Emotions in the Alamblak Lexicon

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ABSTRACT

Alamblak is spoken by people of the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea. Emotion concepts in Alamblak are expressed by verbs and idiomatic expressions. Fifteen terms in seven sub-domains of emotions are described here. The sub-domains include concepts similar to the English concepts ‘happy’, ‘sad’, ‘shame’, ‘anger’, ‘fear’, and ‘desire/love’. Emotions that incorporate the concept of ‘wanting’ are conceptually close to the disposition of ‘desire’, therefore this study includes a description of four Alamblak terms in the two sub-domains of ‘desire’ and ‘dislike/diswant’. The three terms expressing ‘dislike’ or ‘diswant’ represent a rejection of desire; they contrast with negated desire terms that express a lack of desire. Seventeen body image expressions and conventional metaphors associated with these verbs are presented in the discussions of the emotions to which they refer. The body image expressions include the body parts ‘heart’ and ‘liver’, as well as the metaphysical component ‘thoughts/inner person’.

1 Introduction

This study of Alamblak emotions attempts to model emotion concepts by explications of lexical expressions in Alamblak. Cliff Goddard (1996:426), in his article “The Social Emotions of Malay (Bahasa Melayu),” remarks, “the language of emotion can be an invaluable window into culture-specific conceptualizations of social life and human nature.” We hope that this preliminary study of expressions of emotions in Alamblak will contribute to the aims of cultural psychology to better understand the emotional nature of human beings.

Anna Wierzbicka (1999:292-294) proposes four universal types of emotion concepts in human societies: ‘fear-like’, ‘anger-like’, ‘shame-like’, and ‘happy/love-like’. In other words, we should expect to find comparable concepts in all languages, even though specific emotions may not themselves be universal. A second aim of this study is to document the primary Alamblak lexicalized...
expressions for emotions in these four proposed universal categories of emotions. This description will hopefully contribute to a broader study of comparative semantics in the future.

It should be emphasized that documenting comparable lexicalized concepts does not mean that they are exact equivalents to specific concepts expressed by English words of similar meaning. On the point of universals and culture-specific conceptualizations of emotions, Catherine Lutz (1985:38) warns that English emotion words, such as ‘fear’, ‘love’, ‘anger’, and ‘disgust’, “are essentially American ethno-psychological concepts,” not expressions of universal concepts of the innate human emotions. Wierzbicka, in her work, *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition: universal human concepts in culture-specific configurations*, achieves two purposes. Emotion expressions in different languages are not universal; they contrast at least in subtle ways. While they are not universal, emotion terms can be contrasted by using basic, innate concepts that are universal; these universal concepts are the semantic primitives postulated by the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) theory (Wierzbicka 1992).

This analysis of Alamblak emotion terms adapts the NSM format to represent the meanings of each expression of emotion. In practical terms this means that we aim to define each Alamblak term with an analytical explication using simpler semantic concepts to define more complex concepts. Frequently the definitions utilize concepts identified as semantic primitives in NSM theory. These are purported to be inherent concepts, basic to human thought, and therefore universal to all natural languages. That there is a set of inherently understood concepts in human language is based upon the philosophical argumentation of Leibniz (1996) that was written in 1704.

The NSM primitives that are used in the explications herein may not be universal, but they are concepts that have been documented to be lexicalized in a wide variety of languages. They are therefore concepts, among others, that are, in our opinion, less likely to skew the meanings of Alamblak concepts than other terms that could be used for an English audience. The terms one uses in an explication, however, are really secondary to the methodology used in deciphering the concepts in Alamblak in the first place.

The definitions used here, although not formulated exclusively in the NSM primitives, use a mixture of those primitives and slightly more complex components of meaning. The intention is to enhance the clarity of the meanings, while at the same time using semantically simpler terms than the terms being defined. Goddard allows for such an approach. He states,

> It is not always necessary to resolve an explication right down to the level of semantic primitives. An explication can still be reductive – and still be valuable – even while containing some semantically complex terms, provided that none is more complex than the original term being defined and provided none needs to be defined in terms of the original word. (1998:61)
The results of this study draw upon fieldwork we conducted in the Alamblak area over a period of fourteen years in the 1970s and 1980s\(^1\). Specific work on emotion terms depended on the insights of Jude Mengumari, a trained Alamblak translator. Each verb is defined taking into account (1) the typical circumstances in which Alamblak people feel specific emotions or attitudes expressed by the verb and (2) external responses of an Alamblak person that typically accompany each emotion. The determination of typical circumstances of and typical responses to emotions are given from Mengumari’s perspective based on his own introspection guided by the investigative questions of Kathleen Bruce. Descriptions of emotion concepts herein are preliminary because they are limited by the introspections of one native speaker. The results, however, are fully warranted to accomplish the goals of the research. The use of an introspective method and the practice of relating emotions to cultural contexts definitely reflect a cognitive approach to emotions. We assume that emotions are cultural artifacts formed in response to thinking about things (real or imagined), embedded in culture-specific situations.

Emotion concepts in Alamblak are expressed by verbs\(^2\) and body image expressions. Certain verbs expressing attitudes of desire are included here because of lexical overlap between emotions and desires.

This study also investigates possibilities of verbally intensifying lexical forms and the ways body part images relate to the seat of a particular emotions. Body part images are metaphorical means of expressing subjective feelings; they are descriptive of abstract concepts in physical terms partly as a way of portraying what is abstract, and partly because some emotions are perceived to be associated with specific bodily locations (cf. McElhanon 1975).

The Alamblak people number approximately 2000 and live in the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea. There are two major dialects of Alamblak (Bruce 1984:1); the Karawari dialect is described in this study.

The Alamblak people are generally a quiet, non-aggressive folk, and, for the most part, they are not demonstrative in showing their inner feelings by overt actions. However, these feelings and their symptoms and expressions do exist, and an examination of them leads the researcher to a progressive appreciation of the Alamblak person and his way of thinking.

### 2 Emotion Terms

This study examines seven sub-categories of emotions and attitudes. Some of the Alamblak categories are either general concepts encompassing emotions and attitudes with associated actions or they exhibit patterns of polysemy associating certain emotions, attitudes and actions. The seven categories of Alamblak terms of this study are:

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\(^1\)Focused work on the semantic domain of emotions was done during a semantics course conducted by Dr. Karl Franklin in Papua New Guinea at the Ukarumpa Center of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

\(^2\)Alamblak is a verb-dominant language. Alamblak verbs express not only actions and states, but also thoughts, relationships, and qualities that are expressed by adjectives and nouns in other languages (Dixon 1977:51).
1. The realm of ‘happy-like’ emotions is a far-reaching and broad category overlapping with English concepts of ‘pride’, ‘praise’, and other similar concepts; these concepts are expressed by compounding the word *yindhor* with other verbs.

2. The ‘sad-like’ category comprises a network of emotions similar to ‘missing someone’, ‘pity’, ‘grief’ and ‘despair’.

3. The ‘shame-like’ emotion term, *yirufa*, is inclusive of the English concepts ‘shame’ and ‘embarrassment’.

4. The ‘anger-like’ emotion term *nambur* is polysemous with a sense of the action ‘fight’.

5. The ‘fear-like’ emotion term *yakrme* seems to incorporate both emotion and action resulting from the emotion.

6. The concepts similar to English ‘desire’ and ‘be pleased with’ are either polysemous in related emotion and attitude domains or are exponents of a general category comprising two basic lexical items that overlap in meaning. ‘Lust-like’ concepts involve many lexical items in Alamblak, relating the areas of ‘desire’, ‘happiness’, and ‘shame’.

7. The ‘dislike-diswant’ set of terms are antonyms of ‘desire-like’ terms, related in a similar way to the relationship of ‘like’ and ‘dislike’ in English.

Alamblak verbs potentially take an adverbial clause marker (*-kfët*) which forms a non-finite verb form, a nominalizing marker (*-neft*), or tense and person-number-gender markers. For the presentation in this paper, these markers have usually been omitted. Some emotion verbs are inherently intransitive. Others exhibit some transitive features, placing them between prototypical intransitive and transitive verbs on the transitivity scale. See the discussion of Controlled and Uncontrolled Experencer Verbs (Bruce 1984:235-6).

One-word glosses are to be taken only as the nearest equivalent translations of the verbs in question, not as a semantic representation. They are intended to give facility to the reader in identifying an English term that represents a similar concept to the Alamblak term being discussed.

### 2.1 Happiness - Love

This sub-domain relates to good feelings. The range of positive emotions in Alamblak include a response to good things happening (*yindhor*) and wanting good things to happen to someone else (*dukay*).

#### 2.1.1 Yindhor

*yindhor*, iv., may be defined by two closely related senses that may be best regarded as one general sense, ‘feel good because of thinking that good things are happening to me and nothing bad is happening to me that one could think could happen’.
Defined in this way, this term describes contentment with one’s circumstances in general as well as a response to precipitating events. This Alamblak concept seems to cover the ranges of meaning of the English ‘happy’ and ‘pleased’. It refers to a response to good circumstances like those associated with ‘happy’, and it is appropriate for responses to specific events that the experiencer wanted to happen similar to those associated with ‘pleased’. Compare the English concepts ‘content’, ‘happy’, and ‘pleased’:

‘content’: Someone feels good because of thinking about something good that has happened to him, resulting in the lack of desires for other things at the present (adapted from Wierzbicka 1999:55).

‘happy’: Feel good like people feel thinking that good things have happened to them, the kinds of things they wanted to happen, or like people feel when they think that nothing bad is happening now and because of that they do not want anything else right now (cf. Wierzbicka 1999:52 and Bruce 2003:312).

‘pleased’: Feel good like people who think, “something good happened that I wanted to happen” (adapted from Wierzbicka 1999:56).

Yindhor could express satisfaction with one’s living environment, from low-lying hills within the sago swamp to a nearby riverside location, where good water and food are plenteous enough for one to live happily. The verb is a typical intransitive verb as in (1).

(1) tēhbēmtewēr nd natpē yindhor-wēr
strong. IMPERF.3SM therefore (lit. ‘with doing that’) happy- IMPERF.3SM
‘He is strong, therefore he is happy.’

An Alamblak person typically feels yindhor at these times:
- when receiving good news,
- when a friend comes,
- when getting a new possession,
- when one feels good about what one’s son did,
- when something good happens, and
- when bad things are not happening, such as conflict, hunger and sickness.

Another situation in which one might feel yindhor is when one is having pleasant thoughts. Feelings in other situations may be described with yindhor as indicating something more than the English concept of ‘happy’. In response to one accomplishing something noteworthy, yindhor seems to indicate ‘feeling good about oneself’, something like ‘pride’. In response to someone else doing something well, yindhor seems to involve ‘feeling good because someone else is good’, an element of ‘praise’ in English (Wierzbicka 1987:198).

The socially appropriate expressions of this feeling are smiling, laughing, jumping, hitting an object like a tree, grasping the person that made you happy.
and jumping up and down or lifting him up and down. One may also touch the person by holding his hand or arm.

Increased intensity of the emotion is expressed by the adverbial masat ‘much/more’ as in (2):

(2) masat yindhorwēr ‘he is very happy’.

A body image expression related in meaning to yindhor is given in example (3):

(3) Yima yuhr grhewēr.
   (his) inner person dances.IMPERF.3SM
   ‘He is feeling very excited.’

The kind of excitement referred to in example (3) could be paraphrased with the generic statement in example (2). This restatement possibility indicates that the inner self, i.e., something like the soul, is the seat of the emotion yindhor. Yindhor is frequently used in combination with other verbs such as kfē “say” and duka ‘think’. Serial root combinations with Yindhor are highly productive.

2.1.2 Dukay

Dukay means ‘think’ in its basic, intransitive sense. By extension it may be defined as ‘feeling good about someone or something like someone who feels good about someone that he wants to do good things for, not wanting anything bad to happen to them’. This extended sense is illustrated in (4).

(4) Anurwahn yifammaf duke-wfn
don’t.2S.cry parents think.IMPERF.3D.2S
   ‘Don’t cry, (your) parents care about you.’

This emotion is experienced in the following relationships:
• with good relationships among family members,
• between close friends,
• between people and their domesticated animals, and
• between God or benevolent spirits and human beings.

The most obvious expression of this emotion is an act of doing something good for someone because you want to.

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3According to our understanding of the Alamblak view of the person, the soul is differentiated from the spirit. The latter idea is expressed by the Alamblak term yafathat, a semantic extension of the primary meaning ‘shadow’. It is vague whether the soul is a part of the body or the spirit.
2.2 Sadness

This sub-domain relates to feelings that result from bad things happening. It encompasses a set of three words in Alamblak.

2.2.1 Yohoaf

_Yohoaf_, tv., is a generic term, superordinate for three more specific terms. The general sense is ‘feel bad because of thinking about something bad that happens’. It also has a specific sense, equivalent to ‘feel bad because of something bad about someone or something, and want to do something to make the situation better’. This sense is similar to ‘compassion’ in English. This verb is transitive in form, co-referencing the Stimulus\(^4\) of the emotion as the DO of the verb as in (5).

(5) yohoaf-w-an-t
    sad-IMPERF-1S-3SF
    ‘I feel sad (for) her.’

An Alamblak person commonly feels _yohoaf_ at these times:

- when seeing a crippled person,
- when something bad happens to a loved one, a person may feel this when thinking about the loved one,
- when a person breaks a special object, he may feel this when thinking about the object,
- when a significant person leaves someone for some time, he may feel this when thinking about that person, and
- on an occasion when two brothers fight, one may feel this when thinking about them, because there is a wrong involving two brothers fighting.

In a different circumstance, such as when a person dies and the experiencer is nearby or has recently seen the deceased, it is considered a good thing to have been able to say goodbye. Therefore in this case he does not experience this type of sorrow when thinking about the deceased person.

The socially appropriate expression of this feeling is typically hanging one’s head, giving a gift to the person involved, helping the one in need, and trying to fix the broken object or situation.

2.2.2 Dungnang

_Dungnang_, iv., can be defined as ‘because of thinking about something bad that happens someone feels bad like someone who does not think he can ever feel

\(^4\)Semantic role taken from Kroeger (2005:54)
good again’. The term is similar to ‘grief’ or ‘despair’; it is a very heavy sadness or sorrow or a sense of being overwhelmed. This verb is intransitive in form as in (6).

(6) dungnang-wër
   overwhelmed-IMPERF.3SM
   ‘He is overwhelmed.’

Dungnang usually occurs, however, compounded with another root (7) and (8).

(7) Duka-dungnang-wër
   think-overwhelmed-IMPERF.3SM
   ‘He is thinking and overwhelmed.’

(8) Nur-dungnang-wër
   cry-overwhelmed-IMPERF.3SM
   ‘He is crying in grief.’

The compound expression in (8) is used to refer to the public mourning for the dead.

An Alamblak person commonly feels this kind of grief at these times:
• when one’s beloved relative dies,
• upon hearing about something very bad that happened, and
• when a child goes away for a long time, such as to boarding school

The socially appropriate expression of this feeling is typically hanging one’s head, shouting aloud, sitting on the river bank in meditation while looking at the sunset, staying at the graveside, or trying to get the problem out of one’s mind by getting out of the house and engaging in some activity like playing. A person who is feeling this way may visit a grave site. Even though he wants to stay longer, the time of meditation may be cut short for fear of the spirit of the dead person. A less common outward manifestation of dungnang is to cry.

2.2.3 Marbir dohater

Marbir dohater, iv., is a body image expression that can be defined as ‘because of thinking about something bad that happens someone feels bad like someone who does not want to think about doing anything right now’. This expression describes a state that might result from the emotional experience of dungnang. This idiom reflects the loss of enthusiasm for carrying on with the normal affairs of life (9).
(9) Marbir dohater.
   heart without.IMPERF.3SM
   ‘He lacks any motivation for life.’

This expression is a near synonym of *dungnang*.

### 2.2.4 *Durwon*

*Durwon*, iv., can be defined as ‘feel bad when thinking about wanting to be with someone or thinking about something one used to have, knowing that one cannot be with that person or thing’. A person will easily be able to get over this bad feeling. *Durwon* is a mild form of sadness, like ‘missing something’ or ‘being lonesome’ in English. The core concept is the separation or loss that one feels.

An Alamblak person commonly feels *durwon* at these times:
- one’s canoe drifts away and he misses it,
- a friend or possession (not too special) is gone,
- being reminded by some memorabilia of a friend or family member who is gone,
- something like a sunset or bird’s song reminds him of a person long since dead,
- someone’s friend dies and he is not nearby to say goodbye before his friend dies, and
- waiting longingly and impatiently for someone to return.

The appropriate expression of this feeling is typically crying in a stylized way, contemplating a sunset, writing a letter to someone you miss, or sitting at the graveside.

When a friend leaves you and you feel sad, it would be common to express a farewell by vocalizing *ooooo-wa*5 *Wa* is a form of the word for ‘yes’.

The feeling of *durwon* is expressed by the body-part expressions in (10) and (11). These expressions, we believe, are equivalent in denotation to the lexical item *durwon*, i.e., they refer to the same emotion because their core meaning that determines reference is the same. The body image expressions possibly communicate stronger feeling.

(10) Nanho marbir rët hanitr.
   my heart she took.3SF.3SM
   ‘She made me sad.’

This might be said when a loved friend or relative leaves.

(11) Bi marbi-puka. ‘(I’m) heart-broken.’

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5This expression, given in the context of farewells, is referred to as *yok-wonta*, which might be glossed as ‘to farewell someone with emotion’. A related expression, *fër-wonta* ‘move with a swinging action-with emotion’, was coined in the 1970s when the gesture of waving with the hand was adopted.
The expressions in this section form a network and express a cline of ‘sad-like’ expressions. *Yohoaf* expresses sadness due to something bad happening with a desire to help make things better. *Dungnang* is a greater sadness accompanied by a sense of not being able to get over the sadness. It possibly implies that one desairs of being able to do anything about the situation. *Marbir dohater* suggests a debilitating sadness that strips one of enthusiasm or motivation to attempt to do anything. *Durwon* intersects with *dungnang* in that the latter is a hopeless feeling, whereas one can expect to get over the former even in the midst of the sadness it references.

### 2.3 Shame

Wierzbicka (1999:108) indentifies a sub-domain which relates an experiencer’s idea that “other people can think something (either good or bad) about me.” The similar Alamblak concept relates to feelings deriving from thinking about what other people think about oneself.

#### 2.3.1 Yirufa

*Yirufa*, iv, can be defined as ‘someone feels unpleasant like a person X feels when other people are giving attention to X when X does not want anyone to give attention to X’. A person may feel this emotion occasioned by a specific event, or it may reflect a person’s general character. *Yirufa* seem to be completely synonymous with *yimtna*, iv, an apparent loan word from the closely related Kuvenmas dialect.

(12) Masat yirufek-wër 8 ‘He is very embarrassed / shy.’

An Alamblak person commonly feels *yirufa* at these times:

- people call attention to someone,
- a man walks past a group of girls who notice him,
- someone does something wrong, and it is known publicly,
- someone is caught doing something he or she should not be doing, and
- someone is insulted.

The appropriate expressions of this feeling are typically scratching one’s head vigorously, hanging one’s head, looking away, staying in the house, and, in pre-World War II times, committing suicide. Being poorly dressed is indicative of someone whose personality is to avoid public attention.

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6This possible implication, a suggestion of an anonymous reviewer, has been noted after comparing the contrasting elements in the meanings of yohoaf and marbir dohater. We have not had the opportunity to verify this with follow-up fieldwork.

7The origin of yimtna in the Kuvenmas dialect is unknown.

8The underlying present tense stem is *yirufayk*. The diphthong is manifested as a front vowel by phonological rule.
A person who is known to be yirufa may be metaphorically referred to as Manisifer ‘He is a millipede’. This is a common metaphor used to refer either to a short-nosed person or a shy, timid person. Perhaps the millipede is associated with shyness because of the way a millipede recoils when something touches its head.

The expression wom kmithëfer ‘He is a person from another place’ is sometimes used to indirectly refer to how a local resident keeps his head down in public. Such a person is characteristically yirufa. ‘Self conscious’ or ‘embarrassed’ would be the closest English equivalents.

Yirufa is more general in meaning than either of the English terms ‘shame’ or ‘shy’. ‘Shame’ highlights that ‘the experiencer feels badly about himself because he thinks other people think something about him is bad’. ‘Shy’, on the other hand, expresses the disposition of wanting to be unnoticed, whether for something good or bad about oneself.

2.4 Anger

This concept relates to feelings derived from thinking “I don’t want things like this to happen.”

2.4.1 Nambur

Nambur, iv., can refer both to the emotion of anger and the action of fighting, the natural action to take following anger. The first sense can be defined as ‘someone feeling bad about something they did not want to happen, and because of that he or she wants to hurt something or someone’. The simple form of the verb is given in (13).

(13) Nambur-wër
angry-IMPERF.3SM. ‘He is angry.’

An Alamblak person commonly feels nambur at these times:
- someone gossips about him,
- someone steals from him,
- someone disobeys him,
- someone insults him, and
- he himself does something he disapproves of.

The common expression of this feeling is to slam or hit something, to cry, to shout or snap at someone, to hang one’s head, to hit a stick on the ground, to slash a tree or hit a stone with a machete, to pull out grass vigorously, or to fight with someone. Namburet yimar ‘an angry person’ is likely to fight or threaten to fight frequently.
The intensified form for angry is indicated by an aspect marker \textit{bugay} \textasciitilde \textit{buge} ‘to fruition’. Anger coming to fruition indicates a person is angry enough to start fighting.

(14) nambur-buge-wër ‘He is completely angry.’

Anger is described by the body part image in (15) and the metaphor in (16). These expressions are substitutable for \textit{nambur} in the same context.

(15) Yima yuhru kikwër
\hspace{1cm} \text{person soul/inner.self tied.up.IMPERF.3SM} \\
\hspace{1cm} ‘his thoughts are /inner self is tied up.’
\hspace{1cm} ‘He is tied in knots.’

(16) Kaht kañjë kukrwër.
\hspace{1cm} \text{Fire like burning.IMPERF.3SM} \\
\hspace{1cm} ‘He is intensely angry.’

These expressions convey a feature of the emotion of anger as the Alamblak people conceptualize it. Anger affects a person such that the thoughts or inner self of a person are preoccupied with the causing situation, and the person cannot function normally (15). The metaphorical image of (16) refers to someone who feels incensed. The metaphor is based on a conceptual metaphor that anger is fire.

2.5 Fear

This category relates to feelings deriving from thinking that bad things can happen.

2.5.1 Yakrme

\textit{Yakrme}, iv., is another word for which the distinction between an emotion and its related action is blurred. It may be glossed as ‘feeling like someone who feels something bad about something that he thinks may hurt him, and thinking that causes him to think, “I should run away.”’ The term also refers to the action of ‘running away in fear’. The first response to fear is to run, thus the extended meaning of the term. Example (17) illustrates the abstract, non-spatial sense of the word.

(17) Metroh yuhurneft kakrmit-wër\textsuperscript{9}
\hspace{1cm} \text{girls.of liking.NOM afraid-IMPERF.3SM} \\
\hspace{1cm} ‘He is afraid of liking / lusting after girls.’

\textsuperscript{9}The present tense stem of this conjugation begins with /k/, ends with a /t/ and has generalized the first person singular form of the vowel of the last syllable.
It is a wise man who understands the trouble that a seductive woman may bring upon him.

An Alamblak person commonly feels *yakrme* at these times:
- encountering spirits,
- encountering animals that can injure a person, like pigs, dogs and cassowaries,
- encountering an angry person or a madman,
- thinking about receiving bad news, and
- encountering fire, anger or lust.

The appropriate expression of this feeling is typically to run away. In the case of encountering spirits, one may seek company or sleep in a different house, or keep a light burning. One might also hang up tree bark or leaves to ward off evil spirits, burn incense, whistle loudly, or do a child’s dance or song.

The intensified form for fear is indicated by an adverbial suffix *mif* ‘truly’ as in (18).

(18) *yakrme-mif-kfët* ‘to be truly afraid’

The metaphors in (19)-(21) describe a person who is *yakrme* ‘fearful’. As mentioned for other metaphors, these examples seem to refer to the same emotion as *yakrme* but more with more expressive imagery.

(19) *giñetm kañjë ne-wër*
   *Crayfish like do-IMPERF.3SM*
   ‘He is backing off like a crayfish.’

This image focuses on the quick backward retreat of the crayfish when it is startled. A fearful person pulls back like a crayfish. This metaphor would be used most commonly in situations in which a person refrains from doing something out of fear.

(20) *kikroht korh-n yakrme-ñeft?*
   *Chicken seated-2S fear-NOM*
   ‘You are a chicken with respect to fear?’

(21) *Yaom kañjë nohkfitir*
   *Dogs like die.beat.IPST.3SM*
   ‘He's afraid like dogs beaten to the point of death.’

The metaphor in (20) compares fearful people to chickens and the comparative statement in (21) compares them to dogs that have been beaten so much that they cower in fear at the slightest movement of the hand. These three metaphors associate a posture or withdrawing action with fear. *Yakrme* refers to both the internal emotion of fear and the flight action that people do in response to fear.
2.6 Desire - Be pleased with

This sub-domain relates to feelings that derive from thinking about having something that one wants. There are two words in this category. They overlap in meaning considerably with few distinctives. There is commonly a close association between the domains of ‘desire’ and ‘like-appreciate’ which is manifested lexically in some languages. ‘Desire’ is a domain of disposition, which is an attitude of the mind. ‘Like-appreciate’ represents a domain of positive emotion. Bruce (2003:324-325) observed this association in the Maskelyne language of Vanuatu. In Samoan ‘want’ is included in a semi-transitive class of verbs that includes verbs of communication, perception, emotion and thinking (Onishi 2001:16, quoting Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:730-735). All of these verbs in Samoan are thought of as relating to their object in a similar way in contrast to the transitive verbs. All of that to say that verbs of desire and positive emotions are closely related semantically, and that similarity is reflected in the syntax of Samoan.

2.6.1 Yuhur

*Yuhur*, tv., may be defined as ‘someone thinks like this: “I feel something good because I have this good thing.”’ This term is polysemous with another sense that in some contexts means simply ‘want’.

*Yuhur* as a transitive verb takes an object.

(22) Na mett yuhur-w-an-t
    I woman like/want-IMPERF-1S-3SF
    ‘I like/want a/the woman.’

An Alamblak person commonly feels *yuhur* at these times:
- when someone desires an attribute they admire in someone else,
- when someone likes someone else, and
- when someone likes a girl, or wants her.

In the following situations a person is expressing the mental disposition of *yuhur*:
- when a man wants new trousers,
- when a couple wants more children, and
- when someone wants an event to happen.

The appropriate expression for showing that one likes something is typically
to talk about it or to look longingly at it, or to nod one’s head, smile, say “uh-huh.” This person might rub noses with a baby (*kfek-hakfê* ‘rub noses with and talk to’); this will surely bring an accusation of wanting a baby.
In the light of the close relationship of these meanings of ‘appreciation for’ and ‘desire for’, it is not surprising that expressions of appreciation for some object may be taken by a person’s host as an obligation to give the object to the appreciative person. Many cultures in Asia and the Pacific are noted for this characteristic of polite social behavior.

The intensified expression is formed with the adverbial suffix *mif* ‘truly’ as in (23).

(23) Bro Yifemr yuhur-mif-wërnëm.
    Big Father likes-truly-IMPERF.3SM.1PL
    ‘God loves us.’

The body image concepts in examples (24)-(26) describe an emotion involving doing something with an object that one wants to do (cf. sense three of *love* in Bruce 2003:305). These are statements of stronger feelings and desire in the general case than those expressed by the single lexeme *yuhur*.

(24) Yirapam nanho wafet.
    fish.meat my liver.3SF.is
    ‘I love fish meat.’ (Lit. Fish meat is my liver.)

(25) Nanho waf-mkuyet.
    My liver-piece.is.3SF
    ‘I love it / her deeply.’ (Lit. It/she is a piece of my liver.)

Example (26) expresses the attitude that the speaker could never give away the object of his affection. It is appropriate to say this about a special possession or a child, but one would only say it in jest about his wife.

(26) Nanho marbit korhwët rediotn / yëntn.
    My heart sits radio.in / child.3SF.in
    ‘I love the radio / little girl’. (Lit. ‘My heart is in the radio/girl.’)

Examples (27) and (28) are body image expressions built on the verbs *cut* and *shoot* that indicate an object causes a person to experience a desire for the object.

(27) Pukwëtr rediot.
    cut.IMPERF.3SF.3SM radio.3SF
    ‘The radio is captivating his desires’. (Lit. ‘The radio cuts him.’)

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10McElhanon 1977 suggests that in some languages of Papua New Guinea expressions involving a predication about a body part express concepts that are understood more literally than idiomatically. These expressions seem to formulate a concept about something psychological that happens in the locus of the physical body part. They are therefore referred to as body image concepts rather than body part idioms.
(28)  Tu-yuhur-wëtr rediot.
    shoot-like-IMPERF.3SF.3SM radio.3SF
‘The radio arouses his desire to have it.’ (Lit. ‘The radio shoots-likes him.’)

*Yuhur* and *fëhtas* are in the class of Uncontrolled Experiencer verbs in Alamblak (Bruce 1984:235-236). That is, when transitivized as in a serial construction, the experiencer, (i.e., the one feeling a desire) becomes the object of the verb, his desire being caused by some external stimulus. In (28), the radio is the causer marked as the subject of the clause, and the person affected by the radio (in desiring it) is marked as the object of the clause.

### 2.6.2 Wofɨn

*Wofɨn*, tv., means ‘want’. In some contexts, like *yuhur*, it seems to convey an emotional content.

A person can want (*wofɨn*):
- things,
- people, and
- actions.

The term can also express a liking for qualities:
- attributes (*Na bro metm wofɨnwa*. ‘I like fat women.’)

There are a few differences in the two words, however. *Yuhur* comes from the word *yuhr*, ‘thought, inner person’. At its core it has the component of emotional attachment, whereas *wofɨn* indicates less emotional involvement, and more of a desire for or a coveting of something.

Unlike *yuhur*, *wofɨn* cannot occur in a serial root construction that encodes a causer participant in the clause. Example (29) is ungrammatical. One explanation is that *wofɨn* takes an Agent role in Subject position rather than an Experiencer role that *yuhur* appears to take. *Wofɨn* is an act of wanting more than a feeling of emotion. Therefore the Agent cannot assume the Object position in (29) as the Experiencer can in (28). *Wofɨn* fits the transitive paradigm of Alamblak verbs. Transitive verbs cannot be transitivized further by a causativizing process.

(29)  *tuh-wofɨn-wëtr rediot.
    shoot-want-IMPERF.3SF.3SM radio.3SF

Alamblak expressions similar to ‘lust’ are in the domain of desire. These expressions refer to sexual desire and are used to shame and embarrass people (*yirufa*). They are also used in a figurative way to mean ‘excitement’. Apart from the generic desire terms, *yuhur* and *wofɨn*, expressions specific to lustful desire are conventional metaphors.
2.6.4 Bebina

Bebina primarily refers to the action a crown pigeon makes, bobbing its head up and down *while* walking on the ground. This characteristic action is associated with a sexual action, and refers to a person who acts lustfully such as by running around the village looking for a partner. Thus metaphorically *bebina* may mean ‘aroused sexually’ (30).

Bebina also can refer generally to an unrestful, overactive person. The term is used to refer to children who can’t sit still and continually kick their feet or wiggle. Even in this context the metaphor is recognized as an off-color remark because of its sexual connotations.

(30) Duwaum kañjë bebine-wër
    crown pigeon like head.bobbing-IMPERF.3SM
    ‘He is aroused.’ (lit. ‘he is bobbing like a crown pigeon.’)

Two other common expressions are based on images of the domestic dog (31) and (32).

(31) Yiram yawr kañjë gibeft kahik-wër.
    Male dog like odor follow-IMPERF.3SM
    ‘He is aroused.’ (Lit. ‘He follows a smell like a male dog.’)

(32) Pipiu yawyet.
    Heat dog.is.3SF
    ‘She is aroused.’ (Lit. ‘She’s a dog in heat.’)

Example (33) uses the effect of a taro leaf as an image for projecting sexual desire. It is the itching effect of the leaf that is the basis of the metaphorical extension.

(33) Hetihdingeft fawë?
    taro.leaf eat.IMPERF.2S
    ‘You are sexually worked up!’ (Lit. ‘Are you eating the taro leaf?’)

Related words in this domain require further study include: *gigra* ‘sexual excitement’; *pipiu* ‘in heat’; *tehmihi* ‘intense sexual excitement’, ‘orgasm’; *ninia* ‘itch’. This particular domain is susceptible to euphemistic substitution due to the sexual connotations associated with it. Since *ninia* ‘itch’ has been associated figuratively with this domain, its use has been restricted in its original, basic meaning. Other words substituted for skin itching include *rinewt* ‘it itches’ and *tatatwët* ‘it hit-itches’.
2.7 Dislike, ‘Diswant’

This domain relates to wanting not to have or wanting something not to happen.

The concepts of dislike and diswant are most similar to concepts in the Desire domain. The Alamblak term is either general enough to encompass both Desire and Positive Emotions domains, or it is polysemous. The concept (or senses) expresses a negative desire as a rejection of; and in the case of ‘disliking’; it is clearly a negative concept of repulsion toward something, not simply the denial, viz., negation, of a liking for something.

The Alamblak verb for ‘to dislike, to diswant’, is kur. These senses contrast with the negatives of the verbs for ‘like’ and ‘want’, yuhur-kah and wofín-kah, which express the lack or denial of liking and wanting. There are also (kur)masha and hēhrek, which carry the meaning of ‘diswant’, but they are examples of the overlap of emotion and attitude / action, where there is much polysemy if not fuzzy borders.

2.7.1 Kur

Kur, tv., may be defined as ‘someone feels something about something or someone else such that he neither wants that something or someone else, nor wants to be with them’. It is therefore not the denial of a feeling or desire, but a negative feeling or desire. It is an irregular verb, the present tense form being kokr (34) and (35).

(34) kokr-wa
    diswant/dislike-MPERF.1S
    ‘I feel negatively toward (doing something).’

(35) kokr-want
    diswant/dislike-MPERF.1S.3SF
    ‘I feel negatively toward her/it.’

An Alamblak person commonly feels kur about the following:

- things,
- people, and
- doing something.

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11The term diswant was coined by Wierzbicka (1996:64). In her original list of 13 primitives ‘not want’ was included as one primitive rather than the general negation concept embodied in the English term not which was not on the list (Wierzbicka 1980:10). She was ‘trying to come to grips with the fact that the semantic relation between the phrases ‘I want’ and ‘I don’t want’ seems to be different from that between, say, ‘I know’ and ‘I don’t know’... ‘I don’t know’...means, roughly speaking, that ‘it is not the case that I know.’ (…) ‘I don’t want’, however (on one reading at least), does not seem to mean that ‘it is not the case that I want’ (as in ‘I don’t particularly want’); rather, it seems to mean that I positively ‘diswant’ something.” (Wierzbicka 1996:64) ‘I don’t particularly want’ something expresses a denial that I want it; ‘I don’t want’ something expresses an attitude of rejection toward that something. She recognized this concept as a basic, important human concept that was found lexicalized in many languages. She eventually decided that ‘not’ was more basic than ‘not want’ and could derive the rejection concept of ‘not want’ from the negation concept ‘not’ rather than visa-versa. ‘Diswanting’ to focus on the rejection reading of ‘not want’ in contrast to the denial reading.
The appropriate expression of this attitude is typically shaking one’s head, wrinkling one’s nose, raising one’s shoulders, making a \( p > \) sound (bilabial voiceless egressive mouth air, or a squeak).

The intensified form adds the adverbial suffix \textit{mif} ‘truly’ (36).

(36) Kokr-mif-wa. ‘I very much don’t want to.’

\textbf{2.7.2 Masha}

\textit{Masha} may be defined as ‘very much dislike’ or ‘very much wanting not to do something’. The word commonly combines with \textit{kur} (kurˈmasha). \textit{Mashar} is the term given to a person who refuses to do anything. One uses this expression, usually of another person, when that person

\begin{itemize}
  \item doesn’t ever want to do anything,
  \item has been asked repeatedly and always answers negatively, and
  \item is too lazy to do anything.
\end{itemize}

This term clearly refers to a volitional response. It is not used when there are extenuating circumstances for someone being unable to do something.

\textbf{2.7.3 Hēhrek}

\textit{Hēhrek} may be defined as ‘wanting not to do something’. It is used to refer to a person that is too lazy to work. Such a person might be

\begin{itemize}
  \item too tired, and
  \item too lazy—doesn’t want—to do something specific
\end{itemize}

The appropriate expression of this attitude is typically looking down, not smiling, lifting his shoulders, or shaking one’s head.

\textit{Hēhrek-mbēnhar} is the name for such a lazy person. This title results from a curse put on a person. Technically such a person is one who has been cursed and therefore is very lethargic. This experience is therefore in its prototypical case not a volitional response to a situation, but a demeanor that a person experiences more passively than \textit{kur}.

\section*{3 Conclusion}

Fifteen terms in seven sub-domains of emotions are described here. The sub-domains include concepts similar to the English concepts ‘happy’, ‘sad’, ‘shame’, ‘anger’, ‘fear’, and ‘desire/love’. Several of the Alamblak emotion concepts are referred to by body-part images. The body-part images for emotions utilize the heart, the thoughts/inner person, and the liver.
Yindhor ‘happiness’ and nambur ‘anger’ are reflected in image of the yima yuhr ‘thoughts’, ‘dancing’ (3) and ‘being tied up’ (15) respectively. On the positive side the thoughts are unencumbered, whereas on the negative side (‘anger’ is the antonym, not ‘sadness’) one’s thoughts are portrayed as encumbered. Happy thoughts are optimistic because of good things happening and angry thoughts are aggressive because of offenses (bad things happening). The term yuhur ‘desire’, ‘like’ may be a part of this complex also as it is thought to be based on the word yuhr ‘thought’.

All the words in the sub-domain of ‘sadness’ refer to the marbir ‘heart’ in their idiomatic expression. So does yuhur ‘desire’. These common body image expressions indicate a view that the heart is involved in yearning for something that the experiencer wishes for.

Only yuhur ‘desire’ uses waft ‘liver’ as the seat of the emotion, in addition to its usage of marbir ‘heart’ and its possible connection to yima yuhr ‘thoughts’. The liver has been noted to be widely-used throughout Papua New Guinea as a body part associated with emotions, and it occurs in Alamblak associated with the notions of desiring and liking. It is noted that yuhur ‘desire’ is associated with the liver, the heart, and plausibly the thoughts, all three of the body parts used in Alamblak emotions.

Kenneth McElhanon (1975, 1977) has done extensive studies on body image expressions in many languages of the New Guinea area and elsewhere. He has pointed out that expressions of this type involving body parts are not to be dismissed as simply idioms. He has determined, through extensive field work that experiences that are identified with body parts are thought to reflect a duality. There is a physical response in the locus of a body part that reflects a psychological experience in the soul of the person.

The polysemy pattern of yuhur was noted in section 2.6.1. This association of polysemy between the domains of Emotions and Desire, the latter being a disposition of the mind, has been referred to numerous times in the literature. Goddard (2002:24-25) discusses this same type of polysemy relationship in Yankunytjatjara and Spanish. Robert Bugenhagen (2001:76-85) discusses a great variety of body image expressions involving mata- ‘eye’ in the Mbula language of Papua New Guinea. Some of those meanings include a dispositional sense of thinking about someone and wanting to do something good for that person, and complex emotions that tie together wanting something and feeling something as a result.

The Alamblak case is one more example of a language with lexical concepts in the four domains ‘fear-like’—‘Something bad can/will happen’, ‘anger-like’—‘I don’t want things like this to happen’, ‘shame-like’—‘Thinking about ourselves’, and ‘happy/love-like’ feelings—‘Something good happened’. These are the domains that Wierzbicka (1999) suggested were likely domains universally found in human language.
References


