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## SHOWN EMOTIONS, SPOKEN EMOTIONS

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This paper argues that everyday argumentative episodes are *inherently* emotional and proposes applying the concepts and methods used to analyze emotional episodes to argumentative-emotional ones. Emotions develop at the verbal and physical (paraverbal) levels. Sections one and two discuss two paraverbal aspects of emotion. The first section presents *increased tension* as a criterion for identifying the beginning of an emotional-argumentative episode. Section two focuses on the *physical* transformations individuals experience during emotional interactions and their correlative *communicative and argumentative function*. This topic is difficult to document adequately and the data are difficult to interpret. It constitutes an autonomous field of study. Sections three through five focus on the lexicon of emotional terms. This lexicon includes hundreds of *terms that refer to emotions*. In addition to this core set, it includes some thousands of *terms that suggest, connote, imply, or point toward an emotion (some thousands)*. The dictionary-based impact method is a unifying approach to an expanded set of emotional terms.

**Keywords:** emotion, argumentation, tension, emotional episode, emotional lexicon

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## Preliminary: emotions in language, interactions and arguments<sup>1</sup>

While studying on argumentation in interactions, I quickly realized that significant arguments were accompanied by intense emotions. This seemed to be an intriguing fact, given the status of emotion in argumentation studies at the time. I discussed this with my colleague, the late Professor Jacques Cosnier, who was a psychologist, ethologist, and psychoanalyst. He listened patiently to my concerns about emotions, and inspired me to engage in the fascinating field of emotion research. So, about thirty years ago, I began working on argumentation and emotion on the occasion of the 1995 conference “Forms of Argumentative Discourse,” which was organized by Professor Marina Bondi at the Modena University (Plantin, 1998).

I work under one main postulate: *Natural language is not a transparent medium*. It does not *mirror* reality rather, it *structures* reality. This is obvious. Words are not things in disguise. Lexicons have their own structure, sentences have their own syntax and texts have their own concatenation rules.

Spoken emotions are an excellent topic for language studies, as everyday arguments, which are necessarily linguistic. Analyzing them does not require a sophisticated theory of language, just a good grammar and dictionary.

Arguments can be serious or playful. Serious arguments have consequences – pleasant or unpleasant – for the arguer. Serious arguers are involved in their arguments. “Being involved” means that their interests, values and even identities are at risk.

A serious argumentative situation is fundamentally tense and emotional, because it is based on contradiction. In interactions agreement is preferred and expected by default. Disagreement is dispreferred, that is, disruptive. Sustained disagreement simultaneously opens both an argumentative situation and an emotional episode. The arguer is an experiencer. There is no special, ad hoc, concept of “emotion for argumentation.”

Experiencers<sup>2</sup> can *show* their emotion through their bodies while *talkin* about them. Showing emotion is a paraverbal activity, talking about emotion is a verbal activity. *Nonverbal emotional language* can be manipulative. Just as there are verbal lies, there are nonverbal emotional lies.

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<sup>1</sup> My heartfelt thanks go to Professor Barbara Konat, who invited me to contribute to this book and offered me precious guidance.

<sup>2</sup> The experiencer is the individual who experiences an emotion.

This paper considers emotions as both bodily verbal expressions. The focus is on general aspects of emotions as they are manifested during *emotional*<sup>3</sup> *episodes*, which are considered the basic unit for studying *spoken emotion*.

During a serious argument, the arguer-experiencer experiences *tension*. This tension is palpable at the verbal and nonverbal levels. The first section discusses the *increase in tension* (i.e., excitement, arousal) as a criterion for determining the onset of an emotional episode.<sup>4</sup>

For a case analysis of the verbal dimension of tension in the verbal expression of argument, see Plantin, 2019.

The second section discusses the *physical changes* that individuals undergo and exhibit during emotional interactions and their *communicative function*. These changes are a defining feature of emotional episodes.

Tension activates the body of the experiencer. Emotional interactions at large are characterized by the intensity of paraverbal manifestations. Some of these manifestations can be interpreted as indicators of specific emotions.

From an argumentative point of view, these potentially erratic and counterproductive movements can be controlled and repressed as *distractors*. This control is a part of the social management of emotions. The set of fallacies related to controlling of histrionics<sup>5</sup> (*ad ludicrum*, Hamblin 1970, 41) can be interpreted as a special case of tentative emotional control, as formulated in Levi Hedge's seventh "rule for honorable controversies":

Any attempt to ensnare an adversary by the arts of sophistry, or to lessen the force of his reasoning, by wit, caviling, or ridicule, is a violation of the rules of honorable controversy (Hedge, 1838: 159–162).

The study of emotion terms is a classic area of emotional language research. The third section discussed how emotions can be identified in various ways during emotional episodes. However, an emotional episode can be devoid of emotional terms yet still be highly emotional. In this case, the emotion is imported from the context.

Words that *refer* to emotions constitute the core of the standard set of emotional terms, which contains several hundred words. Other words connote, imply or point toward an emotion. These terms weave the continuity

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<sup>3</sup> In this paper, emotional is used in its primary sense of "related to emotion," with emotion being used without any connotation.

<sup>4</sup> For a case analysis of the verbal expression of tension, see Plantin, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> See Plantin, 2025.

of the discourse unfolding during an emotional episode. There are possibly thousands of such terms.

The emergence of computer dictionaries has revitalized the study of these terms. The “impact method,” based on such dictionaries, provides a unifying approach to this expanded set of emotional terms.

## Tension: the emotional waves

### *Emotions as phasic events*

Definitions of emotions can emerge as modes of expression and metaphors that highlight key aspects of emotions. The following French emotion descriptions are examples of these everyday definitions of emotion (tentative translations):

*L'émotion, ça vous tombe dessus.*  
Emotions take you by surprise, and fall upon you.  
*L'é., ça vous met dans tous vos états.*  
(Literally) E. puts you in all your states.  
Emotions stir and move you deeply.  
*L'émotion ça gonfle et puis ça passe; c'est comme une vague.*  
Emotions swell up and then subside; they are like waves.

*Emotions are disruptive.*  
  
*The speaker morphs into an experiencer.*  
  
*Emotions are temporary variations in tension.*

These descriptive features can be integrated into the description of an emotional episode.

- Emotions are linked to the occurrence of *disruptive, unexpected events*. *Surprise* and *excitement* mark the beginning of an emotional episode.
- When experiencing an emotion, the *speaker morphs into an experiencer*.
- The emotional episode can be *limited in duration*.

Together, these features point to a definition of emotions as *complex phasic events*.

(i) For example, imagine a classroom where the students are tasked with solving an equation. This is their *current task*.

(ii) Then, an *unexpected event* occurs, such as a bird flying into the classroom. This interrupts the task and creating group excitement in the form of noise and exclamations.

(iii) *Shift in action*. A new task and mode of action then take the place of the original task. While the original task was routine, the disruptive event generates tension due to the urgency and the need for new, adapted forms of action. For example, the students and teacher might try to open a window to let the bird to fly out.

This emerging structure of action is tentative and temporary by nature.

(iv) *The bird flying out* marks the end of the emotional episode.

The emotion encapsulated in such an episode is actually a combination and succession of several emotions, such as *distress*, *joy*, *helpfulness* and *relief*.

**Representation** – In simplified terms, such an emotional episode can be represented as a fluctuation, that stands out against relatively flat line. The magnitude of this fluctuation corresponds to the tension experienced by the individual, depending on their character, mood, and level of involvement in the situation.

Figure 1 shows a bell curve representing the variation in arousal that defines an emotional episode.

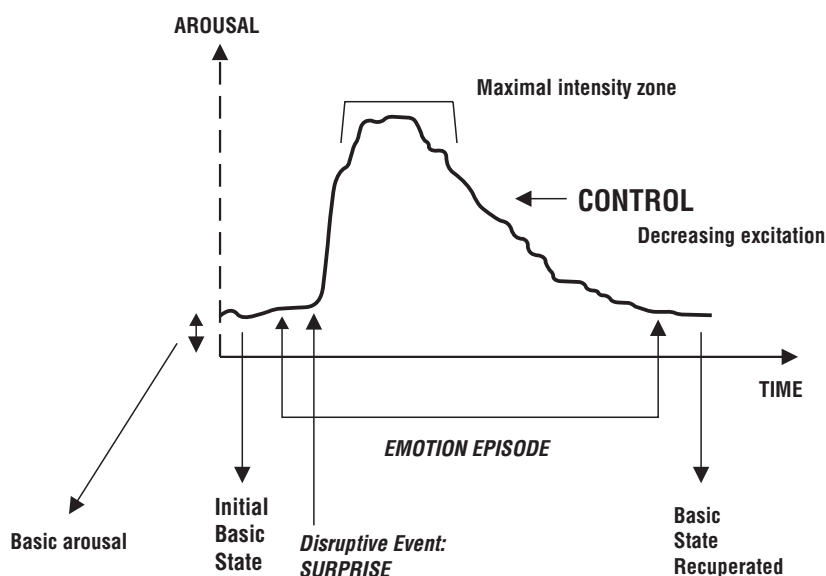


Figure 1. An elementary time/arousal schematization of the emotion episode

Source: after Plantin, 2020.

– The initial state of excitation corresponds to the level of **tension** required by the situation at hand. In this case the situation is a mathematics

course, and the current task is solving an equation. This level can vary according to the individual student's degree of involvement in mathematics, and the classroom atmosphere (e.g. studious or playful).

– The *arousal line* is shaped like an asymmetric bell curve (quasi-Gaussian curve).

Linguistically, the centrality of the tension is consistent with the fact that words expressing a rising level of excitement are impacted by the word “emotion,” which is evident in emotion words such as *anger* or *joy* (see section 3). *Sadness* can be seen as a decrease in tension.

– *Disruption*: The curve develops from an initial basic state, corresponding to the level of tension required for routine task.

Disruption corresponds to *surprise*.

– *The arousal line shows that tension quickly grows on the left side of the curve. It then reaches a maximum.*<sup>6</sup>

The right side of the curve corresponds to a decline in arousal, which is often correlated with an increase in control. Control is associated with reduced excitement and is exerted over the disruptive event.

– This leads back to resuming the temporarily interrupted *task*, i.e., returning to the classroom work. *Once the initial stage resumes*, the emotional episode ends and is not necessarily remembered.

This schematic representation is useful for identifying the onset of an emotional episode. Overall, it is well suited to the class of the “micro-emotions” experienced in everyday interactions. These emotions are accompanied by everyday exclamations or interjections, such as primary interjections like *Ah ah!* or secondary interjections like *Damn it! It's messed up again!* (Plantin, 2015). Most of the time, these emotional episodes quickly disappear, and are absorbed into the current task at hand. They are forgotten. In this sense, we can say that the emotional episode ends with a return to “*calm*,” meaning a return to the interrupted action, with the corresponding level of tension.

### *Emotions as episodes and life-changing emotions*

The preceding schematic curve is open to various criticism. First, the Gaussian curve is misleading because its symmetry suggests that the second leg

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<sup>6</sup> This is the moment when Paul Ekman (1993) captured the facial expression that is considered to be universally associated with a particular “basic emotion,” such as *anger*.

of the curve simply mirrors and reverses the initial arousal. According to this view, “control” intervenes as a kind of *deus ex machina*, to channel and stifle tension restoring the group to its initial state.

Second, the initial state is not necessarily restored exactly as it was before. *Major emotional episodes* are tied to unique events that alter the existence of the experiencer. Disruptive events such as an accident or the death of a loved one, can reshape the experiencer’s world. In these cases, consecutive behaviors and actions are not local events. These emotions are not “phasic,” they are life-changing, and learning to manage them can take years.

*Emotional episodes are open by nature.* They close when the experiencers pull themselves together, and regain control over their actions.

The action triggered by emotion overlaps with the action that developed prior to the occurrence of the disruptive event. This new action emerges as a response to the event. “*Emotion-triggered action*,” a type of “*emotion work*,” must be recognized as an essential autonomous component of the emotional syndrome (cf. *infra*). The outcome of the episode depends entirely on the results of the emotional action. For example, if the disruptive event were an alarm sounding, the appropriate emotional response would be to evacuate the classroom.

*Emotions are a continuum in everyday life.* However, the previous representation is also questionable, because *it implies that the normal mental state is nearly emotionless* and that emotions are anomalies – blisters on existence, illnesses, or accidents.

Figure 1 attributes a low degree of tension to the current task, but solving an equation can be extremely exciting or deeply depressing.

Furthermore, there is no reason to assume the linear stability of an emotionless baseline. Emotional life is more accurately represented by a series of continuous impulses and episodes of tension and relaxation than by a single peak on a flat background.

Figure 2 maintains the phasic nature of emotions, and illustrate the experiencer’s emotional ups and downs as an irregular wavy line. There are multiple salient points, and the baseline state corresponds only to a median state of tension, which is quite quite distinct from an emotionless state.

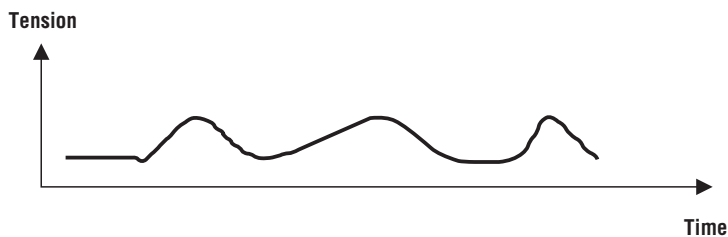


Figure 2. Emotional tension as an uninterrupted wavy line

Source: after Plantin, 2020.

The concentration of interactional events – such as variations in turn frequency, overlapping turns, short or long silences, pitch, vocal intensity, speech rate, pauses – allows us to characterize emotional moments in an interaction, regardless of the semantic content of the turns. Emotions are now seen as group conditions, not individual ones.

These cumulative criteria provide an initial definition of tension and variations in tension within an exchange. This enables us to automatically detect when a particular intensity occurs, as defined by the aforementioned phenomena. Then we can then, manually check, step by step, whether these points have an assignable emotional semantic content (Quignard et al., 2016; Nassau, 2016).

## The physical expression-communication of emotion

### *The emotional syndrome*

This section focuses on communicated emotion, exploiting the resources corresponding to the transformation of the voice, face, postures, and gestures of the experiencer.

The emotional sequence is characterized by the transformation of the individual into an experiencer. This internal and external transformation is described as a five-components syndrome (Scherer 1984a, 1984b). Two components of this syndrome are particularly relevant for the study of spoken emotion, the cognitive component which we cannot address here due to space limitations, and the VFPG component. This component focuses on para-linguistic features.

According to Scherer, the following components of emotion can be distinguished.



- Psychophysiological activation (arousal).
- Internal neurophysiological transformations. These manifestations are not accessible to consciousness, unless they are sources of discomfort or pain.
- Conscious psychological states and processes are evaluated as either pleasant or unpleasant. The term “emotion” refers to this conscious state. The degree to which an emotion is conscious is disputable. Do repressed emotions, automatically become unconscious?
- The cognitive evaluation underlies the perception and the linguistic description of a situation. These processes are not necessarily conscious during formation, but they become so through their manifestations—the narratives and descriptions through which they are communicated.
- Physical transformations of the experiencer are more or less accessible to consciousness, as well as being more or less spontaneous, public, intentional, and reproducible. These transformations correspond to the body and the body part in which they are manifested:
  - Voice and speech
  - Facial expressions
  - Body postures
  - Gestures.

### *The analysis of emotion in written texts and in interactions*

In written texts, emotions can be explicitly self-allocated: “*It makes me sad,*” or allocated to others: “*They are raging.*” Additionally, emotions can be implicit yet still accessible through the description of a character’s VFPG behavior: “*Ned Beaumont smiled mirthlessly.*”

Both resources are infinite. Consider the French phrase, “*Il lève les bras au ciel,*” which literally means: “*He raised his arms to the sky.*” This fixed expression shares the referential meaning of “raising one’s hands” and specifically conveys a range of emotions, including surprise, powerlessness, indignation, despair, and extreme positive or negative excitement. Therefore, it should be considered a plurivocal emotional term that refers to one or several of these emotional states.

Impact analysis (see below) can help to determine the fundamental set of physical expressions associated with an emotion.

The development and transformation of emotions are important instruments of text cohesion. Written texts can describe the most relevant bodily changes associated with their characters’ verbal interactions, as seen in classic detective novels. These changes can be identified as signs of emotional

manifestations. The impact analysis (see below paragraph 3) can reinforce the intuition attributing an emotional content to a word.

Advertising-style videos and comics use stereotypical, coded emotional expressions, making them relatively that are relatively easy to spot and integrate into an emotional analysis.

Current interactions are open, meaning the physical transformations experienced by participants can be seen, heard, recognized, and interpreted by others.

The problems raised by VFGP emotional manifestations in real-life interactions are completely different. The issue is no longer about constructing an emotional interpretation of a given linguistically or semiotically coded description of an action. Rather, it is about perceiving and categorizing brief behavioral segments as the physiological effects of an underlying emotion.

Identifying and deciphering emotional cues in interactions is difficult and controversial.

VFGP modifications are polyfunctional. There is systematic interference between task-related movements and emotional movements.

Added to this, there is a principled objection. Human analysts can project themselves into the situation and become caught in the web of empathetic attraction or repulsion. In this case, their interpretation is no different from that of a participant's.

One could conclude that even the best interaction analysts could benefit from a training in listening and observing emotional language in real-life cases.

## Impact analysis

### *Lists of emotion terms*

Emotions affect all linguistic levels of speech. The third section deals with written and spoken emotion, from a lexical perspective. At some point during the analysis the words used to express or allocate emotion, either directly or indirectly, must be identified and examined. This lexical approach is essential for accounting for the semantic coherence of emotional episodes.

Broadly speaking, the core of the emotional lexicon is constituted by emotion terms. Emotion terms refer directly to an emotion. For instance, the emotion term “*anger*” refers to the emotion of anger. Other terms can refer to any kind of realia and nonetheless connote, suggest, imply an emotion. These terms can be used to reconstruct an emotion using various principles.

For example, “*funeral*” refers to an observance held for a deceased person and implies a generalized “sadness” by virtue of social conventions.

The following paragraphs consider a set of emotion terms and propose a method to expand this set using what can be called the “impact method,” which builds on the concept of “emotional contamination.”

The question that William James chose to title his famous article, “*What Is an Emotion?*” (1886), is best answered with a radical response: “*Emotion is what we call emotion.*” From a linguistic point of view, James’s question becomes, *what do we call “emotion”?* One way to answer this question is to provide short or long lists of emotions, ranging from those identified by Aristotle to those identified by Ekman.

In French, Galati and Sini (2000, 79) have provided a list of 146 emotion terms. They selected these terms from the *Dictionnaire Robert*, based on the correspondence between the terms’ definition and the components of the emotion syndrome.<sup>7</sup> In natural language, emotion terms are not counted in tens, but in hundreds.

The following must be added to these lists:

- The synonyms and antonyms of each identified term.
- Descriptive terms oriented toward a certain emotional area (having a predominant affective component).
- Terms defined by the term *emotion* or by an emotion term. The impact method allows these terms to be listed.

### *The impact method and the abundance of emotion words*

The “impact method” relies on monolingual electronic dictionaries. It is based on the fact that the words in these dictionaries are both defined and used to define other words. However, some words are never used to define others.

If word [w] defines word [a], then [w] impacts [a]. It is possible to compile all the words impacted by a given word in a given dictionary. We infer that this relationship must be reflected in usage.

For example, if the word under investigation is “emotion,” the goal is to identify the words in the same dictionary that are defined using “emotion.” The results first highlight the abundance of emotional vocabulary in natural language. Emotional terms permeate general discourse at all levels, either directly or indirectly.

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<sup>7</sup> This list, among others, is available at: <https://icar.cnrs.fr/dicoplantin/emocollection-de-liste/>

In a monolingual dictionary, the word being defined (the *definiendum*) is a word **[w]**, and the corresponding definition, the *definiens*, is a heterogeneous set of informations, that combines around the core definition typical examples, etymological data, synonyms, and antonyms. Here will consider only the core definition.

We consider a definition to be what the electronic dictionary system defines as such. However, we cannot guarantee that all the specific definitions are based on the same concepts and techniques.

A main entry may be polysemous. In this case, the definition is divided into sub-definitions based on various criteria. The impact method integrates these submeanings.

A lexicographer's primary commitment is to provide *the best possible definition for a given entry*. This "lexicographical commitment" to a word **[w]** applies not only to the corresponding dictionary entry, but also to all uses of **[w]** in the definitions of other words, **a**, **b**, **c** etc.

In other words, we postulate that a dictionary that provides *an explicit, direct, definition* of a word in its entry adheres to that definition in all entries in which the word is used to define another word. If **[w]** defines **a**, then **[w]** is a critical, stable meaning fragment of the meaning of **a**'s global meaning. The set of impacted words provides an *indirect, implicit definition* of **[w]**.

Results improve when the results of the research from several dictionaries are combined. These dictionaries are used without any comparative or evaluative intention. The goal is to combine, not oppose, the results of these searches (i.e., the data extracted from each dictionary).

### *Lexicographic field of a word*

By convention, we will say that the set of words **a**, **b**, **c**, ... impacted by a given word **[w]** constitutes the *lexicographic field* associated with **[w]**, denoted **Lex[w]**, in the considered dictionary.

Since **Lex[w]** is relative to a specific dictionary **[D]**, the name of the dictionary is included in the notation, as follows: "**Lex[w]<sub>[D]</sub>**," which reads "the lexicographic field of the word **[w]** in the dictionary **[D]**"

If data are extracted from several dictionaries (**D<sub>1</sub>**, **D<sub>2</sub>**, ...) the cumulative list of words impacted by the same word **[w]** will be noted **Lex[w]<sub>[D<sub>1</sub>, D<sub>2</sub>]</sub>**

This collection of lexicographic fields associated with a word **[w]** in several dictionaries provides an indication of the *lexical field associated with [w] in the language in question*.

### *Semantically homogeneous morpho-lexical family (SH-MLF)*

The impacting word [w] generally belongs to a morpho-lexical family (MLF), abbreviated to “family” when there is no risk of ambiguity.

This family can be either semantically homogeneous (SH) or heterogeneous. Heterogeneous meanings impact different words.

We will denote the “Semantically Homogeneous Morpho-Lexical Family” of the word [w] as [W]

In the *WordReference Dictionary*, the following MLF is SH:

[EMOTION] = {emotion – emotional – emotionalism – emotionalist – emotionalize}.

It also includes *emotive*, in concurrence with *emotional*.

The word with the greatest number of impacts will be used to designate the SH-MLF. This is why we use [EMOTION], and not, for example, [EMOTIONAL], to refer to the preceding family.

This method and basic concepts are independent of the question of emotions. This method can be used to determine *the lexicographic primitives* of a language for a dictionary, i.e., the set of impacting words, and, correlatively, the set of impacted words which are *defined words that are never used in a definition*.

This method also allows us to compare, the set of words associated with a given word in actual usage, as determined by lexicometric methods with the set of words impacted by that word in a dictionary. This enables us to see how the dictionary aligns with actual usage.

Second, this method shows that the *concept* of emotion does not cover the same realities that the Italian word *emozione*. In Italian, for example, *tristezza* “sadness” is not defined as an *emozione* but “a state of mind.”

### **The dissemination of “Emotion” in the lexicon**

The impact method is illustrated by the Italian word *emozione* (singular: plural form *emozioni*). This word impacts 92 other words (net figure).<sup>8</sup> At first glance, the following areas of consistency can be identified:

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<sup>8</sup> The data and results of a study on the combined impact of the three Italian terms, *emozione*, *passione* and *sentimento* are presented in Plantin (2015).

• **Twenty-one of the impacted words refer to physical changes in the experiencer (VFPG).**

This semantic-lexical subfamily is the most prevalent. Based on this dominance, an emotion is first and foremost a physical upheaval.

Conversely, any mention of a *physical upheaval* in an individual can evoke an emotion or illness. Hence, the possible assimilation of emotion to illness.

VOICE: balbettare, *to stammer* – muto, *mute*

VISION IS AFFECTED – lampo, *flash*

THROAT, RESPIRATION – soffocare, *to suffocate*

ACCELERATED HEART RATE – palpitante, *heartbeat* – batticuore, *heart palpitations* – cardiopalmo, *heart pounding*

FACE – impallidire, *to turn pale*

WHOLE BODY OF THE EXPERIENCER

THE BODY BECOMES A SIGNIFIER – espressivo, *expressive*

THE EXPERIENCER IS EXCITED – elettrizzante, *electrifying*

THE BODY VIBRATES – brivido, *to shiver* – fremito, *to quiver* – tremito, *tremor* – vibrazione, *vibration*

THE EXPERIENCER JOLTS – sussultare, *to startle* – trasalire, *startle*

THE EXPERIENCER IS OUT OF HIMSELF; HE ESCAPES FROM HIMSELF  
svenire, *to faint* – choc, *shock* – scioccante, *shocking* – fulminato, *to struck down* – rapimento, *rapture* – ebbrezza, *intoxication*, *drunk*

THE EXPERIENCER HEATS UP OR COOLS DOWN – caldo, *heat*, *warmth* – impietrire, *to freeze*.

• **Experiencers manage the distance to their emotions (15 terms).**

– The experiencer struggles to control (*controllare*) their emotions. They gain the upper hand over emotions (*contenere*, *trattenere*), repress them (*ritegno*), and dominate (*dominare*) their emotions

– They block (*blocco*) and drive away (*scacciare*) emotions, keeping them at a distance (*distacco*, *distante*).

– They exclude emotions (*impassibile*), or don't feel any (*anaffettività*).

– They hide their feelings (*dissimulare*).

– Nonetheless, emotions gain the upper hand (*incontrollabile*); the experiencer let off steam (*sfogare*), or submit.

The word “control” implies that the experiencer dominates and supervises their emotions. The impact study suggests that emotions are treated as individualized hostile forces.

• **A short series of well-characterized inchoative arousal features (*accendere*, *eccitare*, *attizzare*) focuses on the initial stage of the emotion.**

The same word can cumulate several orientations: *attizzare* combines references to fire and an increase in intensity.

### ***Emozione* and basic emotions**

The impact method is a contribution to the field of lexical semantics. It identifies a set of words that are directly linked to the word “emotion,” or its equivalent in a natural language, for instance the Italian word *emozione*. Psychology, particularly following the work of James (1884), is interested in the *concept* of emotion, in the reality of emotion.

Ekman et al. developed a theory of emotion as a universal biological reality (Ekman et al., 1969), and used the notion of basic emotions. Ekman’s short list includes the following as indisputable “basic emotions”:

fear, anger, disgust, sadness, enjoyment (Ekman 1993: 384).

*Enjoyment* is the only positive emotion on the list. In a later publication, Ekman balances the lists of positive and negative emotions:

*fear, anger, disgust, sadness, contempt*, all negative emotions [...] *amusement, pride in achievement, satisfaction, relief and contentment*, all positive emotions. (Ekman, 1999: 45).

*Enjoyment* does not appear on the 1999 list. Further on, he same paper adds two negative and two positive emotions

*excitement*, [...] *sensory pleasure* should be added to the positive emotions, and *embarrassment*, [...] *shame* to the negative ones (Ekman, 1999: 55).

In summary, the following list of 15 basic emotions is obtained. The emotions from the first list are in small caps. To be more inclusive, *enjoyment* was maintained. *Pride in achievement* was expanded to include *pride* in general, and add *sensory pleasure* to *pleasure*.

FEAR, ANGER, DISGUST, SADNESS, ENJOYMENT, contempt, amusement, pride, satisfaction, relief, contentment, excitement, pleasure, embarrassment, shame.

What is the relationship between the concept of emotions and these specific emotions? Do they have a genus/species relationship, like natural categories, such as trees and oak, in everyday speech?

Words like *oak*, *fir*, *palm*, *baobab*, ... all refer to trees. *Tree* refers to a category of beings that includes many *species*, such as “oak trees.”

To define *oak* the dictionary first specifies that “*it is a tree*.” When we look for the Spanish word *paloborracho* in a Spanish dictionary, we get:

palo borracho: *Árbol de la familia de las bombáceas*, del que existen dos especies principales, ...

Note that the definition is backed by the corresponding scientific name of the species, distinct from its natural language name.

This raises the issue: if *sadness* is a subcategory of *emotions*, just as *palo borracho* to *tree*, then shouldn't their lexical conform to the same pattern, “*sadness*: ... emotion”?

To better understand the relationship between specific emotion words and possible umbrella terms like *emozione*, *passione*, and *sentimenti* in Italian, we will follow this procedure.

– First, take the collection of fourteen basic emotions, as they are designated in English.

– Then, consider the Italian translations of these English words, according to the *WordReference* dictionary. Add *collera* as the equivalent of “anger, fury, violence.”

– Then check if the definitions of these Italian terms are impacted by *emozioasic ne* or by any other covering term.

Table 1. Italian translation of basic “emotions” terms

| Basic emotion | Italian translation                                      | impacted by <i>emozione</i> – <i>sentimenti</i> – <i>passione</i><br>Ø = none of the three |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| amusement     | intrattenimento<br>divertimento                          | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                     |
| anger         | rabbia<br>irritazione<br>collera                         | rabbioso < <i>sentimenti</i><br>Ø<br>collera < <i>sentimento</i>                           |
| contempt      | disprezzo<br>spregio<br>sprezzo<br>disdegno<br>oltraggio | Ø<br>Ø<br>Ø<br>Ø<br>Ø                                                                      |
| contentment   | contentezza<br>appagamento                               | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                     |



| Basic emotion           | Italian translation                          | impacted by <i>emozione</i> – <i>sentimenti</i> – <i>passione</i><br>Ø = none of the three                                        |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| disgust                 | disgusto<br>ripugnanza                       | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                                                            |
| enjoyment               | piacere<br>godimento<br>appagamento<br>svago | <b>dispiacere &lt; sentimento</b><br>Ø<br>Ø<br>Ø                                                                                  |
| embarrassment           | imbarazzo<br>disagio                         | Ø<br><b>disagio &lt; sentimento</b>                                                                                               |
| excitement              | eccitazione<br>agitazione<br>frenesia        | <b>eccitare &lt; passioni</b><br><b>eccitare &lt; sentimenti</b><br><b>agitare &lt; passioni</b><br><b>frenesia &lt; passione</b> |
| fear                    | paura<br>terrore<br>fifa<br>strizza          | <b>paura &lt; emozione</b><br>Ø<br>Ø<br>Ø                                                                                         |
| pride<br>in achievement | fierezza<br>orgoglio                         | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                                                            |
| relief                  | solievo<br>conforto                          | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                                                            |
| sadness                 | tristezza<br>sconforto                       | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                                                            |
| satisfaction            | appagamento<br>soddisfazione                 | Ø<br>Ø                                                                                                                            |
| sensory pleasure        | piacere<br>gioia<br>soddisfazione            | <b>dispiacere &lt; sentimento</b><br>Ø<br>Ø                                                                                       |
| shame                   | vergogna                                     | <b>vergognarsi &lt; sentimenti</b>                                                                                                |

Note.

The first column lists the fourteen basic emotions in alphabetical order.

The second column provides Italian translations of the English words based on the *WordReference* dictionary. We added “*collera*” as an equivalent to “*anger, fury, and violence*.”

The third column examines if the terms in the second column are impacted by *emozione*, *passione*, or *sentimento*. In other words, we check if the translations of terms denoting basic emotions are lexically linked to *emozione*, *passione*, or *sentimento*.

The “<” is read as: “is impacted by.” “Ø” denotes that the word is not derived from any of the three fundamental terms.

Source: own study.

The impacts are as follows:

- ANGER: *Rabbia* and *collera* are defined as *sentimenti*.  
*Irritazione* is not related to the three umbrella terms.
- FEAR: *Paura* is defined as an *emozione*. *Terrore*, *fifa*, *strizza*: not related –.
- ENJOYMENT: *Dispiacere* is defined as a *sentimento*.  
*Godimento*, *appagamento*, *svago*: not related –.
- EMBARRASSMENT: *Disagio* is defined as a *sentimento*.  
*Imbarazzo*: not related: not related –.
- EXCITEMENT: *Eccitare* is defined both as a *passione* and a *sentimento*.  
*Agitare*, *frenesia* are defined as a *passione*.
- SENSORY PLEASURE: *piacere* is defined as a *sentimento*.  
*Gioia*, *soddisfazione* / *dei sensi* are not linked to the three umbrella terms.
- SHAME: *vergogna* is defined as a *sentimento*.

In other words

*Paura* is lexically defined as an *emozione*.  
*Sentimento* lexically defines six terms: *rabbia*, *piacere/dispiacere*, *disagio*, *eccitazione*, and *vergogna*.  
*Passione* and *sentimento* lexically define *eccitazione*.  
*Tristezza* is defined neither as an *emozione*, nor a *passione*, nor a *sentimento*, but as a “*stato d’animo*,” a state of mind.

Thirty-nine terms are used to translate the names of the fifteen basic emotions. Twenty-nine are *not* related to these three umbrella terms.

These results are about words usage, and cannot be transferred to real things and actual facts theorized by the relevant sciences.

## Conclusion: the practical study of shown and spoken emotion

The study of spoken emotion is an applied task. It focuses on emotion episodes. The first step is to segment the discourse or interaction considered.

Ordinary speech and interactions are punctuated by highs and lows that is, readjustments to the variations in the speakers’ mental and environmental and “actional” conditions. Hence the distinction between a tense and a routine mode of speech and action. An emotion episode opens when the routine mode of speech and action (low, routine) is interrupted and the speech becomes markedly tense (low > up). presents some practical criteria for this key turning point are enumerated in paragraph one.

The tension is mental, physical and “actional.” In interactions, material transformations are shown, and interpreted; this analysis asks for professional capacities. In written texts, the author attributes and orchestrates emotions and they can linguistically describe the emotional transformations of the individuals or characters they stage. The reader interprets these descriptions as conventional signs.

We argue that these dimensions of emotional language are embedded in the lexicon of everyday emotional language. They can be reconstructed by considering the semantic structure of the “lexicographic family” constituted by the terms impacted<sup>9</sup> by core emotion terms, and first and foremost, by the word “emotion” itself.

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<sup>9</sup> Papers using the impact method (Plantin, 2015a; 2015b; 2016; 2017; 2018a; 2018b) are available at [icar.cnrs.fr/membre/cplantin/publications-emotions/](http://icar.cnrs.fr/membre/cplantin/publications-emotions/)

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