

## Body metaphors between universality and culture

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This paper is based on a selection of metaphorical expressions with *heart* and *head* in Norwegian and Bulgarian. In both languages these metaphorical expressions are rooted in the popular understanding of the heart as the site of emotions and of the head – as the place of the mind. A great number of the figurative expressions with heart and head cannot actually be stamped as pure metaphors, but are the result of the interaction between metaphor and metonymy. In both conceptual systems the heart stands either for the emotions generally or for certain emotions like love, sympathy, generosity. The head is traditionally associated with intellectual experience and can stand for the intellect or the mind. These are instances of the conceptual metonymy CONTAINER STANDS FOR THE THING CONTAINED because both heart and head are understood as containers respectively for emotions and for thoughts (“my heart is *full* of love”, “the idea came *into* my head” etc.). In addition, both heart and head can stand for the person and thus focus on various aspects of the individual. Expressions like “pay 20 euro per *head*” or “my heart is *crying*” are motivated by the underlying metonymy PART STANDS FOR THE WHOLE, actually by its version BODYPART STANDS FOR THE PERSON.

Provided that the conceptual basis is the same in the two languages, it is interesting to examine the differences in its linguistic expression. Why does *hjertet mitt banker for deg* (‘my heart beats for you’) sound odd if translated literally into Bulgarian? Why can Bulgarian children *climb* onto their parents’ heads, while problems *grow over* the head of a Norwegian (*vokse over hodet på en*)? Some of the cases quoted show also that there are metaphors which exist in only one of the languages, for example INTEREST IS HEARTBEAT is not found in Bulgarian. Others reflect metaphors that are found in both languages, but have different entailments highlighted. Thus the head can be both *skarp* (sharp) and *sløv* (blunt) in Norwegian, while Bulgarian doesn’t have the *sharp* version.

The examples used in this paper demonstrate how differences in cultural background modify universal bodily experience.