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IN ANTHROPOLOGY**

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This conference is a joint initiative of the Society of Anthropological Sciences and the Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies at Vilnius University



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“Romantic Love” Across Generations: A Preliminary Account Using the Freelist to Evaluate Changes in Lithuania

Freelisting is an initial systematic and emic method that is used to find out the main features or concepts that comprise a particular cultural domain. A cultural domain is anything that many members of a culture share a common understanding about. Freelisting is a simple and straightforward task in which you ask a sample (usually around 30 is sufficient) to list all the kinds of X where X can be contagious diseases, things they like about their job, qualities of a successful student etc. We decided to ask people to list all the things that come to their minds when they think of romantic love. Given that researchers have shown that ideas of romantic love have changed significantly in recent times we thought it would be interesting to conduct free lists with four different age groups (18-29 y. o.; 30-39 y. o.; 40-59 y. o. and 60+ y. o.) to compare both differences and similarities. While the free listing is just the first phase of a research project it allows us to elicit terms that reflect salient features of the concept of romantic love and provides an extensive array of terms that show the distribution of ideas related to romantic love.

Results reveal that three older age groups use very similar terms when defining romantic love (for example, respect, trust, understanding, family) with physical aspects of love (sex, passion) ranking lower. The youngest group of participants (18-29 y. o.) mostly associate romantic love with sex, warmth, and being together. Interestingly, all age groups with the exception of 30-39 y. o. often associate romantic love with family. Differences and similarities of “romantic love” between all four age groups will be discussed in more depth during the presentation.