Preliminary Notes on the Glossing of Emotions

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Let me begin with an imaginary dialogue which, in one version or another, we have all heard.

Speaker One:	Do you love me?
Speaker Two:	Please don't ask me that.
Speaker One:	Why?
Speaker two:	You know. I've never been able to say that, not even when I was a kid.
Speaker One:	What's so terrible about saying "I love you"?
Speaker Two:	Nothing, I suppose. I just can't say it. Why should I anyway? They're just words. They have nothing to do with the way I feel. You know that.
Speaker One:	Now you're hurt.
Speaker Two:	No, I'm not. It's that you can't really talk about feelings. You just know them.
Speaker One:	Ah, I get it. You're laying it on me now. I'm not sensitive enough to know what you're feeling. I need a crutch. Words!
Speaker Two:	Now, I've hurt you. I didn't...
Speaker One:	No you haven't. I'm used to your games.
Speaker Two:	I have made you angry.
Speaker One:	No you haven't. I'm not angry. I wouldn't give you the credit
Speaker Two:	Yes, I have.
Speaker One:	You're right. I am angry.
Speaker Two:	So am I. I'm really mad.

I have not indicated the sex of the two speakers, but I am certain that you, as speakers of American English, have identified Speaker One as a woman and Speaker Two as a man. You probably also have a "reasonable" idea of who the speakers are--their class, age, educational background, their income perhaps--and where they are speaking. We know for example that American middle class wives like their husbands to tell them that they love them and that American husbands find it difficult, impossible even, to say,"I love you."

Husbands make all sorts of excuses, often of a metalinguistic nature, declaring, like the poet, the insufficiency of words. They seem willing at times, as in my imaginary dialogue, to sacrifice a presumably romantic mood and all of its possibilities for their metalinguistic principles.[1] They do not hesitate, however, to sacrifice these same principles when it comes to declaring their anger. (Some women do hesitate to declare their anger but rarely, if ever, for metalinguistic principles.)[2] Although love and anger have both been called emotions -- certainly both men and women of Speaker One and Two's milieu would call them emotions -- there seems to be no equivalency other than a grammatical one between the sentences "I love you" and "I am angry at you."[3] There is an economy here,

not of emotions or even the expression of emotions, but of the gloss. It is important to distinguish carefully between emotions, the expression of emotions, and the glossing of emotions. The failure to do so has led, I believe, to considerable confusion in the discussion of emotions in anthropology and psychology.

In this paper I shall be concerned primarily with glossing emotions, less with the expression of emotions, and not at all with the emotions in and of themselves. I am interested in the rhetorical use of words and other communicative forms that are said to denote emotions and not in the (internal) state of affairs of those who give expression to or gloss the emotions they are experiencing -- anger, love, sadness, or elation.[4] I do not deny existence of such states. I do not even claim that I cannot know what someone experiences when he declares himself angry, in love, sad, or elated. Such experiences in and of themselves are simply irrelevant to the rhetorical level I am pursuing here, but, that they are "known" to occur, I hasten to add, is not irrelevant. The nonverbal expression of emotions, through gesture, intonation, demeanor, or pallor is relevant insofar as it marks the ocurrence of emotions and offers an occasion for glossing them and, thereby, affects the exchange in which it occurs.

Put simply, too simply no doubt, I am questioning, at an analytic level at least, the locus of emotions as being in some inherent sort of way in the individual. Emotions, in our society at least, are considered (if I may be a native informant) somehow "natural" and as such "involuntary", "autonomous", "physiological", in essence beyond complete conscious control. Consider such expressions as *la physiologie de l'amour*. Think of our elaborate literature on love -- on the chemistry (!) of love -- as arising spontaneously and condemning, as it were, the smitten to involuntary behaviors that under other circumstances might well be morally and aesthetically distasteful. Think of the equation of love qua sexual intercourse. And think of the vast literature devoted to controllong undesirable emotions, of the institutions that promise such control -- of charm schools, for example, of psychotherapies that cannot rid themselves of their medical model, their bodily concern, and their physiological imagery despite all of the arguments of their Cartesian practitioners. Declared natural, lodged inherently in the individual, and deemed outside his complete control, emotions conform to, indeed confirm, our non-transactional, essentialistic notions of self and person (Crapanzano, 1985). They attest to the self's independence, its uniqueness, its individuality, its facticity -- its personality and character -- its duration. Of course, emotions are stimulated by intra- and extra-corporeal stimuli, including the relations the self has with other selves, but the self's emotional response is entirely its own, rising out of the deepest recesses of its being.[5] As such, emotions can determine the relations that ensue, as we might expect Speaker One's and Speaker Two's "anger" to determine the course of their relationship.

Emotions have, I suggest, a transactional basis that is masked by our notions of the self and our psychology of emotion. They arise out of real, remembered, or fantasized relations, and the glossable or glossed expression of emotions play an active role in determining these relations.[6] They have to be understood in terms of their pragmatic function within any real, fancied, or remembered exchange. They help call the context.[7] Certainly, as any dramatist knows, the sudden expression of anger, indignation, elation, fear, or sadness can and does change the context in which it occurs. Through self-attribution, however, or through the attribution of an "emotion" to another participant in the exchange in which it occurs, its transactional basis is denied. This denial has moral consequence. (It produces strains in the individual and in those in a position to evaluate his or her moral worth as all the discussion about the appropriateness of emotional response or of the sincerity of the expression of emotion attests.) There is a sense in which we are all engaged in the game of who has got the emotion; for, as we all know, having the emotion has its

advantages. Of course, when we play the game, we forget to ask whether we are playing with emotions or "emotions."

Is there something about glosses of emotion, in English at least, that facilitates the confusion between emotion and "emotion"? I believe there is. I have no idea how universal it is, though given the fact that it is determined, as I hope to show, by the way such glosses are meta-pragmatically regimented, that is, by the way they mark their own reading, it seems likely that it would vary from one linguistic community to another. From the point of view of our dominant linguistic ideology, words and propositions that gloss emotions, derive their rhetorical force from their putative referentiality. They are thought to refer to, denote, describe, to signify, a particular state of affairs -- their referent -- the emotion being experienced. It is the existence of this state of affairs, this emotion, their truth value, as it were, that gives them their rhetorical power. Thus, utterances like "I love you" or "I am angry at you" are thought to refer to those particular perturbations of the soul that we call "anger" and "love." Such utterances are said to be true or false and if deemed true (and in a different way, if deemed false) they have considerable (moral) weight in the exchanges in which they occur. Their referent, reified, I believe, in one fashion or another, has to be reckoned with, in accordance with the prevalent psychology of emotion and its moral entailments.

Studies of emotion, like many of those in cognitive anthropology, that attempt to lay out the "psychology" of emotion of a particular group through the analysis of their vocabulary --"their words for" -- emotion (even when they are contextually sensitive) seem to me to replicate a sociolinguistic process, characteristic at least of our own speech community, that "translates" pragmatic, that is, context-dependent, features of an utterance, more accurately of a conversation, into context-independent "entities" that can be ascribed, essentially, to any one of the participants in an encounter or, indeed, abstracted from any encounter, from any particular individual,and described and discussed scientifically even. Witness the rich phenomenological descriptions of emotions that characterize so much of our philosophy and psychology and so much more of our literature. Such studies reinforce our psychologies of emotion and our notions of the self as a bearer of emotion by universalizing the semanticity -- the context-independence -- of such emotion words. They function very much like the phenomenological descriptions of emotion by providing a set of compelling background propositions about, and images of, emotions. They strengthen the referentially derived rhetorical force of our emotion words and propositions by granting them even a special nature. But, if we take, heuristically and as anthropologists we must, the position that there may well be different ways of conceptualizing the self, its relationship to other selves, to social interaction generally, and to those experiences, whatever their (final) locus, that we call emotion, then it becomes clear that those studies that insist that a description, if not a theory, of emotions can be generated from lexemes, understood semantistically, as referring to discrete and context-independent entities cannot do justice to them.[8] We have in fact to look at the pragmatic and metapragmatic dimensions of those exchanges in which locutions about emotion -- expressions and glosses of emotion -- occur.

Let me attempt to illustrate this in a very tentative manner -- I remind you that the title of this paper is Preliminary Notes on the Glossing of Emotions -- by returning to the question I posed earlier: Is there something about our glosses of emotion that faciliates the confusion between emotion and "emotion."? There are -- to follow one route -- important differences between propositions like "I love you" and "I am angry at you" and "he loves you" and "he is angry at you", as those familiar with the literature on performatives will readily recognize. The difference can be illuminated in two different but coordinate ways, which I shall call the indexical and the performative.[9]

Let me begin with the performative way. I do not claim that such utterances as "I love you" or "I am angry at you" are explicit performatives. They certainly do not meet all of either Austin's (1970) or Searle's (1985) criteria, but they do have considerable illocutionary force (Searle, 1983). They do bring about through their very utterance a change in the context of that utterance (that is, they are not simply descriptive of it), and this change has to be acknowledged (even if through denial) by all those who participate in the encounter in which the utterance was made. The interesting question is not whether a change was brought about through the utterance but exactly what the nature of that change is. This seems to be a matter of negotiation, and it is this negotiation that gives spice to a converastion in which people say such things as "I love you" and "I am angry at you." What is being negotiated, to use the jargon of the performative philosophers, is what covert prefix lies behind the utterance. When a speaker says, "I love you", for example, he can be taken to be saying, more accurately to be doing, many things: asserting, promising, predicting, warning, confessing. Think of the different implications of the following covert prefixes that I have taken at random from Austin's (1970) list of performatives.

I reckon	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I proclaim	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I declare	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I believe	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I accept	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I report	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I promise	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I deny	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I warn (you)	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I recognize	that I love you	that I am angry at you
I concede	that I love you	that I am angry at you

We can easily see how important such negotiations are and we can imagine all of the advantages and disadvantages that come with preserving the prefixes' cover. We can see how their covertness determines future conversational moves in all sorts of intriguing ways. Not only does the consequential negotiation allow the speakers to constitute themselves, their relationship, their values but it also allows those playful manoeuvres that create suspense, permit seductions, and render conversation entertaining. For our purposes, the important point is to recognize that the choice of a covert prefix is determined not just by the "grammar" of the sentence but by pragmatic considerations that are understood metapragmatically, usually metaphorically, in non-linguistic terms reflective of broader ideological and axiological presuppositions (Crapanazano, 1986). In the case in point, they are understood in terms of a prevailing psychology of emotions and its entailing morality and etiquette.

Not only do such first person propositions as "I love you" or "I am angry at you" have, when uttered, an illocutionary force that is absent from third person propositions, uttered or not, like "he loves you" or "he is angry at you", but their very utterance is taken as a manifestation, a symptom, of the very state or condition -- the emotion -- they are said to be describing in a way which is simply not true of the third person propositions. It is as though their referentiality loops over onto itself and becomes at once its own object and yet, through some sort of topological contortion, other than itself. Were we not appalled by the idea of creating yet another linguistic category, we would call such locutions "symptomatizers." In this respect, such first person utterances are, on an ideological level, somehow equivalent to non-verbal, "involuntary", "autonomous" expressions of

emotions. It is as though their presumed referentiality -- in Pierce's (1974) terms, their symbolicity, their semanticity[10] -- slips into some sort of symptomatology -- into, again in Pierce's terms, an immediate indexicality.

This "slippage" from symbolic reference to sheer indexicality has certain curious implications. For one, it facilitates the confusion, I noted earlier, between emotion and "emotion" or, put another way, between the expression of emotion and the glossing of emotion. For another, it reinforces the referentially derived rhetorical capacity of such utterances and it may well promote their illocutionary force. And for still another, it raises a puzzling set of questions about truth and sincerity in such utterances. Insofar as such utterances are taken symbolically, as describing a state of affairs, their truth value may be questioned. Am I truthfully describing the perturbations of my soul when I say I love you or I am angry at you? Am I being sincere in giving such an utterance? But, if such utterances are taken as indices -- as symptoms -- of such perturbations, then their truth and sincerity cannot be questioned, for they point to those perturbations as unquestionably, as non-arbitrarily, as smoke points to fire.

It would seem that the coincidence of the symbolic and the indexical dimensions of such utterances motivates much of the discussion about their truthfulness, their sincerity. Can I say, "I love you" or "I am angry at you" without being truthful? Insincerely? Can I be mistaken when I say "I love you" or "I am angry at you"? Does an actor have to feel love or anger when he says on stage, "I love you" or "I am angry at you"?

We have invented many ways of covering the problems that arise from this coincidence of linguistic functions. One is to argue, negotiate, attempt to determine exactly what I meant when I said "I love you" or "I am angry at you", that is, in terms of the theory of performatives, exactly what the covert prefix was. (What precisely did you mean when you said you loved me?" "Well, I meant, well, I suppose I meant that I could easily love you were we really to get to know each other" [a prediction]. Or, "I meant that I would love you no matter what happened" [a promise] Or "I really meant it" [an assertion].) Such strategies stress the symbolic dimension of the utterance. Often they are elaborated in retrospective accounts of what transpired when the confession (!) of love or anger was made. A second is to postulate a state of mind, the "unconscious" for example, that permits one to mean other than what is meant. And a third is to elaborate a theory of fictional representation. Of mimicry.

One interesting consequence of the confusion of emotion and "emotion", of the expression of emotion and its gloss, is, to speak figuratively, the domination of verbal expressions, the gloss properly speaking, over other modes of emotional expression. Coordinate with a prevalent notion of emotional unity -- when one is angry, one is angry; when one is in love, one is in love -- these other modes of emotional expression are seen, frequently, as ancillary, as suprasegmentals. But as Judith Irvine (1982) has noted, there is no necessary correlation between the various registers in which emotions are expressed. Certainly there is no necessary relationship between the expression of emotion and its gloss. It is possible to say, as Speaker One did in our imaginary dialogue that she -- I accept reluctantly a stereotypic gender attribution -- was not angry when we have reason to believe that she was in fact angry (as she herself eventually had to admit). And it is also possible that as Speaker Two was saying he could not say "I love you", he was in fact expressing his adoration.

The disjunction between the expression of emotion and its gloss as well as the disjunction between different registers in which emotions are expressed can lead to all sorts of doublebinding situations. That doublebinding is necessarily pathogenic is, in my view, questionable. Certainly, even the most superficial study of classical rhetoric reveals that disjunction is one of its most powerful devices. Consider the following figures taken from

Lanhams's *Handlist* (1969): antiphrasis (a dwarf for a giant), apophonema (a sententia put in antithetical form), contrarium (one of two opposite statements used to prove the other), dialysis (arguing from a series of disjunctive propositions), dilemma, enigma, litotes, oxymoron, paradox, syncrisis (an expanded paradox), and of course, in its way, irony.[11] And there are many more.

Here I should like to stress that the disjunction between the expression of emotion and the glossing (in its non-indexical sense) of emotion has considerable rhetorical force. It figures mightily in the negotiations that occur in any exchange. To express anger and to deny that one is angry at one and the same time, to express love and to assert that one is incapable of declaring love, to look happy and to say one is sad, to tremble with fear and to claim there is nothing to fear, do call contexts, do constitute the parties to the encounter in which such double messages are transmitted, do permit explicit and implicit characterizations of personality, moral worth, and the like, and do facilitate the play that keeps so much conversation, so much social interaction going. Less dramatically perhaps, conjunctive expressions of emotion and their gloss also have rhetorical force. Suppose, for example, Speaker Two was expressing love, even angry love, all through our imaginary dialogue and suppose having said, "So am I. I'm really mad", he suddenly added, "I do love you, you know." I leave the sequel to your imagination and only caution you to remember that at the level I am pursuing what emotion Speaker Two was really experiencing is totally irrelevant.

However you envision the sequel, it should be clear that any theory of emotion has to recognize the metapragmatically regimented pragmatic plays that the expression and the gloss of emotions have. That these differ from one culture to another appears likely, particularly given the fact that the metapragmatic interpretation of such plays is often metaphorically expresssed in non-linguistic terms, in folk psychological terms, for example. Such non-linguistic terms provide the vehicles for metaphorical understanding. Are they -- the folk psychologies, for example -- in fact refractions of the very linguistic processes they come to describe?

Notes

1. Of course a husband's metalinguistic principles can also protect him from all of those romantic possibilities. Frequently, the principles are supported, implicitly at least, by some background story -- some traumatic event, some disillusionment or betrayal -- that accounts for his linguistic paralysis. Such background stories, revealed in those confessional moments so characteristic of American middle class courting, do help create a bond of intimacy, of confidence, between the lovers and thus figure mnemonically, as it were, in their future relationship. They add a rhetorical poignancy to such exchanges as those between our Speaker One and Speaker Two.

2. De Sousa (1980) argues that attitudes concerning emotions -- an ideology of emotions -- affects their emotional content. He is particularly concerned with gender and the content of emotions. Whether such attitudes and ideologies affect the content of emotions or not, they do affect the expression and the glossing of emotions. De Sousa (1980:291) suggests that love "whose characterization involves whole complexes of particular feelings, expectations, long term patterns of intercourse, and social sanctions." is "arguably too complex to be called an emotion." The point is that it is considered an emotion -- an exemplary one. The duration of an emotion becomes a problem when its ontological status is questioned, but it does not appear to me to be a problem when its expression or glossing is considered rhetorically.

3. Although there are undoubtedly important differences in nuance between feelings and emotions, not to mention between feelings and emotions and sentiments, they are easily translated into one another in most casual conversations. See Ryle (1949) and Solomon (1980) for a discussion of the distinction.

4. Compare Searle (1983) who argues that one has to distinguish carefully between the ontological category of intentionality and its logical properties. I would add, in accordance with my own conversational approach, its rhetorical properties or uses.

5. In Freudian psychology the deepest recesses of being -- of character -- are given some transactional basis. Character is said to be determined in part at least by early childhood experiences of parental and other family figures or their surrogates, though there are times when Freud and other analysts speak as though these experiences are somehow predetermined.

6. I am of course concerned here primarily with social relations, that is, with relations between human beings. Relations with the environment, with the animal world, the plant world, with the supernatural, however understood, also give rise to emotions of all sorts. Often these non-human worlds are anthropomorphized when they are the source of emotion, particularly intense emotion.

7. I use the expression "to call context" to stress the fact that all pragmatic locutions are not only reflective of a given context but, to varying degrees, create, or at least highlight, that context.

8. We ought of course to write "self", "experience", "social", "interaction" etc., as Derrida (1976) would say, *sous rature*, that is, indicating if not a real than a potential break with our own, logocentric or not, metaphysical tradition. It is noteworthy that anthropologists have been unwilling to make use of, to discuss even, Derrida's convention.

9. The two are of course related; for, performatives, tenseless as they are, are immediately linked indexically to their context of utterance since they create what they index. As such, as we shall see, they replicate the indexical function of such utterances as "I love you" and "I am angry at you." See Lee (1985) for a discussion of the indexical dimension of performatives and for an interesting derivation of the mind-body dichotomy through the projection of the (external) indexicality of performatives onto the (internal) indexicality of mental state verbs that share many of their grammatical features. Lee's argument can probably be applied to the first person (non-progressive present tense) utterances of emotion that we are treating here.

10. Throughout this paper, I use "symbolicity" and "semanticity" interchangeably to refer to an abstract reference or description that is context-independent. Symbolicity or semanticity contrasts with (context-dependent) indexicality. See Silverstein (1976) for more precise formulation.

11. Obviously, disjunction has in such circumstances to be understood rhetorically. Pathogenic doublebinding occurs (if it occurs at all) if it is not understood, at some level, as a rhetorical strategy; that is, if there is a failure to communicate, or to understand, how the doublebinding utterance is to be read.

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