

ЛЕКСИКОГРАФИЯ ПОНЯТИЙ: ЭМОЦИИ

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Аннотация: Это одна из серии статей, сравнивающих трактовку связанных элементов в одноязычных словарях разных языков, в данном случае английского, французского и русского. Предыдущие публикации представили и проиллюстрировали принципы, лежащие в основе настоящей серии, и применили эти принципы к так называемым авраамическим религиям и крестовым походам.

Ключевые слова: литература; одноязычные словари; интерпретация; эмоции

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THE LEXICOGRAPHY OF CONCEPTS: EMOTIONS

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Abstract: This is one of a series of essays comparing the treatment of related items in monolingual dictionaries of English, French, and Russian. Previous essays introduced and exemplified the principles of such analysis applied in the articles dealing with the Abrahamic religions and the Crusades.

Key words: literature; monolingual dictionaries; interpretation; emotions

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I now propose to investigate in the same way the lexicographic treatment of the names of several common emotions in the hope of acknowledging their similarities and their differences in both the form of their treatment and its content. Similarities in form will show how the basically similar format of dictionaries is adaptable enough to serve the needs

of dissimilar languages; formal differences will indicate that a one-size-fits-all approach to lexicography has its limits. Similarities in content will suggest the kinship of us *homines sapientes*. But differences in content may arise for more than one reason: lexicographers analysing the same emotions may come to different conclusions about them; or the emotions themselves may differ in different cultures. The very possibility of such differences underlines the fact that there is no such thing as The Perfect Definition. Even the best definition remains a work of art rather than a scientific law. If I quote $E=mc^2$ squared I need not pay a royalty to the estate of the late Professor Einstein; but if I populate my dictionary with definitions copied from its competitors I may be found guilty of plagiarism.

My monolingual corpus is the same three dictionaries as in “The Lexicography of Concepts in English, French, and Russian”: the English dictionary is the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*¹, the French dictionary is *Le Petit Robert*², and the Russian dictionary is *Ожегов С.И. Толковый словарь русского языка*³. When confronted with polysemous items I use the sense closest to the most relevant sense in my starting point: English. Bilingual dictionaries I have consulted include *Collins Robert French-English English French Dictionary*⁴ and *Katzner English-Russian and Russian English Dictionary*⁵.

Anger vs colère vs гнев:

anger : a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility.

colère : Violent mécontentement, accompagné d’agressivité.

гнев: Чувство сильного возмущения, негодования.

The most striking disparity among these dictionary entries is the French *agressivité*, an action rather than a state of mind. It may, however, be simply the outward manifestation of inner *hostility*. For the Russian entry, *anger* is a *strong* feeling; for the French the feeling is *violent*, for the English the feeling is *strong*. Curiously, though, the French feeling that is *violent* is *mécontentement* ‘discontent’, which hardly seems *violent* to me. Likewise, English *annoyance*, *displeasure* are arguably too weak for proper *anger*, which seems better served by Russian *возмущения, негодования* ‘outrage, indignation’.

¹ Concise Oxford Dictionary. 12th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

² Le Petit Robert. Paris, 1988.

³ *Ожегов С.И.* (сост.) Толковый словарь русского языка / Под общ. ред. Л.И. Скворцова. М., 2015.

⁴ Collins-Robert concise French-English, English-French dictionary. London: Collins, 1981.

⁵ English-Russian, Russian-English Dictionary / K. Katzner (ed.). New York: Wiley, 1994.

Hate vs haine vs ненависть:

hate : intense dislike ; strong aversion.

haine : 1: Sentiment violent qui pousse à vouloir du mal à qqn et à se réjouir du mal qui lui arrive. ... 2: Aversion profonde pour qqch.

ненависть: Чувство сильной вражды и отвращения.

Hate is powerful : *intense* and *strong* in English ; *violent* and *profond(e)* in French ; *strong* (*сильно*) in Russian. Notably, the English and Russian versions seem to resemble each other : the big surprise is the French, which differentiates sharply (and surprisingly) between hate/hatred for *someone* and hate/hatred for *something*. But at *hate* Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 11th Edition⁶ distinguishes between 1a : intense hostility and aversion usu. deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury 1b : extreme dislike or antipathy : LOATHING <had a great [hate] of hard work>, which distinction may have a similar semantic basis. Moreover, *haine*, like *colère*, involves a boiling over of the negative emotions into *agressivité* or malicious *réjouissance* 'rejoicing'. All the more noteworthy, therefore, is the absence from these definitions of the items *anger*, *colère*, or *знев*, though *colère* turns up amongst the French examples.

Happy vs bonheur vs счастье:

happy: feeling or showing pleasure or contentment.

bonheur: Etat de la conscience pleinement satisfaite.

счастье: Чувство и состояние полного, высшего удовлетворения.

Here one must decide whether to investigate the adjective (eg *happy*) or the related noun (eg *happiness*): I've used COD's adjective but PR's and O's nouns. Unlike *anger* and *hate*, *happiness* in all three languages is neither *violent* nor *strong* nor *profound* nor *intense* — but in French it is *full* and in Russian *full* to the *highest* degree. Surprisingly, whereas all three dictionaries adduce *contentment* or *satisfaction* as criteria for happiness, only COD invokes *pleasure*. And only COD refers to both an inner state (*feeling*) and its outward manifestation (*showing*): compare the *agressivité* of PR's *colère*. On the other hand, only O offers both a feeling (*чувство*) and a state (*состояние*).

The definitions above are more similar than different — which I suppose suggests the underlying humanity common to the people who wrote them and those who will read them. But a basic problem is whether any or all of these emotions should be called a *feeling*, a *state*, or a *show* (manifestation).

Technically, by beginning each of its definitions with *Чувство*, O displays a marked tendency towards what is called "set defining"; ie,

⁶ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 2003.

defining similar items in similar ways, so that any differences stand out more clearly. It would have been possible, and perhaps desirable, for COD, PR, and O to begin each of its noun definitions in the same way. For instance (based on COD):

anger: a feeling of strong annoyance, displeasure, or hostility.

hate: a feeling of intense dislike or strong aversion.

happiness: a feeling or show of pleasure or contentment.

The use of set-defining facilitates the comparison of related items in a monolingual dictionary. But if used across dictionaries it can also facilitate *their* comparison. Needless to say, though, set-defining should not become a strait-jacket: it is meant not only to highlight similarities but also to expose differences, not to conceal them in a rigid armature.

However, as I've said before, no definition is ever definitive: none can swathe itself in the mantle of a scientific law; any may be subject to emendation.

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