Research article

Universality vs. cultural specificity of anger metaphors and metonymies in English and Vietnamese idioms

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Abstract

As a human basic emotion, anger has been extensively investigated to gain insights into human cognition and psychology. From the cognitive linguistic perspective, research into metaphor and metonymy of anger across languages can shed light on the cultural models of respective speech communities. This paper looks into metaphors and metonymies of anger in Vietnamese and English idioms to find out how this emotion is conceptualized in each language, what features are universal and what characteristics are culturally specific. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory framework proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (1980) was used for data analysis, which involves 68 English and 52 Vietnamese idioms. It was found that both languages conceptualize anger based on embodied experiences as well as cultural models. Six major conceptual metaphors of anger are identified with more diverse elaborations in Vietnamese idioms. Cultural differences are that Vietnamese makes frequent use of body parts and internal organs metonymies while English tends to utilize the whole body to describe emotional states. Vietnamese feudalist values and folk culture are also evident in the metaphorical and metonymic idioms of anger. These findings have both linguistic significance and pedagogical implications. It is suggested that awareness of conceptual motivation should be promoted when teaching idioms as figurative, metaphorically based expressions.

Key words: *anger, metaphor, metonymy, cognitive linguistics, emotion*

Научная статья

Универсальные vs. культурно-специфические характеристики метафор и метонимий со значением гнева в английском и вьетнамском языках

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Аннотация

Гнев как одна из базовых человеческих эмоций является объектом многочисленных исследований, позволяющих постичь особенности когниции и психологии. С точки зрения когнитивной лингвистики изучение метафор и метонимий, выражающих гнев в разных языках, может

пролить свет на культурные модели соответствующих языковых сообществ. В настоящей статье рассматриваются вьетнамские и английские идиомы, основанные на метафорах и метонимиях со значением гнева, с целью выявить, как эмоции концептуализуются в этих языках и какие черты универсальны, а какие культурно-специфичны. Для анализа данных, включающих 68 английских и 52 вьетнамские идиомы, используется Теория концептуальной метафоры Лакоффа и Джонсона (1980). Показано, что в обоих языках концептуализация гнева определяется телесным опытом и культурными моделями. Выявлено шесть концепту-альных метафор гнева, разнообразными способами воплощенных во вьетнамских идиомах. Культурные различия заключаются в том, что вьетнамцы часто метонимически используют наименования различных частей тела и внутренних органов, в то время как в английском языке обозначение эмоциональных состояний, как правило, основано на целостных телесных образах. Во вьетнамских метафорических и метонимических идиомах, выражающих гнев, также проявляются феодальные ценности и народная культура. Полученные результаты значимы как для лингвистики, так и педагогики. Утверждается, что в процессе преподавания следует принимать во внимание концептуальную мотивацию идиом как образных выраже-ний, метафоричных по своей природе.

Ключевые слова: *гнев, метафора, метонимия, когнитивная лингвистика, эмоция*

1. Introduction

Research on conceptual metaphor and metonymy has drawn considerable attention from cognitive linguists over the last few decades. It is a burgeoning area that is claimed to be able to account for much of language phenomena and human cognition (Kövecses 2002, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Yu 1998). Many language aspects, including idioms which used to be considered arbitrary by traditional linguists are now proved to be motivated by conceptual structures that exist independently of language (Keysar & Bly 1999). Unlike the traditional view which posits that metaphor and metonymy are a matter of extraordinary language and characteristic of speech, Lakoff et al. (Lakoff 1987, Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Lakoff & Turner 1989, Lakoff 2008, Musolff 2019, Musolff 2021) see them as a matter of thought and action; therefore, they are pervasive not only in literary works and in political discourse, but also everyday life. As metaphors and metonymies are primarily conceptual, they are manifested not only in language but also in non-linguistic realizations, such as acting, cartoons, drawings, advertisements, etc. For example, an angry man may be drawn with smoke coming out of his ears. Such a picture is based on the conceptual metaphor *Anger is a hot fluid in a container* (Kövecses 2002: 58).

Conceptual metaphors usually use a more concrete concept as their source and a more abstract concept as their target. In other words, we understand something abstract in terms of something we are familiar with. For example, in the conceptual metaphor *anger is heat*, *'anger'* is understood via *'heat'*, which we can feel and even see with our senses. Metaphors are so pervasive in everyday language that we are almost unaware of their existence, and use them automatically. Metaphorical

mappings are not arbitrary, but grounded in the bodily and everyday experiences and knowledge. While the embodied experience may be universal, as we have similar biological mechanisms, understanding of the world may vary from culture to culture. It follows then that metaphorical mappings may, to some extent, vary across speech communities. In order to fully understand human cognition, both enculturated and embodied meaning must be included (Yu 1998: 46).

With regards to metonymy, the traditional view considers it a figure of speech in which one entity is used to indicate another entity on the basis of closeness or contiguous relation. For instance, we use a part to stand for a whole as in the sentence *The authority needs a tough hand to deal with the problem*. In this sentence, *'hand'* refers to a person. The cognitive view accepts the traditional view, but adds that "metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same domain, or idealized cognitive model" (Kövecses 2002: 145). In the example *The White House is going to withdraw its troops out of Iraq*, *'the White House'* is the building where the American president lives and works. It is also the vehicle entity referring to the U.S. central government, which is called the target entity.

Metaphor and metonymy have a conceptual nature, but they differ in some aspects. The function of the former is to understand one thing in terms of another, while the latter's function is to provide mental or cognitive access to a target entity that is less readily available. Metonymy occurs in the same domain while metaphor is the mapping of two distinct domains. Both metaphor and metonymy have some universal and culture-specific features that serve as windows to human cognition and cultures. Among linguistic units, idioms are rich in figurative properties that include metaphor and metonymy. Thus, a cross-linguistic study of idioms through the lens of cognitive linguistics would uncover characteristic features of these two types of trope. Anger is chosen as the focus of investigation because it is one of basic human emotions, possessing "an extremely complex conceptual structure, which gives rise to a wide variety of nontrivial inferences" (Lakoff 1987: 380).

2. Literature review

From the psychological perspective, the question whether emotions are universal or culturally specific is inconclusive (Barrett 2017). The advocates of emotion universality hold that emotions are innately constructed, hence universal. All humans are able to experience and perceive the same core set of emotion categories (Ekman 1999). Constructionist psychologists (e.g.: Lindquist et al. 2012), however, propose that emotions are socially constructed and emerge when people make sense based on the sensory input from the bodily experience and from the world they are familiar with. As a basic emotion of human beings, *anger* has been actively researched by cognitive linguists over the last few decades. Since the inception of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) groundbreaking work *"Metaphors We Live By"*, a considerable body of research has focused on investigating anger from the cognitive perspective in various languages and cultures.

Recent research shows that metaphors and metonymies of anger in Indo-European languages have striking similarities with a few variations. The English and Hungarian languages share significant similarities in metaphors of anger (Kövecses 2000, 2005). One minor difference is that while English makes use of the whole body for metaphors, Hungarian has *'head'* as a container that can hold the hot liquid in the metaphor *Anger is a hot fluid in a container*. Soriano (2003) investigated the metaphorical models of anger in English and Spanish with a focus on analyzing four parameters: existence of the mapping in the language, degree of conceptual elaboration, degree of linguistic conventionalization, and degree of linguistic exploitation. She found that there are considerable commonalities in the cognitive model of anger in both tongues. Nevertheless, the differences are found in the language-specific submetaphors, some of which are motivated by cultural preferences. For example, both English and Spanish conceptualize the effects of anger on the person as 'boiling' or 'burning'. Nonetheless, further elaborations show that Spanish people make use of 'get fried' linguistic expression as compared to the 'stew' manifestation in English due to the cultural preferences in cooking culture. Conceptual metaphors of anger were also contrastively analyzed in English, French, and Greek discourses based on the comparable corpora in psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy (Constantinou 2014). She found that the three languages share the conceptual metaphors *Anger is a hot fluid in a container*, *Anger is fire*, *Anger is insanity*, and *Anger is an opponent in a struggle*. Nevertheless, as with the Spanish metaphors of anger, differences were seen in certain elaborations which highlight various aspects of anger emotion. While the metaphor *Anger is addiction* is found in English authentic texts, it is not observed in a subcorpora of French and Greek. In a similar vein, the conceptual metaphor *Anger is an erruptive force* leads to more diverse elaborations in the English corpora than in those of Greek and French. A comparative study of English and Persian (Abbasvandi & Maghsoudi 2013), which is a more distant language than the aforementioned tongues and cultures, also indicates a tendency in universal features of anger metaphors. Both languages have common conceptual metaphors of anger as *Anger as a fluid*, *Anger as heat/fire*, *Anger as an opponent*, and *Anger as insanity*. However, the differences are present in the entailments and language specific mappings. For instance, the effects of anger on the person, which are conceptualized as 'steaming' in English, are not seen in Persian. The variations are also found with regard to the productivity of mapping in the two tongues. For example, the entailment submetaphor *The increase in intensity of anger is the rise in fluid* is very common in English, but it is sparsely found in Persian.

Research in some East Asian languages has revealed more differences in the subversions of anger metaphors and metonymies. Comparative studies of anger in English and Chinese (e.g.: Yu 1995, Chen 2010) show that both English and Chinese have the central conceptual metaphor *Anger is heat*, which is divided into two sub-versions in the two languages. While both English and Chinese shares a submetaphor *Anger is fire*, English opts for the FLUID metaphors and Chinese uses

the GAS instantiations. The reason for the difference is rooted in the Chinese classical philosophy and traditional medicine, which considers "Qi" (air/gas) as a basic form of physical existence and a source of life. The folk Chinese belief is that all diseases stem from the malfunctions of Qi, hence GAS metaphors. It is also found that Chinese makes use of body parts for metonymies of anger. In Chinese, the GAS metaphors usually go with livers, lungs, and heart; anger is an excess of Qi in these organs. A study of Japanese metaphors of anger (Matsuki 1995) also indicates important universal features of HEAT metaphors, whose instantiations of body heat, internal pressure, redness, and agitation are commonly found. However, metonymies of anger are more varied. Body parts, namely *face, neck,* and *belly* are very productive for metonymic expressions in the Japanese language. For example, such expressions as *to have a swollen face*, *belly rises up*, *red in the neck/face*, etc. are pervasive in Japanese linguistic expressions.

In summary, the review of related literature indicates both universal and cultural grounds for anger metaphors and metonymies. While universality is found at the generic conceptual level, differences lie in the degree of conceptual elaborations, entailments, and language specific mappings. Despite extensive studies in other languages, there is a research gap in anger metaphors and metonymies manifested in Vietnamese idioms in contrast with English counterparts. This paper is intended to enrich knowledge of the universality and cultural specificity of anger phraseology in the light of cognitive linguistics.

3. Methodology

The study employs a contrastive analysis method from the cognitive linguistic perspective, using the framework of Conceptual Metaphor and Metonymy Theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). The idioms of anger (68 English and 52 Vietnamese occurrences) were classified and analyzed according to the conceptual metaphors and metonymies identified by Lakoff (1980, 1987, 1989) and Kövecses (2002). As figurative expressions, they may or may not contain the lexemes denoting anger such as *anger*, *rage*, *fury* or *wrath*, etc. The data are restricted to linguistic expressions collected from idiom dictionaries. The English expressions were taken from "McGraw-Hill's American Idioms Dictionary" *(*Spears 2007); therefore, the idioms are American English. The Vietnamese counterparts were collected from two idiom dictionaries: "Popular Vietnamese Idioms Dictionary" (Nguyen 2002) and "Vietnamese Annotated Idioms Dictionary" (Nguyen et al. 1998). The examples for illustration include naturally occurring data retrieved from the internet archives of two English and three Vietnamese newspapers, including "The New York Times", "USA Today", "An Ninh Thu Do", "Doi Song" and "Dat Viet", respectively. For the ease of comparison, Vietnamese data were translated semantically. Word-for-word translation was also provided to indicate the actual words in the source language.

4. Results

Overall, the taxonomy falls into six major conceptual metaphors, namely *Anger is heat* (which comprises two submetaphors: *Anger is fire* and *Anger is hot fluid in a container*)**,** *Anger is insanity*, *Angry behavior is aggressive animal behavior*, *Cause of anger is physical annoyance*, and *Anger is a natural force*. Four overarching conceptual metonymies include: *The face stands for anger*, *Internal organs stand for anger*, *Physiological effects of anger stand for anger*, and *Gratuitous behavior stands for impotent anger*. However, Vietnamese metonymies are more diverse with more subtle elaborations of the body parts and internal organs. In fact, the overlapping of metaphor and metonymy in one idiom is particularly common in Vietnamese. Many idioms are, therefore, analyzed in both the metaphors and metonymies sections.

4.1. Metaphors of anger in English and Vietnamese idioms

Our contrastive analysis reveals that English and Vietnamese anger metaphors share fundamental commonalities, and at the same time they distinguish themselves from each other with culturally specific features. Six major conceptual metaphors of anger are identified as follows:

ANGER IS HEAT

The metaphorical conceptualization of *Anger is heat* is based on the cultural model of physiological effects that emphasize HEAT (Lakoff & Johnson 1987). The instances below show that English and Vietnamese have many idioms derived from the *Anger is heat* metaphor, which is composed of two versions: *Anger is fire*, and *Anger is a hot fluid in a container*.

Table 1

Anger is Fire

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
1. *Add fuel to the fire*	6. *Đổ dầu vào lửa*
2. *Do a slow burn*	(Pour oil in the fire – Add fuel to the fire).
3. *Burn up*	7. *Lửa cháy lại bỏ thêm rơm*
4. *Breathe fire*	(Add straw to the fire)
5. *Get hot under the collar*	8. *Cơm sôi bớt lửa*
	(Rice boil reduce fire – When rice is boiling, reduce the heat).
	9. *Nóng như lửa* (Hot as fire – As hot as fire)*.*
	10. *Mắt đỏ như lửa*
	(Eye red as fire – One's eyes are as red as fire).
	11. *Mắt như nảy lửa*
	(Eye like spark fire – One's eyes spark fire).
	12. *Nóng tai nóng mặt* (Hot ear hot face – Feel hot in the ears and in the face)

It is evident that English and Vietnamese use exactly the same conceptual metaphor to indicate anger which is based on physiological effects and daily life experience. The intensity of fire corresponds to the level of anger. For example, our

common knowledge tells us that *breathing fire* is much more intense than *a slow burn.* Upon hearing *'breathe fire'* (4), one would understand the person is very angry. It is interesting to note that the description of somebody's anger is predominantly based on the bodily experience (e.g.: 4, 5, 10, 11, 12) while someone's behavior of provoking another's anger is derived from everyday experience (e.g.: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8). Physiologically, when people get angry, the pulse rate becomes faster, making body heat increase. The main difference between the two tongues is found in the association of fire images. While English metaphorical expressions refer to FIRE in general, Vietnamese idioms make use of fire images in specific situations that they are very familiar with. As Vietnam is a rice-growing country, rice and straw (dried yellow stem of rice) are part of Vietnamese culture, hence there are metaphorical expressions with rice and straw. Furthermore, the collectivistic cultural values, which promote harmony and relational interdependance (Hofstede 1991), are present in example (8). The idiom *Cơm sôi bớt lửa*/*When rice is boiling, reduce the heat* is actually advice for appropriate behavior. To maintain harmony, people are advised to calm down if their counterpart is very angry. Such metaphorical expressions are not found in English.

Table 2

Anger is Hot Fluid in a Container

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
13. *Make one's blood boil*	22. *Mắt long sòng sọc*
14. *Simmer down*	(Eye surge bubble – One's eyes boil with bubbles / Eyes are
15. *Reach the boiling point*	flashing fierce glares)
16. *Let sb stew*	23. *Bầm gan sôi máu*
17. *Seethe with rage*	(Bruise liver boil blood – One's liver is bruised and blood boils)
18. *Get all steamed up*	24. *Tức sôi máu*
19. *Blow off steam*	(Angry boil blood – So angry that one's blood boils)
20. *Flip one's lid*	
21. *Blow one's top*	

It can be seen from Table 2 that both English and Vietnamese have the same metaphorical mechanism in conceptualizing *Anger as hot fluid in a container*. Like the *fire* instances, the linguistic realizations of the *hot liquid* metaphors also show a scale of heat, hence a different degree of anger. The meaning of anger is conveyed in terms of destructive force of the hot liquid producing too much steam in a closed container. The steam has to find or force its way out; otherwise it will cause an explosion, which implies the strongest level of anger. There are, however, several differences between the two languages. The English idioms outnumber the Vietnamese counterparts and are more diverse in the intensity and metaphorical images. While Vietnamese metaphorical expressions are all based on the experience in the body parts, English makes use of whole body's physiological effects (e.g.: 13), cooking experience (e.g.: 14, 15, 16, 20, 21), as well as industrial civilization, namely steam engines (e.g.: 18, 19).

Anger is Pressurized Gas in a Container

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
25. *Pop one's cork:* 26. *To go through the roof* 27. *Give vent to:* 28. *Vent one's spleen on:* 29. *It blows my mind:* 30. *Release one's pent-up emotions:* 31. *Put sb out*	32. *Nộ khí xung thiên* (Angry gas soar sky – Angry gas gushes into the sky) 33. *Tức nổ mắt* (Angry explode eye – So angry that one's eyes explode) 34. *Tức lòi con ngươi* (Angry come out pupil – So angry that one's pupils are forced out of the eyeballs) 35. *Tức nổ ruột* (Angry explode guts – So angry that guts explode) 36. *Bầm gan tím ruột* (Bruised liver purple gut – Refrain from anger so much that the livers get bruised and the guts become purple)

The English metaphor *Anger is pressurized gas* manifests itself with idioms indicating a loss of anger control while Vietnamese idioms have two levels: refraining from anger and losing control of anger based on the bodily experience. According to Tran (2008), Vietnam is a sentimentally-oriented society as a saying goes "*Một sự nhịn, chín sự lành/Refrain your anger once, you'll have nine smooth deals*". Inhabiting a region with frequent natural disasters such as typhoons and floods, Vietnamese people have to cooperate with one another to contain and conquer the destructive power of nature. Thus, keeping harmonious relationships with their partners is very important. Tran (ibid) further notes that if applying the Ying-Yang theory to explain for cultural characteristics, Vietnamese people incline to Ying (cold), which symbolizes harmony while Yang (hot) indicates hot temper and directness (ibid). American people, by contrast, are more extrovert, straightforward and usually speak their mind (Athen 1998). They also believe that venting anger is better for the body than refraining from anger and "*youngsters should be taught to vent their anger*" (Myers 1986: 379).

It should also be noted that Vietnamese idioms of anger are frequently based on metaphorical entailment to describe anger repression. Metaphorical entailment refers to the process where additional knowledge about a source is mapped onto a target by logical means (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2002). The metaphorical entailment in the idiom (36*) Bầm gan tím ruột/Bruised liver purple gut* is derived from the premise that 'a pressurized liver and gut will become bruised and/or purple'. Therefore, the metaphorical expression *Bầm gan tím ruột/Bruised liver purple gut* is an entailment of the metaphor *Anger is pressurized gas in a container*.

ANGER IS INSANITY

Literally*, insane* refers to a state of mind which prevents normal perception, behavior, or social interaction (Summers 1998). When people become too angry, they may lose their control. This is the reason why the metaphor *Anger is insanity* is common in both English and Vietnamese.

Anger is Insanity

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
37. *Crazy as betsy bug*	50. *Quá giận mất khôn*
38. *Crazy as a peach orchard boar*	(so angry lose wisdom/so angry that one loses his wisdom)
39. *Drive one out of one's mind*	51. *Như điên như dại* (go crazy)
40. *Drive sb insane*	52. *Nổi cơn Tam Bành* (rise Tam Banh (ill) spirit / to be
41. *Go nuts*	driven out of one's mind)
42. *Go postal*	53. *(Tức) điên đầu điên tiết* (crazy head crazy blood/ Stark
43. *Go mental*	raving mad)
44. *Hopping mad*	
45. *Mad as a Hatter*	
46. *Mad as a March hare*	
47. *Mad as a hornet*	
48. *Mad enough to chew/spit nails*	
49. *Stark raving mad*	

Table 4 shows that the English idioms with the metaphor *Anger is insanity* significantly outnumber the Vietnamese counterparts (13 idioms vs. 4 idioms, respectively). The source domains in English are also more varied and many of them are associated with animal behavior while there is no such case in the Vietnamese data. The commonality between the two languages is that the metaphorical expressions with the physiological effects of an angry person used as the source domain are present in both tongues. Also, classical stories and famous quotes in literature are productive sources for metaphors. The English idioms (45, 46) *Mad as a Hatter* and *Mad as a March hare* are derived from the two characters in Lewis Carroll's famous novel "Allice's Adventures in Wonderland" (1865) and the Vietnamese idiom (52) *Nổi cơn Tam Bành* (rise Tam Banh (ill) spirit/to be driven out of one's mind) is based on a character in Nguyen Du's famous *Kieu Tale* in the 19th century. Although derived from classical literary works, these idioms are still fresh and commonly used in everyday language as in the examples below.

> *(1) Mr. Perot did not support the Persian Gulf war ... he made the blasphemous suggestion that there might be too much emphasis on high school football, which caused Molly Ivins to declare he had gone **"crazy as a peach-orchard boar"** (New York Times, 8th June, 1992).*
>
> *(2) Ronaldo bị thay ra 2 trận liên tiếp: **Nổi cơn tam bành** – Ronaldo was substituted in 2 consecutive matches: he was driven out of his mind (Doi Song newspaper, 11th November, 2019).*

ANGRY BEHAVIOR IS AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL BEHAVIOR

Aggressive behavior of animals is a productive source for anger metaphors in English while it is sparsely seen in Vietnamese. As mentioned earlier, the extroversion and directness of American people are clearly present in the metaphorical idioms of anger. The source domains are dominantly related to domestic animals as examples below.

Table 5

Angry Behavior is Aggressive Animal Behavior

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
54. *Bristle with anger/rage*	69. *Chó dại cắn gàn* (rabid dog fiercely bites – an angry person attacks someone without good cause)
55. *The feathers/ fur/ sparks will fly*	
56. *(To) foam at the mouth*	70. *Đụng vào tổ kiến lửa* (touch the fire ant's nest – drive someone crazy and fierce)
57. *A gnashing of teeth = Grit one's teeth*	
58. *Get up on one's hind (=rear leg) leg*	71. *Cắm cẳn như chó cắn ma* (barking as a dog barks at ghosts – growling because of anger but cannot attack)
59. *Set sb's teeth on edge*	
60. *Show/bare one's teeth*	
61. *Snap at sth*	72. *Tức như bò đá* (as angry as being kicked by a bull – angry but cannot take revenge)
62. *Go ape (over) sb/sth*	
63. *Like a bear with a sore head*	
64. *Get sb's dander up*	
65. *Get sb's back up*	
66. *Get sb's hackles up = raise sb's hackles*	
67. *Ratle sb's cage*	
68. *Ruffle sb's feathers*	

Table 5 indicates that numerous English idioms are derived from the metaphor *Angry behavior is aggressive animal behavior* as compared to only three in Vietnamese. The English metaphorical expressions are made up of two types: venting anger and causing somebody to become angry. The Vietnamese has another type of idiom which indicates a repression of anger (e.g.: idioms 71, 72) in addition to the two categories as in English. Again, the Vietnamese people's yielding spirit and introversion are evident in the idioms. The English and Vietnamese idioms derived from the metaphor *Angry behavior is aggressive animal behavior* are exemplified as follows.

*(3) Imagine British Prime Minister Theresa May each time she sees an unflattering article in The Guardian or The Observer. She might **bristle with rage**. She might ignore the reporters, attack the newspaper or deny the story* (USA Today, 22ⁿᵈ May 2018).

*(4) Cả nhóm đau, **tức như bò đá**, mặt mày bí xị… Thấy vậy Thị Hến liền nói: Bác Nghêu mù sướng thật! Chúng em mong được mù như bác để khỏi nhìn thấy nhiều chuyện trái khoáy trên đời* (The whole group was as ***angry as being kicked by a bull*** but could do nothing. … Seeing this, Thi Hen said "Uncle Ngheu is the happiest man in the world. We wish we were blind as you so as not to see unfairness in this life"). (An Ninh Thu Do newspaper, 4ᵗʰ January, 2008).

THE CAUSE OF ANGER IS PHYSICAL NUISANCE

The bodily experience is an important source domain for metaphor as we can easily feel what is happening in our body (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2002, 2005). The concept of anger is abstract and it is easier to understand if it is described by means of more concrete physiological effects such as pain. The metaphorical expressions of this type are mainly related to the cause of anger with the source domain being physical nuisance as in the following instances.

Table 6

The Cause of Anger is Physical Nuisance

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
73. *A Pain in the ass/butt/rear*	78. *Chướng tai gai mắt* (object ear thorn eyes/an object in the
74. *A pain in the neck*	ear and a thorn in the eye)
75. *Give sb a pain*	79. *Lẩu bẩu như chó hóc xương* (grumble as dog choke
76. *Get under sb's skin*	bone/grumble as a dog choked with bone)
77. *Grate on sb's nerve*	

As can be seen in Table 6, most of the metaphorical expressions make use of body parts with two Vietnamese idioms capitalizing on the feature of physical nuisance as compared to five expressions in English. It should be noted that the Vietnamese idiom (79) *Lẩu bẩu như chó hóc xương (grumble as a dog chocked with bone)* is always used with the second or third person, never with the first person. This idiom describes someone's anger suppression, a situation in which the person feels angry or irriated but he or she cannot express it. Due to the dog's low status in Vietnamese folk culture, most of the Vietnamese idioms associated with canines carries a negative connotation (Pham 2018).

ANGER IS A NATURAL FORCE

It is common knowledge that natural forces such as storms and lightning are highly destructive. Therefore, a number of English and Vietnamese metaphorical expressions elaborate on this idea as in the instances below.

Table 7

Anger is a Natural Force

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
80. *Face is like thunder*	83. *Nổi trận lôi đình* (begin battle thunderbolt/vent Thunder
81. *Storm at sb/sth*	God's anger)
82. *A storm is brewing*	84. *Nổi giận đùng đùng* (get furious lightning strike/get furious
	as lightning strike)

It is interesting to note that both English and Vietnamese have the same mappings of anger onto natural forces and the metaphorical expressions construed as thunder and storms indicate the strongest degree of anger. Since storms, thunder and lightning are as old as the earth, the use of such idioms is found in archived English newspapers as long ago as in the early 20th century.

> (5) *On cross-examination, Weinberger **stormed at** the witness* (New York Times, 12th June, 1917)/
> (6) *Huấn luyện viên Calisto **nổi trận lôi đình** với học trò mới* (*The football coach Calisto vented Thunder God's anger on his new players* (Dat Viet newspaper 18th March, 2011).

4.2. Metonymies of anger in English and Vietnamese idioms

As one of the basic characteristics of cognition, metonymy has primarily a referential function, which allows us to use one entity to stand for another (Lakoff

& Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Kövecses 2002). For example, in the sentence *We need a smart head to deal with this issue*, the body part *'head'* stands for a person. The selection of referents depends largely on cultural and common knowledge, which means that metonymy is characterized by both universal and culturally specific features. As will be discussed below, there are four main types of anger metonymies in Vietnamese in comparison with only three in English.

THE FACE STANDS FOR ANGER

Facial expression plays a crucial role in face-to-face communication as it conveys a significant message to the hearer. As a non-verbal component, facial expression gives insight into emotional states (Axtell 1998) and it is the more trusted form when the verbal message and the non-verbal cue seem to be in conflict (Verderber 1989). Another important universal feature of facial expression is that it is the manifestation of such basic emotions as anger, happiness, sorrow, surprise, fright, and hate (Gallois & Callan 1997). Conducting research in facial expression in various cultures, Ekman (2003) found that one can point out exactly what emotion it is being expressed by looking at pictures with facial expression. Three important positions in the face that usually convey emotional states include forehead, eyes, and mouth. This is the ground for the metaphor *The face stands for anger* in both English and Vietnamese idioms of anger.

Table 8

The Face Stands for Anger

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
85. *Draw/get a dirty look*	90. *Chau mày nghiến răng* (frawn eyebrows clench teeth/vent anger by frawning one's eyebrows and clenching one's teeth)
86. *Give sb a dirty/black look*	
87. *Give sb the evil eye*	91. *Mặt đỏ như vang* (face red as red wood/one's face gets red as red wood)
88. *Look daggers at sb*	
89. *See red*	92. *Mặt nặng mày nhẹ* (face heavy eyebrows light / one's face is heavy and one's eyebrows are light)
	93. *Mặt nặng như chì* (face heavy as lead / one's face is as heavy as lead)
	94. *Mặt sưng mày sỉa* (face swell, eyebrows frawn / one's face is swollen and one's eyebrows frawn with anger)
	95. *Nặng mặt sa mày* (heavy face down eyebrows / one's face is heavy and one's eyebrows frawn with anger)
	96. *Phồng má trợn mắt* (inflate cheek goggle eyes / one's cheeks inflate and one's eyes goggle with anger)

It is noticeable that facial expressions indicating anger in English idioms are all manifested in the eyes while it is more varied in the Vietnamese counterparts. In American culture, looking at the partner's eyes during conversation is appropriate behavior (Althen 1998, Ross & Nilsen 2013). In Vietnamese culture, *mặt* (face) is very important for assessing a person's character and behavior since physiognomy is part of their folk belief[1]. The collocations of *mặt* (face) that indicate anger include

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[1] As a Vietnamese saying goes, *Nhìn mặt bắt hình dong* (Looking at a person's face, we can tell what kind of person he/she is).

đỏ (red), *sưng* (swollen), and *nóng* (hot). These adjectives are associated with the physiological effects of anger. When someone is angry, his face becomes red, or it may look as if it is swollen. The person may feel hot in the face as more blood circulates to the area. Of the body parts in the face, *mắt* (eyes) are considered as windows to the soul in Vietnamese culture. Therefore, these body parts form the basis for the metonymic expressions of anger.

INTERNAL ORGANS STAND FOR ANGER

It is worth noting that while the heart is the major internal organ that forms the basis for the metonymy of emotions in English, a number of other organs are utilized for the same purpose in Vietnamese as evident in the table below:

Table 9

Internal Organs Stand for Anger

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
97. *Harden one's heart*	98. *Bầm gan sôi máu* (bruise liver boil blood / so angry that the livers are bruised and blood boils)
	99. *Buốt gan tím ruột* (hurt liver purple intestine / repress anger so much that the livers hurt and the intestine becomes purple)
	100. *Căm gan ngứa tiết* (anger liver itch blood / anger in the livers and blood)
	101. *Cắn răng bấm bụng* (clench teeth, hold breath belly / repress anger by clenching one's teeth and holding breath in the belly)
	102. *Tức lộn ruột* (angry inside out intestine/so angry that one's intestines get inside out)
	103. *Ngứa gan ngứa tiết* (itch livers itch blood/the livers and blood get itch with anger)
	104. *Sôi gan nổi mật* (boil livers float bile/so angry that the livers and bile boil)

As indicated in Table 9, Vietnamese idioms predominantly make use of four body parts, namely *liver, belly, bile* and *intestines* to refer to anger. *Gan* (liver) in Vietnamese culture represents the character of a person. A coward is described as a person with *'the liver of a rabbit'*; a courageous or stubborn person is said to have a *'big liver'*. It can also be used to describe a state of emotion as in the examples above. In such cases, the adjectives that collocate with *gan* (liver) to describe anger are *bầm* (bruised) and *nóng* (hot)*,* as opposed to *nhỏ* (small*)* and *to* (big) in describing cowardliness and stubbornness, respectively.

Also in Vietnamese culture, *ruột* (intestines) are used to indicate two states of emotions: *anxiety* and *anger*. However, they collocate differently. To describe anxiety, *nóng* (hot) is employed, as in *nóng ruột* (hot intestines – feeling anxious). This usage might be based on the physiological effects of anxiety. When we are anxious, there is a feeling of discomfort in the belly, and it appears to be '*hot'*, although the real organ that controls the feeling and is affected by the feeling is the brain. The adjective *tím* (dark purple) or *bầm* (bruised) collocates with intestines to express anger. The collocation might be derived from the fact that when we hold

pressurized air in the mouth for a while, our face looks dark purple. This color is also seen on the body where the blood circulation is blocked.

GRATUITOUS BEHAVIOR STANDS FOR IMPOTENT ANGER

Influenced by Confucianism and Feudalism, Vietnamese culture is characterized by a Large Power Distance dimension (Hofstede 1991). This cultural value reflects hierarchical relations and regulates proper behavior in verbal and non-verbal communication in a culture. Each type of relation has its own standards of conduct that are readily evident in sayings and idioms. For instance, the relationship between the teacher and students is that the teacher always has an absolute superior status, which is manifested in the saying *Nhất tự vi sư, bán tự vi sư* (The teacher is always the teacher even if he or she taught you only a word or half a word). Women in Vietnam's feudalist society were subordinate to men and had to follow the rule of conduct known as *Three subordinations and four virtues*. The three subordinations are evident in the saying *Tại gia tòng phụ, xuất giá tòng phu, phu tử tòng tử* (Before marriage, the woman is subordinate to her father, after marriage (she) is subordinate to her husband, after her husband's death (she) is subordinate to her eldest son). The women's four virtues include *Công, Dung, Ngôn, Hạnh* (Housekeeping skills, Beauty, Appropriate speech, Moral conduct). Therefore, people of lower ranks or status are expected to refrain from expressing their anger directly to those in a higher position. In case of excessive fury, they may vent their anger on something else. This forms the basis for the Vietnamese metonymy *Gratuitous Behavior Stands for Impotent Anger*.

Table 10

Gratuitous Behavior Stands for Impotent Anger

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms	
None	105.	*Chửi chó mắng mèo* (Curse dogs (and) scold cats)
	106.	*Đá mèo quéo chó* (Kick cats (and) hit dogs)
	107.	*Đá mèo quèo rế* (Kick cats (and) hit baskets)
	108.	*Đá thúng đụng nia* (Kick baskets (and) hit flat wicker baskets)
	109.	*Giận chồng vật con* (Angry with the husband (but) hit children)
	110.	*Giận con rận đốt cái áo* (Angry with the bug (but) burn the shirt)
	111.	*Giận cá chém thớt* (Angry with the fish (but) cut the chopping board)

It is worth noting that the idioms in Table 10 usually refer to women who get angry with someone but they cannot express their anger directly to them. Instead, they vent their rage on something or somebody else to relieve the anger. Such types of idioms are not found in the English language.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ANGER STAND FOR ANGER

Lakoff found that English utilizes a general metonymic principle: "The physiological effects of an emotion stand for the emotion" (1987: 382). This principle forms the basis for the physiological effects of the metonymy of anger in both English and Vietnamese idioms.

Table 11

Physiological Effects Stand for Anger

English idioms	Vietnamese idioms
112. *Shake with anger*	117. *Run lên vì giận* (Shake because angry – Shake with anger)
113. *Quiver with rage*	118. *Phùng má trợn mắt* (Swell cheek open upward eye – One's cheeks are swollen with gas and one's eyebrows are raised)
114. *Burst a blood vessel*	
115. *Hop mad*	119. *Mặt đỏ như vang* (Face red as ironwood – One's face is as red as ironwood)
116. *Blind with rage*	120. *Mặt sưng mày sỉa* (Face swell eyebrows lower – One's face is swollen and one's eyebrows lower)

The metonymy based on the physiological effects reflects the cause-effect relationship between anger and physiological symptoms that are universal in all languages. The cultural specificity lies in the linguistic expressions. While the English metonymies associated with the physiological effects involve the whole body, the Vietnamese counterparts are mainly indicated in the face. Again, a Vietnamese metonymy of suppressed anger is also present in this category but not a single instance is found in the English data.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate both universality and cultural specificity in the English and Vietnamese metaphors and metonymies of anger. The meaning of idioms is based on three mechanisms: independent metaphor and metonymy (i.e., metaphor and metonymy are not related), metaphor from metonymy, and metonymy within metaphor. This overlapping phenomenon is common in all languages and it is hard to distinguish between them in many cases (Geeraerts 2002). The metaphor with no relation to metonymy can be exemplified as *add fuel to the fire, burn up.* The idiom *harden one's heart* is an example of metonymy independent of metaphor. In general, independent metaphors in English idioms far outnumber the Vietnamese counterparts while there is a high frequency of metonymy and metaphor overlapping in Vietnamese idioms.

By comparison, both English and Vietnamese idioms share the same basic conceptual metaphors, including: *Anger is Heat, Anger is Insanity, Angry Behavior is Aggressive Animal Behavior, the Cause of Anger is Physical Annoyance,* and *Anger is a Natural Force.* The differences are present in specific linguistic expressions associated with the culture that its speakers are familiar with. Since Vietnam is an agricultural country influenced by Confucianism, a number of anger metaphors are motivated by images of dogs, cats, and cows. It is worth noting that the dog does not have a good status in Vietnamese culture; therefore, metaphors associated with dogs usually carry negative connotation. Furthermore, the Confucianist values are also evident in Vietnamese metaphorical idioms, which include both expressing anger and repressing anger. People of lower status are expected to be submissive to the superiors both at home and at work. By no means do such metaphors exist in English.

With regards to metonymy, while the body part metonymies of anger in English are mainly associated with the *heart, face* and *eyes*, Vietnamese metonymies of anger are much more diverse with *face, eyes, intestines, belly, livers, biles*, etc. The motivation for such metonymies is based on a folk understanding of traditional medicine, the Theories of Ying-Yang and Five Elements, as well as bodily experiences. According to the Ying-Yang Theory, all things in the universe are governed by opposing, yet interdependent forces (Lê 1998). The opposing Ying-Yang characteristics can be represented by cold and hot, night and day, passive and active, etc, respectively. The theory serves as a basis for understanding the human body and its relationship with other entities, as well as imbalance in the body. The duality of the Ying-Yang theory can be illustrated in the table below:

Table 12

The duality of the Ying-Yang theory (Le 1998: 72)

Ying	cold	static	passive	night	soft	covert
Yang	hot	dynamic	active	day	hard	overt

Applying the theory to explain the Eastern and Western cultures, Le (ibid) holds that Vietnamese culture inclines to the Ying extreme (covert) while Western cultures tend to incline towards the Yang polarity (overt). This concurs with the above-mentioned Confucianist values that account for the reason why there exist a significant number of Vietnamese linguistic expressions of repressed anger but none of such idioms is found in English.

Also derived from the Chinese philosophy and closely related to the Ying-Yang Theory, the Theory of Five Elements provides basic principles, knowledge and guidance for diagnosis and treatment of diseases and it is popular in Vietnamese traditional medicine and a folk understanding of emotions. According to the theory, the universe is made up of five basic elements, including *metal, wood, water, earth,* and *fire*, which have generating and overcoming relationships with each other (Hoàng 2008). Each element has its own characteristics and associations with different aspects of nature, human body organs, as well as respective emotions.

Table 13

Five elements and their corresponding organs (Hoang 2008: 25)

Relationships	Five elements				
	Wood	**Five**	**Earth**	**Metal**	**Water**
Colors	green	red	yellow	white	black
Tastes	sour	bitter	sweet	spicy	salty
Seasons	spring	summer	summer end	autumn	winter
Directions	east	south	center	west	north
Organs (Yin)	*livers*	*heart*	*spleen*	*lungs*	*kidneys*
Organs (Yang)	*gall blader*	*small intestine*	*stomach*	*large intestine*	*urinary bladder*
Five sensory organs	*eyes*	*tongue*	*mouth*	*nose*	*ears*
Emotions	*anger*	*happiness*	*worry*	*sadness*	*fright*

According to Vietnamese traditional medicine, each emotion has a close relationship with an internal organ: anger with the liver, happiness with the heart, sadness with the lungs, worry with the spleen, fright with the kidneys. The five sensory organs also have a direct relationship with the internal organs: nose with the lungs, eyes with the liver, mouth with the spleen, tongue with the heart, ears with the kidneys. Therefore, external observations of the five sensory organs can help diagnose the problems in the corresponding internal organs (Hoàng, ibid). As can be seen in the table, *liver* and *gall bladder,* which belong to *wood*, have a direct relationship with *eyes*, and correspond to *anger.* This association is the basis for such metonymies as: *Tức nổ mắt* (Angry explode eye – So angry that one's eyes explode)*, Tức lòi con ngươi* (Angry come out pupil – So angry that one's pupils are forced out of the eyeballs)*, Mắt long sòng sọc* (Eye surge bubble – One's eyes boil with bubbles /Eyes are flashing fierce glares)*, Mắt đỏ như lửa* (Eye red as fire – One's eyes are as red as fire)*, Mắt như nảy lửa* (Eye like spark fire – One's eyes spark fire)*, Sôi gan nổi mật* (boil livers float bile / so angry that the livers and bile boil), etc.

It should be further noted that according to Vietnamese traditional medicine, gas (or air) and blood are the two fundamental elements that help the body function normally. Gas is considered as invisible nutrition whose function is to generate physiological moving forces for the internal organs (Hoàng, ibid). Gas energy pushes blood to circulate in the veins and arteries all over the body and the acupuncture points are anatomically identified along this network. Obstruction to the gas energy flow would result in diseases and negative emotions. When one gets angry, the flow of gas energy and blood in the liver would be obstructed, causing bruise in the liver, hence (bruised) liver metonymies. The data show that repressed anger idioms are associated with metonymies and metaphors based on this mechanism. Repressed emotions have a direct connection with the respective internal organs in accordance with the principles of the Five Elements Theory and Vietnamese traditional medicine.

6. Conclusions

Lakoff (1987) suggests that our concept of anger is embodied via the autonomic nervous system and that the conceptual metaphors and metonymies used in understanding anger are by no means arbitrary. Instead, they are motivated by our physiology. It can be inferred that the metaphors based on the bodily expreriences *Anger is Fire* and *Anger is Hot Fluid in a Container, Cause of Anger is Physical Annoyance* are universal since human beings have similar biological bodies. The metaphors derived from angry behavior including *Anger is Insanity, Angry Behavior is Aggressive Animal Behavior and Anger is a Natural Force* are also of human nature. They are, therefore, similar in both languages and cultures. Furthermore, the metonymy *physiological effects of an emotion stand for the emotion* metonymic principles are universal. Many metonymic phrases of anger are found to be parallel in both languages. Lakoff also notes that the cultural models

have a great influence on our understanding of the world and constrain the selection of metaphors and metonymies. Since the cultures of Vietnam and the English-speaking nations are quite distant, certain differences are found in the two taxonomies with more detailed elaborations in the former language.

In addition to the linguistic and cultural significance, the findings also have pedagogical implications. As most figurative idioms are metaphorically based and conceptually motivated (Liu 2008), it is advisable to promote conceptual motivation awareness when teaching idioms. Research has shown that using the strategy of thinking in terms of conceptual and orientational metaphors enhances the students' understanding and acquisition of idioms motivated by the concept (Boers 2001, Bui 2019, Kövecses & Szabó 1996, Liu 2008, Tran 2010). Another strategy is to highlight the concepts that motivate the idioms being taught by explaining the concepts or by presenting together idioms that are based on the same concept to help students recognize the conceptual metaphor underlying them. Doing this will help students comprehend and retain idioms more effectively. This strategy is not only good for fixed metaphorical expressions, but also effective for metaphorically used language which is constantly created by the media. Furthermore, it is helpful to have students compare and contrast L2 idioms with their L1 counterparts based on the conceptual motivations and linguistic forms. This analysis shows that Vietnamese and English have the same conceptual metaphor of anger and different linguistic realizations. Such variations are caused by cultural factors, which are also well worth mentioning when teaching idioms. In fact, a metaphorical concept noticeable in one culture may be relatively inconspicuous in another due to the cultural differences. Thus, both conceptual metaphors and cultural factors should be included.

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