

Body representation in linguistic expressions of emotions in Bangla

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The concept of emotion can be described as a process wherein both core affect and conceptual knowledge (Barrett & Lindquist, 2008) play a significant role leading to a wide range of emotions expressed through both verbal and non-verbal communication. According to Planalp (1999), there are five basic components of emotion, namely “(1) objects, causes, precipitating events, (2) appraisal, (3) physiological changes, (4) action tendencies/action/expression, and (5) regulation.” (p. 11) This multi-dimensional nature of emotion has drawn attention of researchers from fields dealing with psychological, neuroscientific, and linguistic studies. In this context, one of the most prominent areas of research has dealt with bodily sources of emotions, probably owing to the fact that “discrete emotions are perceptual events” (Barrett & Lindquist, 2008), which is evident from Enfield and Wierzbicka (2002), Bergen, Lau, Narayan, Stojanovic & Wheeler (2010), Kraska-Szlenk (2014), Newman (2014). Therefore, with this background in consideration, this paper explores the linguistic expressions of emotions involving body parts in Bangla.

Bangla is an Eastern Indo-Aryan (EIA) language spoken majorly in Bangladesh and in the state of West Bengal in India. This paper, however, utilizes linguistic data spoken as part of standard dialect in West Bengal. There are three objectives: (i) documentation of bodily sources of emotions expressed in Bangla, (ii) analyzing productivity of these expressions, (iii) determining the “afferent and efferent conceptualization of emotions” (Zhou, Critchley, Nagai & Wang, 2022, p.1) in these expressions. This is a first documentation of emotion sources in Bangla from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The data is divided into natural, metaphorical, and metonymic expressions based on the criteria of mapping and word-sense boundaries. This qualitative study considers vlogs, advertisements, films, newspapers, comic strips, and short stories as sources of data. To complement this corpus of data, *Samsad Bengali-Bengali Dictionary* is consulted as well as few other sentences are constructed based on author’s knowledge of Bangla as a native language and have been heard in daily conversations of other native speakers. A few phrases are mentioned here to illustrate how body parts are reflected in the expressions of emotions in Bangla:

- a) Head: */maṭṭha gɔrɔm/* ‘head hot’ [**anger**]
- b) Mouth: */mukḥ hal* ‘mouth wide open’ [**surprise**]
- c) Heart: */mon nat̪jal* ‘heart dance’ [**happiness**]
- d) Intestines: */naṛibḥ ũri beronol* ‘intestines come out’ [**disgust**]
- e) Hand and Leg: */haṭ pa ṭḥanḍal* ‘hand leg cold’ [**fear**]

A closer look at these phrases would reveal that examples (a-b) and (e) represent conceptualization of emotions as efferent, i.e. enacted through the body whereas examples (c-d) conceptualize emotions as afferent, i.e. feelings through the body. It is observed that a wide array of both internal and external body parts are utilized for not only expression of basic human emotions but also for representation of effects associated with these emotions, resonating with the statement “bodily states (as experienced in oneself or observed in others) and representations of psychological situations are very likely perceptually categorized and experienced as a single unified percept” (Barrett & Lindquist, 2008, p. 255). It is also noteworthy that a prominent number of bodily sources of emotions are realized linguistically through use of reduplication, a theme which might be taken up in future research works.

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