CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS LEADING TO SOME NAMES OF ANGER IN THE INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES (WITH FOCUS ON THE ROMANCE LANGUAGES)

SIMONA GEORGESCU[1]

Abstract. Taking as a starting point the theory of "embodiment", we aim at outlining the conceptual metaphors that stand for some names of ANGER in various Indo-European languages, among which we shall finally focus on the Romance languages. Following Kövecses' assumption (1986, 1990) that the central metaphor for this emotion would be ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, or ANGER IS FIRE, as a consequence of the physiological changes determined by anger, our study adds the idea that it is not only the personal bodily experience that is involved in this conceptual metaphor, but also the external perspective on the physical and physiognomic implications of this emotion: the impression of increasing dimensions of the body (or of its force, cf. Fr. *se gonfler de colère* etc.), or the image of a swollen face or pressed lips. Rich evidence is offered by the evolutions of Proto-Indo-European roots originally meaning 'swollen' or 'boiling', becoming in various languages simple names for 'anger' or 'angry person'. The acknowledgement of this cognitive pattern is essential in the purpose of determining unclear etymologies of Romance words meaning 'angry', 'sad', 'in a bad mood'. Words like Piem. *muk*, Cat. *motxo*, or Fr. *moue*, *bouder,* which have represented a long-standing etymological puzzle, reflect in fact the polysemy 'prominent' / 'swollen' – 'angry', especially from the image of swollen lips, a physiognomic position interpreted as a sign of a negative emotion, like anger or sadness.

Keywords: anger, conceptual metaphor, Indo-European languages, Romance etymology.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The subject matter

The prototypical image of an angry person, at least in some cultures, has features like red, swollen face, possibly smoke coming out of their ears or nose, evoking to some extent the fury of a bull preparing to hit. We aim at analyzing how these prototypical images are determined by the conceptualization of ANGER, and to which extend can the bodily experience represent the motivational basis for certain denominations of negative emotions like 'anger' or 'sadness'.

[1] University of Bucharest, simona_rodina@yahoo.com.

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1.2. The theoretical perspective

We shall take as a starting point the basic idea of cognitive linguistics, just as it has been formulated by Lakoff (1987: 48): "abstract categories are structured metaphorically on the basis of structures from the realm of physical experience". In other words, it is metaphors that help us understand, in concrete and usual terms, realities that are less usual and more difficult to understand and explain: the CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR represents the general similarity that we establish between our target domain (the one we need to compare with another reality) and a source domain (the one that serves us for comparison).

A great number of these metaphors rely on a comparison between the target domain and our own body – in other words, we understand outside reality (either abstract or concrete) by the means of our own body parts, movements and functions[2]. That would be, briefly, what we call the "embodiment theory".

Another important preliminary observation is that these metaphors are recurrent indifferently of time and space, being a mere result of the similarities in human cognition and perception of the world (see Sweetser 1992, Traugott / Dasher 2002 etc.). It is also true that there is a certain degree of variability based on the differences in cultural environment, but in our present study these differences do not outstand[3].

1.3. A bibliographical overview of the matter

The conceptualization of ANGER has been a central concern for linguists studying the universality of metaphors based on bodily experience (embodiment)[4] (Kövecses 1986, 2000; Lakoff and Kövecses 1987; Lakoff 1987; Wierzbicka 1999; Gevaert 2001, 2005).

While theorizing the conceptualization of reality in terms of concrete (mostly bodily) experience, Lakoff (1987) presented three case studies. One of them is precisely the conceptualization of ANGER as it can be deduced from the expressions used to refer to this emotion in present-day American English. At the basis of a large number of idioms and expressions, he comes to the conclusion that there is "a common folk theory of the physiological effects of anger: (which are) increased body heat, increased pressure (blood pressure, muscular pressure), agitation, and interference with perception" (Lakoff 1987: 381). If we take a look at these expressions, we find that people often refer to the physiological effects of this emotion instead of the emotion itself, which gives rise to a significant number of metonymical expressions: e.g. *get hot under the collar, burst a blood vessel, be scarlet with rage, to be blind with rage* etc.

ANGER can also be referred to in terms of 'boiling', 'steaming', or 'exploding'. Kövecses (1986, 2000, 2008) and Lakoff (1987) stated that the expressions taking as a

[2] That is why we speak of the lungs of the city, the head of a group, one's right hand etc.

[3] At the same time we face the following difficulty: we speak about an emotion that Wierzbicka (1999) places on the short list of universal emotions. As we shall refer only to Indo-European languages, it could be that the common cultural basis has led to a similar perception of this emotion, thus we would need further cross-linguistic insights into the expression strategies for ANGER in order to make a statement concerning its universality. Unfortunately, these insights surpass the limits of the present paper.

[4] Sometimes confronted with the cultural influence (Kövecses 2000, 2008).

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source domain the effects that heating has on water rely on the conceptualization of anger as THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, which they consider as a central and supposedly even universal metaphor.

> The conceptual metaphor helps people understand how this emotion works: if a fluid in a container is heated, it starts to steam and boil, producing pressure in the container, which will explode if the heated fluid is not kept under control: similarly, people who become angry are hot and agitated, and if they cannot keep their emotions under control, they explode (Gevaert 2007: 2).

The study drawn by Geeraerts / Grondelaers (2006) shows, on the other hand, that this fluid image schema might also rely on a culture-based perception of the humors contained by our body. Thus, just as the names of the four fundamental psychological types, *choleric, melancholic, sanguine* and *phlegmatic*, stand on the Ancient Greek view of the human disposition and state of health as determined by the predominating bodily humor, it seems to the authors that the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER is nothing else but the extension of this ancient perception.

Yet, this is not the only metaphorical conceptualization of 'anger' outlined by Lakoff. He (alone or with Kövecses, see Lakoff / Kövecses 1987, Lakoff 1987) also records the conceptual metaphors ANGER IS FIRE, ANGER IS INSANITY or even ANGER IS A DANGEROUS ANIMAL (an image reflected in expressions such as *He unleashed his anger / He has a ferocious temper*). In all of these cases, the experiential factor becomes prominent.

It is well known that these metaphors lose their metaphoric value for speakers, being lexicalized as simple denominations for a certain concept[5]. We would thus expect the usual metaphors for ANGER to lexicalize and become common denominations of this emotion. In other words, we suppose that at least some of the present-day denominations of ANGER rely on dead metaphors with this source domain.

2. NAMES OF *ANGER* IN THE INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

We shall, therefore, draw a short onomasiological study on the Indo-European names for ANGER, using as a corpus Pokorny's *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. This dictionary uses the method of comparative grammar in order to reconstruct the Proto-Indo-European stems that stand for the lexicon of the ancient and modern Indo-European languages. The semantic reconstruction proposed by Pokorny will be taken as a starting point in our analysis of semantic development.

2.1. ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER

Our research highlights several semantic evolutions from the concept of 'boiling' or 'flowing' to 'anger', thus illustrating the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER:

[5] Just to give an example, lat. *testa* was the name of a type of recipient, and used as a metaphor for the 'head', as an illustration of the conceptual metaphor THE HEAD IS A CONTAINER; it eventually lost its metaphorical value at the same time as its initial meaning, becoming a simple name for 'head' (> Fr. *tête* and It. *testa*), deprived of any motivation in the eyes of the common speaker.

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– PIE **bh(e)reu-, *bh(e)rū̃* – ‘to boil, to be wild’ – which, among other descendants, provided Arm. *bark* ‘sharp, sour, cruel, savage’ (related to the concept of ‘fury’), and the verb *barkanam* meaning ‘to get angry’. Figurate meanings of Lat. *ferveō, -ēre, fervō, -ĕre* ‘to be boiling hot, to boil, seethe, glow’ follow the same pattern, although they do not surpass the border of a metaphorical usage: ‘to be in quick movement, to seethe; to be excited by passion, rage’; the same stem provided Lat. *dēfrūtum* ‘leaven, yeast; a kind of beer’, whose figurate meaning is that of ‘anger, passion’.

– PIE **ere-s-*[2] (*ers-, ɹs-, eres-*), and *rēs̃-, rōs̃-* ‘to flow’ is the origin of Arm. *eɹam* ‘boil, flow’, by extension ‘be perpetually in motion’, a verb that can also reach the meaning ‘to be excited passionately’, ‘be or become keen, angry’.

– PIE **bher-*[2] ‘to boil, swell’ provided O. Ind. *bhū́rni-ḥ* ‘violent, angry, irate, wild, keen, eager’.

We find even more numerous words designating ‘anger’ or an ‘angry person’ that are based on a root whose meaning is ‘to swell’. Actually, there may be a link between the conceptualization ANGER AS HEAT and ANGER AS SWELLING. If the process of getting angry is perceived as similar to fluid being heated up in a container, the pressure inside the container can cause it to expand. Similarly, the angry person may be thought to expand.

2.2. ANGER IS SWELLING

Thus the following names are based on the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS SWELLING.

– PIE **bhelĝh-* ‘to swell’ evolved to O.E. *belgan* ‘be angry’, O.H.G. where it maintains the polysemy *belgan* ‘swell up’ and, as a reflexive form, ‘be angry with’. From the same root and by the same conceptual metaphor was derived the name of a population, probably famous for its warlike attitude: Gaul. *Belgae* ‘the angry ones’. We should also mention that in early Middle English, the verbs *bellen* and *bollen* both refer to physical swelling in addition to ‘being swollen with anger or pride’ (Gevaert 2007).

– PIE **b(e)u-*[2], **bh(e)ū̃-* ‘to swell, puff’ provided Nor. *baus* ‘violent, quick-tempered’, Germ. *böse* ‘bad’ from the idea of being swollen (because of anger?), O.Ice. *bysia* ‘stream out with big power’, as well as E.Fris. *būsen* ‘be violent, roar, make a noise, attack’.

– PIE **tēu-, *təu-, *teu̯ə-, *tu̯ō-, *tū̃-*, whose reconstructed semantic area includes the meanings ‘to swell’, ‘crowd, folk’, ‘fat’, ‘strong’, ‘boil’, ‘abscess’, provided O.Ice. *Þȳstr* ‘rage, fury’ and O.E. *(mægen-)ðysse* ‘violence, force’.

Besides the relation between ‘boiling’ and ‘swelling’, there are many cases in which there is no reference to ‘boiling’ at all. We find rather frequently a polysemy in words designating, on the one hand, a ‘swollen object’, on the other hand an ‘angry person’. It is in fact another kind of projection of the physiological changes that the angry person goes through: “the conceptualization can be considered a metonym. Angry people typically draw deep breaths and the swelling of the chest can metonymically refer to those people’s feeling of anger” (Gevaert 2007: 187). The French have an expression, *se gonfler de colère*, which is perfectly transparent in this sense.

This explanation can be supported by the polysemy in words like O.Ice. *blüstr* (**blēstu*) ‘blast, breath, breeze, snort, rage, fury’, or those words meaning ‘to flow’ and ‘to swell’ at the same time, as in the root **bhleu-* ‘to blow; to swell, flow’, which provided

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Welsh *blyngu* 'become angry', *blwng* 'angry, irate'. Another example is Gr. θυμός (*thymós*) 'breath', providing either the meaning 'soul', either that of 'anger'.

The image of a recipient that increases dimensions because of its getting full of anger is also supported by concrete observing of nature: facing danger, many animals increase dimensions, and humans as well have been proved to increase their force as a mere effect of anger (and implied by adrenaline). Thus, many of these expressions can be simply the result of a metonymy of the increasing dimension and power of the body for the emotion that provokes these changes.

The metonymic explanation is also supported by semantic evolutions such as:

– PIE **ten-*[1], **tend-* 'to extend, stretch, span', giving birth to O.E. *ðindan* 'to swell' (in a very concrete sense), but also 'angry, irate'.

– PIE **u̯erĝ-*[3], **u̯orĝ-* 'to abound, to be full of strength', provided the forms: O.Ir. *ferc*, M.Ir. *ferg* 'rage, fury'.

In Old English literature, ANGER can be represented by a swollen heart (cf. the expression *herte grete* used in *King of Tars*, *ap*. Gevaert 2007: 238).

3. *ANGER* IN THE ROMANCE LANGUAGES

As shown by Santos Domínguez / Espinosa Elorza (1996), the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS FIRE or ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER can often be identified in the Romance languages. The examples they offer, mostly from Old Spanish, are comparable to the English expressions analyzed by Kövecses (1986, 2000) and Lakoff (1987): e.g. *Saña (insania)* explained as "*encendimiento de sangre*" (Alfonso X, *Las Partidas*) "Madness: heating of the blood"; "*¿si non se encendra la tu yra contra todos...?*" (*General Estoria* I), "if your fury didn't turn on as fire against all"; "*encender y soplar ...en mis entrañas el fuego de la ira*" (Antonio de Guevara) "turn on and blow in my bowels the fire of fury".

3.1. ANGER as swelling of the lips

If we go back to the Indo-European examples seen under §2, we can acknowledge that the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS SWELLING is the source of many Indo-European names for 'anger' or 'angry person'. If we take a look at various denominations for the same concept in the Romance languages, we find that the idea of swelling is still visible. Yet, the swollen part of the body can vary, in other words we find the same metonymy but with different source-concepts.

In most cases, the leading part is played by human physiognomy. It has been demonstrated through several tests (as those made by Ekman and his group of psychologists in 1983 and 1990, cf. Levenson, Ekman and Friesen 1990, ap. Lakoff 1987: 407) that the facial expression of anger implies "eyebrows down and together, pushing the lower lip up and pressing the lips together" (Levenson, Ekman and Friesen 1990, *ap*. Lakoff 1987: 407).

In her cross-linguistic study on emotions, Wierzbicka (1999) shows that many expressions related to anger rely on the physiognomic changes that the angry person suffers: "[…] the (…) expressions describe that one gets angry and that therefore his or her

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face is no longer the same, and usually it appears to be long". She also quotes the following Chinese expressions, understood as referring to an 'angry face': *zhang hong le lian* 'swell up to red face', *lian hong buozi cu* 'red face thick neck' (Wierzbicka 1999). The expressions have in common the observation of the increasing dimensions of a part of the body.

In several Romance words meaning 'angry', the lips seem to be the focus: they are seen as the central point of emotions, used metonymically for negative feelings (anger or sadness), as the presence of such emotions is most visible on the lips, easily marked by physiognomic changes (see the experiment of Ekman's group, where the subjects pushed their lower lip up and pressed their lips together as to express anger).

In Romanian, for 'angry' or rather 'upset' one may use the adjective *botos* (literally 'with muzzle'), or expressions such as *a face bot*, literally meaning 'to make a muzzle', therefore the verb *a se botoşa,* or *a se îmboța* with the same meaning. These verbs refer in a concrete manner to the position of the lips when one is upset and either preparing to yell, either to cry. Even more transparent is the verb *a buzăi* 'to get upset', *buzău* 'upset', based on the noun *buze* 'lips'.

3.2. Uncertain etymologies

3.2.1. *Rom. "bosumfla"*

An interesting verb is Rom. *bosumfla*, which has correspondents in other Romance languages: Occ. *boudenfla* (Mistral, *Trésor dòu Felibrige*, 1878), Cat. *botinflat, botunflat* (a past participle). While in Romanian the meaning is strictly related to sadness and anger, in Occitan and Catalan the semantics seem to be much wider: in Occitan it is explained as "enfler" ('swell'), in Cat. "inflat excessivament" ('excessively swollen'). It is perhaps the partial loss of motivation that led to what we suppose as a widening of meaning. Yet, the contexts that are presented in Mistral and in *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear* (DCVB) refer clearly either to the swelling of the mouth, either to the eyes bloated by crying. Thus, they seem to be nothing else than the projection of the same conceptual metaphor underlying ANGER: Occ. *Acò fal boudenfla li bouco* "cela le fait enlever les lèvres".

As a second meaning, Mistral proposes: *avoir le coeur gros, suffoquer de sanglots*, 'to have a heavy heart', 'to suffocate because of sighs, of crying'; the "heavy (literally 'great') heart" is a metaphor that we also find in Old English, *herte grete* (*ap.* Gevaert 2007: 238, *cf. supra*), based on the same conceptualization of anger as implying grown dimensions for whatever part of the body might be the siege of such emotion.

In DCVB, one of the two contexts provided is *grosses llàgrimes els reglotaven dels ulls botinflats*, "great tears were falling from his swollen eyes", where *botinflats*, although interpretable as a simple synonym of *inflat*, 'swollen', could still be a reflection of an old usage of this word in contexts implying negative emotions, like sadness or anger. Nonetheless, the meaning of the most transparent component, *umflat, inflat*, seems to have prevailed in this case. The first part is supposed to be the Protorromance **bottum*, which provided Rom. *bot* 'muzzle', and perhaps Sp. *bozo* 'upper lip'. The *Romanian Etymological Dictionary* (CDER) supposes, in the case of *bosumflat*, an influence of *buză* 'lip', as a result of folk etymology. The underlying metaphor, based on the physiognomy of the upset person, also finds a reflection in the still transparent Romanian expression *a rămâne cu buza umflată* (literally 'to be left with swollen lips', i.e. 'to be deceived').

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A parallel term is Fr. *bouder* "montrer de la mauvaise humeur", which seems to stand on an onomatopoeia **bod-* designating a swollen object, while in this case it refers to the swollen lips (TLFi).

3.2.2. *Piem. "roeste mok"*

This perspective on the conceptualization of ANGER may bring new light on the etymology of terms that seem hopelessly obscure.

The meaning of 'deceived' appears frequently as a semantic development in a very interesting Romance lexical family, whose etymology still lies under the sign of uncertainty. Romansh *mok* 'hornless', Lomb. *muka* 'hornless goat', Tosc. *mucca* 'cow', Sp. *mocho* 'without peak', Grischun *mok* 'crippled, hornless; piece of', Val Gard. *mok* 'dull, blunt', Cat. *(cabra / vaca) mótxa* 'hornless' etc. These words, mostly absent from REW, are considered by Poerck (1959) either a variant of the descendants of *MUTTUS (a reconstructed form which appears in REW), either direct descendants of a Proto-Romance variant of this form, namely *MUCCUS. In either case, what is important here is the meaning that must be reconstructed for these forms: 'whose peak has been cut off', 'prominence', or 'spherical object'. As I have suggested in other works (Georgescu 2013, 2017a, b), the last two meanings are a semantic development of the first one, which seems to be the original meaning, evolving towards the designation of any result of the action of cutting off an object (including parts of the body).

What holds our attention within the discussion about the conceptualization of ANGER is that, among the meanings developed by this lexical series, outstand the two following cases: Piem. *muk* 'deceived, confused, sad' and Cat. *motxo* 'silent, melancholic'. These forms have usually been interpreted as parallel, unrelated words with those in the series mentioned above, due to their apparently distant meaning. Yet, if we take as a starting point the meaning of 'prominence' (as possibly the rest of a cut object), also reaching the senses of 'bump' or 'swelling' (cf. Rom. *muc* 'small round object'), we can understand the relation with the concept of 'negative emotion' to be found in the Piemontese and the Catalan forms. This meaning can either reflect the identity between the negative emotion and its visible result on one's position of the mouth (thus, representing a parallel expression strategy as in the case of Rom. *bosumflat, a rămâne cu buza umflată*), either result from a variant of Latin MŪTUS 'dumb'. The Piem. expression *roeste muk*, corresponds to Rom. *a rămâne cu gura căscată* ('to be left with one's mouth open' as an effect of astonishment) or *a rămâne mut* ('to be left dumb', i.e. unable to say a word). But, at the same time, we can mention the variant *a rămâne muci*, an expression which has lost its transparency for the Romanian speaker, as *muci* is understood as 'nose secretion'. Yet, if we relate it to Arum. *muts* s.m. 'muzzle', and if we also take into account the Rom. verb *a muşca*, from an older form *mutšca* (Cod.Vor.16,5), we may establish the same Romance base for all of these forms: *MUCCUS as developing the meaning 'muzzle' from the supposedly pre-existing idea of 'prominence'.

As further evidence for this interpretation stands the French expression *faire la moue*, relying on the Ancient French *moe* meaning 'lip'. The modern meaning for *moue* is "grimace que l'on fait en avançant, en resserrant les lèvres" (*Le Grand Robert de la Langue Française*), specific for certain emotions, like dislike, disdain, anger. An equivalent expression can be found in Lombardian, *fa la moca* 'to be upset, to show one's anger', literally 'to put up a lip', where the connection with the face grimace expressing anger is also transparent.

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4. CONCLUSIONS

Taking as a starting point the idea proposed by Lakoff / Johnson (2003 [1980]) that "the system of metaphors for 'anger' arose, across languages and cultures, from the physiology of anger itself", we need to add that the theory of embodiment applies here from two opposed perspectives: from the point of view of the person dominated by ANGER, experiencing physiological changes, and from the outside perspective, of the person observing the physiognomic changes that his angry fellow is going through.

It is mostly this double view that allows us to understand the etymology of some words for ANGER that we find in various Indo-European languages. We have revealed that many roots whose original meaning is 'to swell' or 'to boil', have provided words in different languages meaning 'anger' or 'angry'. We can therefore identify, in old or modern Indo-European languages, recurrent semantic evolutions as SWOLLEN → ANGRY (besides BOILING → ANGRY).

The acknowledgement of this cognitive pattern is essential in the purpose of determining unclear etymologies of Romance words meaning 'angry', 'sad', 'in a bad mood'.

The image of a swollen part of the body as a sign of anger or sadness also seems to be, in many cases, limited to the mouth, therefore we may find as well the polysemy '(swollen) lip' / 'muzzle' – 'sad'/ 'angry'.

Abbreviations

Arm. – Armenian; Cat. – Catalan; E.Fris. – East Frisian; Fr. – French; Gaul. – Gaulish; Gr. – Greek; Lat. – Latin; Lomb. – Lombardian; M.Ir. – Middle Irish; Occ. – Occitan; O.E. – Old English; O.H.D. – Old High German; O.Ice. – Old Icelandic; O.Ind. – Old Indian; O.Ir. – Old Irish; Nor. – Norwegian; PIE – Proto-Indo-European; Piem. – Piemontese; Sp. – Spanish; Tosc. – Toscan; Val Gard. – (Rhaeto-Romanic from) Val Gerdena.

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