Studia Anglica Posnaniensia XXXIV, 1999

A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF EMOTION TERMS IN OLD ENGLISH[1]

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1. Introduction: data, aims and methods

This paper is an attempt to apply a cognitive perspective to a semantic analysis of a number of Old English emotion words. Three types of emotions are considered: 'joy', 'grief' and 'anger'. Eight words denoting 'joy' and three for 'grief' and 'anger' have been chosen from the *Old English Thesaurus*. Only these words which have the highest frequency in the *Microfiche Concordance to Old English* have been analysed. These are *bliss*, *bliþnes* (*bliþe*), *dream*, *gefea*, *glædness* (*glæd*), *liss*, *mirhþ* and *wynsumnesse* for the concept 'joy'; *dreorignes*, *murcnung* and *gnornung* for 'grief'; and *æbylg*, *grama* and *iernes* for 'anger'.

The collocational patterns of these words have been carefully examined. Particular attention has been paid to verb phrases, as these seem to indicate the conceptual metaphors underlying models of emotions. Although the word *model* is used here, I do not want to commit myself entirely to Lakoff's theory of Idealised Cognitive Models (Lakoff 1987, but also Lakoff – Johnson 1980), developed by Kövacses for Present-day American English emotion terms (Lakoff – Kövacses 1987; Kövacses 1990). The analytical tools used in my research, i.e. the semantic analysis of collocations and larger chunks of texts, goes back, at least, to such classical theories of semantics as field theory (Trier 1931) and componential analysis (Coseriu 1967; Geckeler 1981, 1988; Lehrer 1974[2]). The

[1] This paper was written as a result of research conducted at Otto-Friedrich Universität Bamberg, Sept. 1997-Feb.1998. This was made possible by a grant from Freistaat Bayern, for which I express my gratitude.

[2] Lehrer combines field theory and componential analysis theory, and in Lehrer (1990, 1993) also incorporates the theory of prototypes.

word *model* could well be replaced here by *script* as used by Abelson (1981), or *scenario* (Wierzbicka 1992, 1993, 1996; Bamberg 1997a, 1997b).

This, rather unorthodox, approach to linguistic theories is aimed at developing a method that could best present the interplay between the hypothesised conceptualisation of emotions, as shown in linguistic expressions, and the bonding function emotions play in society.

2. Analysis of 'joy' words

The collocational behaviour of the 'joy' words analysed (Fabiszak 1998) falls into several recurrent patterns.[3] These patterns merge into a number of conceptual metaphors such as the axiological UP IS GOOD, and the emotion-related BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR JOY, JOY IS THE AIM OF A JOURNEY, JOY IS A CONTAINER, JOY IS A COMMODITY.

(1) UP IS GOOD is represented by verb phrases such as
blisse astigan 'rise, ascend'
gefea astigan 'ascend'
wynsumnesse astigan 'ascend'
mirhð astigan 'ascend'
to gefea araran 'lift up'
to gefea aspringan 'ascend'
gefea him upahafan 'he was elated with ...'

(2) BODY IS A CONTAINER FOR JOY is demonstrated in:
mid blisse gefyllan 'fill with ...'
mid gefea gefyllan 'fill with ...'
mid wynsumnesse gefyllan 'fill with ...'
mid bliðe affyllan 'fill with ...'
dream bið in innan cwicra wihta '... will be inside this man's body'
blisse on breostum '... in heart' (lit. 'on breast')
bliðe on breostum '... in heart' (lit. 'on breast')
mid glædre heortan 'with a ... heart'
glæd on mode '... on mind/heart'
blisse on mode '... on mind/heart'
bliðe mode '... on mind/heart'

[3] Cf. Kövecses (1990: 153), who suggests that emotion concepts should be viewed as a set of cognitive models, with a prototype in the centre. The prototype is based on conceptual metaphors and metonymies, which are discovered on the basis of an analysis of the conventionalised expressions in the language.

The noun phrases in which a 'joy' word collocates with parts of the body such as heart or mind suggest that, although the whole body can be filled with an emotion, there are particular organs which are favoured as seats of particular emotions. Often the names of these organs can later develop secondary meanings related to emotions, as in PDE *cordial greeting* or *hearty laugh*.

The JOY IS THE AIM OF A JOURNEY metaphor is supported by collocations which involve motion verbs which suggests that 'joy' may be regarded as a goal of an activity or a space to enter at the end of a journey, for instance:

(3) *cuman to blisse* 'come to ...'
to mirhð siðian 'travel to ...'
gelædan into blisse 'lead into ...'
gefea ingongann 'enter ...'
in gefea gelædan 'lead into ...'
to gefea faran 'travel to'
to gefea cuman 'come to'

Static verbs meaning 'live, inhabit' imply that 'joy' can be conceptualised as a space to enter and stay in, for example,

(4) *on blisse wunian* 'to live in ...'
bliðe eardian 'to inhabit ...'
on mirhð wunian 'to live in ...'
on wynsumnesse wunian 'to live in ...'
on mirhð libban 'to live in ...'
on wynsumnesse libban 'to live in ...'.

These collocations are underlined by the metaphor JOY IS A CONTAINER.

As these two types of collocations appear most often in religious contexts, sceptics might argue that both the UP IS GOOD schema and the JOY IS THE AIM OF A JOURNEY, JOY IS A CONTAINER metaphors are not so much characteristic of the conceptualisation of 'joy' as such, but rather that they are linked to the conceptualisation of paradise and appear in the context of 'joy' only if it is a 'heavenly joy'. Although I agree that Christian 'paradise' and 'joy' are concepts which are both assigned a positive value, and occupy the same end of the axiological axis (for arguments see Krzeszowski 1997), and this fact may facilitate a transfer of conceptual metaphors between the two, I believe that one should not be regarded as more basic than the other. Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987) both stress that one of our most salient experiences is that of our BODY AS A CONTAINER (to fill with food, etc.) and BODY IN A CONTAINER (getting out of bed, into a room, inside/outside the house, etc.). Krzeszowski (1997) develops this idea, positing that the primary experience for the CON-

TAINER schema is that of living in and later leaving the warmth, comfort and safety of the mother's womb. He further claims that

> The axiological ambivalence of the schema is grounded in the contradictory values associated with being in or getting out of this original container. On the one hand, we experience getting out of the container as being born and as gaining freedom. On the other hand, getting out of the original container may be experienced as leaving the security of the protective confines of a shelter and as being exposed to various external dangers (Krzeszowski 1997: 142).

I would like to stress that the concept of safety in a container, unlike that of personal freedom, is very close to the Anglo-Saxon mind. Two Old English elegies, *The Wanderer* and *Deor's Lament*, clearly show that freedom, understood as a lack of personal links, is a source of grief. A lordless person, i.e. one who does not belong to a group of retainers, is suspect and undesirable. Only those who can relate themselves to the leader, those who belong to the group, are allowed to enter the meadhall and enjoy the company and the food and drink.[4] The meadhall, filled with light and music, provides the desired safety, comfort and rest.[5] It is both a place which is a shelter from fear, war and death, being a seat of a mighty leader, and a hall used for feasts. These two aspects – lack of worry, and merrymaking – are often the causes of joy.[6]

The present analysis of 'joy' words also indicates a strong link between the concepts of 'joy' and 'light'. They co-occur in the following collocations:

(5) *hluttre and blisse* 'light and ...'
fægere and blisse 'fairness and ...'
beorhte and blisse 'light and ...'
leoht and liss 'light and ...'
leoht and dream 'light and ...'
leoht and gefea 'light and ...'
leoma and liss 'light and ...'
gleam and dream 'light, shining and ...'
gleow and dream 'light, shining and ...'
scima and dream 'light and ...'

[4] This aspect of 'joy' as a function of togetherness and belonging is very pronounced in the description of Grendel creeping up to the meadhall full of sleeping warriors, where he is refered to as *dreamum bedæled*, the outsider. (I owe this example to Geoffrey Hughes).

[5] For details of Anglo-Saxon life and social structure, see Girvan (1935 [1971]), Blumenstengel (1964), and Hill (1995).

[6] I believe that these two components constituted an integral part of the meaning of the Old English concept of 'joy', even before the introduction of Christianity. Korn (1932: 101-126) claims that Christianity offered the Anglo-Saxons a previously unknown joy that did not depend on the passing conditions of life. Although, no doubt true, this claim seems to overlook the degree to which 'heavenly joy' was modelled on the joy induced by the basic pleasures of the meadhall: fraternity and togetherness with companions and, most of all, the presence of the safety-providing leader. What the Christian missionaries did was not to offer an unknown type of joy, but to install the ultimate Lord, the king of kings, above all the earthly leaders and offer fraternity with the heroes of the new faith: saints, and the followers of the new leader: angels.

Of all the 'joy' words, *glæd* seems to be most closely related to the concept of 'light'. One of its senses is 'shining, bright', as when it is attributed to the polished surfaces of gold and silver or to sources of light, such as the sun. The concept of 'joy' is not only related to the shining of treasures or to light (of the sun, or of the meadhall) as opposed to darkness, but it may also be linked to more metaphoric uses of the 'light' concept, as in *faces beaming with joy*. Compare such Old English examples as:

(6) *glade onsiene* '... face'
glade anwlita '... face'
glædmod on gesihþe '... face'
glæd hiw '... appearance'
heo ær gladu wære on to lociende 'they before ... were to look at'

In this context *glæd* may be translated either as 'bright, radiant, beaming' or 'radiant, beaming with joy' or, finally, 'joyful, happy'.

It seems that broad daylight, the meadhall with firelight reflected in the faces of companions – faces, which might have, in fact, also been lit up with drink – constitute some of the nodes in a network of concepts contributing to the model of 'joy' in Old English.

Another positive sensation co-occurring with 'joy' is music. Singing and the sounds of various instruments may be stimuli for *gefea*, *liss*, *blisse*, *bliðe*, *mirhð*, *wynsumnesse* and most of all *dream*. In many cases it is difficult to determine whether *dream* is used in the meaning 'joy aroused by music' or 'the sound of music, music'. For example, in the first quotation below *dream* definitely has the latter meaning:

(7) *Dauid mid his hearpan, and þone heofonlican dream, ealle singende, þæt seo sawul gehyre heora ealra stemma* ... (AE Hom 28 70)
'David with his harp, and the heavenly ..., all singing, that the soul could hear voices of them all'

In the second quotation, however, it is difficult to ascertain whether *dream* means 'joy' and the noises accompanying the festivities, or music as such:

(8) *þæt he dogora gehwam dream gehyrde hludne in halle, þær wæs hearpan sweg, swutol sang scopes* (Beo 88)
'that he each day heard the loud ... in the hall, there was the sound of a harp and the poet's clear song'

Such cases suggest a link between joy resulting from music and the merry noise of a feast itself.

Other human senses that may participate in the experience of joy are smell and the sense of touch. *Swetan stencas* 'sweet smells' are a source of *wynsumnesse* and also of *dream* and *gefea*. And grass may be *myrig* to sit on.

Another well developed metaphor structuring the concept of 'joy' is JOY AS A COMMODITY. It is expressed in such collocations as

(9) *blisse gifan* 'give ...'
dream forgifan 'give ...'
mirhð forgifan 'give ...'
mirhð sellan 'give ...'
glædnes sellan 'give ...'
mirhð gebycgan 'procure, buy ...'
blisse begitan 'get ...'
mirhð begitan 'get ...'
dream agan 'possess ...'
blisse habban 'have ...'
mirhð habban 'have ...'
dream habban 'have ...'
gefea habban 'have ...'
blisse findan 'find ...'
blisse linnan 'lose ...'
on huse blisse healdan 'keep ... at home'
blisse geearnian 'earn ...'
mirgð geearnian 'earn ...'
gefea geearnian 'earn ...'
mirhð leanan 'give ... as a reward'
liss lænan 'give ... as a reward'
mirhðedlean 'give ... as a reward'
edleane and mirhð 'reward and ...'
med and mirhð 'reward and ...'
med and gefea 'reward and ...'
lean and gefea 'reward and ...'
lean and liss 'reward and ...'
geofu and gefea 'gift and ...'

'Joy' is here understood in terms of a commodity entering an exchange, where it can be given, received, owned, lost or even earned. When earned, it is regarded as a reward for obedience.

When viewed from a more abstract perspective, 'joy' is a feeling associated with bestowing gifts and favours (related to generosity) and with receiving them (linked to gratitude). In both cases it is stressed that giving and receiving must be performed with free will. Although *blisse*, *bliðe* and *gefea* all occur in this context, it is *glædness* (*glæd*) and *liss* that are most closely related to this conceptual model. See, for instance, the following quotation:

(10) *And seo clæne lac, þæt is mægðhad, sceal beon Gode mid glædnysse geoffrod, na mid neadlunge ænigre hæse.* (AEHom 20 50)
'And the clean sacrifice, that is virginity, should be offered to God with ..., and not under compulsion of any order.'

The exchange of gifts is a very important concept in Anglo-Saxon England as it represents symbolically the existing social relations and social order.[7] It stresses the reciprocity between the generosity of the lord and the loyalty of his retainers. Both must be performed with free will and, when performed to the satisfaction of both parties, will induce joy.

Gift exchange usually takes place during the feast in the meadhall, which intensifies the feeling of joy. In this image the two metaphors JOY AS A CONTAINER and JOY AS A COMMODITY amplify one another. They can also be linked through another conceptual pattern, i.e. emotion is a container – container is space – space is the goal of a journey – journey is work – work to achieve joy – joy as a commodity. These two association paradigms suggest that even if a concept is structured by seemingly unrelated metaphors, when these metaphors are fed into images/scenarios it is possible to discover how one can facilitate the understanding of the other.

3. Analysis of 'grief' words

A brief analysis of the verb phrases in which 'grief' words occur, suggests an entirely different situation to that created by the 'joy' words:

(11) *gnornung þolian* 'suffer, endure ...'
him gnornunga gæste scodum 'he was oppressed by ...'
mid murcnung mod drefan 'trouble with ...'
ðurh gnornunga forloren 'destroyed by ...'
mid murcnung beon fornumen 'to be destroyed with ...'

These collocations create a picture where grief is an oppressor (metaphor > GRIEF IS AN OPPRESSOR) and the experiencer suffers to be destroyed (meta-

[7] See Hill (1995: 85-108, 140-144).

phor > GRIEF IS AN ENEMY). Although grief may be endless (*ungendod gnornung*), one may be safe from it, as suggested by the following question:

(12) *hwæt bewearþ þe on ðas care & on þas gnornunga?* (Bo 7.16.7)
'what guards you against anxiety and ...'

Or at least soothed with kisses, as in:

(13) *Witodlice eall se cildlice heap wolde þæs anes cildes dreorignysse adwæscan. ær þan þe Cuðbertus hit mid arfæstum cossum geglædode.* (AECHom II 10 81.22)
'Indeed all the young crowd (all other children) wanted to quench the ... of one child. Before Cuthbert with pious kisses cheered him up.'

In the 'grief' group, *murcnung* is a fuzzy term in that it can both mean 'sorrow' and 'complaint', as indicated in:

(14) *Eft æfter þisum hi begunnon ceorian mid mycelre murcnunge ongean god ælmihtigne* ... (AEHom 21 68)
'Then they began complaining/murmuring with much ... against the God Almighty'

In this case it may co-occur with *idele spræca* 'vain boasting' and result in *godes ierre* 'God's anger'.

4. Analysis of 'anger' words

A collocational analysis of the 'anger' words *æbylg, grama*, and *ierre* reveals a complex structure of this concept. Its representation depends on the perspective – either that of the person experiencing anger, or of the one who is the subject of the other's anger. Verb phrases such as:

(15) *him wæs godes grama onsigende* 'God's ... descended on him'
beo Godes grama ofer us 'God's ... is over us'
grama ofer mannum becymð 'there was/came ... over people'
(*becyman* – lit. 'happen')
us Godes hetelice irre onsyt 'God's hostile ... oppressed us'

suggest a certain helplessness on the part of the subject of anger, which is a hostile and destructive force:

(16) *beon mid irre gewemmed* 'to be destroyed by ...'
grama ofer mannum becymð, to wrace heora mandædum 'there came ... over people to destroy their sins'
of ansyne eorres æbylgnesse þinre ... þu forgnide me 'by your ... you break me'

Anger is often conceived of as fire, as indicated by such collocations as *grama ontendan* 'to kindle, incite ...', *ierre astyrian* 'stir up ...' (cf. *to stir fire*) (> metaphor: ANGER IS FIRE). Anger may also be thought of as an opponent: *ierre gremian* 'to provoke, irritate ...', *ierre metgian* 'control ...', *ierre stillan* 'restrain ...' (> metaphor: ANGER IS AN OPPONENT).[8]

5. Interpretation of data

Psychologists suggest that if we view emotions as scenarios, these should consist of: the cause of the emotion; appreciation of the situation; categorisation and naming of the emotion; reaction to the original stimulus. According to this paradigm, emotions have socio-psychological characteristics in that the reaction display must be performed in accordance with the schemata recognised by a given community (the social aspect), but the stimulus is experienced and decoded on the basis of the personal past.

In this attempt to present an analysis of the Anglo-Saxon concept of 'joy' the above paradigm may be reduced to cause – emotion (experiencer) – reaction. (The psychological processes of stimulus appreciation and categorisation are not of interest in the present paper. Reaction, which belongs more to the realm of pragmatics than semantics, is also of limited concern.)

The collocability analyses of 'joy' words in Old English suggest the following links between cause and emotion, i.e. the emotions aroused by the following stimuli would be labelled as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Cause-emotion relationships in Old English

cause	Old English 'JOY' word
going to heaven	*blisse, bliðe, dream, gefea, liss, mirhð, wynsumnesse*
religious experience on earth	*gefea, wynsumnesse*
being saved from danger	*gefea*
return to health	*gefea*
finding a wife	*bliðe*
birth of a son	*gefea*
return of somebody dear	*blisse, bliðe, gefea*
somebody's arrival	*blisse*

[8] Both metaphors suggestted by Lakoff (1987).

meeting somebody	*bliðe*
finding somebody	*gefea, blisse*
return home	*bliðe, dream*
hearing good news	*bliðe, glæd*
travel	*blisse*
receiving gifts	*glæd*
gratefulness	*gefea, glædnes, liss*
generosity	*glæd, liss*
feast including drinking	*bliðe, dream, gefea, glædnes*
talking with other people	*bliðe*
music/singing	*blisse, bliðe, dream, mirhð, wynsumnesse*
pleasant smell	*wynsumnesse, gefea, dream*
pleasant tactile experience	*myrige (mirhð)*
bodily pleasure of unidentified character[9]	*bliss*
victory	*bliðe, gefea*

An analysis of cause-emotion relationships and of the conventionalised metaphors most often employed for a given emotion word suggests the following grouping of these words:

1) Emotions predominantly used in religious contexts: *blisse*, *gefea*, *mirhð*, *wynsumnesse*.[10] They are emotions of high intensity and show high collocability with *micel* and *swiðe*.
2) Emotions important for building and sustaining social relations: *bliðe* (also very intensive, but rarely religious), *glædnes*, *liss* (both closely linked with the generosity/gratefulness patterns), and *dream*. *Blisse* and *gefea* also appear in this context, although, at least according to the data examined, their primary sense seems to be associated with religious experience.

[9] Le Goff (1997) suggests that in early medieval Christianity bodily sin was understood as all the weaknesses of the body, such as gluttony, abuse of drink, sloth and sexual pleasure. Only later was it narrowed down to sexual pleasure. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the exact nature of the *fleschly lustas* which are a cause of *bliss*.

[10] Though *wynsumnesse* simultaneously belongs to Group 3.

3) Emotions arising from a perception-related pleasure: *dream* (mainly music, but also smell), *glædnes* (mainly visual), *wynsumnesse* (mainly olfactory).

This division is obviously not clearcut. As shown in Table 1, almost all the 'joy' words (with the exception of *glædnes*) can be used to describe 'heavenly joy'. Music is almost equally indiscriminate in inducing *blisse*, *bliðe*, *dream*, *mirhð* and *wynsumnesse* (5 out of 8 examined emotions). The predominantly religious emotions may also always arise from experiences in this life. Nevertheless, I believe that this grouping enables us to emphasise which of the 'joy' words are most closely related to each other, and which of their senses seems to dominate.

As far as the social display of emotion is concerned (the reaction element of the paradigm), the analysed data allow us to posit the following 'display-of-joy' scenario: joy has a characteristic facial expression; when very intensive, it may be conveyed by kissing and embracing the person involved in the stimulus situation, as in:

(17) *... Constantinus þa þis gehyrde, he sona swiðe bliðe forlet þa leohtfatu, þe he behwearf, & hrædlice nyðer astah & þone ceorl beclypte & mid swiðlicre lufe ongann mid his earmum hine clyppan & cyssan & him swiðe þancian.* (GD 1 (H) 16.46.27)
'... when Constantine heard that , he [was] so ..., that he left the lantern he was carrying and came down and embraced this man with much love and took him in his arms and kissed him to thank him so much.'

Joy may also be accompanied by laughter. It may be expressed in words, and in this case it may perform the important social function of strengthening relations in kinship and retainer groups. When joy arises from a gift exchange between a leader and his follower, it creates an emotional bond of mutual dependency between them.

As far as 'grief' words are concerned only two causes of grief have been identified, poverty and God's disfavour. The latter is supported, on the level of collocations, by the opposition between *gnornung* and *bliss*.

Grief can be expressed by weeping (*wop*), groaning (*geomrung*) or wailing (*heaf*). The verbal expression of grief, which may border on complaint (as indicated in the analysis of *murcung*), is an attempt to return to the situation prior to the one which caused grief, and at the same time may itself become a cause of anger on the part of the addressee. This fact points to the social aspect of grief.

The scenario for 'anger' depends on the perspective: subject vs. experiencer. For the subject of the other's anger, anger is an oppressive, dangerous entity. The subject remains passive and helpless. From the experiencer's perspective, anger results from the subject's actions, so that the experiencer is 'aroused to anger' (*awacian*), provoked to it (*gremian*), or even compelled or forced to anger

(*to ierre genided beon*). Anger can cause reactions ranging from angry words (*he cwæð mid ierre*), interrogation (*frinan mid grama* 'ask with ...') to murder, as in the quotation below:

(18) *Maximianus wearð þa mid micclum graman ontend, and het ... þa halgan ofslean.* (AELS (Maurice) 54)
'Maximianus was inflamed with great anger and had the saints killed.'

Anger, at least in some cases, seems to attain a negative value, is seen as undesirable, and should therefore be controlled (*stillan* 'restrain', *metgian* 'control').

6. Conclusions

The social constructionist approach to emotions (Bodor 1997; Bamberg 1997b), claiming that emotional expression is a means of communication aimed at securing an audience's cooperation, is confirmed by the results of my research. The exchange of gifts, and the joy displayed on that occasion, performed the important social function of creating and/or strengthening the bond between the leader of the group and his retainers. 'Joy' in these circumstances was something tangible, an integral part of social custom. Similarly, grief had the same potential for creating a bond between the oppressor and the oppressed, as well as between the addressee of the complaint and the person voicing it. Finally, expressions like:

(19) *He mæg ondrædan ðæt he for his ægenum scyldum mare ierre gewyrce.* (CP 10.63.10)
'He may fear that for his own guilts he incurres more ...'

suggest that anger can be regarded as punishment for a subject's ill-doings, and is therefore an important element in enforcing and keeping social order.

The conceptual structure of emotions can be ascertained on the basis of a semantic analysis of the collocational patterns of emotion words, and can be organised by conceptual metaphors which help to visualise and understand human reactions. Emotional concepts can be efficiently described by means of scenarios, which consist of the cause of an emotion, an emotion label, and a reaction. Reaction, or emotional display, plays an important social role in creating, sustaining and redefining social relations.

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