THE LINGUISTIC IMAGE OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE
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This doctoral dissertation is an attempt at reconstructing the linguistic image of the names of negative emotions in contemporary Chinese. It is based on empirical research using the methods of cognitive and cultural linguistics. In the study, I used the theory and methodology derived from both Jerzy Bartmiński's Linguistic Worldview Program (LWP) and the school of intercultural semantics, developed by Anna Wierzbicka.

The semantic and lexical analysis of the names of emotions in the present work is based on the three types of sources proposed by Bartmiński, namely system, questionnaire, and text (S-Q-T), enriched with linguistic reports and corpus studies. The study focuses on 57 names describing negative emotions in Chinese, excerpted from compulsory vocabulary lists at the highest level of the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) – the official test in Chinese language proficiency. In the analytical part, I assigned these names of emotions to appropriate categories, described and analyzed them, indicated central and peripheral concepts for a given category, discussed their potential contexts (scenarios or types of situations which might trigger a given emotion), and addressed their usage. Each emotion name was provided with a summary definition, with explications based on the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach. In addition to a multi-level analysis, I also attempted to find adequate equivalents (or the closest possible equivalents) to these emotion names in Polish. Moreover, for each category I prepared a visualization in the form of a lexical and semantic field.

The dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter 1 presents the definitions, fundamental concepts and an outline of research on the LWP, NSM and the language of emotions. I described in it the reciprocity of influence between Chinese language, culture, and perceptions and categorizations of the world, providing relevant examples. I also presented the meanings of the words corresponding to Polish emotion-naming lexemes in Chinese, and I showed the structures of basic Chinese sentence patterns in which emotional exponents are present. Further, I addressed the issue of expressing emotions by the Chinese in general, and discussed problems with naming and categorizing emotions – both in Western and Chinese scientific discourse. Chapter 2 describes the objectives of the analysis, the hypothesis, the methodology used, and the sources of the data. Chapter 3, as the main part of the work, contains the lexical-semantic descriptions of the categories and all of the excerpted names of emotions. This part ends with a synthesis of the data on the reconstructed linguistic image of negative emotions, along with the visualization of this superordinate conceptual category.

My analysis showed that the category with the largest number of exponents denoting emotions in present-day Chinese is the category of emotions within the scope of sadness. The names assigned to these emotions can be considered the most diverse in terms of their semantic elements. The results of the study allowed me to formulate conclusions concerning among others the incompatibility of the ways of categorizing emotions, and the complexity of names denoting emotions in Chinese. I also verified the crucial role of Chinese culture in shaping the emotive lexicon.