

## LOVE AND HATRED IN TWO LANGUAGES: CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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### **Abstract:**

Living in a world that has become a 'global village' makes different nations seem very similar - we dress in a very similar way, we listen to the similar music, we sometimes even use the same words. But how similar are we when it comes to understanding another person's culture and values related to some of the general notions, such as love and hatred? The authors of this paper come from two countries that speak Slavic languages and are in many ways similar: Russia and Croatia. This similarity initiated a cross-cultural research described further in the paper. The authors have compared the meanings of two opposite notions (a value and an anti-value) - love and hatred - with regard to the meaning and importance they have in these two countries and how they are used in their respective languages. The definitions of the value love were collected from various available dictionaries in different areas and then analyzed as semantic components. Then the same procedure was conducted with the anti-value hatred. Since these semantic components are used in sentences/phrases in Russian and Croatian in various ways, their comparison has been made. Furthermore, students of two universities (one Russian and one Croatian) filled in a questionnaire regarding the meaning these notions have for them. The purpose of the questionnaire was to help the authors find out whether there are similarities/differences in how these two notions are perceived in their respective countries and languages and whether their meanings and importance for the culture differ. The obtained results will offer some insight into the Russian and Croatian languages when compared on the linguistic and cultural level with regard to a value and an anti-value.

*Key words:* (anti)values, (cross-) culture, language, love and hatred, semantic components.

## 1. Introduction

As one of the consequences of globalization, people tend to be similar – there are no big differences between people throughout the world with regard to what they wear, what kind of music they listen to, what topics they talk about. But how similar are we when it comes to understanding another person's culture and values related to some of the general notions, such as *love* and *hatred*?

In philosophy, culture is seen as something that members of a social group share (Prinz, 2011). Since groups and therefore cultures differ, culture strives to the universality of human development, which makes it designed for and subject to changes and transformations. Being aware of differences among various cultures helps us understand how people behave and for what reason. In order to understand the nature of a culture, we need to contrast it with other cultures; therefore, the dialogue of cultures is needed. This cross-cultural interaction enables us to understand people that belong to a culture different from our own. By understanding the culture, we are able to communicate more effectively.

Even though the similarities among cultures are usually obvious, we sometimes have problems when communicating since those differentiating characteristics become obvious only when unexpected problems in communication appear. Cultural diversity can be overlooked: according to Lewis (2006), romantic love is seen differently in France and Finland, and the English notion of revenge bears little similarity to the Sicilian. In cultural studies, cultural communication is seen as the way of cultural synthesis, i.e. creative acquisition of everything valuable presented in one's own culture and in others (Y.V. Bromley, 1974; S. I. Ryzhakova S. A. Arutyunov, 2004). Since communication is the core of language learning, integrating culture in language education has been a never-ending topic of discussion among language teachers, especially when it is perceived as the consequence of globalization and therefore the necessity of understanding other cultures (Lange & Paige, 2003).

It is of crucial importance in today's pluralistic world to overcome ethnocentrism. In order to do this, inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary integration is required for understanding reality. One of the key concepts of philosophy today is the term cross-culturalness. D.B. Zilberman (1996) and M.T. Stepanyants (1996) define it as a dialogue or pluralism of cultures. From the

philosophical point of view, cross-culturalness contributes to a more precise understanding of the cultural identity of a specific human society. The task that modern philosophy has is to reach the level of the planetary community. When doing this, cross-cultural and universal values need to be taken into consideration.

While trying to understand universal values, one should bear in mind a variety of unique cultures of the peoples inhabiting our planet. The significance of human values should be realized by people living in different cultures. This enables those who live in a multinational, multicultural society interact by being guided by the cross-cultural pluralist prerequisites. Therefore, people should learn to understand foreign values and to transfer this knowledge and this valuable experience of dealing with other cultures from generation to generation. This interaction between cultures then serves as the basis for understanding the world. Within the framework of intercultural dialogue a person faces many problems connected with the adequate transfer of sense when dealing with people representing different cultures and possessing different universal values.

Universal values represent a set of essential values that bind the individual to society and contribute to the unity of man and the world. They have been created alongside the development of the human civilization. However, for the moment there is no unambiguous wording of the concept "universal values". In philosophical studies they distinguish cultural values (freedom, creativity, love, communication, activity), moral values (the point of life and happiness, goodness, duty, responsibility, conscience, honor, dignity), aesthetic values (the beautiful, the sublime), religious values (faith), scientific (the truth), political values (peace, justice, democracy), legal values (law and order). In the modern era of global change the values of kindness and tolerance have become particularly important. Value orientations of a personality explain many of today's events in the world.

Therefore, in order to establish a successful dialogue between cultures, the authors of this paper believe that comparative cross-cultural studies of the values of different nations are needed. With this in mind, it was intriguing to find out whether there is any difference (or similarity) between two nationalities, Russian and Croatian, regarding the attitude towards two notions: a value *love* and its anti-value *hatred*. Since these two represent a cultural value and its anti-value which are probably the most universal of all, the authors expected there would not be many differences in

the attitude towards *love* and *hatred* between these two nations. However, they were intrigued to see whether the definitions of these two notions have a different importance when cross-cultural comparison is made. In addition, they wanted to investigate whether these notions are perceived in the same way between students studying programs in different scientific fields. The background for this interest comes from the years of experience in teaching but also in the scientific evidence – there has been evidence that the brains of science and humanities students differ (Takeuchi, et al., 2014).

## 2. Methodology

The study was conducted in the winter semester of the academic year 2014/2015. The participants of the research were 142 Russian and Croatian students of two universities: Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University (NSPU) in Russia and University North (UNIN) in Croatia (Figure 1). There were 66 male and 78 female students (Figure 2) of approximately the same age– the average age of participants was 20. The students of these two universities study programs belonging to three scientific fields: humanities, technical sciences and social sciences, with the Russian students belonging to humanities and the Croatian to technical and social sciences (Figure 3).

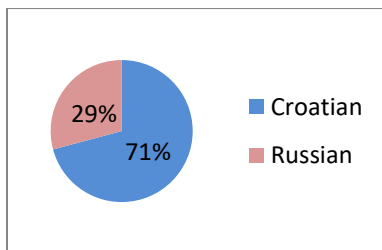


Figure 1. Nationality of participants

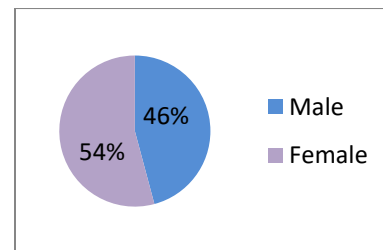


Figure 2. Gender of participants

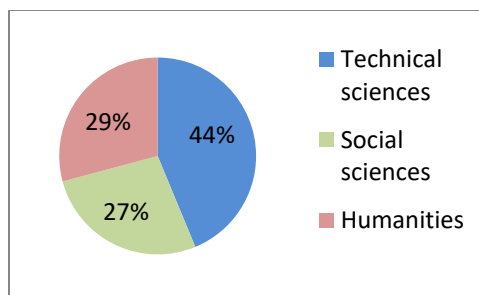


Figure 3. Scientific field that participants belong to

Definitions of a value *love* and its anti-value *hatred* were collected from different Russian and Croatian sources: monolingual dictionaries and encyclopedias from the fields of philosophy, psychology, theology, and general encyclopedia. The authors translated the explanations of the obtained semantic components into English and after a thorough comparison, 16 definitions of *love* and 7 definitions of *hatred* were singled out from all the used sources. These definitions were then used as statements of a questionnaire which was given to the participants. They were asked to choose a number on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where number 1 was equal to ‘I strongly disagree’ and 5 to ‘I strongly agree’. The data was collected during the regular lessons at the universities (English language and Philosophy) and was later analyzed by using the software SPSS. Chi-square test has been conducted, with  $p < 0.01$ .

### 3. Results and discussion

When analyzing the results, the authors wanted to see whether there were any statements that students preferred or opted for more frequently or they chose higher values. Therefore, the frequencies of the statements have been calculated. According to the analyzed results, the students marked three statements describing *love* with the dominant value of 5 – *love* as a complex emotion; *love* as a state of caring (giving and sacrificing for another person); and *love* as a desire to be present in the life of the other person (Table 1).

Table 1. Frequencies of definitions of *love*

LOVE – definition	N	Mo
state of dependence on another person	144	3
state of longing for another person		4
complex emotion		5
state of caring (giving and sacrificing for another person)		5
force that causes reconciliation		4
condition of reflection by presenting the loss of oneself		3
active influence		4
intention (act of will)		4
inclination towards good		4
form of sociability (relations based on natural biological sexual drive)		4

ambivalence of attitudes		3
cardinal virtue (chastity)		3
self-giving (the act of complete giving)		4
emotionally positive attitude to an object in the center of the vital needs		3
feeling physiologically determined by sexual needs		4
desire to be present in the life of the other person		5

With regard to *hatred*, two definitions were marked with the highest value by the majority of students: *hatred* as a deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of anger, and *hatred* as a deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of hostility (Table 2). The other definitions were marked by most of the students with value 3 (I neither agree nor disagree).

Table 2. Frequencies of definitions of *hatred*

<b>HATRED - definition</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mo</b>
deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of anger	144	5
deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of hostility		5
deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of disgust		3
deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of desire to cause the object pain or harm		3
deep emotional attitude characterized by feeling of repulsion		3
deep emotional attitude characterized by persecution and harassment of the object of hatred		3
aspiration to cause pain and feel the satisfaction that results from an unpleasant situation in which the object of hatred is		3

These results show that when it comes to the notion of *love*, the students have agreed or strongly agreed with the definitions they were offered with. As it regards *hatred*, they were less ready to agree with the statements – most of them were indifferent to them. However, they seem to associate *hatred* mostly with feelings of anger and hostility.

When we look at the statements that most of the students strongly agreed with (Figures 4 and 5), we see that the definition of *love* as the state of caring can be chosen as the definition that most of the students agree with. On the other hand, the definition of *hatred* is not as ‘clear-cut’ – the values that the students have chosen show more similarity. However, we noticed that they relate *hatred* mostly to the feeling of anger.

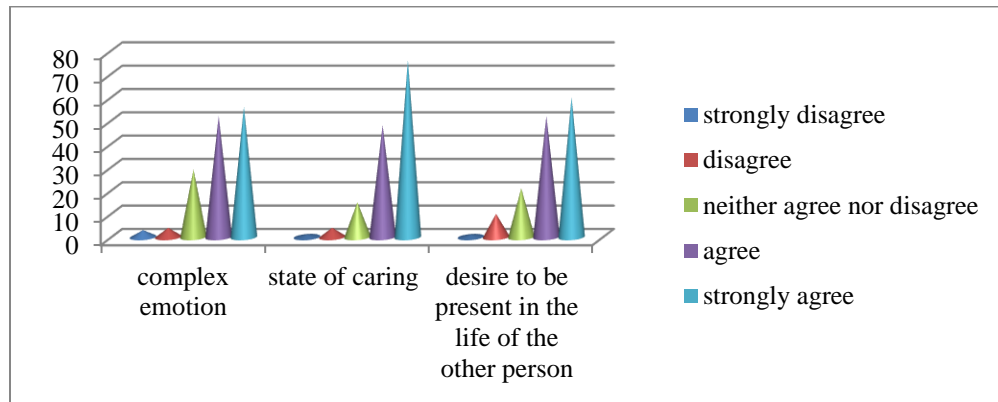


Figure 4. Frequencies of definitions of *love* marked with the highest value by the majority of the students

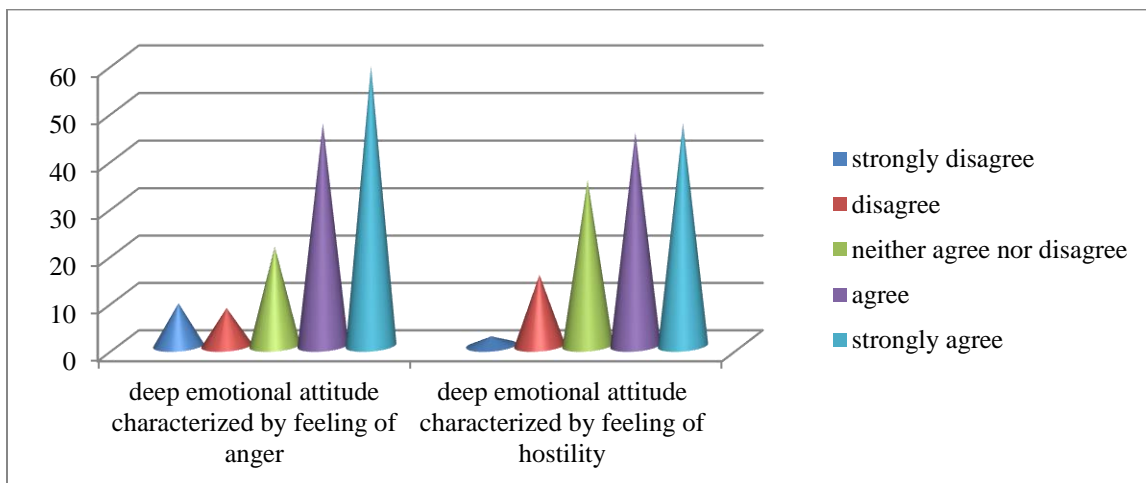


Figure 5. Frequencies of definitions of *hatred* marked with the highest value by the majority of the students

In order to find out whether there are any statistically significant differences regarding the nationality and the field of study in relation to the statements, we looked at all the statements (definitions of *love* and of *hatred*). The obtained data has been analyzed using the SPSS software –a chi-square test has been conducted and we opted for the  $p < 0.01$  since this allows only a 1% chance that the deviation is due to chance alone.

The results showed statistically significant difference with regard to nationality for only two of the statements: *love* as an emotionally positive attitude to an object in the center of the vital needs and *hatred* as aspiration to cause pain and feel the satisfaction that results from an unpleasant situation in which the object of hatred is.

Table 3 shows the statistical significance of results of dependence of love as an emotionally positive attitude to an object in the center of the vital needs with regard to nationality. It can be seen that majority of Croatians opted for value 3 and Russians for value 4. Moreover, only 19% of Russians opted for 3 compared to 51% of Croatians. Only 8.8% of Croatians opted for value 5 compared to 31% of Russians. It has to be mentioned that the mode value for this definition was equal to 3 – the reason for that might be the fact that the opinion of Croatians prevailed maybe because there were more Croatians than Russian students.



Table 3. *Love* as an emotionally positive attitude to an object in the center of the vital needs with regard to nationality

			<b><i>Love</i> as an emotionally positive attitude to an object in the center of the vital needs with regard to nationality</b>					Total
			1	2	3	4	5	
Nationality	Croatia	Count	4	8	52	29	9	102
	n	% within <b>Nationality</b>	3,9%	7,8%	51,0%	28,4%	8,8%	100,0%
		% within <b>attitude</b>	80,0%	61,5%	86,7%	65,9%	40,9%	70,8%
		% of Total	2,8%	5,6%	36,1%	20,1%	6,3%	70,8%
	Russian	Count	1	5	8	15	13	42
		% within <b>Nationality</b>	2,4%	11,9%	19,0%	35,7%	31,0%	100,0%
		% within <b>attitude</b>	20,0%	38,5%	13,3%	34,1%	59,1%	29,2%
		% of Total	,7%	3,5%	5,6%	10,4%	9,0%	29,2%
Total		Count	5	13	60	44	22	144
		% within <b>Nationality</b>	3,5%	9,0%	41,7%	30,6%	15,3%	100,0%
		% within <b>attitude</b>	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	3,5%	9,0%	41,7%	30,6%	15,3%	100,0%

Table 4 shows the results of dependence of nationality and *hatred* as aspiration to cause pain and feel the satisfaction that results from an unpleasant situation in which the object of hatred is. Again, most of the Croatians opted for value 3 and Russians for value 4.

Table 4. *Hatred* as aspiration to cause pain and feel the satisfaction that results from an unpleasant situation in which the object of hatred finds him/her

			<b><i>Hatred</i> as aspiration to cause pain and feel the satisfaction that results from an unpleasant situation in which the object of hatred is</b>					Total
			1	2	3	4	5	
Nationality	Croatia	Count	17	16	40	10	18	101
	n	% within <b>Nationality</b>	16,8%	15,8%	39,6%	9,9%	17,8%	100,0%
		% within <b>pain-satisfaction</b>	65,4%	69,6%	85,1%	40,0%	81,8%	70,6%
		% of Total	11,9%	11,2%	28,0%	7,0%	12,6%	70,6%
Russia		Count	9	7	7	15	4	42
	n	% within <b>Nationality</b>	21,4%	16,7%	16,7%	35,7%	9,5%	100,0%
		% within <b>pain-satisfaction</b>	34,6%	30,4%	14,9%	60,0%	18,2%	29,4%
		% of Total	6,3%	4,9%	4,9%	10,5%	2,8%	29,4%
Total		Count	26	23	47	25	22	143
		% within <b>Nationality</b>	18,2%	16,1%	32,9%	17,5%	15,4%	100,0%
		% within <b>pain-satisfaction</b>	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	18,2%	16,1%	32,9%	17,5%	15,4%	100,0%

There was no statistically significant difference in the choice of the statements regarding the scientific field, neither for *love* nor *hatred*.

#### 4. Conclusion

The present world shows an amazing variety of cultures, both in terms of values and in terms of practices. Culture is a collective phenomenon since it is at least partly shared with people who

live or lived within the same social environment. It consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. Culture is learned, not innate. On the other hand, values are implicit: they belong to the invisible software of our minds. Additionally, values are the deepest manifestations of culture. Hence, the core of culture is formed by values. Values are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. Talking about our own values is difficult, because it implies questioning our motives, emotions, and taboos. Our own culture is to us like the air we breathe, while another culture is like water – it takes special skills to be able to survive in both elements (Hofstede G., Hofstede G. J., Minkov M, 2010).

Although students in this survey are from two different countries and are students of different fields of study, the final results show a similarity between the attitude of the Russian and Croatian students regarding the definitions of *love* and *hatred*. An interesting fact that speaks in favor of the similarity between these two cultures is that the authors, when trying to find the definitions of these (anti)-values, had problems with finding the definitions of *hatred* – there are different descriptions of *love* and only several of *hatred*. That is the reason why there are sixteen definitions of *love* and only seven of *hatred*. The authors explain this discrepancy with the fact that there are different relations that we describe as *love* (love towards our friends, siblings, spouse, etc.) whereas hatred is less complicated to describe it.

Moreover, the perception of *love* and *hatred* is very similar in these two cultures (nationalities) and in the fields of science. Therefore, this shows that *love* and *hatred* are universal values – values perceived in a similar way.

These results confirm the (null) hypothesis that there are no differences between nationalities or scientific fields when it comes to the level of agreement with the statements/definitions of *love* and *hatred*. Minor statistically significant differences were obtained with the aforementioned two statements. Therefore, we could conclude that we ARE talking about universal values. However, we should be aware that the research described in this paper has its limitations with regard to the number of respondents – the majority of respondents are Croatian and the Croatian opinion prevailed as the opinion of majority. Consequently, the authors suggest conducting the same research with more participants from more cultures/nationalities. The data would give an insight into the perception of *love* and *hatred* as universal values from various points of view, i.e. points of view of various nationalities.

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