



Components of Emotional Meaning: A sourcebook

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CHAPTER

3 Folk emotion concepts: Lexicalization of emotional experiences across languages and cultures

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Abstract

The chapter overviews an expansive research area spanning several disciplines in the affective sciences (such as emotion psychology, anthropology, and linguistics) where emotion words are assumed to be good entry points for the study of culture-embedded ('folk') emotion concepts. On outlining major dimensions in current theorizing of the interrelationship between emotion words, concepts, and experiences, the chapter proceeds to discuss the state-of-the-art empirical evidence on emotion lexicalization in different languages of the world, focusing on both the similarities and the differences therein. This literature review convincingly suggests the saliency of emotion components (such as the emotion-eliciting events, emotional expression, regulation, and so on) which appear to not only discriminate individual emotion words across languages, but also clusters of terms, or even entire emotion vocabularies. The chapter concludes with the discussion of the implications of this evidence for cross-cultural research on the emotion lexicon.

Keywords: folk emotion concepts, emotion lexicalization, cross-cultural differences, emotion universals

Subject: Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology

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3.1 Introduction

In the context of the “affective revolution” in human sciences of the last few decades (Davidson et al., 2003), a burgeoning research field has emerged that focuses on lexicalized emotion (i.e., the words labeling emotional experiences). Multiple directions can be singled out in this research domain (cf. Chapters 2 and 4). Among others, many studies address the *contextualized* use of emotion labels, and the ways it varies as a factor of age (Dunn, 2003; Fivush, 1989; Planalp, 1999), gender (Cervantes & Callanan, 1998), cultural background (Cervantes, 2002), socioeconomic status (Burger & Miller, 1999), race (Weathers et al., 2002), or language proficiency (Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002). Others use emotion words as *stimuli* and investigate how they are processed as regards the access to word meaning, contextual integration, or memory encoding (Jay & Janschewitz, 2007; Kissler et al., 2006).

The present chapter aims to overview a distinct research field in this area—the one where emotion words in various languages are thought to be referents of culture-embedded cognitive categories, or “folk” *emotion concepts*. The key premise here is that language plays an important role in establishing categories, both culturally and developmentally (Neisser, 1987: vii), and that the ways in which emotions are represented in language can provide an insight on emotion conceptualization, categorization, and even experience in different cultural groups.

This perspective can be broadly termed as “cognitive” because it assumes that the relationship between the emotional experiences people have, on the one hand, and (arbitrary) linguistic signs (emotion words), on the other hand, is not purely referential, so that no inference can be drawn from each of the areas (Kanner, 1931: 24; Watson, 2004). Instead, it is assumed that not only affective experiences are constitutive for the meaning of emotion words labeling those experiences in a language, but also that the emotion vocabulary of a language provides its speakers with the default ways of categorizing emotional reality (Harré, 1986; Soriano & Ogarkova, 2009).

Two main factors contributed to the emergence of this perspective on emotion lexis. The first is the dissatisfaction among cultural researchers with the skepticism about the relevance of language evidence for the study of emotions *per se*. In philosophy, this skepticism includes arguments against the “linguistic thesis,” that is, the one-to-one correspondence between linguistic forms and the ways in which such phenomena ought to be classified (Wollheim, 1999: 20), or claims that “ordinary language is not a good place to look if one wants to develop a theory of feeling” (Charland, 1995: 296). In anthropology, the “theory of resonance” is formulated (Wikan, 1992), which posits it is insufficient to consider indigenous emotion lexicons to understand the specific ways of feeling in local communities. In social sciences, strong claims are made that language “is not suited to represent emotional experiences at all” (Halberstadt, 2005: 19), and that the diverse vocabularies of emotion developed in many societies are wrong about the feelings they purport to describe (Needham, 1981: 23, quoted in Lutz, 1986: 295).

The second factor is the scholarly opposition to the body of research where emotion words (e.g., English *anger*², *fear*, *sadness*, or *pride*), as well as generic terms (e.g., English *emotion*, *feeling*, *sentiment*, or *affect*) have undergone the semantic process of terminologization (Weinreich, 1962: 149; Werner, 1965), and are used in reference to *scientific*, rather than *culturally-embedded*, or “experience-near” (Geertz, 1984) concepts. As a result, both generic labels and the emotion terms proper are assumed to be devoid of culture- and language-specific connotations and are viewed upon as classical concepts (susceptible to cross-culturally viable definition). This terminological use of emotion labels has been found unsatisfactory by anthropologists and linguists (Lutz, 1985: 38–39; Wierzbicka, 1999b, 2009; but see Ekman, 2003; Griffiths, 1997) who assert that English words like *fear* or *anger* refer to essentially American ethnopsychological concepts and cannot thus be used as culture-free analytical tools in analyses of any disciplinary orientation.

The aim of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, we aim to briefly outline the main theoretical approaches to the relationship between emotion words, concepts, and experiences, specifically through highlighting the degree of significance ascribed by them to language in emotion conceptualization and categorization (see Section 3.2). The second goal is to overview the available empirical evidence on emotion lexicalization in the light of both similarities and differences of how emotional experiences are labeled in different languages (see Section 3.3). The chapter concludes with the discussion of the implications of the overviewed evidence for large-scale cross-cultural research on emotion lexis undertaken with the GRID approach presented in this volume (see Section 3.4).

3.2 Theoretical approaches to emotional experiences, concepts, and words

While all studies within the “cognitive” view on emotion lexis assume the existence of an interrelationship between the experiential, the conceptual, and the linguistic in the emotion domain, there is considerable variation in how this interrelationship is theorized. Most of this variation lies along the continuum of views about the extent to which language is thought to be involved in human cognition (Carruthers, 2008; Gleitman & Parafagou, 2005). Overall, two major positions—each including studies of various disciplinary orientations—can be discerned. On the one hand, there is a view that language determines, or guides emotion conceptualization (and sometimes even experience); on the other hand, there is a view that the emotional experiences and their (pre-linguistic) conceptualizations determine, or guide lexicalization. The latter position typically focuses on the role of culture.

p. 48 In its extreme formulation, the former opinion can be illustrated by a radical (and largely theoretical rather than empirical) position labeled by some as the “nominalist” view (Fernandez-Dols & et al., 2001: 123). Here, the crucial role that language plays in creating conceptual categories is emphasized, and the emotion concepts are thought to derive from the existence of emotion words, rather than from emotional experiences. This is believed to be so because the states to which emotion words point to are so highly variable that they lack universal psychological reality and distinctiveness. Thus, it is only due to emotion words used with reference to certain (vaguely similar) psychological events that distinct emotion categories emerge.

Similar views—often loosely referred to as “strong Whorfian”—assert that emotion words do not only reflect, but also guide and even determine emotion perception, recognition, conceptualization, categorization, and experience. In semantics, linguistic determinism has been advocated by the *Natural Semantic Metalanguage* (henceforth NSM) theorist Anna Wierzbicka, who, ever since the publication of *Semantic Primitives* (1972), has insisted that emotion vocabularies—the lexical “grids” provided by natural languages—not only impose certain constraints on classifying the emotions, but also can bias the speakers to interpret emotional experiences through the prism of a particular language (Wierzbicka, 1992c: 456, 1995b: 236, 1999b: 31).

In psychology, deterministic views have been articulated in the “*language-as-context*” hypothesis and the *conceptual act model* (Barrett, 2006a, 2006b, 2009; Barrett et al., 2007). Deriving from the evidence that emotion terms are involved in disambiguation of facial affect perception (Barrett et al., 2007), the proposal is that emotion words serve as anchors for emotion concepts acquisition through infancy and childhood (Lindquist & Barrett, 2008). Moreover, “emotion language, or cognitive categories it expresses, plays a role in creating conscious emotional experience” (Barrett & Russell, 1999: 13). Thus, having an emotional experience is seen as conditional on one’s conceptualization of this experience as an instance of emotion (Barrett, 2006a, b; Lindquist & Barrett, 2008). This categorization happens as a result of communal (social and cultural) agreement to parse the mental activity in a specific way, allowing thus for cross-cultural differences in how different societies “carve up” their affective spaces. Similarly to the “nominalist” view, the conceptual act model submits that no emotion label has a stable referent. Instead, it is thought to refer to a wide range of

experiential states, and the variance of experiential states to which one and the same emotion word refers to is not substantially lower than the variability between the states labeled by different emotion words (Barrett, 2009: 1288). Therefore, “emotion words serve as ‘conceptual glue’ that holds a category together. Without words, these categories would not exist” (Barrett, 2009: 1292).

Deterministic views have also been voiced in linguistic anthropology (e.g., Wilce, 2009) where (broadly conceived) emotion language is deemed to not only have an impact on emotion concepts, but also to exert influence on emotional experiences themselves: “more than straightforwardly revealing psychological processes, [. . .] genres of so-called emotional expression help *constitute* social understandings and apparently *internal processes*” (Wilce, 2009: 5; emphasis added).

A common (though not always explicitly formulated) assumption in the “language-first” view is that the absence of an emotion label in the lexicon of a language might preclude its speakers from entertaining the “lacunal” emotion concept. Without straightforwardly equating the lexical lacunae with the conceptual ones (criticized in anthropology as a “nominalistic fallacy,” see Goodie, 2002, cf. Caplan, 1992; Carruthers, 2008; Paradis, 1997), culture researchers assert however that the lexical gaps can limit speakers’ power to manipulate the respective concepts, or impede the elaboration of these concepts in oral and written genres of a culture (Gordon, 2004, 2005; Goodie, 2002: 24).

p. 49 In sum, “language-first” approaches assume the existence of a causal link going from language to the conceptualization: the way people think is strongly biased by the languages (and lexicons) they have. The second group of approaches reverses the causal arrow between lexicalization and conceptualization: by contrast, it is the cultural architecture of a lingual community (feeling rules, values, norms, salient concepts, focal concerns) that is assumed to drive lexicalization and have ↵ both qualitative and quantitative impact on the lexical resources of a language (Nida, 1958; Gordon, 2004, 2005). Said plainly, this is a “culture-first,” rather than a “language-first” position.

In the culture-first view, the cultural elaboration of an emotion as focal or, alternatively, as “muted” (cf. Levy, 1973, 1982 on *hyper-* and *hypocognition*) is thought to underlie the ubiquitous lexicalization of some emotion concepts, like “shame” in Chinese (Ho et al., 2004; Li et al., 2004), or, conversely, the scarce lexicalization of others, like “sadness” and “guilt” in the Tahitians (Levy, 1982), or “depression” and “anxiety” in Yoruba and Chinese (Jadhav, 1996; Leff, 1973). Thus, the vocabulary relating to the focus of a culture is assumed to be directly proportionate to its cultural relevance (Nida, 1958)³.

The language-first and culture-first approaches are not incompatible but rather reflect a different focus. Both approaches submit that linguistic representations are reliable signposts to conceptual categories. For example, the fact that an emotion word is recorded in dictionaries of a language is taken to provide definite evidence about the presence of the respective emotion category in the cultural group (Hupka et al., 1999).

Another premise shared by both approaches is that the properties of emotion labels can serve as evidence about the properties of the respective emotion concepts. For example, the finding that most frequently used emotion terms from different historical periods and across countries are the labels for the emotions known in the literature as “basic” (Ekman, 1999; Ortony & Turner, 1990; Plutchik, 1980a) is considered to support the claim on the “basicness” of the emotions referred to by these words (Delgado, 2007).

In social psychology, two main methodological frameworks based on this approximation of the semantic with the conceptual have evolved. The first is the *prototype approach* to emotion lexicons (Fehr & Russell, 1984; Shaver et al., 1987, 1992, 2001, see also 3.1). It is based on the assumption that the outcomes of emotion conceptualization and categorization (that could inform on the place of an emotion concept in the domain hierarchy) are accessible through elicitation of emotion labels from native speakers and testable through various categorization tasks on these words (Iaccino, 1989; Niedenthal et al., 2004).

The second methodological framework is the *dimensional approach* (see Chapters 2 and 7), which derives from the cross-culturally validated empirical research on the structure of connotation underlying various semantic domains in natural languages (Osgood et al., 1957). The Osgoodian dimensions—Evaluation/Valence, Potency/Power, and Activity/Arousal—instantiate three deemed universal types of evaluation: good vs bad, strong vs weak, and active vs passive. Unlike the studies on the connotative meanings of words⁴, however, the dimensional models for the emotions frequently imply that the dimensions do not only capture the evaluation of the verbal stimuli (emotion words), but also represent the evaluative attitudes to emotion concepts or, in several interpretations, also capture the intrinsic qualities of emotional experiences themselves. ↪ For example, Ekman's (1955) study of 23 Swedish emotion words explicitly declares to explore “the degrees of qualitative differences between the emotional states represented by the stimulus words” (1955: 280; emphasis added). Likewise, the circumplex model (Barrett & Russell, 1999; Russell, 1980, 2003) proposes that “the descriptive structure of affect represents both language and conscious affective experience” (Barrett & Russell, 1999: 13, emphasis added), and that the dimensions are the “core processes” that constitute the primitive basis of an emotional experience.

In summary, four key premises underlie the cognitive perspective on emotion lexis discussed above. The first is the assumption that the very fact of lexicalization of an emotional experience points at the existence of the respective concept in the conceptual system of people speaking that language. Secondly, although concessions are made that language speakers can have all kinds of emotional experiences (and entertain emotion concepts without lexical designations in their languages), emotion lexicons are assumed to offer default matrices for conceptualization, categorization, and interpretation of emotions in respective cultural groups. Thirdly, the qualitative and quantitative differences in emotion lexicalization in different languages reflect culture-motivated differences in feeling rules, values, norms, salient concepts and concerns of the cultural groups at stake. The fourth and final premise is methodological: in the cognitive perspective on emotion lexis, linguistic evidence—both experimental (e.g., categorization tasks with language speakers), and analytical (e.g., analyses of emotion word use in corpora)—is assumed to provide a viable access to “folk” emotion conceptualization.

3.3 Emotion lexicalization across languages and cultures

In this section, we will give an overview of the state-of-the-art evidence on the similarities and the divergences in emotion lexicalization in different languages. On the cognitive approach to emotion lexis presented above, both types of evidence can highlight both the common and the specific aspects of how emotions are conceptualized across cultures.

Cross-lingual similarities in the linguistic representation of emotions

There are five general loci of similarities in how emotions are lexicalized in different languages. Firstly, although the differences in the size of emotion vocabularies are pronounced (Pavlenko, 2005; Russell, 1991a; Soriano & Ogarkova, 2009), the vast majority of languages investigated to date are reported to have specific words or expressions to name what would be labeled as “emotional states” in academic English. One of the most representative studies (Hupka et al., 1999) found dictionary translations of English emotion terms in 64 languages that represent 60 major geographical and linguistic groupings of the world's languages, complemented with four languages with fewer than one million speakers (Dehu, Mazahua, Toaripi, and Walpiri). That every world language would have “emotion terms” (i.e., terms for cognitively-based feelings) has been formulated as a working hypothesis for a cross-lingual emotional universal (Wierzbicka, 1999b: 36), and has been supported by NSM research on five language families, including Indo-European (e.g., Polish, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese), African (e.g., Hebrew and Amharic), Austronesian (e.g., Melayu-Papua, Malay, Filipino, Alamlak), Native American (Cree), and Sino-Tibetan (e.g., Chinese).

The second area of cross-lingual similarity in emotion lexicalization relates to specific emotion categories. The study by Hupka and associates (1999) looked into a generalized sequence of how emotion categories emerge in language and established that “anger” is the first emotion category to evolve in any language that has emotion words, followed by “shame/guilt” (Hupka et al., 1999). This finding is also corroborated by NSM research: relying on the evidence from a wide array of languages, Wierzbicka hypothesizes that all languages have words overlapping (though not identical) in meaning with the English words *angry*, *ashamed*, and *afraid* (Wierzbicka, 1999b: 36). Agreeably, our own inquiry into which emotional experiences are lexicalized in the languages with the smallest emotion vocabularies—Chewong, Fante, and Dagbani—suggests that they overlap in lexicalizing four emotional experiences, and these words are the glosses of English *anger*, *fear/fright*, *shame/disgrace*, and *jealousy/envy* (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Chewong, Fante, and Dagbani emotion words

Chewong	Fante	Dagbani	English gloss
Chan	Ebufo	Suli/Suhiyigsili	anger
Hentugn	Akomatu	Dhem	fear/fright
Lidya	Aniwu	Anyinguase	shame/disgrace
Meseg	Ahowoyaw	Jelinsi Nyuli	jealousy/envy
Hanrodn	–	–	proud
Punmen	–	–	like
Osayagn	–	–	fond of
–	Ayemhyehye	Ninimooi	worry/anxiety
–	Anika	Nyagsim	joy/contentment
–	Yawdzi	Suhisajingu	sorrow/sadness
–	Ahobo	–	surprise
–	Anyito	–	guilty/ashamed
–	Ahobrase	–	humility
–	Brɛ	–	tired, weary
–	Basa	–	agitated, irritable
–	Asomdwee	Suhidoo	peace
–	Anibre	–	determined/jealous
–	–	Suhipelli	happiness
–	–	Bomma Nyuli	admiration/positive envy

Note: summarized from Howell, 1981: 133–43 and Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006: 128–9.

The third cross-lingual similarity in emotion lexicalization is that, alongside with the abstract psychological language (i.e., emotion words), in a huge variety of languages emotions can be represented via somatic

sensation expressions and somatic metaphors (Mumford, 1993, see also “Partial semantic overlap” in Section 3.3), that is, body-part phrases referring to both literal and imaginary processes taking place inside, or with the body (e.g., English *she blushed*, *his hair stood on his head*, or *his heart sank*) (cf. Russo, 2010; Sharifian et al., 2008 for overviews). With very few exceptions (e.g., Michelson, 2002), the possibility to codify emotions in somatic terms is reported for Arabic (Seidensticker, 1992), Basque (Ibarretxe-Antunano, 2008), Chinese (Ye, 2002; Yu, 2002), Chocktaw (Mithun, 1984), Dholuo (Reh, 1998), Estonian (Vainik, 2007), Hebrew (Kuzar & Kidron, 2002), Hmong (Jaisser, 1990), Indonesian (Siahaan, 2007), Irianese and Papua New Guinean languages (McElhanon, 1977), Japanese (Hasada, 2002; Kuwabara & Smith, 2007), Ponorogo Javanese (Weiss, 1977), Kambera (Klamer, 1998), Kaytetye (Turpin, 2002), Kuot (Lindström, 2002), Korean (Kyung-Joo Yoon, 2008), Malay (Goddard, 2001; Oey, 1990), Old Koromu (Priestley, 2002), Selepet (McElhanon & McElhanon, 1970), Thaayorre (Gaby, 2008), Thai (Diller & Juntanamalaga, 1990), Tunisian Arabic (Maalej, 2004), Wolof (Becher, 2003; Bondeelle, 2011), and Zulu (Taylor & Mbense, 1998). The same tendency is recorded for ancient languages, such as Gothic, old Hebrew, old Greek, and Latin (Chamberlain, 1895; Mumford, 1993). Agreeably, the contention that, in all languages, people can describe their emotions using both literal and metaphoric body-part expressions has been put forward as a putative universal emotion (Wierzbicka, 1999b: 36).

Fourthly, reports on crosslingual similarity in the emotion domains come from the dimensional studies. Here, comparable (although not identical, see “Emotions as internal states vs relational phenomena” and “Aspects of variation in emotion term semantics” in Section 3.3) dimensions are reported to emerge in the analysis of emotion vocabularies in over twenty languages, including, among others, Swedish (Ekman, 1955), Norwegian (Block, 1957), Hebrew (Fillenbaum & Rapoport, 1971), Woleaian spoken by the Ifaluk (Lutz, 1982), German (Abele-Brehm & Brehm, 1986; Gehm & Scherer, 1988), English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hong Kong Chinese (Herrmann & Raybeck, 1981), Gujarati, Croatian, Japanese (Moore et al., 1999; Romney et al., 1997; Russell, 1980; Russell & Sato, 1995), Polish and Japanese (Russell, 1980), English, French, and Dutch (Fontaine et al., 2007), Italian, French, Catalan, Portuguese, and Romanian (Galati et al., 2008).

Finally, the entirety of the prototype approach studies shows that comparable (but see “Aspects of variation in emotion term semantics” in Section 3.3) emotion categories are found at the basic level of categorization (Rosch, 1978) in typologically distant languages, such as English (Fehr & Russell, 1984; Shaver et al., 1987), French (Niedenthal et al., 2004), Tagalog (Church et al., 1998), Samoan (Gerber, 1985), Bahasa Indonesia (Shaver et al., 2001), Basque (Alonso-Arbiol et al., 2006), Woleaian (Lutz, 1982), Chinese (Shaver et al., 1992; Li et al., 2004), Italian (Galli & Zammuner, 2006; Zammuner, 1998), Czech (Slaměnik & Hurychová, 2006), Estonian (Vainik, 2004), Turkish (Smith & Smith, 1995), and Palauan (Smith & Tkel-Sbal, 1995).

Five types of similarities outlined above are subject to both quantitative and qualitative limitations. Quantitatively, while almost 7 thousand languages (Crystal, 1997; Ethnologue) have been cataloged in the world (of which 82% are spoken by fewer than 100 thousand people and 8% are nearly extinct), the best exemplars of research on lexical universals consider the evidence from a maximum of 500 languages, and concerns have been voiced about the representativeness of any specific selection (Evans & Levinson, 2009). In emotion research proper, the widest selection of languages considered within a single study is 64 (Hupka et al., 1999).

Qualitatively, the similarities outlined above do not inform on two important issues. The first one relates to the variation in emotion lexicalization at the *generic level*, where the pertinent questions are whether “emotion” emerges as a cross-linguistically stable category that can serve as a common denominator on which languages can be compared, what lexical items qualify as “emotion words” in different languages, and what these divergences tell about the indigenous ways to conceptualize emotions. The second issue relates to the variation at the *term level*, where the central questions are how specific emotion words compare across languages, whether satisfactory translational correlates can be found for comparative analyses, and what aspects contribute most to variation in emotion term semantics. Relevant evidence on these two issues will now be overviewed in more detail.

Variation at the generic level: “emotion” as a non-universal cognitive category

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Although in scientific discourse the cognates of the English word *emotion* (e.g., French *émotion*, Italian *emozione*, or Spanish *emoción*) are generally used in a sense “modeled on that of the English *emotion*” (Wierzbicka, 1995a: 22), in ordinary use, these superordinate terms are argued to have somewhat different meanings compared to the English term (Wierzbicka, 1995a: 22). In this context, an even more pronounced divergence between non-Western indigenous terms and English *emotion* can reasonably be expected.

Indeed, research in anthropology, linguistics, and cross-cultural psychology shows that not all languages classify the words to denote emotional experiences into a distinct category of experiential states. Firstly, there is evidence that some languages lack a superordinate term for emotional experiences, which is the case of Dagbani (Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006), Tahitians (Levy, 1973), Bimin-Kuskusmin (Poole, 1985), Gidjingali (Hiatt, 1978), and Chewong (Howell, 1981).

Secondly, in languages where superordinate terms are available, these terms are qualitatively different from the English word *emotion*. On the one hand, the superordinate terms can be narrower in their referential scope than English *emotion*, so that more than one term is needed to capture all relevant words. This is the case of Turkish – *duygu* “feeling,” *heyecan* “excitement, enthusiasm,” and *his* “feeling” (Smith & Smith, 1995: 105), and two in Indonesian – *perasaan hati* “feelings of the heart”⁵ and *emosi* “(negative) emotions” (Beatty, 2005; Heider, 1991; Shaver et al., 2001).

On the other hand, generic-level affect terms in non-Western languages can have a wider referential scope than English *emotion* and thus apply to the states that do not normally qualify as affective in English. For instance, indigenous categories roughly equivalent to English *emotion* can embrace both emotion terms and the lexemes denoting character traits and affective-cognitive dispositions. For example, alongside the emotions words proper, the Japanese category of *jodo* “emotion” includes also the equivalents of English *considerate*, *motivated*, *lucky*, and *calculating* (Matsuyama et al., 1978). In other languages, emotion words fall into one category with the labels for the physiologic, or somatic states, such as hunger or thirst, as in the Fante and Anglo indigenous categories of *atsinka* and *seselelame* (Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006; Geurts, 2002). Thirdly, in several languages emotion words appear to be grouped together with the words denoting mental states, as in the Balinese category *keneh* “feeling-thought” (Wikan, 1992: 463), the Shuar category *anentaimia* (Boster, 2005), or the Ifalukian category *nunuwan* (Lutz, 1985: 17). As a result, emotion vocabularies in these languages include words with cognition, rather than affect, as their referential focus, such as, for instance, Woleaian *filengaw* “discomfort/indecision,” *komayaya* “incapability,” or *yeyewal* “indecision/doubt” (Lutz, 1982: 116).

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Obviously, these differences in the generic-level labeling of emotional experiences have an impact on what language items qualify as “emotion words” in various languages. In English, several attempts to formulate the criteria for “emotion terms” have been made. Wallace and Carson (1973) suggested using the words that would fit both syntactic contexts of “*He feels X*” and “*He has a feeling of X*” (so that both *sad* and *sadness* qualify as emotion terms). Clore et al. (1987) argued that an emotion word has to express emotions in two contexts, *feeling X* and *being X* (so that, e.g., *sad* qualifies as an emotion word but *ignored* does not). A most influential and common approach however is the one suggested by Ortony and associates (1987, cf. Church et al., 1998) where the following criteria were formulated: (1) the terms should refer to internal and mental conditions; (2) they should describe a momentary state; (3) they should have affect as opposed to behavior or *↳* cognition as a predominant (rather than incidental) referential focus. With these criteria as the reference point, the evidence on several alternative ways to conceptualize emotions in non-Western cultures will now be overviewed.

Emotions as internal states vs relational phenomena

Rich ethnographic literature reports that in many non-Western cultures – for example, Ifaluk (Lutz, 1986), Balinese (Wikan, 1990), Fula (Riesman, 1977), Ilongot (Rosaldo, 1980), Kaluli (Schieffelin, 1985), Pintupi (Myers, 1979), Samoan (Gerber, 1975, 1985), and A'ara (White, 1978, 1980) – emotions are seen as relational phenomena, embedded in social situations and taking place between people rather than “inside” them. As a result, emotion words in those cultures function as “statements about the relationship between a person and an event (particularly involving another person), rather than as statements about one’s introspection on one’s internal states” (Lutz, 1986: 267). Thus, the *types of emotion-eliciting events* are a central factor involved in emotion categorization in those cultures (see also “Aspects of variation in emotion term semantics” in Section 3.3).

A classical example of this alternative emotion conceptualization comes from the hierarchical clustering study of the emotion words in the Woleaian language spoken by the Ifaluk (Lutz, 1982). This study shows that Ifalukian affect-related vocabulary does not cluster into groups of near-synonymous items around a prototype word (like English *anger* or *fear*), but forms clusters of words denoting states elicited by similar *types of situations*, such as those of good fortune, danger, human error, connection/loss, or inability (Lutz, 1982). Therefore, *metagu* “fear/anxiety,” *lugumet* “discomfort/guilt,” and *ma* “shame/embarrassment” cluster together because all of them happen in situations “when one must go someplace where respectful behavior is required” (Ibid: 116).

Comparable findings come from a study on emotion categorization in Turkish (Smith & Smith, 1995): despite explicit discouragement in a free-listing task, Turkish participants listed *situations* as instances of “emotion” nearly as frequently (48%) as names for emotional states proper, and 80% of the participants used a situation label at least once. This suggests that the Turkish perceive emotions “holistically, such that they do not consider subjective states independent of the situations that elicit them or the behaviors that result” (Ibid: 110).

Conceptualizing emotions as situation-embedded phenomena rather than as inner states is also captured by the dimensional studies. Whereas in the Western languages the distinction between positive and negative emotions concerns primarily the differences in the perceived (un)pleasantness of a particular emotional experience (“simple hedonic tone,” see Davitz, 1969; Russell, 2003), in Ifalukians this contrast pertains to the differences in the evaluation of the *consequences of the emotion-eliciting situations* (Lutz, 1982: 124). Likewise, for Samoans the pleasantness dimension sets apart “socially virtuous” and “socially non-virtuous” emotions, which might not be “pleasurable” in the Western sense, as they require submissiveness: for example, *lotomama* “a socially approved feeling of happy passivity and willingness to agree with the desires of others” (Gerber, 1985).

Emotions as somatic vs psychological states

Another alternative type of emotion conceptualization stems from the observations that many non-Western languages do not differentiate between emotion and bodily sensation to the same extent that the Western languages do. On the one hand, multiple studies in cross-cultural psychiatry conclude that patients from non-Western cultures tend to “somatize” their emotions, while Western patients tend to “psychologize” them (Mumford, 1993). Thus, the emotional and the somatic appear to be less differentiated in China (Kleinman & Kleinman, 1985; Tsai et al., 2004; Tung, 1994), Kenya and Tanzania (Ice & Yogo, 2005; Kaaya et al., 2002; Pike & Young, 2002), India (Saxena et al., 1988), and Saudi Arabia (Racy, 1980; see also Mumford, 1993 for an overview).

p. 55 On the other hand, anthropologists and linguists report a higher representation of somatic expressions in the emotion vocabularies of African languages (e.g., Ameka, 2002; Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006; Dzokoto & Adams, 2007; Geurts, 2002; Nida, 1958; Taylor & Mbense, 1998), as well as in the languages of several Asian and indigenous South and Central American cultures, such as Chewong (Howell, 1981: 139), Malay (Goddard, 2001: 167), Twaka Indians (Chamberlain, 1895: 590), and Tiribi Indians (Gatchet, 1894: 217).

Although the tendency to codify emotions in somatic terms may well be a universal feature of the majority of the world's cultures (as discussed in "Cross-lingual similarities in the linguistic representation of emotions" in Section 3.3), three aspects of cross-lingual variation can nevertheless be singled out.

Firstly, languages differ in the extent to which the connection between the affective and the somatic is elaborated and nuanced. While languages have been classified into predominantly *cardiocentric* (e.g., Germanic and Romance languages, Japanese, Hausa), where the heart is the "seat" of emotions (Batic, 2011; Ikegami, 2008; Niemeier, 1997, 2008; Occhi, 2008; Pérez, 2008), and *abdomen-centric*, where emotions are figuratively localized in either the belly/guts (as in Nigerian English, Tahitian, Thaayorre, and Tigre; see Bauer, 1973; Gaby, 2008; Lemaître, 1995; Littmann & Hoeffner, 1962) or the liver (as in Malay and Kambera; see Goddard, 2001; Klamer, 1998; Siahhaan, 2008), some languages make fairly nuanced associations between specific body parts and specific emotions. For example, in Wolof, an African language spoken in Senegal, heart (*xol*) is the seat of grief, anger, joy, and jealousy (e.g., *dafa xett xolam* "it pierced his heart," it made him jealous), mind (*xel*) is the seat of contentment, worry, and disappointment (e.g., *suma xel bi tilim* "my mind is dirty," I am disappointed), body (*yaram*) is the seat of sadness and pity (e.g., *suma yaram bi yepp dee* "my whole body died," I am sad), and skin (*der*) is associated with shame (e.g., *danga yàq suma der* "you destroyed my skin," you made me feel ashamed) (Becher, 2003: 13). Likewise, while all emotions (both positive and negative) are associated with the heart (*bihotz*) in Basque, only negative emotions (e.g., *gibelbeldur* "distrust," *gibelgogo* "aversion," or *gibelondo* "disdain") are associated with the liver (*gibel*) in this language (Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 2008).

Secondly, languages differ quantitatively in the proportion of the body-part phrases in their emotion vocabularies, which overall signals the salience of embodied imagery in language representation of emotions. Here, in contrast to English (a cardiocentric language) where *heart*-imagery is less frequent than literal emotion denominations (Geeraerts & Gevaert, 2008), in Anlo-Ewe, Ewe, Anuak, Fante, Dagbani, as well as in Anuak and Niasan, somatic expressions constitute around a half of the emotion vocabularies (Beatty, 2005; Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006; Nida, 1958: 286). For example, in Wolof one literal rendering of "anger" (*dafa mer* "she is angry") is paralleled by at least five body-part phrases that label "anger" experiences of various shades of intensity, ranging from *sama xol bi neexul* "my heart is not sweet" to *sama xol bi fuur* "my heart is boiling" (Becher, 2003: 15).

Thirdly and most importantly, languages differ in the possibility to lexicalize emotions in abstract psychological language as compared to codifying them somatically. While in many Western languages figurative body-part expressions (e.g., *it made my blood boil*) exist in parallel to literal renderings (e.g., *anger* or *fury*), in many indigenous languages no such possibility has been attested. McPherson and Prokhorov (2011: 39–40) note the near-total absence of emotion-specific vocabulary in nine Dogon languages of Mali where emotions are encoded by idiomatic expressions containing the word "liver." Likewise, in Wolof, both "sadness" and "disappointment" can exclusively be codified through body-part phrasals—*dafa tilimal suma xel* "my mind is dirty" and *suma yaram bi yepp dee* "my whole body died," respectively (Becher, 2003: 13–14). A pidginized term *bel i-nogut*, "belly no good" is the only recorded item to mean "disappointment" in Neo-Melanesian (Hupka et al., 1999: 250); *sānītlwīne* "bad-hearted he-is" is the only gloss for *angry* in the Kootenay Indian ↵ language of British Columbia (Chamberlain, 1895: 394). Lacking a one-word label for *guilt*, Niasans use a somatic metaphor *itegu dōdōgu* "my heart is pressed/nagged" instead (Beatty, 2005: 24).

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Taken together, these findings suggest that somatic expressions tend to be a basic mode of emotion labeling in many non-Western languages. This, from the cognitive perspective on emotion lexis, can be assumed to have impact on how emotions are conceptualized in respective cultural groups. Being substituted by a body-part term and appearing only as a possessor attributed to this body-part, people undergoing emotional experiences are seen as inactive participants in the emotional process. In other words, emotions are conceptualized as processes upon which an experiencer has no, or very little control (cf. Becher, 2003; Matisoff, 1986). Furthermore, since somatic metaphors are intrinsically linked with literal expressions conveying somatic

sensations (cf. Mumford, 1993), the evidence overviewed above also suggests that somatic symptoms are a salient aspect in emotion term semantics (see “Aspects of variation in emotion term semantics” in Section 3.3).

Variation at the term level: commensurability of specific emotion words

Alongside with the generic-level differences in emotion labeling outlined in previous sections, considerable cross-lingual variance is also observed at the word level, that is, in the comparisons of deemed equivalent, or comparable words in different languages.

The very concept of semantic equivalence resides on a fairly straightforward idea that two emotion words should share the same/very similar meaning to be considered equivalent. Clearly, the way meaning is defined largely depends on the discipline: some of the psychological approaches assume that the meaning of an emotion word can be derived from the position that word takes on a set of evaluative dimensions; others assess semantic similarity through a degree to which an emotion term shares in the prototypical characteristics pertinent to a specific emotion category. In linguistics, semantic equivalence requires a significant overlap in both the referential and the connotative aspects (Besnier, 1990), or in the referential, the affective and the social (cf. Lyons, 1977). This latter convergence presupposes that the two compared items are used in the same social contexts.

Regardless of a specific approach, however, semantic equivalence is never taken to be an absolute value. Agreeably with a common view that no word can ever mean the same in two different utterances (Ariel, 2002) or for two different speakers (see Chapter 4.), the lack of exact correspondences between comparable words in different languages is one of the fundamental presuppositions in most semantic analyses (Nida, 1958). So, our discussion will be henceforth limited to considering various types of (sometimes very) relative semantic overlap between translation correlates in different languages.

Lexical lacunae

An extreme case of the lack of equivalence at the level of specific emotions words comes from the rich literature on lexical lacunae. With few exceptions (e.g., Beatty, 2005), English is a most frequent language used in comparative work, therefore two types of findings are most common: (1) English terms are said to not have one-word equivalents in other languages; (2) other languages are attributed “culture-specific” terms that do not have one-word correlates in English.

Examples of the former include Tahitians lacking a word equivalent to English *sadness* (Levy, 1973), Nyinba lacking a word for *love* (in its Western sense of “romantic love,” Levine, 1988), Fante and Dagbani not lexicalizing *loneliness* (Dzokoto & Okazaki, 2006), or Greek, Arabic, and Russian having no satisfactory correlate of *frustration* (Panayiotou, 2004a; Pavlenko, 2008; Russell, 1991a). Particularly exuberant reports are available for the lack of correlates of English *guilt* and *depression*. Among the languages reported not to lexicalize *guilt* are Sinhala (Obeyesekere, 1981), Ilongot (Rosaldo, 1984), Pintupi (Morice, 1978), Samoan (Gerber, 1975), and Niasan (Beatty, 2005). The data from Hupka and associates’ (1999) study show that in 32, that is, a half of the languages studied, no equivalent of English *guilt* is recorded. Likewise, English *depression* has no equivalents in several indigenous Indian languages of North America (Termansen & Ryan, 1970), Malay (Resner & Hartog, 1970), Chinese (Chan, 1990; Tseng & Hsu, 1969), Eskimo (Leff, 1973), Fulani (Riesman, 1977), Kaluli (Schieffelin, 1985), and Xhosa (Cheetham & Cheetham, 1976), as well as in 35 other languages from Hupka et al.’s study (1999).

Conversely, many languages are reported to have names for the emotional experiences without one-word designations in English. Among others, these include Chinese *chou* “sorrow, worry, melancholy” (Ye, 2001), Bengali *obhiman* “sorrow caused by the insensitivity of a loved one” (Russell, 1991a: 426), Javanese *sungkan*, “an inhibition of one’s desires before a superior” or *iklas* “a state of pleasant/indifferent frustration” (Geertz, 1959),

and Japanese *ijirashii*, “a feeling associated with seeing someone weak but praiseworthy overcoming an obstacle” and *amae* “a pleasurable sense of dependence” (Araki, 1994; Doi, 1981). Several widely-known examples come also from European languages, such as Polish *przykro* (Wierzbicka, 2001), Czech *dojetí* and *lítost* (Slaměník & Hyruchová, 2006), Russian *toska* (see Chapter 23) and *perezhivat'* (Pavlenko, 2002a), as well as Spanish *cariño* (Altarriba, 2003), Portuguese *saudade* (Farrell, 2006), German *Schadenfreude* (Wierzbicka, 1998b), and Greek *stenahoria* (Panayiotou, 2004b; 2006).

It is important to note, however, that alongside the frequently reported “cultural untranslatability,” many of the deemed “culture-specific” emotion words are nevertheless translatable linguistically. Firstly, context-dependent renderings can in most cases be found for “lacunal” emotion words: for instance, Polish culture-specific word *żal* does share some (although not all) elements with the English *grief*, *sadness*, and *sorrow* (Besemeres, 2006); Greek *ntropi* can be rendered, depending on the context, as *shyness*, *shame*, *embarrassment*, or *discomfort* (Panayiotou, 2006). Contextual translational correlates of the salient Russian emotion word *toska* are “sadness,” “anxiety,” and “boredom” words in other languages, Germanic, Romance, and Slavic alike (see Chapter 23). Depending on the contexts of use, the Woleaian word *fago* can be defined in English as *compassion*, *sad love*, or *sadness* (Lutz, 1982: 123).

Secondly, there is evidence that the meanings lexicalized in a mono-lexemic way in one language can however be rendered in another language in a linguistically more complex way (e.g., as a multi-word expression). For instance, *enthusiasm* and *enthralment* have no one-word denominations in Luganda, but vernacular expressions meaning “the person is working hard” and “the person left us with our mouth open,” respectively, are commonly used instead (Hupka et al., 1999: 248). *Depression*, a lacunal word in Yoruba, can be rendered in this language as “the heart goes weak” and “the heart is not at rest” (Leff, 1973). Psychologists working in the regions where Luo, Turkana, and Datoga are spoken (languages that lack a correlate of English *stress*) conventionally use the local idioms meaning “thinking too much” (Ice & Yogo, 2005; Pike & Young, 2002).

Taken together, these reports corroborate the so-called “Strong Effability/Translatability” hypothesis in linguistics (Katz, 1976) which asserts that anything that can be said (i.e., is effable) in one language can be translated into another language (von Fintel & Matthewson, 2008) and that “every useful meaning can be verbalized” (van Benthem, 1991: 25, cf. Katz, 1976). However, what can be expressed by a word in one language might require a rather complex expression in another language.

p. 58 It is important to note that a transition from one language level to another, or from one morphological word class to another, can impact the semantic and conceptual structure of verbalized emotions (cf. Chapter 4). For instance, while emotion adjectives (e.g., *joyful*) are commonly held to be more easily associated with immediate emotional experience (Plutchik, 1980a), emotion nouns (e.g., *joy*) refer to an abstract store of representations separated from contextual elements (Conway & Bekerian, 1987). Nouns, rather than verbs or adjectives, are assumed to increase the psychological similarity of emotions to “objects” (Shaver et al., 2001: 203) and therefore they are used in emotion categorization research (Fehr & Russell, 1984; Shaver et al., 1987, 1992, 2001). In turn, verbs—the dominant way of emotion lexicalization in Igbo, Hindustani and Russian (Agbo, 2011; Semin et al., 2002; Wolfson, 2005), and the only morphological class to label emotions in East Cree, Amharic, and Alambalak (Amberber, 2001; Junker & Blacksmith, 2006; Bruce & Bruce, 2010)—encode emotions as processes and relationships, highlighting thus their procedural aspects.

Partial semantic overlap

A much more common relationship between emotion terms in different languages is, however, that of a partial overlap in meaning, for which several types are commonly reported. Firstly, there are cases where an emotion word in one language represents only a part of the referential scope of a comparable word in another language. This is the case of correspondence between Ukrainian *kohannya* “a deep affection felt toward a person of the opposite sex” (SUM; Grygorash, 2006, 2007) and English *love*, which has a much wider referential scope (Ogarkova, 2003, 2005); or Russian lexeme *revnost* which correlates with English *jealousy* only in the sense of “the state of mind arising from the suspicion, aggression, or knowledge of rivalry” (OED), but not in the sense of “unhappiness or anger about other people’s possessions” (OED, cf. Pavlenko, 2008: 152).

Secondly, sometimes emotion concepts referred to by a single term in one language are lexically differentiated in (an)other language(s). On the one hand, an indigenous term in one language can correspond to two or more distinct labels from *different emotion categories* in another language, as does the Gidjingali word *gurakadj* which combines “fear” and “shame” (Hiatt, 1978, cf. Wierzbicka, 1999b), Samoan *alofa* that spans together the meanings of “love/liking” and “sympathy/pity” (Gerber, 1975: 3), Amharic *azzənnə* which combines “sadness” and “sympathy” (Amberber, 2001: 45), or Woleaian *rus* that integrates “panic/fright” and “surprise” (Lutz, 1982: 116). A frequently attested pattern here is the conflation of “anger” and “sadness” in several African languages (Leff, 1973) such as, for instance, in Luganda, where the verb *okusunguwa* (“to get angry”) also means “to get sad” (Orley, 1970: 3)⁶.

On the other hand, many reports show that an indigenous term in one language can correspond to two (or more) *same-category words* in other languages. For instance, the meanings of Polish *pogarda* or Swedish *förakt* correspond to two French “contempt” nouns, *mépris* and *dédain* (Koselak, 2005: 21), or the Gidjingali word *gurakadj* can be rendered into English as *terror*, *horror*, *dread*, *apprehension*, and *timidity* (Hiatt, 1978). A frequently mentioned cross-lingual pattern here is the conflation of “shame” and “embarrassment”: while the two emerge as distinct emotion concepts in English (cf. Wierzbicka, 1999b), they “seem to be a lexically unified cluster in many or perhaps most parts of the non-Western world” (Levy, 1983: 131). Indeed, ethnographic accounts suggest that the lexical distinction between “shame” and “embarrassment” is not made in Alambalak (Bruce and Bruce, 2010), Amharic (Amberber, 2001: 53), Indonesian (Keeler, 1983: 153), Japanese (Lebra, 1983: 194), Javanese (Geertz, 1959: 233), Kanuri (Hupka et al., 1999: 276–277), Pintupi (Myers, 1979: 361), Tahitian (Levy, 1973), Tamajaq (Rasmussen, 2007: 238), and Woleaian spoken by the Ifaluk (Lutz, 1988: 209).

p. 59 Aspects of variation in emotion term semantics

While the body of work overviewed in previous sections reveals a complex network of (sometimes, very relative) correspondences between emotion words in different languages, the final issue that still needs to be addressed in this chapter concerns the *aspects of variation* that contribute most to the differences in emotion term semantics. Here, the salience of several such aspects, or components, can be highlighted.

First of all, differences in the meanings of comparable words across languages frequently derive from the differences in the *typical antecedent events* of emotional experiences labeled by the words. For instance, Malay *malu* refers to an emotional experience that typically happens not only in the situations that would be easily recognized as prototypically shame-eliciting by speakers of English (e.g., having done something wrong or foolish), but also in response to being teased, even in a relatively mild way (Goddard, 1996, 2005). *Yirufa*, one of the “shame/embarrassment” words in the Alambalak language, is reported to arise in response to a public insult (Bruce & Bruce, 2010). Another study of English *shame* and Spanish *vergüenza* shows that while most typical antecedent events of *shame* (and least typical of *vergüenza*) are moral transgression, humiliation, and wrongdoing, most typical elicitors of *vergüenza* (that are simultaneously not characteristic of *shame*) are ridicule and the presence of others (Hurtado, 2007, 2008).

Typical antecedent events can also underlie lexical differentiation of larger groups of words within a language: for instance, each of the over thirty East Cree “anger” verbs are reported to refer to an emotion elicited by a distinct event, such as an insult, mutual ill feeling, taking leave of an individual on a walk, offensive visual sights, and so on (Watkins, 1938: 284–285). Likewise, the exuberant “shame” vocabulary in Chinese falls into two smaller subcategories: the lexemes denoting shame varieties arising from appraising of one’s own behavior (“self focus” shame), and the words referring to shame experiences elicited by the actions of others (“other-focus” shame, Li et al., 2004).

Centrally important here are the *social aspects* of emotion-eliciting situations. Overall, five types of them appear to be most salient in this regard, namely:

- 1 *The social status* of agents involved in an emotional episode. In Woleaian, for instance, a distinct cluster of words denotes experiences involving interactions with higher-rank people, such as *nguch* “the frustration engendered by the obedience required to those of higher rank” (Lutz, 1982: 119). Conversely, other emotion terms emerge to label the emotions one has (or is expected to have) with regard to people of a lower rank, such as Utku *naklik*, “the love for those who need protection” (Russell, 1991a).
- 2 *The in-group or out-group membership* of the person(s) causing an emotion in the experiencer. In contrast to the typical “self-other” dichotomy in the Western world, researchers of non-Western cultures contend that many indigenous constructs—such as Filipino *kapwa* (Enriquez, 1992), Korean *woori* (Choi et al., 1993; Choi & Han, 2008), Zulu, Shona, and Runyakitara *ubunti* (Forster, 2006; Louw, 2001), as well as Pintupi *walytja* (Myers, 1979)—conceptualize the social universe differently. In Pintupi, for instance, the social world is divided into (a) those who are “kin,” “relations,” or “family” (*walytja*), and (b) those who are not kin—often described as “not men,” or “different men” (*munuwati*) (Myers, 1979: 351). Consequently, same emotion experienced toward either an in-group or an out-group person implies different modes of emotional expression. For example, when used in reference to the emotion one feels toward the kin, Filipino *galit* “anger” presupposes free and open anger manifestation; when referring to an emotion felt toward outsiders, however, it denotes an anger-like experience accompanied by the culturally-prescribed tendencies to hide, keep quiet, and show indifference (Lorenzano, 2006: 5).
- 3 *The focus of the appraisal of a person* who causes an emotion in the experiencer. Alongside with the behavior, two more aspects—people’s inherent characteristics and possessions—appear to be important. The former is felicitous to discriminate between English *anger* and its Chinese correlate *nu*, which, unlike *anger*, can be caused by “observing certain striking characteristics of someone whom we cannot habitually stand (*taoyan*), for example, especially tall or short, fat or thin, big-eyed or with a pock-marked face” (Kornacki, 2001: 263). The latter aspect—material possessions—is a defining semantic feature of a distinct class of words in Woleaian which unites the emotions of “good fortune” and where many of the emotions occur when a person has a valuable object (Lutz, 1982: 115–116).
- 4 *Social sharing/reciprocity*, that is, possibility of the emotional experiences referred to by emotion terms to be more typically experienced by, or about a group of people at a time. Inherently reciprocal are many Palauan emotion words, such as *klsiberreng* “mutual bad or hurt feelings,” *kaubtikerreng* “mutual fondness,” and *kltareng* “mutual trust” (Smith & Tkel-Sbal, 1995: 91). Likewise, Chinese “anger” lexeme *fen* is not only typically used to refer to a “collective” emotion experienced by many people at a time, but is also typically experienced about a group people (esp. in authority positions) rather than a single individual (Kornacki, 2001: 277).
- 5 *Attribution*, which refers to the possibility that in some cultures (e.g., collectivistic) specific emotional experiences (e.g., negative other-directed emotions) are more readily attributed by their experiencers to others than to themselves. Such reluctance in self-attribution of negative other-directed emotions is indeed attested for Ifalukians: “*gasechaula* (‘hate’) [is] the only emotion that people would not say, even in

private conversation, they had experienced” (Lutz, 1983: 251). Ifalukians are also reluctant to acknowledge several emotions that result from the acquisition of material goods, sexual relationships, or other valued objects, given “the primary danger in an admission of *chegas* ‘pride/self-confidence’ or *ker* ‘happiness/excitement’ because one might be seen as showing-off one’s good fortune” (Ibid.: 251).

The second important source of semantic variation between comparable emotion terms is the *subjective feelings* associated to the labeled emotional experiences. For example, given the evidence that Portuguese *saudade* is frequently used in the constructions *estar com* + *N* (lit. “to be with +N”) designating afflictions or ailments in Portuguese, as well as in the construction *morendo de* “die of,” *saudade* is said to denote a more afflictive emotional experience than its closest English correlates *nostalgia* and *missing* (Farrell, 2006). A contrastive analysis of Russian *zhalost’* and its English counterpart *pity* amounts to similar observations: deriving from the evidence that *zhalost’* is centrally (metaphorically) construed as physical pain, this Russian lexeme is argued to denote an experience associated with more suffering on part of its experience compared to *pity* (Danaher, 2002: 8).

The salience of subjective feelings as a source of semantic variation can extend beyond individual comparisons and differentiate between clusters of words in different languages: in Chinese, a distinct cluster of “sad love” words emerges (Shaver et al., 1992), suggesting that “love” is viewed upon as a negative rather than a positive emotion in Chinese—a contention at least in part corroborated by further analysis of the metaphorical (Na, 2007) and discursive construction of love in Chinese vs American English (Rothbaum & Tsang, 1998). Similarly, Indonesian “love” words are reported to focus more on yearning and desire compared to the words in the analogous American English category (Shaver et al., 2001).

p. 61 Thirdly, cross-lingual glosses have been shown to refer to emotional concepts that differ with respect to the emotion component of *physiological symptoms*. For instance, Greek *stenahoria* is reported to be typically accompanied by a feeling of suffocation which is not implied in *frustration*, ↳ its rough English gloss (Panayitou, 2004a). The salience of physiological symptoms as part of emotion term semantics appears to be applicable at a more general level as well. For example, a dimensional scaling study of several Neo-Latin languages (Galati et al., 2008) shows that in Romanian and Portuguese the factor that explains most of the variance between emotion terms is Activation/Arousal (which signals that the somatic aspects of emotions linked to the “physiological activation” are more important in these languages), whereas in Italian, French, Catalan, and Castilian the most salient factor is that of Potency/Power (which the authors relate to the influence of the Latin and Greek rationalist tradition where the cognitive aspects of mental activity have always enjoyed privileged attention) (Galati et al., 2008: 217).

Finally, the deemed equivalent emotion words in different languages can vary with regard to *expression, action tendencies, and regulation*. Many of these reports touch on the translation equivalents of English *anger* in German (Durst, 2001), Biblical Hebrew (Myhill, 1997), Chinese (Kornacki, 2001), Arrente (Harkins, 2001), Woleaian (Lutz, 1982), Malay (Goddard, 1996), or Shuswap (Kuipers, 1974). For example, while English *anger* is generally taken to imply a negative judgment of someone’s action and a desire to do something about this action which is directed at the offender (Lazarus, 1991a; Russell, 1991a; Wierzbicka, 1999b), several “anger” words in the above mentioned languages do not imply similar retribution tendencies. In Woleaian *song*, as argued by Lutz (1988: 301), the direction of the expression of *song* can be towards the anger experiencer rather than the perpetrator, therefore *song* can manifest itself instead in its experiencer’s sulking, refusal to eat, or an attempted suicide. The same directness at the experiencer, rather than the perpetrator, is attested for Chinese *qi* (Kornacki, 2001: 268). Similar evidence is available for Malay *marah*, which is associated with sullen brooding rather than aggression (Goddard, 1996), and Arrente *akiwarre* in which the retribution is not expected to happen immediately, as *akiwarre* contains the notion of “latent revenge” (Harkins, 2001: 208). As with all emotion components discussed above, the discriminative power of action tendencies, expression, and regulation can go beyond the comparison of translation equivalents across languages and differentiate between the same-category labels within a language. For example, “to be angry-faced” has a distinct *lexical*

designation in Shuswap, in contrast to comparable Shuswap lexemes meaning “making somebody angry,” “becoming angry,” and “being angry at somebody” (Kuipers, 1974).

3.4 The cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspective on the GRID paradigm

This chapter has overviewed the research domain that focuses on emotion vocabularies and assumes that representation of emotions in language can provide a valuable insight into emotion conceptualization and categorization in various cultures of the world. A review of relevant theoretical proposals in the field has shown that many and varied ways to theorize the relevance of language for the emotion research can be assigned to two broad positions: the one that emphasizes the ultimate impact of language on conceptualization of experience (the “language-first” view), and the other that typically focuses on the role of culture in both emotional experiences and linguistic representations of emotions (the “culture-first” view). Despite some differences in emphasis, these two positions share an important set of common assumptions, which, taken together, highlight the importance of linguistic evidence in the study of “folk” emotion conceptualization.

It is in the light of this exigency to consider language data that the anthropologic, ethnographic, psychological, and linguistic evidence has been further considered in this chapter. Relevant cross-lingual commonalities and divergences have been our two major concerns. The GRID paradigm can build on these commonalities and has to deal with the divergences in order to function as a multidisciplinary viable paradigm to study the meaning of emotion terms.

With regard to the common aspects, our overview has revealed five general similarities in emotion labeling across languages. Firstly, there is reliable evidence that all natural languages studied thus far have terms referring to what is conventionally defined as “emotional states” in academic English. These emotion categories emerge in different languages in approximately the same order. Furthermore, in most languages of the world emotions can be represented, alongside with the abstract psychological language, via literal and figurative body-part expressions. Finally, there is robust evidence that a sizable part of variance in the emotion vocabularies can be captured by a few meaningful dimensions, and that the hierarchical structures of the emotion domains are similar across the many and various cultures studied to date. Thus, as emotion words have been found to be universally encoded in language, the aim of the GRID paradigm to study the meaning of emotion words can be considered universally valid. Moreover, it is important for the GRID paradigm to accommodate for the dimensional and the categorical perspectives (see also previous chapter), as they have revealed very comparable structures across cultural and linguistic groups.

At the same time, our review also suggests that emotion lexicalization can go along somewhat different lines in different languages. On the one hand, considerable cross-lingual variation is observed with regard to individual emotion words, with some emotion words emerging only in one language, and with sometimes very sizable shifts in meaning between deemed translation equivalent terms across languages. On the other hand, substantial differences between cultural and linguistic groups have been observed with respect to the features characterizing these terms. There are two sources of variation in meaning that have received special attention. First, relative differences in salience between the psychological and the somatic aspects of emotions have been suggested. Second, it has been proposed that in Western cultural groups emotions are more intrapersonally focused, while they are more interpersonally focused in many non-Western groups.

A multitheoretical and multidisciplinary approach to study the meaning of emotion terms has to take these cultural and linguistic differences into account and has to further elucidate them. The GRID paradigm lends itself very well for this task. Within the GRID paradigm emotion terms are not defined in terms of other emotion terms, but in terms of their componential profiles. This implies that there is no *a priori* assumption

about the equivalence of emotion terms. The GRID paradigm only assumes that emotion terms can be identified in each of the groups. Moreover, the differences that have been reported in cross-cultural and cross-linguistic studies can be very well framed within the componential emotion approach, or can at least be easily incorporated into this approach. Some of the proposed cultural and linguistic differences can be reframed as differences in the salience of particular emotion components, with, for instance, the somatic component being much more salient in some cultural groups than in others. Other suggested cultural and linguistic differences can be conceptualized as differences within specific emotion components. For instance, which appraisals and which action tendencies are salient can be expected to depend on the cultural intrapersonal versus interpersonal focus. The more the interpersonal focus becomes salient, the more it can be predicted that events are appraised in terms of their interpersonal relevance, and that actions are prepared to enhance or restore interpersonal functioning.

It can thus be concluded that the GRID paradigm builds further on the universal observation of emotion words across cultural and linguistic cultural groups. At the same time, it offers a coordinating framework for studying cultural and linguistic differences in the meaning of these terms. These can either be conceptualized as differences in the salience of whole emotion components or as differences in the salience of specific features within specific emotion components.

Notes

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- 2 Throughout this paper, italics (*anger*) will be used for lexemes, inverted commas ('anger') will be used for emotion categories and concepts, no marks (anger) will be used to refer to emotional experiences.
- 3 The centrality of an emotional concept reflected in its more extensive lexicalization does not necessarily entail that this emotion is frequently experienced in the society where it is 'hypercognized'. Rather, an emotion could be 'hypercognized' by a cultural group because it is greatly feared (Levy 1983; cf. Solomon 2003: 139).
- 4 Many studies replicated a similar set of dimensions with emotional stimuli other than words, including pictures (Remington et al. 2000), affective scripts (Panayiotou 2008), or autobiographical memories cued by emotions (Rubin & Talarico 2009). The same, or similar dimensions emerge when one uses extensive language databases (Samsonovich & Ascoli 2007), corpora (Sinclair 1991; Stubbs 2001), or segments of texts longer than a word, as in the phenomenon of the 'semantic prosody' (Partington 1998). Finally, affective dimensions have also been shown to drive lexical choice in context (Corrigan 2007).
- 5 More precisely, *perasaan hati* is uncommon compound of *rasa*, meaning 'feeling-tone', and *hati*, literally meaning 'liver' (the seat of emotions) (Beatty 2005: 28). Goddard (2001: 170) argues that *perasaan hati* 'designates feelings that are relatively longstanding, involve evaluation, and are directed at other people (as opposed to transient or impersonal feelings such as *terkejut* 'being startled' and *takut* 'fear')'.
- 6 For many more relevant cases, see Hupka et al. (1999), Appendix D, pp. 276–278, where 117 words in 64 languages referring to more than one of the English emotion categories are catalogued.