

I Had a Dream, Which Was not All a Dream: Viewpoint Metaphors in Personal Experience Narratives on War

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Abstract

The article makes a case for a particular kind of conceptual metaphor, the viewpoint metaphor. The viewpoint metaphor is argued to be a tool employed by narrators in personal experience narratives in order to render their irregular perception mode. The viewpoint metaphor allows mapping on the narrated real experience the perception characteristics of other experiences such as watching a movie or having a dream. The research material consisted of a sample of 50 personal experience narratives (25 in English and 25 in Ukrainian) produced by the participants or witnesses, military and civilian, of hostilities mainly in Ukraine in 2014-2023 and in some other conflicts. It was found that two basic and most prominent viewpoint metaphors in this kind of discourse is EXPERIENCING THE EVENT is DREAMING OF THE EVENT or WATCHING A MOVIE OF THE EVENT. These metaphors are often reinforced by other viewpoint metaphors and they tend to repeatedly occur in the narrative. The function of the viewpoint metaphor is expressing the subjective experientiality, emotional condition and embodied perception mode at the time of the experience narrated. Viewpoint is therefore argued to be a part of the mental space's construal. Studying the viewpoint metaphor allows to shed light onto the conceptual structure of viewpoint. It was found that the elements mapped from the source experience of watching a movie or having a dream include passive witnessing, reduced agency, hushed perception, unreality of events, timelapse, and slow motion.

Keywords: viewpoint metaphor, experientiality, metaphor, viewpoint, personal experience narrative, trauma narrative

Streszczenie

„Miałem sen, który nie był wyłącznie snem”: metafory oglądu w narracjach osobistych doświadczeń na temat wojny

W artykule przedstawiono argumenty za istnieniem szczególnego rodzaju metafory pojęciowej – metafory oglądu. Metafora oglądu jest narzędziem stosowanym w narracjach dotyczących osobistych doświadczeń narratorów w celu oddania niezwykłości tych doświadczeń. Metafora ta pozwala na użycie w narracji rzeczywistego doświadczenia projekcji cech percepcyjnych innych doświadczeń, takich jak oglądanie filmu lub sen. Materiał badawczy stanowił korpus 50 narracji osobistych doświadczeń (25 w języku angielskim i 25 w języku ukraińskim) wojskowych i cywilnych uczestników lub świadków działań wojennych, przede wszystkim w Ukrainie w

latach 2014-2023 oraz w niektórych innych konfliktach. Stwierdzono, że dwie podstawowe i najbardziej widoczne metafory oglądu w tego rodzaju dyskursie to DOŚWIADCZENIE WYDARZENIA to SEN O WYDARZENIU lub OGLĄDANIE FILMU Z WYDARZENIA. Metafory te są często wzmacniane przez inne metafory oglądu i zwykle pojawiają się wielokrotnie w narracji. Funkcją metafory oglądu jest wyrażanie subiektywnego doświadczenia, stanu emocjonalnego i ucieleśnionego trybu percepcji w momencie doświadczenia, które jest opowiadane. Dlatego też punkt widzenia jest traktowany tutaj jako część konstrukcji przestrzeni mentalnej. Badanie metafory oglądu pozwala rzucić światło na strukturę pojęciową punktu widzenia. Z badania wynika, że cechy percepcji przejęte na podstawie doświadczenia domeny źródłowej (oglądania filmu czy snu) obejmują bycie biernym świadkiem, zmniejszoną sprawczość, wyciszoną percepcję, nierzeczywistość wydarzeń, klatkowość widzenia i zwolnione tempo.

Słowa kluczowe: metafora oglądu, doświadczeniowość, metafora, punkt widzenia, narracja osobistego doświadczenia, narracja traumy

1. Introduction

The article aims to address the viewpoint device narrators employ to render their traumatic experiences by comparing them to other kinds of experience such as having a bad dream or a watching a movie. In this study, this metaphorical way of describing one's subjective emotional mode of perception of the traumatic events is termed viewpoint metaphor. As a concept, the viewpoint metaphor was inspired by close exposure to the discourse where it appears to prevail most – in first-person narratives of traumatic events that presuppose strong emotions, shock, and overwhelmed detachment. War and military hostilities is an extremely challenging experience both for soldiers and civilians witnessing them, bringing about trauma. Military hostilities have consistently been associated with a range of traumatic experiences that impact both soldiers and civilians. The military and the population suffer a moral injury and may develop PTSD (McEwen et al. 2021; Zasiékina et al. 2023). Emotional processing of an extreme stress event may include denial along with dissociation and numbing (Foa & Hearst-Ikeda 1996). Immediate responses to a threat vary, including parasympathetic 'shut-down' ('freeze-or-faint') and dissociation as disconnecting from one's own feelings, sensations, and even identity (Schauer & Elbert 2010). Time slowing or distortion and derealization are common manifestations of dissociation (McNally 2003; Langeslag & Posey 2023). As a result, when retelling traumatic experiences, people often resort to metaphorical means to describe the non-typical or unusually intense states, feelings, and emotions.

The proposed term of viewpoint metaphor allows for bringing together the prolific realm of conceptual metaphor studies and the productive and yet rather multifaceted study of narrative viewpoint. The study makes a case for the proposed term by supporting it with a qualitative

analysis of the viewpoint metaphors found in the English-language (25 narratives) and the Ukrainian-language (25 narratives) first-person reports from media outlets and published interviews about war and military hostilities. In the article, the conceptual structure of viewpoint metaphors is discussed to shed light on the narrative construct of viewpoint and the means of its construction that render the subjective embodied perception, which emerge as an important element of the narrative about traumatic events.

2. Viewpoint metaphor: a case for the term and the study

Viewpoint is a widely researched category of narratology. Even though *viewpoint* and *perspective* are sometimes used as synonyms, narratologists still distinguish between these constructs (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan 2010). In cognitive narratology, narrative *perspective* is defined as one of the construal operations that ensures the organization and understanding of the experience (Herman, 2009b, p. 119). Narrative perspective determines the focus and the voice of the narrative and involves temporal, spatial, and affective components (Herman 2009b: 128). The cognitive view of perspective emphasizes its embodied nature (Langacker 2008: 73-78). Researchers have also developed the term *vantage point* (Tátrai 2015), which integrates the narrator's physical, social, and mental perspectives as an epistemic grounding in an intersubjective context of shared attention (Tátrai 2015: 13-14), which is a definition in line with the cognitive understanding of perspective.

Narrative *viewpoint* is a narrower concept than perspective. Whereas perspective includes evaluative and affective components that the narrator brings to the story by presenting their own conceptualization of events (Herman 2009b: 128; Niederhoff 2014), narrative viewpoint defines the scope of events, actions, images, etc. that are available to the narrator (Herman, 2009b; Prince, 2001). The point of view in a narrative is seen as a vector that renders a certain directionality and distance from the reader to the narrator and to the narrated situation (Stockwell 2020). This distance can be temporal (narration of events that took place at a certain point in the past), discursive (retelling the words of third parties/characters), moral, etc.

The category of viewpoint as well as perspective is closely related to the concept of *focalization* (Bal & Van Boheemen 2009; Herman 2009a: 191), which has been widely used by narratologists since the term was proposed by Gérard Genette within the framework of structuralist narratology. Focalization focuses on the narrator's perceptual accessibility to the events of the story ('through whose eyes are the events perceived?') (Genette 1972). The focalization theory is based on the concept of the focal character (Jahn 1996) that may not

necessarily coincide with the narrator. In narratives of personal experience, the narrator and focalizer are normally the same (unless one delves into the discussion of the state of the focalizer, such as dreaming, delirium, or shock that may actually alter the perception and make the subjective experience less clear and available to the narrator). Viewpoint metaphor is suggested in this article as a means to underscore the specific perceptual mode that the narrator adopted when witnessing or experiencing certain events. Indeed, cognitive narratologists (Dancygier 2011) approach viewpoint as a blended configuration, which prompted me to analyse the metaphorical construal of subjective perception mode found in personal experience narratives.

In this study I use the term *viewpoint* in relation to the subjective experiential narrative construct that renders affective, temporal, and evaluative components of a perception mode of the narrated events with an emphasis on embodied perception.

The narrative viewpoint is rather a construct than a phenomenon (Dancygier 2016). It may be regarded as an umbrella term for such language manifestations of subjectivity in discourse as deixis, modal verbs and constructions, evidentiality markers, epistemic stance, lexical choices, and multimodal and embodied signals (Dancygier 2016). The proposed term of viewpoint metaphor therefore allows to try and deconstruct the elements that contribute to the complex and holistic understanding of the subjective viewpoint.

For this study, I analysed a sample of personal experience narratives produced by the witnesses of military hostilities in English and in Ukrainian that featured viewpoint metaphors. The feeling of lost control, alienation, or distantiation from the traumatic events is typical of trauma narratives (Held et al. 2019). The relevance of the material is therefore inspired by my finding that viewpoint metaphor serves as a narrative construal element that creates a diminished sense of agency in trauma narratives.

2.1. Viewpoint metaphor: the proposed definition

The working definition of the *viewpoint metaphor* that I propose is as follows: the mapping of subjective embodied perception characteristics typical for the source first-person experience (like dreaming or watching a movie) onto a target (real) first-person experience.

The conceptual metaphor theory defines metaphor as a construal operation involving “a relationship between a source domain, the source of the literal meaning of the metaphorical expression, and a target domain, the domain of the experience actually being described by the metaphor” (Croft & Cruse 2004:55). The classical approach to the conceptual metaphor highlighted its role in framing abstract concepts through concrete domains (Lakoff & Johnson

2008: 117). In the conceptual blending theory, metaphor relies on the mental spaces that produce an emergent space combining the elements of the input spaces (Fauconnier & Turner 2003). The current Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, 2020) emphasizes the embodied nature of conceptualization, cultural variations, contextualization, the role of metaphorical thought in online discursive meaning-making, and the different schematicity levels of mapping (image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces). In turn, the cognitive focus of narratological studies on experientiality and narrativization as an online process of making sense of experience through the narrative construction (Fludernik, 2018) inspires a view of narrative construal as a dynamic cognitive structure, whereby viewpoint serves as an important parameter.

To study how viewpoint metaphor serves narrative construction, I propose to identify the elements of a viewpoint that are mapped. For instance, regarding the most broadly represented viewpoint metaphors, the dream viewpoint metaphor can be represented as EXPERIENCING THE EVENT is DREAMING OF THE EVENT, and the cinematic viewpoint metaphor can be expressed as EXPERIENCING THE EVENT is WATCHING A MOVIE OF THE EVENT. Hence, the range of elements characterizing the focalizer's perception that may be mapped are the following: being a passive viewer, having no agency or sense of agency, perceiving the events as not real, camera movement, timelapse, slow motion, and special effects.

2.2. Study and the sample of narratives

This qualitative study focused on a collection of 50 personal experience narratives sampled manually from the online media outlets and published editions of first-hand interviews and reports by military and civilian witnesses of wars and military hostilities. The sources of these narratives are published interviews with witnesses and soldiers or first-hand commentaries included along with media coverage.

For the sake of general understanding of the sample content, Table 1 presents a description of the narratives collected. The sample mainly consists of the narratives of the war in Ukraine but it also includes a smaller fraction of narratives from the witnesses of other military hostilities.

Table 1. Sample description by the source and content of first-hand narratives

Narrator profile	
Civilian	Military
39 narratives	11 narratives
Conflict	
Russian-Ukrainian war	Other military hostilities (WW2; in Iraq, Palestine, Gaza, Syria, Persian Gulf, Vietnam)

42 narratives		8 narratives	
Metaphor connotation			
Negative	Positive		Neutral
58	1		1

The numbers of the viewpoint metaphors sampled for this qualitative analysis are as follows:

- EXPERIENCING is DREAMING – 22;
- EXPERIENCING is WATCHING A MOVIE – 18;
- EXPERIENCING is PLAYING VIDEOGAME – 1;
- EXPERIENCE is NEW LIFE – 4;
- SUBJECTIVE TIME is FROZEN TIME – 4,
- EXPERIENCE is PARALLEL REALITY – 3,
- EXPERIENCE is SINKING / BEING SUNK – 2,
- EXPERIENCE is BEING IN FOG – 2.

It should be noted that some narratives feature more than one metaphor. The overwhelming majority of the metaphors appear in a negative context.

The methodological frame consists in the qualitative study of the sampled viewpoint metaphors supported by the elements of concordance-based analysis performed on the NOW corpus, mainly for illustrative purposes. The qualitative analysis resided in identifying the mapped viewpoint elements between the source experience domain and the target real traumatic experience domain. The core point of the analysis is to shed light onto the subjective experiential and embodied characteristics of the viewpoint by distinguishing the embodied perception characteristics that may be mapped across different experience domains (reality vs. dreaming, experiencing vs. watching a movie of an experience etc.). The viewpoint metaphor being a new proposed focus on narrative subjectivity construction, the qualitative framework allows me to demonstrate the nature of viewpoint construal in first-person narrative through metaphorical integration processes.

2.3. Discussion

In multiple narratives from the corpus, it stands out that once the viewpoint metaphor appears, it is often either repeated and reinforced by other metaphors of the kind, or accompanied by a more extended explanation and disambiguation of the point made by the metaphor. A telling example of this point is (1), excerpted from a published article of Abel Polese, a researcher who was in Ukraine at the time of the 2022 invasion.

- (1) *Escaping your first war is harder than you may think. You hear the bombs from a distance, you see the blast of the explosions and **your brain still thinks** “it’s far away, it won’t get all the way here”. It is the first step of a shock: denial, when you simply think “**this can’t be true. I am dreaming**”. (. . .) **You look at yourself from the side and it feels like watching a bombing on TV.** The danger is just “out there” but definitely not here, you think. Denial could continue until eventually, (. . .) **In a previous life**, you’ve enjoyed multicultural Chernivtsi, (. . .) **It’s the end of the world as you knew it. . . . The war seems just a bad dream**, perhaps it will end soon. (Polese 2022)*

The narrative features the viewpoint metaphors of DREAM (*this can’t be true. I am dreaming; The war seems just a bad dream*), MOVIE (*You look at yourself from the side and it feels like watching a bombing on TV*), and NEW LIFE (*In a previous life; It’s the end of the world as you knew it*). The DREAM metaphor is repeated twice. Both the DREAM and the MOVIE metaphors are provided with additional comments about denial and detachment (*your brain still thinks “it’s far away, it won’t get all the way here”; You look at yourself from the side; The danger is just “out there” but definitely not here, you think. Denial could continue until eventually*), making derealization a crucial experiential component of the metaphorical mapping between experience types.

In other cases, the density of viewpoint metaphors may be lower in a narrative, many narratives still contain more than one viewpoint metaphor, which highlights the narrator’s perceived need to render their specific condition and subjective experientiality of the traumatic events narrated. However, on the other hand, it is still possible to consider them separately in the narrower context.

2.3.1. The EXPERIENCING is DREAMING viewpoint metaphor

The EXPERIENCING is DREAMING viewpoint metaphor is the most common in the sample and it appears to be most frequent in the narratives of traumatic events in general:

- (2) *“It’s like a bad dream you want to wake up from, but you can’t. Every morning you wake up not realizing what is going on and I think that any Ukrainian is thinking is how **to stop this nightmare**,” she said. (Slaght 2022)*

- (3) *Наче уві сні я читала, як деякі люди вже вирушали до обладнаного заздалегідь бомбосховища або обговорювали виїзд з міста. (Transl.: **As if in a dream**, I was reading that some people were already heading to a bomb shelter or discussing leaving the city.) (Бровінська 2022)*

(4) Коли мені сказали, що почалася війна, я подумала, що це сон, що я сплю і що мені все сниться. Та, на жаль, цей страшний сон триває досі... (Transl.: When I was told that the war had started, **I thought it was a dream, that I was asleep and that I was dreaming. But, unfortunately, this terrible dream is still going on...**) (Синяк 2022)

In (2), the narrator compares her experience during the war to a dream, reinforcing the idea by repeating the metaphor using the word *nightmare*. The DREAMING metaphor maps the perceived unreality, detachment, and inability to process and integrate the new information coherently that are characteristic of dreaming onto the real inability to believe and process the traumatic experience. Similarly, the narrator in (3) says she was reading the news on the first day of the Russian invasion into Ukraine in February 2022 *as if in a dream*. Grammatically-wise, it should be noted that the viewpoint metaphor can be rendered by comparing nouns, representing a clear conceptual mapping, such as EXPERIENCE is DREAM in “I thought it was **a dream**” (укр. *це сон*), or by a grammatical construction that profiles the perception mode more expressively, such as “as if **in a dream**” (укр. *наче уві сні*) and “that I **was dreaming it all**” (укр. *мені все сниться*) as in (4).

It should be noted that some of the metaphorical viewpoint structures, as I approach them in this study, appear in simile form. Essentially, the difference in processing the metaphor (A is B) and a simile (A is like B) resides in the creation of a new CONCEPT* for a metaphor, which does not emerge with a simile that relies on specific features (O’Donoghue 2009: 143). Equally, metaphors tend to be based on rather high-salient predicates unlike similes that may involve quite novel analogies (O’Donoghue 2009). Having accepted the general metaphor vs. simile difference in processing, I suggest that the contextual analysis of the specific viewpoint metaphors should not be overlooked. O’Donoghue (2009) notes that the differences between these conceptualization means are often context-bound. Indeed, in viewpoint metaphors analyzed in this study, the analogy is not full as both English- and Ukrainian-speaking narrators tend to avoid naming the subject of the comparison explicitly and use dummy subjects (*it’s like a bad dream*) or compare whole states of consciousness (*felt like I was dreaming, наче уві сні тощо*). Such linguistic choice should be due to the grammatical restriction and inability to put the target domain (mode of experiencing, the whole gestalt-like experience of the situation) into conventional phrasing. For instance, on the account of the example with “I felt like a sardine vs. I felt I was a sardine” from Glucksberg & Haught (2006: 375), O’Donoghue (2009:145) notes that the linguistic conventional way of expressing the meaning here is biased towards a simile. Similarly, there is a linguistic limitation that essentially prevents narrators of mapping the experiencing mode as “in a dream” or “in a movie”, “уві сні” or “в кіно”. Using a metaphor

here would often require naming the target domain of the experiencing mode explicitly, while a simile allows the narrators to drop the target domain mention and only name the source domain. Therefore, in this analysis, I treat the viewpoint metaphors as conceptualizations that can have the linguistic form of comparison with no difference relevant for this particular study in identifying the elements that are mapped across domains.

DREAM metaphors are employed by the witnesses of military hostilities as a means to render their perception of an unexpected and shocking events. In (5), a Syrian doctor reports first seeing a large number of injured and panicking people:

(5) *We just saw people were suffocating... My house was very near, so I arrived to see the big square in front of the hospital full of people. I felt like I was dreaming.* (Parker 2020)

The EXPERIENCING is DREAMING viewpoint metaphor hence maps onto the perception of reality such aspects of dreaming experience as unreality, diminished perceived embodiment with direct participation, lack of belief, and unexpected, shocking events.

The viewpoint metaphor EXPERIENCE is DREAMING stands out as a quite stereotypical viewpoint metaphor that may even be regarded as a dead metaphor in many contexts. The search for the phrase “like I * dreaming” in the NOW Corpus (News on the Web, 17.4 billion words) returns 418 cases where it is used in both positive and negative contexts. A search for “as if I * dreaming” returns 30 results, positively and negatively charged as well. (The metaphor is not limited to these expressions, but only they allow to track first-person contexts in the corpus, unlike, for instance, “as if in a dream” etc.). The fragments of the concordances for “like I was dreaming” and “as if I was dreaming” can be consulted in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. “Like in a bad dream” appears to be another common expression; “in a bad dream” returns 93 results from the NOW Corpus (see Fig. 3 for the concordance excerpt).

#saw my house burning. I felt like I was dreaming, " Mufamadi said. " We tried to extinguish the fire, while
#offered no consolation. " It was like I was dreaming when I received the SMS notification that I had just withdrawn money,
#estranged father and son and it felt like I was dreaming. It was quite surreal. " # You can catch Edwin in the
#the match against Afghanistan. I felt like I was dreaming when we won. " # " Earlier, I didn't know what
#I lifted the trophy, I felt like I was dreaming. I am very happy. Even during the final moments, I was
#'. " At first it seemed like I was dreaming. To be a part of Madhur sir's film is a distinction in
#was just general torture. It was like I was dreaming and someone was going to slap me and wake me up. # "
#didn't feel real, I felt like I was dreaming. # " I headed the ball straight away and it woke me up

Figure 1. A fragment of the NOW Corpus concordance for “like I was dreaming”

link made my heartbeat stop for a while. It was **as if I was dreaming**. # She picked a stick lying carelessly nearby to scribble some illegible the tarmac waiting for the plane to depart, I felt **as if I was dreaming**. # It all still feels surreal. I feel relief that none of my . I was shocked and amazed. At first I felt **as if I was dreaming**, but when my mind was relaxed, I believed it was true that I because I had never registered for the programme. I felt **as if I was dreaming** because I used to watch other people being vaccinated on tele my swimming pool side and surrounded my premises. It looked **as if I was dreaming**. " My mind skipped off. When they came, there was no was sleeping when I heard a loud sound. It was **as if I was dreaming**. I opened the door and ran out. While I was trying to escape know where the fire had come from. " I felt **as if I was dreaming** while I watched helplessly, " Matsila said. " I am now appealing to of a baby. A bright light. It was **as if I was dreaming**. He told me to go and save His people, " he said in

Figure 2. A fragment of the NOW Corpus concordance for “as if I was dreaming”

the NBA again. # " I feel like I'm living **in a bad dream**, " Leonard told Jeremy Schaap of " Outside the Lines " in an i now count, and moments of heart-stopping fear that felt like living **in a bad dream**. Except that the repeated, very what he did. # " I feel like I'm living **in a bad dream**, " Leonard said. " There's not a hateful cell in my body of my life. " # " I feel like I'm **in a bad dream**. The officers said Garrett was a hero. I know. He always was my city and felt it wasn't real, that I was **in a bad dream** instead. But eventually, I felt that I needed to start my life happened. It is not often that we observe, as if **in a bad dream**, a leader openly " commit suicide ". Before you wo . The feelings can be very disturbing -- like you're living **in a bad dream**. The National Health Service in the UK says underestimated. We felt unheard, like we were screaming silent words **in a bad dream**. Like the boss was deaf to Nathan said. # " Early on I just thought I was **in a bad dream**. I woke up and I thought, ' this isn't happening. " Cheer, tells cameras. " I honestly thought I was living **in a bad dream**, I literally couldn't wrap my head around any for a 750g tub. # Shoppers feel like they are living **in a bad dream** as inflation rises above nine per cent and now t

Figure 3. A fragment of the NOW Corpus concordance for “in a bad dream”

Having consulted the concordances, one might argue that not all of dream or movie metaphors that speakers utilize are negatively charged, and not all of them are viewpoint metaphors in the right sense, and that would be correct. In the English language, for example, expressions “it’s a dream” or the theatrical expression “scene shift/next scene” have made their way into everyday communication and not necessarily have sufficient viewpoint relevance. For instance, the evaluative “it’s a dream” bears no specific relation to the viewpoint construction except for its subjectivity. However, another similarly trivial expression “like in a bad dream” rather has viewpoint valence as dream spaces are perceived as mirror realities often highlighting fears and concerns of waking life but blending and distorting them (Bondarenko & Nikolaienko 2022). This feature of dreams makes speakers compare bad experiences which they are not prepared to rationally process to bad dreams. In our study, we departed from the metaphor’s role in rendering the narrative perspective and experientiality to identify metaphors as viewpoint ones. The nature of the war-witnessing narratives indeed has the prerequisite for strong experientiality, which other discourses may exhibit to a lower degree. However, judging from the concordances, viewpoint metaphors turn out to be a rather commonly used means of

rendering one's personal experience and subjective perception of events. It should not be treated as a discourse-specific device but rather a metaphorical mechanism available for any kind of personal experience narrative.

The viewpoint metaphor refers to a highly subjective and embodied perception mode, such as dream, or a specific fixed and passive vantage point as in movie metaphors, or lack of subjective agency that applies both to dream and movie-watching. This way, viewpoint metaphors allow an insight into the essence of the elusive concept of viewpoint in natural narratives, shedding light on the conceptualization of traumatic experience.

Finally, EXPERIENCING is DREAMING viewpoint metaphor is often combined with other ones, which signals the narrators' attempt to employ linguistic and conceptual means that subtly and precisely describe their unusual experience:

(6) *"It's started," he told her. "I had the feeling I was inside a parallel reality, that I was dreaming," Zelenska says, describing the moment when normal life was interrupted, for her family and her country. (Walker 2022)*

Example (6) was taken from an interview with Olena Zelenska and exemplifies two metaphors combined, EXPERIENCING is BEING IN PARALLEL REALITY and EXPERIENCING is DREAMING.

Another example of the doubled, reinforced metaphors of the same kind is (7):

(7) *Відчуття, наче це якась паралельна реальність, наче я сплю і бачу жахливий сон, де на своїй землі гине мій брат, мої друзі дитинства, мої земляки... (Transl.: It feels like some kind of parallel reality, as if I am sleeping and seeing a terrible dream where my brother, my childhood friends, my countrymen are dying on my land...)* (Шрамчук 2017)

These metaphors combined highlight the feeling of unreality of the happening events at the same time as the world appears to be similar but not the same to the one that a person is used to, which applies both to a dream and to a parallel reality as a fiction concept.

It was mentioned that the overwhelming majority of the DREAMING metaphors in the sample are negative but for two, unlike the corpus search that also contains positive ones. It must be due to the nature of the narrative about the intrinsically traumatic experience of witnessing or taking part in the hostilities. However, the positive one in the sample is found in the interview with the defender of Azovstal in Mariupol who had been a POW and was released from the Russian captivity in the prisoner swap.

(8) *They once told us at three or four in the morning: "Pack up. You're leaving." We didn't know where to. We thought they were taking us to the detention center in Yelenivka where the*

others were kept. (...) *When they brought me home, I thought I was dreaming. By now, I've returned to normal life, of course.* (The Insider 2022)

In (8), the soldier reports his disbelief in good turn of events by using the DREAMING metaphor; while it is positively charged, the metaphor still appears in a negative context, but may be labelled as positive.

2.3.2. The EXPERIENCING is WATCHING A MOVIE viewpoint metaphor

The EXPERIENCING is WATCHING A MOVIE is a second-common viewpoint metaphor. Like the DREAMING metaphor, it profiles the perceived unreality of the experienced event or rather inability to process their reality, which necessitates using a metaphor for the perception mode.

In (9), the speaker also explains the cinematic metaphor and highlights the passive viewing, detached aspect of the traumatic experience:

(9) *Не можу сказати, що це було страшно. Це було, як в кіно. Мозок не може сприймати і приймати такої реальності.* (Transl.: *I can't say that it was scary. It was like in a movie. The brain cannot perceive and accept such a reality.*) (Купріянова 2022)

The speaker adds an explicit comment about their brain not being able to process the experience, which prompts them to use the WATCHING A MOVIE metaphor. In addition, a reduced agency and control over the events might also map between the experience of watching a movie and witnessing traumatic events.

Besides being a detached passive viewer and being unable to process events as real with dangerous consequences, another point the MOVIE metaphor allows to make is the timelapse effects:

(10) *Потім картинки, як у фільмах, коли головний герой кліпає очима, а там на екрані ранок, потім хоп і ніч.* (Transl.: *Then pictures, like in movies, when the main character blinks, and it is morning there on the screen, and then suddenly it's night.*) (Ребрик 2022)

In (10), the speaker uses the MOVIE metaphor to profile their altered perception of time during the war.

The viewpoint metaphor EXPERIENCING is WATCHING A MOVIE has an invariant than can be narrowed down as VISION/VISUAL PERCEPTION is CAMERA:

(11) *Як у сповільненій зйомці я повертаю голову і бачу перелякані очі сина* (Transl.: *As if in slow motion, I turn my head and see my son's frightened eyes*) (Кущенко 2022)

(12) *це було кошмарне видовище, я не забуду це ніколи, як у сповільненій зйомці метрів за п'ятдесят від нашої дев'ятиповерхівки, де я жив, пролітає «сіра сигара» до двох метрів, розумієте? (Transl.: it was a nightmarish sight, I'll never forget it, like in slow motion, fifty meters from our nine-story building where I lived, a "gray cigar" of up to two meters long was flying, you know?) (Дембицька 2022)*

(13) *У голові промайнуло: «Міна!». (...) на землі озирнувся та, як у сповільненій зйомці, побачив, як на подвір'ї виростає стовп пилу, а по нозі розпливається пляма крові. (Transl.: It flashed in my head, "A bomb!". (...) I looked around on the ground and, as if in slow motion, saw a column of dust rising in the yard, and a blood stain spreading on my leg.) (Пустиннікова 2022)*

In (11), (12), and (13) people report experiencing traumatic, scary, and shocking events as if in slow motion, using the cinematic camera effect referring to first-person experience. This way they add salience to the moment that was experienced intensely and entrenched in memory.

(14) *In general, time passes slowly, as if in a movie, from the beginning of a full-scale invasion, there is a constant feeling of waking up on February 24. (Gianmarco Del Re 2023)*

In (14), the reported experience is also mapped as movie-watching, and the aspect of subjective time perception is profiled in the accompanying comments (time passes slowly) with a mention of the seemingly looped time (there is a constant feeling of waking up on February 24) to render the comprehensive personal effect of the experience.

2.3.3. Other viewpoint metaphors

Another common (but by far less common than DREAM and MOVIE) metaphor domain in narratives about war is TIME, often in combination with NEW LIFE metaphor. For example:

(15) *The days have fused into each other. It all feels like a big lump of undifferentiated time – our new life after this hell has been unleashed. (Reidy 2022)*

In (15), the narrator highlights how time flow feels subjectively, tagging this fused lump of time “a new life”.

Another metaphor that is less typical yet quite resplendent with experiential meaning is EXPERIENCE is SINKING / BEING SUNK:

(16) *“It was as if I had been sitting underwater for a long time, thinking that there would be no more air, and then I suddenly emerged,” she told Byline Times by phone. “There are no words.” (York 2022)*

In (16), the woman reports her feelings after Kherson, a Ukrainian city that was under Russian occupation, was liberated by the Ukrainian military forces. She renders her feelings as

sitting “underwater” during the occupation, which arguably renders a somewhat hushed and limited perception in her memory, and the suffocating feeling that refers to her emotional condition. She extends the metaphor to “emerging” from underwater when her senses returned to the norm.

Another example of the same metaphor in the same sense is found in (17):

(17) *«Та війна. Вони зайшли з усіх напрямків. У Києві вибухи, глянь на вулицю, черга на виїзд із міста». Я наче з-під води виринаю, кидаюся до вікна, уся вулиця, зазвичай пуста у цей час, у три ряди забита автівками, і саме в цей момент також починає вити сирена. Я відчуваю жах.* (Transl.: *"That's war. They attacked from all directions. There are explosions in Kyiv, look outside, there is a queue to leave the city." I seem to emerge from under the water, rush to the window, and the whole street, usually empty at this time, is jammed with cars in three rows, and at this very moment the siren also starts wailing. I feel terrified.*) (Ребрик 2022)

The narrator describes her experience of the first shock of war as “emerging from underwater,” arguably referring to her suppressed perception during the shocked confusion and return to the normal perception mode.

Finally, a metaphor with a great illustrative potential for the viewpoint metaphor, but yet not as ubiquitous one, is EXPERIENCING is PLAYING VIDEOGAME:

(18) *Mariupol became so unrealistic that it felt like a Battlefield setting: planes flying, shots fired everywhere, tanks, helicopters, artillery, street battles, you get wounded, so they pull you out of the window and transport you on a motor boat... It was really like a video game turned up to eleven.* (The Insider 2022)

The example in (18) shows the soldier’s perception of the battlefield as a videogame. Videogames are played from the first-person point of view, allows for participation, have a dynamic vantage point (unlike a movie with a detached, passive viewer), but the player is rather disembodied and does not run the risk of death. Meanwhile, the landscape in videogames is surreal. These two effects, the unreality of the landscape and the dynamic participation with lagging feeling of fear appear to be the viewpoint elements that are mapped in this case.

3. Conclusion

The article proposes a specific kind of conceptual metaphor, the viewpoint metaphor, to address the viewpoint construction means in personal experience narratives about traumatic events. The working definition was proposed for viewpoint metaphor, that is mapping the perception mode

elements (passive witnessing, reduced agency, hushed perception, unreality of events, timelapse, and slow motion) from source domains of experience such as WATCHING A MOVIE or HAVING A DREAM on the target real experience of traumatic events. The research material was collected from the military and civilian participants and witnesses of armed hostilities in Ukraine and in some other countries, which conditioned the overwhelmingly prevalent negative connotation for the sampled viewpoint metaphors. Such metaphors may yet bear positive connotation in other contexts profiling perceived unreality of the positive events. In both cases, viewpoint metaphors render the experiential, intrinsically subjective and embodied aspect of the narrative viewpoint. The fact that several viewpoint metaphors often appear in a row emphasises their role as an important means for the narrator to verbalize their unusual subjective experience. Studying the viewpoint metaphors allows divulging the conceptual structure of the viewpoint as a part of the mental space construal by identifying the elements that narrators map between the modes of experience/perception.

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