

**ISMGE 2020****II International Scientific and Practical Conference "Individual and Society in the Modern Geopolitical Environment"****EMOTIVE-EVALUATION VOCABULARY AS A MEANS OF CREATING EMOTIONAL MEDIA IMAGE OF COVID-19**

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***Abstract***

The article deals with emotional means in the journalistic discourse and describes how they help to reflect the urgent problems. The authors were attracted by the socially important situation related to the spread of the new coronavirus and the media coverage of this problem. They took a special interest in the linguistic embodiment of emotions, since the headlines of publicist texts are full of emotive-evaluation vocabulary, journalists exploit emotions to make a stronger impact on the addressee. Thus, axiological vocabulary has a special emotional effect capable to create a bright nomination, to form a delicate or rough assessment of the object. Evaluative adjectives reflecting the essential characteristics of the object create more often a pejorative image of COVID-19. Jargonisms and vulgarisms form a sharply negative background, seeking to give an effect of talking and close touch to communication. Emotional quotations convey not only the attitude to the problem, but also create a lively response in the mind of the addressee and are becoming popular in modern media. Effective emotional impact results from constructions with a comparative and a superlative, which explicate the semantics of the high degree of danger and severity of the current situation in the world. The creation of the COVID-19 image also involves emotionally colored syntactic models: questioning sentences and exclamation structures with an imperative.

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**Keywords:** COVID-19, emotional discourse, emotional-expressive connotations, emotive-evaluation vocabulary, language embodiment of emotions, mass media.



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## **1. Introduction**

The 21st century has seen many events that shake various corner of the globe. The highest peak of passion is due to the spread of a new viral disease – coronavirus. We see a large number of publications on this problem in the mass media. The more actual the public problem is, the brighter it is presented in mass media, the more often they exploit emotions (Chung & Zeng, 2020; Ge et al., 2020; Shakhovsky, 2010) to attract the addressee's attention, to interest him, to change his attitude towards the problem (Pinar et al., 2020).

The formation of public opinion involves a variety of linguistic means, as "the pragmatism of any text/speech, both emotive and non-emotive, directly depends on the correct choice of the word" (Kochelaeva, 2017, p. 86). Emotional language tools attract readers' attention: "To form a value orientation, mass communication media are forced to change their format and language policy, thus keeping as many readers, listeners and viewers as possible" (Geyko, 2013, p. 138).

## **2. Problem Statement**

In contemporary linguistics, research on emotional discourse is most relevant. So, Charles Bally considers emotion to be a central function of language. It is impossible to disagree with it because any speech act is caused by a certain emotional condition of the person, and the emotionally colored phrase has more pragmatic effect rather than not colored. "In emotional speech acts, emotional signs carry (express) top meanings precisely because they remain linguistic" (Shakhovsky, 2010, p. 15). Therefore, the problem of verbalization of emotions becomes one of the most topical.

## **3. Research Questions**

The range of issues in this paper includes the following:

1. Studying the emotional components of publicistic texts related to the presentation of the emotional image of COVID-19.
2. Revealing of the language means creating or transferring a special emotional condition which promotes the creation of the relation to a public important problem.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to study the emotionally-evaluating means that allow mass media to form a certain attitude to the problem of coronavirus, objectify the problem.

The research material included the headlines of news articles posted on the Internet in the period from 01.04. to 30.05.2020.

## **5. Research Methods**

The research used a linguistic description method that includes observation and interpretation techniques.

The research applied the semantic analysis method.

## 6. Findings

Many scientists note that modern people are controlled by emotions and perceive the emotional-evaluation component before the actual one (Shakhovsky, 2010, p. 7). According to Sternin (2011), in contemporary publicistic discourse there is conceptual, evaluative, and linguistic freedom, while emotionality and figurativeness are characteristic features of publicistic discourse (Manoj & Nitin, 2020).

Shakhovsky (2008), the founder of the linguistic theory of emotions, asserts: "In certain situations, almost any word can acquire an emotional connotation either by actualization of hidden, probabilistic semes of emotive value, their semantic features or concretizers of semes, potentially coded and coiled in the semantics of a word, or by inducing semes of emotive value from the consociation to the semantics of a neutral word, i.e. the text can induce emotional semes to completely neutral words" (p. 11).

Vezhbitskaya (1996) notes that "the Russian language that pays much more attention to emotions" has a richer "repertoire of lexical and grammatical expressions for their differentiation" (p. 44).

Verbalization of emotions means "emotional syntax and emotional morphology (affixation, grammatical forms of words in a text), emotional intonation, use of interjections and invective vocabulary, verbal description of a posture, features of speech and voice, gaze, and movement" (Shakhovsky, 2010, pp. 21-22).

The works of Vezhbitskaya (1996) reveal certain classes of words that call emotions in the language. It deals with verbs that transmit a passive emotional state ("*быть печальным*" (eng. 'to be sad'), "*быть довольным*" (eng. 'to be satisfied'), "*беспокоиться*" (eng. 'to worry')) and active emotional verbs ("*скучат*" (eng. 'to be bored'), "*волноваться*" (eng. 'to worry'), "*хандрить*" (eng. 'to mope'), "*унывать*" (eng. 'to be sad'), "*радоваться*" (eng. 'to be happy')). The researcher highlights the emotional concepts of "злость" (eng. 'anger') and "печаль" (eng. 'sadness'), which are interpreted "through universal semantic primitives": "хороший" (eng. 'good'), "плохой" (eng. 'bad'), "происходить" (eng. 'to happen'), "чувствовать" (eng. 'to feel'), etc. (p. 326).

The creation of emotionality often happens through a "preliminary swinging of the emotional sphere" (Kara-Murza, 2005, p. 146). Thus, the media actively publishes materials describing the crisis and abnormal situations, so, according to Kara-Murza (2005), the addressees have feelings of fear, envy, hatred and complacency (p. 146).

Our analysis of the examples shows that the emotional image of "COVID-19" is formed through the various emotional and evaluation tools.

It is known that pragmatic influence on the addressee depends on the level of his emotional receptivity: "The received information is never completely adequate to the transmitted information, it (this information) is always a modification of the recipient's emotional location" (Shakhovsky, 2008, p. 137). As a consequence, it is very important to choose a language sign that can, firstly, interest the recipient and, secondly, have a certain suggestion effect on him: "The speaker has at his disposal the whole arsenal of axiological units of language, and although there is an officially accepted standard of marks, his own voice is decisive" (Cherneyko, 1996, p. 43).

Axiological vocabulary is to some extent always emotional, it helps to create a bright nomination, to form a delicate or rough assessment of the object:

Rus. "Общественный транспорт на **острие** коронавируса: «Грязнули» не выживут" [*Public transport at the tip of the coronavirus: "Muddled" will not survive*] (<http://babr24.com> 01.04.20).

Rus. "Будто **стекло** в легких': что переживают люди с COVID-19" [eng. "Like glass in the lungs': what people with COVID-19 are going through"] (<http://news.mail.ru> 04.04.20).

Rus. "Когда коронавирус в **одночасье** меняет твою жизнь" [eng. 'When the coronavirus changes your life overnight']. Experience of Sputnik correspondent in Iran (<https://ria.ru> 01.04.20).

The emotional image of "COVID-19" involves evaluative and representative adjectives:

Rus. "Вылечившийся от COVID-19 оставил **трогательное** сообщение на двери" [eng. 'A COVID-19 cured person left a touching message on the door'] (<https://ria.ru> 03.04.20).

Rus. "Главврач больницы в Коммунарке сообщил **печальные** вести" [eng. 'The head doctor of the hospital in Kommunarka reported sad news'] (<http://smi2.ru> 03.04.20).

Emotional language tools often have an evaluative connotation: "In emotional-evaluation forms, there is the same subjective component of content, personal attitude to the denoted, subjective modality" (Goldin, 2009, p. 107). The subjective evaluation of the addressant motivates the choice of a concrete language element, since "a spontaneous choice of an evaluation word from the synonymous series stands on a solid foundation of the emotional attitude of the evaluation subject to its object" (Cherneyko, 1996, p. 43).

Rus. "В СМИ обсуждают **копеечную** вакцину, способную спасти врачей при COVID-19" [*The media are discussing a penny vaccine that can save doctors at COVID-19*] (<http://bk55.ru> 09.05.20). Instead of the neutral adjective "дешевый" (eng. 'cheap'), the authors use the adjective "копеечный" (eng. 'penny'), which objectifies the semantics of the incredible ease of solving a global problem, especially when used against the background of the verb "спасти" (eng. 'to save').

Rus. «**Огромная** доза ультрафиолета»: поможет ли солнечный свет борьбе с коронавирусом [eng. "Huge dose of ultraviolet": will sunlight help fight the coronavirus] ([www.forbes.ru](http://www.forbes.ru) 25.04.20). The adjective "огромный" (eng. 'huge') and noun "доза" (eng. 'dose') are not semantically congruent, their combination intensifies the meaning of the statement. The following example is similar:

Rus. "**Скрытый пик** эпидемии в России, повторные заражения в Китае и глаза как проводник для вируса: новости COVID-19" [eng. 'Hidden epidemic peak in Russia, re-infection in China and eyes as a gateway to the virus: COVID-19 news'] ([www.forbes.ru](http://www.forbes.ru) 08.05.20).

Emotional adjectives can be pejoratives that have a high pragmatic potential, that is, they can have a certain impact on the addressee, causing an emotional reaction to the transmitted message:

Rus. "Названы три сценария коронавируса: **страшная** цена" [eng. 'There are three scenarios of coronavirus: the terrible price'] (<http://mk.ru> 12.04.20). The negative type of categorization forms due to lexemes with basic negative semantics, which act as a means of expressing pejorative evaluation:

Rus. "Коронавирус очень **коварен**." [eng. 'The coronavirus is very devious']. Rus. "Столичные медики настоятельно рекомендуют горожанам соблюдать карантин" [eng. 'Metropolitan doctors strongly recommend citizens to observe quarantine'] (<https://gazeta-savelki.ru> 29.04.20).

Pejorative use is not typical for all semantic categories of adjectives, but only for lexical and semantic variants that contain the meaning of psychological, moral or ethical evaluation in their structure:

Rus. "**Опасный сезон**" [eng. 'Dangerous season']. Rus. "**Расчеты показали, что случится с COVID-19 осенью**" [eng. 'Calculations showed what will happen to COVID-19 in autumn'] (<https://ria.ru> 11.05.20).

The publicistic text often contains pejoratives (Geyko, 2013), since positive emotions are perceived as a norm and negative emotions as a deviation from it. The spectrum of negative vocabulary is more diverse and widely represented in the language.

Jargonisms, vulgarisms, colloquialisms form a sharply negative emotional background:

Rus. "**Коронавирус из всех утюгов**", **'Не занимайтесь дурью'** – Лукашенко о самоизоляции" [eng. "'Coronavirus out of all irons", "Don't do dope", Lukashenko said about lockdown'] (<https://ukraina.ru> 07.04.20);

Rus. "**Чиновничий беспредел во время пандемии: сотрудников МФЦ не считают за людей**" [eng. 'Bureaucratic abuse during the pandemic: MFC staff are not considered as human beings'] (<http://babr24.com> 03.04.20);

Rus. "**Новости коронавируса: Ледяева начхала на Минздрав России**" [eng. 'Coronavirus news: Ledyayeva had sneezed at the Russian Ministry of Health'] (<http://babr24.com> 02.04.20).

Rus. "**На фоне коронавируса тульские СМИ разругались из-за фейков**" [eng. 'On the background of the coronavirus, the Tula media were fighting about fakes'] (<https://newstula.ru> 28.04.20).

In these examples, the choice of language is motivated by the desire of the addressants to give the communication a touch of talking, and thus, confidence. With the reduced vocabulary, the media appeal to the emotions of the addressee, creating a psychological effect of convergence.

The emotive framework of a statement also results from using evaluation lexemes of any particle belonging:

Rus. "**Снова рост зараженных в России, крах цен на бензин, а Италия готовится выходить из карантина: новости пандемии COVID-2019**" [eng. 'Once again the growth of infected in Russia, the collapse of gasoline prices, and Italy is preparing to exit quarantine: news of the COVID-2019 pandemic'] ([www.forbes.ru](http://www.forbes.ru) 21.04.20);

Rus. "**Коронавирус в России: Собянин пригрозил ужесточить пропускной режим в Москве**" [eng. 'Coronavirus in Russia: Sobyenin threatened to toughen the access control in Moscow'] (<https://www.bbc.com> 17.04.20);

Words and phrases that verbalize a person's emotional state play a special role in creating the image of COVID-19. Usually this is a quote expressing a basic emotion:

Rus. "**Это слишком**": американские врачи рассказали о борьбе с эпидемией" [eng. "'It's too much": American doctors told about fighting the epidemic'] (<https://ria.ru> 04.04.20).

Rus. "**Сожаление и стыд**" – премьер Мишустин реагирует на тяжелое состояние российских региональных больниц" [eng. "'Regret and Shame" - Prime Minister Mishustin responds to the grave condition of Russian regional hospitals'] ([rt.com](http://rt.com) 28.04.20).

Rus. "**До слёз** Как в России встретили Пасху в новых условиях" [eng. "'Pitiful Before Tears". How Russia met Easter in new conditions'] (<https://ria.ru> 20.04.20).

Rus. " **'Ура, свобода!'** Врач увидела семью после полутора месяцев карантина" [eng. "'Hey, freedom!' The doctor saw the family after a month and a half of quarantine'] (<https://ria.ru> 19.05.20).

Rus. "**'Это космос!'** Малышева назвала источник иммунитета к коронавирусу" [eng. "'This is space": Malysheva named the source of immunity to coronavirus'] (<https://ria.ru> 13.04.20).

The quotation-emotion not only conveys the attitude to the problem, but also creates a lively response in the consciousness of the addressee. The quote works as an argument to confirm the validity of the information expressed in the main part of the statement.

Constructions with a comparative and superlative explicate the semantics of a high degree of danger and the seriousness of the situation and have an effective emotional impact:

Rus. "Роберт Редфилд: **'Новая волна COVID-19 будет страшнее'**" [eng. 'Robert Redfield: "New wave of COVID-19 will be worse"'] (<http://bk55.ru> 27.04.20).

Rus. "Отоларинголог назвал **самое страшное последствие COVID-19'**" [eng. 'Otolaryngologist named the worst consequence of COVID-19'] (<http://RG.RU> 16.05.20).

Rus. "**Самая ужасная смерть** – это смерть от удушья" [eng. 'The most horrible death is death by suffocation'] (<http://lenta.ru> 22.04.20).

Emotionally colored syntactic models also participate in creating the image of COVID-19:

(a) Question structures: Rus. "**Шашлыки вам жарить не страшно?**" [eng. 'Do you feel scared to fry your kebabs?'] Rus. "**В России намечается дефицит крови**" [eng. 'There is a forthcoming blood shortage in Russia'] (<https://ria.ru> 01.04.20).

b) exclamation point syntactic constructions with an imperative:

Rus. "**Прочь от меня!** Как защититься от вируса при походе в магазин" [eng. "'Get away from me!" How to protect against the virus when going to the store'] (<https://ria.ru> 21.04.20).

Rus. "Вирус **'косит'** молодых и детей. **Остановите это!**

**Молния!** Число заболевших коронавирусом во Владимирской области увеличилось на 23" [eng. 'The virus "cuts" young and children. Stop it! Lightning! The number of cases of coronavirus in Vladimir region increased by 23'] (<http://vladimirnews.ru> 12.04.20).

Expressive means of language can serve as emotional concepts (Maklakova, 2016):

(a) Metaphor, personification and metonymy: Rus. "**Нерабочая Бурятия. Как коронавирус убьёт республику**" [eng. 'Non-working Buryatia. How the coronavirus will kill the republic'] (<http://babr24.com> 02.04.20). Rus. "**Коронавирус на вахте: как труд вахтовиков не позволяет экономике остановиться**" [eng. 'Coronavirus on shift work: how the work of shift workers prevents the economy from stopping'] (<http://babr24.com> 31.05.20).

b) Hyperball: Rus. "**Тысячи смертей**" [eng. 'Thousands of deaths']. Rus. "**Почему в США так много жертв коронавируса**" [eng. 'Why there are so many coronavirus victims in the USA'] (<https://ria.ru> 01.04.20).

c) Language game: Rus. "**Повороты на крутых тиражах. Что будет с прессой после отмены режима самоизоляции?**" [eng. 'Twists on steep circulations. What will happen to the press once the lockdown mode is cancelled?'] (<http://RG.RU> 07.05.20).

d) Persistent expressions: Rus. "Голыми руками не возьмешь: чего боится новый коронавирус" [eng. 'You can't take it with your bare hands: what the new coronavirus fears'] (<https://ria.ru> 23.04.20).

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, axiological vocabulary, evaluative adjectives with pejorative coloring, jargonisms and vulgarisms, emotional quotes, constructions with a comparative and a superlative, question structures, and exclamation structures with an imperative contribute to creating a psychological effect of emotional experience in the addressee (Selemeneva, 2019, p. 80) and a certain attitude to the problem.

Obviously, the media today use those linguistic units that have a high suggestive potential, form a diverse emotional background, thus not allowing the recipient to critically assess the situation, but clearly draw the necessary image of COVID-19.

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