An Experimental Study on the Associations between Korean Emotion Terms and Color Terms*

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【Abstract】

This study aims to explore the associations between emotions and color terms. At first, we surveyed high-frequent Korean emotion terms to establish the basic emotional terms in Korean. Secondly, the associations between the ten basic Korean emotional terms retrieved from the survey and color terms were examined and applied to depict a two-dimensional model of Korean emotional terms. Results revealed

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that two particular dimensions of emotions are important in the model of Korean emotional terms, which are Valence (negative-positive) and Arousal (activated-sleepy). The current results suggest that the close relationships between emotion-adjectives and colors can be examined in the two-dimensional model of emotion.

Key words: emotion terms, color terms, associations, conceptual metaphor, metonymy

1. Introduction

Emotions are expressed with specific colors based on the idea that emotions and feelings can relate to colors (Ballast 2002, Mahnke 1996). Because of the vague and complicated properties of colors and emotions, the discrete relationships between them have never been identified and systematically defined. Much concern, however, has been directed toward research on associations between emotions and color terms in English. Some of the research contains color-emotion matching tasks; matching colors to a certain number of emotions.

This study will closely examine the associations between emotions and color terms in both English and Korean. It will show that while most of the color term expressions in English and Korean have similar referential and extended meanings, there also exist several interesting and distinct meanings in each language.

This study consists of four chapters. Chapter 2 discusses previous studies of the associations between emotions and color terms in both English and Korean. Employing a contrastive analysis between English

and Korean from a cognitive-semantic perspective, this chapter provides various examples to demonstrate the extended meanings of English and Korean color terms. Chapter 3 investigates high-frequent emotion terms to examine the basic Korean emotion terms and categorize them systematically. This chapter also discusses the associations between color terms and ten Korean emotion terms selected from the survey. Chapter 4 concludes this study by emphasizing the need to look further at the relationship between the color terms and emotions cross-linguistically.

2. Previous Studies

The associations between emotions and color terms are closely tied to color preferences. In particular, color preferences are associated with whether a color elicits positive or negative feelings. While particular colors have been found to be highly preferred regardless of age, racial group, or culture (Adams & Osgood, 1973, Eysenck, 1941), there is some evidence that color preference may be culturally-based. For example, Choungourian (1968) found that the colors RED and BLUE were the most preferred colors among American subjects, but were less preferred in other cultures. In a comparison of Japanese and Korean subjects, Saito (1996) found that unique color preference tendencies between the two countries, and also with respect to age, gender, and geographical region within the individual country. In this chapter, we will discuss previous studies of associations between emotions and color terms in both English and Korean.

2.1 Emotions and English Color Terms

Several color terms in English exhibit certain emotions as follows:

(1) a. Richard had *gone very white*, but he stood his ground.
b. With a bright *red face* I was forced to admit that I had no real idea.
c. Her fur coat makes me *green with envy.*
d. Patricia tends to *feel blue* around the holidays.

If someone *goes white*, the skin on their face becomes very pale due to fear, shock, anger, or illness. *White* is used metonymically to refer to pale face, and the whole phrases (1a) is used to mean 'get frightened' by the emotion of fear. It can be inferred that this expression is also based on the conceptual metaphor, FEAR IS WHITE, which is a sub-stage conceptual metaphor of EMOTION IS COLOR.

Lakoff (1987) explains that increased body heat and/or blood pressure is assumed redness in the face and neck area, and such redness can also metonymically indicate anger. If a person says that someone's *face is red*, they convey that it is redder than its normal color due to embarrassment, anger, or being out of breath. Anger causes blood to surge to the head, making us *red in the face* as in sentence (1b).

If you say that someone is *green with envy* as in (1c), you mean that he or she is very envious indeed. *Green* is the color used in English to describe the pallor of a person's face caused by nausea; *to feel green* is generally interpreted as an expression of envy, even though nausea can be caused by a variety of other factors including shock, fear and illness. In most of continental Europe, jealousy is symbolized by the color *yellow*, but in Early Modern English, *green*

had already taken its place *Blue* has links to depression and to fear, connections which may be due in part to the proximity of *dark blue* to *black* on the color scale. *Dark blue* was symbolically related to *black*, and darkness, acquiring some of the connotative value attributed to the color. Itten (1961) remarks that in the darker shades of *blue*, the color *blue* falls into superstition, fear, grief and perdition. This is the likely origin of *to feel blue* in (1d), which means 'to feel depressed or sad.' This expression may have been reinforced by the notion that anxiety produces a livid skin color.

2.2 Emotions and Korean Color Terms

Several color terms in Korean also exhibit certain emotions as follows:

(2) a. *ansayk-i* *hayah-key* *pyenha-ta*
face.color-Nom white-Advz turn-Inf
'The face color turns white.'

b. *kunye-nun elkwul-ul pwulkhuy-myense eccel cwul-ul mollahayss-ta*
She-Nom. face-Acc. Become.red-Sim. not.know.Past-end.
'Getting a red face, she didn't know what to do.'

c. *ku-nun elkwul-ul pwulkhuy-myense miso-lul ciess-ta*
He-Nom. face-Acc. Become.red-Sim. smile-Acc. express. Past-end.
'He smiled with a red face[a blush].'

d. *kuka elkwul-ul pwulkhuymye hanguy-lul hayssta*
He-Nom. face-Acc. Become.red.Sim. protest-Acc. do.Past-end.
'He protested with a red face[an anger].'

e. *elkwul-i phalayci-ta*
face-Nom turn.blue-Inf
'The face turns blue.'

According to Kim(2009), expression (2a) represent the concept that the skin on a person's face becomes very pale as a result of coldness or great fear. The skin color, which is a part of the body, refers to the person with the body. These expressions are also based on THE SKIN COLOR FOR THE PERSON metonymy. RED in Korean stands for 'embarrassment' in (2b), 'shamefulness' in (2c), and 'anger' in (2d), respectively. In most cases RED in Korean has developed the same or similar extended meanings as the counterpart RED in English because experiencing such emotions can cause the face to become red. Korean color terms do not have a complete congruence with English color terms, denoting emotions on the metonymic motivation, because of contexts such as the nature of the object, the immediate surroundings, the effects of language, culture and physical environment (Hargrave 1982, Wierzbicka 1995, D'Zmura et al 1998). In (2e), the Korean terms for BLUE also denote being pallid because of illness or great fear like the color WHITE in (2a).

3. Experiments

3.1 Method

To examine the Korean basic color terms, two studies were performed and data were collected by using a questionnaire about emotion-adjectives and color terms. A questionnaire answered by one-hundred participants, students at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, is used to explore the typical categorization and association of color terms. In study 1, a list of ten basic emotions in Korean was collected first by asking one-

hundred native Korean speakers to indicate what they thought to be the basic emotions among forty emotion-adjectives.[1] The participants were also asked to match each emotion term they chose to color chips in a standardized stimulus array.[2] In study 2, one-hundred university students were asked to mark the score among the semantic differential scales. The data yielded two dimensions: Valence (negative-positive) and Arousal (activated-sleepy) dimensions. These dimensions could be integrated into a two-dimensional model of emotion.[3] The participants in this survey ranged from 21 to 30 years of age. They completed the task individually in a classroom and instruction was conducted in Korean.

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1) Ten experts in linguistics selected 40 representative emotion terms from the 87 word list which was also selected from the list of 434 emotion words by Park & Min (2005). The list of 434 word list was originally generated from 'The Frequency of Korean Word Usage' published by the Center for Linguistic Informatics Development in Yonsei University. Some of the emotions had the similar meaning and some were overlapped, so they were grouped under the same emotion category.

2) The stimulus array consisted of 329 Munsell color chips, including (a) 320 chromatic chips representing a uniform sampling of the colors on the outer skin of the perceptual color solid, where the most highly saturated colors of every hue and brightness are found; and (b) nine neutral, achromatic chips ranging from black through grey to white. For the reader unfamiliar with the color-solid model of the psychological color space, the important point here is that the stimulus array represents a reasonable sampling of the estimated seven million distinguishable colors (Kay & McDaniel 1978:613).

3) Regarding the richness of the emotion lexicon of Korean, more comprehensive and descriptive study needs carrying out, borrowing instruments and structures lready developed for English-speaking people, namely Russell's (1980) Circumplex of Pleasure and Arousal. The two-dimensional model by Russell (1980) maps emotion-related categories in emotion space defined by pleasure and arousal. The purpose of this study was to examine college students' color-emotion associations and to depict a two-dimensional model of emotion, referencing color sample from the standardized Munsell color system.

3.2 Result

To examine the basic emotions in Korean, we collected data using a questionnaire[4] about emotion-adjectives. A list of ten basic emotions in Korean was collected first by asking the participants to indicate what they thought to be the most basic emotions among forty emotion-adjectives. The results for this task are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Selected Emotion-adjectives in Korean[5]

No.	Emotion-Adjectives	No. of Participants	No.	Emotion-Adjectives	No. of Participants
1	yelkwanghata 'enthusiastic'	75	21	wenmanghata 'reproachful'	20
2	kamtonghata 'moved'	61	22	oylopta 'lonely'	20
3	calangsulepta 'proud'	60	23	changphihata 'shameful'	19
4	kulipta 'yearning'	33	24	pwulssanghata 'pitiful'	17
5	ekwulhata* 'mortifying'	33	25	sulphuta 'sad'	15
6	ccacungnayta 'irritated'	33	26	salanhsulepta 'lovely'	15
7	komapta 'grateful'	31	27	humwushata* 'heartwarming'	15
8	sswuksulepta* 'bashful'	28	28	mancokhata 'satisfied'	15
9	kipputa 'joyful'	28	29	phyenanhata 'comfortable'	14
10	taptaphata* 'feeling heavy'	26	30	hwuhoyhata 'regretful'	14
11	cilthwuhata 'jealous'	25	31	wuwulhata 'gloomy'	13
12	kincanghata 'nervous'	25	32	mangselita 'hesitating'	11
13	hayngpokhata 'happy'	24	33	nolata 'surprised'	10
14	anthakkapta 'regrettable'	24	34	mianhata 'apologizing'	9
15	kwichanhta 'bored'	23	35	koylopta 'distressful'	9
16	puwlanhata 'insecure'	22	36	selleyta* 'throbbing'	7
17	kekcenghata 'worried'	22	37	soksanghata* 'annoyed'	7

4) The original questionnaire was written down in Korean in order for the subjects not to misunderstand the meaning of the questions.

5) The transliteration system used for Korean data is an extended version of the Yale Transliteration System. This system is developed by Rhee (1996) to suit the transliteration of Old Korean and Middle Korean.

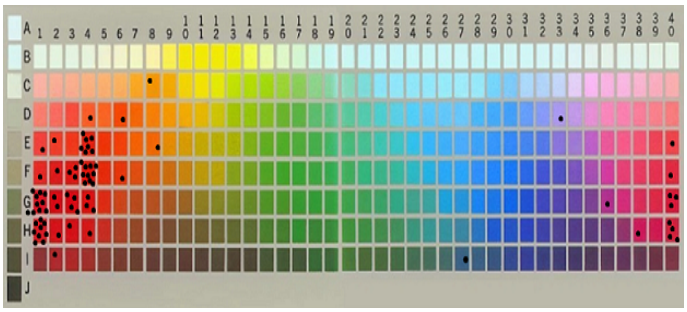
18	pwukkulepta 'shy'	22	38	tanghwanghata 'embarrassed'	6
19	hwanata 'angry'	21	39	mwusepta 'fearful'	5
20	silmanghata 'disappointed'	21	40	pwulkhwayhata 'unpleasant'	5

Note: The emotion-denoting terms which are marked with an asterisk (*) do not have corresponding terms in English because they cannot be focused on the English-based culture.

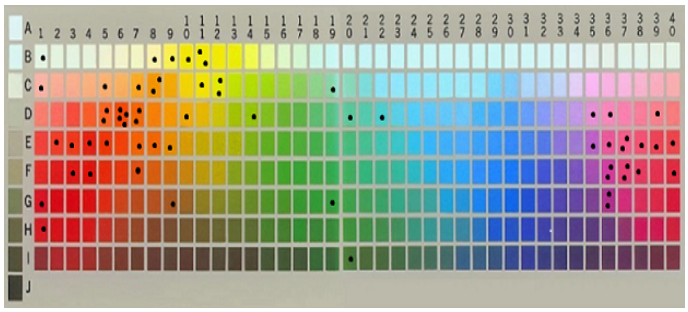
Table 3.1 lists the emotion-adjectives in decreasing order of saliency for all speakers. This table takes the percentages and puts them in rank order, highest to lowest. As discussed in section 1, it is not easy to determine the basic emotion terms in a language. Of the noteworthy observations about emotion terms, *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiastic' is currently the highest ranked adjective of 40 Korean emotion-adjectives, and it is followed by *kamtonghata* 'moved'.

The participants were also asked to match each emotion term they chose to color chips in a standardized stimulus array. The methods were similar to those described by Berlin and Kay (1969), and generally used by most researchers of color naming. The data is as follows:

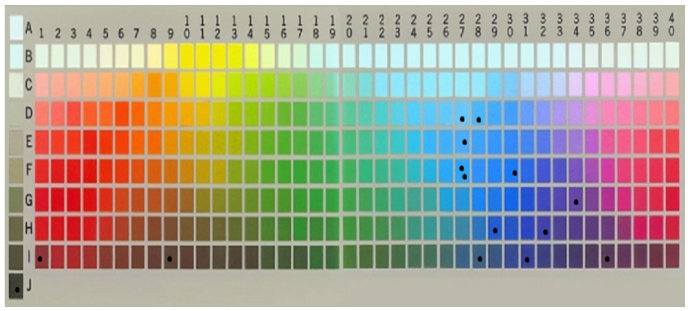
(a) *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiastic'



(b) *kamtonghata* ‘moved’



(c) *sulphuta* ‘sad’



(d) *pwukkulepta* ‘shy’

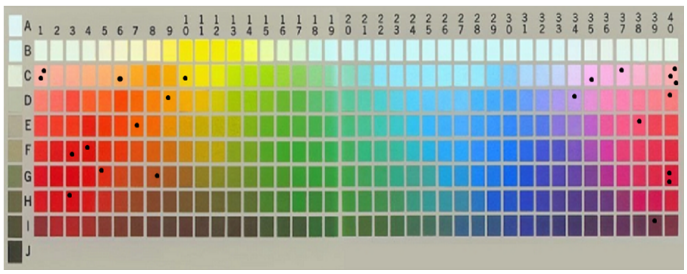


Figure 3.1 Associations of Colors and Emotions

In the figures above, the black point indicates the number of people who select the color as a representative color for the specific emotion. As is clear from the color board, warm colors such as RED, ORANGE, YELLOW and PINK are selected for *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiastic' and *kamtonghata* 'moved.' The first color board (a) which shows *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiastic' has a really noteworthy tendency. The black dots which refer to the participants' choices are concentrated into the quite focal color of RED. On the color board (b), there is also a tendency concentrated into bright and reddish color including red, orange, yellow, and pink. The color board (c) shows that the black dots are distributed on the only blue color. Then the last board (d) is about *pwukkulepta* 'shy'. The dots are mainly distributed on the RED and YELLOW series such as red, pink, yellow and orange colors. As shown in the previous linguistic data *ku-nun elkwul-ul pwukhuy-myense miso-lul ciess-ta* 'He smiled with a red face[a blush].' 'shyness' is related with the reddish color. It is because experiencing this emotion can cause the face to become red or more blushed.

In study 2, results have shown that the emotional dimensions defining the structural models fit within a space characterized by two bipolar axes of Valence and Arousal. Figure 3.2 shows an example of the integrated space. On the right hand side are the more positive states; on the left hand side the more negative ones. On the vertical axe are there scales which can be scored for activated states and sleepy ones. For example,

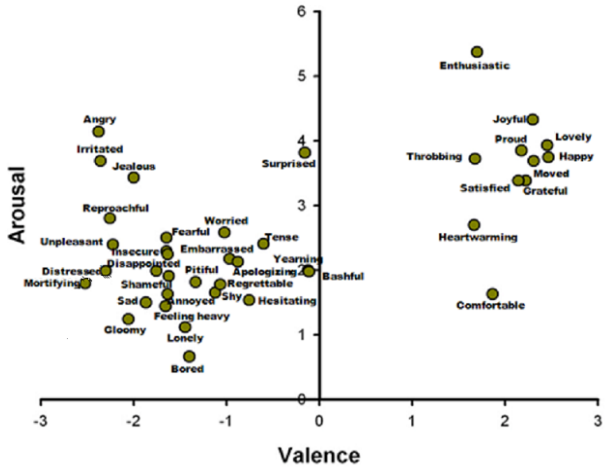


Figure 3.2 Two-dimensional Model of Korean Emotion Terms

From this result, we can compare our two-dimensional model based on Korean emotion terms with Russell's (1980) Circumplex of Pleasure and Arousal as follows.

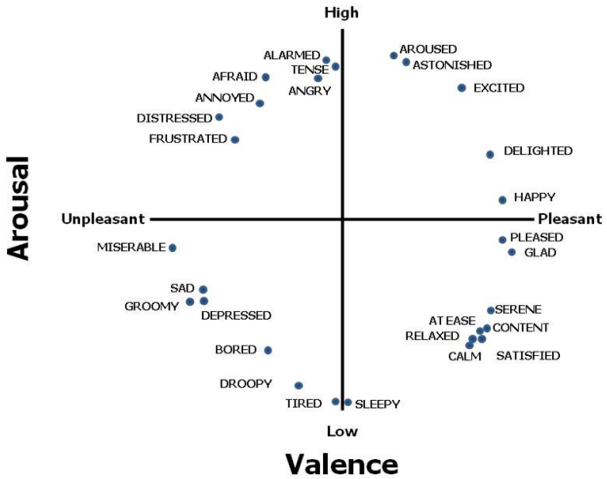


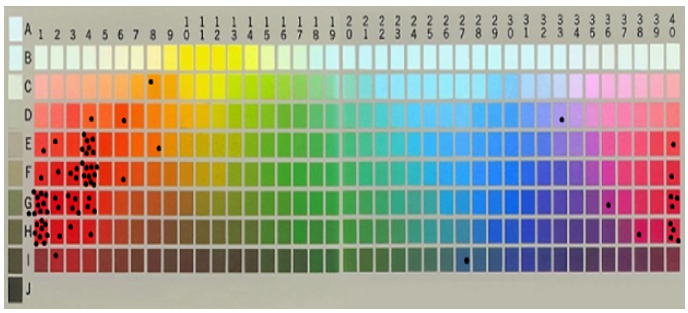
Figure 3.3 Two-dimensional Model of English Emotion Terms

The two-dimensional model by Russell (1980) maps emotion-related categories in emotion space defined by pleasure and arousal. According to Russell's (1980) study targeted onto English speakers, 'Alarmed' falls on the position of the highest arousal, conversely, sleepy is selected as the lowest arousal emotion. In perspective of Valence, 'miserable' is the most unpleasant emotion and 'glad' is the most pleasant emotion. On the graph, the emotion terms of English are distributed on the peripheral positions, not the center.

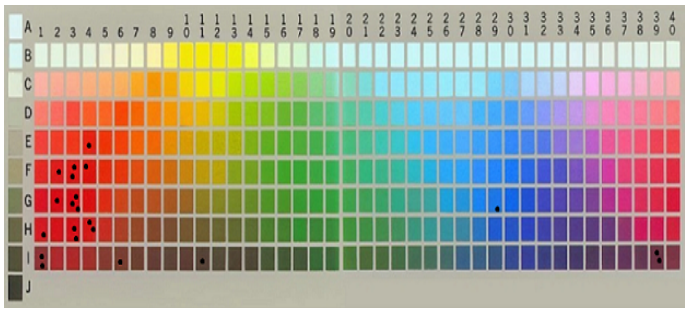
3.3. DISCUSSION

In this study, we took the expedient of borrowing instruments and structures already developed for English-speaking people, namely Russell's (1980) circumplex of Pleasure and Arousal. Given scales that were slightly revised, we were able to begin the study of our proposed integrated model in Korean emotion terms.

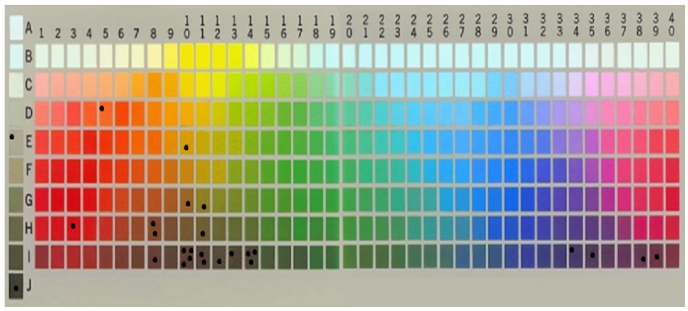
(a) *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiastic'



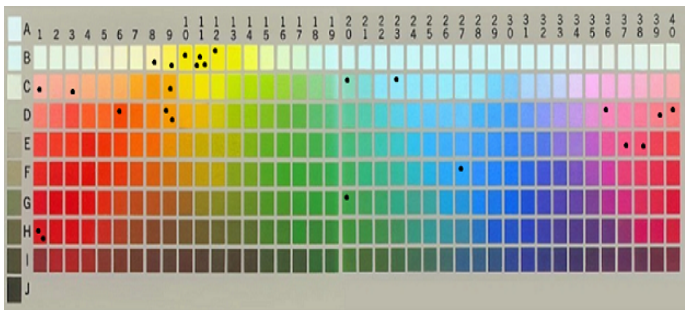
(b) *hwanata* ‘angry’



(c) *taptaphata* ‘feeling heavy’



(d) *hayngpokhata* ‘happy’



(e) *ekwulhata* 'mortifying'

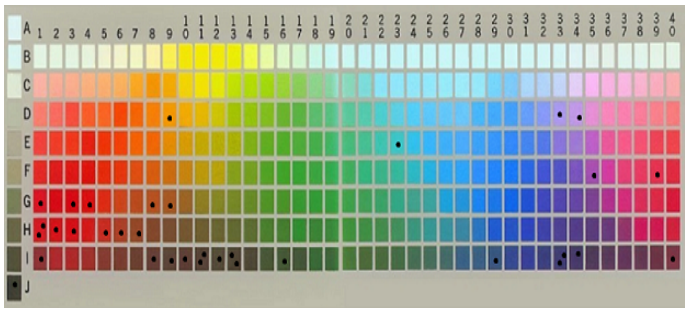


Figure 3.4 Associations of Colors-Emotions based on the two-dimensional model

Yelkwanghata 'enthusiastic' and *hwanata* 'angry' are the most activated, high arousal, emotion adjectives in Figure 3.4. In the figures (a) and (b), we can see that the adjectives intensively fall on the RED categories. RED may stem not only from the stimulus of the color, but from the natural flush of the cheeks, a physical reaction to anger, increased blood pressure, or physical exertion. On a more physiological plane, the color term RED, for its high visibility, is employed in signaling danger, which may be a further result of its association with blood and its perceptual salience. On the contrary, the color board (c) shows the emotion *taptaphata* 'feeling heavy' which is the lowest arousal. The black dots are concentrated into the really dark and heavy colors.

We can also see the opposite phenomenon between two adjectives from the figures (d) and (e). In Figure (d), *hayngpokhata* 'happy' which is the most positive adjective falls on RED, ORANGE, and YELLOW. These colors can be classified into "warm" colors which evoke the more active emotions. RED is regarded to have highly emotive nature to love and ORANGE indicates more relaxed type of happy. The decrease in warmth of a color is a reflection of the level of arousal the color evokes, which may explain

the range of association, from strong emotions such as ‘passion’ and ‘anger’ with RED, to milder emotions such as ‘happy’ with ORANGE. On the contrary, in Figure (e), *ekwulhata* ‘mortifying’ which is the most negative adjective falls on the heavy colors. From the contrastive figures, we can see that the positive significance of a color is related to its lightness rather than its hue.

4. Conclusion

As normally represented on the linguistic expressions, RED in Korean closely related ‘anger’, ‘shyness’, and ‘enthusiasm’. It is also proved on these two experiments through the college students’ responses. The reason can be explained on the thesis that the color RED is linked by metonymic relation to the manifestation of emotion. If a person says that someone’s face is red, he or she conveys that it is redder than its normal color due to embarrassment, anger, or being out of breath. Anger causes blood to surge to the head, making us red in the face. Of course we can observe universality of color terms for emotions. As in English, RED in Korean is related not only to the expression of emotions traditionally assigned to the color such as ‘anger’ and ‘embarrassment’, but also to ‘passion’ and ‘enthusiasm’.

The most interesting result of this study is that *yelkwanghata* ‘enthusiasm’ is the highest ranked adjective of 40. It is remarkable that the most college students regard this adjective as the most basic emotion term. Considering the surroundings of this study, the 2010 World Cup was being held in South Africa. In Korea, the 2002 World Cup is a turning point for a mental switchover about the color RED. Generally, RED had represented communist in Korea and Western culture. Since the 2002

World Cup, Red Devils can represent the positive notion like passion and a full of energy to a generation who experienced the 2002 World in a frenzy. In addition, wearing red t-shirts and scarves, Korean people became the member of the "Red Devils" which have become to display the excitement, passion and patriotism of the Korean cheering squad. This could be identified as culture-specific as well (Kim 2009). Accordingly, *yelkwanghata* 'enthusiasm' can be the most typical emotion term and be naturally associated with the red color which becomes recognized very positive, especially a generation who experienced the 2002 World Cup's enthusiastic cheering.

Except for the expressions with cultural difference, the inference pattern related to blood is similar to the process of conceptualization in every language which has a color term RED. Also we can consider BLUE color. Actually, the Korean blue color did not have any specific connotation, but there have been rich expressions of BLUE in English. It shows the change of young generation's thought. They think BLUE as sadness or gloomy and so on. It's also explained by influence of Western culture.

Considering that language has its foundation in human cognition, which in return, is continuously shaped by the ambient culture, this type of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural study on color terms and emotions should shed light on the cognitive structures of the speakers of these languages.

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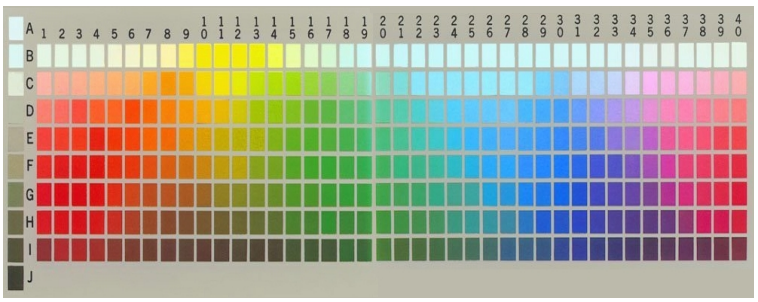
감정 어휘의 색채 표현 조사

성별: 남, 여	나이: 만 세,
이름:	해외거주 경험: 무, 유 (년)

1. 한국인의 감정을 대표하는 단어를 **10 가지** 선택하여 아래 단어의 번호에 동그라미 해주세요.

1	당황하다	9	쑥스럽다	17	불쾌하다	25	불안하다	33	원망하다
2	슬프다	10	흐뭇하다	18	열광하다	26	창피하다	34	질투하다
3	억울하다	11	외롭다	19	걱정하다	27	답답하다	35	화나다
4	고맙다	12	행복하다	20	자랑스럽다	28	부끄럽다	36	짜증내다
5	만족하다	13	실망하다	21	괴롭다	29	그립다	37	우울하다
6	무섭다	14	놀라다	22	귀찮다	30	안타깝다	38	기쁘다
7	감동하다	15	불쌍하다	23	속상하다	31	망설이다	39	긴장하다
8	후회하다	16	설레다	24	사랑스럽다	32	미안하다	40	편안하다

2. 한국인의 감정을 대표하는 단어로 위의 1번 문항에서 선택한 단어와 가장 잘 어울리는 색상을 아래 색편에서 찾아 그 색상 위에 단어의 번호를 적어주세요.



3. 다음의 단어 표현을 보고 떠오르는 느낌이 긍정적인지 아니면 부정적인지를 아래의 표에 보기와 같이 표시해 주세요.
(매우 긍정적: +3 / 매우 부정적: -3)

[보 기]

	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
기쁘다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

		-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
1	괴롭다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
2	귀찮다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
3	속상하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
4	사랑스럽다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
5	불안하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
6	창피하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
7	답답하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
8	부끄럽다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
9	그립다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
10	안타깝다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
11	망설이다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
12	미안하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
13	원망하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
14	질투하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
15	화나다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
16	짜증내다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
17	우울하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
18	기쁘다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
19	긴장하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
20	편안하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
21	당황하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
22	슬프다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
23	억울하다	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

24	고맙다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
25	만족하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
26	무섭다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
27	감동하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
28	후회하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
29	쑥스럽다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
30	흐뭇하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
31	외롭다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
32	행복하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
33	실망하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
34	놀라다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
35	불쌍하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
36	설레다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
37	불쾌하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
38	열광하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
39	걱정하다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I
40	자랑스럽다	I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I-------I

한국어 감정어휘와 색채어간의 연관성에 대한 실험 연구

김지인 · 이지영 · 서종석

이 논문의 목적은 감정과 색채어의 연관성을 살펴보는 것이다. 먼저, 기본적인 한국어 감정어휘를 알아보고 체계적으로 범주화시키기 위해 고빈도 감정어휘를 조사했다. 두 번째로, 설문을 통해 선택된 한국어 감정어휘와 색채어간의 연관성을 알아보고 한국어 감정형용사를 2차원 모델로 그려보았다. 연구 결과 설문을 통해 수집한 데이터는 2차원 즉, Valence (긍정적-부정적)와 Arousal (활동적-비활동적)로 분류 가능했으며, 이러한 2차원 모델과 색채어간에 밀접한 관계가 있다는 것을 알 수 있었다.

주제어: 감정어휘, 색채어, 연관성, 개념은유, 환유

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