

**JEZIK I EMOCIJE / LANGUAGE  
AND EMOTIONS**



# METAPHORS FOR OČAJ ‘DESPAIR’ IN CROATIAN: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

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This study examines the role of metaphor in the conceptualization of *očaj* ‘despair’ based on the Croatian corpus hrWaC. The study also considers some non-figurative aspects. Employing “metaphorical pattern analysis” (Stefanowitsch 2006) and MIP (Pragglejaz Group 2007) methods, the paper scrutinizes corpus examples that contain the target-domain word *očaj* ‘despair’, looking for metaphorical patterns. These patterns were extracted from a random sample of 1,000 citations and additional corpus citations that were retrieved based on a list of collocation candidates. The analysis shows that the metaphorical conceptualization of *očaj* ‘despair’ in Croatian in the data examined relates to approximately forty source domains, out of which the most frequently utilized is CONTAINER, followed by OBJECT. The source domains identified in the conceptualization of *očaj* illustrate similarities between the metaphors for *očaj* in Croatian and those identified for sadness and depression in various languages, and point toward universal features of metaphorical conceptualization of some emotions and emotional states.

KEYWORDS:

*conceptual metaphors, conceptualization of emotional states, očaj (despair)*

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This study is part of a broader project examining metaphorical conceptualization of complex and atypical emotions and emotional states. It was directly motivated by the study of *nada* ‘hope’ in Croatian,<sup>1</sup> in which corpus-based evidence was found indicating a close relationship between despair and hope. That relationship has been addressed in previous research. For instance, Nesse indicates that despair and hope are intrinsically intertwined, “differing only in whether or not the object of desire is more or less likely to be reached” (Nesse 1999: 431). The author sees hope and despair as existing in the middle realm between fear on the one side of the spectrum, and disappointment and sadness on the other. Hope and despair emerge “when efforts are ongoing but the goal is not yet reached nor recognized as impossible” (Nesse 1999: 442). According to Lazarus, despair is an “utter loss of hope” (Lazarus 1999: 659). Govier approaches despair as a (cognitive) opposite of hope, equating it with hopelessness (see below): “to despair is to lose all hope, to be without hope” (Govier 2011: 247).

Despair is a complex psychological construct understood and defined in various ways in psychological, medical, and philosophical literature: as a state of mind (Lazarus 1999: 659; Theravive n.d.), a depressed emotional and/or cognitive state (Gutin et al. 2023: 2), a core symptom of depression (Shanahan et al. 2019: 855), an emotion (Nesse 1999: 429), and “an emotional state of futility and hopelessness due to inability or unwillingness to overcome stressful stimuli” (Kositsyn et al. 2022: 1).

Research further suggests that despair is a negative emotional state that can arise from a variety of causes, such as perceived unchangeable circumstances, loss, and disappointment, and that it relates to depression.

In many contexts, including corpora examples used in this study, despair and depression indeed seem to be closely related in that both are negative emotional states that involve feelings of hopelessness, sadness, and a loss of interest in daily activities. However, they differ in some important aspects: despair is typically considered a temporary state that arises in response to some specific circumstances. It is often a normal and necessary part of the process of coping with difficulties. However, its intensity can vary, and it can have fatal consequences: in recent times, researchers have frequently referred to diverse causes of mortality as “deaths of despair” (e.g., Bower 2020).

<sup>1</sup> Both that study (Šarić 2022) and this one were developed within the framework of the interdisciplinary hub *Literature, Cognition and Emotions* (LCE) at the University of Oslo. The author acknowledges LCE’s financial support, which made it possible to complete this study.

Depression is a clinical condition that requires professional help, and it involves a persistent and pervasive feeling of sadness, along with other symptoms such as fatigue, changes in appetite, sleep disturbances, and loss of interest in activities that were once enjoyable ('Depression' n.d.). Shanahan et al. regard despair as a core symptom of depression (Shanahan et al. 2019: 855).

"Milder" forms of despair are often a natural response to difficult life events. In some cases, prolonged feelings of despair can lead to either clinical despair, "a profound and existential hopelessness, helplessness, powerlessness and pessimism about life and the future" (Diamond 2011), or depression, particularly if individuals are unable to find ways to cope with their feelings or move forward from the events that triggered them.

Kositsyn et al. (2022) link hopelessness and despair, as do many other accounts, whereby some of them equate despair and hopelessness, and some differentiate the two. For instance, Huber distinguishes episodic and fundamental despair and defines the latter as a "general state of hopelessness" (Huber 2023: 84). Kwong claims that hopelessness and despair are two ways of losing hope: hopelessness implies ceasing to hope for a desired outcome, whereas despair implies ceasing to be hopeful that a desired outcome will be obtained (Kwong 2023: 2). Some accounts also provide insights about the relation of despair and hopelessness to depression, such as Overholser et al. who define hopelessness as "the expectation that current life problems will never be resolved" (Overholser et al. 2015: 2), and despair as a feeling caused by "severe levels of hopelessness" that also cause a "tendency to give up, thereby blocking effective coping" (Overholser et al. 2015: 8). Moderate or severe hopelessness is linked to more severe depression and more frequent suicidal thoughts (Overholser et al. 2015: 8). Thus, in this account, hopelessness is considered a less severe condition than despair, which represents a more intense emotional state.

Hopelessness can lead to feelings of despair, but not all instances of despair are characterized by hopelessness. For example, an individual that is grieving the loss of a loved one may experience intense feelings of sadness and despair, but may still hold onto hope for the future. Thus, although hopelessness and despair are related, they are often not interchangeable.

Arias et al. (2020) specifically investigate the relationship between sadness and despair, and the relationship of the latter to depression. Sadness is described as an emotion resulting from the activity of the PANIC/GRIEF system. Its sustained activation "provokes a cascade of psychological despair that, if persistent, leads from normal sadness to depressive disorders" (Arias et al. 2020: 203).

Despair is a complex emotional state that involves a number of other components in addition to sadness. Mohammad and Turney's study indicates that despair addition-

ally relates to anger, disgust, and fear (Mohammad and Turney 2013: 61). Shanahan et al. argue that despair “manifests itself in cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and biological domains” (Shanahan et al. 2019: 854), corresponding to emotional, cognitive, biosomatic, and behavioral despair at the personal level. However, beyond that level, despair can “permeate social contexts, including social networks and communities in which people are embedded” (Shanahan et al. 2019: 855-856).

The ways despair is conceptualized non-figuratively and figuratively vary across cultures and languages, and studying these differences can provide insights into the cultural and linguistic factors that shape its understanding.

Studying metaphors defining despair can shed light on dealing with this difficult phenomenon in everyday life. A profound understanding of the dominant metaphors that frame despair and their alternatives can positively influence mental health. Understanding the nature of despair and the way individuals perceive it is important for these individuals and also for healthcare professionals that work with people struggling with depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues that despair relates to.

In psychotherapy, metaphors have been recognized as an important communication tool between patients and therapists (Tay 2013). Understanding how a variety of sources frame despair metaphorically is useful because it contributes to facilitating communication about how to deal with it and how to overcome it. It also contributes to facilitating communication about depression — a medical condition that affects many people and is not only misunderstood and underestimated, but is also often taboo.

## 2. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND EMOTIONS

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (e.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1999) postulates that, by using metaphors, we systematically conceptualize abstract, complex targets (such as states and emotions) in terms of concrete, physical sources: for instance, in LOVE IS FIRE,<sup>2</sup> we use a physical source domain (FIRE) to conceptualize the target, LOVE. Kövecses’s (e.g., 2000a) introspective studies extensively examined the metaphorical and metonymic conceptualization of several emotions. He suggested that figurative language allows us to understand and describe aspects of various emotions, such as their causes, their intensity, and our ability to control them. Kövecses (2015) linked

<sup>2</sup> Small capitals are the standard form for signaling conceptual metaphors in Conceptual Metaphor Theory. This study, along with many others (e.g., Forceville and Paling 2021) recognizes that the practical shorthand A IS B suggests a misleading precision and lack of ambiguity, and it downplays the dynamic nature of metaphors.

typical conceptual metaphors that characterize emotions to the source domains FLUID IN A CONTAINER, HEAT/FIRE, NATURAL FORCE, PHYSICAL FORCE, SOCIAL SUPERIOR, OPPONENT, CAPTIVE ANIMAL, FORCE DISLOCATING THE SELF, BURDEN, INSANITY, and DISEASE.

Conceptualization of emotions is influenced by cultural and linguistic factors, and studying these differences can provide insights into the nature of the emotion and its expression across different cultures and languages (see, e.g., Kövecses 2000b; Türker 2013).

Corpus-based studies (e.g., Stefanowitsch 2006; Türker 2013) have found that many of the source domains discussed in introspective studies are indeed frequent, whereas many others go unnoticed. These studies have shown how entrenched in language particular mappings are, what linguistic metaphors are most common — that is, realized in numerous (conventionalized) language patterns — and which are less common or innovative.

Some emotions, such as love and anger (see, e.g., Kövecses 1990, 2000a; Ogarkova and Soriano 2014; Stefanowitsch 2006), have received much attention in cognitive linguistics. The linguistic conceptualization of despair has not received much attention. Alonso-Arbiol, Soriano and van de Vijver (2013) call attention to issues of (in)equivalence of emotion terms: they discuss the most common despair terms across languages (English, Spanish, and Basque), concluding that the most comparable terms in the three languages — *despair*, *desesperación*, and *estipena* — actually refer to two different concepts, not an unitary one.

Interesting findings that shed some light on despair can be found in studies focusing on metaphors for sadness and depression. Works that analyzed metaphors of depression have mostly focused on English. An early cognitive linguistics study by Barcelona (1986) operated with a limited number of authors' examples, but identified the main metaphors of depression that were also identified in later empirical works. More recent studies focused on various empirical material: McMullen and Conway (2002) analyzed therapy session recordings, Semino (2008) radio broadcasts on depression, and Charteris-Black (2012) interviews with people that had experienced depression. The press was analyzed by Reali et al. (2016), and Coll-Florit et al. (2021) analyzed first-person accounts in blogs. Animated films were analyzed by Fahlenbrach (2017) and Forceville and Paling (2021). Comparative insights into the conceptualization of sadness in English and other languages are provided, for instance, by Türker (2013) for Korean, Skuban (2022) for Serbian, and Trào (2014) for Vietnamese.

This corpus-based study of the role of metaphor in the conceptualization of *očaj* 'despair'<sup>3</sup> in Croatian proceeds by presenting the procedure and method (Section 2),

<sup>3</sup> *Despair* and *očaj* are used interchangeably in this text. Unless stated otherwise, the observations relate to the Croatian word *očaj* and the related concept.

and then examines the most and least frequently utilized metaphors, and what they indicate about how speakers of Croatian experience and construe despair (Section 3). Some non-figurative aspects are also addressed.<sup>4</sup> Section 4 discusses the findings in the light of research on metaphors for depression and sadness, and it provides some conclusions.

This analysis provides insights that can be used in further comparative studies. *Očaj* can be compared to some other emotions, states, and dispositions in Croatian, and insights into its figurative conceptualization make it possible to account for similarities and differences between Croatian and other languages.<sup>5</sup> A detailed account of metaphors for *očaj* in Croatian contributes to our knowledge of universal and culture-specific aspects of this concept.

### 3. PROCEDURE AND METHOD

This analysis employed “metaphorical pattern analysis” (Stefanowitsch 2006), meaning that metaphorical expressions (or patterns) were examined in corpus citations containing the target-domain word *očaj* ‘despair’<sup>6</sup> in the corpus hrWaC.<sup>7</sup> The immediate context of the target word was examined<sup>8</sup> following the MIP procedure (Pragglejaz Group 2007). The searches were performed in March 2023. Altogether, 12,042 (8.62 per million) wordforms of the lemma *očaj* ‘despair’ were found.<sup>9</sup> First, a random sample of 1,000 examples and the collocation candidates (CC) list (see Appendix for its beginning and the search option) were retrieved. Next, the sample and the 1,500 uppermost collocates on the CC list were examined to arrive at additional patterns. In the random sample, all the metaphorical expressions co-occurring in the immediate context together with the search word *očaj* were identified and grouped into sets

<sup>4</sup> Specific bodily reactions may indicate the existence of despair and are often the basis for metonymic conceptualizations. Due to space limitations and the specific features of the material used, metonymy is not analyzed in the present study.

<sup>5</sup> For cultural specificities of the conceptualization of emotions, see, e.g., Kövecses (2000b).

<sup>6</sup> Emotion terms can refer to long-term dispositions, immediate behavioral reactions, theoretical concepts, and even artistic/professional practices (Tissari 2009). When it comes to despair, the first two references dominate in hrWaC. In religious contexts, *očaj* is most often a theoretical concept.

<sup>7</sup> A web corpus collected from the .hr top-level domain. The current version (v2.0) contains 1.9 billion tokens. See <http://nlp.ffzg.hr/resources/corpora/hrwac/>, and [https://www.clarin.si/noske/all.cgi/first\\_form?corpname=hrwac;align=](https://www.clarin.si/noske/all.cgi/first_form?corpname=hrwac;align=) for the web interface.

<sup>8</sup> The average length of the examples is twenty to thirty words.

<sup>9</sup> To compare, 3,347 tokens were found for *beznade* ‘hopelessness’ and 104,330 for *nada* ‘hope’.



representing various source domains (e.g., *prevelik očaj* 'huge despair',<sup>10</sup> MEASURABLE OBJECT). Subsequently, on the CC list, potentially figuratively used words and their source domains were identified (e.g., *curiti* 'leak', LIQUID). All of the citations with relevant metaphorical patterns include the target domain lexeme *očaj*,<sup>11</sup> as well as one or more words that evoke one or more source domains (e.g., in the prepositional phrase *u očaj* 'into despair', the preposition *u* evokes space, and specifically CONTAINER).

Various source domains are linked to different numbers of lexical units. For instance, for the source domain PLANT, three such units are attested in the sample: *korijen* 'root', *plod* 'fruit', *sijati* 'sow' (*korijen očaja* 'root of despair', *sijati očaj* 'sow despair', *plod očaja* 'fruit of despair').

In addition to the random sample and the CC list, the relevant units were also identified in additional concordances. For potentially figurative words on the CC list, concordances were created to check whether these words were actually used figuratively in their contexts. The online dictionary HJP (<https://hjp.znanje.hr/>) was used as a guide for checking whether a language unit is used figuratively (and thus indicates a metaphorical conceptualization) or not.

#### 4. ANALYSIS

After examining the random sample, four examples (in which the search word *očaj* was, for example, used as a proper name) were disregarded. In 54 examples in the sample, *očaj* is explicitly defined or referred to as emotion (41 examples), state (10), emotion and state (1), process (1), and mood (1); see for instance, (1).

- (1) *osjećaj* očaja može lako prerasti u suicidalni poriv  
the feeling of despair can easily turn into a suicidal urge

In 134 examples, no figurative pattern could be identified, that is, the short context of *očaj* did not suggest any figurative conceptualization of the concept. In many of these examples, some other concepts were mentioned along with *očaj*. They point, for instance, toward emotions appearing together with *očaj*, circumstances in which *očaj* tends to appear, and consequences it may relate to. In 42 examples, the noun *očaj* is

<sup>10</sup> The translations of corpus examples are kept very close to the originals to better present the source domains instantiated by the original Croatian expressions.

<sup>11</sup> All of the conceptual metaphors for the phenomenon examined are not related to the noun *očaj* 'despair' only, but to some other lexical items, such as the verb *očajavati* 'to despair' and the adjective *očajan* 'desperate', and to various expressions and constructions that describe *očaj* without naming it. Thus, the limitation of this study is the exclusive focus on expressions containing *očaj*.

used evaluatively instead of the adjective *očajan* ‘extremely bad, terrible’, suggesting low quality (e.g., *RTL je očaj* ‘RTL is extremely bad’). That usage can be considered metonymic: *očaj* ‘despair’ is a label of a phenomenon that (hyperbolically) causes “despair” (a mixture of attitudes and feelings) in an evaluating subject.

In the remaining 766 examples, a total of 842 metaphorical patterns were identified suggesting that *očaj* is, for instance, conceived of as a bounded space (container), a living organism, or another type of entity. That number includes 76 examples in which two metaphorical source domains were identified (e.g., *u tvom očaju* ‘in your despair’: CONTAINER and POSSESSION).

One way of understanding the meaning of a concept is via its (near) synonyms. A list of up to one hundred synonyms of *očaj* can automatically be generated in Sketch Engine. Figure 1 visualizes the list of twenty synonyms generated in Sketch Engine. The **circle sizes** refer to frequency and show that *tuga* ‘sadness’ (attested in 361 examples in the immediate context of *očaj*) is more frequent than *beznade* ‘hopelessness’ (attested in 243 examples).

The **distance** from the center (*očaj*) indicates the similarity score: *beznade* ‘hopelessness’ is very close to the center and is more similar to *očaj* than *tuga* ‘sadness’ is. Thus, the closest concept to *očaj* as suggested by the corpus is *beznade* ‘hopelessness’, and the next closest are *tuga* ‘sadness’, *bijes* ‘rage’, *razočaranje* ‘disappointment’, and *tjeskoba* ‘anxiety’.



FIGURE 1 *Očaj* and its synonyms (vzualization by Sketch Engine; glosses are added by the author)

*Depresija* ‘depression’ is not as close to the center as some other concepts are, but it appears rather frequently in the immediate context with *očaj* (102 examples). *Tuga* ‘sadness’ and *depresija* ‘depression’ are both linked to *očaj* (see Section 1), and, as will be shown, share some metaphorical conceptualizations with it (see Section 4).

To identify opposite concepts,<sup>12</sup> 1,500 collocates were examined and a number of candidates<sup>13</sup> identified. Its opposites define *očaj* in terms of what it is *not*. Of these, *nada* ‘hope’ occurs by far most frequently (121 examples), followed by *euforija* ‘euphoria’ (29) and *sreća* ‘happiness’ (26). These opposite concepts presumably employ rather different metaphors compared to *očaj*: the way *očaj* is conceptualized may indicate how *sreća* and *nada* are *not* conceptualized.

#### 4.1. METAPHORS OF DESPAIR

Table 1 provides an overview of metaphors whose majority was identified in the random sample. A few metaphors were identified in the additional concordances examined on the basis of the CC list: these are without attestation in the sample. The metaphors identified and the scenarios they are part of are discussed and further illustrated below the table.

In metaphor research, an important issue is generality, or the specificity levels that should be posited for a conceptual metaphor instantiated by actual usage examples. As discussed below, some metaphors identified for *očaj* are general, applying to many other or perhaps all emotion concepts (Kövecses 1998: 133) and beyond. These are in fact event structure metaphors verbalizing “states, changes, processes, actions, causes, purposes, and means” (Lakoff 1993: 220). As with metaphors for other emotions, metaphors related to *očaj* have different levels of specificity. Target and source domains can be formulated at different levels of abstraction (Lakoff 1987: 31–40).

Another issue discussed in metaphor research is naming of source domains. Different verbal formulations, while referring to the same conceptual metaphor, may influence specific mappings activated in a metaphor’s interpretation.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Sketch Engine does not generate candidates for antonyms.

<sup>13</sup> The candidates identified (in order of appearance): *euforija* ‘euphoria’ (29), *nada* ‘hope’ (121), *ekstaza* ‘ecstasy’ (9), *nadanje* ‘hope’ (9), *ushit* ‘exhilaration’ (8), *smijeh* ‘laughter’ (25), *humor* ‘humor’ (12), *utjeha* ‘consolation’ (10), *optimizam* ‘optimism’ (7), *veselje* ‘joy’ (5), *svjetlo* ‘light’ (6), *oduševljenje* ‘delight’ (4), *sreća* ‘happiness’ (26), *snaga* ‘strength’ (16).

<sup>14</sup> Forceville and Paling (2021) indicate that a specific source domain for depression they found in animated films could be formulated, among others, as RED BEAR, BEAR, WILD ANIMAL, OR MONSTER.

The following observations on the metaphors identified start with general metaphors (ENTITY, OBJECT, SPACE); to exclude them would mean accounting for only a small portion of figurations. Much attention will be given to the dominant spatial scenarios that many corpus citations relate to.

According to Lakoff, there are two ways of conceptualizing complex states such as moods or emotions: as an object that one can possess, or as space – a location one can be in (Lakoff 1993: 16). As will be shown, both are rather relevant for the conceptualization of *očaj*.

TABLE 1 Metaphors for *očaj* in Croatian

Metaphors	Metaphorical patterns	No., random sample
1. DESPAIR IS AN ENTITY	<i>postoji očaj</i> ‘despair exists’, <i>pojava očaja</i> ‘emergence of despair’	22
2. DESPAIR IS SPACE (excl. CONTAINER)	<i>do očaja</i> ‘to despair’, <i>od očaja</i> ‘from/out of despair’; <i>na očaj</i> ‘at despair’, <i>između očaja i x</i> ‘between despair and x’, <i>luka očaja</i> ‘harbor of despair’	91
3. DESPAIR IS A CONTAINER <sup>15</sup>	<i>u očaju</i> ‘in despair’, <i>u očaj</i> ‘into despair’, <i>iz očaja</i> ‘from/out of despair’	349
4. DESPAIR IS AN OBJECT (POSSESSED, unspecified)	<i>moj očaj</i> ‘my despair’	102
5. DESPAIR IS A MEASURABLE OBJECT	<i>veliki očaj</i> ‘big despair’	45
6. DESPAIR IS A VISIBLE OBJECT	<i>skrivati očaj</i> ‘hide despair’, <i>vidjeti očaj</i> ‘see despair’	17
<i>Other specific types of objects</i>		
7. DESPAIR IS A HEAVY OBJECT	<i>teški očaj</i> ‘heavy despair’	5
8. DESPAIR IS A BUILT OBJECT	<i>zid očaja</i> ‘wall of despair’	--
9. DESPAIR IS FOOD	<i>hraniti se očajem</i> ‘feed on despair’	2
10. DESPAIR IS A DEEP OBJECT	<i>duboki očaj</i> ‘deep despair’	1
11. DESPAIR IS A SPECIFIC PHYSICAL OBJECT (HILL, SPIRAL, COAST, CLOUD, PRODUCT, OBSTACLE)	<i>obala očaja</i> ‘shore of despair’, <i>spirala očaja</i> ‘spiral of despair’	7
<b>OBJECT: total</b>		<b>179</b>

<sup>15</sup> Often implies the metaphors DESPAIR IS DOWN and BECOMING DESPERATE IS DESCENT.

Metaphors	Metaphorical patterns	No., random sample
12. DESPAIR IS SMELL (FRAGRANT OBJECT/SMELLY SUBSTANCE)	<i>smrdimo po očaju</i> 'we reek of despair'; <i>miris očaja</i> 'scent of despair'	4
13. DESPAIR IS A SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER <sup>16</sup>	<i>čovjek pun očaja</i> 'person full of despair'	26
14. DESPAIR IS A MIXED/PURE SUBSTANCE	<i>mješavina očaja i ...</i> 'mixture of despair and ...'	13
15. DESPAIR IS A FROZEN SUBSTANCE	<i>rastopiti očaj</i> 'melt despair'	2
16. DESPAIR IS A COLOR	<i>obojan očajem</i> 'tinged with despair'	1
17. DESPAIR IS A LIQUID/WATER	<i>tonuti u očaj</i> 'sink into despair'	12
<b>SUBSTANCE: total</b>		<b>54</b>
18. DESPAIR IS A MEASURABLE QUANTITY	<i>malo očaja</i> 'little despair'	12
19. DESPAIR IS A LIVING ORGANISM <sup>17</sup>	<i>živi očaj</i> 'living despair' (11)	15
20. DESPAIR IS A PLANT	<i>sijati očaj</i> 'sow despair'	3
21. DESPAIR IS A PERSON (other than 22, 23)	<i>očaj čeka</i> 'despair awaits', <i>očaj progovara</i> 'despair utters'	18
22. DESPAIR IS A CHILD	<i>roditi očaj</i> 'give birth to despair'	1
23. DESPAIR IS A COMPANION	<i>s očajem</i> 'with despair', <i>uz očaj</i> 'accompanied by despair'	9
24. DESPAIR IS A BEAST	<i>kandže očaja</i> 'claws of despair'	1
25. DESPAIR IS A SLEEPING ORGANISM	<i>buditi očaj</i> 'wake up despair'	1
<b>LIVING ORGANISM: total</b>		<b>48</b>
26. DESPAIR IS A DEAD BODY		2
27. DESPAIR IS AN AGENTIVE FORCE/AGENT	<i>očaj odbija</i> 'despair refuses'	14
28. DESPAIR IS AN ENEMY/OPPONENT	<i>boriti se s očajem</i> 'fight with despair'	25
29. DESPAIR IS A CAPTOR	<i>očaj (koga) hvata</i> 'despair seizes (somebody)'	7
30. DESPAIR IS A MALEVOLENT AGENT	<i>očaj ih je izobličio</i> 'despair distorted them'	6
<b>AGENT: total</b>		<b>52</b>

<sup>16</sup> HUMAN BODY is a container in 13 of these examples, and it implies the metaphor SELF IS A CONTAINER FOR DESPAIR.

<sup>17</sup> Unspecified (2), MOVING ORGANISM (1), GROWING ORGANISM (1).

Metaphors	Metaphorical patterns	No., random sample
31. DESPAIR IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR	<i>očaj (koga) vodi</i> ‘despair leads sb’, <i>očaj je zavladao</i> ‘despair has taken over’	8
32. DESPAIR IS A SUPERIOR FORCE	<i>prepustiti se očaju</i> ‘surrender to despair’	13
<i>Other</i>		
33. DESPAIR IS A NATURAL FORCE (WIND, WAVE)	<i>dašak očaja</i> ‘breath of despair’, <i>val očaja</i> ‘wave of despair’	2
34. DESPAIR IS SOUND	<i>očaj je odjek</i> ‘despair is an echo’	2
35. DESPAIR IS ILLNESS	<i>sredstvo protiv očaja</i> ‘despair remedy’	2
36. DESPAIR IS MILITARY	<i>vojska očaja</i> ‘army of despair’	1
37. DESPAIR IS PERFORMANCE	<i>opera očaja</i> ‘opera of despair’	1
38. DESPAIR IS A TRAP/CONFINEMENT	<i>kavez očaja</i> ‘cage of despair’	-

#### 4.1.1. ENTITY AND OBJECT

In a rather general ontological metaphorization, *očaj* is an entity, unspecified with respect to animacy: it is simply something that exists. The source domain ENTITY is utilized in the conceptualization of all emotions and abstract concepts (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Stefanowitsch 2006; Tissari 2017). Because of its general nature, ENTITY does not allow emotions to be distinguished from each other, nor does it make it possible to differentiate emotions from states and dispositions, whereas some more specific metaphors may show how an emotion or state is different from another one.

The conceptualization of *očaj* as an ENTITY is attested in constructions such as *pojava očaja* ‘appearance of despair’. DESPAIR IS AN ENTITY is primarily instantiated by metaphorical patterns with verbs such as *biti*, *postojati* ‘exist’. Rather than being an independent metaphor (as Table 1 indicates), DESPAIR IS AN ENTITY can also be viewed as the metaphor underlying all the other more specific ones. Moreover, also in the corpus citations in which no metaphorical conceptualization was apparent, *očaj* is an entity: it is a topic made relevant in discourse and often juxtaposed to other entities discussed.

Somewhat more specific is the OBJECT metaphor. The conceptualization of *očaj* as an inanimate physical OBJECT is visible in constructions with words indicating transfer and possession, such as *unositi/unijeti*<sup>18</sup> ‘carry into’, *donositi/donijeti* ‘bring’; see (2).

<sup>18</sup> In similar cases, imperfective (first) and perfective (second) verbs are provided. The prefix in parentheses in examples such as (*iz*)*gubiti* ‘lose’ marks perfective verbs (*gubiti* ‘lose’ is imperfective).

Causing despair is conceived of as transferring it from a certain location to a new one in constructions such as *donijeti očaj* 'bring despair', *unijeti očaj* 'carry despair into'.

(2) *unese defetizam i očaj među široke mase*

he brought defeatism and despair among the masses

The focus in similar constructions is on agents and phenomena that cause despair in others. When despair is brought to others (according to which making somebody desperate is giving them despair), despair is also a POSSESSED OBJECT. In fact, in 87 patterns in the sample, *očaj* is a possession: a wide range of possessors is expressed by possessive pronouns or nouns (e.g., *moj očaj* 'my despair', *očaj naroda* 'people's despair'). Relatively frequently, despair is conceptualized as a VISIBLE OBJECT in constructions such as *vidjeti očaj* 'see despair'.

When qualified as small or large (e.g., *velik/prevelik očaj* 'big/huge despair'), despair is conceptualized as a MEASURABLE OBJECT and its intensity as physical SIZE (as shown below, despair's intensity is also conceived of in terms of QUANTITY, DEPTH, and WEIGHT). The INTENSITY OF EMOTION IS SIZE mapping applies to a few emotions. It plays an important role in the conceptualization of both happiness and sadness in English; see Stefanowitsch (2006). In hrWaC, this mapping is mainly related to adjective–noun patterns such as *prevelik očaj* 'huge despair'.

The focus on intensity links the metaphors DESPAIR IS A MEASURABLE OBJECT and DESPAIR IS A MEASURABLE QUANTITY. Quantity is instantiated by adverbs or nouns in constructions such as *malo/toliko očaja* 'little/so much despair', *more očaja* 'sea of despair'. Some patterns such as the last one instantiate other metaphors in addition to MEASURABLE QUANTITY: *more očaja* 'sea of despair' also instantiates DESPAIR IS WATER/LIQUID.

In some contexts, despair is an object with specific features: the metaphors instantiated are DESPAIR IS A BUILT OBJECT (e.g., *zid očaja* 'wall of despair'), DESPAIR IS A HEAVY OBJECT (instantiated by for example, *utezi očaja* 'weights of despair'), and DESPAIR IS A DEEP OBJECT (e.g., *dubok očaj* 'deep despair').

The domain FOOD, which can be understood as a specific type of object, is lexicalized in two patterns with the verb *hraniti* 'feed, nourish' (e.g., *hraniti se očajem* 'feed on despair'). Food can also be understood as a nourishing substance or liquid.

In several examples in the sample, *očaj* is conceptualized as a specific object or, more specifically, a form found in nature or man-made: SPIRAL, HILL, COAST, PRODUCT, CLOUD (see 3),<sup>19</sup> and OBSTACLE.

<sup>19</sup> This source domain is also found in the conceptualization of depression (Tercedor Sánchez and Ramos-Bossini 2020).

(3) [haljina je] dizajnirana u *oblaku* frustracije i *očaja*

[the dress] is designed in a cloud of frustration and despair

Some of these domains relate to the negative evaluation of *očaj* (see Section 4).

#### 4.1.2. SPACE. SPATIAL SCENARIOS WITH ACCUSATIVE, LOCATIVE, AND GENITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

A considerable number of metaphorical patterns instantiate the rather general metaphor DESPAIR IS SPACE. Table 2 presents the number of metaphorical patterns indicating spatial scenarios attested in 413 examples with the prepositions *u*, *do*, *iz*, and *od* in the random sample. In these scenarios, *očaj* is metaphorically conceptualized as a destination (in constructions with the preposition *do* ‘to’), origin of movement (with *iz*, *od* ‘from, out of’), and a bounded space, or container (with *u* ‘in(to)’, be it a destination or location).

TABLE 2 Patterns with *u*, *do*, *iz*, and *od*

Accusative	<i>u očaj</i> ‘into despair’	136
Locative	<i>u očaju</i> ‘in despair’	137
Genitive	<i>do očaja</i> ‘to despair’	25
	<i>iz očaja</i> ‘out of despair’	82
	<i>od očaja</i> ‘out of/from despair’	33

Let us look at scenarios with the dynamic accusative and static locative constructions of the type *bacati u očaj* (acc.) ‘throw into despair’, *živjeti u očaju* (loc.) ‘live in despair’. In similar constructions, *očaj* is conceptualized as a bounded space, a CONTAINER that experiencers move or are moved into, or in which they exist and act. These scenarios are illustrated by (4) and (5).

(4) nova vijest o rastu tečaja, baca ih *u očaj*

recent news about the growth of the exchange rate throws them into despair

(5) stvarno živiš *u neznanju i očaju*

you really live in ignorance and despair

In (4), we can see the linguistic reflection of the complex conceptual metaphor CAUSED CHANGE OF STATE IS CONTROL OVER AN ENTITY RELATIVE TO A LOCATION, whereby causing a new state is moving the affected party to a new location. It is an entailment of the metaphor CHANGE OF STATE IS MOTION and makes use of the metaphors CAUSES ARE FORCES and CAUSATION IS OBJECT TRANSFER.<sup>20</sup> The verb *bacati/baciti* ‘throw into’ implies

<sup>20</sup> Part of the Event structure model: Causation (Lakoff et al. 1991).



propelling something or someone with a rapid movement of the arm and wrist, moving it violently, energetically, and/or carelessly.

The prepositional construction *u očaj* 'into despair' is employed in dynamic contexts with the following caused-motion verbs and verbal noun: *bacati/baciti*, *bacanje* 'throw into/throwing' (66 examples); *tjerati/otjerati*, *natjerati* 'drive/pressure' (16), *voditi/dovoditi/dovesti* 'lead' (10), *gurati/gurnuti* 'push' (2), *goniti*, *nagoniti* 'chase' (2), *nagnati* 'force' (1), *odnijeti* 'carry' (1), *slati* 'send' (1), and *uvaliti* 'put' (1).

The vast majority of the constructions contain the verb *bacati/baciti* 'throw' (65). Examples such as (4) and (6) depict a scenario in which a causer (a concrete or abstract phenomenon) moves an emoter into despair, whereby despair is a metaphorical place (destination):

(6) ovo što sad doživljava tjera ga u očaj  
 what he is experiencing now drives him into despair

Verbs similar to *bacati* 'throw' in that they imply propelling or carrying along by force in a specified direction, *tjerati/otjerati*, *natjerati* 'drive/pressure', are also relatively frequent. A similar meaning is conveyed by some other verbs with single occurrences only (*gurati/gurnuti* 'push', *uvaliti* 'put', *goniti* 'chase', *nagoniti/nagnati* 'force'). Only in a small number of examples were neutral caused-motion verbs found that do not imply violent and careless action (e.g., *voditi* 'lead', *dovoditi/dovesti* 'bring'). In individual examples, *odnijeti* 'carry away' and *slati* 'send' are also attested.

In the motion scenario with accusative constructions that employ the metaphor *DESPAIR IS A BOUNDED SPACE/CONTAINER* (and imply the metaphor *CHANGE OF STATE OF THE AFFECTED IS MOVEMENT INTO A BOUNDED SPACE*), the dominant type of caused-motion verb employed implies that the emoter is helpless and brought into the metaphorical space against his will. The doer performing the action is a variety of agents causing despair including persons and abstract phenomena such as feelings (e.g., *saznanje* 'knowledge', *ispiti* 'exams', *osjećaj gubitka* 'sense of loss', *odluke* 'decisions').

In a sub-scenario with dynamic accusative constructions, emoters experiencing despair in a self-motion event move to a metaphorical space:

(7) Nikad ne smijemo *upasti u* beznadnost, napuštenost, očaj.  
 We must never fall into hopelessness, abandonment, despair.

The most frequent verbs in self-motion constructions are *padati/pasti*, *upasti*, and *zapasti* 'fall' (26 examples), whereas a few other verbs occur only once (*tonuti* 'sink', *ponirati* 'plunge', *zaglibiti* 'get stuck').<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Other examples with accusative constructions employ the verbs *pretvoriti* 'turn' (3), *prelaziti* 'transform' (2), and *izroditi se* 'degenerate' (1), and the noun *put* 'road' (1).

The static scenario with the locative case is attested in 137 examples. The viewpoint linked to the CONTAINER realized in examples such as *živjeti u očaju* ‘live in despair’ suggests that persons experiencing despair are inside it. The existence of any emotion in emoters is often conceptualized as being in a figurative, bounded space (Kövecses 2000a), which is reflected in the conceptual metaphor EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS BEING IN A BOUNDED SPACE. However, as discussed below, that space can have various and rather specific features, influencing emoters’ possibilities of dealing with and having control over their situation.

An interesting question related to this scenario is what kind of activity the “space of despair” allows. What are we able to do in despair? What do the actions we perform in despair suggest about the ways of dealing with it and overcoming it? To examine that, the actions described in the locative constructions were examined and classified; see Table 3. It shows that emoters in despair as a container are engaged in destructive and negative actions equally frequently as in positive and neutral actions. In some examples, the actions depicted are speaking and moving.<sup>22</sup>

**TABLE 3** Locative constructions and types of actions

<i>u očaju</i> ‘in despair’	
Destructive and self-destructive actions	11
Various negative actions	45
Positive actions	20
Neutral actions	35
Speaking (18), moving (4)	22

In the scenarios involving the locative and accusative with the preposition *u* ‘in(to)’, *očaj* is a space that can be entered and left. The genitive pattern with the preposition *do* expresses reaching a spatial border (regardless of the features of the space: it can be a container or surface). Two other genitive constructions (involving *iz* and *od*) use SPACE as the source domain to predominantly express cause.

The genitive construction *do očaja* ‘to despair’ (25 examples) most frequently occurs with the verb *dovoditi/dovesti* ‘bring’ (11) in caused motion constructions<sup>23</sup> that imply that an emoter is brought to a border of despair conceptualized as a metaphorical space:

(8) *Dovela je sama sebe, svojim razmišljanjima, do očaja*

<sup>22</sup> Four constructions with no verb were excluded.

<sup>23</sup> Another caused-motion verb (*tjerati* ‘drive’) appears only once in *do* constructions.

She brought herself, with her thoughts, to despair

(9) a kada se teško razbolio, i obitelj doveo *do ruba očaja*

when he fell seriously ill, he brought his family to the brink of despair

Among the agents causing the emoter's movement (i.e., emotional arousal) are people, their actions or emotions, and various social phenomena and circumstances.

A few verbs and phrases in *do* constructions imply self-motion: *dolaziti* 'arrive' (2), *ići* 'go' (1), *srozati se* 'droop' (1).<sup>24</sup>

(10) neke stvari [su] *išle do* apsurdna i očaja

some things went from absurd to despair

Spatial constructions with the preposition *iz* and *očaj* in the genitive (*iz očaja* 'out of/from despair' (82)) mainly indicate cause such as in *jedemo iz očaja, tuge* 'we eat out of despair, sadness'. Only in individual examples does the preposition *iz* indicate movement from *očaj* conceptualized as a container (which one can run out of); see (11):

(11) i svatko *iz tog očaja* hoće pobjeći

and everyone wants to escape from that despair

The corpus citations with *iz očaja* were examined to determine types of actions caused by the feeling of despair: does despair cause negative or positive, or destructive or constructive actions? Table 4 shows that destructive, self-destructive, and negative actions together (34) do not outnumber positive and neutral ones (39),<sup>25</sup> although explicitly positive actions are less frequent than neutral ones.

The genitive constructions with *od očaja* 'from/out of despair' (33 examples) also primarily indicate cause (*od očaja su popadali* 'all of them fell down out of despair'). However, in some examples, *očaj* is a metaphorical space one can be located far from or move away from:

(12) Bio sam jednako udaljen od sreće kao i *od očaja*.

I was as far from happiness as I was from despair.

(13) ja sam morao dalje ... Dalje *od očaja*

I had to move on... far from despair

In the scenario with *od očaja* expressing cause, (self-)destructive and negative actions are equally represented as positive ones; see Table 4.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The remaining constructions are *biti na pedalj do* 'be close to' (1), *tranzicija od euforije do* 'transition from euphoria to' (1), *od sjaja do* 'from shine to' (1), *od nježnosti do* 'from tenderness to' (1), *zabrinut do* 'worried to' (1), *voljeti do* 'love to' (1), *ljubiti do* 'love to' (1), *napastvovani do* 'persecuted to' (1). In one construction, no verb appears.

<sup>25</sup> Seven citations with no verb were not included in the count.

<sup>26</sup> Five citations with no verb were not included in the count.

TABLE 4 Types of actions in the constructions *od očajja* and *iz očajja* ‘out of despair’

	<i>od očajja</i>	<i>iz očajja</i>
Destructive or self-destructive actions	6	24
Negative actions	6	10
Positive actions	5	12
Neutral actions	6	27
Speaking (2) and moving (3)	5	2

The discussion above addressed the majority of constructions involving spatial conceptualization. Some additional construction types in which *očaj* is conceptualized as a space found in the corpus involve the prepositions *između* ‘between’ (see (14)) and *na* ‘on(to)’, and *kroz* (e.g., *prolaziti kroz očaj* ‘go through despair’, *nagoniti na očaj* ‘drive to despair’).

(14) Ja lutam *između* očaja i nade.

I am wandering between despair and hope.

Some metaphorical patterns relating to space suggest a conceptualization of *očaj* in terms of some specific geographical phenomena: *pustinja očaja* ‘desert of despair’, *ravnica očaja* ‘plain of despair’. Using a specific source domain such as DESERT — referring to a waterless, desolate area of land with little or no vegetation — implies an unfavorable state of the emoters.

#### 4.1.3. OČAJ: A DEEP CONTAINER

A specific conceptualization addressed above, *očaj* as a CONTAINER, necessitates further reflections because this conceptualization is predominant, and it involves conventional expressions that tend to be overlooked or given less importance in metaphorical studies. *Očaj* is often a specific type of space (or, sometimes, a built object): moderately or very deep, and occasionally dark. This is suggested by various metaphorical patterns in the random sample. For instance, *ponor očaja* ‘abyss of despair’ is attested several times in the sample; see (15).

(15) vulkan bijesa prokuljao *iz ponora očaja* u kojem se nalazim već mjesecima  
a volcano of rage erupted from the abyss of despair I’ve been in for months

*Ponor* refers to a deep, immeasurable space, gulf, or cavity: a vast chasm. People’s being in that space maps onto not being able to resolve problems that they face, and it implies immense difficulties for people when they try to resolve them. We know from our everyday experience that upward movement from deep spaces requires great effort and energy, and how easy it is to move downward.

*Tunel očaja* 'tunnel of despair' is also repeatedly attested in the sample (e.g., *ima li izlaza iz tunela mraka i očaja* 'is there a way out of the tunnel of darkness and despair'). Tunnels are confined spaces with limited or restricted means of exit. The scenario in which *očaj* is a tunnel implies a narrow space and claustrophobic feelings of the emoter in the tunnel. Other metaphorical patterns found in the corpus instantiating DEEP CONTAINER include *bezdan očaja*<sup>27</sup> 'abyss of despair' and *rupa očaja* 'pit of despair' (see (16)). Deep containers such as pits in the natural environment are as a rule dark: the deeper, the darker. That fact makes them even more difficult to get out from.

(16) *podigne iz rupe očaja, oprašta*  
it lifts from the pit of despair, forgives

(17) *Baltik [je] ove godine pao u crni bezdan očaja*

The Baltik has fallen into a black abyss of despair this year

In the example *ima li izlaza iz tunela mraka i očaja* 'is there a way out of the tunnel of darkness and despair', the noun *mrak* 'darkness' is explicitly mentioned. In (17), *bezdan* is qualified as *crn* 'black'. In such examples, *očaj* is explicitly related to the source domain DARKNESS, and that domain is repeatedly utilized together with DEPTH and CONTAINER. DARKNESS is also instantiated in patterns such as *mračni očaj* 'dark despair' and *tama očaja* 'darkness of despair'.

Some constructions are rather explicit with respect to the depth of the container, which is implied by the prefixed verb *upasti* 'fall into' and explicitly referred to by the noun *ponor* 'abyss' in (18):

(18) *Upao sam tada u ponor beskrajnog očaja*

I then fell into an abyss of endless despair

Another pattern found in the corpus that suggests a very deep space is *provalija očaja* 'precipice of despair'. However, deep space is also implied in many constructions in the sample with the construction *baciti u* 'throw into' (see Section 3.1.2.), which implies that emoters are thrown into a place of a certain depth. Around thirty such constructions are represented in the sample. An additional nineteen citations contain the word *rub* 'edge' (see (19)) and also imply depth. According to dictionary definitions, *rub* 'edge' refers to a place or line where an object stops, or the part of it that is furthest from the middle. In the examples with *očaj*, *rub* implies a dangerous line or border, which is not the border of a surface or surface-like object, but the border of a steep place, such as a precipice. The edges implied in scenarios such as in (19) are edges of containers one can fall into and which one cannot easily get out of (e.g., the edge or brink of an abyss).

<sup>27</sup> *Bezdan* is defined in HJP as "large chasm".

(19) branitelji, dovedeni su na *rub* očaja  
the defenders were brought to the brink of despair

Being at such edges means that the emoters are about to enter into frightening or threatening situations, and bringing the emoters to such edges means putting them in a situation that is difficult to bear.

If persons experiencing despair are in a deep place, it means that they are DOWN (or deep down), and that they need either substantial energy or assistance to get out:

(20) pomoz mi da se podignem iz *ponora* očaja  
help me rise from the abyss of despair

Example (20) implies two metaphors focused on the emoter: BECOMING DESPERATE IS DESCENT/FALLING DOWN; OVERCOMING DESPAIR IS UPWARD MOVEMENT.

The vertical dimension is, as indicated, the source for conceptualizing many emotions. Being DOWN is common to negative emotions and states, including sadness and depression (See Section 4).

In some examples in which some other source domains are evoked, such as LIQUID/WATER in (21),<sup>28</sup> the expressions used (e.g., *more* ‘sea’, *uroniti* ‘plunge’) additionally suggest a specific deep space (water) and the emoter’s descent: he is moving DOWN:

(21) kad ponovno u *more* vlastitog očaja uroniš, ne zovi me  
when you plunge again into the sea of your own despair, don’t call me

In similar examples, the metaphor observable is EXPERIENCING DESPAIR IS DESCENT.

Importantly, the figurative space of despair is difficult to get out of, and much effort is required to achieve that. Research on depression has arrived at similar findings. The metaphorical space of depression is often unpleasant or difficult to get out of (Semino 2008). Charteris-Black (2012) notes that the second most frequent way in which patients conceptualized their depression is a combination of CONTAINMENT and CONSTRAINT metaphors (see Section 4).

Some patterns found in the additional corpus examples explicitly suggest a confined space that is not dark and (not necessarily) deep as some others mentioned (e.g., tunnels or pits). These examples clearly indicate TRAP/CONFINEMENT and also evoke the source domain CAPTIVE ANIMAL (e.g., *izvući (nekoga) iz kaveza očaja* ‘pull (a person) out of the cage of despair’).

Deep (low) and dark spaces are not necessarily connected. However, we know from our everyday experience that low places, such as pits, are without (much) natural light and tend to be dark. DOWN and CONFINED SPACE are nevertheless two distinct source domains.

<sup>28</sup> *Vlastitog* ‘your own’ instantiates POSSESSED OBJECT.

#### 4.1.4. SUBSTANCE

A fairly well-represented metaphor in the sample is DESPAIR IS A SUBSTANCE, with a few more specific metaphors. As a general metaphor, it places despair in human bodies (or their parts), conceived of as containers. The metaphor EMOTIONS ARE SUBSTANCES (INSIDE A PERSON/CONTAINER), attested in many languages, has often been discussed among general emotion metaphors (e.g., Kövecses 2000a). This metaphor is instantiated in constructions such as *pun očajja* and *ispunjen očajem* 'full of despair', indicating that the body is a container which can be filled and emptied, and in which despair can reach a certain level. This metaphor implies another one: SELF/BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR DESPAIR.

*Očaj* is most frequently placed in the entire body/person (e.g., *očaj i strah u čovjeku* 'despair and fear in the person'), but its containers are also body parts. A body part repeatedly found in the random sample is heart (e.g., *srce puno očajja* 'heart full of despair'). A single occurrence of *glas* 'voice' (e.g., *očaj u glasu* 'despair in the voice') is also found. Apart from these, other containers for despair found in the corpus are *pogled* 'look', *oči* 'eyes', and *lice* 'face'.

Other containers for despair in the random sample are abstract and concrete entities (e.g., *vrijeme puno očajja* 'time full of despair', *post prepun očajja* 'post full of despair').

With *ispuniti* 'fill' and *pun* 'full', as a rule it is unclear whether the substance is solid or liquid because these words can apply to both. However, some patterns unambiguously instantiate LIQUID (e.g., *izvor očajja* 'source of despair', *očaj curi* 'despair trickles', *kap očajja* 'drop of despair', *val očajja* 'wave of despair').<sup>29</sup> In these examples, the focus is not on the substance in a body.<sup>30</sup>

In individual examples, despair is A FROZEN SUBSTANCE and COLOR (e.g., *obojan očajem* 'tinged with despair').

#### 4.1.5. LIVING ORGANISM

LIVING ORGANISM is among "source domains that apply to all emotion concepts" (Kövecses 2000a: 36), such as sadness and friendship (Kövecses 2000a: 25, 104). According to Kövecses, it expresses an "increase or decrease in the intensity of ...

<sup>29</sup> Also: MEASURABLE QUANTITY.

<sup>30</sup> The metaphor EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER is among the most typical emotion metaphors (Kövecses 2015: 157).

emotions” (Kövecses 2000a: 36).

DESPAIR IS A LIVING ORGANISM is found in 48 metaphorical patterns. Knowledge about the source domain LIVING ORGANISM that is relevant to emotions pertains to the fact that living organisms come into existence themselves and are not made (as objects are). Their developmental aspects are also important: a beginning, development, and a possible end. Furthermore, from the viewpoint implied by LIVING ORGANISM, emotions are separate from the self and capable of independent action.

In the majority of the LIVING ORGANISM examples in the random sample, the lower-level source domains are PERSON and COMPANION. Language units from the PERSON domain refer to actions related to people and society. For instance, people meet with *očaj* as they meet other persons (*susretati se s očajem* ‘meet with despair’), and *očaj* is in charge of making final decisions (*posljednju riječ ima očaj* ‘despair has the last word’).

A submetaphor of PERSON, DESPAIR IS A COMPANION, is instantiated by only a few patterns. However, these include the frequent conventional prepositional expressions *s očajem* ‘with despair’ and *uz očaj*, literally, ‘by/along with despair’. In individual examples only, other parts of speech (e.g., verbs) instantiate the COMPANION metaphor, such as *igramo se (s očajem)* ‘we play (with despair)’, *očaj (nekoga) prati* ‘despair is following (somebody)’.

In some examples, the organism is left unspecified or is underspecified (e.g., it moves). In a specific group of examples, the pattern relating to LIVING ORGANISM (*živi očaj, očaj živi* literally, ‘living despair’) is negatively evaluative (e.g., *takve curke su očaj živi* ‘such girls are very bad/nasty/terrible’).

Three source domains — SLEEPING ORGANISM, CHILD, and BEAST<sup>31</sup>—are attested only in individual examples in the random sample.

The PLANT metaphor is attested in three examples altogether, but it is instantiated by three different expressions each time: the nouns *korijen* ‘root’ and *plod* ‘fruit’, and the verb *sijati* ‘sow’.<sup>32</sup>

In two examples in the sample, the source domain is DEAD ORGANISM/BODY (e.g., *secirati očaj* ‘dissect despair’).

<sup>31</sup> The domain could also be labeled WILD ANIMAL. See the discussion in Forceville and Paling (2021).

<sup>32</sup> In HrWaC, the first two collocates referring to emotions and states on the CC list for *sijati* are *razdor* ‘discord’ and *mržnja* ‘hatred’.



#### 4.1.6. AGENTIVE FORCE/AGENT

The LIVING ORGANISM source domain, and specifically the PERSON source domain, share features with the AGENTIVE FORCE domain. As an agent, *očaj potiče* 'encourages', *motivira* 'motivates', or *tjera na nešto* 'forces [an emoter] to do something'.

One lower-level source domain is rather prominent within this category: OPPOSITION/ENEMY. The metaphor DESPAIR IS AN ENEMY<sup>33</sup> is instantiated in constructions with *pred(ava)ti se* 'surrender', *kloniti se (očaja)* 'stay away (from despair)', *pobijediti (očaj)* 'defeat despair', *neprijatelj* 'enemy' (e.g., *strah i očaj naši su neprijatelji* 'fear and despair are our enemies'), and *dati smrtonosni udarac (očaju)* 'give the death blow (to despair)'. This metaphor implies a broader battle scenario in which emoters are confronted with an enemy who is at times overwhelming, with whom they struggle, and whom they seek to defeat or to whom they have to surrender.

Two other specific source domains fairly frequently represented are CAPTOR and MALEVOLENT AGENT (a similar source domain is labeled EVIL BEING by Coll-Florit et al. in their study of metaphors for depression (Coll-Florit et al. 2021: 16)). The first is instantiated in the repeated patterns with the verb *hvatati/uhvatiti* 'catch' (*očaj me hvata* 'despair grips me'). In other patterns, other verbs with a similar meaning are attested (e.g., *loviti* 'catch': *ulovi ih očaj* 'they were caught by despair').

#### 4.1.7. SUPERIOR FORCE AND SOCIAL SUPERIOR

EMOTION IS A SOCIAL SUPERIOR is claimed to be one of the most typical emotion metaphors. It is attested in the conceptualization of anger, fear, sadness, love, lust, pride, and happiness (see Kövecses 2000a: 37; 2015: 160), and it is considered "the social equivalent of physical–natural forces" (Kövecses 2000a: 37) applicable to habitual states. That metaphor is instantiated with *očaj* in constructions such as *očaj vodi* 'despair leads', *očaj ima vlast nad čovjekom* 'despair has power over a person', and *očaj je ovladao/zavladao* 'despair reigned/took over'.

EMOTIONS ARE FORCES is one of the general emotion metaphors mapping forces, causes, and motion onto the target domain of emotions. The metaphor DESPAIR IS A SUPERIOR FORCE is attested in a fair number of contexts. The patterns repeatedly include the verbs *prepuštati se/prepustiti se* 'submit' and the noun *navala* 'rush'. The former contexts primarily focus on resignation and helplessness of emoters (see (22), in which the domains of DESCENT and DEEP CONTAINER are also instantiated), and the latter on

<sup>33</sup> With the opposite concept, *nada* 'hope', the prominent metaphor is GUARDIAN; see Šarić (2020).

intensity of the despair.

(22) *Padamo u očaj i prepuštamo se tom očaju*

We are falling into despair and submit to it

#### 4.1.8. OTHER SOURCE DOMAINS

NATURAL FORCE, which is a prominent source domain for some emotions (see Kövecses 2000a: 37), is attested in two examples in which it is specified as wind and wave (*dašak očaja* ‘breath of despair’, *val očaja* ‘wave of despair’). The first pattern is found in a context focusing on low intensity of despair, and the second on high intensity.<sup>34</sup>

The intensity of some emotions and states (e.g., euphoric) is experienced as HEIGHT. Despair’s intensity in Croatian is experienced as DEPTH. It is also frequently related to the source domain of SIZE (e.g., *veliki očaj* ‘big despair’). Lexical items found for both DEPTH and SIZE in the sample are similar in frequency: *dubok očaj* ‘deep despair’ occurs six times, and *velik* ‘big’, *prevelik* ‘huge’, and *veći* ‘bigger’ seven times.

Source domains attested in single patterns only in the sample are SOUND, PERFORMANCE, ILLNESS, and MILITARY. A single pattern found in additional concordances examined suggests TRAP/CONFINEMENT (e.g., *kavez očaja* ‘cage of despair’).

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

General metaphors for *očaj* identified in hrWaC apply to many other emotions, dispositions, and states. Some source domains (e.g., ENTITY) are rather general and thus carry less explanatory value. Most frequent metaphors for *očaj* are conventional metaphors that often go unnoticed, including container, instantiated by metaphorical patterns with prepositions. Some of the metaphors for despair apply to related emotional states, conditions, and emotions, and have been discussed in research on English and other languages (e.g., metaphors for depression and sadness; see below).

Some metaphors are highly conventional, either with many metaphorical patterns instantiating them (such as object), or with just a few frequent patterns (such as COMPANION). Low frequencies of some metaphorical patterns (e.g., *ravnica očaja* ‘plain of despair’) frequently coincide with innovative usages.

<sup>34</sup> In most of the corpus citations examined that depict intensity, the focus is on the latter.

As indicated above, the SPACE/CONTAINER and OBJECT metaphors are rather frequent, accounting for 75% of all metaphorical patterns with *očaj* found in the sample. The frequency of the metaphorical patterns instantiating them indicates a central role these metaphors play in the conceptualization of *očaj*. Such patterns are often neglected in introspective studies of metaphors that tend to focus on more “visible” patterns, that is, innovative ones.

As indicated earlier, despair is closely related to sadness and depression: it often starts or coexists with the former, and sometimes it develops into the latter, which is a serious medical condition. Their conceptual closeness seems to relate to their sharing of some central metaphors. Studies dealing with sadness (mainly in English) have identified the following source domains utilized in its conceptualization: DOWN, DARKNESS, FLUID IN A CONTAINER, VIOLENT PHYSICAL FORCE, NATURAL FORCE, ILLNESS, INSANITY, BURDEN, LIVING ORGANISM, CAPTIVE ANIMAL, OPPONENT, SOCIAL SUPERIOR, LACK OF HEAT, LACK OF VITALITY (Barcelona 1986; Kövecses 2000a); MIXED/PURE SUBSTANCE, SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER (UNDER PRESSURE), LIQUID, DEPTH, AURA, SOUND, WEATHER PHENOMENON, TASTE/FOOD, HEAT (Stefanowitsch 2006). Many of these metaphors are found in various languages, including non-European ones, although sharing a conceptual metaphor does not necessarily imply sharing specific mappings (see, e.g., Trào (2014) on SAD IS DOWN in English and Vietnamese). Some specific metaphors for sadness are language-specific, as Türker (2013) demonstrates for Korean, in which, for instance, the source domains (DESIRED) HIDDEN OBJECT, SHARING, LIGHT, SMELL, and COLOR are utilized. Some of these metaphors for sadness identified in various languages are found in the conceptualization of *očaj* (e.g., DOWN, DARKNESS, LIVING ORGANISM, OPPONENT, SOCIAL SUPERIOR; see previous sections). Interestingly, SMELL and COLOR are also utilized in Croatian.

Some of the recurring conceptual metaphors identified (mostly for English, but also for other languages) in research on depression are also rather relevant for despair in Croatian. For instance, DEPRESSION IS DESCENT was identified by McMullen and Conway (2002) as dominant in their corpus; it is also the most common one in Charteris-Black's (2012) data. It is expressed in terms of an unrestrained movement in a physical space, from a high location to a lower one, and it is closely related to the conceptualization of despair in Croatian. The remaining two metaphors represented in a smaller portion of McMullen and Conway's examples utilize the source domains DARKNESS and WEIGHT (also identified by Charteris-Black (2012) and Fahlenbrach (2017),<sup>35</sup> who studied short animated films), and CAPTOR. The latter is also relevant

<sup>35</sup> Fahlenbrach suggests LACK OF CONTROL as a domain that, in its embodied nature, functions cross-culturally as a source domain for depression (Fahlenbrach 2017: 106).

for *očaj*. Semino found that the domains UP/DOWN, ENCLOSED SPACE, JOURNEY, PHYSICAL ENTITY (e.g., BURDEN), and, infrequently, ENEMY are most used by people reflecting on their depression (Semino 2008: 178–190). Charteris-Black (2012) labeled one group of frequent metaphors in his data “metaphors of containment/constraint.” The containment/constraint source domain is also rather relevant for despair in Croatian.<sup>36</sup> In a study of Spanish, Reali, Soriano, and Rodríguez (2016) identified the two most frequent metaphors: DEPRESSION IS A PLACE IN SPACE (bounded, deep, and dark) and DEPRESSION IS AN OPPONENT (including monsters and beasts).

In a large corpus, Tercedor Sánchez and Ramos-Bossini (2020) found the most frequent source domains for depression: NATURAL AGENT (subcategories: STORM and CLOUD); CONTAINER (subcategories: TRAP and PRISON); DARKNESS (subcategories: SHADOW and VACUUM); UP–DOWN schemas (subcategories: FEELING DOWN and DOWNWARD ROAD OR PATH); and MONSTER/BIG ANIMAL. In short wordless animation films, Forceville and Paling (2021) found two dominant metaphors: DEPRESSION IS A DARK MONSTER and DEPRESSION IS A DARK CONFINING SPACE (which corresponds to the CONTAINER and DARKNESS domains identified by others).

In this analysis as well, many source domains for *očaj* ‘despair’ were found that are utilized in the conceptualization of depression and sadness: DESCENT, DOWN, CAPTOR, ENEMY, OBJECT (cf. PHYSICAL ENTITY), CONTAINER (cf. ENCLOSED SPACE), CONFINED SPACE (cf. CONFINING SPACE), DARKNESS, WEIGHT, BEAST (cf. MONSTER/BIG ANIMAL), TRAP. Thus, there are many similarities in the ways *očaj* ‘despair’ is conceptualized in Croatian compared to how sadness and depression are conceptualized cross-linguistically.

Some metaphors of despair are clearly evaluative, emphasizing despair’s negative value. Such appraisal is explicitly linked to the source domains ENEMY, CAPTOR, MALEVOLENT AGENT, and ILLNESS. Negative evaluative force is also related to the dominant CONTAINER source domain, and specifically to the DESPAIR IS A DEEP CONTAINER metaphor, which implies PERSON EXPERIENCING DESPAIR IS DOWN. Both are evaluative, emphasizing the negative aspects of *očaj*. These mappings are based on our everyday experience and orientation in space. The source domain (i.e., image schema)<sup>37</sup> of VERTICALITY (UP and DOWN) is commonly used in the conceptualization of states and emotions. DOWN is a source domain regularly employed in the metaphorical conceptualization of negative states and emotions (e.g., sadness), whereas UP is employed for positive ones, such as happiness (Kövecses 2000a: 5), health, virtue, and life (Lakoff

<sup>36</sup> The CONTAINER metaphor was earlier formulated by Barcelona (1986) and also mentioned by Semino (2008).

<sup>37</sup> Image schemas are “directly embodied (basic) but highly schematic representations of spatial and force-dynamic relations” (Hampe 2005: 82).

and Johnson 1980: 17). In some examples with CONTAINER, it correlates with DARK. Both relate to the negative assessment of despair<sup>38</sup> and to the more general metaphor POSITIVE EMOTIONS ARE LIGHT, NEGATIVE EMOTIONS ARE DARKNESS.

Some domains identified in research on emotion metaphors (e.g., LIGHT, FRIEND) are not utilized because of their mainly positive evaluative potential, which is incompatible with the overall negative value ascribed to *očaj* in Croatian. Some of the negatively connoted source domains found with *očaj* (e.g., ENEMY, MALEVOLENT AGENT, CAPTOR, ILLNESS) are also associated with fear; see Kövecses (1990) and Perak (2014).

Metaphors are relevant to how we deal with emotional states. Some metaphors can influence constructive actions and behaviors more than some others. Conceiving of despair as a SUPERIOR FORCE (OR NATURAL FORCE) implies that emoters are subjects of external forces and cannot influence their situation. In the scenarios implying deep CONTAINERS, overcoming despair involves a movement upwards (the general metaphor GOOD IS UP), which is never easy, but is possible. If we “fall” due to external forces, we cannot influence it. Some other scenarios imply that emoters can do something about their situation, and the change of perspective (and metaphor) reinforces the feeling of being in control: for instance, the metaphor of OPPONENT/ENEMY implies a possibility of action toward a positive outcome.

<sup>38</sup> The positive–negative values ascribed to emotions and emotional states are not universal. Positive source domains such as SHARING and LIGHT used for sadness in Korean are a product of the Korean cultural model; see Türker (2013: 112-114).

## APPENDIX

The uppermost collocation candidates for *očaj* and the search criteria

Collocation candidates

Attribute: lemma In the range from: -5 to: 5

Minimum frequency in corpus: 5

Minimum frequency in given range: 3

T-score MI MI3 log likelihood min\_sensitivity

Show functions: logDice Sort by: logDice

Make candidate list Save options

Collocation candidates

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	Cooccurrence count	Candidate count	T-score	MI	logDice
beznade	247	3,475	16.336	13.122	9.139
tuga	461	36,501	21.456	10.517	8.281
očaj	188	12,042	13.703	10.823	7.998
bacati	464	53,386	21.519	9.978	7.860
nemoć	140	10,089	11.824	10.653	7.695
bijes	198	22,151	14.057	10.018	7.567
jad	158	16,700	12.558	10.100	7.492
bijeda	112	12,250	10.573	10.051	7.239
bačati	425	106,783	20.570	8.851	6.872
tjerati	188	41,815	13.655	9.027	6.837
tjeskoba	71	10,806	8.415	9.601	6.682
rub	251	69,615	15.805	8.709	6.654
bespomoćnost	41	1,728	6.400	11.427	6.608
depresija	137	36,123	11.678	8.781	6.542
ljutnja	71	15,069	8.410	9.095	6.423
usamjenost	40	3,494	6.319	10.375	6.398
krik	46	6,429	6.774	9.697	6.350
nevjeric	52	8,979	7.200	9.292	6.340
besmisao	35	3,042	5.911	10.383	6.248
rezignacija	30	1,307	5.475	11.379	6.202
siromaštvo	81	25,525	8.975	8.524	6.142
gorčina	40	6,812	6.315	9.412	6.119
izgubijenost	28	1,264	5.289	11.328	6.107
obuzeti	39	7,168	6.225	9.202	6.085
dovoditi	181	77,297	13.404	8.066	6.052
samoća	46	11,146	6.768	8.904	6.022
enciklopedija	40	9,820	6.311	8.883	5.905
ponor	36	7,847	5.958	9.056	5.890
suza	122	55,627	11.001	7.991	5.884
patnja	93	39,583	9.608	8.091	5.803
plac	47	14,287	6.837	8.576	5.870
malodušnost	23	1,090	4.793	11.258	5.842
razočaranje	45	14,092	6.690	8.533	5.818
nada	199	104,330	14.043	7.790	5.808
strah	314	177,631	17.633	7.680	5.761
pesimizam	26	3,781	5.092	9.640	5.750
panika	64	27,633	7.970	8.070	5.724
osamjenost	22	1,946	4.656	10.357	5.687
krajnji	121	65,436	10.946	7.745	5.677
euforija	37	11,977	6.065	8.498	5.663
egzistencijalan	29	7,185	6.373	8.871	5.627
neimaština	24	4,067	4.891	9.419	5.609
obuzimati	21	2,292	4.570	10.053	5.585
hvatati	55	26,006	7.385	7.939	5.565
mržnja	95	53,867	9.699	7.677	5.561
gnjev	26	5,996	5.088	8.974	5.561
zapesti	30	8,844	5.463	8.621	5.556
očajan	40	15,574	6.302	8.192	5.553
besperspektivnost	18	598	4.241	11.770	5.544
samoubojstvo	49	23,369	6.972	7.990	5.544

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## METAFORE ZA OČAJ U HRVATSKOME: KORPUSNA ANALIZA

LJILJANA ŠARIĆ

### SAŽETAK

Rad ispituje ulogu metafora u konceptualizaciji *očaja* u hrvatskome jeziku. Analiza je utemeljena na korpusu hrWaC te se osvrće i na neke nefigurativne aspekte. Na analizu korpusnih primjera primijenjena je metoda razrađena u Stefanowitsch (2006), *metaphorical pattern analysis*, a kod identifikacije metafora korištena je MIP-metoda (Pragglejaz Group 2007). U fokusu je studije 1000 korpusnih primjera koji sadrže riječ *očaj*, a dobiveni su opcijom *random sample*. U tim su primjerima primjenom navedenih metoda identificirani izrazi koji upućuju na metaforičku konceptualizaciju očaja. Neki su dodatni izrazi dobiveni na temelju podataka s popisa kolokacijskih kandidata.

Analiza pokazuje da se u metaforičkoj konceptualizaciji očaja u hrvatskome u analiziranom materijalu pojavljuje oko 40 izvornih domena od kojih je najčešća SPREMNIK, a slijedi OBJEKT. Izvorne domene koje se pojavljuju u konceptualizaciji pokazuju da su metafore relevantne za koncept očaja u hrvatskome slične metaforama koje su identificirane u konceptualizaciji tuge i depresije u drugim jezicima. Rezultati ove studije ukazuju na povezanost tih triju konceptata kako unutar istog jezika, tako i u komparativnoj perspektivi, te na univerzalne aspekte metaforičke konceptualizacije nekih emocija i stanja.

### KLJUČNE RJEČI:

*konceptualne metafore, konceptualizacija emocionalnih stanja, očaj*

