

Metaphor and Emotion in End-of-Life Care

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Project and research questions



Part of the ESRC funded Metaphor in End-of-Life Care project (see <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/melc/>)

Research Questions for today

1. How are metaphors used to represent the emotions of unpaid family carers? How are metaphors used differently by
 - a) carers themselves
 - b) healthcare professionals representing carer emotions?
2. What are the implications of emotions being constructed as
 - a) inside or outside the body
 - b) moving from the inside to the outside or vice versa?

Literature, data and method

Emotion in conceptual metaphor theory

No definition of emotion in Lakoff & Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1987), Kövecses (2000)

‘The following is an attempt to arrive at a definition of the concept of happiness ... through an analysis of the language related to happiness. In doing so... [o]ne [assumption] is that language reflects some underlying conceptual reality, hence it is possible to recover the content and structure of concepts through an analysis of language.’ (Kövecses 1991: 29)

→ belief that emotions cannot be defined apart from their linguistic, often metaphorical and metonymic, expression

Defining emotions

‘Emotions’: prototypical affective states such as anger, happiness, curiosity or fear, but also “moods” (e.g., irritability, boredom) and affective dispositions (depression, generalized anxiety) (Manstead, 2007)

What connects these different concepts is their intrinsically valenced nature i.e. that they can (sometimes explicitly, but always implicitly) be placed on a scale of positive – negative.



Common feelings (=emotions) associated with terminal illness include anxiety/fear, isolation, guilt and, potentially, shame.

Identifying references to emotions in language

Literal references to emotions

Words whose basic and contextual meanings are affective states generally (e.g. 'emotions', 'feelings' etc.), or specific instances of affective states (e.g. 'her husband was scared')

Different parts of speech may be involved in such direct expressions: nouns ('a worry'), adjectives ('happy'), verbs ('to worry') and adverbs ('happily')

Metonymic references to emotions

Can occur on their own in the co-text or in close proximity to literal and/or metaphoric references to emotions: e.g. 'you can't really come out with anything too tearful'

Identifying references to emotions in language (cont.)

Metaphoric references to emotions

- a) both source-domain and target-domain language

‘you have to go through this range of **emotions**’; ‘she had all this **worry** trapped inside her’

- b) only source-domain language

‘driving myself round the bend’

often with relevant evidence in the co-text, such as a reference to the stimulus for the emotional reaction

‘it still hurts every time a patient dies’

Identifying references to emotions in language (cont.)

Metaphoric references to emotions

c) together with metonymy

‘you can't really come out with **anything** too **tearful**’

d) metaphonymy (Goossens 1990/20003: 350, 352; Steen 2007: 59)

often a combination of metonymy and body metaphor

‘[I] became disheartened with medicine’

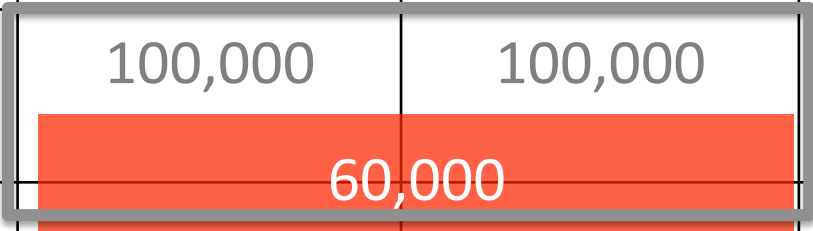
Data

ca. 1.5 million words total

60,000-word sample for qualitative manual analysis

200,000-word corpus for computer-assisted analysis

	Patients	Carers	Healthcare Professionals	Total
Semi-structured interviews	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
Online forum posts	500,000	500,000	200,000	1.2 mil
Total	600,000	600,000	300,000	1.5 mil



Method

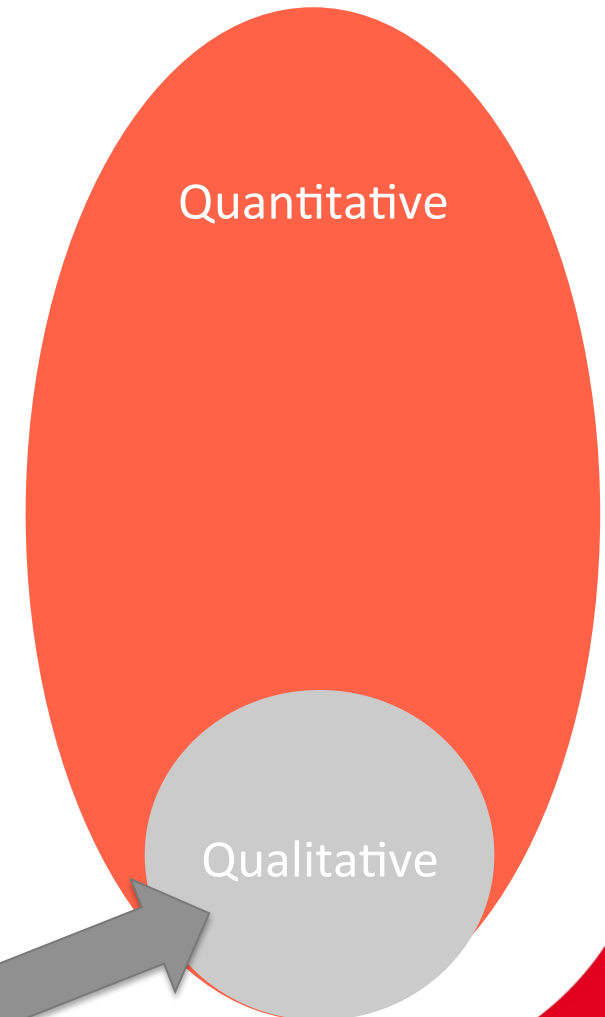
Manual intensive analysis of 60,000-word sample: MIP + elements of MIPVU

Automated analysis of 200,000 words:

Wmatrix + Broad Sweep searching

~ a modification to Wmatrix especially developed to facilitate corpus-based metaphor analysis

~ allows us to see and explore all the semantic categories an expression can belong to, thereby capturing more metaphorical expressions (cf. Koller et al. 2008)



Main focus today

Analysis

Where are emotions?

EMOTIONS



EMOTIONS



EMOTIONS

Carer Emotions Outside: Carer data

Emotion as location

1. *for people who have been caring or who have lost the person and gone into bereavement*

Emotion as opponent

2. *At first we was apprehensive and you think do I want to meet people who've got the same thing. Sometimes you found it a bit overpowering but other times you found it quite helpful*
3. *my Mum, she's really good at organising things and getting things going and researching, finding out, but for somebody who's not perhaps so adept or maybe they're very overwhelmed with their situation*

Carer Emotions Outside: Carer data (cont.)

Emotion as opponent

4. *now a friend of mine has just lost her husband through the same thing about 3 weeks ago, that really knocked us both for six because you face the truth then, don't you. You know but no, we got over that*

Carer Emotions Outside: Professional data



Emotion as location

1. *I think the most difficult thing is the for all the parties to be in the right, the same place psychologically at the same time*
2. *[the family] can go through a natural normal grief*
3. *because once you've said two or three time that you my husband, my wife, my child is terminally unwell and have faced that kind of that look in people's eyes, they don't want to go there again*

Emotion as opponent

4. *they feel overwhelmed or they feel they don't know how they're gonna go on*

Carer Emotions Inside: Carer data



None in our sample corpus, few in whole corpus:
metaphtonymy

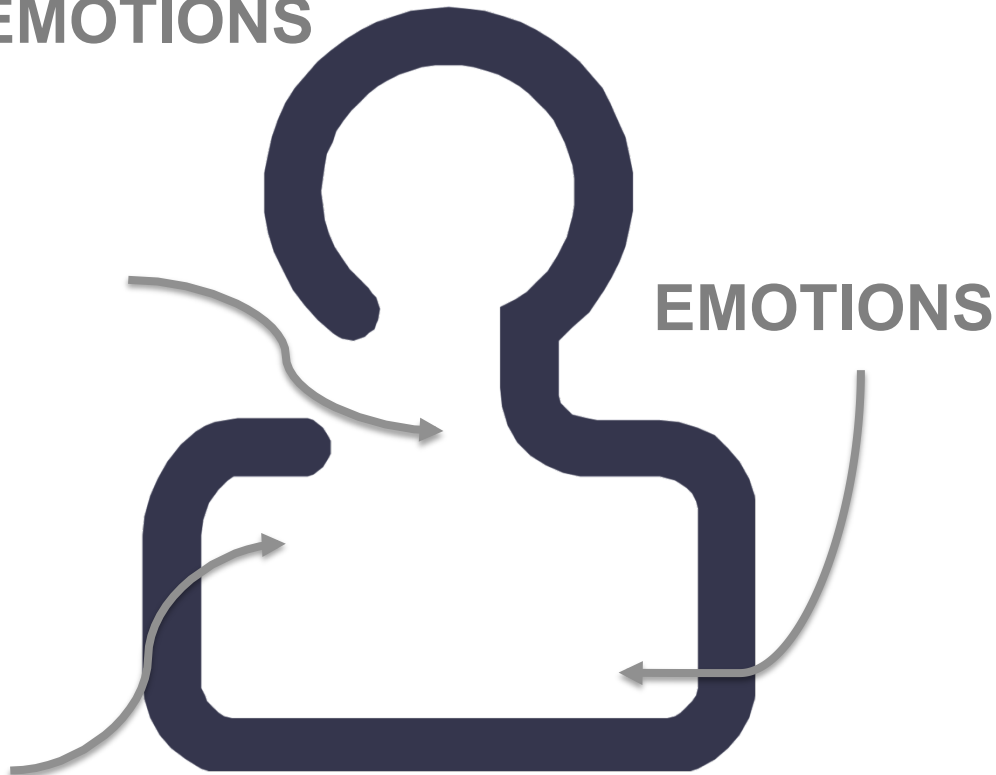
1. *I think now I mean last week if I could have had one [massage] it would have been bliss cos I could feel myself sort of pent up*

Carer Emotions Inside: Professional data

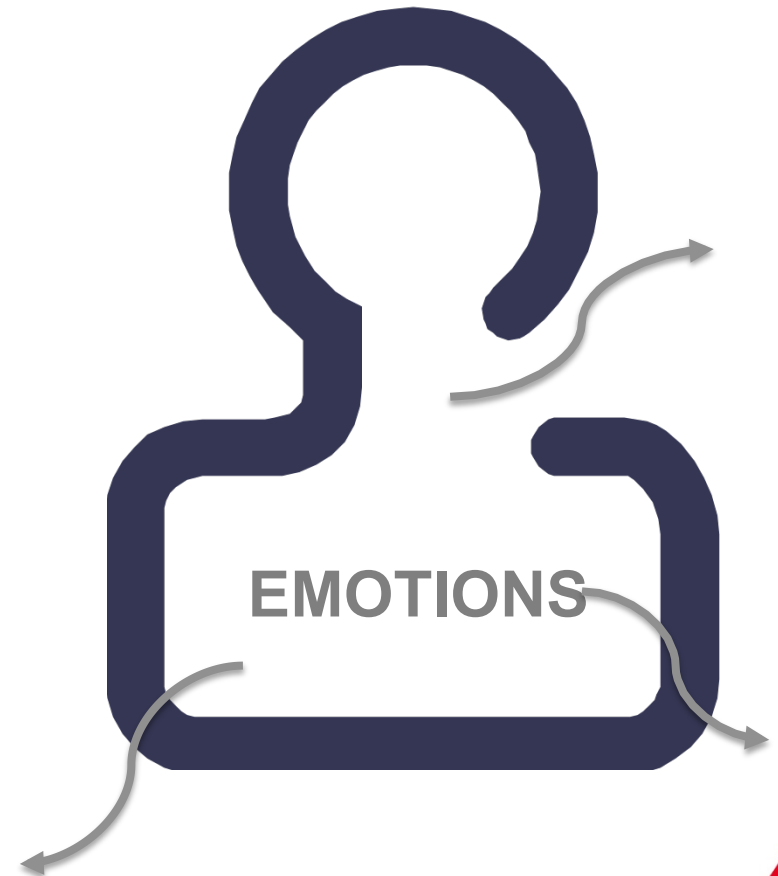
1. *I think also feelings of ... in the carer of pain and distress*
2. *I what I talk a lot about, to staff and, the person that was here before you came, erm about containerisation. So erm and everyone looks at me containerisation? Well we know what containers are in terms of lorries and trucks and we put everything in a box and so on and I think often our job in a hospice is to containerise situations. Whatever that the shape of that container might be and it's not a rigid box like the lorry scenario but it is actually about containing it. Keeping it safe within a boundary, whatever the boundary is*

Where do emotions go?

EMOTIONS



EMOTIONS



Carer Emotions Coming in: Carer and professional data



Carer data

1. *There is not a great deal of guilt about doing something entirely for yourself, which does creep in sometimes. You need to do it but it doesn't make you feel less guilty.*

Professional data

2. *that's where your [generic 'you', includes speaker] stress comes in because that's what you want for everybody and it doesn't you can't always get it*
from the complete corpus, refers to speaker

Carer Emotions Coming out: Carer data

1. *the work elements within it [carers' meeting] give you ways of releasing stress and frustration and things, which is not a bad thing to do in life.*
2. *I just want emotional release [from a carers' meeting]*
3. *I think if it had been a large group I don't think I'd have opened up so much myself. But I did feel very relaxed enough to talk quite a bit.*
4. *when you're with the person who is ill you can't really say what you're feeling cos you've got to keep yourself going, yourself as well as them so you can't really come out with anything too tearful you know, because you've got to keep going for them.*

Carer Emotions Coming out – Professional data

1. *I do think that overt crying and anger where it's expressed, I do think that staff find that quite hard [refers to both patient and carer emotion]*
2. *And I think sometimes that is distress coming out as ... that's the moment of panic or moment of fear. Where somebody just needs you to be in that relationship with them and give them the support in the moment..*
3. *occasionally when the anger is directed at people or institutions that on the face of it might not be deserving of the anger it's sometimes useful to say...*

Discussion



Research questions revisited

Q: How are metaphors used to represent the emotions of unpaid family carers? How are metaphors used differently by

- a) carers themselves
- b) healthcare professionals representing carer emotions?

A: Carer emotions are represented as:

- mostly outside, as opponents (mostly by carers) or locations (mostly by professionals);
- mostly coming out, with a tendency for carers to refer to them as being relaxed in a safe, controlled environment, and professionals also ascribing agency to carers.

Research questions revisited

Q: What are the implications of emotions being constructed as

a) inside or outside the body

b) moving from the inside to the outside or vice versa?

A: Evaluation



- emotions coming out with no agency on part of experiencer, misdirected expression of emotions
- negatively valenced experience of emotion as obstacles



- controlled release and safe boundaries
- shared emotional space

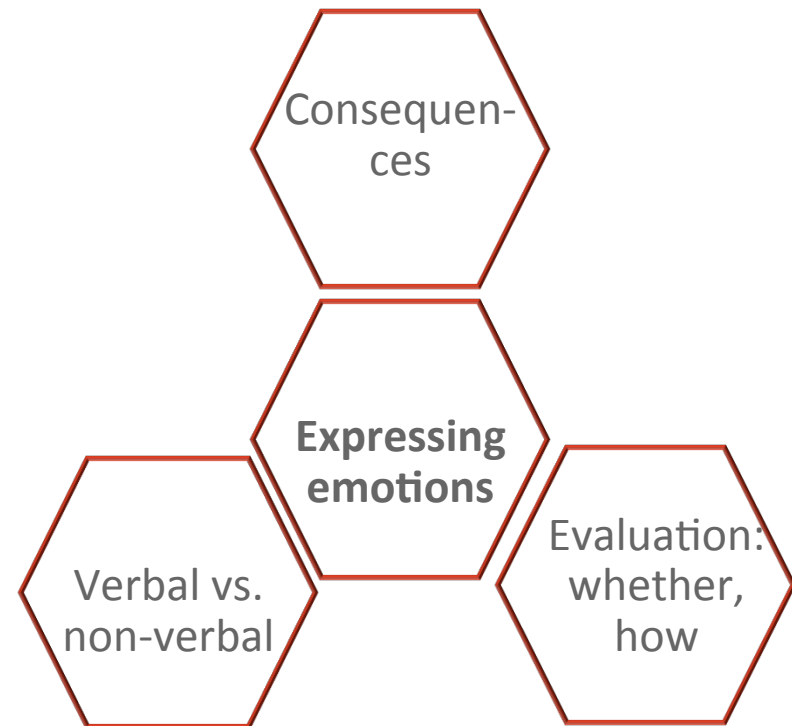
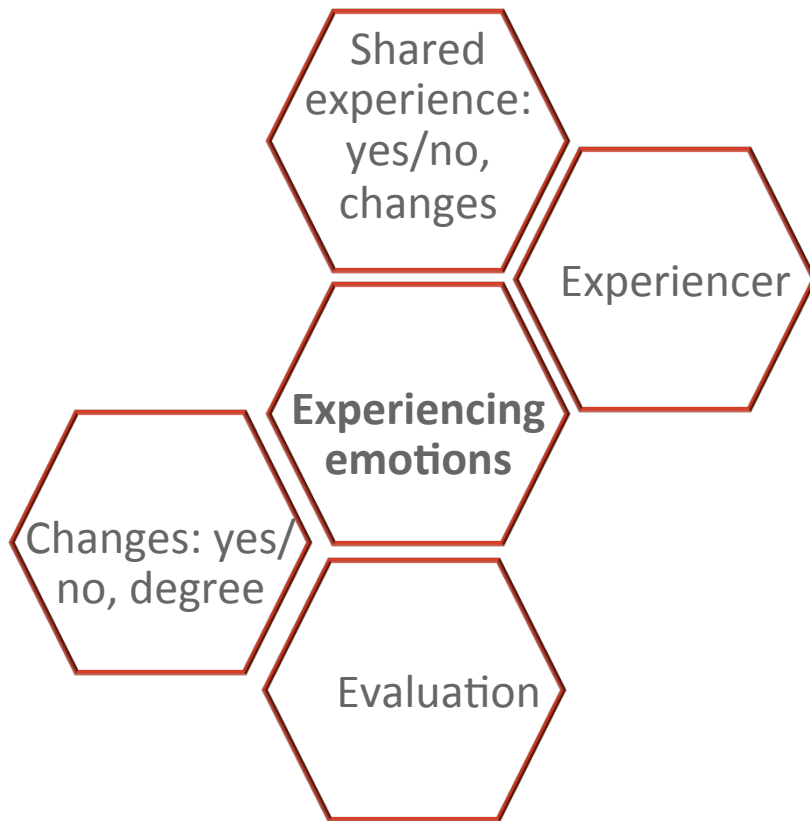
The evaluation is not attached to the emotion itself but to its interpersonal consequences.

Emotion scenarios


‘emotion scenarios’ – building on Kövecses’ (2000) ‘emotion concepts’; consistent with Grady’s (1997) ‘primary scenes’ and Musolff’s (2006) ‘metaphor scenarios’

‘figurative words and expressions ... denote various *aspects* of emotion concepts, such as intensity, cause, control ... The particular *sequence* of events makes up the structure of the prototypical concept of any given emotion, ... while the particular *events* that participate in the sequence make up the contents of the concepts’
(Kövecses 2000: 4, 11)

Emotion scenarios



Contributions

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- Defining emotion for metaphor research
 - Analysing emotion metaphors in linguistic co-text and situational context
 - interview setting
 - represented situations
 - Introducing emotion scenarios
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- A large, solid red curved shape in the bottom right corner of the slide, resembling a quarter-circle or a stylized 'C'.

References



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