



Annika Straube

Neuphilologische Fakultät

The lexis of suffering in French, Italian, and German

Aim

This thesis is part of a project in the field of linguistics whose goal is to analyse the lexis of emotions in different languages. It consists of a comparative analysis of the lexical field of suffering in French, Italian, and German and aims to clarify the differences between the synonyms or rather quasi-synonyms pertaining to the semantic field of suffering, focussing on a detailed semantical differentiation and thus providing a valuable tool for translators to choose the best equivalent in a given context.

Methodology

According to Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word depends on its use and context. I will therefore analyse the cooccurrences of different lexemes denoting suffering in French, Italian, and German – such as *chagrin*, *peine*, *sofferenza*, *tristezza*, *Kummer*, *Leid*, etc. – by dividing them into semantic categories established for this purpose. Examples for these semantic categories are:

- Experiencer (individuum, collective, animal, ...)
- Temporal aspect (duration, beginning, end, ...)
- Intensity (strong vs. weak)
- Cause (situations, events, memories, ...)
- Manifestation (facial expression, body language, physiological modifications, ...)
- Effects on the experiencer and on others (intentional/ non-intentional actions, empathy, ...)
- Control of the emotion or its manifestation, loss of control
- Context orientation (positive vs. negative)

The analysis is conducted using original language corpora consisting of literary texts, such as InterCorp, Emolex and CORIS/CODIS.

Expected results

Based on the findings of previously conducted studies, it is expected that the force of the semantic dimensions for the different lexemes of suffering will vary considerably, even though they are quasi synonyms. This means that in order to deliver an idiomatic translation, the context always has to be taken into account when searching for the right equivalent in another language.

HGGS

HEIDELBERGER
GRADUIERTENSCHULE
FÜR GEISTES- UND
SOZIALWISSENSCHAFTEN



UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

Another aim of this thesis is uncovering relations between the different semantic dimensions – for example, it can be assumed that there is a correlation between the cause of the emotion and its effects.

Keywords: *Lexis of emotions, lexis of suffering, Comparative linguistics, Translation studies, Corpusbased linguistics*