Cultural Influence on the Expression of Cathartic Conceptualization in English and Spanish: A Corpus-Based Analysis

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Abstract

This paper investigates the conceptualization of emotional release from a cognitive linguistics perspective (*Cognitive Metaphor Theory*). The metaphor *weeping is a means of liberating contained emotions* is grounded in universal embodied cognition and is reflected in linguistic expressions in English and Spanish. Lexicalization patterns which encapsulate this conceptualization include the *caused-motion construction*, the *resultative construction*, and the *reaction object construction* (Goldberg, 1995; Levin, 1993). These patterns are common in English but atypical or non-existent in Spanish and other Romance languages. Results from a corpus analysis, however, reveal that syntactic manifestations of this metaphor are abundant in Spanish, but rare in English. I argue that specific socio-cultural rules are imposed on universal human schemas and particular linguistic availability in this specific domain. In line with recent research on the culture-language interface (Kövecses, 2005; Sharifian, 2011; Wierzbicka, 1999, 2002) this article attempts to show how cultural filters restrain English speakers from using typologically 'preferred' constructions in this specific emotional domain.

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1. Introduction

Emotions have been studied extensively from a variety of different perspectives (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, and linguistics). Within the cognitive linguistics tradition, *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (Lakoff, 1987, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999) offers an excellent tool for the analysis of these abstract entities (Kövecses, 1990, 2000, 2005; Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987). Emotions are generally conceptualized as substances inside our bodies. The conceptualization of the human body as a container is common in English and in other languages (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010); the generic-level metaphor *the body is container for the emotions* (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987; Kövecses, 2010) captures this extended conceptualization. However, emotions are commonly regarded as processes rather than states. Kövecses (2000) explains that most metaphors of emotion are instantiations of the master metaphor, which says *emotion is force*. Thus, the specific-level metaphor *emotion is pressure inside a container* (Lakoff & Kövecses, 1987; Kövecses, 1990) assumes that emotion is a force that may produce an effect. In his study on the ethnography of emotion, Heider (1991) also views emotion as a "flow", "a slice of the continuum of human behavior, a sort of scenario with antecedents and outcomes" (p. 7). He distinguishes three phases in the emotional scenario: an antecedent event, an inner state, and an outcome (e.g., facial expression). The outcome usually involves a physiological process (e.g., smiling, weeping) which is perceived as a way of expressing (i.e., "squeezing out") the emotional substance from the body.

Since emotions are grounded in bodily experience, they are often considered universal. Cross-linguistic studies, though, have also revealed intercultural and intracultural variation (Kövecses, 2000, 2005; Wierzbicka, 1997; Zhu, 2016). Even societies that share the same conceptualization of an emotion may offer a slightly different perspective on its expression; speakers may choose different source domains to represent the targeted emotion, or may assign different degrees of saliency to the components of the emotional scenario. Language, hence, is a perfect *tertium comparationis* for the analysis of cultural influence in conceptualization. Cultural linguistics, a recent theoretical framework developed by Sharifian (2011), underlines the importance of the study of language in relation to thought and culture. Language is "one of the primary mechanisms which stores and communicates cultural conceptualisations. It acts as both a memory bank and a fluid vehicle for the (re)transmission of these socioculturally embodied cultural conceptualisations" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 39).

Cross-linguistic research on emotions has focused mainly on the comparison of a number of basic, near-universal emotions like fear, sadness, anger, or happiness (Kövecses, 2000), and their reflection in the lexical system of different languages. However, cultural meaning can also be embedded in the syntactic level; the analysis of syntactic constructions offers "an especially valuable source of insight into the common ways of thinking characteristic of a given speech community" (Wierzbicka, 1979, p. 313). This new sub-discipline, *ethnosyntax*, explores "connections between the cultural knowledge, attitudes, and practices of speakers, and the morphosyntactic resources they employ in speech" (Enfield, 2002, p. 3).

Germanic and Romance languages code the conceptual components of motion events in different lexicalization patterns (Talmy, 1985, 2000). English expresses the *motion* component outside the verb, while the verbal slot is left for the expression of *manner* (e.g., *The bottle floated into the cave*). Spanish typically encodes the *path* of motion in the verb, while the manner component is lexicalized as a second verbal element (gerundive), which renders it salient information (e.g., 'La botella entró en la cueva (flotando)', *the bottle entered in the cave (floating)*). As Talmy (2000) maintains, English lexicalizes in a single sentence both manner and path as "backgrounding constituents", while manner in Spanish is expressed as a "foregrounding constituent" in a separate predicate (p. 131).

Slobin (1987, 1996a, 1996b, 2006) has explored the cognitive implications of this typological distinction. According to his *thinking for speaking* hypothesis, speakers organize their thinking while they are preparing to speak, which "involves picking those characteristics that (a) fit some conceptualization

of the event, and (b) are readily encodable in the language" (Slobin, 1987, p. 435). Thus, the lack of availability of lexicalization patterns for the expression of manner of motion non-saliently makes Romance language speakers less sensitive to this conceptual component.

Surprisingly, in the emotional domain, Spanish speakers use a pattern which blends figurative manner and path in a single construction, as in the Germanic typology, e.g., 'llorar las penas', *weep one's sorrows* (Martínez-Vázquez, 2014a, 2016). This construction presents the manner component (weep) in the verb and codes the emotion, which flows out of the body, as an unsubcategorized resulting object. Given the availability of lexicalization patterns in English which pack manner and path (or result) in one construction, one might expect that speakers of English would be more inclined to use such constructions, as they do with other somatic processes (e.g., *smile one's delight/satisfaction*). However, such patterns in English are rare.

Based on these striking differences, in this study I will conduct a corpus analysis of these constructions in English and Spanish, and attempt to link their use to different cultural understandings.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Cognitive Model of Emotion

Kövecses (2000) identifies five temporal and causal stages in the prototypical cognitive model of emotion:

(1) cause of emotion → emotion → attempt at control → loss of control → response (p. 129)

In the final stage, when the self is unable to control the emotion, the container overflows (uncontrolled non-violent response, *He was brimming/overflowing with rage*) or explodes (uncontrolled violent response, *She felt like she was going to burst with joy*) (Kövecses, 2005, p. 40). The control component adds a rational filter to a highly uncontrolled emotional process; hence, it offers a window on our cognitive perception of emotions. The different outcomes of individuals or groups will be determined largely by this control component.

In the causal structure of an emotional process, each element appears as the cause of the following component. But metaphors highlight different aspects of the emotional experience; some conceptualize the emotion as cause (*Bill trembled with fear*), others focus on the cause of the emotion (*Bill panicked at her remark*), and some conceptualize the whole scenario (Dirven, 1997; Kövecses, 2000). Thus, in *Bill bridled with anger at Hillary's remark*, three phases of the emotional causality blend in one construction: "the physiological reaction of bridling is caused by the inner emotional state of anger, which in its turn is caused by the external event of somebody making a remark" (Dirven, 1997, p. 56). The physiological response is presented here as caused by the emotion, but an alternative syntactic arrangement may offer a different conceptualization. Hence, in *Bill sweat fear,* the somatic process is perceived as the cause of the release of the emotion. The emotional substance as object of a physiological verb is interpreted as a resulting object, one that emerges from the body-container as a result of the verbal action, while its appearance after a preposition (e.g., *tremble in/with fear*) presents the emotion as simultaneous with the physiological process (Dirven, 1997; Radden, 1998).

The causal sequence of an emotional process bears a close resemblance to the speech process and its conceptualization through the *conduit metaphor* (Reddy, 1979). "Language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one person to another" (p. 290). In linguistic communication, thoughts and feelings are transferred outside the body in words; but they may also emerge from a physiological process. This stage of emotional release is contemplated in the minor framework of Reddy's conduit metaphor, where ideas or feelings are squeezed out of human minds without necessarily entering someone else's mind, as in *Mary poured out all of the sorrow she had been holding in for so long* (p. 291). Since emotions are generally transitory states, the emotional 'substance' that fills the body must flow out of the container at a certain point. The major conceptual metaphor, emotion is pressure inside a container, instantiates the metaphor *a physiological response is a means of releasing contained emotions*, which focuses on a physiological experience as a means of

emotional release, as in the following examples:

(2)   She would spit her contempt at his face and never come back. (COCA, 1991)
(3)   To be honest, I would have wanted to vomit my discomfort at Betzi. (COCA, 1995)
(4)   He'd never have sat here sweating his fear like a cornered hare. (COCA, 1991)

As in the conduit metaphor, the final sequence of an emotional process is conceptualized as figurative motion, but the reified emotion moves outside the body through a somatic process rather than with words. Thus, we may extend the cognitive model of emotion to incorporate a final stage of emotional release:

(5)   cause of emotion → emotion → physiological response → *emotional release*

2.2. Cathartic Weeping

Physiological responses may be triggered by different factors, which are not always easy to identify, and are not necessarily universal. However, Wierzbicka (1999) notes that observable corporal behaviours (e.g., *cry/weep* and *smile/laugh*) are universally perceived as (semi)-intentional ways of expressing emotions (p. 305). In our folk understanding, tears are a universal visibly embodied experience regarded as an emotive reaction to a typically negative episode. This conception is quite extended, especially in certain contexts. "[P]robably in most cultures the death of a child is defined as sad, and that sadness is expressed directly with the pan-cultural 'sad' face and *weeping*" (Heider, 1991, p. 7, emphasis mine). Yet, crying is not only a 'reaction' to a negative – sometimes positive– stimulus; it can also be perceived as part of a healing process.

Negative emotions are commonly conceptualized as illnesses. The conceptual metaphor *negative emotions are illnesses* (Kövecses, 2000, p. 44) is commonly manifested in language (e.g., *The sight made her sick with fear*). Lutz (1998) underlines the connection between emotion, cognition, and illness: "[e]motion, thought, and body are seen in ethnotheory as intimately linked through their roles in illness" (p. 100). She describes a way in which the Ifaluk people

heal physical and mental sickness: "[b]oth illness and unpleasant thoughts/emotions must 'come out' in order to alleviate the trouble they can cause. In addition, emotion not expressed may cause illness" (p. 100). Thus, the Ifaluk are advised to "cry big" in funerals to "throw out" their bad thoughts/emotions and thus to avoid illness. Sharifian (2011) also describes how Iranians release their "grief" in religious and cultural ceremonies "where this emotional experience is construed as positive, as a sign of piety, loyalty, etc." (p. 151).

The cathartic effects of tears are commonly discussed in Psychology: "western folk psychology leaves little doubt about the positive effects of crying on one's well-being" (Vingerhoets, 2013, p. 105). The following English and Spanish linguistic expressions reflect this purifying conceptualization of tears:

(6)   He completely breaks down, weeping convulsively, the emotion he's been holding in for years spilling out, the guilt consuming him. (COCA, 1993)
(7)   Llora y se vacía de pena hasta que sólo queda lugar para el amor. (CORPES, 2005)
        (s/he) cries and empties his/her sorrow till there is only space for love

Such a positive view of tears as emotional discharge is not universal, and does not extend to all scenarios. But when crying is seen as positive, it is not restrained but promoted, like the Iafluk do at funerals. In such contexts, the control component is neutralized or at least loosened.

2.3. Lexicalization Patterns for the Expression of Emotional Release

Cathartic weeping is conceptualized as figurative motion; the *figure* is the reified emotion, the *ground* is the body-container and the *path* is the liquid stream from of the container. This transfer is achieved through the act of weeping (*manner*).

The lexicalization pattern that best fits the expression of motion in English is the *caused motion construction* (CMC), with a syntactic structure [SUBJ [V OBJ OBL]] and an abstract semantic structure 'X CAUSES Y TO MOVE Z (Goldberg, 1995, pp. 152-180). This schema

"describes events in which an energetic force, typically a human agent, brings about the motion of a thing to or from a location" (Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 292). The verb in a CMC does not need to code motion, since this notion is already present in the prepositional phrase, e.g., *He sneezed the napkin off the table* (Goldberg, 1995). But the verb changes its basic intransitive meaning and gains a causative sense ("to use the force of one's sneezing to cause something to move away in a sudden, explosive, etc. manner" (Radden & Dirven, 2007, pp. 293-294). Manner of speaking verbs also acquire a causative interpretation when inserted in a CMC. In the following examples, which are also illustrative of Reddy's (1979) conduit metaphor, *howl* and *mumble* are means of releasing an emotional state:

(8)   Greta Marie threw her head back and howled her misery to the skies. (COCA, 1999)
(9)   […] they mumble their discontent into their beer. (COCA, 2008)

The *resultative construction* (RC), a metaphorical extension of the CMC (Goldberg, 1995, pp. 81-89), can also encode emotional release. The change of state is metaphorically presented as movement to a new location. The following examples contain emotional objects with the adverb *away*, which conveys the translational component (or figurative result), while the verb expresses different kinds of manner activities:

(10)   After getting teary-eyed over Caroline Kennedy's speech, with all its references to JFK, the Floridians *dance their blues away* at a party with music by supergroup survivor and delegation member Stephen Stills. (COCA, 2000)
(11)   At that point in her life she'd been to five different funeral homes yet legally couldn't enter a bar *to wash the sorrow away*. (COCA, 2001)
(12)   He struggled *to press his anguish away* but the effort increased the ache in his heart. (COCA, 2000)

The final stage of the emotional flow may also be lexicalized in another transitive construction, where the verb denotes the means of expressing a released emotion lexicalized as a resulting object, as in (13). This example

captures the two stages of the emotional causality: An external stimulus (*her ingenuity*) causes a feeling of delight, which triggers a smiling facial gesture as an expression of that feeling.

(13)   Max chuckled his delight at her ingenuity. (COCA, 1991)

Constructions like (13) are discussed by Levin (1993) under the rubric of *reaction object construction* (ROC). ROCs are alternations involving an intransitive manner of speaking verb or a sign verb that takes a non-subcategorized object (*Pauline smiled her thanks*). The construction takes an extended sense: 'Express a reaction by V-ing'. The verbs which typically allow these objects denote processes that are concomitant with particular emotions, and are metonymically used as the expression of the emotion: "[t]heir verbs typically denote 'activities that are associated with particular emotions', and the action they name is performed to 'express the associated emotion' " (Levin, 1993, p. 98, emphasis mine). Although most of the examples discussed in Levin (1993) involve linguistic acts, as in (14), some ROCs take objects denoting emotional states. For example, in (15), laughing is a physiological means of liberating an emotion, *excitement*. These emotive ROCs depict the expressive stage of the emotional flow (Martínez-Váquez, 2014b):

(14)   Susan whispered her consent. (Levin, 1993, p. 205)
(15)   She laughed her excitement. (Levin, 1993, p. 219)

CMCs, RCs, and ROCs are typical in Germanic languages like English, yet they are considered almost non-existent in Romance typologies, such as in Spanish (Aske, 1989; Jackendoff, 1990, 1995; Mora, 1999; Slobin, 1996a). Spanish speakers cannot "conflate" manner and motion (or result) in *information packed* constructions the way English speakers do. Instead, they express path or result in the verb while "any other expressed component is forced into the foreground in a gerundive or prepositional phrase" (Talmy, 1985, p. 123). In the emotional domain this would imply the use of a path verb to express the release of the emotional substance from the body, while the physiological event (manner) would have to be

lexicalized as a second predicate, typically a gerundive, e.g., 'Soltó/sacó su tristeza (llorando)', *s/he released/removed her sadness (crying/weeping)*. To avoid this undesired emphasis, manner is often omitted in Spanish. As a result, when 'thinking for speaking' Spanish speakers are less sensitive to manner (Slobin, 2006).

Although this may generally be the case, the present study attempts to show that the choice of event encoding construction may be culturally motivated in certain domains. To achieve this, I will conduct a corpus analysis of cathartic constructions in English and Spanish and explore the potential influence of cultural factors on the selection of lexicalization patterns.

3. Methodology

In order to compare how speakers of the two languages lexicalize their conceptualizations of emotional release, a corpus linguistics methodology was employed. Linguistic manifestations of the metaphor, weeping is a means of liberating contained emotions, were searched for in the 520 million words *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) and the 160 million words *Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual* (CREA). Additional data were retrieved from the 400 million words *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA) and the 225 million words *Corpus del Español del Siglo XXI* (CORPES). All the searches were run during 2016. Some examples were shortened for the sake of clarity.

Manifestations of the cathartic metaphor in English were sampled through systematic searches for the verbs *weep* and *cry*. The former is used less in everyday speech, according to the Longman dictionary, whereas the latter is often used for its acoustic effect, and tends to be used as a manner of speaking verb. In fact, in a random sample of 100 tokens of the verb *cry* extracted from COCA, 57 were used as manner of speaking verbs, while 43 implied shedding tears. All transitive uses of *weep* and *cry* were retrieved from COCA. The objects were manually analyzed; only objects implying emotional states were selected. Frequent (semi)fixed idioms with *tears* (e.g., *weep bitter tears*) and *heart/eyes* (e.g., *weep your eyes/heart out*), as well as constructions with

inanimate subjects (e.g., *The headlines weep tragedy*), were discarded. This method was repeated with the Spanish corpus. All transitive uses of the verb *llorar* (*weep/cry*) were retrieved from CREA. Cognate and body part objects (e.g., 'lágrimas' *tears*; 'ojos*', eyes*) which did not refer to emotions were manually removed. Spanish free word order yielded many examples with postverbal subjects which also had to be manually filtered out (e.g., 'Aquí lloraron sus niños*', here wept his/her children*). Additional queries for other weeping verbs were run in both corpora.

Some objects which did not directly refer to feelings were selected since they targeted an emotional domain through the *cause for effect* metonymy. These objects take a human or inanimate entity as source domain to denote some type of loss (human or inanimate), which stands for the negative emotion it causes (e.g., grief). As Wierzbicka (1999) explains, grief is metaphorically related to the "loss" of someone or something that was "like a part of me" (pp. 67-8). Thus, in a mourning sense, tears are caused by the grief that a person's departure inflicts on us (e.g., *they wept him, they wept their loss*). But grief can also be extended to situations when someone loses something. For example, in (16) the experiencer releases a negative feeling caused by the years she had lost while in jail. Another sub-type of *cause for effect* metonymical object takes as source domain the emotional state suffered by someone loved, which stands for the subject's 'sympathetic' suffering; i.e., the sadness of a close person is shared by the subject, as in (17) and (18). Similarly, in sporting contexts the defeat of a team stands for the despair it triggers in all its supporters, as in (19).

(16) Llora los años que estuvo en la cárcel. (CREA, 2002)
     she weeps the years she spent in jail
(17) You know my secrets, I have cried your pain. (COCA, 1997)
(18) Abrazó a una compañera y lloró el desconsuelo de su madre. (CREA, 2002)
     she hugged a workmate and wept her mother's despair
(19) Maracaná sigue llorando la derrota brasileña en el Mundial. (CREA, 1995)
     Maracaná continues weeping the Brazilian defeat in the World Championship

Another difficulty in the selection of constructions arose from the fuzzy boundary between the emotional and the linguistic domains (both instantiations of the conduit metaphor). Thus, *weep* in (20) is used as a manner of speaking verb. The object in (21) juxtaposes a communicative act (*supplication*) and a mental state (*hurt*) in a metaphorical CMC. The idiom *cry the blues* also denotes cathartic release within a communicative setting, as in (22).

(20) Stevie wept out the truth to his father. (COCA, 1992)
(21) 'I'm trying. I hurt, too'. She wept her supplication, her hurt into my hair. (COCA, 2004)
(22) Though I'll be damned if she ain't always crying the blues over some dude. (COCA, 2008)

The final sample of cathartic constructions retrieved from the corpora contains sentences

with emotions or feelings as objects of weeping verbs in both languages, e.g., *llorar su pena/weep one's sorrow*, where weeping is the means of liberating/expressing the emotion. Examples with objects implying speech acts, as in (20), or idiomatic phrases, as in (22), were not included.

4. Results

The normalized frequency per million words (pmw) of *llorar* (73.01) is more than seven times higher than *weep* (9.49 pmw). The verb *cry* shows a higher frequency than *weep* (68.73 pmw), but we should recall that this verb denotes manner of speaking more often than shedding tears (57%). The chronological distribution of *weep* in COCA showed a clear decreasing tendency, as seen in Table 1. Additional searches in COHA confirmed this declining trend (Figure 1).

Table 1
Chronological Distribution of Weep in COCA (Normalized Frequency per Million Words)

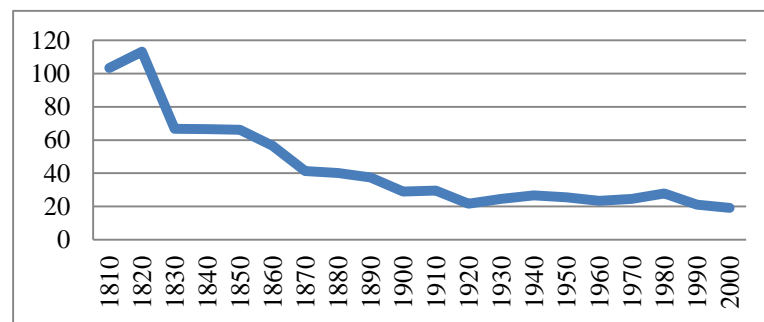|	
1995-1999	10.63
2000-2004	10.28
2005-2009	8.72
2010-2015	8.75

Figure 1
Normalized Frequency of Weep (pmw) in COHA

Both languages exhibit a higher frequency of weeping verbs in Fiction (Tables 2 and 3), which is not surprising given the central role

emotions play in narrative genres (Mar, Oatley, Djikic, & Mullin, 2011).

Table 2
Distribution by Genre of Weep and Cry in COCA (Raw and Normalized Frequency)

weep			cry		
	N	pmw		N	pmw
FICTION	3256	31.04	FICTION	21379	203.80
MAGAZINE	778	7.07	SPOKEN	5958	54.46
NEWSPAPER	538	5.08	MAGAZINE	5272	47.88
SPOKEN	399	3.65	NEWSPAPER	3881	36.63
ACADEMIC	250	2.42	ACADEMIC	1310	12.67

Table 3
Distribution by Genre of LLorar in CREA (Raw and Normalized Frequency)

	Genre	N	pmw
	Theater	1.979	335.46
FICTION	Short-Story	462	198.46
	Novel	4.541	194.26
	Social Sciences, Beliefs and Thought	924	53.45
	Arts, Culture and Entertainment	557	37.02
NON-FICTION	News, Leisure and Daily Life	602	34.93
	Health	226	30.55
	Politics, Economics and Justice	385	10.94
	Science and Technology	31	3.37

The higher incidence of *llorar* suggests that this physiological process is more salient for speakers of Spanish. Its distribution in cathartic lexicalization patterns provides a far more striking difference.

4.1. English

Contrary to expectations, the availability of three different lexicalization patterns to express figurative release in English does not result in a higher productivity of cathartic constructions. These expressions are rare in English: only 6 occurrences with *weep,* and 17 with *cry* in COCA. Given that *weep* turned out to be more frequent in COHA, I searched for emotional release patterns in this corpus: 57 cathartic constructions were attested, a much higher rate than in COCA. This indicates that the conceptualization of weeping as emotional liberation is rooted in English, but suggests that its linguistic expression is decreasing in recent times. Constructions with *cry* do not show much variation. Table 4 sets out the raw and normalized frequencies (percentages of overall frequency of the verbal type) of these constructions in both corpora. Such constructions are predominantly from Fiction (80% in COCA, 100% in COHA).

Table 4
Raw and Percentage of Cathartic Constructions in English

	Corpus	N	%
Weep	COCA	6	0.12
	COHA	57	0.40
Cry	COCA	17	0.03
	COHA	13	0.02

Although the sample of cathartic constructions in English is very small, it is interesting that examples were attested in the different lexicalization patterns available in English for the expression of figurative transfer out of the body (section 2.3.). The verb *weep* appears in RCs, figurative CMCs and ROCs, as in (23), (24) and (25), respectively, which proves that these lexicalization patterns are available in this domain.

(23) She silently *wept away her grief.* (COCA, 1991)

(24) 'I'm trying. I hurt, too'. She *wept her supplication, her hurt into* my hair. (COCA, 2004)

(25)   They *wept their sorrow and their anger* as the coffin was lowered and the funeral earth covered it, shovel by shovel. (COCA, 1992)

The wider sample of cathartic constructions found in COHA illustrates a richer variety of conceptualizations for emotional release. The *cause for effect* metonymy extends the range of objects (i.e., emotional substances expelled through weeping) in this construction.

(26)   I will not *weep my doom*. (COHA, 1831)
(27)   The maiden *wept his departure*. (COHA, 1846)
(28)   I might have *wept my country*, but my tears had flowed without the anguish of remorse! (COHA, 1843)
(29)   [...] who, with good reason, *wept her death* bitterly. (COHA, 1866)

Cathartic constructions with *cry* were also attested in RCs, (30), CMCs, (31), and ROCs, (32). There was also one example of the sympathetic cathartic construction, (33).

(30)   When I had *cried my despair into silence* at last, I let Colin lead me back [...] (COCA, 2003)
(31)   I come home Friday early and heard Ma in her room *crying out her troubles*. (COCA, 2005)
(32)   [...] he was utterly insane, mute and seated now, eyes everywhere, *crying his idiot's astonishment* in dense, dolorous and incessant tears. (COCA, 1994).
(33)   We are souls along the way -- in my heart you stay. You know my secrets, I have *cried your pain.* (COCA, 1997)

Queries for other weeping verbs in COCA (*sob*, *snivel, whimper, whine, wail,* and *bawl*) yielded only 2 cathartic constructions with *sob*, as in (34). The verb *whimper* appears in cathartic constructions with animal subjects, as in (35).

(34)   Marc *sobbed his lifelong love* for Safira while silently wishing he'd never been born. (COCA, 2000)
(35)   [...] the *collie*, crouched beside Clarie's chair, *whimpered his unease*. (COCA, 2001)

4.2. Spanish

Even though Spanish, like other Romance languages, typically lacks CMCs, RCs, and ROCs, it is surprising that an *information-packed* pattern is frequently found in the domain of emotional release in Spanish: the intransitive verb *llorar* expresses the means of conveying an emotional state lexicalized as an unsubcategorized object:

(36)   La joven llora sus penas. (CREA, 1997)
         the young lady weeps her sorrows
(37)   Quedó atrás, llorando su desgracia. (CREA, 1991)
         (s/he) stayed behind, weeping her/his misfortune

Cathartic conceptualization through tears is more prominent for speakers of Spanish than English: 380 tokens of this construction were found in CREA, representing 3.9% of the overall use of the verbal type.

As in English, these constructions predominate in Fiction (88%). Most examples take a *cause for effect* metonymic object. As discussed in Section 2.3., typical objects relate to the death of a person, either directly ('lloraron su muerte', *they wept his/her death*), or figuratively expressed as a departure or loss ('marcha', *departure*, 'pérdida', *loss*, 'desaparición', *disappearance*), as in (38). Human objects are also common source domains, standing for the sadness the person's death causes, as in (39) and (40).

(38)   Todos lloran la marcha de Madre Teresa. (CREA, 1997
         They all weep the departure of Mother Teresa
(39)   Los canadienses lloran a Pierre Elliot Trudeau. (CREA, 2000)
         Canadians weep Pierre Elliot Trudeau
(40)   Irremplazable Diana. Gran Bretaña la llora y añora. (CREA, 1997)
         Irreplaceable Diana. Great Britain cries and misses her

These constructions are frequently linked to religious contexts, e.g., '*llorar los pecados',* *weep one's sins*, as in (41). Other objects referring to causes of negative emotions in CREA range from very common, e.g., *death* (71 occurrences), to most atypical, as in (42).

(41) Déjame llorar mis pecados. (CREA, 1988)
     Let me weep my sins
(42) [...] Pierre llorando su homosexualismo [...] (CREA, 1982)
     Pierre weeping his homosexuality

Additional cathartic constructions were found with the verbs *lloriquear, 'snivel', moquear, 'sob', sollozar, 'sob'* and *plañir, 'moan'* in CREA, which suggests a process of extension by analogy:

(43) Domènec lloriqueaba su impotencia. (CREA, 1986)
     Domenec sniveled his helplessness
(44) Ella moqueó su indignación en soledad. (CREA, 1987)
     She sobbed her indignation in solitude
(45) Su madre recién viuda, que sollozaba su pena en casa de una vecina piadosa. (CREA, 1991)
     'his/her mother recently widowed sobbed her grief in the house of a pious neighbor'
(46) En el exterior plañían su desconsuelo. (CREA, 1991)
     Outside they moaned their grief

5. Discussion

Corpus linguistic data has provided evidence of a common cathartic conceptualization in English and Spanish; both cultures share a conceptualization of negative emotions flowing out of the body through a liquid path of tears. Expressions of this conceptualization are common in Spanish, but rare in English, even though this typology privileges the lexicalization of path and manner in a single construction. Therefore, this limited use is not linguistically motivated; the data rather suggest that there are other factors that restrain speakers of English from making reference to this specific physiological experience.

Weeping is a universal human behaviour (Vingerhoets, 2013). But most crying episodes occur in private contexts, with almost no cultural differences here; it is in public crying where cross-cultural differences are found (Vingerhoets, 2013). In a study on adult crying in 37 countries, van Hemert, van de Vijver, & Vingerhoets (2011) suggest that cross-cultural differences in crying are related to cultural norms about the expression of emotions rather than to distress. Heider (1991) states that the "flow of emotion" is similar cross-culturally, but some culture-specific rules may "refract the flow" (p. 8). He mentions two "cultural interventions": the culture-specific rules that define the antecedent event, and the "reaction rules", which control the behavioural outcome (p. 8). For example, death triggers different emotional outcomes. If it is understood as the result of witchcraft, it will give rise to anger, but if the person is believed to have gone to heaven, it will produce happiness. Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen (2002, as cited in Van Hemert et al., 2011, p. 405) mention that Japanese widows smiled at the news of their husbands' deaths in combat during World War II because it was considered "honorable". Social conventions for emotional "display rules" (Ekman & Friesen, 2003, p. 137) vary cross-culturally.

Early work by the American psychologist Borquist (1906) provides interesting insights on different crying behavior among the 'civilized races' at the beginning of the twentieth century. His description suggests that Romance language speakers have more relaxed display rules than users of English:

> Among civilized races there are wide differences. Darwin says that the English shed tears much less freely than the people on the continent. Teachers who have Italian children in their classes report that they cry easily; similarly, Mr. Wesley R. Long speaks from a wide acquaintance with the literature of the Latin races, of the abundant references there to weeping and tears. (p. 155)

Heider (2001) analyses contemporary scenes which reveal different cultural display rules for grief. He notes that Jacqueline Kennedy was praised for her decorous control after her husband's assassination, but the American press criticized Prince Rainier severely for 'losing control' (i.e., weeping) at his wife's funeral. Heider (2001) argues that Rainier was following the emotional display rules of his "Euro-Mediterranean" culture, but his behaviour was judged by "Anglo-Saxon" cultural norms (p. 168). These norms were also applied to Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine, whose presidential ambitions were destroyed

when he wept at a press conference. These scenes provide evidence of a strict control element imposed on emotional behaviour among speakers of English, which does not seem to work in the same way among southern Europeans.

The social standards for emotional display also change historically. Thus, Stearns (1999) contrasts Senator Edmund Muskie's case with the "permissible emotionality" shown by leaders in the nineteenth-century, like Lincoln (p. 178). Premodern society was even more permissible toward open expression of emotions according to Stearns & Stearns (1986, p. 27). Stearns (1999) describes how control rules have been redefined during the last century in Modern America. He begins his reflection with an analysis of the conceptualization that lies behind a linguistic expression like 'I really lost it', which reveals some kind of impulse control as part of social relationships in modern American society. Victorians tried to control damaging emotions like anger by teaching emotional control from childhood onwards. In the twentieth century, some Victorian norms were relaxed, but "[a]ssumptions about the responsibility for self-discipline not only endured but often broadened" (Stearns, 1999, p. 323). The trend toward emotional self-control during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries could explain the lower frequency of cathartic constructions in COCA in contrast to COHA (Figure 2).

This emphasis on self-control seems to be a key element in the cultural model of emotional release for American English speakers. As Wierzbicka (2014) claims, "terms like 'suppression', 'inhibition', 'control', and 'self-control' are very prominent in present-day Anglophone psychology, philosophy, and cognitive science as a yardstick with which to evaluate human development (or regress)" (p. 56). This is consistent with my corpus findings; if cultural display rules inhibit emotional display, linguistic expressions about it will also be constrained. Conversely, the common use of linguistic expressions for emotional release in Spanish suggests that speakers of Spanish are not regulated by such a rigid control of emotions.

This paper has explored the use and productivity of the lexicalization patterns used by speakers of English and Spanish for the expression of cathartic release. English offers more lexicalization possibilities to encode the conceptual components of this event, yet manifestations of this metaphor are extremely rare. Hence, the availability of lexicalization patterns does not entail its use in all conceptual domains. This is in line with Croft, Bar, Hollmann, Sotirova, & Taoka (2010) who claim that Talmy's typological classification should be applied to specific situation types instead of "languages as a whole" (p. 231).

My corpus findings suggest that cultural filters apply before linguistic restrictions when 'thinking for speaking' in this specific emotional domain. In line with Wierzbicka (1999), my findings imply that English speakers place a high value on emotional self-control and discourage the unrestrained flow of emotion. The physical outcome of an emotion (especially if it is a negative feeling) has to be controlled. The prototypical cognitive model of emotions in English includes a strict control component which constrains emotional display, as proposed by Kövecses (2000), (1); hence, manifestations of emotional release are limited. Speakers of Spanish, on the other hand, value spontaneous emotional expression, but use a lexicalization pattern which is atypical in the Romance typology.

On a more general level this study has shown that language is an excellent arena for the study of cross-cultural differences. In line with recent ethnosyntactic approaches (Enfield, 2002; Gladkova, 2015a, 2015b; Wierzbicka, 1979) it proves that "[g]rammar is thick with cultural meaning" (Enfield, 2002, p. 3). Speakers with different cultural experiences make use of different conceptual metaphors and metonymies to understand certain concepts (Kövecses, 2006), and their cultural conceptualization is reflected in the figurative syntactic patterns they use, or omit.

One limitation of this study is that it focuses only on a particular cognitive domain. Further empirical cross-linguistic studies of grammatical patterns in other domains are needed to establish more solid connections between culture and grammar. Another limitation of the present work is that it does not

distinguish dialectal varieties of Spanish. Future research should analyze different national varieties, which may also reveal culturally motivated intralinguistic differences.

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Appendix: Corpora

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