CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS
New Perspectives in English and American Studies

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CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS
New Perspectives in English and American Studies

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TARTALOMJEGYZÉK

2.
GENDER, MYTH, AND THE GOTHIC

3.
LANGUAGE, LANGUAGE USE

Andrea Csillag

Fear Expressions in English and Russian
Metaphors, Metonymies and their Interaction

Introduction

The aim of the present paper is to study the language of fear in English and Russian with a special focus on metaphor and metonymy and their possible interaction.

Kövecses (1990, 2000) gives a detailed analysis of the metaphors and metonymies comprising the American English concept of fear. Goossens (2002) gives an account of the interaction of metaphor and metonymy based on a research conducted on a corpus of linguistic action. He claims that the interaction of metaphor and metonymy results in a phenomenon named metaphtonymy. However, besides the interaction of metaphor and metonymy it is possible that two metaphors or two metonymies are combined in linguistic expressions and I attempt to find examples in my English and Russian corpus of *fear* and *strakh,* respectively, to prove this hypothesis.

Theoretical background – emotion, metaphor, metonymy, metaphtonymy

Fear is one of the six universal basic emotions (Ekman et al. 1972). It is an "emotion caused by the nearness or possibility of danger, pain, evil, etc." (Hornby 1989). We respond with fear to situations in which we are faced with either some physical danger or some other threat to our security. Esenova (2011, 72) notes that the close connection between fear and danger is reflected in its etymology: *fear* comes from Middle English *fere* going back to Old English *fær* meaning "calamity, sudden danger, peril, sudden attack" (The Online Etymology Dictionary).

In relation to fear people talk about a number of details of their experience, mainly the kind and intensity of the danger or threat they are exposed to as

well as their physiological and behavioural reactions, their facial expressions, their cognitive appraisal of the situation (Atkinson et al. 1997, Bányai 2013). Specific details of the aforementioned items serve as distinguishing features between emotions, that is, between fear, anxiety, fright, horror, terror, panic. Lazarus (1991) claims that the term *fear* refers to a family of related emotions and should be used as a cover term for all these emotions and not only to denote one of the six universal basic emotions.

Kövecses (1990, 70–74) gives a list of nineteen metonymies of fear like PHYSICAL AGITATION (*She was shaking with fear.*), INCREASE IN HEART RATE (*His heart pounded with fear.*), and INABILITY TO MOVE (*I was rooted to the spot.*), etc. Based on the metonymies capturing physiological and behavioural reactions Kövecses (1990, 74) proposes a three-stage cognitive model of fear: stage (1) danger, stage (2) fear exists and stage (3) flight.

Kövecses (1990, 74–78) identifies nine metaphors of fear like FEAR IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER (*Fear was rising in him.*), FEAR IS AN OPPONENT (*He was wrestling with his fear.*) and FEAR IS A NATURAL FORCE (*Fear swept over him.*), etc. (Kövecses (2000, 23) presents practically the same list of fear metaphors as in his 1990 study, there are only a few slight modifications that do not make a real difference to my point in the present paper.) Based on his findings Kövecses (1990, 79) proposes a more complex cognitive model by inserting two more stages into the metonymy-based model of fear. By doing so he gets a five-stage model of fear, which is in complete harmony with the prototypical model (or scenario) of emotion (Kövecses 1990, 182–197), on the one hand, and, on the other, the five-stage model gives a more precise representation of the characteristic features of fear: stage (1) danger, stage (2) fear exists, stage (3) attempt at control, stage (4) loss of control and stage (5) flight. At stage (5) of the model fear ceases to exist since the experiencer is emotionally calm again after fleeing from the danger he/she had to face earlier.

It is clear from the above discussion that Kövecses (1990, 2000) takes metaphor and metonymy separately into account claiming that they conceptualize different features of our fear experience. At the same time, he argues that in order to get a full picture and a clear and detailed understanding of fear (or any other emotion) metaphor and metonymy should be viewed together as integral parts of our concept of emotion. In a corpus-based study on the vocabulary of linguistic action, Goossens (2002, 350) claims that the interaction of metaphor and metonymy is possible and coins the term *metaphtonymy* to name the phenomenon. He uses the term as a cover

term for four kinds of interactions, namely metaphor from metonymy (*beat one's breast*), metonymy within metaphor (*She caught the minister's ear and persuaded him to accept her plan*), metaphor within metonymy (*be/get on one's hind legs*) and demetonymisation inside a metaphor (*pay lip service to*). Goossens's discussion (2002) shows that he is not concerned with the possible interaction of more than one metaphor and one metonymy, or else with the interactions of two (or more) metaphors or two (or more) metonymies, the reason for which may be that he has no example of any of them in his database of expressions of linguistic action. However, I think, it is worth checking their occurrence, presently, in my corpora of English and Russian linguistic expressions of *fear* and *strakh*.

My hypothesis, research questions and some methodological issues

Cognitive linguistic research has already demonstrated that (1) the language of emotion abounds in figurative expressions instantiating metonymies and metaphors (Kövecses 1990, 2000, 2015, Goatly 2007, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Wierzbicka 1996), (2) universal (or near universal) emotions tend to be conceptualized by varieties of generic level emotion metaphors (e.g. EMOTIONS ARE CONTAINERS) and generic level metonymies (e.g. PHYSIOLOGICAL REACTIONS OF EMOTIONS STAND FOR EMOTIONS) (Barcelona, 1986, Kövecses, 1990, 2000), and (3) studies of emotion vocabulary of different languages may shed light on culture-specific peculiarities of emotion concepts of different nations (see for example Apresjan and Apresjan 1993, Levontina and Zalizniak 2001, Lifang 2008, Wierzbicka 1996, 1999, Pinelli 2017, Rewis-Łetkowska 2015, Sharma 2017).

I hypothesize that Kövecses's lists of fear metonymies and metaphors are not definitive even in relation to the English concept of fear, therefore a corpus-based investigation conducted into the language of fear may result in metaphors and metonymies not identified by Kövecses. A similar investigation into the language of *strakh* (the Russian counterpart of fear) may provide us with some culture-specific details of the Russian concept of fear. In addition to this, I might find examples of metaphtonymy, a totally unaccounted for area in Kövecses's research. Thus my research questions are

1. Does my English corpus of fear expressions contain any examples of metonymies and metaphors not presented in Kövecses's 1990 and 2000 analyses?

2. What metonymies and metaphors are instantiated in my Russian corpus?
3. Are there any examples of the interaction of metonymy and metaphor of any kind in my English and Russian corpora?

I have built two corpora of linguistic expressions of fear and related emotions in English and Russian. For the English corpus, I used The Free Dictionary (https://www.thefreedictionary.com) as a source and collected example sentences from the 'cite' section under the headings *fear, anxiety, nervousness* and *tension*. (The 'cite' section of each entry presents quotations from Sommer's (1988) *Similes Dictionary*.) For the Russian corpus, I used the Russian National Corpus (http://www.ruscorpora.ru/) as a source and collected examples using *strakh, ispug, panika* and *trevoga* as search words. In both my English and Russian corpora, I selected the examples that instantiate either metaphors or metonymies or their interactions, which finally resulted in 68 English and 65 Russian example sentences.

Discussion

In the passage below, I attempt to answer my research questions by discussing some representative examples of my English and Russian corpora. Due to paper length limits I only give one example of each metonymy, metaphor and any kind of their interaction.

1. *Does my English corpus of fear expressions contain any examples of metonymies and metaphors not presented in Kövecses's 1990 and 2000 analyses?*

My English corpus contains fourteen examples of 'physiological effect' metonymies. The examples instantiate four metonymies, three of which are included in Kövecses's (1990) analysis. The sentence (1) *(Mildred's) heart leapt with like a bird in her breast* instantiates the metonymy AN INCREASE IN HEART RATE STANDS FOR FEAR. While sentence (2) *Felt chilled as by the breath of death's head* instantiates the metonymy DROP IN BODY TEMPERATURE STANDS FOR FEAR, and sentence (3) *His stomach felt like a volcano about to erupt* is an instantiation of NERVOUSNESS IN THE STOMACH STANDS FOR FEAR.

Kövecses (1990) does not mention tension among the physiological reactions accompanying fear (and related emotions), however, in my corpus there are 8 examples instantiating the metonymy TENSION IN THE BODY

STANDS FOR FEAR. Sentence (4) *Body rigid from shoulder to belly as though he had been stricken with elephantiasis* highlights the back. It must be noted that there are no examples of Kövecses's (1990) 'behavioural reaction' metonymies (PHYSICAL AGITATION/ WAYS OF LOOKING/ FLIGHT STANDS FOR FEAR) in my corpus.

My corpus contains 54 metaphorical expressions of fear and related emotions. 17 of these metaphorical expressions instantiate the container metaphor. Kövecses (1990, 2000) identifies fear as a fluid in a container claming that the container is the human body. My corpus proves that the body is very frequently conceptualized as the container of fear, however, it also provides 10 examples of specific parts of the body conceptualized as containers for fear, for example the brain, foot, toes and ankle as in (5) *Brute terrors […] filled the more remote chambers of his brain* and (6) *I pretend my right foot is like a bottle. I pour my fears down into the toes and cork the whole thing at the ankle, so none of my fears can escape into the rest of me.* However, examples like (5) and (6) do not basically modify Kövecses's findings, they serve as considerable additions to them by drawing our attention to the use of certain body parts as containers in several versions of the container metaphor.

A further addition to Kövecses's container metaphor is that fear is almost as frequently conceptualized as a substance (in 8 examples) and as a fluid (in 9 examples) in my corpus. In (7) *Fear … sat heavy in the center of his body like a ball of badly digested food* we can see fear as a substance. Thus the metaphor FEAR IS A SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER. It must be admitted that the substance reading of fear is reinforced by the context provided by the simile coming after the metaphorical expression. In (7) fear is understood as a food substance.

Along with the sentences instantiating the container metaphor in my corpus there are 27 examples of several other metaphors in which the body and a number of body parts serve as locations for different entities understood as fear and related emotions. The body parts providing locations are head, face, tooth, chest, heart, stomach/belly, limbs, legs, knees, bones and nerves, whereas the emotions fear, terror, panic, worry, anxiety and fright are conceptualized as animate/animate-like and inanimate entities. The animate/animate-like entities are personified objects, animals or supernatural beings, while the inanimate entities are technical equipments, natural forces or substances.

In (8) *Fear … lay on me like a slab of stone* fear is a personified object on the body as a surface location. In (9) *Felt (the beginning of) panic, like a giant hand squeezing my heart* panic is likened to a giant hand thus instantiating

the metaphor FEAR/PANIC IS A SUPERNATURAL BEING, whose location or operation area is the heart.

Because the natural force metaphor is exemplified in Kövecses (1990, 2000) and the substance metaphor is discussed above, I only present one example of the 5 instantiations of fear as (the operation of) a technical equipment: (10) *The terror inside him acted like radar.* Sentence (10) is a complex example, where terror is an entity in the body and its operation is likened to a radar's. In this example, the following images play together: (a) terror is an animate-like being (*terror acted*) (b) the operation of terror is (like) the operation of a technical equipment and (c) the location for the emotion terror is the experiencer's body (*terror inside him*). I will attempt to identify the combination of metaphors which sentence (10) instantiates when I answer my third research question concerning the interaction of metaphors.

2. *What metonymies and metaphors are instantiated in my Russian corpus?*

My Russian corpus has a wide range of fear metonymies providing several instantiations of the following metonymies: WAYS OF LOOKING STANDS FOR FEAR – (11) *Smotrela na nego s ispugom…* (She looked at him with fright…); CHANGE OF SKIN COLOUR (WHITE FACE) STANDS FOR FEAR – (12) *V eto vremja v komnatu vskol'znul odin iz molodykh. Belyj ot ispuga.* (At that time one of the young slipped/crept into the room. He was white with fright.); TENSION/TIGHTNESS STANDS FOR FEAR (not included in Kövecses's list of metonymies) – (13) *U menja chto-to szhalos' v grudi, kak ot ispuga.* (I had something tightened in my breast just like due to fright.); PHYSICAL AGITATION STANDS FOR FEAR – (14) *Vsë, ja napugan, ja drozhu ot strakha, i ja nemedlenno nachinaju uchit' zarubezhku*! (That's all, I am frightened, I am quivering with fear, and I soon start to study abroad!); INABILITY TO SPEAK STANDS FOR FEAR – (15) *On s ispugu i ot neozhidannosti lishilsja rechi, skoro perezvonil mne, ne verja v slushevsheesja.* (He became speechless because of fright and unexpectedness, soon called me up not believing what he heard.).

My corpus is also rich in metaphors, most of which are included in Kövecses's list of metaphors. The metaphors 'fear as a fluid' and 'fear as a container' have three and four instantiations, respectively: FEAR IS A FLUID (IN A CONTAINER) – (16) *On ponjal tajno i prostuju mysl' Leny, ot etogo ponimanija ispug pronik v ego serdce…* (He understood Lena's secret and simple thought, because of this understanding fright penetrated into

his heart...); FEAR IS A CONTAINER – (17) *A ja tut prebyvaju v strakhe i uzhase, osobenno v svjazi s poslednimi sobytijami.* (And here I am in fear and horror, especially in connection with the latest events.).

Although sentences like (11) *Smotrela na nego s ispugom…* (She looked at him with fright…) quoted above instantiate the metonymy WAYS OF LOOKING STANDS FOR FEAR, it is interesting to consider examples like (18) and (19). In (11) *s ispugom* (instrumental-comitative case in Russian, singular) clearly answers the question *kak* (how) describing the way of looking. In (18) *K nemu shli so strakhom…* (They went to him with fear…) *so strakhom* (instrumental-comitative case in Russian, singular) has a similar lexical function describing the way of going, whereas in (19) *Ne ostavljajte rebënka naedine s ego strakhami* (Do not leave the child alone with his fears.) *so strakhami* (instrumental-comitative case in Russian, plural) seems to have the metaphorical meaning 'companion'. Thus sentence (19) instantiates the metaphor FEAR IS A (BAD) COMPANION, which is not covered in Kövecses's (1990; 2000) studies probably because it is not part of the English concept of fear. Dávid (2016) claims that culture-specific differences of figurative language may be explained by the fact that socio-cultural distinctions may prioratize different scenarios (image schemata), consequently different metaphors may emerge throughout languages.

Stefanowitsch (2006, 78-79) suggests that Kövecses's (1998) metaphors FEAR IS A VICIOUS ENEMY, FEAR IS A TORMENTOR, and FEAR IS AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE should be subsumed under FEAR IS AN ENEMY. My Russian corpus contains ten examples of the enemy metaphor in Stefanowitsch's (2006) sense, however, the use of the verb *preodolevat'* (overcome) highlights the image of enemy as in (20) *Tol'ko togda Kal'vero nachinaet bor'bu, preodolevaja svoj i chuzhoj strakh pered provalom […], potomu chto boretsja … za soldata svoej armii* (Only then does Kal'vero start the fight, overcoming his own and the others' fear before the failure […], because he is fighting … for a soldier of his army.); the verb *okhvatyvat'* (seize) hightlights the image of a vicious enemy as in (21) *No komandir skazal, chto po doroge nel'zja, i Kostju okhvatyval ispug – a vdrug zavedët ne tuda*? (But the commander told not to go on the road and Kostja was caught by fright – whether it (the road) takes you not there?); while the verb *muchit'* (torment) the image of tormentor as in (22) *V etom sluchae ikh ne budet muchit' strakh, chto oni znachitel'no slabee sverstnikov* (In this case, they will not be tormented by fear that they are much weaker than peers.). Sentences (20), (21) and (22) capture different aspects of the Russian concept of fear as enemy.

3. *Are there any examples of the interaction of metonymy and metaphor of any kind in my English and Russian corpora?*

In my English corpus there are some complex metaphor constructs. The examples below instantiate combinations of two metaphors. Sentence (23) is a variation on the container metaphor, in which a body part serves as a container for the emotion: *Brute terrors […] filled the more remote chambers of his brain.* Example (23) instantiates the metaphors TERROR IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, A BODY PART/THE BRAIN IS A CONTAINER FOR TERROR, which combine in the specific (double) metaphor TERROR IS A FLUID IN THE BRAIN CONTAINER. In the remainder of the present paper, I will use the term 'combimetaphor' for constructs combining two metaphors. (N.B.: Such combinations are outside the scope of Goossens' (2002) study because he is only concerned with the interaction of metonymy and metaphor.)

The following example conceptualizes fear as a (solid) substance on a location, which can be viewed as a variation of the emotion as substance metaphor: (24=8) *Fear … lay on me like a slab of stone.* Sentence (24) combines the metaphors FEAR IS A SUBSTANCE ON A LOCATION and THE BODY IS A LOCATION FOR FEAR, thus the combimetaphor is FEAR IS A SUBSTANCE ON THE BODY LOCATION.

So far I have found combimetaphors comprising two metaphors as components. The following example is a candidate for 'triple combimetaphor', in which fear/terror is conceptualized as an animate-like being (*terror acted*), which is in a location (*terror inside him*), the location is the human body and the operation of the emotion is likened to the operation of a technical equipment as in (25=10) *The terror inside him acted like radar*, where the three metaphor components combine in the combimetaphor TERROR IS AN ANIMATE-LIKE BEING WHOSE OPERATION IS (LIKE) THE OPERATION OF A TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT IN THE BODY LOCATION.

In my Russian corpus, there are three examples of the interaction of metaphor and metonymy as in (25) *V tot moment, kogda na nego padalo eto klounskoe vedro, on, estestvenno, v ispuge vskochil, zaprygal, upal* […] (At the moment, when this bucket of the clown fell on him, he, of course, in his fright jumped, skipped, fell […].) In example (25) the emotion *ispuga* (fright) is a container for the experiencer, while the verb refers to behavioural reactions/physiological reactions/agitated behaviour (sprain, quiver, jump, skip, fall). The first component with the container image is a metaphor, the second

component is a metonymy. Thus, the metonymy AGITATED BEHAVIOUR STANDS FOR FEAR/FRIGHT and the metaphor FEAR/FRIGHT IS A CONTAINER FOR THE EXPERIENCER combine in the metaphtonymy AGITATED BEHAVIOUR STANDS FOR FEAR BEING A CONTAINER FOR THE EXPERIENCER. In this case the metonymy is imbedded in the metaphor, which produces metonymy within metaphor to use Goossens's (2002) terminology. There are no examples of similar combinations in Kövecses (1990 and 2000).

Conclusion

In the present study, I have used Kövecses's lists of fear metonymies and fear metaphors as checklists to investigate the language of fear in my English and Russian corpus of linguistic expressions of fear. I hypothesized that Kövecses's lists of fear metaphors and metonymies may not include all the metaphors and metonymies that I find in my corpora. My findings show that practically all the metonymies in Kövecses (1990) can be identified in my English and Russian corpora, however, the metonymy TENSION STANDS FOR FEAR, which is not included in Kövecses (1990), is instantiated in both my English and Russian corpora.

As far as metaphors of fear are concerned, I have found several of the ones listed in Kövecses (1990, 2000). In addition, my corpora exemplify the following variations of the container metaphor: FEAR IS A FLUID/ SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER; THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR FEAR or CERTAIN BODY PARTS ARE CONTAINERS FOR FEAR. Fear has some further conceptulaziations, too: FEAR IS AN ANIMATE(-LIKE)/ INANIMATE ENTITY in English and FEAR IS A BAD COMPANION in Russian. The latter is probably a culture specific-metaphor, which is not part of the English concept of fear.

Kövecses (1990, 2000) focuses on the identification of metaphor and metonymy in the language of fear but does not go into the structural analysis of metaphors and metonymies. I have found that metaphors like FEAR IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER have a complex structure and comprise the combination of two (pure) metaphors (FEAR IS A FLUID and THE BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR FEAR) resulting in the combimetaphor FEAR IS A FLUID IN THE BODY CONTAINER. My English corpus has several instantiations of this metaphor.

My second hypothesis at the beginning of my research was that the language of fear (and most probably the language of emotion in general) may

contain linguistic expressions that are not instantiations of pure metonymies and pure metaphors but may be instantiations of the interaction of metonymy and metaphor (in any combination), too. My findings have proved that two metaphors may combine in the language of fear, however, I have no examples of combimetonymies. Combimetaphors instantiated in my English corpus are: TERROR IS A FLUID IN THE BRAIN CONTAINER, TERROR IS A FLUID IN THE BODY CONTAINER and TERROR IS AN ANIMATE-LIKE BEING WHOSE OPERATION IS (LIKE) THE OPERATION OF A TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT IN THE BODY CONTAINER. The former two are combinations of two, while the latter one is a combination of three metaphors.

The last of my hypotheses was that the language of fear may have instantiations of metaphtonymy in Goosens' s (2002) sense. Although my English corpus has no examples, my Russian corpus has three instantiations of one kind of metaphtonymy, metonymy within metaphor, AGITATED BEHAVIOUR STANDS FOR FEAR BEING A CONTAINER FOR THE EXPERIENCER.

As a final note, because both my English and Russian corpora are relatively small further research has to be conducted to produce a more detailed analysis of the language of fear in English and Russian. However, I hope to have contributed to the knowledge and database concerning the English and Russian concepts of fear.

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