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La définition

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Postcolonial Lexicography Defining Creole Emotion Words with the Natural Semantic Metalanguage

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- **Author:** Levisen (Carsten)
- **Abstract:** The lexicographic study of postcolonial language varieties is severely undertheorized and underdeveloped. Against that background, this paper develops a new framework, Postcolonial Lexicography. This framework aims at providing a new praxis of word definition for the study of creoles, world Englishes, and other languages spoken in postcolonial contexts. Drawing on advances in lexical semantics, linguistic ethnography and postcolonial language studies, the paper offers an original analysis of emotion words in Urban Bislama, a creole language spoken in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The paper develops a sketch of the Bislama lexicon of emotion and provides new definitions of kros, roughly “angry,” les, roughly “annoyed” and sem, roughly “ashamed.” The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) is utilized as an interpretative technique for the definition of meaning. The NSM approach allows for a fine-grained lexical-semantic analysis, and at the same time, it helps circumvent “conceptual colonialism” and the related vices of Anglocentrism and Eurocentrism, all of which hamper advances in the field of lexicographic studies in postcolonial context.
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