

# Tongue and Cheek: Some Non-Tongue-in-Cheek Remarks on the Metaphorical Usage and Phraseology Associated with Two Body Part Nouns

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## *Tongue and Cheek:*

Some Non-Tongue-in-Cheek Remarks on the Metaphorical Usage and  
Phraseology Associated with Two Body Part Nouns

Phillip R. Morrow

### 1.0 Introduction

Metaphor has long been recognized as a central process or tool in human reasoning and cognition, and it has been pointed out that human sensorimotor processes serve as a primary source of metaphors which are mapped onto abstract processes outside the body. (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Simon-Vandenberg 1991) In investigating the use of body-based metaphor, research has often focused on the range and function of metaphors derived from a particular human sensorimotor process. In the present study, the use of body-based metaphor is investigated from a different perspective in that I am starting with two lexical items, *tongue* and *cheek*, and looking at their occurrence in phrases and the metaphorical and evaluative meanings associated with them.

This line of research follows earlier studies by Lindquist and Levin (2007) who investigated the metaphorical use of phrases including the lemmas *foot* and *mouth*, and another study by Levin and Lindquist (2007) which looked at the phraseology and evaluative functions associated with the lemma *nose*. Along the same lines, an earlier study of mine (Morrow 2009) dealt with the phraseology associated with *hand* and *heart*.

For the present study I have consulted a number of general and specialized dictionaries, but I have also made use of corpus resources to investigate the use of lexical items. By utilizing standard corpora it is possible to get a clearer picture of language use in a variety of genres and contexts and in both the written and spoken modes.

### 2.0 Background and aims

As noted above, the use of metaphor in language has long attracted the interest of linguists, who have noted the frequency of body-related metaphors. Studies of body-related metaphors have often been concerned with identifying and describing the metaphors associated with a particular sensorimotor process, for example, vision. But another approach begins with the lexical items themselves to ascertain how frequently and for which functions they are used metaphorically. This line of research has made extensive use of corpus resources to identify and analyze specific instances of metaphorical use. This approach is described and exemplified in a number of papers in Stefanowitsch

and Gries' (2006) volume on *Corpus-based approaches to metaphor and metonymy*. In this section I will briefly review the studies of this type which are most similar in terms of aims and method to the present study.

Levin and Lindquist (2007) made a study of the metaphorical and metonymic uses of *nose* concentrating on the phrases in which it frequently occurs, and drawing on data from the *British National Corpus* (BNC) and other corpora. They noted that the phrases in which *nose* was used often had negative meanings or connotations, and they suggested that this could result from *nose's* being associated with bad smells or with the nose's function of excreting mucus. Furthermore, they observed that phrases with *nose* were often used to express evaluation, and most frequently a negative evaluation on either the speaker's or agent's part. The phrases in which *nose* occurs have often become conventionalized (e.g. *to wrinkle one's nose*), and while literal and non-literal meanings may both exist, the non-literal ones tend to be more frequent. Levin and Lindquist also made observations about how phrases are stored in the mental lexicon, suggesting that the literal and non-literal meanings are stored separately.

In Lindquist and Levin (2007) the authors investigated the phrasal patterning of two frequent body part nouns, *foot* and *mouth* in the British National Corpus (BNC) and other corpora. Stubbs (2007) argued that many lexical items are frequent because of their tendency to occur in phrases. Lindquist and Levin found that this held true for *foot* and *mouth*: At least half of the tokens in the BNC occurred in phrases. The two words tended to be used in phrases for topographical locations, and *mouth* was often used in phrases related to "conventional ways of describing eating, drinking, speaking and the experience of emotions." (Lindquist & Levin 2007) In addition, Lindquist and Levin (2007) showed that metaphor and metonymy were important in the creation and extension of new phrases.

Based on Levin and Lindquist's (2007) and Lindquist and Levin's (2007) studies, I made a study of the uses and phraseology associated with two other body part nouns, *hand* and *heart* (Morrow 2009). Both *hand* and *heart* are frequent nouns in English, in fact, according to frequency lists based on the BNC, *hand* is the 26<sup>th</sup> most frequent noun in English. The high frequency of these nouns suggested that they were being used in other than their literal meanings since it seemed unlikely that speakers or writers would have occasion to refer to their hands or hearts often in the normal course of events. I found that there were differences between *hand* and *heart* in the extent to which they occurred in phrases. *Hand* occurred much more frequently than *heart*, and more frequently in phrases. This difference was related partly to the fact that hands are used for multiple tasks while the heart's functions are more limited. Both items were frequently used metaphorically; the use of *hand* in locative phrases was particularly noteworthy, while *heart* was often used metaphorically in the semantic domain of emotion.

The present paper continues this line of research by analyzing the use of two less frequently mentioned body part nouns, *tongue* and *cheek*. One purpose of this paper is to investigate how *tongue*

and *cheek* and phrases containing them are used metaphorically. In this connection, I examine the basic meanings of these lexical items and consider how their basic meanings relate to their use in metaphorical expressions. A further aim of the paper is to investigate the frequency and type of phrases in which they occur and to describe the use of these phrases in terms of the functions for which they are used.

### **3.0 *Tongue* and *cheek*: definitions and phrases**

Since metaphorical meanings are generally related to literal ones, dictionary definitions are a logical starting point. Different types of dictionaries vary considerably in terms of the amount of information provided in definitions and the way it is presented. I have relied primarily on the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2002) which provides quite comprehensive entries for both items, but I have also consulted some more general dictionaries (*The American Heritage Dictionary*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (2000), *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1983)), and two specialized dictionaries (*Collins CoBuild Dictionary of Idioms*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2003), *The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (2009)) and two learner's dictionaries (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (2010), *MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2007)).

#### **3.1 Definitions of *tongue***

The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (SOED) provides 21 definitions for the noun *tongue* organized according to related meanings into four main categories. The 1<sup>st</sup> category of definitions includes those related to *tongue* as, "a part of the body." The 2<sup>nd</sup> category includes definitions "with ref. to speech," the 3<sup>rd</sup> category has definitions related to its meanings as "a thing resembling a tongue." The 4<sup>th</sup> category contains meanings with a geographical or geological sense. In addition to the definitions, the SOED also gives a number of phrases and variations on them, for example, *with one's tongue in one's cheek*, and *with tongue in cheek*. There is also a list of combinations, mostly of hyphenated expressions, for example, *tongue-in-cheek*. There is a separate entry for *tongue* as a verb with 9 definitions.

The *Webster's Dictionary* (WD) and *American Heritage Dictionary* (AHD) give fewer definitions for *tongue* as a noun, but both follow the SOED in showing the meaning of *tongue* as a body part as the first definition. Both list several idioms with *tongue*, but interestingly there is not much overlap between the idioms that they list. AH includes *have (or speak with) a forked tongue*, *hold one's tongue*, *lose (one's) tongue*, *on the tip of (one's) tongue*, and WD includes *gift of tongues*, *on everyone's tongue*, *on the tip of one's (or the) tongue*, *to find one's tongue*, *to give tongue*, and *to hold one's tongue*. Both dictionaries also give separate entries for some combinations with *tongue*, for example, *tongue-lashing*, *tongue-tied*, and *tongue-twister*.

The learner's dictionaries, the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (OALD) and the *MacMillan*

*English Dictionary for Advanced Learner's* (MED), offer briefer definitions, along with lists of idioms or phrases that they consider useful for advanced learners. It is perhaps noteworthy that in these dictionaries about the same amount of space is given to the idioms or phrases and their definitions as for definitions of the lexical item itself.

The *Collins-CoBuild Dictionary of Idioms* (CCDI) and the *BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English* (CDE) are specifically concerned with the use of lexical items in phrases, and like the learner's dictionaries are intended for learners of English. CCDI lists 7 idioms with *tongue*, and one with *tongues*. Among these, two are marked as "key idioms": *bite/hold your tongue* and *(with) tongue in cheek*. CDE lists a number of adjective collocations (e.g. *caustic, foul, nasty, sharp, vile, civil, glib, loose*) as well as common phrases and idioms. CDE also provides a separate entry for *tongue-lashing*.

### 3.2 Definitions of *cheek*

There are fewer entries for *cheek* than *tongue* in all of the dictionaries. SOED gives 9 definitions for the noun *cheek* under two different general meanings. It also lists a number of commonly used phrases and combinations. WD shows 6 entries, and AHD just 4. Both include the idiom, *cheek by jowl* and WD mentions *tongue in cheek*. All list the meaning of *cheek* as "side of the face" as the first definition. The learner's dictionaries also give primacy to the body part meaning in the order of their definitions. Each provides two more definitions for *cheek* as a noun: rude behavior, or one of the buttocks. OALD includes the idioms, *cheek by jowl* and *turn the other cheek*, while MED includes: *have the cheek to do sth.*, *cheek to cheek*, and *turn the other cheek*.

CCDI gives just two idioms with *cheek*: *cheek by jowl* and *turn the other cheek*. CDE lists a number of adjective collocations: *burning, flushed, dimpled, chubby, full, rounded, hollow, sunken, pale, rosy, ruddy*. It also mentions the idioms *to turn the other cheek*, and *(with) tongue in cheek*.

### 3.3 Observations on the definitions

The dictionaries are alike in giving priority to the non-literal meaning in ordering the definitions for both *tongue* and *cheek*. All of them list phrases or idioms associated with the lexical items, and this indicates that the use of the items in phrases is frequent or typical. This is perhaps most evident in the case of the learner's dictionaries, which have the task of identifying for learners the prototypical uses of words, those which a learner is most likely to encounter or use. When collocations are included in the definitions, one can make inferences about the semantic prosodies associated with these items. In case of *tongue*, the collocations suggest that it may have negative prosody.

### 4.0 Negative evaluations and metaphorical meanings

Some words and expressions exhibit a tendency to be associated with negative meanings. This is

referred to as negative prosody. For example, Sinclair (1991) has pointed out that the expression *set in* has negative prosody; usually the things that set in are not desirable. Levin and Lindquist (2007) pointed out that *nose* is often used in expressions that express a negative evaluation. As for the items in the present study, the CDE listed a number of adjective collocations of *tongue* that have a negative connotation, for example, *caustic, foul, vile, and loose*. But is it actually the case that *tongue* has negative prosody? Is there a clear tendency? Similarly, one of the meanings associated with the lexical item, *cheek*, is rude or impertinent speech. But to what extent does *cheek* have negative prosody?

By examining tokens of *tongue* and *cheek* and the phrases in which they occur in actual usage we can obtain a much clearer picture of the semantic prosody associated with these items. One approach to investigating this issue is to examine the adjectives that collocate with these nouns, and also to examine the meanings and uses of the phrases in which these items occur.

#### 4.1 *Tongue*

In this section, I examine the metaphorical and metonymic uses of *tongue*, and of the phrases in which it occurs. I also consider the semantic prosody associated with it.

##### 4.1.1 *Tongue* in phrases

*Tongue* and *tongues* occur in a number of set phrases. Table 1 below lists the phrases identified in the dictionaries or reference books mentioned above (Section 3.0) that include one of these forms.

**Table 1 Phrases with *tongue* (s) (sources in parentheses)**

*click one's tongue* (CDE)

*dead-tongue* (SOED)

*find one's tongue* (SOED) (WD) (MED) (CCDI) (CDE)

*get one's tongue around/round* (SOED) (OALD) (MED) (CCDI)

*gift of tongues* (SOED) (WD)

*(give someone) the rough/sharp side/edge of your tongue* (SOED) (CCDI)

*give tongue* (SOED) (WD)

*have (speak with) a forked tongue* (SOED) (AHD) (CCDI) (CDE)

*hold/bite one's tongue* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (OALD) (MED) (CCDI) (CDE)

*keep a civil tongue in one's head* (SOED) (OALD) (MED)

*keep a still tongue* (SOED)

*loosen the tongue* (CDE)

*lose one's tongue* (SOED) (AHD) (MED)

*on everyone's tongue* (WD) (CDE)

*on the tip of one's tongue* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (CDE)

*roll/slip/trip off the tongue* (OALD) (MED)  
*(set) tongues wagging* (SOED) (OALD) (MED) (CDE)  
*silver tongue* (SOED) (OALD) (MED)  
*slip of the tongue* (SOED)  
*speak in/with tongues* (SOED) (MED)  
*stick out one's/your tongue at* (MED) (CDE)  
*throw one's tongue* (SOED)  
*watch your tongue* (MED)  
*whip and tongue grafting* (SOED)  
*with (one's) tongue hanging out* (SOED)  
*(with) (one's) tongue in (one's) cheek* (SOED) (AHD) (OALD) (MED) (CCDI) (CDE)  
*wooden tongue* (SOED)

**Table 2 Combinations with *tongue* (sources in parentheses)**

*tongue-and-groove (joint)* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (OALD)  
*tongue-bang* (SOED)  
*tongue bird* (WD)  
*tongue-bit* (SOED)  
*tongue-depressor* (SOED) (AHD) (OALD)  
*tongue-fish* (SOED) (AHD) (WD)  
*tongueflower (ed)* (WD)  
*tongue grafting* (WD)  
*tongue grass* (WD)  
*tongue-in-cheek* (SOED) (AHD) (OALD)  
*tongue-lash (ing)* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (CCDI) (CDE)  
*tongueless* (AHD) (WD)  
*tonguelet* (WD)  
*tongue-pad* (SOED) (WD)  
*tongue-shaped* (WD)  
*tongue shell* (WD)  
*tongue-shot* (SOED)  
*tongue-slip* (SOED)  
*tongue-sole* (SOED)  
*tongue-tacked* (SOED)  
*tongue-tie (d)* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (OALD)  
*tongue-twister/twisting* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (OALD)

*tongue-work* (SOED)

*tongue-worm* (SOED) (AHD) (WD)

In listing the expressions in two tables, I have followed the practice of SOED, which divided them into phrases and combinations, the latter being primarily hyphenated expressions consisting of *tongue* and a noun or adjective. The lists of phrases and combinations in Tables 1 and 2 are not comprehensive. There are other phrases and combinations besides these, though when I checked these lists against entries in some dictionaries of idioms (*All-purpose dictionary of English idioms and expressions* (2003) and *Sanseido comprehensive dictionary of English idioms and phrasal verbs* (2011)) I found very few expressions and only infrequent ones which were not on the lists from the dictionaries. As can be seen by the source notations the most familiar phrases occur in several of the dictionaries, while some of the less-familiar expressions are only in SOED or WD.

Almost all the phrases in Table 1 are metaphorical or metonymic, and refer to the meaning of *tongue* as speech, or related to speech. There are only a very few exceptions: *wooden tongue* refers metaphorically to a disease which causes an enlarged tongue, and *dead tongue* is used metaphorically for a type of poisonous plant. A few metonymic expressions refer not to speech, but to kinds of non-verbal communication: *to click one's tongue* is to express disapproval, and *to stick out your tongue at* is to insult. The phrases with the plural form, *tongues*, (e.g. *gift of tongues*) refer metaphorically to language, rather than speech.

An examination of the phrases in Table 1 enables us to conclude that when it is used in phrases, *tongue* is most often used with a metaphorical or metonymic meaning, and the meaning is associated with the semantic area of speech or language. Among the combinations in Table 2 there are also many instances in which the expression containing *tongue* has a metaphorical meaning, for example, *tongue-bang* 'to scold', *tongue-slip* 'an error in speaking', *tongue-twister* 'an expression that is difficult to say quickly,' and so on. These examples are all related to the meaning of speech or speaking, but there are a few metaphorical expressions related to the meaning of having the shape of a tongue, for example, *tongue-and-groove* or *tongue-flowered*.

Levin and Lindquist (2007) noted a tendency for *nose* and the phrases in which it occurred to carry a negative evaluation. They suggested this might be related to *nose* being associated with bad smells or its function of excreting mucus. In contrast, the tongue's main functions are related to the ingestion of food, the perception of taste and the articulation of speech. None of these functions would seem to have a particularly negative association, yet some of the phrases in Table 1 clearly carry a negative connotation, so it is worth examining to what extent *tongue* has negative prosody.

Some of the phrases containing *tongue* refer to actions that express a negative evaluation: *to click one's tongue* is to express disapproval, *to stick your tongue out* is to insult, *to speak with a forked tongue* is to speak in a deceitful way or prevaricate, *to set tongues wagging* is to give rise to gossip, *to give*



*someone the rough edge of your tongue* is to speak angrily or harshly, and to tell someone to *watch your tongue* is to warn them that they are being rude.

There are also combinations with negative meanings, for example, *tongue-bang* ‘to scold’, and *tongue-lashing* ‘scolding’. Other combinations could be interpreted as having a negative meaning depending on the context, for example, *tonguester* ‘a talkative person’, or *tongue-tied* ‘unable to speak’.

Another way to investigate semantic prosody is to examine the adjectives with which an item collocates. In the case of *tongue*, some of the collocating adjectives have a negative sense, but there is no strong evidence of negative prosody. To check for collocation with negative adjectives, I used the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) which, with 450 million words, is much larger than the BNC corpus that contains 100 million words. There were 22 adjectives that frequently collocated with *tongue* within 3 words on the right or left, and among these were 6 that had a clearly negative sense: *sharp*, *forked*, *rough*, *bitter*, *tart* and *alien*. There were 7 more that had a frequency of at least 5: *glib*, *lolling*, *wicked*, *acerbic*, *incomprehensible*, *flattering* and *insistent*. That is a total of 13 negative adjectives out of a total of 38. It does not constitute strong evidence of negative prosody and runs counter to the tendency implied by CDE that *tongue* collocates frequently with negative adjectives such as *caustic*, *foul*, *nasty*, *sharp*, *vile*, *glib* and *loose*.

Analysis of the semantic prosody associated with *tongue* thus yields different tendencies. On the one hand, phrases containing *tongue* tend to be used with metaphorical meanings and are often, but not always, used to express negative evaluations. However, this tendency to be associated with negative meanings is not evident in other usages of *tongue*, that is, when *tongue* is not part of a phrase.

## 4.2 Cheek

In this section I will look at the phrases in which *cheek* commonly occurs, and then at the adjectives with which *cheek* frequently collocates to determine whether or not *cheek* has negative prosody.

### 4.2.1 Cheek in phrases

Table 3 below shows the phrases with *cheek*, and Table 4 shows combinations with *cheek*.

#### **Table 3 Cheek in phrases (sources in parentheses)**

*cheek by jowl* (SOED) (AHD) (WD) (OALD) (CCDI)

*cheek to cheek* (SOED)

*(have) the cheek to* (do sth) (MED) (CCDI)

*of all the cheek* (SOED) (MED)

*to one's own cheek* (SOED)

*to puff (out) one's cheek* (CDE)

*turn the other cheek* (SOED) (OALD) (MED) (CCDI)

(with) *one's tongue in one's cheek* (SOED) (WD) (CCDI)

**Table 4 *Cheek* in combinations (sources in parentheses)**

*cheek-bone* (s) (SOED) (AHD) (OALD) (MED) (CDE)

*cheek-pouch* (SOED) (AHD) (WD)

*cheek strap* (WD)

*cheek-tooth* (SOED) (WD)

The lists in Tables 3 and 4 are much shorter than those for *tongue* in Tables 1 and 2. This reflects the fact that *cheek* is a less frequent noun than *tongue*: In COCA there are 11,826 tokens of *tongue* and 8,184 tokens of *cheek*. Interestingly though, if both singular and plural forms are included, there are more tokens of *cheek* and *cheeks* (15,524), than of *tongue* and *tongues* (13,686 tokens). One simple reason for the difference between *tongue* and *cheek* in the frequency of plural forms is that human beings normally have two cheeks, but only one tongue. Therefore, when speakers (or writers) are using these words with their body-part meaning, it is natural that they would use the plural form for *cheek*, but the singular form for *tongue*. An examination of a random sample of 100 sentences from the BNC containing the token *cheeks* revealed that all 100 tokens were being used in a literal sense to refer to the body part.

The singular form, *cheek*, is also used overwhelmingly in its literal sense. In a concordance of 100 tokens selected randomly from the BNC, only 17 tokens were not being used to refer to a body part. And in 9 of those 17 instances, *cheek* was being used in a phrase: *cheek by jowl*, or *tongue in cheek*. *Cheek by jowl* is used metaphorically to mean ‘very close to somebody or something’, and *tongue in cheek* ‘speaking in a funny and ironic way’ seems to have a metaphorical meaning too although there is not a clear relationship of resemblance between this condition and its meaning. In the meaning of *cheek* as effrontery or insolence, it does not seem to be metaphorical as there is no resemblance between the body part and the meaning, though it is quite possible that there was a resemblance at an earlier point in the word’s history.

However, *cheeks* is used metaphorically quite often, and this becomes clear when we examine a concordance of *cheeks*. In these cases, *cheeks* is often used in describing metaphorically a state of heightened emotion, as in the following examples from a BNC concordance:

- (1) It is guilt, not age or misunderstanding, that withers cheeks and drives lovers apart. (source HGS)
- (2) There are many hidden sides to this man, she decided fighting to keep the colour from rising to her cheeks again. (source: H97)
- (3) Gabriel shook his head furiously; then hurried back to the Mason as fast as he could go without spilling the liquor. His cheeks were burning. (source: HTN)

In these examples and in other sentences like them, descriptions containing *cheeks* are used in a metonymic way to describe emotional states. This tendency is also apparent in the adjectives that frequently collocate with *cheeks*. In the BNC, the five adjectives that most frequently collocate with *cheeks* are (in order of frequency): *pale*, *red*, *pink*, *flushed*, and *hot*. These adjectives are used in collocation with *cheeks* to describe a person's appearance, but they are also used metonymically to show an emotional state, as in the following example sentences from the BNC:

- (4) Her cheeks were pink and she could not look into his eyes. But he respected her modesty and did nothing more. (source: GW8)
- (5) "I know you were promised to Craig, but no-one would blame you for trying to forget him." She lifted a gloved hand to fan her hot cheeks. "Craig is my first-born son and I love him dearly," she paused, "but, after what he's done, Craig must consider himself disowned by the entire Grenfell family." (source: CKD)
- (6) "He's horrid!" Shirley's cheeks had turned pale at the thought of facing the terrifying tramp. (source: BOB)

In nearly all the 100 concordance examples for *cheeks*, it was used metonymically to show a state of heightened emotion as illustrated in the examples above.

## 5.0 Conclusion

This study was undertaken as an extension of earlier research on the use and phraseology associated with body-part nouns. Lindquist and Levin (2007) and Levin and Lindquist (2007) provided the stimulus for my earlier research in this area (Morrow 2009). Their two studies on *foot* and *mouth* and on *nose* yielded some interesting findings and many perceptive observations. In this study I have investigated nouns that are much less frequent than those studied by Lindquist and Levin and also less frequent than *heart* and *hand*, the items I investigated in my own previous study. In undertaking this study I was interested to see how much the processes and tendencies that had been identified in the previous studies could be observed with the less frequent nouns, *tongue* and *cheek*.

Several interesting points have emerged from this study. First, regarding the use of *tongue*, there are many definitions, idioms and phrases associated with it and the large number of such phrases and idioms is one indication of the extent to which *tongue* and *cheek* are typically used in phrases. CDE listed a number of adjectives that frequently collocate with *tongue* and most of them had negative connotations, suggesting that *tongue* could have negative prosody. Examination of the phrases containing *tongue* showed that many of them could be used to express a negative evaluation, but on the other hand, although CDE listed a number of negative adjectives used with *tongue*, these collocations did not occur frequently in the corpora, indicating *tongue* itself (when not used in phrases) did not have a strong tendency toward negative prosody.

Examination of phrases revealed that almost all of the common phrases with *tongue* had a metaphorical or metonymic meaning and that the meaning was related to the semantic area of speech. The plural form, *tongues*, was used metaphorically with the different, but related meaning of languages.

If we count both singular and plural forms (*cheek, cheeks, tongue, tongues*) we find that *cheek* and *cheeks* occur more frequently than *tongue* and *tongues*, however dictionaries give many more phrases with *tongue* than with *cheek*. Thus, *tongue* exhibits a much stronger propensity to combine with other words in phrases. This may be due in part to its having more meanings associated with it. For example, SOED gave 21 definitions for *tongue*, but only 9 for *cheek*.

An examination of a random sample of a concordance of 100 tokens of *cheek* showed that all of them were used in a literal sense. Also, there was very little metaphorical use of *cheek* in phrases. But a comparison with the use of the plural form, *cheeks*, revealed an interesting contrast. Examination of concordance lines with *cheeks* revealed that it was used very frequently in a metonymic way to describe states of heightened emotion. This observation was supported by an analysis of frequently occurring adjective collocates of *cheeks*. In concordance lines the five most frequently occurring adjective collocates were all used in metonymic descriptions of emotion.

This study has revealed some of the phraseological characteristics and usage patterns of *tongue* and *cheek*, and has in this way contributed to the ongoing study of how body-part nouns are used. Clearly, there is much scope for further study of this intriguing topic.

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