

Conceptualization of Negative Emotions in Modern English and Russian Drama

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The present research focuses on the conceptualization of strong negative emotions experienced by the personages involved in conflicts, or quarrels, in contemporary British and Russian drama and approaches them from a cognitive linguistic perspective. The study attempts to reconstruct both potentially universal and culture-specific conceptual metaphors through the establishment of a set of correspondences or mappings between a 'source' and 'target' domains. The materials yielded a number of culture-specific metaphors alongside with a number of potentially universal metaphors shared by the Anglo and Russian cultures, whose universality could be accounted for by the shared embodiment.

Key-words: a conflict, a negative emotion, conceptualization, a metaphor

The present research falls within the realms of ethnolinguistics, pragmatics and conflictology. It focuses on a wide spectrum of emotions experienced and expressed by the representatives of the Anglo and Russian cultures involved in conflicts, or quarrels, and approaches the issue of metaphor in a cross-cultural context. Conflicts as situations 'in which actors use conflict behaviour against each other to attain incompatible goals and/or to express their hostility' [1:13] are associated with frustration due to blocked goals and aggression, which inevitably leads to verbal expression of such negative emotions as anger, rage, sorrow, indignation, anxiety, etc. The study aims at: 1) identifying cases of metaphorical conceptualization of strong negative emotions within the two cultures under discussion; 2) establishing culture-specific, or within-culture,

metaphors by identifying culture-bound source domains. The corpus for the present study consists of forty conflicts identified in contemporary British and Russian drama. Plays written by the representative of *In-yer-face* theatre, David Eldridge, and the representative of “*novaja drama*” (“new drama”), Ivan Vyrypaev, were chosen as the materials for the present research. The identified conflicts were analysed in the theoretical framework of Conceptual Metaphor theory, Extended Metaphor theory and Critical Metaphor Analysis [2;6;7;8;9] .

Contemporary drama was chosen as the materials for the present study due to the following reasons: first, it always ‘forces us to look at ideas and feelings we would normally avoid because they are too painful, too frightening, too unpleasant or too acute. Theatre is similar to other cultural forms in that it provides a comparatively safe place in which to explore such emotions’ [11:6]; second, drama is the only literary genre which successfully creates the illusion of human interaction taking place *impromptu*. Personages quarrel, disagree, contradict each other, and give vent to all kinds of emotions uncontrollably.

The research data revealed a number of cases when metaphorical conceptualizations of strong emotions in both cultures coincide. The following potentially universal conceptual metaphors were reconstructed in both corpora: **The Body is a Container for Emotions** → **Emotions are Liquids, Emotions are Entities within a Person**. In example (1) Helen realizes that her colleague, Nick, whom she loves, is indifferent towards her: *Like you cracked something. And it leaked out. I felt different then. With every word I say I feel I’m betraying myself. I’m shrinking in front of you* [4]. In example (2) Verner is sharing his feelings concerning his unhappy life with his wife saying that his pain is running out of him, out of his ears, nose, his mouth, out of his whole body: *Никто не имеет право говорить мне, что я не знаю, что такое боль, потому что боль течет у меня из ушей, из носа, изо рта и из всего полностью меня. Боль течет из всего полностью меня. Полностью, полностью меня* [14]. In example (3) to render the emotions she is experiencing, Helen uses somatic lexis, that is, splachnic lexical items ‘guts’ and ‘heart’, where her feelings are localized. Guts and heart that can

be taken out of the container: *Personal feelings? So I can put my heart and guts on the floor in front of you? Sob and wail like a widow and hope it might change your mind?* [4].

A Human Body is A Physical Body → An Impaired Body is the Seat of Negative Emotions is one more potentially universal metaphor reconstructed in both corpora. In example (4) Kelly describes his emotional state when his wife confesses that she no longer loves him: *You've cut me in half* [5]. In example (5) Beth refers to her emotions when her husband left her as: *When your father left, Sherry, it was like someone took half of me away. It was like he'd taken all the laughter and life I had right out of my body there and then, an' it's not got much better, Sherry* [3]. As it can be seen from examples (4) and (5), one's body loses its integrity and its parameters change; under the burden of negative emotions or unpleasant sensations our bodies tend to contract, become smaller. The results are accordant with Kövesces's observations that emotion concepts are embodied, which, according to the author 'can lead to universality in metaphorical conceptualization' [8:20]. What is more, the speculations presented above are supported by the scientists researching into bodily maps of emotions as they prove the fact that subjective emotional feelings are triggered by the perception of emotion-related bodily states that reflect changes in the skeletomuscular, neuroendocrine, and autonomic nervous systems [10].

A number of culture-specific metaphors were reconstructed in the corpora as well. Thus, the metaphor **A Negative Emotion is a Disease with Clear Symptoms** with Medicine being the 'source' domain were present only in the Russian corpus and should be attributed to culture particulars. In example (6), when trying to account for his feelings, Verner is speaking about prickling sensations in his abdomen: *В животе колет так, как будто бурундука напичкали слабительным и он все обосрал!*; he also refers to the pain he is experiencing as paralysis: *Что я испытываю, если не, б**дь, невыносимую, е* твою мать, боль, от которой мне так невыносимо, что я практически парализован. Пять часов утра, я стою тут посреди нашей кухни, и меня всего просто сковало от невыносимой, нестерпимой, тупой боли* [12]. It

should be pointed out that the symptoms describe actual physiological changes associated with the emotional response. What is more, it has been claimed that sensations in the digestive were mainly found in disgust [10].

Numerous instances of one's negative emotions being ontologized through zoomorphic metaphors were yielded by the English corpus. Such metaphors as *You are a pig*, *a pig-headed cow*, *a cow* are intended both to express irritation, anger and to dehumanize the adversary by denigrating his/her personal traits.

Frequent instances of the metaphor **The Person who Made me Angry is a Sex Organ** have been detected in the English corpus. Thus, for example, *You are a c*nt* correlates with the extreme acuteness of one's emotions. It should be pointed out that words naming the female sex organ are the strongest taboo words both in the Russian and English languages and cultures. The reason for such a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural coincidence should be looked for in religious and mythical Indo-European cosmology, within which they are viewed as referring to the progenitress, the Mother [13:60]. However, no instances of the use of the female sex organ to explicate one's negative emotions were detected in the Russian corpus.

To sum everything up, both corpora yielded a number of conceptual metaphors, whose potential universality lies in the fact that they correspond to physiological and behavioural responses associated with particular emotions, alongside with the metaphors that can be regarded as culture particulars.

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Концептуализация отрицательных эмоций в современной английской и русской драме

Резюме

В фокусе данного исследования находится концептуализация отрицательных эмоций, испытываемых персонажами, вовлеченными в конфликты, или ссоры. Анализируемые конфликты были идентифицированы на материале английских пьес, написанных представителем театрального направления In-Yer-Face Дэвидом Элдриджем, и русских пьес, написанных представителем театрального течения «новая драма» Иваном Вырыпаевым. В ходе исследования была предпринята попытка реконструировать как потенциально универсальные, так и культурно-обусловленные

концептуальные метафоры, посредством которых были онтологизированы отрицательные эмоции.

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