CHAPTER 7

Emotional universals

1 "Emotional universals" – genuine and spurious

It is often assumed that to emphasize the differences in ways of speaking about "emotions" that we find in different languages and cultures is to embrace cultural relativism and reject the possibility of there being any "emotional universals". This isn't necessarily true. But false universals are a major obstacle in our search for true universals; and in searching for the latter we must, first of all, debunk the former. Since false universals mainly arise from the absolutization of distinctions drawn by one's native language, close attention to such ethnocentric traps is of prime importance. The idea (championed recently by the cognitive scientist Steven Pinker) that "mental life goes on independently of particular languages" and that in other cultures, too, concepts encoded in the English lexicon "will be thinkable even if they are nameless" (Pinker (1994: 82)) is naive and ethnocentric.

In applying this idea to the domain of "emotions" Pinker (1997) ignores the work of anthropologists like Michelle Rosaldo (1980), Catherine Lutz (1988), or Fred Myers (1986), and falls into the trap described more than a decade earlier by Lutz (1986: 47) as "the tendency to treat [English] emotion concepts as conceptual primitives and universals". As Lutz pointed out at the time, "in the cross-cultural context, Western ideas about the nature of emotion have set the terms for descriptions of the emotional lives of cultural 'other'". One can only hope that with time this realization will reach the darkest corners of contemporary "cognitive science" – where at the moment great syntheses are being forged on "how the mind works" blithely ignoring the data stemming from empirical cross-cultural investigations.

To repeat here what was said earlier, the phenomenon of ANGER is of course real, but it is no more real or more revealing of human nature than the phenomena of RABBIA (identified by the Italian word *rabbia*; cf. Wierzbicka 1995c) or SONG (identified by the Ifaluk word *song*; cf. Lutz 1988; Wierzbicka 1992a). Similarly, the phenomenon of EMOTION is of course real enough, but it is no more so than German GEFÜHLE or Russian ČUVSTVA (cf. chapter 1).

Research into "colour universals" provides a useful analogy here.

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Many languages don't have a word for "colour", and in many societies people talk habitually about visual experience without separating the "colour" of various things from other aspects of their appearance. Even in English there are words like *gold* or *silver* (referring not only to colour but also to a shining appearance), and in many other languages words of this kind appear to be the rule rather than an exception. A classic example is Hanunōo (cf. Conklin 1955), where, for example, the closest equivalent of *green*, *latuy*, is more properly glossed as "looking like plants when they have a lot of juice inside" (i.e. fresh, succulent-looking, probably – but not necessarily – green).

The search for "colour universals" initiated by Berlin and Kay's 1969 classic has ultimately proved misguided (see, e.g. Van Brakel 1993; Saunders and Van Brakel 1996; Dimmendaal 1995; Lucy 1997; Wierzbicka 1990c, 1996a (Chapter 10) and forthcoming b) precisely because it approached human ways of thinking and talking about "seeing" (a universal notion) in terms of a preconceived and non-universal notion of "colour"; and also in terms of preconceived and non-universal concepts such as "black", "white", "red", and "green".

While Berlin and Kay's error proved fruitful (for although their theory finally collapsed, a great deal was learnt in the process), this error should not be repeated in the case of "emotions". The concept of "emotion" is no more universal than the concept of "colour", and conceptual categories such as "anger", "sadness", or "surprise" are no more universal than the conceptual categories "white", "red", "green", or "blue". For example, as discussed earlier, the English concept of "anger" (as in *angry with*) is linked with a cognitive scenario which includes the following components: (a) this person did something bad; (b) I don't want this person to do things like this; (c) I want to do something to this person because of this. By contrast, the cognitive scenario linked with the Ifaluk concept "song" includes components (a) and (b) above, but not (c); on the other hand, it includes an additional component (d), which it shares with concepts embodied in the meaning of English words such as *reproach* and *admonition*: (d) I want this person to know this. By assigning to the words *angry (with)* and *song* such overlapping but non-identical cognitive scenarios we can explain why "song" may manifest itself in sulking, refusal to eat, or even attempted suicide, whereas "anger" (as in *angry with*) normally manifests itself in an action aimed at the offender, not at oneself. (See Lutz 1988; Wierzbicka 1992a.)

Just as the English concept of "blue" doesn't match the Russian concept "goluboj" ("sky blue"), the Polish concept "niebieski" or the Japanese concept "aoi" (cf. Wierzbicka 1996a, Chapter 10), so the English concept of "anger" doesn't match the Ifaluk concept "song" or the

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Italian concept "rabbia". This doesn't mean that there are no "universals of seeing", or that there are no "universals of feeling", but it does mean that in our search for these universals we should carefully listen to how people in different cultures talk about what they see and how they feel (cf. White 1992; Fridlund 1994); and that we should avoid analytical categories based on culture-specific aspects of our own languages.

2 A proposed set of "emotional universals"

In this chapter (sections 2.1–2.12) I am going to survey ten or so "emotional universals" which emerge from linguistic and ethnographic studies of various languages and cultures. Some of these universals are firmly based, but most have only the status of working hypotheses.

The studies of the concept FEEL included in the volume *Semantic and Lexical Universals* (Goddard and Wierzbicka 1994), which was devoted in its entirety to an empirical search for conceptual universals, contain a particularly thorough analysis of the various methodological dilemmas involved. But a wealth of relevant data and observations can be found in a variety of modern "grammars" and other descriptive linguistic studies, particularly those focussed on "emotions". A great deal of information is also available in recent anthropological literature, and in particular, in the writings of such scholars as M. Rosaldo (1980), Lutz (1988), Howell (1981), Myers (1986), and White (1993). The hypothetical universal 4 (referring to human faces) is supported, above all, by the cross-cultural work of psychologists, especially Ekman and his colleagues.

On the basis of the evidence gleaned from both cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies I would like to propose the following set of working hypotheses:

1. All languages have a word for FEEL.
2. In all languages, some feelings can be described as "good" and some as "bad" (while some may be viewed as neither "good" nor "bad").
3. All languages have words comparable, though not necessarily identical in meaning, with *cry* and *smile*; that is words referring to bodily expression of good and bad feelings.
4. In all cultures people appear to link some facial gestures with either good or bad feelings, and in particular, they link the raised corners of the mouth with good feelings (cf. Ginsburg 1997) whereas turned

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down corners of the mouth or a wrinkled nose appear to be linked with bad feelings.
5. All languages have "emotive" interjections (i.e. interjections expressing cognitively based feelings).
6. All languages have some "emotion terms" (i.e. terms designating some cognitively based feelings).
7. All languages have words linking feelings with (i) the thought that "something bad can happen to me", (ii) the thought that "I want to do something", and (iii) the thought that "people can think something bad about me", that is words overlapping (though not identical) in meaning with the English words *afraid*, *angry*, and *ashamed*.
8. In all languages, people can describe cognitively based feelings via observable bodily "symptoms" (that is, via some bodily events regarded as characteristic of these feelings).
9. In all languages, cognitively based feelings can be described with reference to bodily sensations.
10. In all languages, cognitively based feelings can be described via figurative "bodily images".
11. In all languages, there are alternative grammatical constructions for describing (and interpreting) cognitively based feelings.

In what follows, I will discuss these putative universals one by one.

2.1 A word for FEEL

As discussed earlier (cf. chapter 1), all languages have a word for FEEL, undifferentiated between "bodily feelings" (sensations) and "cognitively based" feelings ("emotions"). This word doesn't have to be a verb – it can be an adjective, or a noun – but cross-linguistic surveys conducted to date suggest that all languages do have some word corresponding in meaning to the English *feel* – not in all its senses (and certainly not in the sense involving intentional touching), but in the basic "psychological" sense which can be illustrated with the following sentences:

I feel like this now.
I don't feel anything.
I can't describe what I felt.
How are you feeling?
I felt as if I was going to die.

The claim that all languages do have a word for FEEL (in this sense) has often been denied, but a closer examination of the evidence suggests that such denials are misguided. In particular, the claims that a

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given language doesn't have a word for FEEL are often followed by a statement that in this language to say the equivalent of "I feel good" or "I feel bad" one has to say "my liver is good" and "my liver is bad", or "my insides are good" and "my insides are bad" (see e.g. Lutz 1988; Howell 1981; Levy 1973). What statements of this kind show is that the languages in question do have a word for FEEL (in the relevant sense) but that this word is not a verb (as in English), but a noun, and that it is a noun which, in a different sense, means "liver" or "insides".

For example, in Ifaluk there is the word *niferash*, which Lutz primarily glosses as "our insides". Her data suggest, however, that *niferash* means "feel" as well as "insides", and that it can refer to physical as well as psychological feelings, just like the English verb *feel*: "To say 'My insides are bad' (*Ye ngaw niferai*) may mean either that one is feeling physically bad or experiencing bad thoughts and emotions, or both. The exact meaning, as with the English phrase 'I feel bad,' is determined by context" (Lutz, 1985: 47).

Cross-linguistic investigations show that the pattern of polysemy which links "feel" with "liver", "insides", or "stomach" is very common (cf. Goddard 1994). Facts of this kind cannot possibly be interpreted in terms of "vagueness". A sentence like "I don't feel anything", for example, cannot be vague between a "no feeling" and a "no stomach" interpretation, even if the word which here means "feel" in other sentences means "stomach". So they are perfectly compatible with the claim that FEEL is a lexical and semantic universal.

Goddard (1996b) argues convincingly that sentences like "my *tjuni* (stomach/feel) is bad" are neither vague nor metaphorical. The very notion of "metaphor" implies that a distinction can be made between the metaphorical and the literal. As Ricoeur (1981) points out, without such a distinction everything becomes "metaphorical" and the notion of "metaphor" loses its usefulness. It makes sense to say that an English expression like "boiling with rage" is metaphorical, because the meaning of this expression can be explicated in a non-metaphorical way (see below, section 2.9); but it makes no sense to claim that a sentence like "my *tjuni* is bad" (for "I feel bad") is metaphorical, given that there is no other way of saying that "I feel bad".

A metaphorical expression (e.g. "boiling with rage") can be explicated in a non-metaphorical way in the same language. But since an expression like "my *tjuni* is bad" cannot be explicated within the same language (Yankunytjatjara) at all, from a Yankunytjatjara point of view it cannot be regarded as metaphorical, and to claim otherwise would be to exoticize the Yankunytjatjara people in the spirit of old-fashioned "orientalism" (cf. Keesing 1994). This is not to deny that the Yankunytjatjara people may associate "feeling" with the stomach, as in English

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people associate "love" with the heart, but to claim that the Yankunytjatjara notion of FEEL is indistinguishable for them from that of stomach as a body part would be as unfounded as to claim that for speakers of English the notion of "love" is indistinguishable from that of heart as a body part.

In addition to the confusion which has often plagued discussions of the relation between "feeling" and body parts another area of confusion must also be mentioned here: that concerning the relationship between "feeling" and "thinking". Claims have sometimes been made that this or that indigenous culture makes no distinction between "feeling" and "thinking". For example, Lutz (1985) suggested that Ifaluk does not distinguish lexically between *feel* and *think*, and that the most relevant word in this area, *nunuwan*, "refers to mental events ranging from what we consider thought to what we consider emotion . . . Thus, *nunuwan* may be translated . . . as 'thought/emotion'" (p. 47). Lutz argued that "it is not simply that thought evokes, or is accompanied by, an emotion; the two are inextricably linked. *Nunuwan* is included in the definitions of various words we would consider emotion words. For example, *yarofali* 'longing/missing' is the state of 'continually *nunuwan* about [for example] one's dead mother'" (p. 48).

In fact, however, Lutz's careful and scrupulously presented data are compatible with a different analysis: namely, that *nunuwan* means "think" rather than "think or feel", and that its frequent emotive connotations are due to context rather than to the word itself. For example, one of Lutz's (1985) informants says of a pregnant woman R. that she "has lots of *nunuwan* because the health aide is leaving on the next ship which is coming, and she [R.] *nunuwan* that there will be trouble with the delivery of the baby" (p. 47). This is compatible with the interpretation that *nunuwan* always means "think", and that "emotions" are implied only by the word's context.

The suggestion that *nunuwan* can be linked with the primitive THINK and *niferash* with FEEL is supported by informants' comments such as the following one, cited by Lutz (1985): "T. said that if we had bad *nunuwan*, we will have bad insides [i.e. *niferash*], and if we have good *nunuwan*, we will have good insides [*niferash*]" (p. 47).

To take another example, Howell (1981: 139) has written that while popular conceptions in the West contrast the head and the heart as the organs of thought and feelings, the Chewong people of Malaysia "make no such explicit distinction . . . The liver, *rus* . . . is the seat of both what we call 'thoughts' and 'feelings', and they do not make any conceptual distinction between the two. In fact, they have no word for 'think' or 'feel'. Whenever they express emotional and mental states verbally, this is done through the medium of liver. Thus, they may say, 'my liver is good' (I'm feeling fine)".

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But if the Chewong really made no distinction between thoughts and feelings, then why should the sentence "my liver is good" mean "I'm feeling fine" rather than "I think well"? The very gloss offered by Howell suggests that while one of the meanings of *rus* is "liver", the other one is simply "feel", not some mixture of feeling and thinking.

As for "thinking", it is noticeable that in the Chewong myths edited by Howell (1982 and 1984), references to "thinking" (Howell's word) do occur from time to time too, as in the following sentences:

> The woman thought she was pregnant. (1982: 255)
> Bòngso was born and the pandanus woman thought that he was a real baby. (1982: 255)
> They were asleep, but he thought they were dead. (1982: 253)

It is possible that the Chewong word translated here by Howell as "think" is a loan from Malay, for in a more recent work Howell (forthcoming) writes: "They [the Chewong] do not distinguish between thinking and feeling. In fact, as far as I could make out, they do not have indigenous verbs for these processes". But even if the verb for "think" is in fact a loan from Malay, this would not disqualify it from being a valid exponent of the primitive and universal concept THINK, for, first, a loan from Malay may have been in use for hundreds of years, and second, it may well have replaced an earlier indigenous word. Nor is it necessary for a valid exponent of either FEEL or THINK to be a verb: a noun like *rus* (1. liver, 2. feel) may well do as an exponent of FEEL if, as Howell herself tells us, "my *rus* is good" means, unambiguously, "I feel good" (cf. Goddard 1996b).

Linguistic evidence suggests that no languages fail to distinguish between THINKING and FEELING, and that in fact both these categories are necessary ingredients of the universal "folk model" of a person (cf. D'Andrade 1987; Bruner 1990) – alongside KNOW and WANT.

Where cultures do differ is in the extent, as well as the character, of their "feel-talk". But this, while important and interesting, is a different matter altogether: the basic conceptual and linguistic resources for talking about matters relating to feelings are always there. On the other hand, whether the main focus of such talk is psychological, moral, or social, depends on the culture. For example the great importance of "feel-talk" in American culture (cf. Bellah et al. 1985; Stearns and Stearns 1988), is clearly in sharp contrast to the avoidance of "feel talk" in many other cultures, such as, for example, Japanese culture (see e.g. Lebra 1976; Mori 1997) or Chewong culture (Howell 1981).

2.2 "Feel good" and "feel bad"

It appears that in all languages feelings can sometimes be described as "good" or "bad". For example, in English, one can say "I feel good" and

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"I feel bad" or "I feel awful" and "I feel wonderful"; and, as mentioned earlier, in Chewong one can say "my liver is good" meaning "I feel well" or "my liver is bad" meaning "I feel bad".

Similarly, in the Australian language Yankunytjatjara, people say (see Goddard 1994: 239):

Ngayulu tjuni palya/kura
I "belly" good/bad
"I feel good/bad"

And in another Australian language, Kayardild (Evans 1994: 212) one uses the word *bardaka* "stomach" to refer to good and bad feelings:

mirraa bardaka
good stomach/feeling
"I feel good"

birdiya bardaka
bad stomach/feeling
"I feel bad"

In other languages, too, one can readily combine a word for FEEL with a word for GOOD or BAD (as in English). Hale (1994: 269) provides examples from Misumalpan languages of Nicaragua, such as the following:

yamni ka-daka-yang
good feel
"I feel good"

Hill (1994: 317) provides a similar example from the Austronesian language Longgu:

Nu vadangi meta/ta'a
I feel good/bad
"I feel good/bad"

In Japanese, one can also use the expressions *ii kimochi* ("good feeling") or *warui kimochi* ("bad feeling"), with reference to unspecified (physical or mental) feelings. One example (from a Japanese novel, quoted in Hasada 1996:93; see also Onishi 1994):

Watashi wa konya wa, ii kimochi deshita. Bunji-san to Eiji-san

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to anata to, rippa na kodomo ga sannin narande suwatte iru tokoro o mitara, namida ga deru hodo, ureshikatta.
"I feel very good tonight. When I saw you and Bunji and Eiji sitting next to one another, I was so happy I almost wept."

(For further illustrations and discussion, see Goddard and Wierzbicka 1994.)

The hypothesis that feelings can be described, universally, as either good or bad is of course in keeping with the view often expressed by psychologists that emotions are usually "valenced" or that they usually have a positive or negative "hedonic tone". For example, Plutchik (1994: 109) points out that "a common practice is to group emotion words into two broad categories called *positive affect* and *negative affect*"; and he states that an "important characteristic that is part of our experience of emotions is their bipolar nature" (p. 65). Some scholars go so far as to regard this "bipolar" character of "emotions" as one of their defining qualities. For example, Ortony, Clore, and Collins (1988: 13) define "emotions" as "valenced reactions to events, agents, or objects, with their particular nature being determined by the way in which the eliciting situation is construed".

Linguistic evidence suggests that feelings are not always interpreted as good or bad, and some "emotion terms" (such as, for example, *surprise* or *amazement* in English) do not imply any evaluation (although the closest counterpart in, for example, Malay, does imply evaluation; see Goddard 1997b). On the other hand, it does seem to be true that feelings are often conceptualized as either "good" or bad", and that in all languages people can talk of "good feelings" and "bad feelings" (of "feeling good" and "feeling bad").

To account for "mixed feelings" of different kinds, we need to distinguish "feeling good", which sounds idiomatic in English, from "feeling something good", which does not but which is nonetheless intelligible. (An alternative solution would be to say, instead, "to feel bad/ have a bad feeling".) As for *feeling bad*, it is a kind of idiom in English (unlike, for example, *feeling awful*) and it implies something akin to "feeling guilty" (for detailed discussion, see Wierzbicka 1998b). To account for all "bad feelings" we need to use an awkward expression like "feel something bad" or, alternatively, "to feel (or have) a bad feeling".

In the semantic explications proposed in chapter 2 and elsewhere in this book I have used the expressions "to feel something good" and "to feel something bad", which sound much less natural and idiomatic in English than "to feel good" and "to feel bad". For analytical purposes, however, the use of such artificial and awkward expressions is preferable because they do not imply a global "well-being", or its opposite, as

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"feel good" or "feel bad" ("feel awful") tend to do. From the point of view of "naive" ethno-psychology, one can feel "something good" (e.g. relief) and "something bad" (e.g. shame) at the same time. (For example, if I have suspected someone of planning a hostile act towards me and then discover that they were in fact planning an act of generosity, I may feel relieved and ashamed at the same time.)

2.3 Links between feelings and the body – "smile" and "cry"

All languages appear to have some word or words comparable in meaning to *smile* or *laugh*, and some word or words comparable in meaning to *cry* or *weep*.

The distinctions between "smile" and "laugh" or between "cry" and "weep" are by no means universal. The words described here as "comparable" to *smile* and *laugh* or *cry* and *weep* do not have to correspond to these in meaning exactly, but some shared components *can* be identified. These components can be formulated as follows (cf. Wierzbicka 1995b and d; see also chapter 4):

cry/weep
I think: something bad is happening
I feel something bad now

smile/laugh
I think: something good is happening
I feel something good now

I have formulated the core meanings of smiling/laughing and crying/weeping in a first-person mode, on the assumption that such behaviours can be (and usually are) interpreted as if they were messages (cf. chapter 4). Other bodily behaviours, which are normally assumed to be involuntary and which are likely to be interpreted as "symptoms" rather than "messages", will be discussed in section 2.8.

2.4 "Facial universals"

In all cultures, people are prepared to interpret facial gestures such as raised eyebrows, a wrinkled nose, or eyebrows drawn together as indicating certain thoughts and feelings. The words or expressions that people would use for this purpose differ from language to language and they don't necessarily match in meaning, but the willingness to attribute some thoughts and feelings to such gestures appears to be universal. While to a degree speculative, this hypothesis seems to be

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strongly supported by Ekman's cross-cultural research, despite the doubts that have been raised about some aspects of his methodology and conclusions (cf. Russell 1994, 1995; Fridlund 1994).

To say the least, it seems indubitable that given a suitable experimental design people all over the world would be found to recognize the message of raised corners of the lips as "I feel something good now". I am not suggesting that people all over the world would be found to actually feel good whenever they raise the corners of the mouth (cf. Fridlund 1997), but rather that people all over the world would be found to recognize the *message* of this facial gesture as "I feel something good now".

I would also hypothesize that given a suitable experimental design, people would also be found, across cultures, to recognize the message of lowered corners of the mouth, or of a wrinkled nose, as conveying (in part) "I feel something bad now"; for these latter two hypotheses, however, there is much less circumstantial evidence at this stage than for the universal semantic interpretation of a smiling gesture. (For other hypotheses concerning facial universals see chapter 4.)

2.5. Emotive interjections

All languages have special words ("interjections") which are used to express "cognitively based feelings", that is, feelings linked with specific thoughts, such as, for example, *gee*!, *wow*!, or *yuk*! in English. The shared meaning of all such words can be represented as follows:

I feel something now
because I think something now

What exactly one feels is not described directly but can be gleaned from the content of the thought on which the feeling is based.

For example, Ochs (1988: 173) in her study of Samoan language and culture acquisition cites the following Samoan interjections, among others: *ola* "surprise", *uoia* "surprise/sympathy etc.", *visa* "negative surprise", *isa* "annoyance", *a'e* "disapproval", *tae* "anger". Ochs' glosses are of course no more than approximations, but they clearly indicate a combination of a feeling ("I feel something") and a thought. On the basis of Ochs' hints, we can hypothesize that these thoughts may have the following content:

ola → I didn't think this would happen
visa → this is bad
I didn't think this would happen

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voia → something bad happened to this person
I didn't think this would happen
isa → something bad is happening
I don't want this to be happening
I don't want to say: it is very bad
a'e → this person did something bad
tae → this person did something bad
I don't want this person to do things like this

As noted by Wilkins (1992), interjections are present even in American Sign Language. Wilkins discusses, in particular, a sign usually glossed as "pity; sympathy; mercy". Presumably, the cognitive component of this sign can be represented along the following lines:

I think: something bad happened to this person
[I want to do something good for this person because of this]

(For a detailed discussion of interjections from languages as different as Swahili and Ewe (Africa), Arrernte and Mayali (Australia), or Thai, see papers in Ameka 1992; for a detailed analysis of many Polish and Russian interjections see Wierzbicka 1991.) The existence of such words in all languages shows that although the universal concept FEEL is undifferentiated and makes no distinction between "bodily feelings" ("sensations") and "cognitively based feelings" ("emotions"), all cultures recognize that some feelings are based on thoughts. It also shows that in all cultures people sometimes want to *voice* some feelings of this kind (by interjections), as well as depicting them in their faces.

2.6 "Emotion terms"

All languages have some words for describing (rather than merely voicing) feelings based on certain thoughts, such as, for example, *anger* (*angry*), *shame* (*ashamed*), or *surprise* (*surprised*) in English. These words don't have to match in meaning across languages, but they all combine (in addition to various others) the following two components:

someone feels something
because this person thinks something

Furthermore, words of this kind attempt to describe the nature of the feelings in question – not directly, but, as discussed in chapter 1, via a cognitive prototype. This can be represented as follows:

Person X was angry/afraid/ashamed/worried etc. ⇒

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person X felt something
because X thought something
    sometimes a person thinks: [Y]
    because of this this person feels something
person X felt something like this
because X thought something like this

It is this general model, rather than specific "emotion terms" widely relied on in psychological literature, which can be regarded as universal. For example, the child psychologist Paul Harris (1989: 103) writes: "Thus, children do not begin their emotional lives by learning a script from their culture. They are born with the capacity to experience basic emotions of sadness, anger and joy when desirable goals are lost or blocked or achieved. They also come to understand that other people may experience those emotions." Harris's three scenarios (1. "desirable goals lost"; 2. "desirable goals blocked"; 3. "desirable goals achieved") are clearly modelled on the English lexicon, although here, too, the "fit" is far from perfect (for example, when my goals are achieved, I'm likely to feel pleased rather than joyful; both joy and sadness can be disinterested and unrelated to personal "goals"; furthermore, the metaphor of "losing one's goals" is unclear and could be applied to apathy rather than sadness; anger can be caused by an insult rather than by an obstacle to one's goals, and so on). (For further discussion, see Wierzbicka 1992a and c; see also chapter 2).

But even if we assume that the three cognitive scenarios formulated in terms of goals fit English folk-psychology well enough, they certainly don't fit that expressed in other languages. There is no reason to assume that these particular cognitive scenarios specified by Harris are innate, universal, and independent of culture. What are more likely to be innate are, first, universal concepts like WANT, FEEL, I, HAPPEN, DO, NOT, GOOD, and BAD, and second, certain ways of combining such concepts into meaningful configurations, such as, for example, "someone thinks something", "this person wants to do something", or "this person feels something bad". As argued in detail in chapter 4, it is also likely that some configurations of universal concepts are innately associated with certain experientially accessible (i.e. felt) facial movements (e.g. "I feel something good now", "I feel something bad now", "I want to do something now"). But again, there are no identifiable facial movements which can be always linked with English words such as *sadness*, *anger*, or *joy*.

But while the cognitive scenarios encoded in the English words *anger*, *sadness*, and *joy* (or Harris' approximations of them) are not universal and cannot be plausibly regarded as innate, the basic conceptual

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pattern combining a cognitive component ("I think X") with a feeling component ("I feel something") does seem to be universal, for all languages provide lexically encoded examples of it.

2.7 The three recurring themes: "fear-like" words, "anger-like" words, "shame-like" words

Different languages "choose", so to speak, different cognitive scenarios as reference points for their emotional concepts, and no such scenarios are universal. At the same time, there are certain *components* of the cognitive scenarios which appear to be universal as reference points for emotion concepts. For mnemonic purposes, these components could be described as "fear-like", "anger-like", and "shame-like". I will discuss these three categories in three separate sections (A, B, and C) below.

A. All languages appear to have some words overlapping in meaning with English words such as *fear*, *afraid*, *scared*, *fright*, or *anxiety*. In fact, in many languages the family in question (which can be called, roughly and arbitrarily, the "fear" family) is much more differentiated than it is in English. For example, Bugenhagen (1990: 208) makes the following comments about "fear-like" words and expressions in the Austronesian language Mbula (spoken in New Guinea):

> Life in an animistic society is very fragile. Dangers abound. Sickness, sorcery, malevolent spirits, jealous neighbours are all potential threats. It is hardly surprising, then, that out of all the different emotions, fear appears to have the broadest range of encodings. Key parameters in delineating the various encodings are:
>
> 1. Does the fear have a particular object?
> 2. Does one fear for oneself or for someone else?
> 3. Does one fear physical harm to oneself?
> 4. Is the feared entity proximate?
> 5. Is the fear the result of one's having done something?
> 6. Is the fear a response to having "felt" some sensation?
> 7. Is the feared entity a spirit?
> 8. Is the fear a response to something having happened?

Given that all these "fear-like" words in both English and Mbula differ in meaning from one another, we cannot assume that all languages will have a word for "fear" in some constant sense. What we can hypothesize, however, is that all languages will have some word or words including the following two semantic components:

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something bad can happen (to me)
I don't want this to happen

These two crucial components can be combined with various other ones, and a language may have numerous lexical distinctions in this area, but the evidence available suggests that every language will have at least one word relating, roughly speaking, to "danger" and to "wish to avoid danger" ("something bad can happen to me, I don't want this to happen"). Given the human existential condition, this clearly makes sense.

B. All languages appear to have a word which shares at least two semantic components with the English word *anger*. These two components are:

I don't want things like this (to happen)
I want to do something because of this

In many languages, these two components are combined with a "negative judgement" component: "someone did something bad", but this doesn't have to be the case. For example, the Ilongot word *liget* (see M. Rosaldo 1980; for detailed discussion, see Wierzbicka 1992a), which can refer to, for example, "fierce work in one's garden", clearly does not include such a component. But *liget*, too, refers to something undesirable: the idea that people may think that I am not as good as other people. In addition, *liget* (glossed by Rosaldo, amongst others, as "energy" and "passion") contains (like *anger*) an "active" component: "I want to do something".

In the case of *anger* (*angry with*) and many other similar words in other languages, this "active" component refers to a punitive or retaliatory action, which in general terms can be represented as "I want to do something to this person (because of this)". But not all languages have a word including such a component; and, for example, the Ilongot *liget* does not. While the "liget" of young men taking part in a head-hunting expedition may seem to be highly compatible with such a component, the *liget* of people working "fiercely" (that is, with *liget*) in their gardens is clearly not.

In the case of *liget*, the absence of the component "I want to do something to this person" may seem to be due to the absence of the component "this person did something bad"; but the assumption that someone did something bad (present in *anger* but absent from *liget*) does not always lead to the presence of such a punitive or retaliatory component. For example, the Ifaluk word *song* (Lutz 1987, 1988;

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Wierzbicka 1992a) does imply a negative judgment ("this person did something bad") but does not imply a desire for punishment or retaliation ("I want to do something to this person because of this"). What all these words (*anger*, *liget*, *song*, and so on) do imply is a desire for action ("I want to do something because of this"), where the causal subcomponent "because of this" refers to something undesirable or unacceptable ("I don't want things like this to happen").

Why should all languages have an "emotion term" comparable in these two cognitive components with *anger*? Some may seek an answer to this question in theories of "aggression" as a (supposedly) common ingredient of "human nature". But words like *liget* or *song* cannot be legitimately described in terms of "aggression", for they lack the crucial component "X wants to do something bad to Y". One cannot say, therefore, that if "fear-like" words are universally associated with an impulse, or need, to run away, "anger-like" words are universally associated with an impulse, or need, to fight. Rather, we have to conclude that "anger-like" words (including those like *liget* and *song*) document a universal human impulse, and need, to "act" (to do something), in order to prevent the occurrence, or the repetition, of some undesirable events.

C. Turning now to "shame-like" emotions, we must note, first of all, that the area in question is particularly variable, and that the idea that all languages and cultures would have a word and concept identical in meaning to the modern English *shame* is profoundly mistaken (see e.g. Harkins 1996).

Nonetheless, it seems likely that all languages have a word (or words) referring to what might be called "social emotions" (cf. Goddard 1995). This means, above all, words referring in their meaning to "people" and to what people may think about us, and in particular, conveying a concern about "bad things" that people may think about us. The cognitive components in question can be represented as follows:

people can think something bad about me
I don't want this to happen

Judging by lexical evidence, a concern of this kind appears to be universal, and it is universally linked with feelings. The universal core meaning of the words in question can, therefore, be represented as follows:

someone thinks:
"people can think something bad about me

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I don't want this to happen"
because of this this person feels something

Why should all languages have a word linking feelings with other people's (real or imagined) disapproval? Presumably, because we are not Robinson Crusoes and have to live among and with other people. In contemporary Anglo culture, with its marked individualism, this concern for other people's possible disapproval may appear to have diminished. (See the discussion of *shame* in chapter 2, section 6.1.) At the same time, however, another "social" emotion, "embarrassment", has emerged and come to play a key role in Anglo culture (see chapter 2, section 6.2).

As discussed in chapter 2, we could say, then, that the Anglo concept of "shame" links social concerns with moral concerns, whereas the (modern) Anglo concept of "embarrassment" explicitly dissociates the two. In many other cultures, no such distinction is drawn. But the core components of "social emotions", postulated here as universal, are relevant to both "shame" and "embarrassment", as well as to those concepts lexicalized in many other languages which combine in one semantic entity ideas separated in English under *shame*, *embarrassment*, and *shyness*:

people can think something bad about me
I don't want this to happen

It is interesting that of the three potentially universal categories discussed here, two – "fear-like emotions" and "anger-like emotions" – correspond to two hypothetical "basic human emotions" which seem to "appear on every list" (Plutchik 1994: 57), whereas the third – "shame-like emotions" – does not. This may be due to the prevailing biological emphasis of the literature on "basic emotions". The complex which extends over "shame", "embarrassment", and "shyness" (sometimes even "respect") clearly has a social focus (although Darwin, for one, did not hesitate to posit a biological basis for some "social emotions", linking "shame" with the biological phenomenon of blushing. See also Izard 1991; Nathanson 1992; Tomkins 1987).

2.8 "Fear-like" emotions vs. "shame-like" emotions: can the line always be drawn?

In an earlier essay on the conceptualization of "emotions" (Wierzbicka 1986a) I noted, with reference to Hiatt's (1978) work on "Australian Aboriginal Concepts", that not all languages appear to distinguish

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lexically between "fear" and "shame". In particular, Hiatt (1978: 185) pointed out that in the Australian language Gidjingali (now called Burarra) the same word *-gurakadj-* appears to cover both "fear" and "shame", and he offered the following vignettes (some from "real life" and some from texts):

1. a meeting decides to put an end to two notorious killers. Two volunteers later make a surprise attack. When they report a successful outcome, a spokesman for their grateful countrymen replies: "Good. Now we can sleep in peace, defaecate, urinate, go back to the camp, get up, urinate, defaecate, and so on, for we were afraid (*ara-gurakadj-a)* of those two men". (text)
2. A baby cries as I approach a family group. His mother says: "He is afraid (*a-gurakadj-a)* of you."
3. A woman says she was afraid (*ng-gurakadj-ira)* of encountering a ghost. (text)
4. A man sees a naked woman approaching. He feels embarrassed (*a-gurakadj-a)*. (Text)
5. Gidjingali men are circumspect with respect to their mothers-in-law and sisters (they must not utter their names, look at them, go near them etc. . .) When asked why, a man replies that he is ashamed (*ng-gurakadj-a*).
6. In 1960 police arrested two young men for a felony committed in Darwin. At the time of their arrest, they were participating as novices in a Kunapipi ceremony at Maningrida, and as such were under strict injunction to keep away from women and children. After police had conducted them through the general camp, men spoke of the widespread shame/fear(?) that had been caused (*ngubura-gurakadj-a)*.
7. A man, on deciding that it is time to arrange his son's circumcision, speaks first to the lad's MMB (mother's mother's brother). He indicates that he does not wish to raise the matter with the boy's mother, as this would cause him (the boy's father) embarrassment (*ng-gurakadj-a*). (Text) (Hiatt 1978: 185)

Hiatt considers the possibility that in all situations the word in question implies both "fear" and "shame", but he rejects it as incompatible with some of the examples, and suggests instead a common core: "a strong impulse to retreat from the stimulus" (Hiatt 1978: 186).

It is not quite clear, however, whether in Hiatt's view the Burarra people do or do not distinguish two distinct "emotions", comparable to English *shame* and *fear*. Although he looks for a common core he nonetheless repeatedly talks of "two emotions", for example:

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> I have argued that, although situations arise among the Gidjingali in which fear and shame may be felt simultaneously, other situations occur in which only one or the other is present. Nevertheless, the same term is used in all three cases. Why should this be so? Perhaps it is because both emotions manifest a strong impulse to retreat from the stimulus, viz. snakes, ghosts etc. in the case of fear; mothers-in-law, sisters etc. in the case of shame. (Hiatt 1978: 186)

On the basis of Hiatt's data (confirmed by personal information from other linguists who have worked on Burarra and related languages) I concluded (in Wierzbicka 1986a) that a distinction between "fear-like emotions" and "shame-like emotions" is probably not universal.

In the intervening decade, however, a comprehensive Burarra dictionary has been published (Glasgow 1994), which allows us to see the situation in a different light. The dictionary shows that there are two different words in the language (the adverb *gona* and the verb *gurkuja*) which can be said to be associated with "an impulse to withdraw". While each of these two words is glossed in terms of both "fear" and "shame", the primary gloss offered for *gona* is "ashamed", and the primary gloss offered for *gurkuja* is "show fear; be frightened; be afraid". Both these primary glosses and the illustrative examples suggest that *gona* is in fact more "shame-like", and *gurkuja* more "fear-like". Particularly illuminating is the following example, in which both the putative "fear/shame" words occur:

> wurra an-ngaypa jawina gala barra a-gurkuja burrwa wurra gama gorlk rrapa minypa gona a-ni apula ngaypa rrapa gun-ngaypa janguny.
> "But my disciple must not be afraid of people and like be ashamed [sic] of me and my story."

The word translated in this case as "afraid" is *gurkuja* and the one translated as "ashamed" is *gona*. Although "people" are mentioned in the first case, and not in the second, in fact the first word (*gurkuja*) seems to imply the "fear-like" thought "something bad can happen to me", whereas the second implies the "shame-like" thought "people can think something bad about me".

This is not the place to undertake a detailed discussion of *gona*, *gurkuja*, and other related words in Burarra. From the data now available, however, it emerges that while the language doesn't have words corresponding exactly to *fear* and *shame*, it does have two words which could be roughly described as "fear-like" and "shame-like" (i.e. as containing on the one hand the "fear-like" component "I don't want something bad to happen to me" and on the other hand the "shame-

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like'' component ''I don't want people to think bad things about me'').

Available evidence suggests that the two Burarra concepts in question are indeed closer to one another than *fear* and *shame* are in English; nonetheless the Burarra data are not incompatible with the set of ''emotional universals'' proposed here. As Hiatt suggested, avoidance (the ''strong impulse to retreat from the stimulus'') is, no doubt, the key factor in the apparent closeness of the ''fear-like'' and ''shame-like'' emotion concepts in Australian languages. Nonetheless, the available evidence suggests that Burarra, like other Australian languages, does draw a distinction between ''fear-like'' feelings and ''shame-like'' feelings.

2.9 What about ''good feelings''?

The three categories singled out here as possibly universal (''fear-like'', ''anger-like'', and ''shame-like'' feelings) may strike the reader as being all ''negative'': what about happier, ''joy-like'' or ''love-like'' feelings?

In fact, emotions labelled here as ''anger-like'' do not necessarily involve any ''bad feelings'' at all. In particular, the Ilongot concept of *liget* (as described by M. Rosaldo 1980) is not necessarily linked with ''bad feelings''. The semantic components proposed here as the universal common core of the category in question are ''I don't want things like this to happen'' and ''I want to do something because of this''. What is ''negative'' about this category is the volitive component ''I don't want things like this to happen'', but the ''hedonic tone'' of the emotion does not have to be negative (''bad'').

Some languages appear to rely largely on the collocation ''feel good'' and may not have any other words comparable to *joy* and *happy*. This impression may, however, depend more on the limitations of our knowledge than the limitations of the ''emotional lexicons'' in these languages. For example, Hiatt's prediction concerning Australian languages (1978: 181) may have been overly negative:

> After inspecting a small number of lexicons, I predict that all Aboriginal languages possess words for the following emotional states: anger, fear, sorrow, jealousy, and shame. In the context of Aboriginal society, I would call them the dramatic emotions. Words referring to affection and contentment may also be widespread, though I suspect that in Australia the tranquil emotions have not obtained the same degree of verbal representation as their counterparts.

In the intervening two decades, however, a number of detailed dictionaries and descriptive studies of Australian languages have appeared which show that words for ''positive feelings'' comparable to *happy* or *joy* do exist in the languages in question (cf. Goddard 1990 and 1994;

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Evans 1992; Henderson and Dobson 1994). Obviously, the matter requires further investigation.

As for the "love-like emotions", in many languages words referring to them appear to be linked with thoughts of "bad things" happening to people and so to be akin, in some ways, to "pity", "compassion", "sadness", and even "anguish" rather than to "happiness" or "joy". The Ifaluk concept of *fago*, glossed by Lutz (1988) as "love/sadness/compassion", is a good case in point, as is also the Russian *žalost'*, which could be loosely glossed as "loving compassion", or even "sorrowful loving compassion" (cf. Wierzbicka 1992a; Zaliznjak 1992). It will also be useful to quote here at some length what Levine (1981: 110–11) says about the Nyinba language of Nepal:

> The Nyinba moral system includes no precept and provides no grounds for the evaluation of love in the generalized western sense. Nor is there any comprehensive term or concept to describe the idea of "love", whether divine, parental or sexual. Although the relations between close kin, particularly parents and children, are informed by a special moral bond, the nature of this bond is not seen as a suitable topic for discussion and is thus poorly articulated. Parents speak of having a feeling of "compassion" or "compassionate love" (Tib. *snying rje*) for their children, but this, ideally, should be disinterested concern, comparable to the feeling of compassion prescribed towards all sentient beings by Buddhist ethics . . . Less commonly, parents may describe their children, as well as other close kin and friends, as persons "they hold dear" (Tib. *nga'i gce ba*). This, like expressed sentiments of "compassion", is typically applied to dependent and weaker persons. However, it also seems to imply a state of exclusive emotional attachment.
>
> In the Nyinba moral system emotional attachments are identified with the desire for material goods and condemned as covetousness or greed (Tib. *'dod pa*), considered one of the cardinal vices. All such attachments are thought to produce mental suffering, simply because they give rise to frustration and inevitable sorrow. Furthermore, this is a state of mind said to increase the individual's concern with worldly existence and thus to interfere with his pursuit of salvation. Sexual relationships are presumed to be especially conducive to the development of interpersonal attachments and to be motivated by or to motivate carnal desire, known as *dödchag* (Tib. *'dod chags*; these are considered a type of *'dod pa*). There is no other term which can be used to describe the sexual "love" of husbands, wives or lovers; nor is there any positive valuation of this phenomenon.

If we believe Levine (and other similar reports) we will have to accept that "love" (in the English sense of the word) is not a universal human notion. On the other hand, it seems possible that all languages have some word or words implying a desire to do good things for someone else, presumably modelled, prototypically, on the relationship between

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mothers (X) and their small children (Y), which can be represented as follows: "person X wants to do good things for person Y". At this stage, however, we do not know whether this is indeed universal.

In the past (Wierzbicka 1992a: 146–7) I have argued against the common assumption that "love" is a universal human emotion, pointing out that the concept "love" is no more universal than, for example, the Ifaluk "fago". I still think that the point is valid. I would now add, however, that all languages may nonetheless recognize lexically a distinct type of feeling linked with the semantic component "person X wants to do good things for person Y". But the matter requires further investigation.

2.10 Emotions described via external bodily symptoms

It appears that in all languages one can talk about "emotions" by referring to externally observable bodily events and processes understood as symptoms of inner feelings. For example, in English one can say:

> She blushed.
> She grew pale.
> Her hands (lips) were trembling.
> Her eyes became round [with fear].
> When I saw this, my palms started to sweat.

intending such sentences to be understood as referring to feelings rather than just to bodily events. Presumably, the folk model behind such sentences can be interpreted as follows:

> sometimes when a person feels something because this person thinks something
> something happens to a part of this person's body at the same time
> when other people see this, they can know that this person feels something

Unlike in the case of "smiling" and "crying", I am not suggesting that all languages will have special words referring to such symptoms. For example, while English has the special word *blush*, presenting a visible bodily process as a symptom of a thought-related feeling, in many other languages (for example, in Russian) the closest equivalent of *blush* is simply something like "go red", with no special reference to feelings. What I think might be universal in this area is the very fact that visible bodily events and processes (such as becoming red in the face)

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may be treated as symptoms of thought-related feelings, that is, may be reported (in everyday discourse) with the intention of conveying information about a person's feelings (linked with this person's concurrent thoughts).

Descriptions of symptoms referring to thought-related feelings can't always be literally translated into other languages, as their interpretation can be culture-specific (cf. Iordanskaja 1986). For example, as pointed out by Hasada (1996: 87), in Japanese a reference to "lowering one's eyes" (*mejiri o sageru*: lit. "lowering the outer corners of one's eyes") would refer to feeling pleased or satisfied, as in the following sentence from a novel by Kobayashi:

> [Ero-jishi de aru] Subuyan kara denwa o uke, tachimachi *mejiri o sageru* kyaku bakari to wa kagiranu.
> "True, some customers had to only receive a call from Subuyan [a pimp] to begin *salivating*." (lit. "lowering the edges of their eyes").

Hasada comments on this example as follows:

> Here the customers feel "pleased" to get a call from Subuyan who introduced a girl to them. However, in English the description of this Japanese facial expression would not be translated word-for-word as "drawing down the edge of one's eyes". This is because the equivalent English facial expression does not convey the intended meaning of the expression in the original text. It is translated as "salivating", which only partially corresponds to the original meaning, since it implies the customer's positive response, but expresses it through a different part of the body: the mouth.

Similarly, in Chinese the perceived bodily symptoms of "emotions" are different from those recognized in English. For example, Chun (1997: 3) cites the following expressions: *la chang lian* lit. "pull long face"; *la xia lian* lit. "pull down face"; *bian lian* lit. "change face" and comments: "All the above expressions describe that one gets angry and that therefore his or her face is no longer the same, and usually it appears to be long". In addition, Chun (1997: 4) quotes the following expressions, also understood as referring to what she describes as an "angry face": *zhang hong le lian* lit. "flow red face" and *lian hong buozi cu* lit. "red face expanded neck". (For other examples and discussion, see also Iordanskaja 1986.)

2.11 "Emotions" described via sensations

It appears that in most, and perhaps all languages "emotions" (cognitively based feelings) can be described via bodily feelings – either

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general or localized. For example, it seems likely that in all languages people can say something like this:

When I saw (heard) this, I felt hot (cold).
When I saw (heard) this, my ears got hot.
When I heard this, my ears started to burn.
When I heard this, my throat went dry.

Sentences of this kind describe bodily sensations implying that these sensations are not due to physical causes but to "appraisals" (thoughts), however fleeting or hidden from the light of full consciousness. The folk model reflected in such ways of speaking can be represented as either A or B below:

A
[when I saw/heard X] I thought something (Y)
because of this, I felt something
like a person feels when this person thinks something like this
BECAUSE OF THIS, I felt something in my body
like a person feels when something(Z) happens to this person's body

B
[when I saw/heard X] I thought something (Y)
because of this I felt something
like a person feels when this person thinks something like this
WHEN I FELT THIS, I felt something in my body
like a person feels when something (Z) happens to this person's body

Whether or not the bodily sensation is actually *caused* by or merely concurrent with a cognitively based feeling is a point that may be debated (cf. James 1890), but what is at issue here is the folk model, reflected in ordinary ways of speaking. The question whether this folk model is best portrayed in terms of "because" or in terms of "when" may also be disputed. In any case, cross-linguistic evidence suggests that feelings based on thoughts can be seen, universally, as linked with bodily feelings, and are sometimes described as *resulting* in bodily sensations.

For example, Mikołajczuk (1998) quotes Polish expressions glossed literally as "to choke from rage" or "exasperation chokes someone". Taylor and Mbense (1998: 203–4) quote Zulu sentences which they gloss as "He was so angry he choked", "When he heard, he warmed up",

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and "I felt my blood getting hot". Palmer and Brown (1998) cite among many Tagalog expressions describing "emotions" one which they gloss as "tightening of breath (feel terribly hurt)". Iordanskaja (1986) cites examples from a number of languages including, besides Russian, Tajik Tatar and the Bantu language Kuria, emphasizing the language-specific character of the expressions in question. For example, in Russian one says *dux zaxvatyvaet ot vostorga*, lit. "it cuts one's breath from ecstasy", whereas in Tajik the same (or similar) sensation is linked with fright (*nafasaš gašt* lit. "his breathing stopped [from fright]"). In Russian, one's eyes can, roughly speaking, "flash from anger" (*glaza sverkajut ot gneva*), whereas in Kuria one's eyes can "shake" from anger (*amaiso garagankana*). Finally, Reh's (1998) analysis of "the language of emotions" in the Nilotic language Dholuo includes examples with glosses such as "her heart beat wildly with fear".

Expressions of this kind are sometimes described as "metaphorical" (e.g. Taylor and Mbense 1998) or "figurative" (e.g. Palmer and Brown 1998). In fact, however, there isn't necessarily anything metaphorical or figurative about them and they should be distinguished from truly figurative expressions such as "stomach burns" (Dholuo), "shattered heart" (Tagalog), or "he is burning with roaring flames" and "my heart turned into blood" (Zulu), to which we will turn next.

2.12 "Emotions" described via internal "bodily images"

It appears that in all languages people can talk about cognitively based feelings in terms of figurative "body images", referring to imaginary events and processes taking place inside the body, such as the following ones in English:

> When I heard/saw this, my heart sank.
> It [the news, etc.] broke my heart.
> I did it with a heavy heart.

In contrast to the bodily "symptoms", discussed in section 2.10, the bodily images presently under discussion combine similes (LIKE) with a counterfactual (AS IF) mode of thinking, roughly along the following lines: X feels like a person who thinks [Y] and who feels because of this as if Z was happening (or: has happened) in their body. For example, a person who says "I was boiling inside (with rage)" does not think that something was actually boiling inside their body, or that if some water were actually boiling inside their body they would feel like they are feeling now. And if one says that something "broke my heart" one doesn't really mean that one feels as one would if one's heart were

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ruptured. Rather, one is consciously using an image which seems intuitively effective and which can be counted upon to be understood as an image, not literally. Using NSM, this can be represented as follows:

She was boiling inside (with rage) ⇒
she felt something because she thought something
I say: something was boiling inside her
I say this not because I think it is true
I say this because I want to say how she felt

She did it with a heavy heart ⇒
when she was doing it
she felt something because she thought something
I say: her heart was heavy
I say this not because I think it is true
I say this because I want to say how she felt

The phrase "I say" in these explications (e.g. "something was boiling inside her") does not imply that I think that what I say is true; and in fact there is an implicit message there that what I say is only a figure of speech.

Some more examples from Polish:

Polish
serce mi pęka (z bólu)
heart to-me is-breaking (from pain)
"I experience painful emotions as if my heart were breaking"

serce mi się ściska (żalu)
heart to me REFL is-squeezing (from intense regret)
"I experience painful emotions, as if my heart were being squeezed"

serce mi się kraje
heart to-me REFL. is-cutting
"I experience painful emotions, as if my heart were being cut to pieces"

Figurative expressions of this kind often encode, in addition to the images, non-metaphorical semantic components. For example, each of the Polish expressions cited above is associated with different thoughts and feelings, as suggested by different collocations that each of them typically enters: the Polish heart (*serce*) *pęka z bólu* "is breaking from

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[something like] pain'', *ściska się z żalu* ''is being squeezed from [something like] regret'', and *kraje się* ''is being cut into pieces'' not ''from something'' but typically ''at the sight of something'' (*na widok . . .*). Each figurative expression, then, includes, in addition to the image, its own cognitive scenario. Here are some examples from Polish literature, cited by the *Dictionary of the Polish Language* (*SJP* 1958–69), and supplied here with NSM explications:

Trzeba się rozstać, choć serce pęka.
We have to part although one's heart is breaking ⇒

[I] feel something because [I] think something
sometimes a person thinks:
''something very bad is happening to me
I don't want this to be happening
I want to do something because of this
I can't do anything
I will not be able to live after this''
when this person thinks this this person feels something very bad
I feel something like this because I think something like this

Serce ściskało mi się, gdym opuszczał okolicę, w której urodziłem się i wzrosłem.
''My heart was being squeezed as I was leaving the places where I had been born and where I had grown up.''⇒

I felt something because I thought something
sometimes a person thinks:
''something very bad happened
I don't want things like this to happen
I can't think: I want to do something because of this
I know I can't do anything''
when this person thinks this this person feels something bad
I felt something like this
because I thought something like this

Aż się serce kraje jak się na ten sponiewierany naród patrzy.
''[My] heart is being cut to pieces when [I] look at these poor humiliated people.''⇒

I feel something because I think something
sometimes a person thinks about someone else:
''something very bad is happening to this person
I don't want things like this to happen

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I want to do something because of this
I can't do anything''
when this person thinks this this person feels something very bad
I feel something like this because I think something like this

As these explications show, in the case of *pęka* ''is breaking'' the very bad thing has to be happening to me personally; in the case of *się kraje* ''is being cut to pieces'' it is normally happening to someone else, and in the case of *się ściska* ''is being squeezed'' it can be either. In addition, *pęka* implies the notion that ''I won't be able to live after this'' (reminiscent of *despair*, cf. chapter 2), and *ściska się* typically refers to events thought of as past (even if it is immediate past), whereas *pęka* and *kraje się* typically refer to events viewed as on-going.

English expressions like *with a heavy heart* or *heart-broken*, in addition to bodily images, also encode certain cognitive scenarios. For example, *a heavy heart* implies the following thought (in addition to feelings and bodily images):

I will now do something
I don't want to do it
I know I have to do it
I know: someone will feel something bad because of this
I don't want this to happen
I can't do anything else

The expression *heart-broken* implies, in addition to feelings and bodily images, the following thought:

something very bad happened to me
before it happened, I thought that some very good things would happen
I wanted these good things to happen
I did many things because of this
now I know: these good things will not happen

In addition, the image suggests that the person in question can't think of or want other good things (for some time).

I will adduce some examples from a few other languages, this time, however, without detailed discussion or explications.

Mbula (Austronesian; Bugenhagen 1990: 205; Bugenhagen's glosses):

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Expression	*Gloss*
kete- (i)malmal	"angry" (lit. "liver fight")
kete- (i)bayou	"very angry" (lit. "liver hot")
kete-(i)beleu	"uncontrollably angry" (lit. "liver swirl")
kete-pitpit	"get excited too quickly" (lit. "liver jumps")
kete- ikam keN	"startled" (lit. "liver does snapping")
kete- biibi	"too slow" (lit. "liver is big")
kete- kutkut	"anxious" (lit. "liver beats")
kete- iluumu	"at peace" (lit. "liver cool")
kete- pas	"out of breath" or "lose one's temper" (lit. "liver removes")
kete- paNana	"calm, unmoved, long-suffering" (lit. "liver is rock-like")
kete- ise	"aroused' (lit. "liver goes up")
kete- isu	"take a rest" (lit. "liver goes down")
kete- pakpak	"very angry" (lit. "liver is sour")

For Chinese, Chun (1997) offers the following examples and comments:

1. *chang duan* "broken intestine"

"This expression is used to describe that someone is in great grief, misery or sadness. One can say "someone is crying like *chang duan*'."

2. *xin ru dao ge* "heart is like cut by a knife"

"This expression is used to describe that one is in a very painful situation because of sadness, grief, or misery."

3. *wu zhang ju lie* "five organs all broken"

"This expression is used to describe that one is in great anger and that therefore his or her internal organs are all broken."

4. *xin ji ru fen* "one's heart is like burning"

"This expression describes that one is in great anxiety like fire burning."

5. *xia po dan* "gallbladder is broken from fear"

"One's gallbladder is often linked with courage by the Chinese. If one is

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very courageous or brave, he or she is said to be *hen you dan liang* (have much gallbladder). On the contrary, if one is terrified badly, then he or she is said to be *xia po dan* (gallbladder broken from fear)".

Finally, for Kayardild (an Australian language) Evans (1994: 212) offers the expressions *mildalatha bardaka* "feel grief-stricken", which means literally "cut through one's stomach"; and *bardaka warriliija* "feel uneasy", which means literally "stomach causes itself to go away". (For additional examples from other languages, see Taylor and Mbense 1998; Palmer and Brown 1998; Reh 1998; Mikołajczuk 1998.)

2.13 The grammar of "emotions"

It seems likely that all languages draw some grammatical distinctions in the area of emotions, thus reflecting different perspectives on feelings, available to speakers within one culture. Roughly speaking, different constructions may present a feeling as "involuntary" or as "uncontrollable", or as "overwhelming" and "irresistible", or as "active" and in some sense "voluntary", and so on. It is too early to say whether any such perspectives on "emotions" are universal, but it does seem eminently plausible that speakers of any language have more than one mode for conceptualizing "emotions".

To illustrate; in English, the predominant way of describing "emotions" is by means of adjectives and quasi-participles:

> He was angry/sad/happy/afraid.
> She was worried/disgusted/surprised/amazed/ashamed.

These adjectives and quasi-participles present the experiencer's "emotion" as a state. In some cases, however, there is also a verbal mode of expression, which implies a more active attitude on the part of the experiencer:

> She worried/grieved/rejoiced (archaic).

What this "active" attitude means is that the experiencer is thinking certain thoughts for some time and thus is, as it were, generating certain feelings in himself or herself (a process which – though not necessarily voluntary – in principle could be stopped):

> X was thinking something for some time
> because of this, X felt something (Y) for some time

In other languages distinctions of this kind play a much greater role

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than they do in English. For example, Russian grammar includes the following three constructions for the description of something akin to "sadness" (see Wierzbicka 1992a and 1995a; for similar examples from Polish, see chapter 6):

(1) On byl grusten.
he-NOM was-MASC sad-MASC

(2) Emu bylo grustno.
he-DAT (it)was-NEUT sad(ADV)-NEUT

(3) On grustil.
he-NOM sad(VERB)-PAST.MASC

All these sentences can be roughly glossed as "he was sad", but in fact they differ in meaning. In particular, sentence (2) implies that the sadness was involuntary and was, so to speak, "happening to the experiencer", whereas (3) implies active involvement by the experiencer and suggests that he was bringing about his own sadness by thinking certain thoughts (and also that he was somehow displaying it). The reality of these semantic differences is manifested in further grammatical facts, such as, for example, that the verb *grustit'* (infinitive), in contrast to the adjective *grusten* and the adverb *grustno*, takes the preposition *o* (comparable to the English *about*), characteristic of verbs of active thinking:

(4) On dumal o nej.
"He was thinking about her."

(5) On grustil o nej.
"He was 'saddening-himself' about her."
"He was making himself sad by thinking about her."

(6) *On byl grusten o nej.
"He was sad about her."

(7) *Emu bylo grustno o nej.
"He experienced sadness about her."

Another grammatical construction, which can be illustrated from English but which has more elaborated analogues in Russian, allows speakers of English to talk of some feelings as overwhelming. In English, this is done by means of a noun with the preposition *in*, which suggests a container image. For example, one can say in English "She was in panic/in despair/in ecstasy/in agony", though not *"She was in

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fear/in joy/in sadness'' (cf. Wierzbicka 1986b). In Russian, feelings perceived as overwhelming can also be described by means of a noun combined with the preposition *v* ''in/into'', but further related distinctions are drawn by means of accompanying verbs. Thus, in her study of several Russian prepositional constructions used for talking about feelings, Mostovaja (1998) shows that one construction (*on pogruzilsja v X* lit. ''he sank into X'') implies that the experience lasted for a long time, another (*on prišel v X* lit. ''he came into X'') implies a short-term feeling which is both intense and externally manifested, and yet another (*on vpal v X*, lit. ''he fell into X''), implies that the emotion in question is perceived as ''bad''.

Finally, for the Austronesian language Mbula, Bugenhagen (1990) lists as many as five different ''experiential constructions'' (in addition to ''body images''), each suggesting a different conceptualization of emotions. For example, *moto* (roughly, ''fear'') can be reported in the following three constructions, among others (s stands for ''subject'', PSR, for possessor, and NMZ, for nominalization):

(8) N-io aŋ-moto.
1s 1s-fear
''I am afraid.''

(9) Kuli-ŋ i-moto.
skin-1s.PSR 3s-fear
''Something makes me feel uneasy.''
(lit. ''something frightens my skin'')

(10) Moto-ŋa-na i-kam yo.
fear-NMZ-3s.PSR 3s-do/get 1s.ACC
''I was terrified.''
(lit. ''fear got me'')

(For numerous further illustrations, see e.g. Bugenhagen 1990; Ameka 1990b; Wierzbicka 1992a; Reh 1998.)

What such grammatical facts suggest is that in all cultures people conceive of ''emotions'' as being experienced in many different ways, especially in relation to human will. In some ''emotions'', the experiencer can conceive of herself in a more or less agentive role, as a person in charge of her feelings, whereas in others, the experiencer perceives herself as someone to whom something happens, independently of, or even against, her will. This flexibility in the interpretation of ''emotions'' may well be another emotional universal.

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3 Conclusion

Since all languages appear to have a word for the concept "feel", we can assume that this concept is an integral part of the universal folk model of a person, that is, that in all cultures people attribute feelings to other people, as well as to themselves (cf. D'Andrade 1987, 1995). Furthermore, evidence suggests that in all cultures people distinguish linguistically (and in particular, lexically) between different kinds of feelings. Apparently, in all languages some feelings are lexically linked with thoughts (in the form of words comparable in their over-all semantic structure to English words like *angry*, *afraid*, or *ashamed*). It seems likely, too, that in all languages there are some words linking feelings with the body, such as *hungry*, *thirsty*, and *pain* or *hurt* in English.

In all languages there also seem to be ways of speaking that link feelings based on thoughts with events or processes involving the body – a fact strikingly consistent with the emphasis placed by many scholars, especially psychologists, on the biological aspect of "emotions". First of all, these ways of speaking suggest that some externally observable bodily behaviours (in particular, facial behaviours) are seen universally as voluntary or semi-voluntary modes of expressing and communicating cognitively based feelings (e.g. "cry/weep" and "smile/laugh"). Second, they suggest that some visible and/or audible (that is, externally observable) bodily events and processes may be seen, universally, as involuntary symptoms of cognitively based feelings (such as, for example, *blush* in English). Third, all languages also appear to have conventional bodily images, that is, expressions referring to imaginary events and processes taking place inside the body, used as a basis for describing the subjective experience of feelings assumed to be based on thoughts (such as *my heart sank* in English).

It also appears that the main universal mode for describing cognitively based feelings is in terms of a comparison, that is, via LIKE, and that in this, the main human strategy for talking about feelings is analogous to the main human strategy for talking about colours. If *gold* (adjective) means, essentially, "looking like gold", and *blue*, "looking like the sky (when one can see the sun) or like the sea (seen from afar)", so *afraid* means, roughly, "feeling like a person does who thinks: something bad can happen to me, I don't want it to happen". Expressions based on bodily images such as *heart-broken* involve, in addition, saying that something happened inside the person's body (e.g. their heart broke) and implying that one says this not because one thinks it is true but because one needs a peg on which the expression "he/she felt like this" can be hung.

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While internal bodily images focus on the subjective aspect of feelings and on their possible links with essentially unknowable processes going on inside the body, full cognitive scenarios often point to social and moral concerns, and to aspects of interpersonal interaction. For example, they reflect concerns about "bad things happening to someone", or about "good things happening to someone else (and not to me)", about "someone doing something bad", about "someone wanting to do good things for someone else", or about "other people thinking something bad about me".

This mode of discourse, referring to feelings but linking them with evaluative and "people-oriented" cognitive scenarios, is of course consistent with the emphasis of anthropologists such as Lutz (1988) or White (1992) on the social, interpersonal, and moral character of discourse about "emotions" in many non-Western societies; and on the culture-specific nature of modern Western (especially Anglo-American) "therapeutic" discourse, with its focus on introspection into one's subjective internal states, rather than on social and moral concerns (cf. also Stearns and Stearns 1988).

Feelings are subjective, and they appear to be universally thought of as related in some cases to what is happening in the body; but they are also often thought of as based on certain recurrent thoughts – cognitive scenarios shaped by the particular culture.

Since in common human experience the content of feeling-provoking thoughts influences the actual feeling, one can legitimately say that not only "emotion-concepts" but feelings themselves are also influenced by culture. Since, furthermore, in common human experience cognitively based feelings often trigger or influence bodily feelings, it makes sense to suggest that bodily feelings, too (and perhaps even some bodily processes associated with them), may be indirectly influenced by culture.

There is no real conflict between the view that human feelings can be "embodied" and have a biological dimension and the view that they are "socially constructed" and have a cultural dimension. There is also no real conflict between a recognition of cross-cultural differences in the area of "emotions" and a recognition of similarities.

Clearly, the ways of thinking and talking about feelings in different cultures and societies (and also different epochs; cf. e.g. Stearns and Stearns 1986, 1988a) exhibit considerable diversity; but neither can there be any doubt about the existence of commonalities and indeed universals. The problem is how to sort out the culture-specific from the universal; how to comprehend the former through the latter; and, also, how to develop some understanding of the universal by sifting through a wide range of languages and cultures rather than by absolutizing

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modes of understanding derived exclusively from one's own language. For all this, I have claimed, we need a well-founded *tertium comparationis*; and such a *tertium comparationis* is provided by the mini-language of universal human concepts, derived from empirical cross-linguistic investigations.

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