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EMOTIVE TEXT ANALYSIS: METHOD OR METHODOLOGY?

Natalia G. Solodovnikova (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University, Volgograd, Russia, tommyboy22@mail.ru

Abstract

The article is aimed at verification of what exactly emotive analysis is – a proprietary method or a general methodology of linguistics of emotions. For this purpose, firstly is considered the history of its origin. Then are sequentially analyzed the stages of its transformation. Finally, is described its current state. Are made necessary comments to key concepts of linguistics of emotions. Shown is its dynamics and transition to a new (eco-oriented) paradigm. Is demonstrated the potential of emotive analysis on the example of the word functioning in the text. To illustrate this are given contemporary ultra-short flash-fiction texts, unique in their structure and semantics. Due to their limited scope, the category of emotivity is implemented in a special way, which makes it possible to fully demonstrate emotive analysis in action. This results in understanding that emotive analysis is a special method of linguistics of emotions, which is supposedly able to be universally applicable not only to texts of different genres and functional styles, but also to different time periods. Using the method of emotive analysis is found that in such unusual modern ultra-short texts, selected in this article as a private illustration of its application, potentiatives and connotatives almost instantly approach to affectives. This also suggests a new idea of accelerated ultra-emotivity of modern texts.

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1. Introduction

An entire galaxy of outstanding linguists (Arnold, 2016; Galperin, 2019, 2020; Kolshansky, 2020; Komlev, 2017; Ufimtseva, 2020; Shakhovsky, 2019c) is credited with the development of such concepts as lexical meaning, connotation, style, text which are directly related to the study of the nature of human emotions embodied in the language. Without the dedicated work of these scientists, it would hardly be possible to talk about the presence of emotions in language, about the emerging communicative (and, more broadly, anthropocentric, and now eco-centric) turn of linguistics.

1.1. Emotion in a word

Some researchers focused exclusively on such a unit of language as a word. This gave a powerful impetus to the development of a semiological approach to the study of vocabulary and its semantics. Gradually, scientists noticed that the emotion somehow penetrates the structure of the word's meaning, and they were interested in its volume in it.

1.2. Emotion in a text

But a number of researchers paid attention to the functioning of the word in a unit of a higher order – the text. The concept of the text, its structure and features, actively developed in text linguistics. Scientists could not help but see that emotion is translated not only by the word, but also by the text. The obvious conclusion was that the functioning of the word expressing emotion in the text could be no longer ignored.

2. Problem Statement

All this gave an impulse to the emergence and development of such a powerful scientific field as linguistics of emotions. Like any science that goes through the process of finding its own coordinates, linguistics of emotions had to develop its own object, subject, offer its own terminology, determine the main research unit, and suggest a private scientific method.

Emotive analysis claimed to be the latter. It was an attempt to categorize emotions in the lexical and semantic system of English and Russian. Its significance is difficult to overestimate: at a certain stage of development of domestic science, some cognitive lacuna was closed. Namely, with the help of emotive analysis, it was established how emotions penetrate the word, what place and what volume they occupy in its semantics, how and why words acquire the ability to translate emotions, what dictionaries say about the reflection of emotions in the semantics of the word and etc.

More than 30 years have passed since then. Language does not stand still. And we wanted to turn back to emotive analysis to look at it in action, in relation to modern texts.

This feature of modern communication, such as speed, probably dictates the appearance of ultra-short texts. This article is devoted to the application of emotive analysis to the named texts in order to determine whether such analysis can be called a method or even a methodology, and also to determine what type of their emotivity it can be spoken about after identifying different types of emotives in them and their functioning.

2.1. Emotive word and emotive text

Speaking about emotives, we will show how this concept expanded its boundaries: initially it was only about words with an emotive meaning, but later it was established that any language unit can act as an emotive. However, in order to avoid improper mixing of different terms, let us clarify that the text can be considered to be the largest language unit, and then it becomes possible to talk about emotive texts. On the other hand, the text contains units of lower levels (and in particular words), and then we can talk about an emotive text, the emotive density of which is measured at all levels by quantitative calculation of emotives.

2.2. Dynamics of the emotive meaning of the word in the text

Realizing that a word itself performs only its nominative and significative function, we are well aware that it can live a full life only in a certain context, which is "grasped" or "removed" by the text from a certain situation of communication. And in this environment, the word can change the degree of its emotivity and through the emotive valence in different ways realize its emotive potential.

3. Research Questions

In connection with the latest circumstances, natural questions arise:

3.1. What steps does emotive analysis consist of?

A review of the literature on the problem revealed several disparate ways to analyze emotions in the word and the text. We would like to specify whether there is a specific algorithm that can be identified by summing up parts of emotive analysis and bringing them into a certain sequence.

3.2. Is emotive analysis of the word and the text the same?

It is also necessary to find out how universal emotive analysis is in relation not only to texts of different functional styles and genres, but also to the ones of different time periods. If we proceed from emotionality as a fact of the human psyche of all times, it makes sense to check the work of emotive analysis on a specific type of text, and then make a corpus of the analyzed texts. In a global sense – this is a task that is just being begun in this research. In this article, we will consider only one particular example – namely ultra-short flash-fiction texts.

3.3. Does the quality of emotivity depend on the type of text?

Here we plan to find out how emotives behave and what happens to their emotive semantics in ultra-short texts.

4. Purpose of the Study

Thus, the purpose of this article is to identify the status of emotive analysis, on the material of, in particular, modern ultra-short texts. This goal involves the following tasks:

- operating with the main terminological concepts in the context of modernity: emotionality, emotivity, word, text, context, emotive, emotive text;
- crystallization of the main approaches in the found research on linguistics of emotions in Soviet and modern Russia;
- determining the content of emotive analysis;
- installation and description of a step-by-step algorithm for emotive analysis of the word in the text;
- the use of emotive analysis of ultra-short texts;
- practical application of emotive analysis to the word in the text.

5. Research Methods

The main research method in this work is emotive analysis, which is also checked at the meta-level. Namely, the use of emotive analysis clarifies whether it is a method or a methodology. Clarifying the understanding of the method and methodology we find the definition of both concepts. We also find similarities between emotive analysis and the method and methodology. To do this, we generalize its stages described in the works of its author. We apply emotive analysis to the vocabulary we are interested in in ultra-short texts. Intuitively, we choose the type of emotives we are interested in. We observe the implementation of emotivity in ultra-short texts.

6. Findings

To achieve the stated goal of this article, we will try to rethink the emotive analysis developed by Shakhovsky (1983) and apply it to ultra-short texts in the flash-fiction genre.

Let us first pass to the current concepts of linguistics of emotions.

Linguistics of emotions (or emotiology) developed into an independent theory with its own object, subject, terminology, units, and method of research by the end of the 80's of the XX century (Shakhovsky, 2019a). By this period, it had already passed a long way of development (Shakhovsky, 2016; Shakhovsky & Solodovnikova, 2017), and now even acquires an eco-centric orientation (Solodovnikova, 2019).

It is obvious that all knowledge is gradual, accumulative, but the linguistic theory of emotions still has no analogues, and the questions it develops are still relevant (Palkin, 2002; Riabtseva, 2019; Shakhovsky, 2019b, 2019d, 2019e, 2019f), which is probably due to the recognition of a human *homo sapiens*, whose emotions will always, as mentioned above, act as the motivational basis for all his activities, including speech.

Since we fully share V.I. Shakhovsky's linguistic theory of emotions, we consider it necessary to present its main concepts proposed by the scientist in order to approach the key concept of this article – emotive analysis.

So, following Shakhovsky (2019a), the next formulations of the main terminological concepts are accepted in this work:

emotivity– the reflection of emotions in a word, which determines its semantic ability to express emotions, compared to its ability to name and describe them;

emotive component of semantics – a structural division of semantics that is specifically designed to adequately express emotional relationships by all speakers of a given language;

emotive – a word with an emotive component in its semantics;

affective – a word with a denotative emotionality;

connotative – a word with an emotive connotation;

potentative– a word that acquires an emotive connotation by actualizing hidden semantics of emotivity, their semantic features, or semeconcretizers that are potentially encoded and collapsed in the semantics of a word, or by inducing semantics of emotionality from consociation to the semantics of a neutral word;

emotive valence – a combination of unpredictable, and therefore, as a rule, emotive, due to unusual denotative-referential relations of words;

emotive text – a statement within one or more sentences that conveys, along with factual and emotional information (or only one of them) using at least one emotive means – linguistic or paralinguistic (kinesics, phonation), expressing a certain emotion that is more or less adequately understood by all communicants in a given situation (Shakhovsky, 2019a).

6.1. The history of the emergence of emotive analysis

Based on the theses about the emotional aspect of thinking, about the concept as the unit of cognition, the word as the form of existence of concepts, the scientist quite rightly came to the conclusion on possibility of existence of some concepts with emotive content, which is reflected in the emotive component of the semantics of words.

Studying the emotive component of meaning, the scientist developed certain methods for describing it. Generalizing, it can be noted that it gives a semasiological interpretation of the category of emotivity, using such methods as the method of modeling the lexical-semantic field of emotivity, linguistic interviewing, the method of contrasting emotive texts, the method of emotive valence, and some other to describe it (Shakhovsky, 1983). He points out that these methods are complementary, since they can be used in a variety of ways. They extract data, the integration of which forms a certain understanding of this semasiological phenomenon. In his work, the author pays special attention to the methodological aspect of the study of the category of emotivity.

6.2. Stages of transformation of emotive analysis

Dealing with the most important problem of semantics – the emotive (connotative) aspect of meaning, the scientist considers it in the word, phraseology, sentence, and text, gradually coming to his own, original, understanding of connotation and an expansive interpretation of the emotive. The scientist develops the idea of a complex organization of the semantic system of emotivity, namely the idea of the integral functioning of the emotive, evaluative, and expressive components at the level of the emotive aspect of meaning, its emotive valence, and emotive function as components of this system.

Justifying why emotivity is a linguistic aspect of the category of emotionality, the author considers the lexical meaning of the word and its connotation (emotivity). He studies connotation as a subject of semasiology, the relationship of emotion, the lexical meaning of a word and connotation, the interaction of denotation and connotation (emotivity), expression and evaluation as components of denotation, the functional and stylistic component of meaning and connotation of emotivity.

While working on the description of the emotive component of meaning, the author for the first time faces the problem of formulating a method for studying emotivity. Exploring a variety of language material, he goes from modeling the lexical-semantic field of emotivity to its typological and lexicographic description. This stage involves working with a unit such as a word.

But then it becomes quite obvious that a word does not live in a dictionary, but it lives in a text. And the scientist comes to understand what an emotive text is. He uses the contextual method of analyzing emotivity, the method of contrasting the emotivity of the original text and its translation, the method of linguistic interviewing, and has a deeper understanding of the problem of emotive valence.

6.3. Modern understanding of emotive analysis

In the tradition of modern linguistics, it is possible to use texts of fiction as research material, which are stylized fixation of oral colloquial speech, but its main features, in principle, remain. This corresponds to the thesis that all fiction is a cast from reality, and therefore the linguistics of emotions has accumulated an impressive amount of knowledge about the emotivity of a literary text and an emotive artistic text. However, it does not limit itself only to this functional style, although there is a certain genre diversity in it itself.

And emotive analysis of such a text consists in identifying the most obvious cases of using the vocabulary of naming, describing, and expressing emotions by verbal means, as well as finding the most striking examples of affectives, connotatives, and potentiatives in it. Then their quantitative calculation is performed, the emotive density of the text is set, and the dynamics of the emotive semantics of the keywords of this text is monitored. Separately, different types of lexical emotives are correlated with lexical stylistic devices. Their negative or positive connotation is determined and the emotions they relate to are named.

6.4. So, what is emotive analysis – a method or a methodology?

From the works of V.I. Shakhovsky of different years, it is impossible to conclude with accuracy what the author considers emotive analysis to be. On the one hand, he suggests that a set of methods should be considered a methodology for the study of emotivity. We believe, based on the understanding of the method as an action that allows for the shortest possible time to get the maximum result with minimal costs, and the methodology as a set of methods used in a certain area, or the rules for their development and application (Pishchalnikova & Sonin, 2017), that emotive analysis is a method, i.e. a set of certain actions – that is, options for using the method in working with a separate group of objects, a special case of the method adapted to specific conditions. The method of emotive analysis itself is included in the methodology of emotivity research.

6.5. Application of the emotive analysis method to ultra-short texts in the flash-fiction genre

For this article, ultra-short flash-fiction texts were chosen out of love for the genre itself, based on the principle of consistent research of the category of emotivity in texts of different functional styles and genres and time periods, as well as out of interest in its implementation in a limited volume, i.e. using a minimum of means.

The complexity and low level of research of the above-mentioned genre is evidenced by the fact that a general terminology has not been formed for this phenomenon. Flash-fiction, small prose, short story, ultra-small, minimal, ultra-short prose are all names of the same phenomenon. The genre of small prose has not been subjected to deep emotive analysis before.

The fundamental and most pronounced distinguishing feature of flash-fiction is, as the name of the genre implies, the size of the text, that is, its volume. Flash-fiction is a story whose content is thought out by the reader, because the authors deliberately use an ultra-short form.

To analyze the practical material, the paper uses the method of counting affectives, connotatives and potentiatives, and elements of stylistic analysis (means only of the lexical level, which corresponds to the traditions of the chosen research paradigm).

The analysis showed that in the case of ultra-short texts consisting of several sentences (shorter than a paragraph), it is not only about emotive inclusions, but also about emotive ultra-density. From the point of view of the theory of emotivity, there are no neutral words at all, even potentiatives express emotions. Ultra-short texts consisting of several sentences (shorter than a paragraph) contain mainly potentiatives and a few splashes of connotation and / or affectives, however, the analysis showed that potentiatives in the "texts" are implemented property to converge on the transmitted power of emotions effectively depending on the amount of story and context. In this sense, we can speak not only about the convergence of stylistic means and techniques, but also about the convergence of emotives, which also indicates the ability of emotive semantics to dynamics.

Here is an example of an ultra-short "text-sentence" authored by Graeme Gibson: Three to Iraq. One came back.

There are only six words in this text. None of them have a dictionary emotivity markation. This means that all the words in this text are potentially emotive. However, it is clear from the context that Iraq becomes a symbol of death and tragic losses and is associated with emotions such as grief, fear, and hatred. The implied verb went is omitted. Both sentences are an example of an antithesis. The fact that the other two were killed is not mentioned in the text, but it is obvious. Therefore, all potentially emotive words in this context appear to converge in their emotive semantics with affectives. In this text, there is also a gradation that is veiled by the reception of deceived expectations. The word Iraq, of course, does not promise well, but the contrast of three gone – one returned reinforces this feeling because of a failed hope. We didn't choose this short text by accident. It fully demonstrates the emotive potential of each neutral word used in it, turning this text into a super-dense or, in other words, ultra-emotive one. The genre feature of such texts allows us to conclude that we can speak not only about the dynamics of the emotive semantics of the word in the text, but also about the ultra-emotivity of some texts.

7. Conclusion

Let us sum up the results concerning the issues considered in this article. Namely, what is emotive analysis – a method or a methodology, and also – what features of the implementation of the category of emotivity by the word in the text are revealed through the application of emotive analysis to individual emotives in ultra-short texts in the flash-fiction genre.

7.1. Why is emotive analysis a method, not a methodology?

Emotive analysis is a symbiosis of semasiology and contextual analysis. Firstly, a researcher intuitively selects a word for analysis, checks all its fixed meanings in the dictionary, sets their common semantic core, and then analyzes the same word in a context where its positive or negative evaluation sign and relationship with the emotion being expressed are established through lexical compatibility. The maximum number of contexts found for the functioning of a given word allows a researcher to make a representation of all its possible connotations, but no dictionary is currently able to fix them. Hence, arise the fundamental limitations of dictionaries and the limitless emotive potential of each word in the limitless contexts of its use. The steps listed above allow us to consider emotive analysis as a method – actually and a methodology – potentially. Its reality as a method is explained by the fact that it has already been repeatedly applied to many words of individual linguistic cultures, including contrastively, and its potential as a methodology is explained by the fact that the universality of its application to texts of different functional styles and genres of different time epochs is currently still only an attractive prospect.

7.2. Emotivity in ultra-short texts

The specificity of ultra-short texts is manifested in their extremely limited volume. This makes their authors use figurative and expressive means of creating fiction reality as much as possible. As it is known, evaluation, imagery, and expressiveness are closely intertwined in the stylistic tools and techniques used by authors of works of fiction, especially those that are small in volume, such as flash-fiction texts. The restriction imposed on the volume of such texts by the genre to which they belong makes them densely emotive, if it is assumed that all words of the language are actually or virtually emotive. All types of emotives are found in the analyzed example. We consider the texts of the flash-fiction genre not only ultra-short, but also ultra-emotive. In this sense, it is proposed to continue this logic and talk about ultra-emotivity, which implies it is the emotive ultra-high density. Since a number of texts are formally characterized by the use of potentially emotive vocabulary (with or without affectives and connotatives), the emotive dynamics of words in such texts is of particular interest. Observations of ultra-short texts have shown that they are close to affective in their emotive potential and always have a pronounced negative or positive evaluation.

7.3. Perspectives of the method of emotive analysis

As a prospect for further research we see the development of the idea whether the method of emotive analysis is universally applicable to any text. For that it is necessary to determine the notions of

"texts of ancientry and contemporaneity" and to generate a corpus of such texts, united by a uniform approach.

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