

Ana Jelčić

University of Zagreb

Faculty of Geotechnical Engineering

ana.jelcic@gfv.unizg.hr

jelcicana9@gmail.com

Contrastive analysis of emotions expressed by Croatian and German similes with a plant as their component

Various aspects of a human life can be expressed by a language, including positive and negative psychological states and processes. Emotions are an important part of our lives because they influence our actions and behaviour and a language is one of the most significant means we use to let others know how we feel and how we comprehend the way others feel. For that reason, we wanted to analyse Croatian and German similes with a plant as their component in order to find out which emotions they express. By using a method of semantic decomposition certain descriptors (semantic markers) were matched with Croatian and German similes with a plant as their component and based on their similarities they were joined to four conceptual clusters (thematic units from the real world), such as “a man`s physical life”; “a man`s psychic life”; “a man`s relationship to other people and to the surrounding world” and “abstract concepts”. The aim of the paper is to analyse the similes which were joined to the thematic unit called “a man`s psychic life” in order to find out which emotions are expressed by Croatian and German similes with a plant as their component and in that way determine similarities and differences between these two languages. The analysis showed that in both languages similes with a plant as their component express negative emotional states such as hurt, anger, fear, worry, sadness, anxiety, shame, helplessness, hatred, pain and loneliness, but they use different plants to express them. Also, German similes express positive emotions, whereas Croatian express only negative ones. The corpus is based on Croatian and German lexicographic sources.

Key words: simile, emotion, plant, cognitive-semantic analysis, descriptor, conceptual cluster