

Cognitive Semantic Analysis of Fear Expressions in Bangla and Hindi

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Emotion concepts are largely metaphorical and metonymic in nature across languages. Fear is an intensely unpleasant emotion in response to perceiving or recognizing a danger or threat. Fear includes physical, psychological, and behavioural reactions. The language of emotion is one of the areas where the influence of culture on cognition has been studied. This study delves into a comparative analysis of fear-related colloquial and idiomatic expressions in Hindi and Bangla, juxtaposed with English expressions, adopting a cross-cultural perspective rooted in Cognitive Linguistics. In this paper, we analyze the metaphors and metonymies of fear in Bangla and Hindi using Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) of Lakoff and Johnson and Extended Cognitive Metaphor theory of Kövecses and incorporating the lexical method for studying the fear metaphors in both the languages, taking data from the colloquial as well as idiomatic expressions from various sources like websites, books, and native speakers. We have classified these expressions into different stages of fear like auditory or visual stimuli causing fear, physiological arousal, and so on. A notable finding is that the majority of expressions in the selected languages utilize metonymy, particularly involving body parts, to convey fear. The research underscores the significance of a cross-cultural perspective in understanding emotion concepts linguistically.

Keywords: *emotion concepts, fear, idiomatic expressions, metaphor, metonymy, cross-cultural perspective*

1. Introduction

Basic emotion theory proposes that human beings have a limited number of biologically and psychologically *basic* emotions, such as fear, anger, joy, and sadness (Wilson-Mendenhall et al. 2013). These emotions are believed to have evolved to serve essential functions in survival, adaptation, and social interaction (Izard 1977). However, the precise number of basic emotions remains debated among psychologists. According to Paul Ekman's research, fear is one of the six *basic emotions* identified in the Atlas of Emotions along with anger, disgust, happiness, sadness, and surprise. While the core understanding, and expression of fear may be universal, diverse cultural and social factors shape how fear is conceptualized and expressed in diverse societies.

Linguistic research examines how emotions are encoded and conveyed through language, the cultural and social influences on emotional expression, and the relationship between language and emotional experiences. This field explores topics such as emotional language development, the role of metaphor and figurative language in expressing emotions, and cross-cultural variations in emotional expression and language use. Metaphorical language in emotional expression allows individuals to bridge the gap between the abstract nature of emotions and the concrete world, enabling effective communication and understanding of emotional experiences. There has been widespread research conducted on the use of metaphors to conceptualize and express basic

emotions in language. They highlight the role of metaphors in shaping our understanding and communication of emotional experiences.

The language of emotion provides a rich illustration of how culture influences cognition, as it highlights the ways in which cultural factors shape the cognitive processes involved in perceiving, experiencing, and expressing emotions. Human emotions are to a large extent “*constructed* from individuals” embodied experiences in different cultural settings (Kövecses 2000). Idiomatic expressions and proverbs often encapsulate a culture's collective wisdom, beliefs, and values. By delving into these linguistic constructs, we can unravel the intricacies of how societies convey meaning, share experiences, and impart cultural insights through language (Lauhakangas 2007). Fear is an intensely unpleasant emotion in response to perceiving or recognizing a danger or threat. The core understanding and expression of this emotional state of fear, which involves a range of physical, psychological, and behavioural responses, may be universal but diverse cultural and social factors shape how fear is conceptualized and expressed in diverse societies. The study of basic emotions from a cognitive linguistic perspective presents an intriguing area of study within the broader field of metaphor research. However, reviewing the cross-cultural studies of emotion metaphors in various languages shows that hardly any work has been done on emotion metaphors in South Asian languages. This paper attempts to fill this gap with an attempt to investigate and compare the conceptual metaphors and metonymies of FEAR in Hindi and Bangla, two widely spoken new Indo-Aryan languages of south Asia, with English. On the one hand where Hindi is the third most spoken language across the world with about 609.5 million speakers, Bangla has approximately 272.8 million speakers (<https://www.ethnologue.com/insights/ethnologue200/>) spreading over mostly in Bangladesh and India with a big diasporic community all over the world. Typologically it is an SOV language with Subject Verb agreement for the Person and Honorificity feature only. Hindi is also an SOV language with a more complex agreement system where the subject and the verb agree for all Person, Number, Gender as well as Honorificity features. Hindi is also a split ergative language where object verb agreement is found in perfective constructions only. Historically, Bangla evolved from the eastern variety of Prakrit known as Magadhi Prakrit whereas standard Hindi is a descendent of Sauraseni Prakrit which is a central variety of Prakrit.

We have collected fear-related idiomatic expressions of both Hindi and Bangla from various sources like websites, books, and native speakers. For the sake of the analysis, we employed the framework of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory of Lakoff & Johnson (1980) and the Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory of Kövecses (2020).

The present study endeavours to research one of the basic emotions, FEAR, through a cognitive semantic approach and then identify the similarities and differences in its conceptualization between Hindi and Bangla and compare it with that of English.

The major research objectives are as follows:

- (i) To identify prevalent conceptual metaphors and metonymies of fear in Hindi and Bangla and explore the underlying mappings that motivate these fear metaphors in the respective language.

- (ii) To identify the notion of embodied cognition used for conceptualizing the emotion of fear in Hindi and Bangla, and to look for similarities or/and differences between the two languages.
- (iii) To find out the sources of metaphor (animal metaphors, cultural metaphors, etc.) creation in each of the aforementioned languages based on the above findings.
- (iv) To provide a comparative analysis of fear expressions in Hindi, Bangla with those of English from the Cognitive semantics perspective.

This paper is divided into 10 sections. The first section comprises the introduction. The second section discusses the previous literature in the domain of emotion and emotion metaphors, which is further subdivided into two portions: First, the literature survey on emotions in Psychology, followed by the literature survey on metaphors and subsequently emotion metaphors in Linguistics. The third section mentions the methodology used for the current cross-cultural study of FEAR metaphors in Bangla and Hindi. Section four constitutes the detailed data analysis of conceptual metaphors of FEAR in Hindi and Bangla. In the fifth section, we have illustrated a distributive table of the different source domains of FEAR metaphors in Hindi, Bangla, and English. The sixth section analyzes the conceptual metonymies of FEAR in both Hindi and Bangla. We have charted in the seventh section, the body parts associated with the different states of FEAR in Hindi, Bangla, and English. The role of animals in the FEAR expressions in Bangla and Hindi is elaborated in eighth seven. In the ninth section of this paper, we reflect on our results and discussion, followed by the conclusion in the tenth section.

2. Emotion and emotional metaphors in literature

The following sub-section deals with a brief overview of the extensive scholarship on *emotion* research in Psychology and the subsequent sub-section deals with the enormous *metaphor* research starting from, *Metaphors We Live By* the seminal work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in Cognitive Linguistics till date.

2.1 Literature survey on emotion in psychology

Emotion, as defined by the American Psychological Association (APA), is a complex reaction involving experiential, behavioural, and physiological elements. Psychologists have long studied emotions to understand their nature, functions, development, and their influence on human behaviour and mental processes. Different theories propose various frameworks to explain emotions, and there has been debate regarding the number of basic emotions.

One classification in emotional psychology divides emotions into two categories: basic and complex. Basic emotions are considered distinct, biologically rooted emotional states that are universally recognizable and share common physiological and behavioural characteristics. They are often grouped into pairs of opposites, such as joy and sadness, anger and fear, trust and disgust, and surprise and anticipation. Paul Ekman (1992: 63-70) identified six basic emotions deduced from facial expressions: happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, and disgust. His work emphasized the universality of facial expressions across cultures. However, there have been other

models proposed, including Robert Plutchik's (1980: 3-33) eight primary emotions. Researchers have also examined the functional aspects of emotions, with Izard (2007: 260-280) proposing ten basic emotions, each serving specific adaptive purposes. Fredrickson & Levenson (1998: 191-220) focused on psychophysiological patterns, identifying three dimensions of emotion: positive affect, negative affect, and arousal. Panksepp & Watt's (2011: 387-396) model linked basic emotions to seven emotional systems in the brain, grounded in neuroscience.

More recent research suggests that there may be only four clearly distinguishable basic emotions, with anger/disgust and surprise/fear sharing facial expressions. This challenges the traditional view of six basic emotions and suggests sociological influences on emotional expression. A 2019 study on fruit flies (Gu et al. 2019) applied the emotional circumplex framework to categorize their behaviours, revealing four distinct emotional states: positive high arousal, positive low arousal, negative high arousal, and negative low arousal. This research suggests that basic emotions are evolutionarily conserved and offers insights into studying the neural and genetic mechanisms underlying emotions in simple organisms. In summary, the study of emotions in psychology has led to various theories and models regarding basic emotions. While the number and categorization of these emotions remain debated, research continues to shed light on their universality and evolutionary significance across species.

Linguistic research delves into the encoding and communication of emotions through language, considering cultural and social influences on emotional expression and the connection between language and emotional experiences. It investigates various aspects of emotional language development, the role of metaphors and figurative language in expressing emotions, and cross-cultural differences in emotional expression and language use. Metaphors play a vital role in expressing emotions linguistically. Research has examined how metaphors help conceptualize and express basic emotions in language. This research highlights the role of metaphors in shaping our understanding and communication of emotions. Cultural factors significantly influence how emotions are perceived, experienced, and expressed. Emotions are constructed from individuals' embodied experiences in diverse cultural settings. This influence is explored by linguistic research, examining how cultural factors shape cognitive processes related to emotions.

2.2 Literature survey on metaphor research in linguistics

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's influential book, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), discusses the pervasive role of metaphors in everyday language and thought, including their impact on emotions. Kövecses (1990: 160-181), in his work, explores the cognitive and linguistic aspects of emotion concepts, emphasizing the role of metaphors in structuring and understanding emotions, especially basic emotions. He also investigates primary metaphors grounded in embodied experience and their role in conceptualizing emotions and their linguistic expressions. *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* by Kövecses (2005) explores how metaphors are used to express and understand various aspects of culture, including emotions. It highlights both universal elements and cultural-specific variations in metaphorical expressions related to emotions.

Kövecses' (2015) reconsiders the role of context in creating and interpreting metaphors, identifying four types of contexts: situational, discourse, bodily, and conceptual-cognitive. These contexts influence the meaning of metaphorical expressions. In his 2020 work, Kövecses refined

his conceptual metaphor theory, exploring its applications and extensions to new domains, including emotions. This book provides a comprehensive perspective on the influence of conceptual metaphors on language, thought, and culture, deepening our understanding of their role in shaping cognition and emotional experiences.

There is a wide range of literature on the cross-cultural study of emotion concepts from a cognitive linguistic perspective in different languages. A closer look into these cross-cultural studies of emotions reveals that comparatively there is far less research work on the basic emotion of FEAR as compared to other emotion concepts. Kövecses, in his book, *Emotion Concepts* (Kövecses 1990), has dedicated one chapter to fear, alongside the other three basic emotions - happiness, sadness and anger. In this chapter, Kövecses explores the limitations of constructing a prototypical model of fear solely based on the metonymic system, highlighting that it results in a significant loss of conceptual depth. This approach is contrasted with the richer insights gained from incorporating metaphors to capture the full complexity of fear beyond its basic physiological and behavioural aspects. Later, delving into a corpus-based study, Yan et al. (2010) focuses on the translation of FEAR metaphors from English to Chinese, within the framework of conceptual metaphor theory. In this study, they aimed to analyze how these FEAR metaphors are handled in translations and their connection to cross-cultural variations in the context of fear metaphors. In her 2014 paper, Ansah investigates how culture influences the metaphorical and metonymic depictions of fear in Akan and English, employing Conceptual Metaphor Theory to analyze both commonalities and language-specific distinctions in these conceptualizations. Afrashi & Ghouchani (2018: 45-60) utilized a corpus of 42 contemporary Persian texts to identify 600 conceptual metaphors of fear, with the most frequent source domains being substance, force, and movement, encompassing elements like motion verbs, personification, colours, and animals in fear-related metaphors. This research explored multiple aspects of fear metaphors, including the significance of motion verbs, personification, the use of colours, and the inclusion of animals within these metaphoric expressions. Andrea Csillag's (2018: 247-258) paper examines fear-related quotations from www.searchquotes.com/search/Fear and finds that, contrary to Kövecses' theories, the container metaphor is less prevalent while various versions of the object metaphor are more prominent in the corpus of fear expressions. Later, Anna Rewiś-Łętkowska (2019) offers an in-depth examination of how metaphor, metonymy, and image schema interact in the conceptualization of FEAR/STRACH in English and Polish. In a recent study, Zibin & Hamdan (2019: 239-262) explore how fear is conceptualized in Jordanian Arabic (JA) through conceptual metonymy, metaphor, and metaphonymy, comparing it to English. The study exhibits that universal physiological reactions and cultural beliefs influence the conceptualization of fear, supporting the idea of universal cognitive embodiment, and calls for further research on emotions in JA to better understand this phenomenon.

Reviewing the cross-cultural studies of emotion metaphors shows that research on emotion metaphors is missing in Indian languages. Thus, the present study has tried to investigate the conceptualization of one of the basic emotions, fear, through a cognitive and corpus-based approach in a comparative study of Hindi and Bangla.

3. Methodology

Kövecses et al. (2019: 149-173) compare and contrast the lexical and corpus-linguistic approaches in the study of metaphors. In the paper, the strengths, and weaknesses of both the methods in analysing metaphors, particularly in the context of the concept of surprise. Since, our present study is not much concerned with offering frequency data, we chose the lexical approach for analyzing the metaphors of FEAR in Hindi and Bangla. The lexical approach is particularly useful when we need to gain insight into the lexical/conceptual structure of a target term, such as understanding the polysemy of the term and identifying various related senses. It can provide a highly schematic model or folk theory of the target term, revealing the components of the model and their frequency of occurrence. Additionally, the lexical approach is effective in identifying idiomatic expressions, synonyms, and major concept-specific metaphors associated with the target term. Therefore, the lexical approach is preferable when the focus is on understanding the lexical and conceptual nuances of a specific term, as well as when uncovering idiomatic expressions and major concept-specific metaphors associated with the target term.

The detailed procedure for the present study which include search for fear related linguistic contents, their contextual analysis leading to identification of metaphors and metonymies in both the languages are as follows:

- i) **Creation of keyword list:** We initially compiled a list of keywords/lexical items related to the emotion of fear based on our native speaker intuition in both Hindi and Bangla. The list of fear related lexical items included:
Hindi: *ḍar*, *bʰəj*, *aṭəŋk*, *a:fəŋka*, *giraft*, *ronṭe*, *ṭrəst*, *ḍəhsəṭ*, *kʰəwḥ*, *ṭraf*, *ḍarəona*, *əndʰera*.
Bangla: *bʰəj*, *ḍara*, *uḍbeg*, *aṭəŋko*, *a:fəŋka*, *uṭkəntʰa*, *ḥəntṛaf*, *ḍustʃintā*, *bʰəjgrostō*.
- ii) **Web search using keywords:** Utilising the above-mentioned keywords, we conducted web searches from selected websites (mentioned in the third point) to find linguistic expressions encompassing fear related content.
- iii) **Dataset compilation:** For the current work, we compiled a brief dataset of 35 Bengali expressions and 35 Hindi expressions, including idioms, proverbs, and frequently used phrases associated with the emotion of fear in the respective languages. This set of 35 fear related idioms and proverbs was collected from a multitude of online sources. The web sources used for data collection included:
 - a) <https://bn.m.wikipedia.org> (Bengali Wikipedia) (for Bangla)
 - b) <https://hindilearning.in/hindi-muhavare/> (for Hindi)
 - c) <https://www.ncertbooks.guru/hindi-muhavare/> (for Hindi)
 - d) <https://www.aplustopper.com/muhavare-in-hindi/> (for Hindi)
 - e) <https://www.hindivarta.com/> (for Hindi)
 - f) <https://www.hindisahityadarpan.in/> (for Hindi)
 - g) <https://www.rekhtadictionary.com/?lang=hi> (for Hindi).

We also consulted blogs such as <https://bengali.pratilipi.com/blog/bangler-prabaad-probochon-2tf04u8h15gpa41> for Bangla and <https://leverageedu.com/blog/> for Hindi, and books such as *Bangla Pravada (A Collection of 9100 Bengali Proverbs)* by Shri Sushilkumar De and

Drishtanta Bakya Samgraha / A Collection of Proverbs edited by Chakraborty, Barun Kumar for Bangla.

Sampling method: As the study required only those linguistic expressions themed on the emotion of fear, we relied on purposive sampling and native speaker intuition while selecting the data for the study.

- iv) **Verification and contextual analysis:** We also cross checked these expressions with our native competence and examined their contextual occurrences in the web corpus to verify their relevance to the fear domain. It ensures the reliability of the dataset.

4. Conceptual metaphors of fear in Hindi and Bangla

On the basis of the gathered data for analysis, the main metaphors used in Hindi and Bangla to conceptualize FEAR are listed below with illustrative examples:

Table 1: Common conceptual mappings of fear in Hindi and Bangla

Conceptual mappings of fear in Hindi and Bangla
FEAR IS A GAS
FEAR IS A NATURAL FORCE
FEAR IS A COLD FEELING
FEAR IS FLIGHT OF AN ANIMAL
FEAR IS AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE
FEAR IS A CONTAINER
FEAR IS A SEED
FEAR IS A DISEASE
FEAR IS A BURDEN
FEAR IS A FEROCIOUS ANIMAL
FEAR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR

- i) FEAR IS A GAS

This metaphor is derived from a more generic-level metaphor, EMOTION IS A FLUID. While in English, EMOTION is generally conceived as a LIQUID, in Hindi and Bangla, the EMOTION of FEAR (specific-level concept) is conceptualized as a GAS (specific-level concept) which is a specific subcategory of FLUID. The GAS metaphor is more specific in this context as we can directly create sentences with air as the location where the fear spreads out. The GAS metaphor is also found in Bangla with the complex emotion, love. Therefore, we can say EMOTION is GAS (a subcategory of FLUID) is more common in these languages.

EMOTION IS A FLUID (generic-level metaphor)

SOURCE: GAS (specific-level concept)

TARGET: FEAR (specific-level concept)

FEAR IS A GAS

- (1) *ḍar* *fælna* (Hindi)
 fear spread-INF
 ‘fear/panic spreads in the air’
- (2) *baṭaṭe* *aṭoṅko* *ṭhōṛije* *poṛa* (Bangla)
 wind-LOC terror spread fall-INF
 ‘fear/panic spreads in the air’

ii) FEAR IS A NATURAL FORCE

- (3) *a:ṣəṅka* *ke* *ba:ḍal* *ṭhāṭ* *ṭhuke* *hæe* (Hindi)
 doubt GEN cloud disappear finish-PRF be.PRS.3
 ‘Clouds of anxiety have disappeared’
- (4) *g^hor* *poṛa* *goru* *sīḍure* *meg^h* *ḍek^hle* *dōrae* (Bangla)
 home burn-INF cow vermillion-red clouds see-COND-PTCP fear-PRS.INDF.3
 ‘A cow whose shed is burnt is afraid of even a red cloud (which looks like fire)’

Here, the source of fear is a cloud that brings heavy rain. This is an example of an ecological metaphor. The cow is a prevalent and revered animal in Bengal's ecology, often seen as gentle and meek. *Kalbaishakhi*, also known as Nor'westers, is another common weather phenomenon experienced in the Bengal region, particularly during the months of April and May. The name *Kalbaishakhi* originates from the Bengali month of *Baishakh* when these storms are frequent. The vermillion red cloud holds significance in Bengal as this is considered as a prelude to the *Kalbaishakhi* storms. In local beliefs, the *Kalbaishakhi* cloud serves as a foreboding omen, signaling an impending storm. This meteorological phenomenon instills fear in the typically docile cow whose house is burnt down by the storm, causing it to exhibit signs of distress or unease.

iii) FEAR IS A COLD FEELING

This metaphor suggests that fear can evoke sensations like those experienced when encountering coldness. This metaphor highlights the chilling and numbing effect of fear on emotions, emphasizing its ability to create a sense of discomfort, unease, or detachment.

- (5) *haṭṭ^h* *pao* *ṭhānda* *hona* (Hindi)
 hand feet cold be-INF
 ‘Palms and feet getting cold in fear’
- (6) *b^hoje* *haṭṭ^h* *pa:* *ṭhānda* *hoe* *ḍāoa* (Bangla)
 fear-LOC hand foot cold be-CV go-INF

‘Palms and feet getting cold(numb) in fear’

iv) FEAR IS FLIGHT OF AN ANIMAL

(7) *ḍum* *ḍāba: kər* *b^hagna* (Hindi)
 tail tuck-CONJ PTCP run-INF
 ‘To run away in fear (by tucking its tail like an animal)’

(8) Ram babake dek^he *leḍʒ* *gutije* *palalo* (Bangla)
 Ram.NOM father-ACC see-QUOT.COMP tail tuck-CONJ PTCP run-PST.3
 ‘Having seen his father, Ram ran away in fear’

The metaphorical expression in Hindi as well as Bangla illustrates someone fleeing or running away in fear, much like an animal that tucks its tail and runs. It symbolizes the instinctual reaction to fear, where the individual's primary instinct is to escape or seek safety. The metaphor emphasizes the primal nature of fear and the urge to protect oneself from perceived danger. The image of an animal tucking its tail and running away in fear is deeply ingrained in folk wisdom, children's rhymes and fables in Hindi and Bangla both. It reflects the cultural understanding of fear as a powerful and instinctual emotion that triggers a flight response in both humans and animals. This expression captures the essence of fear as a primal instinct for self-preservation, transcending language, and cultural boundaries.

The action of tucking the tail between the legs is a visual indication of fear or submissiveness commonly observed in animals. By using this imagery, fear is indirectly referred to, representing the emotional state of the individual experiencing fear. Hence, it also serves as a metonymy in both Hindi and Bangla as exemplified later in Section 6.3 examples 47 and 48, where behavioural reactions of the emotion of fear stand for the emotion itself.

v) FEAR IS AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE

The metaphor FEAR IS AN OPPONENT IN A STRUGGLE portrays fear as an adversary or challenger in the ongoing battle of life. This metaphor underscores the notion that fear is something to be overcome or conquered, implying that individuals must confront their fears to achieve their goals or aspirations.

(9) *b^həj* *ko* *ka:bu* *kər* *lena* (Hindi)
 fear ACC overpower do take-INF
 ‘To overpower fear’

(10) *b^həje* *kabu* *həa* (Bangla)
 fear-LOC overpower be-INF
 ‘To be overpowered by fear’

vi) FEAR IS A CONTAINER

(11) *ḍar* *se* *bahar* *ana* (Hindi)
 fear from exit-CV come-INF
 ‘To come out of fear’

(12) *bʰɔj* *ɦeke* *berije* *aɦa* (Bangla)
 fear from exit- CV come- INF
 ‘To come out of fear’

Here, in both the Hindi and Bangla expressions, fear is conceptualized as a confinement from which one seeks liberation. This metaphor implies that fear has boundaries and limitations, but individuals can break free from its constraints and move forward with courage and resilience.

vii) FEAR IS A SEED

This metaphor targets the origin or source of fear. It encapsulates the idea that fear, like a seed, has the potential to grow and spread, affecting individuals or societies. It suggests that even a small incident or idea can serve as the catalyst for instilling fear, leading to widespread apprehension and anxiety. This metaphor underscores the need to address the root causes of fear and take proactive measures to prevent its proliferation.

(13) *ḍar* *ka* *bid̄ɦ* (Hindi)
 fear GEN seed
 ‘Seed of fear’

(14) *aɦonker* *bid̄ɦ* (Bangla)
 terror- GEN seed
 ‘Seed of terror’

viii) FEAR IS A DISEASE

The metaphor highlights the detrimental effects of fear on mental health and well-being. Just as a disease can debilitate the body and fear can paralyze the mind. Like a disease, fear can also be contagious.

(15) *bʰɔj* *grafiɦ* *hona* (Hindi)
 fear affliction be-INF
 ‘To be afflicted by fear’

(16) *ɦara* *ɦriɦibi* *ad̄ɦ* *ɦarona* *bʰairase* *bʰɔjɦrosɦo* (Bangla)
 whole world today Corona virus-LOC fear-affliction
 ‘The whole world is afflicted by the fear of Corona virus today’

ix) FEAR IS A BURDEN

- (17) *ḍar* *ka* *boḍḍ* *uṭar* *fekna* (Hindi)
 fear GEN burden unload-CONJ PTCP throw-INF
 ‘To unload the burden of anxiety or worry’
- (18) *ḍustḥinṭar* *boḍḍa* *bḥa* (Bangla)
 worry. GEN burden carry- INF
 ‘To carry the burden of anxiety or worry’

Both expressions convey the idea that fear weighs heavily on individuals, making it difficult for them to move forward or live freely. Unloading this burden is liberating.

x) FEAR IS A FEROCIOUS ANIMAL

- (19) *ḍar* *ke* *pāṇḍḍe* *mē* *hona* (Hindi)
 fear GEN claw-OBL in be-INF
 ‘To be in the claw of fear’
- (20) *bḥjer* *kḥbole* (Bangla)
 fear-GEN grip-LOC
 ‘In the grip of fear’

In Hindi, fear is perceived as possessing a claw with which it can hunt down a victim. In Bengali also we can observe the use of the phrase “in the grip of” along with fear vividly portrays the intense and suffocating nature of fear, suggesting that fear has a firm and controlling hold over an individual, much like being physically grasped or restrained.

The result of a web corpus search in Bangla reveals a hierarchy in usage frequency. "In the grip of a lion" is most common, followed by "in the grip of a fox," and "in the grip of a tiger." Interestingly, these outnumber instances of being "in the grip of an enemy" or "in the grip of an opponent." This reflects a prevalence of metaphors where emotions are portrayed as fierce animals, indicating a deeper cultural association between fear and ferocious creatures.

Hence, FEAR IS A FEROCIOUS ANIMAL serves as a very culture-specific metaphor. However, this metaphor is derived from a more generic-level metaphor, EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT. EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT (generic-level metaphor)

SOURCE: FEROCIOUS ANIMAL (specific-level concept)

TARGET: FEAR (specific-level concept)

xi) FEAR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR

- (21) *ḍar* *havr* *hona* (Hindi)
 fear domination be-INF
 ‘To be dominated by fear’

- (22) *ʃonʌraʃer* *radʒoʈʈjo* (Bangla)
 terror-GEN reign
 ‘Reign of terror’

A subcategory of this is noticed in Hindi which is Police. We want to keep it separate subcategory because we found the word *girafʈ* mostly collocating with police (most frequent in the google search). There is also an atmosphere of fear in the collective consciousness of general people with the image of Police in the entire north India as it creates a lot of trouble and loss of one’s money, time, and energy. Therefore, the use of police as the source domain in Hindi and Bangla fear metaphors is very culture-specific. In fact, by comparing the threat posed by the police with that of a tiger is again very culture-specific in Bangla since the tiger is a very common animal reference for the source of fear in Bengal, especially South Bengal (Sundarban Delta).

FEAR IS POLICE¹

- (23) *ʌar* *ke* *girafʈ* *mẽ* *hona* (Hindi)
 fear GEN captivity in be-INF
 ‘To be held captive by fear’
- (24) *bagʰe* *ʈʈule* *aʈʰaro* *gʰa* *pulife* *ʈʈule* *ʈʈʰoʈʈrif* (Bangla)
 tiger-PL touch-CND eighteen blow police-PL touch-CND thirty-six
 ‘A police man can inflict more woes than a tiger.’

Table 2: Conceptual mappings of fear unique to Bangla

Conceptual mappings of fear in Bangla
FEAR IS A TORMENTOR
FEAR IS INSANITY
FEAR IS A BIRD

- xiii) FEAR IS A TORMENTOR

¹The initial analysis of metaphors included some misinterpretations, such as considering ‘POLICE’ and ‘SOCIAL SUPERIOR’ as separate source domains. Following the reviewers’ suggestions, these conceptual domains were reanalyzed, leading to the understanding that ‘POLICE’ can indeed be categorised as a subset of ‘SOCIAL SUPERIOR’. This refinement has been incorporated into the manuscript, ensuring a more accurate representation of the metaphors.

- (25) *ḍoner kɔŋʰa ʃune bʰɔje kaṛor sanbaḍik* (Bangla)
 don-GEN words hear-QUOT.COMP fear-LOC distress-PTCP journalist
 ‘The journalist was fear-ridden on hearing the words of the don (leader of a mafia organization).’

This metaphor can come as a subcategory under the preceding metaphor, FEAR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR. In Bengali culture, the metaphor, FEAR IS A TORMENTOR, holds great significance and is intricately linked to societal, and historical contexts. The metaphor bears great significance when seen against the historical backdrop of Bengal's feudal system. The feudal system, long established in Bengal since ancient times, had its roots deeply embedded in the socio-political fabric. The feudal lords were bestowed with great power and authority over the subjects under their lordship. There was therefore a generalized feeling of fear. Fear ruled the public's mindset, and aspirations for development, justice in society, and freedom were effectively hindered by this dread. Fear was more than just an emotion; it was a mechanism used to keep the feudal order intact. It ensured the maintenance of the status quo by discouraging conflict and rebellion. In addition, amidst the general social unrest and possible upheavals, anxiety and suffering became essential elements of the social landscape.

xiv) FEAR IS INSANITY

- (26) *uḍbeg-uṭkɔŋʰae pagol ho* (Bangla)
 anxiety-LOC insane be-INF
 ‘To go crazy with anxiety (fear of an anticipated or actual state of danger)’

In Bengali, fear is metaphorically compared to insanity or madness. This metaphor highlights the debilitating effects of fear on the human mind, suggesting that intense fear can lead to irrational thoughts, behaviors, and perceptions, akin to those associated with insanity. In Bangla, insane behaviour is characteristic of several emotions such as anger, love and disgust, apart from fear. However, in Hindi and many other cultures, anger is often more closely associated with madness or losing control, rather than fear.

xv) FEAR IS A BIRD

- (27) *mone aṛoŋko bafa bāḍʰe* (Bangla)
 mind-LOC terror nest build-IND.PRS.INDF.3
 ‘Fear builds nest in the mind’

In Bengali literature and everyday conversation, when someone uses the phrase *bafa bāḍʰe*, they are usually referring to ‘the intricate process of constructing a nest by birds’ rather than a literal house-building activity. The connotation that this phrase bears, likely has roots in Bengali folklore and oral tradition, where stories and proverbs passed down through generations often use imagery from nature to impart wisdom and moral lessons. Birds, being predominant in Bengali landscapes, feature prominently in folk tales, where their behaviors, including nest-building, serve as allegories for human experiences. In Bengali, fear is metaphorically depicted as a bird building its nest in

someone's mind. This metaphor vividly captures the notion of fear taking root and nesting within one's thoughts, creating a sense of unease or anxiety that can be difficult to shake off.

5. Comparison of source domains of the conceptual metaphors of fear in Hindi, Bangla and English

Tabulated underneath is the distribution of source domains of FEAR metaphors in Hindi and Bangla, compared and contrasted with the source domains of FEAR metaphors in English, and the association of each of these source domains with the different states of the emotion, FEAR (Ekman 2016).

Table 3: Distribution of source domains of fear metaphors in Hindi, Bangla, and English

Source domains of fear	Hindi	Bangla	English	State of fear
Liquid in a container	No	No	Yes	anxiety
Gas	Yes	Yes	No	dread
Natural force	Yes	Yes	Yes	anxiety
Cold feeling	Yes	Yes	Yes	nervousness, dread
Flight of an animal	Yes	Yes	Yes	trepidation, dread, desperation, terror
Opponent in a struggle	Yes	Yes	Yes	anxiety, terror
Tormentor	No	Yes	Yes	anxiety, desperation
Container	Yes	Yes	Yes	anxiety, desperation
Seed	Yes	Yes	Yes	dread
Insanity	No	Yes	Yes	anxiety
Disease	Yes	Yes	Yes	dread
Burden	Yes	Yes	Yes	anxiety
Ferocious animal	Yes	Yes	Yes	dread, terror
Social superior	Yes	Yes	Yes	terror
Bird	No	Yes	No	anxiety, dread

6. Conceptual metonymies of fear in Hindi and Bangla

In this section, we discuss the role of body parts (Embodied Cognition) in the metonymy of fear expressions in Bangla and Hindi. The physiological effects of an emotion can serve as a metonymic representation of that emotion. These metonymies, in turn, can form the foundation for creating metaphors related to the same emotion.

Kövecses (1990: 160-181) establishes two core metonymic principles shaping conceptual representations of fear and other emotions in English: (a) THE PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION, and (b) THE BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION. In Hindi as well as in Bangla, we have examples of such conceptual metonymies for fear that are presented as behavioural and physiological responses to the emotion. However, aligning with Ansah (2014: 44-58) and Zibin & Hamdan's (2019: 239-262) work on metaphorical/metonymic conceptualizations of fear Akan and Jordanian Arabic respectively, in both Bangla and Hindi, the first metonymic principle (a) THE PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION, can be further divided into two subcategories : (i) THE REALISTIC PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION, (elaborated in Section 6.1) and (ii) THE METAPHORICAL PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION, (elaborated in Section 6.2). The analogous patterns in metonymic and metaphorical structures in fear-related expressions with Bangla and Hindi as well.

6.1 Realistic physiological reactions standing for fear

In this type of metonymy, the physiological effects resulting from fear are realistic. For example, changes in heart rate or hands and feet getting cold as a response to fear would be considered a realistic physiological effect.

i) Drop in body temperature for fear

(28) *haṭṭʰ* *pao* *tʰənda* *hona* (Hindi)
 hand foot cold be-INF
 'Hands and feet getting cold.'

(29) *haṭṭʰ* *pa:* *tʰanda* *hoe* *ḍāoa* (Bangla)
 hands legs cold be go- INF
 'Coldness of palms and feet'

ii) Shrinking of body for fear

(30) *ḍar* *se* *sikur* *ḍāana* (Hindi)
 fear-LOC from.POSTP cower be-INF
 'To cower' (in fear)

(31) *bʰɔje* *ḍāoʃro* *hoa* (Bangla)
 fear-LOC cower be-INF

‘To cower’ (in fear)

iii) Change in heart rate for fear

- (32) *kələd̄ʒa* *ḡḡək ḡḡək* *kərna* (Hindi)
heart pounding heartbeat do-INF
‘Heart pounding fast’

- (33) *bʰɔje* *buk* *ḡḡərḡḡər* *kɔɾa* (Bangla)
fear-LOC chest palpitations do-INF
‘Palpitations of the chest in fear’

iv) Eyelids closing for fear

- (34) *bʰɔje* *tʃokʰ* *bud̄ʒe* *pʰæla* (Bangla)
fear-LOC eye close throw-INF
‘To close one’s eyes in fear’

v) Dryness in throat for fear

- (35) *ɖar* *se* *gəla* *sukʰna* (Hindi)
fear-LOC from throat dry-INF
‘Drying of throat in fear’

- (36) *bʰɔje* *gɔla* *fukije* *d̄ʒaoa* (Bangla)
fear-LOC throat dry-CV go-INF
‘Drying of throat in fear’

vi) Pupils dilating for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (37) *tʃokʰ* *tʰikɾe* *berije* *afa* (Bangla)
eyes pop-PST-PTCP exit-CV come-INF
‘Eyes coming right out’

vii) Tingling sensation in the skin for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (38) *bʰɔje* *ga* *firfir* *kɔra* (Bangla)
 fear-LOC body (here, skin) tingling do-INF
 ‘Shivering with fear’

firfirkɔra ‘tingling sensation’ is also felt in cold (shivering with cold). This shows that fear has physiological symptoms quite similar to that of cold.

- viii) Blood leaving face for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (39) *mukʰ* *rɔkʰtofunjo* *hoe* *pʰɛkʰafe* *hoe* *ḍʒaoa* (*bibʰifika*) (Bangla)
 face bloodless be-PRS.INDF.3 pale be go-INF
 ‘Face becoming bloodless/pale’

6.2 Metaphorical physiological reactions standing for fear

In this category, the physiological effects of fear are metaphorical rather than realistic. For instance, the drying or freezing of blood in fear. These effects might lead to metaphonymies, which are a combination of metaphor and metonymy, where the physiological effect stands in for the emotion but in a more symbolic or metaphorical manner. Metaphonymy is a linguistic concept delineated as a fusion of both metaphor and metonymy within a single expression or phrase. It represents a complex linguistic phenomenon where a metaphor incorporates a built-in metonymic element, or a metonymy occurs within the structure of a metaphor (Goossens 1990).

- i) Metaphorical freezing of blood for fear

- (40) *kʰʊ:n* *tʰənda* *hona* (Hindi)
 blood cold be-INF
 ‘Blood getting cold’ (in fear)
- (41) *rɔkʰto* *him* *hoa* (Bangla)
 blood ice be-INF
 ‘Blood freezing’ (in fear)

- ii) Metaphorical drying of blood for fear

- (42) *kʰʊ:n* *sukʰ* *ḍʒana* (Hindi)
 blood dry go-INF
 ‘Drying of blood’ (in fear)

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Bangla

- iii) Metaphorical sensation of nervousness in the stomach for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (43) *peṭer* *b^hitor* *haṭ^h* *pa:* *sēḍ^hije* *ḍ̣̣̣aḍ̣̣̣a (uḍ̣̣̣beg)* (Bangla)
abdomen-GEN inside hand feet sink-CONJ PTCP go-INF
'Hands and feet sinking into the abdomen'

iv) Metaphorical spinal sensation for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (44) *ṣirḍ̣̣̣ara* *beje* *himsroṭ̣̣̣* *nama* (Bangla)
spine climb frozen stream come down-INF
'A chilling sensation down the spine'

v) Inability to move for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (45) *b^hṛje* *ka:ṭ^h* *hoe* *ḍ̣̣̣aḍ̣̣̣a* (Bangla)
fear-LOC wood be go-INF
'(lit.) To become wood in fear' or 'To become lifeless in fear'

6.3 Behavioral reactions standing for fear

i) Insane behaviour for fear

This conceptual metonymy is not found in Hindi

- (46) *uḍ̣̣̣beg-uṭ̣̣̣kṇṭ^hae* *pagol* *hoa* (Bangla)
anxiety-LOC insane be-INF
'To go crazy with anxiety (fear of an anticipated or actual state of danger)'

ii) Animal behaviour for fear

- (47) *ḍ̣̣̣um* *ḍ̣̣̣aba: kəṛ* *b^hagna* (Hindi)
tail tuck-CONJ PTCP run-INF
'To run away in fear (by tucking its tail like an animal)'

- (48) *leḍ̣̣̣* *gutije* *palano* (Bangla)
tail tuck-CONJ PTCP run-INF
'To run away in fear (by tucking its tail like an animal)'

7. Body parts association with different states of fear in Bangla, Hindi, and English

Tabulated underneath are the associations of body parts with different states of the emotion of FEAR (Ekman 2016) which provide a framework for understanding how abstract emotions are often conceptualized and expressed metaphorically through the language of the body. These associations usually vary across cultures and languages, which we have tried to illustrate by comparing with the English framework of the different intensities of fear provided by Ekman's Atlas of Emotions (2016: 31-34).

The Atlas of Emotions (Ekman 2016), created in collaboration between the Dalai Lama and Dr. Paul Ekman, is based on a consensus among scientists regarding the existence of universal emotions and facial signals associated with them. A survey of 248 emotion researchers revealed high agreement on key emotions like anger, fear, disgust, sadness, and happiness. While there were varying opinions on triggers, physiology, and appraisal mechanisms, the atlas synthesizes diverse perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of human emotions. It acknowledges five basic emotions—anger, fear, happiness, sadness, and disgust—as universally recognized across cultures and contexts, contributing to the study of emotional experiences and expressions worldwide.

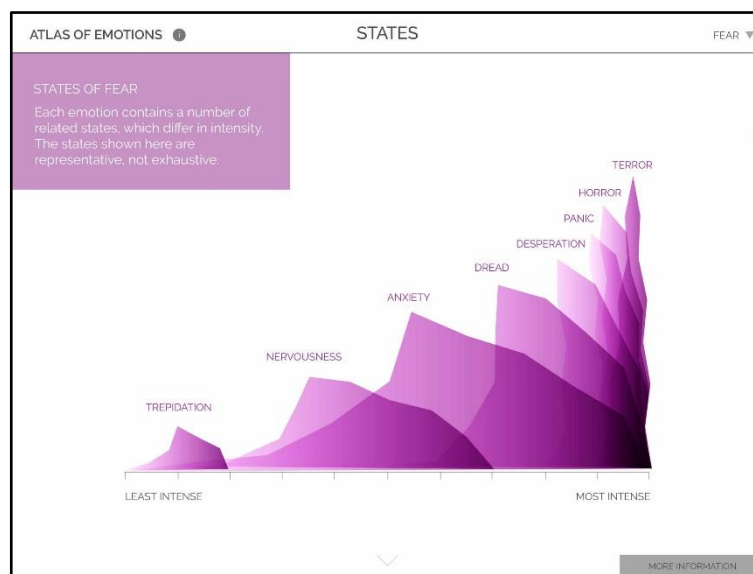


Figure 1: States of fear (Ekman's atlas of emotions, 2016) according to the levels of intensity

Table 4: Body parts associated with different states of fear in Bangla, Hindi, and English

States of fear	English	Bangla	Hindi
Nervousness	Sweating, dryness of mouth, nervousness in the stomach	Dryness of throat, eerie feeling in the body	Dryness of throat
Anxiety	Heart pounding, inability to think, inability to breathe	Unstable mind, shivering of chest	Mind, shivering of mind
Dread	Rising of the hair of the body (goosebumps), chilling sensation in the spine, heart pounding	Rising of the hair of the body (goosebumps), heart pounding, hands and legs sinking into the belly, chilling sensation in the spine	Rising of the hair of the body, heart pounding, cooling of hands and legs
Horror	Paleness of face, heart coming to the mouth, involuntary release of bowels or bladder	Paleness of face, stopping of the heart	Paleness of face, pausing of the heartbeat momentarily, drying of blood, heart coming to the mouth

8. Role of animals in the fear expressions in Bangla and Hindi: data and analysis

Animals associated with fear (Afraid person (AP) and source of fear (SF)).

In many cultures, animals are often used metaphorically to represent fear due to their perceived strength, danger, or predatory nature. In Bangla culture, animals like tigers, crocodiles, and snakes hold significant symbolism when it comes to fear due to their prevalence in the Bengal ecology, and their inherent characteristics. Hence, they are very prevalent in Bangla idioms, proverbs as well as colloquial day-to-day language as metaphors for fear.

- (49) *ḍʒekʰane* *bagʰer* *bʰɔj* *ʃekʰane* *ʃonḍʰja* *hɔe* (Bangla)
 where tiger-GEN fear there evening come-PRS.INDF.3
 ‘Danger often comes where danger is feared.’

The tiger is a powerful and fierce predator, known for its strength and stealth. In Bengali culture, the tiger is often used as a symbol of fear due to its ability to strike unexpectedly, instilling a sense of danger and anxiety.

- (50) *ḍʒole* *kumir* *daṅae* *bagʰ* (Bangla)

water-LOC crocodile land-LOC tiger-LOC
 ‘Between the devil and the deep blue sea’ (Stuck between danger on both sides)

Crocodiles are stealthy predators that lurk in rivers or water bodies. They are known for their sudden attacks and their ability to grab prey swiftly. In Bangla idioms, references to crocodiles often connote a hidden or lurking danger that causes fear.

- (51) *g^hɔr poɾa goru siḍure meg^h ḍek^hle dɔrae* (Bangla)
 home burn-INF cow vermilion-red clouds see-COND-PTCP fear-PRS.INDF.3
 ‘A cow whose shed is burnt is afraid of even a red cloud (which looks like fire)’

The animal reference of the cow is taken to refer to the person who is afraid of an impending danger. This proverbial sentence is the Bangla equivalent of the well-known English proverb, ‘‘A burnt child dreads the fire,’’ which conveys the literal meaning that a child who has been burnt in the past is afraid to go near fire. The extended metaphorical sense that this proverbial saying conveys in both Bangla and English is that one must be afraid to repeat the mistake once he/she has already experienced a painful consequence of the same mistake in the past.

In Bangla culture, snakes also evoke fear due to their venomous nature and the unpredictability of their movements, which also stands true for the Hindi culture.

- (52) *sā:p ka kata rassi se ḍare* (Hindi)
 snake GEN bite.PTCP rope from fear-PRS.INDF.3
 ‘The person who is bitten by a snake is afraid of even a rope.’

- (53) *ḍum ḍaba: kər b^hagna* (Hindi)
 tail tuck-CONJ PTCP run-INF
 ‘To run away in fear (by tucking its tail like an animal)’

These animals have become ingrained in Bangla and Hindi idioms, proverbs, and daily language to illustrate and express different levels and types of fear. The frequent encounters with these creatures in their ecology have contributed to their metaphorical use to depict fear in various contexts, from primal and instinctive fears to hidden and sudden threats. They convey emotional states and cautionary tales deeply rooted in their culture, highlighting the significance of animals as powerful symbols in expressing human emotions and experiences.

Table 5: Use of animal-reference in the fear expressions in Hindi and Bangla

Hindi	Bangla
Cat (AP)	Doe (AP)
Dog (AP)	Mouse (AP)
Jackal (SF)	Cow (AP)
Snake (SF)	Snake (SF)
Tiger (SF)	Tiger (SF)

Horse (AP)	Crocodile (SF)
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9. Result and discussion

In this research, we conducted a thorough examination, by incorporating the lexical approach, for analyzing conceptual metaphors and metonymies related to the emotion of FEAR in Hindi and Bangla idiomatic and colloquial expressions. The analysis of data indicates that in Hindi and in Bangla, the conceptualization of FEAR involves three distinct figurative mechanisms: conceptual metonymy, conceptual metaphor, and conceptual metaphonymy.

Our findings revealed distinctive patterns in the representation of fear across these languages, shedding light on the influence of culture, ecology, and natural environment on metaphorical expressions. For example, the mapping FEAR IS POLICE reflects the cultural conditioning in the form of deep-rooted fear of police in Hindi and Bangla speech community. Also, the metaphorical mappings where the emotion of fear has been realised in terms of wild, ferocious, and threatening animals like crocodile, jackal, tiger, snake, etc. Kövecses (2015) has also emphasised the importance of various contexts like situational, discourse, bodily, and conceptual-cognitive in creating and interpreting metaphors. Specifically, we identified eleven common conceptual mappings of fear in Hindi and Bangla. Three other conceptual mappings of fear were identified in Bangla, which are absent in Hindi. Additionally, fourteen conceptual metonymies of fear were pinpointed in Bangla, while Hindi exhibited seven conceptual metonymies. Indeed, the common metaphors of fear found in languages like Bangla and Hindi often draw upon universal human experiences and emotions. Fear is a basic emotion which is biologically rooted and hence, the metaphors related to fear tend to resonate universally. However, the manifestations of these fear metaphors are influenced by the cultural and ecological contexts in which they emerge. The resemblances in conceptual mappings across Hindi and Bangla largely overlap because they are near-universal² metaphors and metonymies.

For instance, the universal metaphor EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, where the container is the human body, is absent in both Hindi and Bangla. Instead, unlike English, the South-Asian languages Hindi and Bangla, have the shared metaphor FEAR IS GAS, implying that fear, like a gas, can pervade and permeate every aspect of ones being, spreading rapidly and influencing thoughts, emotions, and actions. Fear is also conceived as a NATURAL FORCE in the environment which is threatening like the *Kalbaishakhi* in Bengal. The vermilion clouds act as a source of fear as exemplified in Example 50. In Bengal's ecological context, where agriculture is a primary livelihood and the region's economy heavily relies on the monsoon rains for irrigation and sustenance, the *Kalbaishakhi* storms can evoke a sense of fear and uncertainty. The appearance of the vermilion clouds signifies the impending arrival of these violent storms, which can cause damage to crops, property, and even pose risks to human safety. Thus, the vermilion clouds of *Kalbaishakhi* serve as a potent ecological metaphor of fear in Bengal, symbolizing the imminent threat and destructive power of these storms. The metaphor illustrates not only the physical danger posed by the storms but also the deeper anxieties and vulnerabilities associated with the

²The reviewers' comments have significantly enhanced the quality of this research. In particular, the point regarding the near-universal metaphors and metonymies based on bodily experiences of fear has been invaluable.

unpredictability of nature in the region. On the other hand, FEAR IS THE FLIGHT OF AN ANIMAL metaphor encapsulates the fundamental nature of fear as an instinctual drive for self-preservation, which is universally understood across different languages and cultures.

The metaphor FEAR IS A FEROCIOUS ANIMAL serves as a highly culture-specific representation of fear found in Hindi and Bangla. However, it stems from a more generic-level metaphor, EMOTION IS AN OPPONENT, where emotions are conceptualized as adversaries in a struggle. In both cultures, fear is depicted as possessing a claw or as holding someone in its grip, suggesting its predatory nature, indicates a shared understanding of fear as something that actively hunts down its victims. In Hindi and Bangla, a notable subcategory within the FEAR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR metaphor is associated with the Police, reflecting the cultural perception of law enforcement agencies as instilling fear due to their association with trouble and loss. This highlights the culture-specific nature of fear metaphors in both languages.

Unlike Hindi, Bangla possesses a subcategory of FEAR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR metaphor, namely, FEAR IS A TORMENTOR that symbolizes the historical dominance of the feudal system, where fear was wielded by feudal lords to maintain power, stifling societal progress, and fuelling social unrest. In the culture of Bengal, fear is compared to insanity, highlighting its debilitating effects on the mind. Conversely, in Hindi and many other cultures, anger is more often associated with madness. Notably, the conceptual metaphor FEAR IS A BIRD was found exclusively in Bangla derived from Bangla folklore and oral tradition, apart from Polish (Rewiś-Łętkowska 2019), suggesting a linguistic and cultural commonality in expressing fear that transcends geographical boundaries.

Furthermore, our exploration delved into the impact of culture, ecology, and natural surroundings on the creation of metaphors in Bangla and Hindi. In Bangla, animals such as tigers, crocodiles, and snakes, integral to the Bengal ecology, emerged as potent sources of fear, and the docile cow, doe and mouse embodied the afraid person, thus permeating idioms, proverbs, and everyday language. Whereas, In Hindi reference to animals like jackal, cat, dog, tiger, and snake are present. In general, when examining animal references in both Bangla and Hindi, it appears that they have drawn inspiration from folklore wisdom, children's rhymes and fables in Bangla and Hindi. These rhymes and fables for children specifically comprised precautionary tales where the abovementioned animals are portrayed in the same light as sources of fear and the afraid person.

The metaphor-based metonymies, i.e., the metaphonymies tend to be more culture-specific because they depend on cultural conceptualization of fear. While the metaphorical sensation of drying of blood is a characteristic of Hindi only, the spinal sensation, the sensation of nervousness in the stomach and becoming lifeless like a block of wood is characteristic typically of Bangla. Also, the metonymy, insane behaviour for fear, is found in Bangla, but not in Hindi.

In our analysis, we also intended to discover the intensities of the various states of fear in both Hindi and Bangla. We attempted to find out whether we get linguistic expressions in our languages, viz., Hindi and Bangla, that roughly can be associated with the seven stages of fear according to its intensity as proposed in the work of Ekman. Though mapping of these different intensive states of fear onto exact lexical phrases is a difficult task to perform, we attempted to do it by using a semantic differential scale where the following expressions along with some other sentences containing expressions related to fear were given to some native speakers of Hindi and Bangla for rating these expressions in a 7- point scale where 1 corresponds to least fearful and 7

corresponds to most fearful. The intensity of fear associated with some of these expressions can be found out from the rating in the 7-point scale by majority of the speakers. From this survey, we were able to distinguish the lexical items for low intensity of fear from the lexical items depicting higher intensity of fear. However, we could not arrive at a clear conclusion due to the non-uniformity in the rating of the respondents for lexical items representing the different stages of higher intensity of fear. This survey would require further research and we keep it as the future scope of the study.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study highlights the intricate interplay between language and cognition, emphasizing the dual role of language as a universal psychological tool and a variable cultural entity. The examination of Bangla and Hindi data and its comparison with English revealed both shared aspects and distinctions in how fear is conceptualized. These findings support the idea of a universal cognitive embodiment thesis, where similarities stem from universal physiological or behavioural responses triggered by fear, directly influencing its conceptualization. However, differences arise due to cultural beliefs deeply rooted in specific socio-cultural groups. Our observation aligns with the cognitive linguistics concept of *Embodied Cognition* (Kövecses 2000), as most metaphoric expressions were rooted in the physiological responses to fear, reflecting conventional human knowledge and folk theories. It is suggested that further studies exploring the intensity and the states of the emotion in both Bangla and Hindi would enhance our understanding of how universal cognitive embodiment shapes the human conceptualization system. The subtle differences between fear metaphors and metonymies in Hindi and Bangla offer important insights into the complex web of linguistic variation and cultural influences on how people perceive and express their emotions.

Since our set of keywords/lexical items to search fear related contents were not completely exhaustive, hence we might have missed some more conceptualizations of fear. Moreover, the datasets were relatively small and only from the domains of idioms and proverbs. Therefore, in future, carrying out the study using more sizeable data and covering other domains may provide us with more conceptual mappings.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their insightful and constructive feedback. We are deeply appreciative of the reviewers' efforts and contributions, which have greatly improved the clarity and rigor of this research.

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In SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics [online]. 2024, vol. 21, no. 1 [cit. 2024-06-26]. Available on web page <http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTL56/05.pdf>. ISSN 1336-782X