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"EMOTION-RELATED WORDS" IN PERSIAN DICTIONARIES: CULTURE, MEANING AND EMOTION THEORY

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Abstract

Aimes: Vocabulary, written or oral, may potentially mirror the attitudes, emotionality, thinking styles, mentality and cultural tendencies among people. This research aimed to scrutinise the emotion-related words (ERWs) vs. the cognition-related words (CRWs) of three Persian dictionaries (namely, *Moeen, Amid* and *Moaser*), exploring cultural differences in terms of positive/negative and somatic/non-somatic aspects. *Method:* All entries in these three dictionaries were scrutinised by three independent judges all of whom were psychologists. The final judgments incorporated feedback which included descriptive and qualitative comments provided by a cognitive linguist. Non-parametric data (frequencies and ratios) on somatic/non-somatic, positive/negative and common/uncommon components of the target words were analysed by SPSS for Windows v19. *Results:* The results show that the ratio of negative ERWs is higher than positive ERWs, compared to both positive and negative CRWs. Moreover, 30-45% of ERWs were somatic (contained body-related component/s). *Conclusion:* The findings appear to be in line with theories suggesting that people with Eastern cultural backgrounds are more likely to express their feelings through body-related words; a fact that may be correlated with the high level of somatisation symptoms in Eastern countries.

Keywords: Emotion words, Dictionaries, Persian, Somatization, Culture

Introduction

> '*...the bodily changes follow directly the PERCEPTION of the fact, and ... our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion*.'
> (William James, 1884, P. 189; Italics and capitals in original)\

Emotion and language

Emotions are complex constructs which are culturally influenced and interpersonally processed, manifested and interpreted (Fussell, 2002). In order to explore the complexity of the verbal communication of emotions then, we need to turn to an interdisciplinary approach which gives access to insights from psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, ethnomethodology, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and clinical psychology (Niemeier, 1997). Each of these different disciplines may contribute to more accurate, richer insight into emotion.

Some studies (e.g., Pennebaker, 2011) have shown that words used in written and spoken language may correspond to our emotionality, personality, thinking style, attitude,

communication, etc. For instance, different patterns of words and writing styles (e.g. formal, analytical, narrative) used by students in their written essays, were found to be associated with their personality traits. High scorers on formal writing (or thinking) tended to be more preoccupied with status and power, less self-reflective, less honest, more mentally healthy, less open to new experiences, and drank/smoked less compared to those who scored higher on analytical writing, who were found to be more honest and open to new experiences. High scorers also tended to have better social skills and more friends.

An array of verbal material exits in all languages to be utilised when expressing and conveying feelings and emotions. From the psycholinguistic viewpoint, people usually use two types of expression, namely, literal (e.g., angry, sad, disgusting, etc) and figurative (e.g., heart-broken, shattered, breath-taking) to convey how they feel (Clore, Ontony, & Foss, 1987; Kaviani & Hamedi, 2011; McMullen & Conway, 2002; Ontony, Clore, & Collins, 1988). However, Wierzbicka (1999) suggests all linguistic facets of words such as grammar and intonation need to be examined cross-culturally in order to ascertain the actual use made of them, by the speaker.

Emotion in its cultural context

The interrelations between emotions and culture may be reflected in everyday language and vocabulary use and therefore investigated. Goddard (2002) shows that culture has a role to play in the way people display their emotions as well as how they interpret and react to the emotional displays of others. He emphasises that research in this field should take semantic differences between languages into consideration when examining emotion across cultures. In the absence of careful cultural, linguistic scrutiny, the verbatim (word by word) translation from one language to another can be confusing – essence is lost in translation.

Language analysis may reveal important cultural assumptions. Farooq et al (1995) and others have found that people with Eastern cultural backgrounds tend to express depression and anxiety through bodily complaints and ailments rather than through the use of psychological terms. In these cultures, a person's response to a difficult life situation might be expressed in terms that are primarily physical (somatic). Somatising feelings and emotions in language (e.g. heart-broken, gutted, etc) may be related to variations in acceptable expression, or a suppression of emotionality among people in a given culture. It would seem that the more a culture encourages people to express and share their actual emotions, the less they present with somatic symptoms that may be traced to emotional causes. On the other hand, the less a culture allows people to express their emotions and feelings freely and explicitly, the more they suppress such emotions and the more they present with somatic (somatization) symptoms (e.g. King and Emmons, 1991; Kleinman and Kleinman, 1985; see also Pennebaker, 1995; Pennebaker and Seagal, 1999).

Based on these findings, one can surmise that emotions are conceptualized differently across different cultures and that people with different cultural backgrounds both see and interpret their emotional experiences in different ways. However, there are also similarities across cultures with regard to emotional experiences that should be taken into consideration while examining emotion-related words. This gives the present study a reasonable basis for the study of emotions-related words in Persian dictionaries. We hypothesised that target entries of emotion-related words in Persian dictionaries are more negative and somatic compared to entries in the same dictionaries associated with cognition and intellectual functioning.

Relevance of the present study

Emotions, communicated either verbally or in written form, are eventually reflected in formal vocabularies and dictionaries. Although the literature on the associations between emotions and language has achieved considerable diversification (see *inter alia*, Fussell, 2002), few studies have taken emotion-related words in written references (such as dictionaries) as the area of investigation. Large volume dictionaries offer a valuable corpus for this project. Analysing the entries of dictionaries in the present study can be understood as a systematic attempt to identify the availability and breadth of emotion-related words in a particular language.

This research aimed to investigate the frequencies of somatic/non-somatic, positive/negative, and common/uncommon components of emotion- vs. cognition-related words in Persian dictionaries. Three Persian dictionaries, i.e. Moeen (Moeen, 2001, reprint), Amid (Amid, 2001, reprint), and Moaser (Sadri-Afshar, et al., 2001) were examined. McBurney (1998) states that the archival method is at the risk of biases which may occur when collecting data. For this reason and in order to limit these types of biases, this study benefited from the input of three independent 'judges' (see below). The results may be useful in helping us to further understand the role of culture in encouraging people to either express or supress their feelings and emotions. Understanding the sources of variation in emotional expression is important for clinicians and other professionals working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Method

Subjects (words): All entries in three of the best-known Persian dictionaries were qualitatively and quantitatively investigated with regard to their type (emotion/cognition), hedonic tone (positive/negative), somaticism (somatic/non-somatic) and commonness (common/uncommon).

Independent Judges: Three psychologists, a clinical psychologist (PhD, university Associate Professor), a general psychologist (PhD, Assistant Professor) and an educational psychologist (MSc, researcher) reviewed all entries independently. The judges each had at least 10 years experience in research, teaching and practice in their background. Each first scrutinized the emotion and cognition-related words based on the equivalent meanings (in front of each entry in the dictionary). They then categorized the target words in terms of positive/negative, somatic/non-somatic, and common/uncommon, again based on the equivalent meanings. Discrepancies between reviewers were addressed through discussion. Eventually, two agreed opinions out of three were used to determine any remaining differences. There was less than 2% disagreement and thiswas resolved in this way.

Categorical variables:

(a) Emotion/cognition: This prime categorization was to assess and determine words which were associated with either emotion or cognition. Emotion-related words (ERWs) included all entries which were related in any way with human feelings and sentiments. Cognition-related words (CRWs) included those entries which were related to cognitive domains such as thinking, attention, memory, problem-solving, decision-making, judgment, consciousness, etc. The entries extracted at this stage were exposed to the subsequent categorizations. No words were stratified as a mixed category, since only less than 1% of extracted words fell under both cognition and emotion categories. Therefore, they were added to both ERWs and CRWs lists.

(b) Positive/negative: Based on the hedonic tone of the words, these were categorized as positive, negative or both (dual). The latter included those which could convey both positive and negative hedonic tones.

(c) Somatic/non-somatic: A word was categorized as somatic if it contained one (or more) body-related component(s).
(d) Common/uncommon: Linguistic expressions of ERWs which are commonly used by native speakers to talk and write about their feelings, thoughts, etc. This was a qualitative judgement made by judges. Incidences/examples of certain target words were categorized as common if the judges identified them as being in current usage in everyday written and verbal communications. This dichotomous categorization was used to filter out uncommon words in order to further examine whether or not the findings change.

Examples

Two examples of ERWs and CRWs are as follows. These indicate the Farsi words, *their* equivalent meanings, the meanings inEnglish and their given categorization,
غژم GHOZDM: γožm خشم (anger), [emotion, negative, non-somatic, uncommon]
کافتن KAFTAN: kāf-tan جستجو کردن؛ کاویدن (search, exploration), [cognition, dual, non-somatic, uncommon]

Procedure

The three judges examined all entries of the above mentioned Persian dictionaries and categorized the ERWs and CRWs accordingly. They also categorized the target words in terms of their hedonic tone using the three categories given above, namely positive, negative and dual, somaticism (two categories: somatic and non-somatic) and commonness (two categories: common and uncommon). The latter enabled investigators to filter out uncommon words from commonly used words.

Final assessments were then reviewed by a cognitive linguist with 8 years of experience in psycholinguistic field, who is a PhD in the field of linguistics and Associate Professor. His feedback was then discussed in the weekly judges' conferences and incorporated where appropriate. The linguist's feedback on approximately 4% of categorizations most of which, lay in the categories of somaticism and commonness resulted in new decisions made by the three judges.

The Persian dictionaries

Lexicography started in ancient Persia (Iran) more than 2000 years ago with dictionaries called "Ueem" and "Menakhay". Throughout the 20th century, different systematic attempts have been made to compile Persian dictionaries by using a methodology-based lexicography. This is characterized by a series of defined steps such as conducting a systematic survey to identify corpora, using rigorous inclusion criteria to collect words, using phonetic symbols, cross-checking entries, annotating wordlists by native speakers and the like (see Svensén, 1993). The dictionaries, Moeen, Amid, and Moaser, which were investigated in this project have been compiled over the past 80 years respectively; the first is the oldest and the last is the most recent. This may potentially allow us to look further into any cultural changes over this period of time in Iranian society. All three dictionaries include all of the tenses of a given verb as a single entry.

1. Moeen Dictionary (Moeen, 2001, reprint), the two-volume version (adapted from a six-volume version), was used in this study. This dictionary, compiled in the 1950s is based on classic and contemporary written texts in the literary and scientific domains. The two-volume version contains approximately 43000 entries.

2. Amid Dictionary (Amid, 2001, reprint), the one-volume version was used in this study. This dictionary was compiled during the 1950s and 1960s and contains words

extracted from classic and contemporary written texts in literature and science. This dictionary contains about 39000 entries.

3. Moaser (Sadri-Afshar, et al., 2001).Compiled during the 1980s and 1990s, the one-volume version was used in this study and contains about 50000 entries. In this dictionary, the words have been collected from both written and oral examples in general contemporary culture (including pop culture),.

Data analysis

The following formula was used to calculate word ratio (WR): $\frac{Identified\ words}{Total\ entries} \times (100)$. A series of chi-squares were conducted to examine the differences between WRs of various categories. It should be noted that in order to re-analyse the data on only commonly used words, we excluded words classed as non-common from all further analysis. SPSS v.19 was used to analyse the data.

Results

General findings

A total of 653 ERWs and 1110 CRWs were identified in the three dictionaries. Table 1 presents further details of frequencies and word ratios (WR) of two types of words separately in Moeen, Amid, and Moaser dictionaries. Use of Chi-square showed WRs of ERWs and CRWs differ significantly across data sets selected from each of the dictionaries ($x^2 = 65.3, p < .001$). This suggests that the number of ERWs and CRWs has decreased over time. In total, the dictionaries contain more CRWs (WR = .84) than ERWs (WRs = .51).

Table 1: Frequencies and WRs of ERWs and CRWs the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries.

Dictionaries	ERWs Frequency (WR)	CRWs Frequency (WR)	Total entries
Moeen	317 (.74)	401 (.93)	43,000
Amid	175 (.45)	358 (.92)	39,000
Moaser	161 (.32)	351 (.71)	50,000
Total	653 (.51)	1110 (.84)	132,000

WRs: Word Ratios, ERWs: Emotion-related Words: CRWs: Cognition-related words

When non-common words were filtered out and the data re-analysed, the incidence of WRs of ERWs appeared to be higher than those in Amid and Moaser dictionaries ($x^2 = 53.62, p < .001$). The WRs of CRWs did not differ across dictionaries ($p > .05$). For more detail, see Table 2. Again, in total, the dictionaries contain more CRWs (WR = .56) than ERWs (WRs = .36).

Table 2: Frequencies and WRs of Commonly used ERWs and commonly used CRWs across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries.

Dictionaries	ERWs Frequency (WR)	CRWs Frequency (WR)	Dictionary entries Total entries
Moeen	199 (.46)	272 (.63)	43,000
Amid	108 (.28)	260 (.66)	39,000
Moaser	151 (.32)	325 (.65)	50,000
Total	458 (.36)	857 (.65)	132,000

WRs: Word Ratios, ERWs: Emotion-related Words: CRWs: Cognition-related words

As seen in Table 3, approximately 65% of both ERWs and CRWs in Moeen and Amid and 95% in Moaser are commonly used words.

Table 3: Percentages of commonly used ERWs and CRWs across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries.

Dictionaries	Common ERWs	Common CRWs	Total
Moeen	64%	68%	66%
Amid	62%	72%	67%
Moaser	96%	94%	95%

ERWs: Emotion-related Words: CRWs: Cognition-related words

Positive and negative words

Figure 1 displays percentages of ERWs and CRWs with positive, negative and dual emotional tone separately for the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries. It seems that the percentage of negative ERWs is higher than that of positive ones in all three dictionaries ($x^2 = 57.24, p < .001$). Most of the CRWs were categorized as dual.

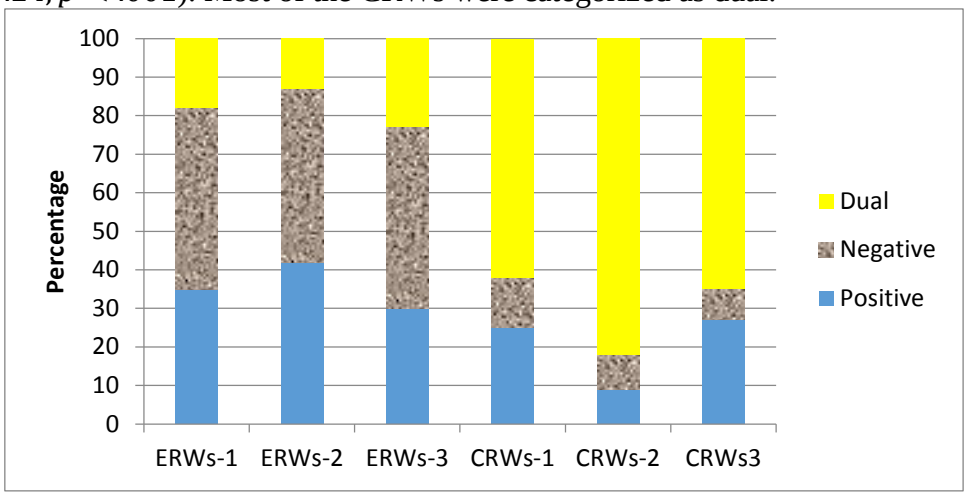

Figure 1: Percentage of ERWs and CRWs with positive, negative and dual emotional tones across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries (1 = Moeen, 2 = Amid, 3 = Moaser)

When included only commonly used words in the re-analysis, similar results were obtained ($x^2 = 62.72, p < .001$) (see Figure 2).

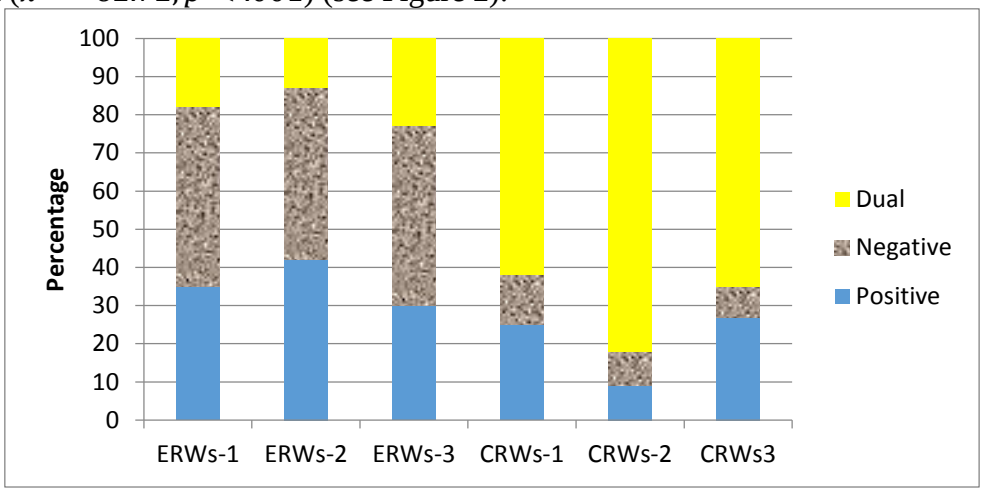

Figure 2: Percentage of *commonly used* ERWs and CRWs with positive, negative and dual emotional tones across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries (1 = Moeen, 2 = Amid, 3 = Moaser)

Somatic and non-somatic words

As demonstrated in Figure 3, approximately 30% of ERWs selected from all three dictionaries are somatic words compared to CRWs (3%) ($x^2 = 54.21, p < .001$). When re-

analysed, the data on commonly used words revealed similar findings ($x^2 = 48.54, p < .001$). See Figure 4 for further details.

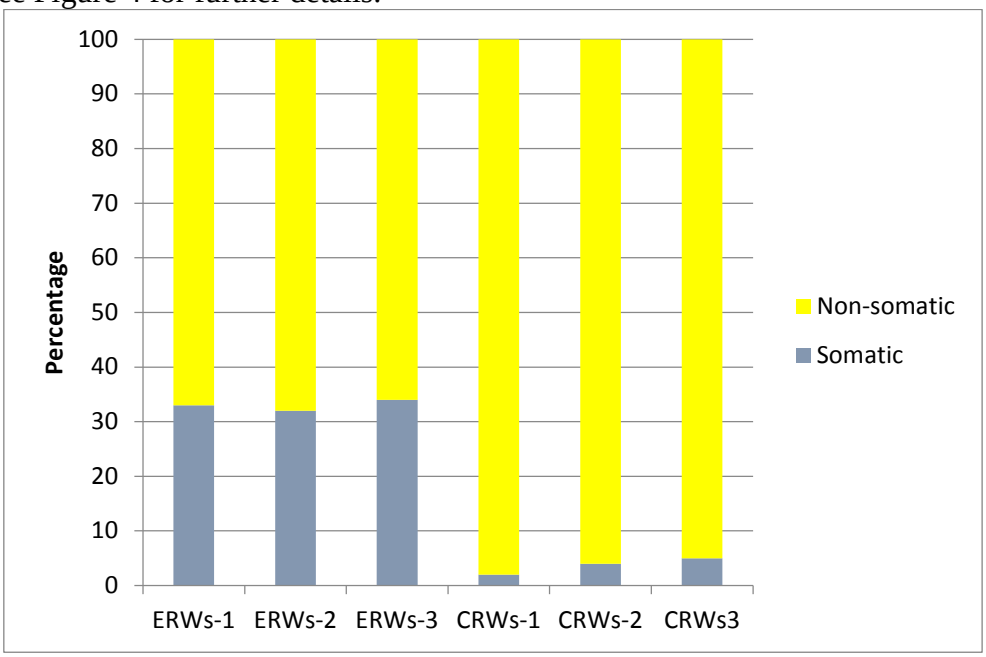

Figure 3: Percentage of ERWs and CRWs with or without somatic part across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries (1 = Moeen, 2 = Amid, 3 = Moaser)

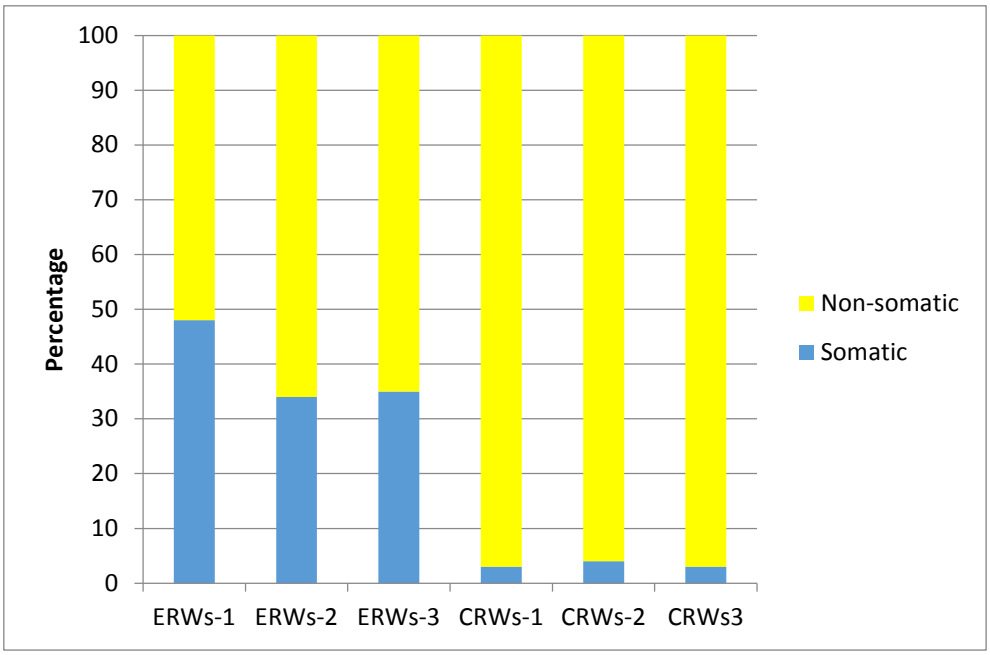

Figure 4: Percentage of *commonly used* ERWs and CRWs with or without somatic part across the data sets selected from each of the dictionaries (1 = Moeen, 2 = Amid, 3 = Moaser)

Conclusion

This paper reports on our study of emotion-related vocabulary, as identified in the corpus of 3 Persian dictionaries. Our assumption was that emotion-related words are not simply isolated elements employed to differentiate and specify emotional states We argue that research can help to determine whether ERWs reflect a literal, concrete description, or potentially bear implicit, important meanings. Investigation of 'emotions' vocabulary is a potentially productive step for reifying the concepts encapsulated in emotion-related words. Some authors (Wierzbicka,1999) believe 'only by studying words, one can go beyond words'

and identify the cultural meanings attached to each word in a given language. With regards to this statement, however, one might argue that people from differing cultural backgrounds may speak the same language but nevertheless attach different meanings to the same words. Although this field of study has received little attention, it may well have a bearing on cross – cultural conceptualizing of emotions and our understanding of cultural differences.

We scrutinized Persian vocabulary registered in three well known Persian dictionaries to examine emotion and cognition related words (abbreviated as ERWs and CRWs) in terms of their hedonic tone (positive, negative and dual) and somaticism (somatic and non-somatic). The literature search reveals that no findings so far have been reported in this respect. The underlying assumption in the present study was that the vocabulary used by people may reflect the association between the cultural tendencies and verbal expressions represented in vocabulary registered in dictionaries. A dichotomous categorization was used to filter out uncommon words in order to further examine whether or not the data re-analysis on commonly used data leads to the same end.

The first finding deserving mention here is that the frequency of ERWs is less than CRWs in all three dictionaries. This may imply that Persian speakers have produced, and used more CRWs than ERWs in their written and oral communications over time, which may reflect sociocultural changes and trends. However we ought to bear in mind that words in dictionaries are likely to reflect universal categories and might not necessarily represent the frequency of the used words in actual everyday communication in a particular cultural context. The results also show that there is a decline of commonly used ERWs in the second and the third dictionaries compared to the first one whilst CRWs remain almost constant across dictionaries. This may be ascribed to the original sources the dictionaries used to compile the words; for example the first two dictionaries relied heavily on written documents, but the other drew on a broader range of sources, including scientific and literary texts as well as everyday cultural exchanges and texts. On the other hand, this decline may be suggestive of broader, sociocultural shifts in the ways in which people express their emotional lives over time, within a changing cultural and political environment.

A further objective of the present research was to assess the emotional tone of the target words. A division of emotions into positive and negative categories potentially organizes diverse sets of emotion-related words into a coherent system. Negative ERWs turned out to be more frequent than positive ones in all three dictionaries, compared to CRWs. This finding is in line with other well documented research findings reporting that people in Western countries tend to value positive emotions and discourage negative emotions whilst people in Eastern countries tend to display negative emotions such as sadness, fear and anger (Eid & Diener, 2001; see also Heine & Hamamura, 2007; Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Miyamoto, Uchida, & Ellsworth, 2010). Bearing this in mind the results of the present study might highlight the fact that in some cultural settings, there exist more negative words available to be used by people when describing their emotional interactions. This may be reflective of a broader cultural bias against emotional literacy, and an ambivalence regarding the use, or value of such expressions. Apart from this, approximately 15%-25% of targeted ERWs were categorised as dual or mixed (implying both positive and negative emotional tone). Research shows that in Western culture (specifically American), it is a norm that people avoid contradiction and try to polarize attitudes while their counterparts in Eastern countries (specifically Asians) attempt a linguistic compromise (Peng & Nisbett, 1999). This account might explain a tendency among people from Eastern cultures to experience more mixed and negative emotions. If this is the case, there are important ramifications for talking therapies with clients from the Persian backgrounds of this present study. Clients from such backgrounds in receipt of therapy in their own language may be expressing psychological distress through the filter of linguistic biases such as those

identified in this study. On the other hand, clients from Persian backgrounds receiving therapy in a second language such as English, are drawing on, and exposed to the linguistic devices of a different cultural milieu and *its* bias, as represented in its vocabulary. The ways in which experiences and emotional reactions are encoded becomes more complex when more than one language is spoken (Costa & Dewaele, 2010). In each of these clinical situations, therapists need to recognise the approximation of language, and the potential discrepancy between experience and its emotions and the body of available vocabulary available through which to accurately express these.

The present research also aimed to work out the ratio of somatic ERWs and CRWs. The results show 30 - 40 percent of ERWs contained component/s related to the body organs, compared to only 3 percent of CRWs. This might suggest that Iranian people are more likely to use body-related words to express emotional states, a finding that seems to comply with the assumption that the more a culture encourages people to suppress their actual emotions the more they tend to communicate their feelings through the use of body-related words. This is also in line with the results of some studies (e.g., Farooq, 1885; Kleinman and Kleinman, 1985) suggesting that people with Asian cultural backgrounds tend to somatise their psychological symptoms and express these through bodily complaints.

This suggestion has further ramifications for the broader medical context. It would seem pertinent that the medical profession in Iran be aware of a possible tendency on the part of Persian mother-tongue speakers to somatise as a consequence of there being limited acceptable linguistic means by which to narrate psychological 'dis-ease'. An individual immersed in an Eastern cultural context expressing loss may go to a doctor and complain about physical aches and pains, such as headaches, backaches, muscular pains. In contrast, one from a European background undergoing the same life event might present himself or herself as depressed. The words that the person uses to describe their 'troubles' or sufferings implicitly reflect the underpinning philosophical viewpoint of the culture to which the person belongs. It seems that people in Western cultures more readily use abstract terms and words such as depression, anxiety, guilt, to express their feelings and emotions. This reflects not only the development of a language over time and its acquisition of new words and terms, but also the cultural climate which allows or discourages such words from entering the mainstream.

To interpret further the findings of the present study, an interdisciplinary approach is recommended, one that draws on fields such as psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics as emphasised by scientists (e.g., O'Connell and Kowal, 2011). This multidisciplinary approach would provide a more complete picture and knowledge that may benefit media such as radio, television, published material and on-line forums when dealing with and addressing emotional expressions in different cultural and ethnic contexts. There are, of course, the described important clinical implications of these results for clinical psychologists, counsellors and therapists dealing with clients coming from a diverse set of backgrounds.

Our literature review suggests a lack of research investigating body-related emotion terms. One might argue that, for example, the differences between body-related ERWs and body-related CRWs imply a universal categorization which is reflected across various languages. Using the same methodology to collect data from dictionaries used in Western societies, such as the Standard English dictionary might provide information regarding cross-cultural differences in this respect and add more to the picture sketched in this preliminary paper. English and Persian are members of the same family of languages, namely Indo-European, with some morphological and structural differences and similarities (see Keshavarz, 2007, for more related details). Future research planned by the authors will explore this potentiality.

Beyond this, we suggest that a much wider range of figurative language needs to be examined in future studies. As pointed out in Gibbs (1994), there are many kinds of figurative language (e.g., metonymy, proverbs, oxymora, euphemism, slang), each of which might have their own respective pragmatic and emotional properties. Future research would benefit from exploring what use is made by such linguistic strategies such as metaphor and simile in the absence of a rich emotion related vocabulary, as well as paralinguistic features such as exclamation.

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(AD)DRESSING DYNAMICS OF DEVELOPMENT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE AND ITS METAPHORICAL USES DEMONSTRATED IN E. ESTES' *THE HUNDRED DRESSES*

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Abstract

Language facilitates socialization, acculturation, and identity-development; these multifaceted roles of language manifest throughout E. Estes' *The Hundred Dresses,* which tells a story of a girl who becomes the laughingstock among her peers by frequently telling them that she has one-hundred dresses, despite the fact that she wears the same dress every day. With her seemingly-bizarre claims, Wanda experiences institutional repression as a consequential effect of failed communication. Despite the implausible nature of Wanda's allegations, it is precisely the intricate nature of words and their (different) uses that lie at the heart of Wanda's miscommunication and repression, as Wanda actually *does* have one hundred dresses hanging in her closet…in some form. The dresses, however, are actually drawings that Wanda has completed. Analyzing the role of the drawings alongside how Wanda's use of language prevents communication, the acquisition of institutional power, and socialization by applying key concepts of Jacques Lacan's studies reveals how Wanda's metaphorical use of language indicates her progress in self-development and sophisticated perception of identity. When Wanda's drawings are eventually revealed, she has already relocated to another city. The drawings then become her 'voice' by clarifying her metaphorical language use, as well as help cultivate new perceptions among her primary repressors. Examining the significance of language within a broader context, it is only through the operative dichotomy of individuals' self-realization in conjunction with their position within social institutions that enable them to foster the attitudes and behaviors that yield sociological proficiency, a 'dress' for everyone that never goes out of style.

Keywords: Language, metaphor, drawings, dresses, socialization, development, repression, miscommunication, Lacan, identity

(Ad)Dressing Dynamics of Development: The Significance of Language and its Metaphorical Uses Demonstrated in E. Estes' *The Hundred Dresses*

From the moment of birth, individuals are introduced to the world and eventually come to understand aspects of their environments through language. S. Chase (1938) defines language as "the most human of all human attributes….It is part and parcel of our minds, [*sic*] and of the relatively greater size of our brains" (pp. 352-353). As a result, Chase boldly upholds language as one of the most important aspects of humanity and judiciously so (1938, pp. 352-361). Words, nonverbal elements (facial expressions, voice tone, gestures, interjections), and various combinations of these linguistic components create vehicles for communication, one of the principal functions of language use. Communication represents perhaps the most fundamental means of interaction and establishing relationships among individuals, so it comes as no surprise then, that language plays an integral role in individuals' intellectual growth, social development and psychological maturation.

The processes of socialization, acculturation, and assimilation transpire through language, and, as a result, individuals come to understand social hierarchies, authoritative powers, and their ever-evolving place within collective societies. These multifaceted roles of language manifest throughout many works of literature, and particularly in E. Estes' (1972) *The Hundred Dresses*. Chase (1938) identitfies language as the primary tool for thinking (p. 19), and K. Coats (2004) expands on this relationship by declaring that "language has effects that are retroactively construed as knowledge- specifically, referential knowledge, knowledge of things as they exist in the world" (p. 31). Although all species utilize communication methods unique to their own kind, humans remain the only creatures on the planet that utilize language not only for the sole purpose of interaction and communication, but also to foster thought, construct knowledge, and expand their intellect. Indeed, language functions as a vehicle by which people learn, clarify, interpret, and understand concepts and ideas that transpire into knowledge, discernment, and wisdom regarding of their surrounding environments and one another.

Estes' (1972) book tells a story of a shy girl named Wanda Petronski who becomes the laughingstock among the girls in her class at school by frequently telling them that she has one-hundred dresses hanging in her closet, despite the fact that she wears the same dress every day. With her seemingly-bizarre claims, Wanda experiences institutional repression as a consequential effect of language. Additionally, she exemplifies the Speech Act Theory by demonstrating how language functions performatively, hereby illustrating why the end goal of communication is thwarted when the meaning of the spoken language is not the same for the speaker and recipient. Examining how Wanda's use of language prevents communication and the acquisition of institutional power by applying key concepts of J. Lacan's studies reveals the metaphorical use of language as representative of Wanda's progress in self-development. Moreover, this process simultaneously provokes behavior modification among Wanda's primary repressors, Peggy and Maddie, thus justifying the metaphorical use of language as not only a representation, but as a facilitator of the earliest stages of Peggy and Maddie's development, as well.

As the primary means of communication and interaction among individuals, language represents a means of cultural expression and socialization, as S. Berg (1984) affirms by asserting that "language is both socially formed and personally selected" (p. 140). This dichotomy between the publicized and personal aspects of language use proves critical in understanding the inherent power of language as an agent by which individuals construct social knowledge and either establish social positions of power or experience institutional repression. Describing how language functions socially, J. Culler (1975) states that "the cultural meaning of any particular act or object is determined by a whole system of constitutive rules" (p. 5). Specifically, language is "meaningful only with respect to a set of institutional conventions" (Culler, 1975, p. 5) "that are not organic or idiosyncratic to the individual….Instead, they are located in language, which is a public order" (Coats, 2004, p. 17). In other words, a shared understanding of the various elements of language remains necessary in order for effective language use and successful communication to occur.[1]

Given the distinctiveness that characterizes language through individuals' diction, syntax, cognition, and physicality (voice timbre, disability, tobacco or drug use, illness), J. F. MacCannell (1986) avows that "the transmission of messages is never a simple or symmetrical exchange" (p. 54) because "the word [the most fundamental element of language] never has only one use. Every word always has a beyond, sustains several functions, envelops several meanings" (MacCannell, 1986, p. 47). Although some scholars,

[1] Such is the case with cryptic messages, secret codes, Hieroglyphics, nicknames, slang, metaphorical usage, and inside jokes. Only when all members involved in the particular linguistic exchange are aware of to what the message itself refers does actual communication occur.

such as S. Butler (1962), insist that the implication of words is overrated and "incomplete in the first place, because [words] omi[t] all reference to the ideas which [they]… are intended to convey, and there can be no true word without its actually or potentially conveying an idea" (p. 14), many others prove quick to disagree agree. A. Huxley (1962), for instance, declares that "words have power to mold men's thinking, to canalize their feelings, to direct their willing and acting" (p. 2), thus comprising moral fiber and influencing personal character. Likewise, K. Sornig (1989) warns that "words can, in fact, be used as instruments of power and deception" (p. 96), and, in an even bolder assertion, T. Todorov (1970) claims that "words create reality, [*sic*] they are not just its pale reflection" (p. 120). Clearly, these individuals hold words, in and of themselves, with very high regards with respect to their perceptions that words embody philosophical and psychological stimuli; more specifically, words influence and eventually determine how one perceives reality and functions as a member of his or her respective society.

A. J. Ayer (1970) maintains a different stance, insofar as the significance of the language in and of itself is concerned, as demonstrated in his assertion that "there are other ways of conveying information than by the use of language" (p. 21). Despite this recognition, however, he does not fail to recognize what the most basic constituent components of language *represent*, as implied when he acknowledges the belief that hails words as "the signs of ideas: and ideas are here identified with thoughts or images" (Ayer, 1970, p. 37) that philosophers claim manifest directly from individual minds. Once again, the emphasis falls back to not simply knowing what the words mean by definition, but on the ability to convey and comprehend them in meaningful contexts. Interestingly, as a caveat to this perception, however, Ayer (1970) explains that, in order for this definition to be taken literally, it would mean that "we never do, or indeed can, talk about anything except our own mental processes" (p. 37), as this definition completely disregards the necessity of a common basis of understanding essential for effective communication. This description implies that all words assume different meanings for each and every single individual, rendering communication between two or more people virtually impossible. It is for this very reason that R. M. Keesing (1979/2002) explains that, in order to fulfill the primary function of communication, language "distributed and transmitted within *communities* and hence must be learnable and broadly shared, although individuals command variant and partial versions of the community's pool of knowledge" (p. 275). Individuality and variations should be embraced and welcomed, as they fortify the role of language as a window to a person's culture, in which they exist as both a member of a collective society *and* as an individual.

Speaking of individuals, E. B. Huey (1970) points out that individual words alone fail to yield clear linguistic comprehension; understanding language "is not a mere sum of associations, but is an apperceptive unity" (Huey, 1970, p. 154). Components of this particular unity include grammatical conventions, familiarity with native language, syntax, connotation, context, setting, and the relationship between the individuals involved in the communicative exchange, as all represent crucial aspects of helping individuals clarify their intentions and comprehend others' messages, yielding effective exchanges of communication. All individuals involved in the particular communicative exchange must have a fairly similar basis of understanding regarding these different aspects in order to utilize language effectively, both as a speaker and as a recipient.

Consequentially, as C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards (1930) proclaim, "the realization of the multiplicity of the normal language function is vital to a serious approach" (p. 193) to the problem of correctly perceiving the array of word meanings that continuously pervade language and transform effective communication into an increasingly challenging endeavor. Throughout *The Hundred Dresses*, it is precisely this multidimensional aspect of words that renders Wanda a powerless, repressed institutional victim. Despite the significance of school

as the institution through which Wanda is repressed, R. S. Trites (2000) declares that the institution itself "matters less than the acknowledgement that institutions rely on language to regulate the individual's authority" (p. 53). Regarding this sociological role of language, Chase (1938) explains that "words are active forces which give a measure of control over the environment" (p. 55). Accordingly, Wanda "didn't have any friends, but a lot of girls talked to her" (Estes, 1972, p. 12) for the sole purpose of having fun at Wanda's expense. Each time Wanda claims to own one-hundred dresses, her classmates "couldn't help bursting into shrieks and peals of laughter" (Estes, 1972, p. 13). Despite the implausible nature of Wanda's allegations, the intricate nature of words and their (different) uses lie at the heart of her miscommunication and intuitional repression, as she actually *does* have one hundred dresses hanging in her closet…in some form.

What the language fails to convey is the fact that the dresses are actually drawings that she has completed on paper. Ogden and Richards (1930) verify that "the metaphorical aspects of the greater part of language, and the ease with which any word may be used metaphorically, further indicate the degree to which, especially for educated persons, words have gained contexts through other words" (p. 214). By manipulating language metaphorically with the word *dress* as representative of her drawings, Wanda illustrates what A. Leupin (2004) articulates as "the distinction between the signifier and the signified,…what characterizes human language and makes it ambiguous and equivocal" (p. 39). Language's quality of ambiguity represents the most critical factor in determining whether communication can occur, for Chase (1938) asserts that "when people can agree on the thing to which their words refer, minds meet. The communication line is cleared" (p. 9). Moreover, the disagreement and ambiguity between Wanda's use of the word *dress* and her classmates' use of the same word when they question, and eventually mock her, is why language repeatedly fails to grant Wanda any power within the institution.

In accordance to Huey's (1970) recognition of language as "an apperceptive unity" (p. 154), Trites (2000) contends, "one series of miscommunications builds upon another" (p. 22), just like the game of the hundred dresses began, which was "so suddenly and unexpectedly, with everybody falling right in…even if you felt uncomfortable…there wasn't anything you could do about it" (Estes, 1972, p. 33). It becomes evident that language not only begins the hundred dresses game and sustains it day after day, but it also represses power, not just from Wanda as the target of the jokes, but also from the individuals involved, as they imply the absence of personal choice in their claims that participation was completely involuntary.

While language constitutes a means of power within an institution, it stands to reason that repression can manifest in the form of silence. As the hundred dresses game of mockery became a daily occurrence, Wanda becomes even more repressed within the institution with her silence, as "everybody was talking to everybody else…Nobody talked to Wanda" (Estes, 1972, p. 28). Even as Wanda makes a slight attempt to dissolve the institutional repression by breaking her silence, as "she figured all she'd have to do was say something and she'd really be one of the girls" (Estes, 1972, p. 28), her repressed status is substantiated when Peggy (the most popular, hence, powerful, girl in the institution) takes the opportunity to mock Wanda when she discusses her hundred dresses in front of everyone in the crowd. The attention that Wanda receives when she speaks is also met with silence. Wanda, however, does not partakes in silence alone. Through Maddie's own silence from failing to stop Peggy's relentless teasing, "she had done just as much as Peggy to make life miserable for Wanda by simply standing by and saying nothing" (Estes, 1972, p. 49). Whereas Wanda's silence serves to perpetuate her repressed status, Maddie's silence, on the other hand, is justified to *maintain* her social power as Peggy's best friend within the institution.

Eventually, Peggy "seemed to think a day was lost if she had not had some fun with Wanda, winning the approving laughter of the girls" (Estes, 1972, p. 32). These informal

accolades confirm Peggy as a bearer of institutional power and "demonstrate how institutions derive their power from the discourse people use" (Trites, 2000, p. 22), as Peggy maintains her institutional power by using Wanda's linguistic discourse against her, and Wanda remains silent because she has no reason to talk. Just like many words involve a multitude of uses, language, too, contains several multifaceted aspects, all of which fulfill communicative--or spiteful--intentions. Discovering how language actually *does* execute these roles, then, proves vital to understanding how language functions intricately among individuals and the role that it plays in an individual's intellectual growth, psychological development, and maturation.

B. Malinowski (1962) declares that through language men develop the conviction that the knowledge of a name, the correct use of a verb, [or] the right application of a particle, have a mystical power which transcends the mere utilitarian convenience of such words in communication from man to man. (p. 73)

Despite a greater number of scholars who approach linguistics with a more practical perspective and refrain from incorporating supernatural elements into their methodologies and explanations, most will agree that language proves effective in executing various functions and asserting positions of power. This inherent power of language is most commonly explained with the Speech Act Theory, which justifies how words function as not only units of communication, but as executors of actions as well. Coats (2004) emphasizes the significance of the Speech Act Theory in her assertion that, in order for language to execute its power most closely in accordance with the speaker's original meanings and intentions, then language "must act rather than simply refer to something that already exists" (p. 30). Put more simply, "language is not about knowing, but about doing, [as it] is itself performative" (Coats, 2004, 31). One of the Speech Act Theory's earliest pioneers, J. L. Austin (1962), recognized that not all word combinations serve the sole purpose of making statements, but can also function to ask questions and express exclamations, commands, wishes, declarations, or concessions.

Austin considers most sentences *performative*, meaning that "the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action—it is not normally thought of as just saying something" (1962, pp. 6-7). Sornig (1989) echoes Austin (1962) in his observation that there is no such thing as a 'pure,' unbiased statement: the process of verbalizing thought and transmitting ideas involves the simultaneous signaling of purposes, aims[,] and wishes [or signifiers, in Lacanian theory,] along with the message itself [which Lacan's studies designate as the signified.] (Sornig, 1989, p. 95)

The relationship between the signifier and the signified, then becomes distinctive to each individual implementing it, as meaning is largely derived from perceptions, experiences, and cerebral aptitude; consequentially, "the signifier thus separates us from each other, [and] disrupts any 'communication' we might have with each other" (MacCannell, 1986, p. 9). This idea reverts back to Ayer's (1970) problematic designation of words' significance and isolates the core of the problem that causes Wanda's communication difficulties.

Alongside this very notion lies the process through which Wanda becomes alienated through language and repressed through the institution as a result. L. Chiesa (2007) describes the alienation process through language as occurring because the speaker never manages to say exactly what he really wants to say. His interlocutor [recipient] is unable to grasp fully what the subject actually means to tell him […] at the same time, the subject's individual speech—his perpetually addressing a counterpart in discourse-also always says *more* than the subject wants to say. (p. 38)

Each time Wanda affirms that she has one-hundred dresses, Peggy and the rest of the girls never realize the difference between Wanda's use of the word *dress* and their own (albeit, incorrect) assumptions that she is speaking in literal terms. In this instance, the relationship

between the signifier and the signified for Wanda is not analogous with the relationship between the signifier and the signified for Peggy or the other girls.

Coats (2004) describes Wanda's mistake as the creation of a communicative situation that involved "subverting the signifiers without removing the fundamental framework within which they exist" (p. 87). In other words, the girls have no way of recognizing Wanda's use of the words (the signifiers) as literal or metaphoric, as there is no basis of context nor explanations, (which would have constituted removal from the fundamental framework to which Coats refers.) Consequentially, this indistinctness causes subversion of the signifiers that transpires throughout the language's ambiguity and results in misinterpretation and, ultimately, failed communication. In this case, the interpretation of the language becomes entirely dependent upon the recipients' predisposed assumptions of the relationship between the signifiers and signified.

This type of dissonance yields unsuccessful communication because of the failure to reach a mutually understood perspective. Until reciprocal understanding and agreement of meanings occur, all involved in the language exchange are thinking in completely different directions. As implied in Todorov's (1970) observation that "the same verbal message can take on different meanings if it is addressed to different individuals" (P. 117), *some* degree of variation in language interpretation must be considered to account for the individuality inherent within human nature. The question then becomes whether or not the particular use of language is one that will enable the individual to comprehend the speaker, henceforth, enabling effective communication.

Given the apparent absurdity behind Wanda's claim, alongside the fact that "obviously the only dress Wanda had was the blue one she wore every day" (Estes, 1972, p. 13), the girls laugh "derisively" (Estes, 1972, p. 13) at her, assume that she is a delusional fool, and perpetuate her status of repression within the institution by ignoring her. When the girls *do* periodically address Wanda, ulterior motives of prompting mockery and laugher provoke their actions, which disconnects Wanda from the source through which institutional power is gained: language. This instance illustrates Ogden and Richard's (1930) explanation that, for some people such as Wanda, their words are essential members of the contexts of their references. To those who are not so tied by their symbolism[,] this inability to renounce for the moment favourite [*sic*] modes of expression usually appears as a peculiar localized stupidity. (p. 216)

Because of the other girls' inabilities to recognize Wanda's metaphorical use of the word *dresses* and because Wanda is unable to offer an explanation of the word's literal meaning for fear of permanent institutional oppression, they perceive Wanda as delusional and dense. Furthermore, since her statements are only met with sarcasm, imprudent commentary, and rude laughter, Wanda exemplifies Chiesa's (2007) concept of saying too much: perhaps Wanda would have been better off saying nothing at all, as the speech was no longer utilized as a form of communication, but rather as fodder for meanness.

Motives for language use and its consequential results constitute the main focus of the Speech Act Theory, as the three types of speech acts are distinguished by the speaker's intentions and the results they evoke. As such, they reveal the degree to which language proves a potent instigator of ideas and actions. It is precisely the application of the three types of speech acts: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, that reveal the cause of Wanda's institutional repression as failure in effective language use resulting in misrepresentation and miscommunication. Specifically regarding matters of power, H. E. Brekle (1989) emphasizes that "all…types of speech acts are in principle suitable for enforcing the interests of power" (p. 82). This concept is demonstrated with the girls prompting Wanda to speak by asking her the same question every day. Although the linguistic power that transpires depends largely on the type of speech act utilized under

different circumstances in different situations, each of Wanda's responses only reinforce the girls' power within the institution by being able to legitimately repress her with ridicule.

Wanda's first claim of owning one-hundred dresses and all other allegations that follow represent her attempts to gain power and acceptance within the institution by means of language, therefore classifying them as illocutionary acts. Such is the case when Wanda "figured all she'd have to do was say something and she'd really be one of the girls" (Estes, 1972, p. 28). Wanda's metaphorical use of words, as in her replacement of 'dress' for 'drawing,' indicate that her intentions for these claims began as perlocutionary acts, with evocations of admiration, acceptance, and slight jealousy as the end goal for the language. This instance challenges G. M. Wilson's (1992) declaration that "the illocutionary force of an utterance centrally depends on the utterer's speech-act intention" (p. 181), as is the case with successful execution of language in secret codes, inside jokes, and, unlike Wanda's language use, successful metaphoric portrayals. True, a speaker's intentions greatly determine what language they use in different communicative exchanges, but problems arise when a speaker's intentions are not perceived by recipients as such, when the language executes a different speech-act than what the speaker originally intends, or when referential meanings to words are unclear and unspecified, leaving them susceptible to misinterpretation and misunderstanding, all of which become evident in Wanda's language use throughout the book. Coats (2004) remarks that individuals "often suffer from the delusion that language is transparent" (p. 87) by neglecting to consider the multiplicity prevalent within the use, functions, and intentions of language before jumping to (often inaccurate) conclusions and poorly construed meanings.

The inconsistencies prevalent within these concepts demonstrate why discrepancies between speakers and recipients of language during exchange lead to failed communication, as the language did not reflect the proper intentions or the execution was not interpreted as such. In perhaps a more accurate assessment in accordance with the Speech Act Theory, D. Holdcroft (1978) declares that "there must be some connection between the meaning of a sentence and the illocutionary acts that can be performed by one who uses it literally and seriously" (p. 44). This observation highlights the correlation between recipients' interpretations of language and the particular speech acts that transpire as a result; additionally, these conditions explain why Wanda's claims were constantly met with the ridicule, as she does not foresee the girls' misinterpretation of her metaphorical language use, a disregarded aspect underlying the failure of her intended and anticipated speech acts.

While the resulting speech acts that manifest do not resemble those of Wanda expectations, they do, unfortunately, serve as perlocutionary acts yielding the disheartening effects of mockery, repression, and derision. Moreover, the general perception of Wanda throughout the institution causes the girls to constantly ignore her, further repressing her by disconnecting her from language. Accordingly, the girls' scornful teasing becomes a speech act in and of itself, because their mockery forces Wanda to physically relocate herself in order to escape it. The fact that "the girls laughed derisively, while Wanda moved over to the sunny place by the ivy-covered brick wall of the school building" (Estes, 1972, pp. 13-14) renders their mockery a perlocutionary act. Regardless of Wanda's intentions with the hundred dresses claim, her use of the language failed to transmit meaning to the recipients, established discrepancies between the signifier and the signified, and botched the lines of communication, hereby silencing her voice, and alienating her from the language within the institution.

The description of Wanda's institutional repression through (and in the absence of) language, alongside the explanation of how language executes communicative and socializing functions, necessitates a discussion regarding the consequential effects that transpire from Wanda's experience of repression. After examining the role of language as an

agent of power and socialization within the institution, it becomes apparent, then, that language plays a significant role "in the formation and transformation of the self" (Coats, 2004, p. 16). While the role of language as a key factor in socialization remains somewhat obvious through the ways in which language is manipulated for interaction and communication, identifying the role that language plays in self-development requires a closer look at the language utilized by the individual as well as how the language of others affects that particular person.

Expanding on Coats' (2004) affirmation that all language is, in a sense, "essentially performative" (p. 31), Austin (1962) observes that, in most all instances, language will "produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons" (p. 101). This statement declares all speech acts perlocutionary in nature, but encourages a closer look at the emotional effects of language as a component in individuals' development of the self, since emotions represent perhaps the largest aspect of the human condition, and, as C. S. Lewis (1967) proclaims in *Studies in Words*, "one of the most important and effective uses of language is the emotional" (p. 314). Likewise, intellectually and psychologically healthy humans "do not talk only in order to reason or to inform. We have to make love and quarrel, to propitiate and pardon, to rebuke, console, intercede, and arouse" (Lewis, 1967, p. 314).

In charting how an individual must develop in order to achieve this level of intellectual sophistication and psychological normalcy, the importance of the individual's environment must not be ignored, as D. J. Kann (1984) declares that "perception is a function of identity, and the resources of perception are contained in the environment. Interpretation is perception and perception is behavior. Behavior is an outgrowth of the individual's identity" (p. 121). This concept is frequently utilized when teaching young children and adolescents that their actions reflect their personal character and develop their reputations. It also proves relevant when stressing the importance of considering how one's own actions may potentially affect other people, both directly and indirectly, and emphasizing that an individual's treatment of others generally indicates how they perceive themselves, in terms of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-respect.

Elaborating upon these developmental behaviors and perceptions, B. J. Paris (1984) explains that:

The person who is able to develop in accordance with his real self possess a number of characteristics that distinguish him from the self-alienated person. […] He has a healthy self-esteem and […] his values […] reflect what all men require in order to achieve self-realization. (p. 157)

Additionally, Paris explains that because a fully self-realized and developed individual's "relation to the world is allocentric […] rather than egocentric" (1984, p. 157), this particular type of person "is able to perceive the external world more clearly" (Paris, 1984, p. 157). This information emphasizes the fact that individuals' self-development remains largely dependent upon their perception of themselves in relation to *and* as an active participant in the outer world, namely, their environment, which plays a critical role in determining how individuals interpret their surroundings, perceive themselves, and regulate their behavior. The role of social institutions cannot be ignored or neglected when considering the factors that comprise individuals' environments, for these facilities maintain "inevitable power […] over individuals in every aspect of their lives" (Trites, 2000, p. 35). When considering the substantial role of language within social institutions alongside the fact that these institutions comprise so large a component in individuals' environments, it stands to reason that language remains a crucial factor throughout the entire process of individuals' development of self.

This notion becomes apparent in Wanda's emotions and responses to the teasing within the social institution, as well as her treatment toward the individuals who repress her, as "only a small minority of people is in the position to take such an enlightened and independent stand […] against the institutionalized and conventionalized speech […] used in […] society" (Brekle, 1989, pp. 82-83). Although Wanda is clearly uncomfortable when she speaks, which becomes evident each time she relocates herself away from the girls following their fits of shameful laughter, "they never made her cry" (Estes, 1972, p. 17), indicating a strong sense of self-esteem and emotional control, as Paris (1984) mentions, in the midst of repressive language. Interestingly, Wanda never exhibits any type of aggression, hostility, or resentment toward the girls at any time; her willingness to continue claiming that she owns one-hundred dresses day after day, despite knowing that mockery will ensue, manifests as behavior that illustrates an instance of being "open to the world rather than defensive or embedded" (Paris, 1984, p. 157) and, since behavior represents an effect and reflection of the individual's identity, constitutes evidence of Wanda's progress in identity development and self-realization. Further evidence of Wanda's growth as a self-realized individual appears in the fact that she never displays her drawings, despite her impressive talent, and enters them in her class's drawing contest, notwithstanding her assumption that "Peggy would win the girls' medal [since] Peggy drew better than anyone else in the room" (Estes, 1972, p. 38). This instance verifies that Wanda does not rely on approval or validation from others in terms of recognizing her own abilities, representing an aspect of self-development described in Paris' discussion.

In addition, it must be noted that, while the girls do not yet understand Wanda's metaphoric use of the word *dresses* as representative of her drawings, Wanda's obvious comprehension of the concept of metaphor verifies her superior understanding of language, proving significant because "for Lacan, all *uses* [*sic*] of the word are metaphoric" (MacCannell, 1986, p. 93) and the only actual *meaning* of the word (not to be confused with the definition or the use) is "the desire for recognition […] any other use of language constitutes a metaphor" (MacCannell, 1986, p. 93). In this sense, the meaning of Wanda's drawings reveals her desire to be noticed, which becomes obvious in every disclosure that she owns one-hundred dresses and in her entering the drawings in the contest. Furthermore, the metaphoric use of the words to express desire further establishes the language as perlocutionary speech acts and validates her intellectual astuteness as far beyond that of her peers. In charting Wanda's unconventional self-development in terms of Paris' (1984) discussion, it must be noted that the girls' laughter and criticism each time Wanda claims to have one-hundred dresses is unknowingly directed towards her art, as Lewis (1967) reiterates that linguistic meaning lies within the speaker's intentions and not within the recipients' interpretations (p. 193). Wanda draws in spite of the institution's insulting repression and alienation, a sure sign of headway on the journey to self-realization and maturity. As observed in the previous instances, evidence of Wanda's self-development transpire, ultimately, from her use of and responses to language.

Wanda's ability to escape linguistic alienation and repression from the social institution further indicates her maturation and self-development. Just as Chiesa (2007) describes the process by which an individual becomes alienated through failed communication, he also includes Jacques Lacan's proposition that individuals can indeed conquer linguistic alienation, a feat which also "enable[s] the subject to overcome imaginary alienation and its narcissistically destructive tendencies" (Chiesa, 2007, p. 37). For this reason, Coats (2004) declares that "alienation is the necessary condition for any subject whatsoever" (p. 24). Self-sacrifice represents one of these narcissistically destructive tendencies that Paris (1984) identifies, since the underdeveloped self results in "a weak and dependent being whose needs for safety, love, and acceptance are so strong" (p. 157). On the

contrary, features of the developed and self-realized individual allow him to pinpoint "what he really wants, thinks, and feels" (Paris, 1984, p. 157) as well as "love people for what they are rather than for their fulfillment of his needs" (Paris, 1984, p. 157), the latter exemplified in Wanda's actions toward Peggy and Maddie.

As the most repressive source of power within the institution, Peggy, deemed the most popular individual, always begins the process of mocking Wanda by asking her how many dresses she has. Girls were quick to praise Peggy and submit to her actions by participating along in an effort to win her approval and thus, gain institutional power as well. While no one would have probably blamed Wanda if she had activated her defenses against Peggy, instead, she demonstrates kindness towards them after she moves away by specifically giving Peggy and Maddie two of her beautiful drawings. Peggy and Maddie do nothing to fulfill Wanda's needs, such as love and acceptance, and, in fact, do just the opposite by "mak[ing] life miserable for Wanda" (Estes, 1972, p. 49). It is not until they take the drawings home that they recognize the faces in them as themselves and realize that "Wanda had really drawn this for [them]" (Estes, 1972, p. 78). This instance solidifies Wanda's self-development and maturity, as demonstrated in her lack of vengeance and ability to love others just as themselves and for no other reason.

Additionally, this moment demonstrates Wanda's acquisition of power within the social institution by finally enabling the girls to understand her language, thus escaping linguistic alienation and silenced repression, made evident when Maddie "blinked away the tears that came every time she thought of Wanda […] looking stolidly over at the group of laughing girls after she had walked off, after she said, 'Sure, a hundred of them—all lined up"' (Estes, 1972, p. 80). Through her drawings, Wanda clarifies word use that facilitates effective communication and gains approval from sources with established institutional power, as Peggy expresses amazement and praise for Wanda's drawings. Since the drawings now represent the means by which Wanda communicates through the institution, Peggy's positive reception of them eliminates Wanda's institutional repression and grants her power by validating her 'voice.'

Ironically, Wanda only establishes a legitimate "voice" within the social institution when she physically relocates to another city and leaves her drawings hanging in the classroom, which become representative of her identity. This instance exemplifies Coats' (2004) affirmation that proves separation necessary for constituting the subject. The drawings become Wanda's voice by providing the explanation to her seemingly outlandish claims. In this sense, she is finally connected to other individuals and becomes a Lacanian subject now included in the language of the institution. Wanda's "language" and communication through her drawings function as perlocutionary acts through the effects that provoke change and facilitate development in Peggy and especially in Maddie. Despite Maddie's claims of feeling uncomfortable about Peggy's constant pestering of Wanda, "she knew she'd never have the courage to speak right out to Peggy" (Estes, 1972, p. 35), even though she maintains power through her status within the institution. The longer Wanda prolongs her absence within the institution, the worse Maddie feels, indicating that Wanda's newfound power through language influences not only emotions, but provokes new perceptions.

Maddie's new perception becomes evident when she avows that "she was never going to stand by and say nothing again. If she ever heard anybody picking on someone […] she'd speak up. Even if it meant losing Peggy's friendship" (Estes, 1972, p. 63). This declaration reflects a non-egotistical perspective, as well as the ability to love others, both of which represent critical aspects of self-development. The fact that Maddie's new perception is influenced by Wanda's drawings, or more specifically, the metaphor underlying the drawings, not only demonstrates Maddie's growth into a considerate adolescent from a selfish child, but also exemplifies the significant role that language plays in facilitating self-

development. Wanda's refined sense of self enables her to formulate deeper perceptions about others and cultivate those perceptions as a way to communicate and share her insight, which is exactly what she does with her drawings.

By exploring the significance of the drawings in the context of language and power, it becomes very clear, in comparison, how *un*developed and naïve Peggy proves, further illuminating Wanda's advanced self-development. As the most popular girl in school and the strongest source of power within the institution, Peggy's knowledge of herself and her treatment towards Wanda surprisingly reflect a very weak and irresolute individual, as Peggy's institutional power remains largely dependent on "winning the approving laughter of the girls" (Estes, 1972, p. 32). As her power depends on the amount of support she receives from the group, Peggy is likely not considered as a source power when she is alone. Moreover, her constant teasing can arguably be identified as her sheer jealously, since she is constantly trying to maintain her position of power within the social institution, and the entrance of an outsider with a more impressive wardrobe translates as a threat to her; therefore, as Paris (1984) points out, Peggy's actions could be interpreted as defensive strategies generated by her values, not her basic necessities (p. 157), a habit typical of self-alienated individuals such as her. Additionally, Peggy's emotions reflect her inability to empathize and feel remorse, as revealed in her assumptions that Wanda's gift of the drawings "shows she really liked [her…] and this is her way of saying that everything's all right" (Estes, 1972, p. 76), which remains largely indicative of her egotistic, rather than allocentric, perception, as well as her inability to consider others (and demonstrate outward emotion) as equally important aspects of her environment in relation to herself. As the most influential source of power within the social institution, her oafish self-development and general oblivion render her a weak individual and wholly dependent on (often unreliable) external factors.

While Maddie is not yet completely identifiable with that of the fully self-realized individual, her emotions and perceptions demonstrate far greater progress on this path than those of Peggy, as Maddie recognizes that by not standing in defense of Wanda against Peggy's attempts of defamation "was just as bad as what Peggy had done" (Estes, 1972, p. 49). Maddie's silence shows a form of repression against Peggy's social power within the institution, and hence, may be interpreted as her ability to humble herself and empathize through a less egocentric perspective than Peggy's, although she has yet to achieve full establishment of a completely non-egocentric point of view. Wanda's linguistic discourse throughout the book not only verifies her realization of self-development through her mature perceptions, but the communicative exchanges also help facilitate the beginning stages of Peggy and Maddie's journeys towards the same understanding.

Just as language plays a prominent role in an individual's socialization, it simultaneously aids the individual's establishment of mature perceptions, which prove absolutely vital to the development of the self. Such is the case with Estes' (1972) *The Hundred Dresses*; it exemplifies how language functions as a means of power and repression in social institutions, as well as demonstrates how the multiplicity of language use hinders communicative exchanges among individuals, and, consequentially, weakens social power and leads to institutional repression.

All of these constituent areas represent essential aspects of individuals' psychological health and continuous intellectual growth, two processes fundamentally rooted in language that must be maintained for individuals, as well as for future generations, to continue to thrive.

Examining the significance of language within a broader context, it is only through the operative dichotomy of individuals' self-realization in conjunction with their position within social institutions that enable them to foster the attitudes and behaviors that yield sociological

proficiency, a suitable cerebral wardrobe fashioned with demeanor, attitude, and perspective for *everyone*, which never goes out of style.

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