Metaphoric modelling of “ARREST” in Thomas P. Whitney’s translation of Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn’s novel “The Gulag Archipelago”

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Abstract. The article offers a cognitive analysis of a metaphor in the framework of narrative discourse. It closely looks into the term ‘metaphoric model’ and discloses the latter listing a number of examples. The research of metaphors is a relevant study in linguistics which allows one to analyse mental processes due to the fact that a thought viewed as a mental activity easily operates with metaphors alleviating the process of encoding and decoding messages. Moreover, when any society disapproves of expressing a personal point of view due to current social and political events, metaphor interpretation becomes one of the few ways which helps disclose an individual attitude towards the events

1 Introduction

The novel “The Gulag Archipelago” by A.I. Solzhenitsyn is dedicated to the events which took place in 1918-1956 in the Soviet Union. That was the period of massive political repressions. It was the time when the “Gulag system” was artificially created. Lots of people were sent to prison for some unknown reasons. They were alleged to have broken some laws, often not specified, thus, allegedly endangering the principles of the political system. As a matter of fact, the officials made their decisions basing on their personal judgements (to be more precise: on political views of the time).

The piece of literary work under study abounds in language metaphors [1]. A metaphor is a multifaceted phenomenon that involves language, conceptual system and social-cultural practices [2]. Functioning as a unit of a mental process a metaphor is directed at alleviation of the perception process. Moreover, it structures the world around us. On the one hand, a metaphor helps get the knowledge, on the other hand, it is both an ideal tool for human manipulation and a unique means of representing a human emotional world. Thus, abundant metaphors prove the author’s emotional interest in the depicted events. Metaphors, predominantly conceptual ones, are essential part of the linguistic tool kit of the novel and they generate consistent metaphorical expressions. In other words, a metaphor is systematic: a common notion of a metaphor can produce countless linguistic expressions; and different notions of a metaphor form a systematic network which is the basis of our remarks and thoughts [3].

2 Materials and methods

Metaphor creation is based on the interaction between two fields: the original nominative field, which is known to most of native speakers, and the secondary metaphoric field aimed at mental representation of the elements of the abstract world. The specifics of the latter field account for the fact that a metaphor has got a peculiar nature. They are mostly generated subconsciously by instinct. At the same time, they convey the idea which could be formulated by other clearer lexical means.

Language is not independent of the mind but reflects our perceptual and conceptual understanding of experience [4]. The connection between the language and the mind contributes to the fact that a metaphor might impose a biased (generated by an author) view on a phenomenon or realia. So it could be stated that a metaphor’s nature is determined by an intricate system of cultural and personal images of a particular object.

According to conceptual approach a metaphor generation implies the transition from abstract to tangible. The authors of a conceptual metaphor theory highlight that a metaphor is a cognitive operation aimed at penetrating abstract, obscure notions through definite notions that have got perceptive basis which results in their meanings being much clearer [5]. It should be pointed that metaphorical meanings stem from nonmetaphorical aspects of our everyday experiences [6]. The process of a metaphor generation is tantamount to the focus on the selected characteristics of the main agent with the reference to the characteristics of the

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supporting agent. Associations connected with the supporting agent can be divided into 2 groups: 1) ones that are brought to the foreground, 2) ones that are discarded. So a metaphor is a kind of filter which structures the system of associations focusing on the ones that can refer to the main agent in the given situation or context.

Metaphoric modelling [7] is the centre of a scientific interest in the framework of the given article. This cognitive approach is widely applied in different types of discourses [8]. Metaphoric modelling reflects three dimensions: national, social and self-identity. Cognitive scientists analyse and assess the target units of surrounding reality through scenarios, slots and frames.

3 Results

While writing the novel A.I. Solzhenitsyn pursued the aim to bring out the essence of a civilian-state relationship to public eye. In his novel A.I. Solzhenitsyn describes the soviet realias connected with political repressions. Hence, the particular attention was drawn to the metaphors describing the process of arrest. Evidently the main purpose of the article is the analysis of a metaphoric modelling of arrest as an event causing a flood of emotions. Feelings and emotions are the elements of one's inner world, so the lexis used to denote them might be designated as abstract, and hence such lexis is difficult for perception in case a recipient hasn't got any relevant experience. It appears to be challenging to describe feelings of a person being arrested as such an event either has not happened or (hopefully) has happened once in a recipient's life. As for the author of the novel, he had to endure this ordeal. Consequently, the experience helped him transform the corresponding negative feelings into a lexical form.

4 Discussion

While analysing the nature of the target metaphors in the novel 5 dominant models have been detected. They are discussed in the subsequent subsections.

4.1 The metaphoric model ARREST IS A DISEASE

The authors of the conceptual metaphor theory assume that all notions in our mind are predetermined by our physical feelings and sensual experience which are widely referred to in the process of a metaphor generation. This assumption finds its way in the considered examples. No wonder that the author (and, further on, the translator) associates arrest with a disease. At that time arrests were made on a massive scale. Frequent cases of a disease are called "an epidemic". In case an epidemic takes place, quarantine is declared. Both notions of "an epidemic" and "a quarantine" are appealed to with the reference to arrest. The metaphoric model ARREST IS A DISEASE (of anthropomorphic character) is traced within the following examples:

"Arrests rolled through the streets and apartment houses like **an epidemic**" [9, 75].

"...he had never stood up in my presence in my former life — and reached across **the quarantine line** that separated us and gave me his hand, although he would never have reached out his hand to me had I remained a free man" [9, 19].

"Across the sheer gap separating me from those left behind, the gap created by the heavy-falling word "arrest," across that **quarantine line** not even a sound dared penetrate, came the unthinkable, magic words of the brigade commander: "Solzhenitsyn. Come back here." "[9, 18-19]

In accordance with the principle of developing the notional field of a disease the examples also reveal productive use of the frame "symptoms of a disease" like "pus-filled boils" and "to metastasize" while describing arrest:

"In the metallurgy, defense, machinery, shipbuilding, chemical, mining, gold and platinum industries, in irrigation, everywhere there were these **pus-filled boils** of wrecking!" [9, 44].

"But the Gulag Archipelago had already begun its **malignant life** and would shortly **metastasize** throughout the whole **body of the nation**" [9, 36].

The typical pragmatic meanings of the metaphors are determined by the fact that the primary meanings of the used lexis are well known to the reader, so the designated realias cause negative emotions.

Due to the fact that the judicial system views the citizens as patients the frame "treatment" is productively implemented:

"A convenient world outlook gives rise to a convenient juridical term: **social prophylaxis**" [9, 42].

"This **therapy** continued full speed from 1927 on, and immediately exposed to the proletariat all the causes of our economic failures and shortages" [9, 44].

4.2 The metaphoric model ARREST IS A GAME

The second metaphoric model (of sociomorphic character) detected in the novel is ARREST IS A GAME. The actions of the government in the context of relations with its citizens are characterized as solitaire. Actually the activity of state bodies is viewed by the author as a card game. It is widely known that such games are not popular with the representatives of higher social circles. Cards is a game where a player can easily cheat. So such parallel stigmatizes the image of the authorities. Moreover, the authorities play the game silently (by stealth) which detects the same "unfair". In this case we witness the power of a metaphor to represent an image with the help of an indirect nomination. The productive application of a metaphoric model ARREST IS A GAME might be observed in the following extracts:

"In this **game of the Big Solitaire**, the majority of the old political prisoners, survivors of hard labor, were destroyed, for it was primarily the SR's and the Anarchists-not the Social Democrats-who had received the harshest sentences from the Tsarist courts" [9, 36].

“They didn’t, after all, play that **interrogation game** with the second-termers of 1948: it would have gotten them nowhere” [9, 123].

“In the midst of the general to-do, the **Big Solitaire game** was finally wound up” [9, 72].

4.3 The metaphoric model ARREST IS A HUNTING

The metaphoric model ARREST IS A GAME is conceptually similar to the model ARREST IS A HUNTING which has also been detected. In this context the state is a hunter and a soviet citizen is a potential prey. Owing to the fact that the work of literature under scrutiny is based on real events of political and social life at the totalitarian time, the metaphoric opposition of the authorities “superiority” and “insignificance” of outsiders (either nature or a human being) can be seen throughout the whole Volume 1 of the novel “The Gulag Archipelago”. In the framework of the above-mentioned metaphoric model this opposition can be observed in the following examples:

“Here and there in the provincial centers and even further down in the administrative districts, metropolitans and bishops were arrested, and, as always, **in the wake of the big fish**, followed shoals of smaller fry: archpriests, monks, and deacons” [9, 36-37].

“Men of religion **were an inevitable part of every annual "catch,"** and their silver locks gleamed in every cell and in every prisoner transport en route to the Solovetsky Islands” [9, 37].

“And, of course, all former state officials **had gone into hiding** and were likewise **liable to be hunted down**. They **had hidden well and disguised themselves** cleverly, making use of the fact that there was as yet no internal passport system nor any unified system of work-books in the Republic-and they managed to creep into Soviet institutions” [9, 39].

“The MGB wasn’t interested in the truth and had no intention of **letting** anyone **out of its grip** once he was arrested” [9, 145].

The frame of hunting produces the slot “instruments for hunting”:

“What do you need to make you stronger than the interrogator and the whole **trap**?” [9, 130].

“That is the mark of quality of their work, and these are also **new patches of woods in which to set out snares**” [9, 129].

“Therefore my interrogator did not have to invent anything. He merely tried **to cast his noose** around everyone I had ever written to or received a letter from” [9, 135].

In addition, culprits appeared to fall prey to the system by an unlucky accident. They were “picked up / plucked / jailed right and left / eliminated”. The conceptual status opposition of a superior government (at the top) and an inferior citizen (at the bottom) is observed throughout the whole novel. Citizens were depicted as voiceless and unprotected objects deprived of the right to live in peace despite the fact that they were law-abiding. Though it could hardly be seen what

the law was. Their destiny rested not in their hands but in the “tentacles” or “grip” of the soviet authorities. The author and the translator get across this conceptual opposition to the reader by means of an ontological metaphor as in examples below:

“It **did not tear me from the embrace of kith and kin**, nor wrench me from a deeply cherished home life. One pallid European February it **took** me from our narrow salient on the Baltic Sea, where, depending on one’s point of view, either we had surrounded the Germans or they had surrounded us, and it **deprived** me only of my familiar artillery battery and the scenes of the last three months of the war” [9, 18].

“Hardly had the SMERSH men finished **"plucking"** me and taken my notes on political subjects ...” [9, 18-19].

“That is why we **remove** them from our path, so they won’t **get under our feet**” [9, 31].

“But the old “close-to-the-Cadets” intelligentsia **had already been thoroughly shaken up**, starting in 1919. Had the time not come to shake up that part of the intelligentsia which imagined itself to be progressive? **To give the students a once-over**?” [9, 42].

“And that was how they [NKVD] went about **eliminating** them [*independent people*]” [9, 70].

“In 1919 ... free people were simply arrested and executed immediately, and **right and left** those elements of the intelligentsia considered *close to the Cadets* **were raked into prison**” [9, 31].

“... they were all sentenced together and **driven off** in herds to the slaughterhouses of the Archipelago” [9, 72].

4.4 The metaphoric model ARREST IS AN ACT OF NATURE

Describing arrest of political culprits the author (and, further on, the translator) applies the metaphoric model ARREST IS AN ACT OF NATURE. Such metaphoric model appears to be productive and effective as all of us are familiar with such natural phenomena as rain, snow, fire, wind, etc. This metaphoric model functions in the following examples.

“Arrest! Need it be said that it is a breaking point in your life, **a bolt of lightning which hasscored a direct hit on** you? That it is an unassimilable **spiritual earthquake** not every person can cope with, as a result of which people often slip into insanity?” [9, 7].

“Did the participants in **the clusters of plots uncovered** in every province ... at least succeed in setting foot on the land of the Archipelago, or did they not and are they therefore not related to the subject of our investigations?” [9, 29].

“No. There were a few ways back! The **counterwaves** were **thin, sparse**, but they did sometimes **break through**” [9, 40].

“It never stopped, and whenever there was another big **wave**, as, for instance, in 1937, 1945, and 1949, **its waters became particularly swollen**” [9, 60].

“A **wave is a natural catastrophe** and is even more powerful than the *Organs* themselves. In this situation,

no one was going to help anyone else lest he be drawn into the same **abyss** himself” [9, 156].

“Those first hours are passing when everything inside him [*arrested*] is still **ablaze** from the **unstilld storm** in his heart” [9, 109].

“The victims of the Bolsheviks from 1918 to 1946 never conducted themselves so despicably as the leading Bolsheviks when **the lightning struck** them” [9, 130].

“The possibility did exist, however, if you were well informed and had a sharp sensitivity, of **getting yourself out from under the avalanche**, even at the last minute, by proving that you had no connection with it” [9, 156].

Lightning, an earthquake, waves, an avalanche and a storm are impossible to withstand and avoid, that is why these metaphors introduce the semes of “violence”, “suddenness” and “helplessness”.

4.5 The metaphoric model ARREST IS AN ACT OF MURDER

Last but not least, we can discover the metaphoric model ARREST IS AN ACT OF MURDER. Throughout the first chapters of the novel the translator describes arrest in terms of death. To be more precise, the translator adopts the author’s connotation of a violent death which can be witnessed in the following examples.

“However, it has always been clean-cut—and, most surprising of all, the **victims**, in cooperation with the Security men, have conducted themselves in the noblest conceivable manner, so as to spare the living from witnessing **the death** of the condemned” [9, 11].

“But their turn, too, came implacably, and **their heads rolled implacably from their shoulders**” [9, 36].

“Yet, at the hour appointed in their stars, the kings of the *Organs*, the aces of the *Organs*, and even the ministers themselves **laid their heads down beneath their own guillotine**” [9, 156].

“Piles of **victims**! Hills of **victims**! A frontal **assault** of the NKVD on the city” [9, 74].

“And all the big Bolsheviks, who now wear martyrs’ halos, managed to be the **executioners** of other Bolsheviks (not even taking into account how *all of them* in the first place had been the **executioners** of non-Communists)” [9, 129].

As can be seen in the examples the Bolsheviks are viewed as “executioners” who “murder” (=arrest) their “victims” (=citizens who go to prison).

“At the very threshold, you must say to yourself: **My life is over**, a little early to be sure, but there’s nothing to be done about it. I shall never return to freedom. I am **condemned to die**” [9, 130].

Evidently no one can tell what follows after death. It is something covered with mystery. As for arrest, it wasn’t always followed by death. But it can be stated that arrest was a kind of rapid transition from one life to another which was unfamiliar, obscure and frightening as the soviet government directed all its efforts at putting an end to any contacts between a prisoner and the society. Moreover, there was a common tendency to increase the terms of sentence groundlessly. This fact contributed to unpredictability of the situation and

frightening unawareness of the prisoner, entailing even more fear. The above-mentioned seme of “obscurity”, “suspense” and “darkness” accounts for productive use of the latter metaphoric model.

5 Conclusion

The article has focused on the close study of 80 metaphors modeling arrest. As a result, 5 dominant metaphoric models have been detected. These are:

- 1) ARREST IS A DISEASE with the dominant slots “symptoms” and “treatment”.
- 2) ARREST IS A HUNTING with the dominant slot “instruments for hunting”.
- 3) ARREST IS A GAME with the dominant slot “card game”.
- 4) ARREST IS AN ACT OF NATURE with the dominant slots “types of acts of nature” and “their typical actions”.
- 5) ARREST IS A MURDER with the dominant slots “weapons for murder” and “participants of a murder”.

Their numerical decomposition is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The frequency of metaphoric models.

METAPHORIC MODEL (a number of examples)	FREQUENCY
ARREST IS AN ACT OF NATURE (22)	28%
ARREST IS A DISEASE (18)	23%
ARREST IS HUNTING (16)	20%
ARREST IS AN ACT OF MURDER (12)	15%
ARREST IS A GAME (7)	9%
other non-dominant models	5%

The models detected were applied by A.I. Solzhenitsyn in the original novel [10]. The same pattern was chosen by translator T. Whitney in the English version despite the fact that the model usually tends to have quite a wide range of source concepts due to the linguistic and cross-cultural differences [11]. The listed metaphoric models are aimed at the emotional reproduction of negative emotions bundle related to arrest. The rationale for metaphor application is the fact that arrest is not part and parcel of one’s everyday life. Most readers have never experienced it in their life, but have fallen ill and have witnessed different acts of nature. As for game activities, they are the first stage of human development. These are the mental parallel lines helping implement the language representation of arrest and immerse the reader into this unknown and fairly negative emotional state.

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