

Review of Alba-Juez, L., & Larina, T. (2018). The discourse of emotions [Special issue]. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 22(1). 185 pages.

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Since 2015, this is the second special issue dedicated by *Russian Journal of Linguistics* to a topic “that is increasingly attracting the attention of linguists in the 21st century” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 9). Jointly edited by Prof. Laura Alba-Juez (National Distance Education, Madrid) and Prof. Tatiana Larina (People’s Friendship University of Russia), it brings together ten researchers with diverse backgrounds, interests and research orientations. They have contributed nine most interesting and timely papers. Taken together, these attest to the undeniable fact that “emotion matters in every scientific field and in particular, in linguistics, because it is a key factor not only in understanding human nature, but also in the comprehension of human language and communication” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 9). Indeed, as the editors aptly put it, “emotion affects language and at the same time is affected by language: the way we feel may influence the way we talk and express those feelings, and at the same time, the way we name or talk about emotions can affect the way we feel such emotions” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 10).

The issue opens with an introductory paper by the editors. They highlight the need and importance of researching emotions from a pragmatic and discourse perspective. In fact, they regard emotion as “a pragma-linguistic phenomenon which shows the relationship *brain-body-world* within a dynamical system [...] which reflects the sequential cyclic structure *sense-think-act*” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 11). Moreover, “emotive meanings are interpersonal” and “cannot be isolated from their different possible contexts (linguistic, cultural, social, emotional, etc.)” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 14). Understanding emotive meanings does not simply require looking

into the words used when communicating, but also examining “the situation and environment in which these words were uttered”, as well as the interaction between a number of linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic variables (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 14). Due to the complexity and dynamicity of emotions in communication, research cannot but be multidisciplinary and integrate approaches and insights from disciplines like “philosophy, biology, cognitive science, psychology, social studies, neurology, information science, or existentialism” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p.11). It should attempt to cause the old *rationalistic* research paradigm and the new *emotion-integrating* one to “‘unite forces’ in order to acquire a better understanding of what human language is and how it operates” (Alba-Juez & Larina, 2018, p. 11). In the editors’ view, emotion is a universal phenomenon that surfaces differently across languages and/or cultures; it shapes distinct *ethnostyles*, or recurrent verbal and nonverbal patterns for showing and expressing emotions.

The first paper is authored by Anna Wierzbicka. Titled “Emotions of Jesus”, it argues that a complete and unbiased understanding of what is meant by specific emotionally loaded words cannot be grasped through individual language-specific lexical items. Rather, the meaning of such words may be successfully captured by means of simple sentences that can be constructed with universally valid words. Wierzbicka’s proposal rests squarely on the *Natural Semantic Metalanguage* (NSM, henceforth) developed by her and her colleagues over years of constant, fruitful and illuminating research. In her opinion, this metalanguage enables researchers and translators to cope with many of the problems posed by the literal interpretation of words that are used not only to make intentions manifest, but also, and more importantly, to make emotions effable.

Until the 1970s, emotions had received little attention in linguistics, although the advent of anthropocentric linguistics raised the interest of researchers. Russian linguists, in contrast, had been concerned with the correlation between language and emotion since the late 1960s. As a result, *Language Personality Theory* originated as an endeavour to include the emotive component in linguistic description and enquiry. The second paper in this special issue traces the development of this framework. “The cognitive matrix of emotional-communicative personality”, by Victor I. Shakhovskiy, also proposes introducing the term *emotionally-communicative personality*. Despite its multifaceted nature, Language Personality Theory fails to offer a full description of language personality. However, it provides cognitive matrices for it, as well as for emotionally-communicative personality. The paper also shows that the language personality matrix is in need of a structure-emotive component that would explain whether language personality may be ecological or non-ecological.

In the financial world and stock markets, sentiments and feelings of trust are fundamental. The third paper, by J. Lachlan Mackenzie, addresses precisely this issue. “Sentiment and confidence in financial English: A corpus study” is an empirical work that scrutinises the Hong Kong Financial Services Corpus. Informed by functionally-oriented semantics and *Appraisal Theory*, this paper selects two very frequent words in financial journalism and examines instances of sentiment and confidence online. In addition to accounting for their use in clauses and noun phrases in the corpus, the study reveals that sentiment and confidence are employed in the financial parlance as if they were synonyms. This suggests awareness of the essential role of emotions in decision-making.

Francisco Yus authors the fourth paper in this special issue. He calls attention to the role of feelings and emotions when interpreting. Like much of his work elsewhere,

his paper relies on Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) relevance theory, a cognitive-pragmatic framework that has typically posited the creation of mental propositional representations that somehow fill the gap between what speakers say and what hearers end up understanding. Nevertheless, "Attaching feelings and emotions to propositions. Some insights on irony and internet communication" highlights the role of non-propositional elements like feelings and emotions when communicating. The paper emphasises their fundamental role when understanding ironic utterances and when communication is mediated by the new technologies.

Irony is also the topic of the fifth paper, even though it focuses on a different discourse type. "Ironic metaphors in political discourse", by Anna A. Gornostaeva, seeks to unveil current trends in the use of ironic metaphors by Russian- and English-speaking political leaders. The analysis centres on secondary and folklore political genres, which are considered informal and prone to the occurrence of irony. It is based on data from the speeches of politicians like Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump or Barack Obama. After identifying the conceptual spheres giving rise to the metaphors employed in their speeches, the study traces the connections between new political tendencies and innovative metaphors. Furthermore, it delves into existing metaphors that acquire a novel ironic meaning. As a result, the study indicates that ironic metaphors, including aggressive ones, are recurrent in these politicians' speeches and fulfil varied functions. The cross-cultural idiosyncrasies observed in these figures of speech are claimed to be motivated by culture-specific discursive features and practices.

The next paper also addresses a specific type of communication, but focuses on prosody. It also adopts a multidisciplinary standpoint, as it is grounded in Narratology, Corpus Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, *Proximization Theory* (Cap, 2013) and *Positioning Theory* (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Thus, "The emotional prosody of

U.S. fatal air-accident dockets online: Risking risk communication?”, by Carmen Sancho Guinda, explores how the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) of the United States of America seeks to impact the mentalities and behaviours of its audience so as to increase risk awareness and prevention. Through an investigation of 500 online samples of fatal aviation dockets issued between 2010 and 2015, the paper shows that the emotional prosody employed by the NTSB in risk communication tends to be rhetorical rather than lexical. In it, the strategies of focalisation and speech representation play a crucial role by rendering information more vivid and creating emotional engagement. Indeed, these strategies are believed to activate memory and inferential processes, and to positively contribute to decision making. Hence, they can mediate perceptions of risk and danger.

Communication through the new technologies could not escape the interest of the contributors to this volume, either. A quintessential aspect of human interaction like *self-presentation* has been widely examined in both face-to-face and online communication. Yet, research on the latter has mainly been concerned with networking sites, blogs or chatrooms, to name but some examples. Little attention has been paid to communication mediated by text-messaging technologies, such as *WhatsApp*, and, more specifically, to how their users display emotions through them. This is precisely what encourages Carmen Maíz Arévalo to undertake an analysis of emotional self-presentation on this massively used app. “Emotional self-presentation on *WhatsApp*: Analysis of the profile status” surveys a corpus of 206 Spanish profile statuses and demonstrates recurrent patterns in emotional display. The study is limited to profile statuses, where such patterns are judged to be motivated by variables like gender or age.

Quite undeniably, emotions pervade social relationships and significantly impact assessments of (im)politeness. Many verbal and non-verbal actions are intentionally or

unintentionally evaluated as impolite because of the negative feelings and emotions that they generate. The so-called *fustigation impoliteness* appears to be one of those actions. Frequently resorted to in public by many media celebrities, it is an action that not only plays with emotions, but also exploits *extimacy* to a large extent. This is a volitional feature of aggressive relationships that seeks to promote a speaker or hearer's ego through media exhibitionism. This leads Silvia Kaul de Marlangeon to look into expressions of fustigation impoliteness in her paper. "Fustigation impoliteness, emotions and extimacy in Argentine media celebrities" illustrates how celebrities from Río de la Plata share their own and other peers' intimacy in public. The use of expressions of fustigation impoliteness in public is deemed to be triggered by the speaker's extimacy and/or the extimacy that the speaker attributes to, or imposes on, the hearer or a third party.

The last paper in this special issue is "Discourse variation of the concepts of destructive emotions". In it, Yana Volkova and Nadezhda Panchenko aim to portray the in-discourse change in terms of emotion-related concepts and meanings that certain Russian words denoting destructive emotions undergo. Based on data from the Russian National Corpus and explanatory and etymological dictionaries, the authors identify the invariant meanings of those words in a series of contexts both synchronically and diachronically. Their semantic change is found to be connected with the interlocutors' understanding and assessment of those emotions. Associative meanings are contended to overlap and interpenetrate the peripheral semantics of the concepts that those words encode. As a consequence, their discursive use reveals a modification as regards connotative potential. This is thought to stem from the fluctuation of linguo-cultural values pertaining to attitudes towards certain emotions.

The papers in this special issue do not simply evidence the vibrancy and multifariousness of current research in the realm of language and emotions. Additionally, they fill some research lacunae, raise intriguing issues and bridge certain gaps between frameworks and approaches. Surely, researchers interested in emotions and (emotional) language from distinct perspectives will find them most valuable and insightful for a good number of reasons:

- The diversity of paradigms and frameworks on which the studies are based. These include NSM, Language Personality Theory, functionally-oriented semantics, Appraisal Theory, relevance theory, Narratology, corpus linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, Proximization Theory or Positioning Theory.
- The interdisciplinarity of most of the works, as they are informed by postulates, claims and insights drawn from different models. This enables them to offer more comprehensive, encompassing, complementary and in-depth descriptions, analyses and proposals.
- The variety of the approaches adopted, as some papers are empirical and rely on corpus research, while others are more theoretical.
- The heterogeneity of the contexts where emotions and language are examined, which comprise the financial world, mediated communication, political discourse and the air industry.
- The set of phenomena analysed, which range from figures of speech like metaphor and irony, to a suprasegmental feature like prosody, impoliteness or a pervasive feature of mediated communication like emoticons.

All in all, this most illuminating collection will certainly contribute to the consolidation of the interdisciplinary field that Shakhovskiy (2008) labelled *emotion linguistics* or *emotiology* some years ago. More importantly, it will also expand research

horizons by opening up new avenues for further research that should explore, unravel or delve into additional issues that cannot be more human than those pertaining to expressing, feeling, conceptualising and talking about emotions. It would be thrilling if the fruitful interactions between frameworks, approaches and methodologies exhibited in this special issue could find a continuation in future research.

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