

**METAPHORICAL MATERIALIZATION OF EMOTIONS IN THE SPEECH OF A
HOMODIEGETIC NARRATOR IN J. S. FOER'S NOVEL «EXTREMELY LOUD & INCREDIBLY
CLOSE»**

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Abstract:

The thesis examines the metaphorical materialization of emotions in the speech of the homodiegetic narrator in J. S. Foer's novel *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*. The study focuses on bodily and object-based metaphors through which abstract emotional states are represented as physical sensations, spatial structures, or mechanical processes. Drawing on narratology and cognitive metaphor theory, the paper argues that such materialization performs a cognitive and compensatory function, enabling the narrator to structure traumatic experience and articulate subjective perception. The analysis demonstrates that metaphor in the novel serves not merely as a stylistic device but as a key mechanism for modeling the character's consciousness.

Keywords: metaphor; metaphorical materialization; homodiegetic narrator; narratology; cognitive linguistics; linguistic personality; bodily metaphor; traumatic narrative; representation of consciousness.

The problem of linguistic representation of a character's inner world occupies a central place in contemporary linguistics of literary text. In the case of homodiegetic narration, when the narrator participates in the events being described, language becomes a direct reflection of the structure of consciousness. According to G. Genette, a homodiegetic narrator combines the functions of storyteller and character, which intensifies the subjectivity of narration [5, p. 245].

J. S. Foer's novel *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* is of particular interest in this respect, as the story is told from the perspective of nine-year-old Oskar Schell, who is coping with the death of his father. In such texts, language performs not only a communicative but also a cognitive function — it becomes a means of structuring emotional experience.

The aim of this article is to identify the mechanisms of bodily and object-based metaphorization of emotional states in the speech of the homodiegetic narrator. The methodological framework of the study is based on the theory of linguistic personality [2, p. 45], cognitive metaphor theory [6, p. 5], and narratology [5, p. 213].

Theoretical framework

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is understood as a mechanism of conceptualization through which abstract domains are interpreted in terms of more concrete and perceptually grounded ones [6, p. 5]. Conceptual schemas such as "EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT" or "THE INNER WORLD IS A SPACE" represent universal cognitive models.

Within the theory of linguistic personality, a character's speech reflects their cognitive and emotional characteristics [2, p. 52]. In homodiegetic narration, this relationship becomes particularly evident.

Bodily metaphorization of emotional states

One of the most consistent strategies in Oskar's speech is the transfer of emotional states into the sphere of bodily experience.

"I'm still wearing heavy boots." [4, p. 7]

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Physical weight is projected onto an emotional state. According to Lakoff and Johnson, such projection is grounded in bodily experience of weight as a universal sensation of burden [6, p. 15].

A similar model appears in the following statements:

“I felt extremely heavy.” [4, p. 36]

“My insides don’t feel right.” [4, p. 28]

“It was like there was something wrong inside my chest.” [4, p. 37]

In all cases, inner experience is localized within the body. The emotion acquires a spatial coordinate (“inside”), corresponding to the CONTAINER schema [6, p. 29].

Bodily concretization makes the experience visible and limited. This is particularly significant in the context of trauma: undefined anxiety is transformed into a localized “symptom.”

Spatial and mechanical imagery

The text frequently contains expressions in which emotional states are described through physiological processes:

“It was like I couldn’t breathe.” [4, p. 32]

“My heart was beating too hard.” [4, p. 41]

Disturbed breathing and accelerated heartbeat function as bodily markers of anxiety.

Moreover, the inner world is conceptualized as a damaged mechanism:

“Something was broken inside me.” [4, p. 114]

Emotion is conceptualized through the metaphor of mechanical breakdown. The abstract state of grief takes the form of a technical defect, corresponding to the universal schema “THE PSYCHE IS A MECHANISM” [6, p. 33].

Materialization through weight and intensification

The recurring semantics of heaviness is reinforced by intensifiers:

“Even though it was an incredibly sad day...” [4, p. 15]

Intensification enhances the subjectivity of perception. According to I. V. Arnold, intensifying adverbs increase the degree of emotional involvement of the speaker [1, p. 174].

The emotion is not merely “sad” but “incredibly sad,” which strengthens the bodily metaphor through extremity of evaluation.

Cognitive function of materialization

Metaphorical materialization performs a compensatory function. The loss of his father disrupts the familiar structure of Oskar’s world. In a situation where the event resists rational explanation, language becomes a stabilizing instrument.

Translating emotion into physical form allows:

- giving the experience boundaries;
- localizing it;
- making it observable.

Thus, metaphor becomes a mechanism of cognitive adaptation to trauma.

Conclusion

The analysis of J. S. Foer’s novel demonstrates that metaphorical materialization of emotions is a systemic feature of the homodiegetic narrator’s speech. Bodily and object-based images ensure the translation of abstract experiences into the sphere of physical concreteness.

Materialization performs both cognitive and compensatory functions, contributing to the structuring of traumatic experience. In the novel, linguistic form functions as a mechanism for modeling the character’s consciousness. Metaphor becomes a means of representing the subjective world of the homodiegetic narrator.

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