உவமப்பொருள் remains consistent in theory and is limited to four (S 1) delineated meanings (until தண்டியலங்காரம் compacts the number to three). There is, however, a question if the four உவமப்பொருள் could be expanded into eight by sutra 18 (நாலிரண்டாகும் பாலுமார் உண்டே ‘there exists the possibility of making the four divisions into eight’). The commentators differ in their readings of this opaque sutra amenable to multiple interpretations. பேராசிரியர் picks on the form of உவமை and reads it as referring to the presence and absence of உவமச் சொல். இளம்பூரணர் picks on

the meaning of உவமை and points to the possibility of splitting each meaning into: வினை ‘action’ – வினை ‘time specified action’, வினைக்குறிப்பு ‘time unspecified action’; பயன் ‘result’ – நன்மை ‘good result’, தீமை ‘bad result’; மெய் – வடிவு ‘shape’, அளவு ‘measurement’; உரு – நிறம் ‘color’, குணம் ‘character’. பேராசிரியர்’s division is an instance of two of manifestations of the same form; it is not an instance two different forms. சுட்டிக் கூறா உவமம் ‘the simile that does not have its meaning pointed to’ (because of the absence of உவமச் சொல்) is mentioned in S 7 for getting the meaning, not for including another meaning. Moreover, there are other structurally non-canonical forms of உவமை that do not have the உவமச் சொல் (see above). பேராசிரியர் suggests an alternative reading (it could be a note added by a teacher or reader in the palm leaf manuscript). It is this: each of the eight உவமச் சொல் specified for each of உவமப்பொருள் may be divided into four plus four, of which one set of four is semantically transparent and another set is semantically opaque. This does not bear empirical test. இளம்பூரணர்’s division is an instance of two manifestations of the same meaning and are not different meanings. There is some arbitrariness in splitting the last two; they could be divided differently also. For example, மெய் could be வடிவு ‘shape’ and திரவம் ‘liquid’; உரு could be நிறம் ‘color’ and ருசி ‘taste’. A better reading of this sutra would be to say that it anticipates மெய்ப்பாடு in the following sutra and that உவமப் பொருள் could relate to expressing the eight kinds of மெய்ப்பாடு. Note that this sutra is repeated word for word in the second sutra of the chapter on மெய்ப்பாடு.

Classification of உவமை

The description of உவமப் பொருள் in Tolkappiyam is from the perspective of the reader of poetry rather than from that of the poets to serve as a kind of manual to help composing poems. It is about how to get the meaning of உவமை in its various manifestations. It is not even for categorizing and classifying உவமைs. Tolkappiyam is aware of this possibility, but is ambivalent about it being the main component of the theory of உவமை. It uses the word பால் (S. 13, as in வினைப்பால் உவமம் and in other sites in the following sutras), which could be taken in the taxonomic sense of ‘division of category’ or in the descriptive sense of locative to mean ‘உவமை based on வினை’. Later grammarians give primacy to classification, as they do of அணி theories, and call this வினையுவமம் ‘simile of action’. பேராசிரியர் (S *) seems to have classification in mind when he says உவமப் பகுதி ‘kind of simile’. He differentiates பகுதி ‘part, division’ from வகை ‘variety’. For him (S 1), உவம வகை is a kind of simile differentiated by structure (not by meaning) such as the absence of உவமச் சொல். In other words, உவம வகை is identified on the basis of the difference in உவம வாய்பாடு, which is a structural classification and உவமப் பகுதி on the

basis of உவமப் பொருள், which is a semantic classification. இளம்பூரணர் (*) uses உவம வகை for the latter and உவம வேறுபாடு for the former.