

EMOTIVENESS OF POETIC TEXT: A CASE OF CONCEPTUAL MODELLING

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Summary

The paper aims at finding out the conceptual ground of emotiveness of the poetic text. In the current study, emotiveness is regarded as a textual category which reveals itself in the unity of the form (figurative means), content (emotional images of the addresser), and specific functions (intentions of communicating emotional experience of the addresser) of a poem. It has been stated that emotiveness of a poetic text is made of emotives – verbal units that mark emotional images of the author. Since emotional imagery of a poetic text bears diffuse (but by no means haphazard) features, its study becomes possible through the conceptual modelling methods. The application of them to the study of emotives resulted in revealing the presence of emotive trajectory – the emergent formation in the poetic text that organizes its emotional images. In this paper, the emotive trajectory is defined as a conceptual construct which has a specific configuration embracing the alternation of fluctuates and emotive turns. Each fluctuate consists of the starting point, uprising fragment, peak, down-falling fragment and affective zero point. The fluctuates are shaped by force dynamics of the emotional situations which are present in the poetic text.

Keywords: emotive unit, force dynamics, emotional image, emotional situation.

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1. Introduction

Emotiveness of a poetic text is one of its categories that is regarded as a unity of form (a network stylistic means) and content (emotional imagery that renders emotions of a poet which are notable for their diffuse character). The issues of emotiveness of poetic texts are centered around the point of communicating the emotional experience or intentions of the addresser through the linguistic means of a text.

The number of researches dedicated to textual emotiveness (in non-poetic and poetic genres) have already revealed some of the fundamental sides of this phenomenon: 1) the difference between the notions of *emotionality* and *emotiveness* (the latter is regarded as a specifically linguistic phenomenon whose essence lies in verbal expression of emotional experience of a person) (Shakhovskiy, 2016); 2) the correlation between the *emotive – expressive – aesthetic* categories of fictional texts (Bolotnova, 2013; Lenko, 2014; Nashkhoieva, 2011); 3) the typology of emotive units (that includes nominative / descriptive / expressive ones) (Shakhovskiy, 2016); 4) the principles of grouping emotive units into complex emotive networks (Redka, 2020); and also 5) the methodology of working with diffuse images – such as emotions – in fictional texts (Gladio, 2020; Vorobyova, 2006). These and many other findings in emotiology – the branch of linguistics which deals with representations of human emotions in languages – form a solid basis for oncoming researches of emotiveness of poetic texts.

The fact that emotions have a diffuse character does not mean that they stay in a chaotic form in the text. Since poetic texts profile a large number of interrelated images,

they are also marked by high emotive density (the term suggested by V. Shakhovsky (*Shakhovsky, 2016*)). In the current study, we will try to find out how emotional images are organized in a poem.

The **aim** of the paper is to reconstruct the configuration of emotive trajectory – the complex conceptual image that models the flow of the addressers' emotions in the poetic text. This aim can be achieved provided some **tasks** are accomplished: *firstly*, we will try to trace the stylistic means that have an emotiogenic capacity; *secondly*, we will make an effort to establish the ways of organizing the above-mentioned stylistic means in the fragments of the poetic text; *thirdly*, we will try to identify the dominant emotives in the poem and analyze them from the point of view of valency and intensity of the emotional images that they mark. Thus, we hypothesize that tracking the links between the emotives will result in finding out a specific configuration of the emotive trajectory in the poetic text.

The **methods** of analysis employed in the paper include 1) the stylistic analysis (aims at revealing the cases of convergence and functioning of figurative means and devices); 2) the method of conceptual modelling which helps to establish the main conceptual nodes that correlate with dominant emotional images and thus enables the reconstruction of the model of emotive trajectory; 3) the methods of text interpretation which rely on the findings of psychology (*Izard, 1991*) and help to explain the obtained results.

The analysis is carried out on the basis of the poem "Winter" by the Scottish poet Edwin Morgan (1920–2010) (*Morgan, 1990*).

Winter

*The year goes, the woods decay, and after,
many a summer dies. The swan
on Bingham's pond, a ghost, comes and goes.
It goes, and ice appears, it holds,
bears gulls that stand around surprised,
blinking in the heavy light, bears boys
when skates take over swan-tracks gone.
After many summer dyes, the swan-white ice
glints only crystal beyond white. Even
dearest blue's not there, though poets would find it.
I find one stark scene
cut by evening cries, by warring air.
The muffled hiss of blades escapes into breath,
hangs with it a moment, fades off.
Fades off, goes, the scene, the voices fade,
the line of trees, the woods that fall, decay
and break, the dark comes down, the shouts
run off into it and disappear.
At last the lamps go too, when fog
drives monstrous down the dual carriageway
out to the west, and even in my room
and on this paper I do not know
about that grey dead pane
of ice that sees nothing and that nothing sees.*

The poem masterly represents the winter atmosphere in Nottinghamshire due to the eventivity and laconic descriptions of settings which altogether create a number of emotional situations.

2. Emotional situations within image-bearing space of poetic text

All images in a poetic text are subdued to some kind of center (*Gadamer, 2001: 89*). However, the existential context of a poem may be based on several inner centers (*Neborsina, 2005: 27*). These inner centers correlate with so-called “emotional situations”.

In other words, the image-bearing space of the poem is centered around internally organized subspaces that contain emotional situations. The emotional situation is regarded as a set of circumstances a persona finds himself/herself in and thus experiences some sort of feelings (*Cambridge dictionary; Freeman, 2013: 93; Rojas de la Puente, 2018*).

Emotional situations embrace such components as 1) a brief scenario of some event or its part; 2) the setting (in the sense of space and/or time structuring); 2) the image of agonist and 3) antagonist (in L. Talmy’s terminology (*Talmy, 1988*)) the interaction of which predetermines the outcome of the situation described. Since emotions are situationally bound (*Shakhovsky, 2016*), the analysis of the emotional situations in the poem is important for revealing the specificity of force dynamics that shapes the dominant emotional images of the text.

Emotional situations can be universal, culturally bound, and personal. According to their modalities they fall into real or imaginary; desirable or undesirable for the persona in the poetic text. In case if several of them interact within a poem, they acquire contrasting or complementing qualities.

The suggested for the analysis text contains two global emotional situations that of summer and winter. The emotional situation of summer is represented only with few poetic details that represent the debris of emotional impressions of the persona: the image of summer (it supposedly implies positive feelings which stay vague and undifferentiated in nuances) and the images closely connected with it, for example, a graceful swan that leaves the tracks on the surface of water. The positive impressions appear in the text in the images of ephemeral bright spots: “*summer dyes*”, “*the dearest blue*”. The epithets on the verbal level of the poem appear to be the manifestation of the conceptual metaphor positive emotions are bright spots which structures the subspace of summer. These emotional images are pushed to the background by the powerful images from the subspace of winter. The emotional situations of this subspace are more differentiated. Structurally they spiral down from the neutral ones (at the beginning of the poem the phrase *the year goes* has undifferentiated axiology and emotive colouring since it can be either positive or negative in the context of the poem) to fearsome dizziness evoked by the awesome all-engulfing dark energy of winter.

Within the subspace of winter the emotional situation is shaped by the antagonist of nothingness that takes everything away including the bright spots of summer. This is a cumulative image in the text. It is becoming more and more powerful.

The poem fixes the transitions of persona throughout the stages of one and the same emotional state. The figurative expressions give the possibility to trace the process of how one group of images is superseded with the other ones until the nothingness fully intakes the vital energy and conserves it. On the lexical level, these transitions are marked with the combinations of enjambments, catch repetitions, and climax: “*The muffled hiss of blades escapes into breath, / hangs with it a moment, fades off. / Fades off, goes, the scene, the voices fade, / the*

line of trees, the woods that fall, decay / and break, the dark comes down, the shouts / run off into it and disappear.”

Thus, on the conceptual level of the text the metaphor negative emotion is all-encompassing darkness makes itself visible. The image of nothingness which parallels darkness takes away a lot of common images. On the lexical level, the idea is marked by the repetition of the verb *to go* in different grammatical forms and its contextual synonyms *to fade* and *to disappear*. So, darkness which is associated with nothingness generates a complex of undifferentiated diffuse feeling (*I do not know / about that grey dead pane / of ice that sees nothing and that nothing sees*) which have the potential to express themselves when the vital light comes on.

Interestingly, the fragments of the positive emotional images pertaining to the subspace of summer transform into the artistic memory of persona under the influence of the image of nothingness: *the swan-white ice, dearest blue's not there, though poets would find it*. These examples testify to the fact that figurative language is always fueled by the author's emotions.

So, the emotional situation in a poem forms its dominant emotive image (*Maslova, 2013: 38*) which has its own dynamism of unfolding and its own axiology. The switching of the author's attention from one emotional situation to the other (which has the dominant emotional image of its own) forms the emotive trajectory in poetic texts.

3. Emotive trajectory of poetic text

The way the author focuses his attention on the subspaces predetermines the formation of the emotive trajectory in a poetic text. The emotive trajectory appears as a result of linking the dominant emotive images (that are identified on the previous stage of conceptual analysis) as they appear in the text. In fact, the emotive trajectory seems to be the model of the flow of the author's emotion of which results in getting either to positive or negative emotional state. In other cases, the poem ends with the ambivalent emotional image.

The emotive trajectory is a dynamic emergent formation which changes under the influence of force dynamics of subspaces in the poetic text. It reflects the valency and intensity of the emotional images experienced by persona and gets manifested in the tonal system of the poem.

The features of the emotive trajectory are predetermined by the ontology of the emotional experience of a person. Structurally it consists of emotive fluctuates and turns. The emotive fluctuate is a fragment of emotive trajectory which reflects a progress of one emotional image that moves towards its peak. The emotive fluctuate is marked by specific valency and intensity. The fluctuates of different valencies alternate with emotive turns in creating the emotional tension in poetic texts.

The analyzed poem is based on the number of fluctuates of the same valency and uprising intensity that enhance each other building up the image of uprising disturbance of persona: 1) *The muffled hiss of blades escapes into breath, / hangs with it a moment, fades off;* 2) *Fades off, goes, the scene, the voices fade, / the line of trees, the woods that fall, decay;* 3) *and break, the dark comes down, the shouts / run off into it and disappear.*

Let us now consider the structure of the emotive fluctuate. It consists of 1) the starting point; 2) uprising fragment; 3) peak or focus; 4) down-falling fragment and 5) affective zero which naturally coincides with the starting point of the subsequent emotional image.

The starting point of the emotive fluctuate is marked with a fragment in the text which signals about the appearance of a new emotional image. This point usually coincides with a logical «threshold» in a text which is defined by V. Karasev as the place of “condensed sense” (*Karasev, 2009*). Emotive thresholds can be high, middle, and low. In the analyzed poetic text,

the number of fluctuates start with a point when the previous fluctuate gets to the lowest point thus making the atmosphere more and more electrified with emotions of intrigue.

The uprising fragment of emotive fluctuate is marked with the cases of gradation on the verbal level of the text. They create the effects of emotive crescendo. In the analyzed poem it is represented by the cases of climax that have been mentioned above.

The increase of emotive intensity takes the emotive fluctuate to its peak, which correlates with the notion of emotive dominant in a poetic text or its fragment. Some poetic texts can have several emotive peaks of different axiological characteristics. The emotive peak can be created with the help of convergence of linguistic means in some fragments of a text. In the analyzed poem, it is represented with the verbs *to go – to fade – to disappear*. The last one being of the strongest in connotation.

The down-falling fragment of the emotive fluctuate renders the images associated with the emotional relief of the persona, and it is usually visible by the cases of anticlimax in the text.

The affective zero-point associates with the emotive balance and harmony in a poetic text. There is next to no distance between the affective zero and the emotive turn within the fragment of emotive trajectory.

The following fragment of the poem can illustrate the point of the emotive fluctuate development: *At last the lamps go too, when fog / drives monstrous down the dual carriage-way / out to the west, and even in my room / and on this paper I do not know / about that grey dead pane / of ice that sees nothing and that nothing sees*. In these lines, the emotional image of fearsome disturbance starts with somewhat positive image of peacefulness which comes with “*lights going on*”, but as the image progresses, it becomes clear that this positiveness is intended to set the contrast with the “*monstrous*” fog (the uprising fragment of the fluctuate) that transforms into the dreary evening “*grey dead pane*” (the uprising fragment of the fluctuate) and finally into the total darkness or “*nothingness*” (the peak of the fluctuate).

Emotive turn is defined as the change of in the emotive strategy of the author. The emotive turn occurs the image of emotion of the opposite axiology in a poetic text is observed. On the verbal level, it can be visible through the use of stylistic means marked by the opposite connotation. The emotive turns may create the cumulative images on the level of the text. They may signal about the author’s emotional reorientation (be it conscious or subconscious). The analyzed poem does not have the emotive turns since the fluctuates possess the same valency and differ only in their intensify creating the image of anxiety, a kind of emotional disbalance which is necessary for poetry writing.

4. Conclusions

Emotiveness of poetic texts is centered around the emotive trajectory – the emergent image which renders the flow of the author’s emotions. The emotive trajectory includes the number of fluctuates of different intensity and valency which are directed at the ultimate emotive image formation in the poetic. It can be represented by delight or agitation. The configuration of the emotive trajectory much depends on the author’s emotionality and creative intentions.

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