Eyes and Hands Expressions: Embodiment of Lexical Meanings

Shelley Ching-yu Hsieh & Elena Kolodkina
National Cheng Kung University, Cheng Shiu University

Abstract
This paper focuses on compounds and idiomatic expressions containing body-part terms for the eye(s) and hand(s) in Mandarin Chinese, Russian and English. Conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson 1980) and THE PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF AN EMOTION STAND FOR THE EMOTION (Lakoff 1987) are our theoretical background. It is found that (1) there are different conceptions in three languages, and (2) The BODY AS FUNCTION is equally displayed in all three analyses languages, but (3) BODY AS EMOTION as a particular conceptual model is characteristic only of Chinese. In Russian, BODY AS EMOTION is subcategorized in BODY AS FUNCTION. Eyes and hands are integral parts of languages, speakers of different languages who then project their own cultures and life experiences to create interesting language diversities.

Keywords: body-part expressions, Chinese, Russian, Cognitive semantic, body as emotion

1. Introduction
The cultural experience and knowledge we gain while submerged in our culture inevitably shape our worldview, making our mind enculturated. The role of body-part metaphors in constructing a nonliteral world is considered particularly important. Rosch (e.g., 1973), Lakoff (1987), Johnson (1987), and others explicate the relationship between body-part metaphors and learning; children understand the world on the basis of their bodies and the relationship of their bodies to the world, and they build knowledge from the concrete to the abstract by metaphorically extending body relationships to new domains.

This study focuses on compounds and idiomatic expressions (viz. fixed expressions) containing body-part terms for the eye(s) and hand(s) in Mandarin Chinese, Russian and English. Data taken from three corpora form the database of the present study in order to provide a cross-linguistic comparison. The three corpora are: