

EVALUATIVE CONCEPTS ENCODED IN METAPHORICAL LANGUAGE

Igor. V. Chekulai¹

Olga N. Prokhorova²

Elena V. Pupynina³

Ekaterina F. Bekh⁴

Abstract: Metaphorical models that convey the evaluative meaning are the focus of this article. The paper intends to show that metaphor and in certain cases metonymy belong to the main means of creating the value attitude to the facts of reality and thinking, this attitude resulting in certain utterances of evaluative character. The data for analysis consist of the utterances from the literary prose in different Indo-European languages of Slavonic, German and Romance groups. The examples show that the main metaphorical models and the specific sub-models in each of the thematic groups viewed as an object of the present study manifest the same or similar

evaluative potentials irrespectively of the linguistic culture they belong to. That means that the general mechanism of creating the value relations receiving their manifestation in the form of evaluative utterances within different linguistic cultures is the same.

Key words: cognitive metaphor, metonymy, value, evaluation, value concept.

Introduction.

Metaphor and metonymy are the main means of creating knowledge and experience structures. Actually, a person investigates the world he or she

¹ The National Research University “Belgorod State University” / “BelSU”, Russia, 308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17

² The National Research University “Belgorod State University” / “BelSU”, Russia, 308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17

³ The National Research University “Belgorod State University” / “BelSU”, Russia, 308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17

⁴ The National Research University “Belgorod State University” / “BelSU”, Russia, 308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17

lives in by using the mental procedures of comparison and substitution. The cognitive core of the first is metaphor; the cognitive core of the other is metonymy.

While giving a description of the functional characteristic features of metaphor and metonymy, a well-known Russian scientist Nina Arutyunova points out that these phenomena of thinking and language aim at making any object individual and thus unique in itself [1]. The metaphor makes an object individual by making it refer to a certain class of objects to which it does not actually belong. The cognitive mistake (the term is used by Arutyunova [1]) is a sort of ‘fuel’ for the metaphorical mechanism.

The standpoint that the metaphor is not a purely linguistic phenomenon but first of all a phenomenon belonging to the sphere of thinking and cognition receives its justification in the words of George Lakoff and Michael Johnson who lay an emphasis on the fact that the processes of human thinking are mainly of metaphorical character, and the whole conceptual system of a human being has

been structured and determined by a metaphor [2, p. 12-13].

Nowadays, one can see a wide spectrum of using the evaluative potential of metaphor. The cognitive approach to the study of different humanitarian problems having gained the priority among other approaches to such problems, the notion of metaphor as a universal means of understanding the surrounding reality, of gaining the main and special forms of knowledge and of creative activity became one of the main instruments of the scientific description in different branches of scientific knowledge. It seems suitable to mention that the studies having metaphor as their subject-matter are of both fundamental and applied character.

As an object of fundamental linguistic studies, linguists often view the metaphor within a certain institutional type of discourse, for instance, in newspaper discourse [3], medical discourse [4], law and jurisprudence discourse [5], political discourse and studying a politician as the language personality [6] and other types of discourse. All these authors lay an emphasis on the fact that metaphors play an important part in creating the modal

framework of this or that particular piece of discourse because of their evaluative character.

The fundamental work of the Polish scholar J. Podhorodecka “Evaluative Metaphor: Extended meanings of English motion verbs” seems to be a very successful attempt to connect the cognitive view on the metaphor as a means of inspiring a certain attitude shared or debated by people taking part in some (no matter, personal or institutional) discourse with the traditional conception of metaphor as a semiotic language means [7].

Still, the metaphor as a phenomenon of mind often receives its investigation irrespective of a discourse in which it occurs. For instance, a well-known researcher of the phenomenon of metaphor Z. Kövecses views metaphor as one of the main means of creating emotional colouring of speech. He defines, in particular, the three main domains of creating certain emotional and evaluative attitude towards the object of speech – agonist’s force tendency, antagonist’s force tendency, resultant action – as being the products of metaphorical transformations to

480

create such an evaluative effect [8, p. 195-198].

The evaluative characteristics of metaphors find their scientific application in applied studies as well, as value and evaluation belong to the main characteristic features of thinking in any field of human activity. Thus, Alwin E. Wagener investigates the pragmatic peculiarities of using metaphors in the sphere of management (particularly, in the part of working with clients) [9], and E. Shutova majors in the evaluative metaphorical models to develop computer programs oriented to fulfill certain tasks within different domains of computer programs’ application [10].

General remarks.

Judging from the said above, one can hardly doubt that the metaphor is one of the main means of the empirical categorization (we mean the linguistic experience) and the society knowledge conceptualization, as such a standpoint has become an axiom tempered by centuries. Still, the fact that metaphor is such a means does not mean that it is the only means of creating a human’s knowledge corpus about himself/herself,

the surrounding reality and the sphere of human thoughts, emotions, volitions etc. That is why the mentioned above “cognitive mistake” is actually an equivalent of the aim of the metaphorical transition of the meaning. Actually, it fills “the vacuum” which cannot be filled with the conventional means of cognition in the structural organization of human knowledge.

One should admit that the analysis of the correlation of the value conceptual sphere reveals that the cognitive “voids”, or lacunae, of such kind are highly frequent within the system of forming the axiological structures’ experiential basis. This receives its explanation through different reasons. On the one hand, the value concepts appear as a result of the individual interpretation of a certain value within the framework of one’s individual conscience and, as a result, they possess the “ambidextrous” axiological valency, i.e. they combine the both main kinds of evaluation (positive and negative). This can be easily understood if we remember any situation from our experience that we judge differently depending of what is judged – our faults or someone else’s.

For instance, we often come across situations where a father regrets his adolescent son’s smoking but at the same time he smokes himself.

In this connection, we consider necessary to add that due to the flexible ties between such main constituent spheres of a personality as the rational, emotive and volitive ones, sometimes it is rather difficult if possible to determine which of them is the dominant while forming the evaluative utterance by means of human speech.

On the other hand, the values are not objective but subjective, as people’s life interests have a multi-dimensional character and are incongruent even within a certain individual, and thus the primary and secondary values distribute unequally and individually. This also concerns the evaluative scales applied to the definite situations and to different temporal interpretations of usefulness and significance of things on the background of some common values. To complicate this, the individual psychological peculiarities may confuse the uniformity of the general value system. In this connection, metaphorical and metonymical changes close the cognitive

gaps. If we take the language society as a whole then value metaphorical and metonymical rethinking of the reality in general, as well as its separate facts, is the real set of connecting models of forming the conceptual relations which receive their language structuring and speech actualization.

Results and Discussion.

The analysis of different metaphorical models of the axiological rethinking of the reality made it possible to define recurrent source-domain and target-domain as determined by their pragmatic peculiarities. These are the following models:

1. ACTIVITY IS THE WAY

Any activity consists of the following main phases as its beginning, duration and end. Each of them may have the crucial significance for its successful realization. The most explicit type of such activity is the motion in space and/or time as represented by the concept of WAY. That is why this metaphorical model is one of the most widespread models of such kind to convey the value relation. For instance, in the following

English-language example the metaphor of way shows the intention to do something not necessarily connected with a real motion in space;

*Tell her a friend of yours has offered to put up half the money, and that I'm **on my way** over to see her* (S. Sheldon. *If Tomorrow Comes*).

Such a transformation may create new models describing different aspects of a human activity. In English, in particular, much depends of the combinability of the lexeme *way* with other lexical units. Many of them create some clichés of the set-expression type.

First, let us consider the combination *The way someone does something* which is actually neutral by itself. Still, one can easily see that this is an unfinished utterance. It needs some extension of evaluative character, and this extension is always of evaluative character, as can be seen from the following examples:

*"What?" El Sordo said and looked at him with his eyes very flat. There **was no friendliness in the way** he asked the question* (E. Hemingway. *For Whom The Bell Tolls*).

In this case the whole evaluative set shows a person's negative

attitude to some other people's action that this person considers them as contrary to his expectations of the partner's attitude, and the negative evaluation of El Sordo's attitude is expressed by the word-combination *no friendliness*.

However, in the following case, the positive evaluation of some fact from the part of the person which Langdon speaks about appears by the coordination of the word-combination *the way they are* with the positive attitude to some state of things expressed by the predicatively linked words he prefers:

"Don't ask." Langdon had already been through that with Teabing. "He prefers things the way they are at home" (Dan Brown. *Da Vinci Code*).

Besides, the word way may create evaluative effects when used with prepositional or other modifiers expressed by the non-notional parts of speech and even by the morphemes, as in the following instance:

"I don't want to do anything out of the way!" he kept saying. "I want to see her right next door." (F.S. Fitzgerald. *The Great Gatsby*).

Now let us view the main use of this metaphorical model in other

languages. First, in many instances we see that way is closely associated with someone's life or an important period in it. Surely, a human life is important in itself, it is one of the basic values in any linguistic culture, and any reference to it involves explicit or implicit evaluation. This becomes evident from the analysis of the said metaphorical model in the following examples:

Кто зайдет смерти наперед? Кто разгадает конец человеческого пути? (М.А. Шолохов. *Тихий Дон*) – Russian.

Ha una lunga strada davanti a sé, ma se c'è qualcuno che può farcela... (www.context-reverso.net) - Italian.

Тут, серед цього безкрайого сліпого степу, під чужими зорями, серед вітру, що роздимає он попіл на згаріщі... - тут він, рибалка з-над Бугу, мабуть, закінчить свій шлях (= «life») (О. Гончар. *Прапорносець*) - Ukrainian.

These languages also possess the peculiar metaphorical models of way in the meaning of correspondence to some world outlook, expectations, ambitions and the like. For instance, in Russian the use of the word-combination по пути shows whether a speaker views

his interlocutor's intentions and ambitions are in accordance with his own (and by actualization of this word-combination he approves such attitudes), or by using the negative particle in front of it expresses the opposite evaluative relation, as in the following:

- ... Скажите, какая сумма вам нравится?

- Пять тысяч, - быстро ответил Балаганов.

- В месяц?

- В год.

- Тогда мне с вами **не по пути**. Мне нужно пятьсот тысяч. И по возможности сразу, а не частями (И. Ильф, Е. Петров. Золотой теленок).

In the Eastern Slavonic languages, there is also a metaphorical equivalent to the English *to stand in one's way* in the similar meaning "to hinder, to make obstacles or oppose to somebody". For instance:

"Тоў, чаму трэба, загіне. Ты лезны чалавек, чужынец нейкі. **Сыходзь з дарогі**. Ты чужы тут, якая справа табе да праклятых радоў. Паляванне караля Стаха прыходзіць апоўначы. Чакай". (У. Караткевіч. Дзікае паляванне караля Стаха).

2. ACTIVITY IS A PLANT OR AN ANIMAL

This is maybe the most recurrent model among all the described ones, and this fact is easily explained, as the metaphor associating people and their actions with other earthly forms of life has been one of the most long-standing and tempered by time metaphorical universal models. This fact does not seem unusual, as the animals and to some extent plants have always been the main personages of legends, fairy-tales. People associated these forms of living with certain qualities that resemble their characters and actions, and, as a result of it, there appeared more or less stable associations of humans' states, actions, ways of behavior which, in their turn, resulted in rather definite metaphorical and metonymical models of evaluation by the means of speech.

It seems important to view the metaphoric potentials of the generic terms of the living forms different from humans. As for the generic term of the fauna, the associations with the concept which in English is represented by the word ANIMALS in different linguistic cultures are homogeneous, as most people associate this nomination in the

evaluative function as negative, corresponding to “non-human”, for instance:

You acted like the worst kind of degenerates,” the judge said harshly. Yes, yes, thought Amerigo Bonasera. Animals. Animals (M. Puzo. The Godfather) – English.

Иоганн закричал:

- Говори, животное, говори!

- И ударил палкой по столу. - Говори!

(В. Кожевников. Щит и меч) –

Russian.

Karl wurde leiser, aber sein

Röhren war immer noch das eines

wilden Tieres (E.-M. Remarque. Drei

Kameraden) – German.

- En vérité, murmura

d'Artagnan, à qui les recommandations

de M. De Tréville revenaient en

mémoire; en vérité, cet animal finirait

par me faire peur.” (Alexandre

Dumas. Les trois mousquetaires). –

French.

Після дикої оргії пізно

попрокидалося панство,

прочумувалося воно ліниво, з тупим

болем голови, з відчуттям

тваринного пересичення... (М.

Старицький. Останні орли) –

Ukrainian.

It is evident that these evaluative nominations may convey different shades of negative characterization which may be described in the terms of different aspects of behavior (such as beastly behavior, inferior social, racial or other status, making violent sounds or motions, excessive consumption of food and drink, etc). Yet they are united into one evaluative conceptual paradigm with the main characteristic feature, namely, evaluation of the mode of behavior which is not suited to people.

As for the floristic generic terms, one must admit that they reveal certain traces of difference. For instance, to express the helpless corporeal condition of a person the Russians usually use the substantive *растение* (which is translated into English as *a plant* in its neutral meaning), but to characterize such a state, the use of another noun, *овоц*, which corresponds to the English word *vegetable* in this metaphorical meaning, is possible though a little bit obsolete. To admit the truth, *овоц* is more expressive in this metaphorically determined meaning than *растение*, and it is preferable in cases of strong emphatic expression of the attitude.

If we take the specific evaluative speech realizations of this general model, i.e. if we resort to the certain species of plants and animals as the cognitive material for the evaluative metaphorical and metonymical models, then it is necessary to admit that it seems next to impossible to make a thorough review on the subject within the narrow limits of scientific article. Still, we consider it important to consider at least some general features of specific evaluative metaphorical models where the source domain is determined by semi-generic or specific nominations of plants and animals. They may also coincide in different linguistic cultures. For example, the word *flower* and its equivalents in most of different languages is used metaphorically to show the affected or tender positive attitude to women's beauty, ways of presenting herself and the like, as in the following extract where the object of evaluative relation is a little and frail girl:

'Or even one before her,' said the bachelor. 'it is many years ago, and affliction makes the time longer, but you have not forgotten her whose death contributed to make this child so dear to you, even before you knew her worth or

*could read her heart? Say, that you could carry back your thoughts to very distant days-to the time of your early life-when, unlike this **fair flower**, you did not pass your youth alone'* (Ch. Dickens. The Old Curiosity Shop).

The same effect is evident in the following example:

*But now he had seen that world, possible and real, with **a flower of a woman** called Ruth in the midmost centre of it* (J. London. Martin Eden).

We consider it necessary to add that the derivatives of this adjective, such as *flowery*, *flowering* and others are very frequent epithets to give a positive aesthetic evaluation to different inanimate objects. Besides, such an effect is no less commendable by the similar use of specific flower nominations, such as *rose*, *tulip*, *lily* and many others.

As for the animals, there is no need to say that different peoples' associations as to the most recurrent specific nominations differ little. For instance, admitting the fact that dogs are "the best friends of people" does not restrain them to be of generally low meaning about this representative of the animal world because of its bad smell,

excessive servility often combined with sudden ferocity and some other negative traces about them. This negative general attitude is very transparent in different linguistic cultures:

Dogs asleep in the sun often whined and barked, but they were unable to tell what they saw that made them whine and bark. He had often wondered what it was. And that was all he was, a dog asleep in the sun (J. London. Martin Eden) - English.

- *Ah cane!* - *urlò Renzo.* - *E come ha fatto? Cosa le ha detto per...?* (A. Manzoni. I promessi sposi) - Italian.

- *Wilde Geuzen, sprak hij, gij zijt wolven, leeuwen entijgers. Verslindt de honden van den bloedigen koning* (Charles de Coster. De legende en de heldhaftige, vroolijke en roemrijke daden van Uilenspiegel en Lamme Goedzak in Vlaanderenland en elders) - Dutch.

The last example is remarkable through having a metaphorical evaluative antithesis where a dog as a miserable animal embodied in the king's slanders is opposed to such noble and fierce animals as lions and tigers that symbolize the Goezen, i.e. the native

rebels. This particular metaphorical model seems to be the universal one.

Many other animalistic evaluative metaphorical models also coincide in different linguistic cultures. For instance, in most of them cats are associated with dignity and independence, pigs with dirtiness, doves with peacefulness and serenity, eagles with proudness and nobleness, falcons and hawks with swiftness, wolves with ferocity and so on. Still, different evaluative associations in connection with the same animals are not the same within different linguistic societies. For example, the Russian linguistic culture often views rabbits and hares as very shy and timid creatures while in the English folklore they often embody cunningness. A Russian man usually give a tender nomination to the object of his warm feelings as *зайка* (bunny), *птичка* (birdie) but he will never call a woman *уточка* (ducky), as a duck is usually associated with clumsiness and homely manner of walking.

Beside metaphors, floristic and animalistic metonymical models are also frequent to convey a certain evaluation through speech, as in the following example:

“You all don't know what war is. You think it's riding a pretty horse and having the girls throw flowers at you and coming home a hero. Well, it ain't. No, sir!” (M. Mitchell. *Gone with the Wind*).

3. Any activity may also have associations with the means of preserving of the present situation, or, vice versa, with the means of its destruction. This is also a universal model, though not so recurrent in actual speech as the previous ones. For example:

And this was the price you paid for sleeping together. This was the end of the trap. This was what people got for loving each other [E. Hemingway. *A Farewell to Arms*] - English.

As Margot had calculated, ridicule is one of the stronger weapons in any arsenal (A. Hailey. *The Moneychangers*) - English.

— *От і не вір у спадковість! Адже в тебе чисто батькова пам'ять! А для нас, розвідників, хороша пам'ять — перша зброя* (Ю. Дольд-Михайлик. *І один у полі воїн*) – Ukrainian.

Смешные позитивные мотиваторы - спасательный круг в

водоворотax

жизни! [<http://fb.ru/article/252913/>] - Russian.

4. The last extensive domain of the metaphorical axiological models is the attributive sphere of sense – perception semantics. It is possible to determine the certain and specific models within it, these models reflecting the specific value understanding of a fact of reality through a certain sphere of sense perception (vision, hearing, odour, taste, tactile perception). For instance, the adjectives of visual perception can perform the evaluative function, as, in the following case, the adjective of coloristic perception performs this function:

Tak mne vedli k regimentsraportu a náš obrst, takovej vůl, dej mu pánbůh nebe, začal na mne řvát, abych stál rovné a řek, kdo to do těch novin napsal, nebo že mně roztrhne hubu od ucha k uchu a dá mě zavřít, až budu černej (J. Hašek *Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války*) – Czech, the sub-model ‘color perception → meaning of death’.

The metaphorical evaluative transformation of meaning in the terms of audio-, odouristic, olfactory and

tactile perception is extremely recurrent in different languages and appear in different activity spheres, e.g.:

*The house was furnished in extremely **good taste**, with a judicious mixture of the antique and the modern* (W.S. Maugham. Theatre) – English, the sub-model ‘olfactory perception → aesthetic evaluation’.

*And he said, “Man is conceived in sin and born in corruption and he passeth from the **stink** of the didie to the **stench** of the shroud. There is always something.”* (R.P. Warren. All the King’s Men) – English, the sub-model ‘odour perception → moral judgement’.

... когда-то, много лет назад, мы с сестрой помогли доктору, - одинокие, брошенные дети в глухой, занесенной снегом деревне (В.А. Каверин. Два капитана) – Russian, the sub-model ‘negative audio perception → negative social attitude’.

*Sebbene nessuno dei tre sperasse molto nel tentativo del padre Cristoforo, giacché il vedere un potente ritirarsi da una soverchieria, senza esserci costretto, e per mera condiscendenza a preghiere disarmate, era cosa piuttosto inaudita che rara; nulladimeno la trista certezza fu **un***

colpo per tutti (A. Manzoni. I promessi sposi) – Italian, the sub-model ‘tactile perception → bad news’.

Conclusion. The analysis the main metaphorical models involving the evaluative target domain shows that such metaphorical transformation is applicable not only to brighten up speech decoration. It is besides a very important means of making a deep pragmatic impact on a reader or hearer to convey one’s views, beliefs, convictions, mood to him, make him accept all these views and convictions, and to share the value position which the author of the evaluative utterance occupies. That is why the study of the metaphor (as well as the metonymy or other important general models of the meaning-change) as an important mechanism of creation the certain value aura and therefore of forming a definite relation of the qualifying character in the form of an evaluative utterance has an important research perspective.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by Belgorod State National Research University (University research grant).

References

Arutyunova, N. D., 1999. *Yazyk I Mir Cheloveka*. Moskva: Yazyki russkoy kultury.

Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M., 2003. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicag

o: The University of Chicago Press.

Liu, F., 2018. Lexical metaphor as affiliative bond in newspaper editorials: a systemic functional linguistics perspective. *Functional Linguistics*, 5:2.

Semino, E., Demjén, Z., and J. Demmen, 2018. An Integrated Approach to Metaphor and Framing in Cognition, Discourse, and Practice, with an Application to Metaphors for Cancer. *Applied Linguistics*, 39/5: 625–645.

Lloyd, H. A., 2016. Law as Trope: Framing and Evaluating Conceptual Metaphors. *Pace Law Review*. 37(1): 89-114.

Arcimaviciene, L., and V. Jonaitiene, 2015. Metaphor Evaluation of Leadership Styles: A Case Study of Presidential New Year Greetings. *Open Linguistics*, 1: 345–360.

Podhorodecka, J., 2007. *Evaluative Metaphor: Extended meanings of English motion verbs*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo naukowe AP.

Kövecses, Z., 2003. *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture and Body in Human Feeling*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wagener, A. E., 2017. Metaphor in Professional Counseling. *The Professional Counselor*, 7(2): 144–154.

Shutova, E., 2015. Design and Evaluation of Metaphor Processing Systems. *Computational Linguistics*, 41(4): 579-623.

Information about the authors

Olga Nikolaevna Prokhorova, Doctor of Philology, Professor, National Research University “Belgorod State University” / “BelsU”, Russia, 308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17

prokhorova@bsu.edu.ru, +7 (4722) 24 54 00.

Igor Vladimirovich Chekulai, Doctor of Philology, Professor, National

Research University “Belgorod State
University” / “BelSU”, Russia, 308015,
Belgorod, Studencheskaya Street, 17
chekulay@bsu.edu.ru, +7
(4722) 30 12 45.

Elena Vladimirovna Pupynina, PhD
(Philology), Associate Professor,
National Research University “Belgorod
State University” / “BelSU”, Russia,
308015, Belgorod, Studencheskaya
Street, 17
pupynina@bsu.edu.ru, +7
(4722) 30 12 45.

Ekaterina Feodorovna Bekh,
Instructor, National Research University
“Belgorod State University” / “BelSU”,
Russia, 308015, Belgorod,
Studencheskaya Street, 17
bekh@bsu.edu.ru, +7 (4722)
30 12 45