

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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## Katakrese

(\_litterær\_praksis) Fra gresk: “misbruk”. Begrepet har to langt på vei motstridende definisjoner, enten som en ulogisk, feilaktig metafor, eller en metafor som må brukes fordi språket mangler et ord for et fenomen. “De to forskjellige katakresbegrepene har bare samme navn, ellers har de knapt noe med hverandre å gjøre.” (<http://www.li-go.de/prosa/rhetorik/print-katachrese.html>; lesedato 29.11.19)

I boka *Litteraturvitenskapelige grunnbegreper* (1974; på tysk) skiller Jürgen Link mellom “metaforiske katakreser”, som bøter på mangler i språket, og “katakreser”, som er motsetningsfulle metaforer.

Den ene betydningen av katakrese er en trope som fyller et “hull” (en mangel) i språket, der det ikke finnes et ord eller begrep allerede. “Catachresis, in general, consists in this, that a sign already assigned to a first idea should be assigned also to a new idea which has no other sign at all, or no longer has a sign as its proper expression” (Pierre Fontanier), “katakresen [er] den “lånte” term, der utfyller en mangel i det eksisterende ordforråd” (Jørgensen 1995). Katakresen er en påtvunget trope, som språket tvinger på oss (Genette 1966 s. 212). Det er språkfiguren for det ikke benevnte (Bohrer 1993 s. 38).

Katakrese er en “nødvendig metafor”, der det billedlige faller sammen med selve betegnelsen, fordi det ikke finnes noen “egentlig” betegnelse. “Katakresen er den metaforiske bruken av et ord for å erstatte en term som ikke finnes i det aktuelle språket.” (Nayrolles 1987 s. 48) “En “nødvendig” metafor som tas i bruk fordi språket mangler et egentlig begrep” (Aarønæs 2007 s. 155). Katakresen retter slik sett på en språklig mangel. Norske eksempler: stolbein, flaskehals, lypære, romskip. Hva er det ikke-metaforiske uttrykket for “stolbein”? Mange katakreser kan ha oppstått ved at bestemte metaforer har blitt gjentatt så ofte at de har blitt “leksikalisert” (Aquièn 1993 s. 178).

“Katakresen *stolbein* er rimeligvis en trope, siden den bruker om et bord et ord som opprinnelig var reservert for menneskekroppen, og snur ordets betydning bort fra dets opprinnelige betydning [...]. Men den er ikke en språkfigur, for jeg kan ikke finne noen oversettelse av ordet fot, av mangel på et annet ord” (Genette 1966 s. 213).

Begrepet “smak” brukt om musikk, litteratur og bildekunst, og annet som ikke kan smakes med munnen, er en katakrese (<http://www.li-go.de/prosa/rhetorik/print-katachrese.html>; lesedato 29.11.19).

Katakresen “utfører en tolknings-ytelse: Den utlegger virkelighet på en bestemt måte” (Plett 1991 s. 70). En katakrese kan ifølge Paul Ricoeur være en metafor, metonymi eller synekdoke, avhengig av måten språket brukes på til å supplere en mangel i språket, et ord som ikke finnes (1975 s. 369). En kan ikke oversette tilbake til det ikke-metaforiske. Vi har ikke noe annet ord for fenomenet.

“Ifølge Cicero er metaforen oprindeligt opstået som *katakrese* (dvs. et “lånt” udtryk, der udfylder en lakune i det eksisterende ordforråd som i bjergets *fod*, møllens *vinger* osv.); men: “Oprindeligt skabt af nødvendigheden, dikteret af mangel og fattigdom, har den efterhånden vundet udbredelse takket være sin tiltalende og behagelige virkning. Ligesom nemlig klædedragten oprindeligt blev opfundet for at beskytte os mod kulden og sidenhen efterhånden også kom til at tjene kroppens udsmykning og værdige fremtræden, således er metaforen indført af nød, men har fundet udbredelse, fordi den vækker behag.” [fra den romerske retorikeren Ciceros *Om talekunsten*]” (Jørgensen 1995)

“Katakrese betegner i retorikken først bruken av et ord med uegentlig betydning (som da er likeverdig med metafor), deretter en talers synd mot et bildes enhet, altså bildesammenblanding, dvs. en tom talemåte. Et kjent skoleeksempel for en bebreidelsesverdige katakrese lyder: “I dette året ble statens søyle født” ” (Fritz Mauthner sitert fra <http://www.textlog.de/31282.html>; lesedato 24.04.14).

“It is a form of speech, whereby the speaker or writer, wanting a proper word, borroweth the next or the likest to the thing that he would signifie. It is an improper kinde of speech, somewhat more desperate than a Metaphor, and is the expressing of one matter by the name of another, which is incompatible with, and sometimes clean contrary to it: and is when the change of speech is hard, strange and unwonted: or, It is the abuse of a Trope, when words are too far wrested from their native signification, or when one word is abusively put for another, for lack of the proper word [...] By the license of this figure we give names to many things which lack names: as when we say, The water runs, which is improper; for to run, is proper to those creatures which have feet and not unto water. By this form also we attribute horns to a snail, and feet to a stool; and so likewise to many other things which lack their proper names.” (fra John Smiths retorikkbok, 1665; her gjengitt fra <https://rhetfig.appspot.com/>; lesedato 01.11.19)

Bruk av katakrese innebærer en “strained or paradoxical use of words either in error (as ‘blatant’ to mean ‘flagrant’) or deliberately (as in a mixed metaphor: ‘blind mouths’)” (<https://www.vocabulary.com/lists/112898>; lesedato 24.04.18).

“Av gresk *katakhraistai*, ‘bruke fullt ut’. ‘Død’ metafor; en type metafor som er så velbrukt i språket at vi ikke lenger oppfatter den som en metafor. Forekommer som oftest der et egentlig ord ikke finnes i språket, som for eksempel med ordet “bordbein”, hvor vi bruker en levende organismes bevegelsesorgan (bein) i analogi med “det som bordplaten hviler på”. I retorikken betyr katakrese det forhold at et ord brukes i et sammensatt uttrykk på en måte som strider mot ordets egentlige betydning, for eksempel “halsbrekkende fingerøvelser”.” (Ingvild A. Jansen i <http://atrium.b.uib.no/2011/09/ukens-ord/>; lesedato 18.09.14) Det brukes i poetisk sammenheng om en feilaktig eller fordreid metafor som har et gåtefullt (eller eventuelt komisk preg), en merkelig og “ulogisk” metaforisk sammenbinding av ord, f.eks. “språkmånen” (Tor Ulven).

Katakrese innebærer ifølge noen definisjoner “abusio”, en feilaktig anvendelse. “Classically defined as the trope of misapplication or abuse, catachresis (*abusio*) refers to the internal narrative or changes in the meaning of a word, defined classically as the extension of a word to a novel or improper meaning. Thus, for example, the word *foot*, whose original reference is to a limb, is used to refer to the foot of a hill; *leaf* is extended to refer to leaves of paper or pastry.” (Peter Goodrich i Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 47). Den markerer det tilfeldige og konvensjonsbundne (arbitrære) i betydningsskapning (Bohrer 1993 s. 38).

“Catachresis occurs, according to [Pierre] Fontanier, when a sign already assigned to a first idea is assigned to a new idea which had no expression – that is to say, where there is no existing literal expression which the figurative designation is replacing. One example of catachresis would be *head of lettuce*, in which *head*, which is already assigned to one idea, is assigned to another idea which has no other designation. Another example of catachresis, however, would be a truly creative metaphor which names something that previously had no name, which discloses or identifies something that we have no other way of describing. In both cases there is no substitution of a figurative expression for a literal one – which puts into question the claim that it is the contrast between the literal and the figurative which constitutes metaphors. And we cannot adopt the expedient of excluding catachresis from the domain of metaphors (on the grounds that so-called ‘dead’ metaphors are no longer metaphors), because truly creative metaphors also lack this crucial contrast between the literal paraphrase and the figurative denomination.” (Culler 1983 s. 205-206)

“In general terms, a catachresis is a mistake in language. For most cases, it involves using a word in the wrong context or straining the word’s meaning from its norm. Mixed metaphors are one prominent example of catachresis. Individuals might engage in misapplication of a word unintentionally, or they might misuse the word on purpose in order to create a stylistic or rhetorical effect. The use of catachresis usually separates a word from its literal meaning, so it is a figure of speech. A catachresis might change the meaning of a word. When the change results from unintentionally replacing one word’s meaning with another word’s meaning, a

malapropism has taken place. This usually happens when two words sound similar, such as using the word “electrical” in a sentence rather than the word “electoral.” An intentional change might be used as a literary tool, a means of making a point or as an expression of extreme emotion. If an individual references a slithering politician, for example, the term “slither” is understood as more of a commentary on the politician’s reptilian personality than a literal reference to sliding over a surface.” (<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-catachresis.htm>; lesedato 10.09.14)

“A completely impossible figure of speech, especially one breaking the limits of realism or grammar. For example, many figures of speech describe something biologically or physically impossible: “Joe will kittens when he hears this!” “I will sing victories for you.” Or as Milton so elegantly phrased it, catachresis is all about “blind mouths.” For a more recent example, consider the disturbingly cheerful pop song by Foster the People, “Pumped Up Kicks,” which deals with a school shooting. Here, the shooter/narrator states, “I’ve waited for a long time. Yeah, the sleight of my hand is now a quick-pull trigger. / I reason with my cigarette.” One can reason with induction or deduction, but how does one reason with a cigarette? Here, the catachresis might evoke the idea of the “cool” kid using personal style instead of a persuasive argument, or it might evoke the imagery of torture – burning victims with a cigarette-butt to make one’s point. This sort of evocative, almost nonsensical language is the heart of good catachresis.” (<https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/tropes.html>; lesedato 24.09.15)

“One of the most prominent examples of a catachresis is the mixed metaphor, and this figure of speech occurs when an individual is seeking to make an exaggerated and illogical comparison between two objects. In other words, two objects are being compared that have no obvious similarities. Mixed metaphors are often used intentionally in literary works as creative and unique ways of expressing particular ideas. In William Shakespeare’s famous play Hamlet, one of Hamlet’s most renowned speech includes a catachresis of this variety: “... to take arms against a sea of troubles ... .” For this comparison, the writer has forged a connection between two seemingly unrelated topics: war and the ocean. Intentional catachresis is particularly prominent in poststructuralist works. This literary philosophy thrives on ambiguity and breaking down traditional literary techniques, structures and meanings. As such, poststructuralist authors embraced the wordplay and confusion that is inherent in catachresis. Therefore, catachresis abounds in such works. Sounds might be seen rather than heard, darkness might be bright, or an individual might experience a dull sharpness. On occasion, the catachresis might create a word or reference that previously did not exist, and in these cases, it fills a void in meaning. For example, some words are grammatically incorrect but are so pervasive in use that they become an unofficial part of a language. The English word “ain’t” is such an example, and it is referred to as a solecism. Words also might arise to describe a previously unnamed action that has become commonplace in popular culture. In the computing world, for example, the word “tweet” has

become recognized as a reference to messages created on the social network called Twitter.” (<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-catachresis.htm>; lesedato 10.09.14)

“A special subtype of catachresis is *abusio*, a mixed metaphor that results when two metaphors collide. For instance, one U. S. senator learned of an unlikely political alliance. He is said to have exclaimed, “Now that is a horse of a different feather.” This *abusio* is the result of two metaphors. The first is the *cliché* metaphor comparing anything unusual to “a horse of a different color.” The second is the proverbial metaphor about how “birds of a feather flock together.” However, by taking the two dead metaphors and combining them, the resulting image of “a horse of a different feather” truly emphasizes how bizarre and unlikely the resulting political alliance was. Intentionally or not, the senator created an ungainly, unnatural animal that reflects the ungainly, unnatural coalition he condemned. [...] when used intentionally for a subtle effect, *abusio* and *catachresis* can be powerful tools for originality.” ([http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit\\_terms\\_C.html](http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms_C.html); lesedato 26.08.15)

Nyskapte katakreser bryter med vanlige sammenstillingsmønstre. Slike uttrykk brukes ofte i hermetisk diktning. Dikterne vil unngå et “representerende” språk for å signalisere en krise, noe uutsigelig osv. Katakreser brukes om det som ikke har noe navn eller ikke kan uttales direkte. Den rumenske dikteren Paul Celans “incongruity manifests itself in a number of literary devices including paradox, oxymoron, chiasmus, catachresis, hypallage, enallage, and contradictio in adjecto. These result in, as Kelletat observed, “astounding, terrifying, and shocking formulas,” whose linguistic structures are based on inversion and obfuscation.” (<http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue562/celan7.html>; lesedato 03.09.15)

“Catachresis can be divided into two types. First, we have those usages that emerge by association or metalepsis, where the novel use extends an original meaning as with animadversion, whose primary meaning is to turn the mind towards, but which came to mean criticism. Second, we have usages emerging by similarity or metaphor, where the novel meaning is based upon likeness, as with tongue of a shoe or, to use an example of Puttenham’s: ‘I lent my love to loss, and gaged my life in vaine’, where lending is understood originally to have referred to money” (Peter Goodrich i Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 47).

“Catachresis is a dominant trope in Emily Dickinson’s poetry, allowing her to revise concepts formerly uncontested. It extends the meaning of one expression toward another, without pointing outside of language. As such, it is instrumental in bringing about non-mimetic poetry. Dickinson’s performances of gender invite two different figures: metaphor and catachresis. While Dickinson reserves metaphor for the performances of familiar gender roles, she employs catachresis for the performance of new gender constructs. As a figure of impropriety, catachresis posits a radical subversion of the production of meaning, allowing for the poetic figuration of formerly unscripted performances. Moreover, the many selves

performed in the poems are scattered over experience, whether real life or imagined. In such a way, Dickinson's catachretic performances of "supposed person[s]" contribute to the construction of particular, real selves, which family, friends, and critics have understood as "poses." Catachresis allows Dickinson to retain a constative-performative aporia, or a sense of undecidability between the autobiographical and the rhetorical or figurative. This trope, predominantly orchestrated in the context of gender performance, also spills over into poems on various other subjects (God, death, and psychological states). Ultimately, catachresis serves as the quintessential trope that enables Dickinson to lift the unthought into language." (Enikő Bollobás i <https://muse.jhu.edu/login>; lesedato 25.08.15)

I Shakespeares tragedie sier Hamlet: "I will speak daggers to her, but use none" (i 3. akt, 2. scene), som kan være en måte å snakke på som det ikke finnes noe ord for. Den engelske lyrikeren Philip Larkin bruker i diktet "The Old Fools" (1972) uttrykket "incompetent cold". Dette er en katakrese som har blitt tolket som at den kalde kroppen ikke kan holde kulden unna (Platz-Waury 1978 s. 220).

Den walisiske dikteren Dylan Thomas "selects particularly those linguistic devices that demand great dexterity with language and play on words: 'portmanteau words' are packed with the sense (and sound) of two words; 'paronomasia' plays on words which have the same root or the same sound as each other; 'paragram' changes (usually initial) letters of words; 'catachresis' is an abnormally stretched metaphor. Don McKay concludes: 'In his use of such devices as pun, displaced clichés, transferred epithets and catachresis, we sense a willed grotesquerie in Thomas's craft, a deliberate violation of decorum' (McKay 1986: 377). [...] Describing his poetic technique, Thomas explained: "to whatever wrong uses I may apply my technical paraphernalia, I use everything and anything to make my poems move in the directions I want them to: old tricks, new tricks, puns, portmanteau-words, paradox, allusion, paronomasia, paragram, catachresis, slang, assonantal rhymes, vowel rhymes, sprung rhythm" (Fitzgibbon 1965: 371)." (Alexandra Mary Davies i <https://hydra.hull.ac.uk/assets/hull:1738a/content>; lesedato 07.10.15)

En katakrese kan vitne om "sociolinguistic and political struggles over meaning, as most obviously in the modern era with the use of gay to mean homosexual. According to Du Marsais (1757) [i verket *Tropene*], catachresis is the general form of all invention and thus 'it reigns over all the other figures', by which he means that any alteration in use marks a deviation from the accepted or proper signification. Catachresis is in this sense the exemplary source of linguistic novelty because it is the most extreme form of metaphor or altered use." (Peter Goodrich i Herman, Jahn og Ryan 2005 s. 47)

I en artikkel kalt "The Ethics of Hypertext" (1995) skriver den amerikanske litteraturviteren Joseph Hillis Miller om Internett: "[I]n this case, a visible net, mosaic, highway, web, or galaxy, to something unnamed, not an 'identifiable

entity’, but something unknown, and indeed unknowable, if ‘knowable’ means direct apprehension by the senses. All the common names for the Internet and its programmes are catachreses.” (sitert fra Gräf og Krajewki 1997 s. 84)

“I miniessayet “Avsluttende bemerkning” – etter gjendiktningen av den kinesiske 200-tallsdikteren og kritikeren Lu Ji i *Forskjellig* – finnes noen linjer som kanskje kan være med og belyse [lyriker Øyvind] Bergs egen diktning når han skriver om arbeidet med Lu Ji og hans refleksjoner omkring en metaforisk og en metonymisk pol i Paul Celans diktning: “I en ganske omfattende sondering ble jeg slått av noe helt annet: Hvordan Celans bildespråk tenderer mot katakrese, misbruk av ord og uttrykk. Et misbruk foretatt av en dikter som følte at (det tyske) språket var misbrukt, (det jødiske) folket var misbrukt etc. Dette kan sjølsagt også tenkes i samband med den lyriske modernismens endelikt – fra *Les Fleurs du Mal* til *Die Niemandrose*.” ” (lyriker Steinar Opstad i *Morgenbladet* 9.–15. januar 2009 s. 36)

Pajari Räsänen skriver om Celans dikt “Til det skarpe punktet”: “Celan often makes such expeditions into the no-man’s-land between the general, ‘natural’ language and specific terminologies [...] and the transfer, from the first strophe with its geological terms and into the bracketed second strophe, serves the catachrestic precision rather than metaphorical approximation. Irony, too: this lying “upward, revealed, / crossways” is the way *not only* the ores and crystals and geodes are things that have been “unwritten” but also, then, “hardened / into language”, exposed.” (<https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/19366/counterf.pdf>; lesedato 07.09.15)

Den jødisk-tyske dikteren Nelly Sachs bruker “et selvstendig bildespråk der vakre ord som “planetstøvkronen” skiller seg ut fra en mer konvensjonell, sentrallyrisk metaforikk. Man aner at ordenes betydninger er kilt fast mellom bildet og det usynlige, det som unndrar seg representasjon – natten, døden, tida, skapelsen. [...] “bildesjokkene” ” (Anne Helene Guddal i *Morgenbladet* 4.–10. mars 2016 s. 53). “I intense og fortettede dikt smelter ofte ordene sammen til vonde, vakre neologismer som løvhyttehånd, velsignelsesrøtter, tåregjennomstrømt, erindringsantent, jegertørst, englerykninger, bergkrystallbrevloddet og sorgnattsvermere.” (*Dagbladet* 26. mars 2016 s. 49)

I en anmeldelse av Vemund Solheim Ådlands diktsamling *Årsol* (2019) skrev Katrine Heiberg: “Jegets blikk på og relasjon til moren intensiveres av dette språket: “Oppklort, oppbøyd mor; skinnende, skinnkald hudbro.” Skal man lese slike setninger som en fremmedgjørende fremstilling av noe hverdagslig, eller av et destruktivt forhold? Usikkerheten og nysgjerrigheten slipper uansett ikke leseren – til det er Ådland for god til å finne vippepunktet mellom det klare og det ubestemmelige. Det siste ordet i sitatet, “hudbro”, er et eksempel på diktenes uvanlige oppkomme av nyord, som kan sende tankene til Paul Celan (Ådland skriver også “smertemelk” et sted, som må kunne tolkes som en referanse til et av Celans mest kjente dikt, “Dødsfuge”). I likhet med ham skaper Ådland en egen

optikk og følsomhet idet kjente ord kombineres til det ukjente. [...] Å lese *Årsol* er en litt vrangere affære, rett og slett fordi adjektivene og de gjentakende nyordene (ofte er de substantiver utledet av utvalgte ord, som “øyegry”, “øregry”, “sår feste”, “sårstøv”) hopper seg opp og liksom tetner til teksten. For å få noe substansielt ut av disse konstruksjonene, må en skru til det analytiske leseblikket: da finner man en interesse for det ødelagte og utskutte, for avfall og forvandlinger, samt seksualitetens mer utraderte soner (som likevel ligger i kim overalt).” (*Morgenbladet* 4.–10. oktober 2019 s. 38)

“In Jacques Derrida’s ideas of deconstruction, catachresis refers to the original incompleteness that is a part of all systems of meaning. He proposes that metaphor and catachresis are tropes that ground philosophical discourse. Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak applies this word to “master words” that claim to represent a group, e.g., women or the proletariat, when there are no “true” examples of “woman” or “proletarian”. In a similar way, words that are imposed upon people and are deemed improper thus denote a catachresis, a word with an arbitrary connection to its meaning. [...] In Calvin Warren’s *Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation*, catachresis refers to the ways Warren conceptualizes the figure of the black body as vessel or vehicle in which fantasy can be projected. Drawing primarily from the “Look a Negro” moment in Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, Chapter 5: “The Fact of Blackness,” Warren works from the notion that the “the black body ... provides form for a nothing that metaphysics works tirelessly to obliterate,” in which “the black body as a vase provides form for the formlessness of nothingness. Catachresis creates a fantastical place for representation to situate the unrepresentable (i.e. blackness as nothingness).” (<https://www.revolvy.com/page/Catachresis>; lesedato 01.11.19)

“The application of a term to a thing that it does not properly denote (OED). Originally referring to grammatical ‘misuse’, this term is used by Gayatri Spivak in a way that is close to the meaning of *appropriation*. Catachresis is the process by which the colonized take and reinscribe something that exists traditionally as a feature of imperial culture, such as parliamentary democracy. When Spivak speaks, for instance, of the ability of the subaltern ‘to catachretize parliamentary democracy’ (1991: 70), she means ‘the insertion and the reinscription of something which does not refer literally to the correct narrative of the emergence of parliamentary democracy’ (70). That is, while parliamentary democracy emerges from a specific European history and culture, its adoption into, and adaptation by, the culture of the post-colonial society, including the assertion, for instance, that there exists a pre-colonial native tradition of parliamentary democracy, may offer an empowering avenue of self-determination to the subaltern subject. Another common and empowering catechresis is the application of the term ‘nation’ to a social group in existence before colonization, such as the ‘Zulu nation’, the ‘Aboriginal nation’, the ‘Sioux nation’.” (Ashcroft, Griffiths og Tiffin 2013 s. 41)

“Trauma, defined as a rupture, fissure, negativity or absention may also be considered, from the point of view of a rhetorical configuration, as a form of *catachresis*, a trope which, in this case, means a “sealing over” or “covering” of a break, absence or aporia. However, it is also the case that *catachresis* is neither wholly stable nor is it pure, which is to say that it is not unaffected by other forms of figuration. In fact, a more appropriate description of trauma may be that it operates like a *catachresis*, which is at the same time also an *apostrophe* (a “turning away,” Latin: *aversio*, French: *volte-face*). The catechretic ‘scar’ or ‘cicatrice’ turns away from itself – i.e., from the wound – only to return again, as another form of address, possibly elsewhere. [...] *Catachresis*: A scar is formed, covering over the dreaded wound. We do not break the seal of the letter but rather seal the letter away in a drawer, in our hearts, into a pigeonhole of our souls (Fernando Pessoa). It is the Gorgon of our lives (Primo Levi).” (Thomas Zimmer gjengitt fra <http://philoshrink.blogspot.no/2011/12/annotation-on-trauma.html>; lesedato 05.10.15)

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