THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF EMOTIONS AS LOCATIONS IN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT. *We can metaphorically view emotions as locations which may be reached, occupied and left behind. Our concepts of bodily space are important organizing structures that permeate emotion concepts. Metaphors help us to understand emotions by describing such experiences in terms of things that are more familiar to us like the spatial concepts, that is, in terms of the geometrical dimensions of the physical objects. Accordingly by placing ourselves* on shaky ground, up in the air, in the pits or on somebody's shoes, *etc., we are mapping the spatial concepts onto the domain of emotions which are not as sharply defined as the perceptual or spatial concepts. We concentrate our attention on three conceptual metaphors: EMOTIONS ARE DESTINATIONS, EMOTIONS ARE LOCATIONS WHERE WE LIVE, LEAVING AN EMOTIONAL STATE IS LEAVING A LOCATION.*

KEYWORDS. *Spatial concepts, destination, location, schema, metaphorical expressions.*

RESUMEN. *Metafóricamente podemos considerar las emociones como lugares a donde se puede llegar, ocupar y abandonar. Nuestros conceptos que dependen de la relación del cuerpo con el espacio son importantes estructuras organizativas que están presentes en los conceptos de emoción. Las metáforas nos ayudan a comprender las emociones al describir tales experiencias mediante conceptos más conocidos como son los conceptos espaciales, es decir, a través de las dimensiones geométricas de los objetos físicos. Por lo tanto, al posicionarnos nosotros mismos en* un terreno poco firme, en el aire, en un pozo, en el lugar de alguien, *etc., estamos proyectando los conceptos espaciales al dominio de las emociones que no están tan claramente definidas como los conceptos espaciales y perceptuales. Nos vamos a concentrar en tres metáforas conceptuales: LAS EMOCIONES SON DESTINOS, LAS EMOCIONES SON LUGARES DONDE VIVIMOS, ABANDONAR UN ESTADO EMOCIONAL ES ABANDONAR UN LUGAR.*

PALABRAS CLAVE. *Conceptos espaciales, destino, ubicación, esquema, expresiones metafóricas.*

1. INTRODUCTION

A number of cognitive scientists, including George Lakoff, Mark Turner, and their colleagues, have recently argued that metaphor should not be seen as a linguistic device,

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but rather as a form of thought, which is pervasive, systematic, and fundamental. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) think that people's conceptual systems are fundamentally structured by core cultural metaphors; for example, abstract concepts like emotions are metaphorically structured by concrete spatial concepts. The extent to which particular spatial metaphors have pervaded the language is representative of the way our cognitive typologies dissect the world.

Our objective here is to study some emotions by mapping the basic experiences from the spatial domain onto them. We frequently think about objects, properties, or relations in one domain, called the *source domain*, by systematically mapping these onto objects and properties in another domain, called the *target domain*. The corresponding relationship between these domains constitutes an organised *conceptual metaphor*, by means of which we think, or conceive, the one domain in terms of the other. In the *Love as a journey* metaphor we can talk about the relationship of a couple in terms of different vehicles: *on the rocks* (boat); *off the rails* (train); *in the slow lane* (car) etc (Lakoff 1990, 1992)

In this paper we are going to start by describing some aspects of spatial prepositions which organise much of our abstract concepts by casting spatial concepts into the nouns they modify. Then we will attempt to analyse emotions as regions which individuals can *go* and *enter (*EMOTIONS ARE DESTINATIONS), *inhabit* (EMOTIONS ARE LOCATIONS WHERE WE LIVE) and *leave (*LEAVING AN EMOTIONAL STATE IS LEAVING A LOCATION). In accordance with this, we have expressions such as: he *entered* a state of euphoria, she was *in* love, or he was *out of* depression again.

The linguistic examples provided in this paper have been extracted from dictionaries, a wide variety of papers and from the following web pages: Metaphor Home Page (http://cogsci.berkeley.edu), Metaphors of mind databank: (http://cs.bham.ac.uk/~jab/ATT-Meta/Databank)

2. DESCRIPTION OF SOME SPATIAL PREPOSITIONS

In this section we attempt to provide a cognitive typology inherent in the use of some prepositions (Veale 1996). Each of the following examples that we are going to study contains different prepositions to express something different by casting spatial perspectives into the concepts they modify or complement. The preposition *"TO"* is viewed as a syntactic marker which is used to indicate the destination of a movement towards an abstract state, which is viewed as a region that can be reached:

1. There are many routes *to* happiness

2. Poverty drove him *to* desperation

Abstract location states may be viewed metaphorically as containers by means of the prepositions *"IN"*, *"OUT"*, *"INTO"* *"OUT-OF"*:

3. She is deeply *in* love

4. He came *out of* his trance

5. He went *into* a depression

The prepositions *into, in* and *out of* indicate the destination, location and source of the trajector in relation to the container which is linguistically conceptualized by the terms *depression, love* and *trance. Into* is used where direction or motion is expressed. It also expresses a change of state. *In* expresses the place where somebody or something is or can be found. When two concepts are connected and one concept possesses a spatial orientation, then that orientation may be projected onto the other. For example in the example "He went *into* a depression", the inherent orientation *down* of the concept depression is projected onto the person experiencing the emotion. The expression "John came *out of* his trance" is resolved by projecting the opposite orientation *up* of trance onto John.

The capacity of a container specifying the maximum and the minimum levels may be defined by the prepositions *"UP TO"*. The schema of a sudden increase in the feelings is manifested in: *"an upsurge of anger, violence or enthusiasm"*.

6. He is *up to* his eyes *in* love

The notion of a point location underlies the prepositions *"AT"* and *"ON"*. At (sentence 7) denotes location at a zero dimension or point, *on* (sentence 8) denotes location at a one or two dimensional line or surface:

7. We are *at* a crossroads

8. I didn't tread *on* anyone´s toes

The explanation of reason, cause or motive of the emotional state is expressed by the preposition *"FROM"*, here the source of the emotional state is located within the bounded space which is linguistically coded by the term *trauma:*

9. He was suffering *from* trauma

The idea of location and boundary that extends beyond a mere point in space is conveyed by the prepositions *"ABOUT"*, *"AROUND"* and *"THROUGHOUT"*. These prepositions are used to circumscribe a particular conceptual space:

10. He's been moping *about/around* the place all weekend

11. *Throughout* their marriage he had only once seen her cry

The preposition *"THROUGH"* represents an intermediate state or location towards another destination. This preposition denotes the effort on the part of the person experiencing the emotion owing to the presence of some difficulty:

12. She *went through* torment when he left her

The path schema between two locations or abstracts states is provided by *"FROM...TO..."*

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13. Things have gone *from* bad *to* worse

The verticality schema that is used to convey the meaning of recovery after a setback underlies the expressions: *"BE BACK"*, *"GOT BACK"* and *"BOUNCE BACK"*.

14. I'm glad to say that we *are back* on an even keel now

15. She *got back* on her feet

16. He seems to *bounce back* every time

3. EMOTIONS ARE DESTINATIONS

Abstracts states, such as emotions, are usually described in terms of physical location. The locative metaphor allows us to map the states one may be in with physical places or regions one may enter, stay and leave. Thus one can *fall into* a depression, *go through* it and *emerge from* that depressed state after one has entered it.

Both positive and negative states are conceptualized metaphorically as destinations, but with the difference that positive emotions are *desired* destinations whereas the negative ones are *undesired.* For instance we can choose happiness as our main goal in life, but no human being wishes to choose a negative emotion to live with. On the contrary we meet unexpectedly negative states; for example, depression owing to the external circumstances of the individual. Consider:

1. *His main goal in life is simply to be happy*

2. *Depression is frequently encountered*

The persons searching for happiness are travellers on a journey and their life goals are seen as destinations to be reached by means of different routes. The locomotion to reach a destination is conveyed by the path schema (Johnson 1987), which consists of

a) A starting point

3. *Where do we begin the quest for happiness?*

4. *Seek happiness and you will find it*

b) Destination

5. *She found happiness*

6. *She discovered the joy of writing*

7. *He entered a depression*

c) Direction along the path to the end point

8. *All seemed to be going happily*

9. *Inner harmony leads to happiness*

10. *I am searching for happiness*

11. *I am on my way into the city of woe*

All these expressions are instances of the conceptual metaphor DESIRED OR UNDESIRED STATES ARE DESIRED OR UNDESIRED LOCATIONS.

The metaphor THE MEANS TO FIND HAPPINESS ARE ROUTES is reflected in the following expressions:

12. There are many potential routes to happiness

13. You're on the right path now

14. Can we find any possible routes to happiness?

Happiness that includes many shades—from peace and tranquillity to joy and ecstasy seems to be our goal in life and we struggle for it. However, the search for the destination where we can find our happy realization involves going through difficulties which are impediments to reach the destination. The following expressions are instances of the metaphor DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO FIND THE DESTINATION (Lakoff 1992)[1]

15. He has been absolutely lost since his dog died

16. Love is sweet in the beginning but sour in the ending

The difficulties are impediments to the motion. Because of these obstacles the individual can experience a change of state. The metaphor CHANGE OF STATE IS MOTION is reflected in:

17. He went mad

18. Imprisonment drove him insane

Just as we can move from location to location within a region, our emotional state can change from one state to another one. Thus, the metaphor CHANGE OF STATE IS CHANGE OF LOCATION is reflected in such expressions as:

19. He went from laughing to crying

20. He went from depression to depression

21. He went from bad to worse

To escape from one uncomfortable situation into another that is much worse is conceptualized with the OUT/IN schema:

22. He found himself out of the frying-pan into the fire

If we want to reach our destination we have to set ourselves in motion and go ahead, LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD THE DESTINATION IS LACK OF MOTION:

23. They are at a crossroads in their relationship

24. He just doesn't seem to be going anywhere

Once the destination has been reached there are different ways of entering (Vanparys 1995). The degree of force that is used in entering a location correlates with

the intensity of the emotion. The expressions below focus on the manner of entering the destination:

25. The news sank us all in the gloom

26. He went into a trance

27. He entered a state of euphoria

28. He flew into a rage

29. Her presence threw him into confusion

30. He was plunged into a deep gloom

31. I was pushed into depression

The image schema underlying the above examples is the path schema. The trajector enters or is forced to enter the landmark. The motion is rendered by the preposition *into*, the emotion terms: *gloom, trance, euphoria, rage, confusion* and *depression* are viewed as locations/containers where the trajector enters and experiences the emotion, and the manner of entering is given by the lexical meaning of the verbs: *sink, go, enter, fly, throw, plunge* and *push*. Within the location there can be serious emotional changes:

32. He slipped into depression

33. He slipped into further depression

Being overcome by emotions is like being confined in an enclosed area or location where the emotional state can change for the better or for the worse. These two sentences are examples of the conceptual metaphor AN EMOTIONAL CHANGE WITHIN A STATE IS MOTION WITHIN A LOCATION. The emotional intensity is coded by *further*. The concept of depth measures the intensity of the emotion: *in low spirits, hit the bottom, in a deep slough of depression.*

Once an individual has entered or being forced to enter an emotion, he can live and stay there for some time:

34. He´s lost in grief

35. She´s madly in love

These two sentences highlight the temporal and transitory loss of the emotional control of the person affected by the emotion. Let us analyse then, in the following section, the conceptualization of the emotions as locations where we can remain for some time.

4. EMOTIONS ARE LOCATIONS WHERE WE LIVE

Kövecses (2000: 41) claims that there are metaphors whose task is to express whether an emotion exists or does not exist. The major conceptual metaphors that apply to all emotion concepts are:

EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS PRESENCE HERE
EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS BEING IN A BOUNDED SPACE
EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS POSSESSING AN OBJECT

In this section we conceptualize emotions as locations or regions which can be spatially structured and in which any individual can occupy them and live for a period of time. Using the concepts of *trajector* and *landmark* (Langacker 1987; Peña 1999). The LM is the region and the TR is the person inside the region:

1. *If life is a bowl of cherries, what am I doing in the pits?*

2. *I am lost in grief*

3. *They were in ecstasy*

4. *She was bathed in tears*

5. *He was suffering from trauma*

One way of describing a mental state is to say that the person is surrounded by the emotion. The emotions can be linguistically viewed as enclosed areas in which the people affected feel confined, that is in an unpleasant situation that is difficult to escape from. The mental state of being forced to stay inside the emotion for a period of time is reflected in such expressions as: *in the pits, in the gloom, in grief, in tears, etc.* The basic spatial preposition *in,* which is used metaphorically in a non-spatial domain, conveys the idea of volume to the emotion terms that are viewed as locations where any individual can undergo emotional changes. Victims who have suffered from stress disorder frequently use analogies and metaphors to describe their own situations:

6. *I feel like I am caught up in a tornado*

7. *I feel like I'm in a cave and can't get out*

Victims that are recovering from trauma can replace these linguistic expressions by metaphors such as:

8. *One door closes and another opens*

9. *I want to move out of whirlpools and into still waters*

All of these examples involve analogical mappings from a familiar situation to the situation of the patient. He resorts to concepts that are understood directly, such as spatial concepts to talk about his emotional states.

When somebody is experiencing a particular emotion how does he see himself metaphorically? For instance he can see himself *down in the dumps, flying high, in an edgy mood, off balance,* etc. Our bodily sense of the three perpendicular axes: *up/down, left/right* and *front/back* that any person experiences in the physical reality is mapped onto the abstract domain of emotions to talk about them.

The vertical axis schema assists us in conceptualizing abstract categories by mapping basic experiences from the spatial domain onto the abstract cognitive models.

Negative states have a downward orientation, while positive states are upwardly oriented. It is coherent with this principle to say *he fell into a depression*, but never *he fell into euphoria*. The conceptual metaphor STATE OF BEING IS ORIENTATION IN VERTICAL SPACE gives rise to innumerable linguistic expressions. Thus someone can be *buoyant, on a high, on top of the world, a bit down, depressed, weighed down by cares, to have its ups and downs*. The emotional intensity is related to the scale schema, "the further along the scale one moves, the greater the amount or intensity" (Johnson 1987: 124).

To recover the verticality or the original position is to recover the state or condition that someone was in before. The following metaphorical expressions are examples of the metaphor TO RECOVER THE EMOTIONAL STATE IS TO BE UP AGAIN:

10. *She got back on her feet*

11. *We are back on an even keel now*

12. *He seems to bounce back every time*

13. *It is difficult to pick up the pieces after a tragedy like that.*

The left/right axis is related to our body's sense of balance. Let us consider the balance schema. Just as we try to balance our bodies on our feet in any physical place or location, likewise we can try to maintain our emotional stability when we are affected by an emotion. This physical skill of keeping balance is incorporated metaphorically in the language of emotions. Consider:

14. *He is a very stable individual*

15. *She is quite level-headed*

16. *She is upset*

17. *He is on the edge*

18. *I was on the brink of losing my cool*

19. *He is on the verge of suicide*

20. *She is on shaky ground*

All these sentences are metaphorical expressions of the conceptual metaphor EMOTIONAL STABILITY IS BALANCE. The metaphorical expressions *on the edge, on the brink, on the verge* are examples of the conceptual metaphor EMOTIONAL STABILITY IS MAINTAINING POSITION that is a subtype of the balance metaphor. This metaphor maps the physical experience of being on the brink of a dangerous place or surface onto the abstract domain to indicate that an individual is just about to lose his complete emotional control. The state of emotional uncertainty underlies the metaphorical expression: *she was on shaky ground.*

The front/back axis organises the way we talk about emotions as well. There are conventional linguistics expressions which are motivated by the experience of standing

face to face with other people. Therefore our sense of position in space provides us with a very good base for the conceptualization of our emotions. Consider the sentences:

21. *Put yourself in his position*

22. *Put yourself in her shoes*

These are two instances of the conceptual metaphor: SYMPATHIZING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S TROUBLES IS A CHANGE OF THE PHYSICAL POSITION. By switching positions, we can feel in our bodies what someone else might feel.

In line with the horizontal axis, there is a very large number of linguistic expressions about love that have to do with physical closeness. The general metaphor EMOTIONAL INTIMACY IS PHYSICAL CLOSENESS is reflected in the following sentences, which contain the idea that lovers want to be physically close to each other.

23. *I feel close to her*

24. *They are very close emotionally*

25. *Please don't let me go*

Anyone can lie at various positions in the region, surrounded by a private space. Trespassing that private territory is the cause of the emotional change. We can say *be/ get/step out line* to someone that is unfair, incorrect or hurtful. The English metaphor TRESPASSING THE TERRITORY IS THE CAUSE OF ANGER is reflected in these expressions of territoriality:

26. *Don't step on my toes!*

27. *I didn't tread on anyone's toes*

28. *Get out of here*

29. *He kept his opponent at bay*

5. LEAVING AN EMOTIONAL STATE IS LEAVING A LOCATION

The schema of the preposition *OUT* that comes from the experience of perceiving one object moving out of a location or container assists us in conceptualizing the change of state as movement out of a location. The particle designates movement of an entity away from its initial location where it was enclosed. Consider:

1. Yes, the situation is pretty bad, but take heart - we'll find a way *out of* it.

2. I snapped *out of* this melancholy the moment a friend called

3. I pulled him *out of* his depression

4. She is *out of her* depression

In the first sentence, the trajector is part of the landmark. In sentences 2 and 3 the schema underlying these expressions is that the trajector moves from being included

within the boundaries of the landmark to a location where the two are completely detached from each other. The motion is rendered by the particle, while the manner of the movement is incorporated in the verb. The path schema is expressed by means of the particle OUT OF. Both sentences focus on the way of getting out of the container, SNAP OUT indicates *motion* plus *force* on the part of the experiencer. PULL OUT indicates that the experiencer has to rely on someone to help him to get out of the situation he is in. In sentence 4 the trajector and the landmark are completely detached from each other.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Emotions have been described in terms of physical location that one may enter, stay and leave. The locomotion to reach and leave a destination (emotion) is conveyed by the path schema. The difficulties are impediments to find the destination. The emotional change that one undergoes is understood as motion from one location to another. Finally, we have also studied the three perpendicular axes: *up/down, left/right* and *front/back* in order to conceptualize emotions as locations where we live.

We make sense of what goes on around us by thinking metaphorically. But at some point, we need concepts which are experienced directly, without metaphor. The concepts which are directly experienced are those which we experience with our bodies such as BALANCE, UP/DOWN, IN/OUT, FRONT/BACK, NEAR/FAR, etc. The natural ability that human beings possess to create these concepts and use them metaphorically is natural and universal because it is based on our embodied experience in the world. Since many metaphors are grounded in the relationship between the human body and the external world it is expected then that such metaphors are recurrent in different languages and cultures. From these orientational concepts we can make general metaphors. For example, one of the first things we like to make sense out of is our emotions, which are not as sharply defined or felt as are our spatial and perceptual concepts.

NOTES

1. Lakoff (1992) considers some aspects of The Event Structure Meatphor such as Purposes are Destinations, States are Locations, Changes are Movements which are related to the study of this paper.

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