

# What is the Mood?: Cross-Language Mood Description for Works of Fiction

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## ABSTRACT

Fiction is a popular resource type for pleasure reading. Many readers pursue escapist moments and emotional experiences through reading fiction. While mood is a critical factor in fiction reading, most information systems fail to support mood description and mood-based retrieval of fiction. To address this gap, previous study (Cho et al., 2023) collected mood terms from fiction readers, and identified 30 mood categories (e.g., happy, nostalgic) and 3 overlapping families of mood in fiction: atmosphere/setting, emotion, and tone/narrative. The findings were based on English data. Expanding on the previous study, this study explores cross-language mood description for fiction. Through an open-ended online survey, we collected reader-assigned mood terms in Chinese and Korean. With a small sample size (16 Chinese and 13 Korean responses), the purpose is to observe unique or challenging cases rooted in language differences. One type of challenging cases is metaphorical mood terms. These terms describe mood with metaphors and require interpretation. For instance, one reader uses *eclosion* in Chinese to describe the complex feeling of relief, empowerment, and gaining freedom after transformation. Other challenges, such as the lack of satisfactory match in English, were observed as well. Identifying translation challenges and unique mood terms could set directions for further research, and ultimately improve cross-language mood description and retrieval for fiction.

## REFERENCES

Cho, H., Lee, W.-C., Huang, L.-M., & Kohlburn, J. (2023). User-centered categorization of mood in fiction, *Journal of Documentation*, 79(3), 567-588. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-03-2022-0071>.

## **ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Cross-language information retrieval; Indexing; Metadata; Taxonomies.

## **AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Mood; Fiction; Emotion.

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