

Conceptualizing emotions. A cognitive linguistic perspective

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May, 4th 10:00 – C1

In a number of studies in the 1980s and '90s, I attempted to offer a detailed description of emotion concepts from a cognitive linguistic perspective (see, e.g., Lakoff and Kövecses 1987 and Kövecses 1986, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991ab, 1995, 1998, 2000). The emotion concepts I investigated included anger, love, pride, fear, happiness, friendship, and respect. Following these studies, several scholars have analyzed the same and additional emotions in a fashion similar to the one that I employed. The product of all this work is a large body of knowledge concerning the potential cognitive structure of emotions within the larger framework of our conceptual system as envisaged by cognitive linguists.

The results of these early original studies indicated several important points about emotion concepts, including, on the content side:

- that emotion concepts are largely metaphorical and metonymic;
- that several of the conceptual metaphors and metonymies are tightly connected;
- that many of our emotion concepts have a bodily basis, i.e., that they are embodied;
- that our emotion concepts can be seen to have a frame-like structure, i.e., that they can be represented as cultural models in the mind;

and on the methodology side:

- that the description and analysis of emotion concepts requires the collection and analysis of preferably complete lists of linguistic expressions that have to do with an emotion.

However, all of these ideas, except perhaps the first one, have undergone modification or revision in the past 25 years. My talk will focus on these more recent developments.

Open Lecture funded by Akademicki i naukowy Poznań

Books on emotions by Zoltán Kövecses:

2000. *Metaphor and emotion. Language, culture, and body in human feeling*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
1990. *Emotion concepts*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
1988. *The language of love. The semantics of passion in conversational English*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, London and Toronto: Associated University Presses.
1986. *Metaphors of anger, pride and love. A lexical approach to the structure of concepts*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Papers on emotions by Zoltán Kövecses:

2008. "Metaphor and emotion", in: Raymond Gibbs, (ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought*. Cambridge University Press, 380-396.
2008. "The conceptual structure of happiness and pain", in: C. Lascaratou, A. Despotopoulou and E. Ifantidou (eds.), *Reconstructing pain and joy: Linguistic, literary, and cultural perspectives*. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 17-34.
1998. "Are there any emotion-specific metaphors?", in: A. Athanasiadou and E. Tabakowska (eds.), *Speaking of Emotion: Conceptualization and Expression*. Berlin: Mouton.
1995. "American friendship and the scope of metaphor", *Cognitive Linguistics* 6-4: 315-346.
1991. "Happiness: A definitional effort", *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 6(1): 29-46.
1991. "A linguist's quest for love", *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 8: 77-97.
1987. *The cognitive model of anger inherent in American English*. (co-author: G. Lakoff), in: D. Holland and N. Quinn (eds.), *Cultural Models in Language and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 195-221.